Tropes and Schemes

Stylistic devices to add spunk to your writing

Foreword

Hello guys!

I composed this e-book to help myself and others get acquainted with the nuances of writing. Professional writers can choose the tropes and schemes that are appropriate for their fiction and use them to put that extra bite in their work. I’ve got as many as 69 with explanations and examples, and here they all are, so you won’t need to bother to make a list. Suggestions or criticism is welcome. Have fun with your writing!

Figures of speech are words or phrases that leave the literal meaning for effect. They are used as a writing device for emphasis, concision, clarity, rhythm, novelty, peculiarity, style and so on. Figures of speech is divided into two rhetorical devices known as tropes and schemes.

Tropes

Trope is a figure of speech in which the use of a word or a phrase other than in its literal meaning, changes the meaning of a sentence. The word trope comes from Greek *tropos* meaning turn. That is, turning the meaning of a sentence another way by the use of a word(s). There are many kinds of tropes in the English language.

Four major kinds of tropes are: -

- Irony
- Metonymy
- Metaphor
- Antanaclasis pun

Irony

Irony is a literary device in which the underlying meaning of a statement or a situation is in contrast with what is apparent. The word irony comes from Greek *eirOnia* in which *eirOn* means dissembler.

Types of Irony

Verbal irony

In verbal irony, a speaker says something that differs from what he actually means. Generally, it happens due to the ignorance of the speaker of a larger context to his words of which he is not conscious.

Verbal irony in The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthrone
Chapter - The Recognition

Dimmesdale to Hester
"…Hester, though he were to step down from a high place, and stand there beside thee, on thy pedestal of shame, yet better were it so than to hide a guilty heart through life. What can thy silence do for him, except it tempt him yea, compel him, as it were to add

hypocrisy to sin . . . Take heed how thou deniest
to him who, perchance, hath not the courage to grasp it for
himself the bitter, but wholesome cup that is now presented
to thy lips!"
Later in the book we see that it is Dimmesdale predicting his future in these lines. He did 'add hypocrisy to sin' by staying quiet about his affair with Hester, and that he 'hath not the courage to grasp it for himself, the bitter but wholesome cup' due to which he suffered in silence and had to endure guilt and loneliness.

Dramatic or tragic irony

Dramatic irony is used especially in plays. When a character, in ignorance, says something that has a different meaning from what he intends to express, then it is an instance of dramatic irony. Later, the character comes to know about the true nature of his actions, which leads to tragedy.

Dramatic irony was mostly used in ancient Greek plays where the spectators were fully aware of the plot, intentions and situation whereas the characters weren't. In such a setting, characters said things without knowing their larger significance.

Examples

In Othello by Shakespeare, Othello is suspicious of his wife, Desdemona, when there is no cause for suspicion. The characters are oblivious of the truth, but the readers can see the advance of tragedy.

In Oedipus the King by Sophocles, King Oedipus unknowingly kills his father and marries his mother, which later leads to tragedy.

In Romeo and Juliet by Shakespeare, Romeo kills himself after he believes that Juliet is dead.

Structural irony

When an ironic voice is continued through a work by means of a narrator or a character whose viewpoint is unreliable or wrong, then it's called structural irony.

Jonathan Swift's satirical essay The Modest Proposal uses structural irony.

Candide, a French satire by Voltaire, has a character named Candide, who has blind optimism, but later becomes disillusioned.

Socratic Irony

This is just being clever, and there is little irony in it. When a person or a character feigns ignorance to extract a secret or expose a person, then he is using Socratic irony. Through the use of Socratic irony, you can very cleverly have a person reveal things that he intends to hide.

Louis Theroux in television series When Louis Met… is a perfect example of Socratic irony.

Cosmic Irony

If you believe that God or a Supreme Being is manipulating events or humans for fun or some other motive, then you might be knocking on Cosmic Irony. In short, you hope, God dashes them.

> A short story titled The Open Boat by Stephen Crane deals with cosmic irony.

Roman irony

When someone purposely uses words that have double meaning to consciously stir a particular response in a listener or a reader, then he's using roman irony. The difference between Socratic irony and Roman irony is that the speaker doesn't expect the listeners to participate in the dialogue directly.

> That is basically for politicians or such as Antony of Shakespeare's play Julius Caesar, who need to juggle a lot of balls.
>
> What explanation won't do, example will.
>
> Julius Caeser by William Shakespeare
> Antony –
> "…The noble Brutus
> Hath told you Caesar was ambitious:
> If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
> And grievously hath Caesar answer'd it.
> Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest
> For Brutus is an honourable man;
> So are they all, all honourable men
> Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.
> He was my friend, faithful and just to me:
> But Brutus says he was ambitious;
> And Brutus is an honourable man.
> He hath brought many captives home to Rome
> Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:
> Did this in Caesar seem ambitious
> When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept:
> Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:
> Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
> And Brutus is an honourable man.
> You all did see that on the Lupercal
> I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
> Which he did thrice refuse: was this ambition
> Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
> And, sure, he is an honourable man.
> I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
> But here I am to speak what I do know.
> You all did love him once, not without cause:
> What cause withholds you then, to mourn for him
> O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts,
> And men have lost their reason. Bear with me
> My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,
> And I must pause till it come back to me.

Situational irony

When the expected outcome of a situation is in contrast with what actually results from it, then that's called situational irony.

In fiction, the reader might know beforehand that the situation will unfold not as the characters think it will, but in some unexpected way. This technique will make the reader feel for the character who is expecting something very different from what he will actually have to deal with.

Also, you can hide the outcome from the reader till it actually happens so that the reader will be surprised by the unexpected outcome, and so will the character.

The short story titled The Gift of the Magi by O Henry uses situational irony. In it, Jim and Della decide to buy a gift for each other for Christmas. Due to lack of money, Jim sells his watch to buy a set of combs for Della while Della gets her long hair cut and sold to buy a new chain for Jim's watch.

Romantic or philosophical irony

In romantic irony, the human ability to create art consciously rather than naturally, like plants create fruits etc, is seen in contrast with the outcome of such art. The outcome of art is seen as a fall because then it takes on a definite form whereas the creative process can be seen, criticized, changed, progressed by the human mind. There are endless possibilities in the creative process, but when it becomes a poem or any other art form, it loses all of that and becomes inert; giving just what the author intended it to.

Comic irony

When there is a serious underlying meaning, a contrast or a generalization under a witty, humorous or light statement, then you call it comic irony.

The first sentence of Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen is a perfect example of comic irony.

"It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife."

However, we soon find out that what is actually true is that women are always in search of a single man with a good fortune, and not otherwise.

Comic irony in Great Expectations by Charles Dickens

"Here! Give me your fork, Mum, and take the baby," said Flopson. "Don't take it that way, or you'll get its head under the table."

Thus advised, Mrs. Pocket took it the other way, and got its head upon the table; which was announced to all present by a prodigious concussion.

"Dear, dear! Give it back, Mum," said Flopson; "and Miss Jane, come and dance to baby, do!"

Irony-filled Ironic by Alanis Morissette
An old man turned ninety-eight
He won the lottery and died the next day
It's a black fly in your Chardonnay
It's a death row pardon two minutes too late
And isn't it ironic…dontcha think

It's like rain on your wedding day
It's a free ride when you've already paid
It's the good advice that you just didn't take
Who would've thought…it figures

Mr. Play It Safe was afraid to fly
He packed his suitcase and kissed his kids goodbye
He waited his whole damn life to take that flight
And as the plane crashed down he thought
"Well isn't this nice…"
And isn't it ironic…dontcha think

A traffic jam when you're already late
A no-smoking sign on your cigarette break
It's like ten thousand spoons when all you need is a knife
It's meeting the man of my dreams
And then meeting his beautiful wife
And isn't it ironic…dontcha think
A little too ironic…and yeah I really do think…

Metonymy

Metonymy is a rhetorical device in which a strong association of a thing is used to represent it. For example – We don't know how India will respond. Here, India is used to represent the government of India, not its citizens.

Examples of metonymy
The truck hit me from behind. (The truck hit my car from behind.)
The press has made my life hell. (Journalists)
Today, we will be performing Shakespeare. (a play of Shakespeare)
Bush has launched an attack. (America)
I couldn't catch his tongue. (language)
The Pentagon has made an announcement. (the U.S. dept. of defense)
They will reach the sceptred isles by sunset. (Britian)
The White House is certain of the positive outcome of its actions. (The President and his staff)
Metonymy between a thing and its contents
I didn't like that book. (the contents of the book)
He has brains. (what is inside his brain – intelligence)

Metonymy and metaphor

There is a subtle difference between metonymy and metaphor. Whereas metaphor uses the similarity between two objects, metonymy uses contiguity or proximity. For example, Shut your trap. That's a metaphor because trap is being used instead of mouth. There is no connection between a trap and a mouth except that both can open and shut, and are of a particular size.

In metonymy, it's the commonly recognized association between two things that counts. For example – I have deep respect for the royal crown. Here, crown is so closely associated with monarchy that instead of saying the king or the queen, you can simple say crown. It's like you keep funny nicknames for people and call them by that instead of their real names. I hope you get it.

Metonymy and synecdoche

Now another one is synecdoche. It also closely resembles metonymy, so we'll take a look at the differences.

In Synecdoche, the word used in the sentence is part of the whole like claws for crabs or wheels for cars. Claws and wheels both are physically attached to crabs and cars respectively. Let's see another example.

Her feet flapped like terrified wings.

Instead of using the word bird, we have used wings as a substitute for bird, and also to stress on the flapping. As wings are a part of a bird, that's a synecdoche.

In metonymy, the objects are not physically or closely related. For example – The press will be here any minute. Instead of the press, we can also say media. The point is that journalists or newspapers are not closely related to the press (the word had come up due to the printing technique in those days), still we use it because we strongly associate the press with media people.

Metaphor

The first extremely obvious question is – What is this darned metaphor? Another fancy name? Well . . . yes and no. It is fancy, but also effective. Charged with energy. Stuffed with genius.

By definition, a metaphor is a figure of speech where two entirely dissimilar words or phrases are brought together to suggest a similarity. Confused? What are examples for?

All the world's a stage

Yes, it's Shakespeare and he is comparing the world to a stage. You generally don't see the world as a stage, you see it . . . as the world, the earth, the mother; but not a stage. That is why it's a metaphor. Because it has brought together two entirely unrelated things and made sense with it.

That was simple. But there is no peace, here starts the rollercoaster. (bet you won't enjoy it right now)

1. Extended or telescoping metaphor or conceit

When your metaphoric insight has developed, then you cannot restrain yourself to just one metaphor. Like –

All the world's a stage and men and women are merely players*.*

This extension – "Men and women are merely players" has made this an extended metaphor. The author stretched "the world" and "a stage" by introducing parts of "the world" (men and women) and "a stage" (players). Of course, it has to make sense. You can't extend it by comparing men and women to an ipod. Sounds distasteful? Exactly.

2. Metonym

When you've grown tired of clichéd words and are searching desperately for a word closely related to it that has not been used to death, that word is a metonym. A new word to replace an old one. Of course, an example.

The pen *is mightier than the* sword*.*

This saying in itself has become clichéd, but originally the thought was otherwise. Here, the pen stands for the freedom of expression and the sword for the power of authority. Now, if you said, freedom is greater than power, nobody would have said Wow. That's why Pen and Sword instead of freedom and power.

3. Mixed metaphor

Some of us fail to create a good metaphor; such a twisted, out of tune metaphor is called a mixed metaphor.

The waves of emotion have punctured my heart.

Can waves puncture? They do in a nonsensical world, but most of us are still sane, but widely tolerable of nonsense and that is why such nonsense is given a modest name of mixed metaphor.

OK, for info's sake – there are two kinds of mixed metaphors: permissible mixed metaphors and impermissible mixed metaphors. Never use impermissible ones, so that leaves me to explain only permissible ones.

Permissible mixed metaphors make sense even though the parts are not directly related.

We've weathered plenty of storms with an iron will.

There is no connection between weathering the storms and an iron will, still it sounds right.

4. Absolute metaphor

A perfect metaphor to show craziness and confusion. In an Absolute metaphor, the metaphor actually, really, truthfully, doesn't make sense.

She broke upon a sad piece.
In today's world of indistinctness, it is reigning absolute. Confuse them with your confusion.

There are two types of Absolute metaphor: Paralogical and antimetaphor.

5. Implied metaphor

Implied metaphor is an indirect metaphor where an implication to the whole is made.

Shut your trap.
He ruffled his feathers.

No *bird* and no *mouth*, just feathers and trap. Yeah, that's implied.

6. Dead metaphor

Dead metaphors have been so overused that they have lost their individuality.

Face of the mountain
Crown of glory

Dead metaphors are mostly used as phrases and not as metaphors. Their association has died. Now, they are just phrases, although their names still remain. Take off your hats. It's mourning time!

7. Dormant metaphor

Didn't our teachers say that eating words in not good. Here it is again. When the meaning of a metaphor becomes unclear because the sentence has been shortened, then it is called a dormant metaphor.

He was blazing. (for whaat, if you please)
She flew towards her uncle. (why?)
They blew her off. (WHY?)

OK, it makes sense, but in itself, they don't create the whole picture. Why chew words. Dormant, yes, they are sleeping. Hibernating. But still alive.

8. Synecdoche metaphor

The name looks scary, but it's rather simple. In synecdoche metaphor, a part of the association is used instead of the object. For example feathers instead of bird or claws instead of crab. These associations are symbolic of the whole.

Her feet flapped *like terrified* wings*.*

9. Root metaphor

Root metaphors are named thus because from them numerous other metaphors can take birth. Also, they are generalizations like –

Time is money.
Make hay while the sun shines.

10. Active metaphor

Active metaphors are new born so you will have to introduce them to the world. They are not familiar to the reader. That's why it is better if they are explained clearly.

Her blinking love.
They mashed each other's lives.

Any new metaphor that hasn't been in the world before is an active metaphor.

11. Submerged metaphor

In a submerged metaphor, the first part of the metaphor or the vehicle is implied. For example: his winged dreams or her legged ambition.

12. Dying metaphor

It should have been named 'rising from the dead metaphor' or 'the mummy metaphor' because when you take out dead metaphors from the grave and use them in your writing, then they can't be called dying. I don't know what George Orwell was thinking when he coined the name. Dying metaphors are clichéd metaphors like –

Needle in a haystack

Achilles heel
A different ball game

13. Conceptual metaphor

This is hard, so read slowly. A conceptual metaphor has many metaphoric meanings in them. Their underlying meaning creates a novel thought or a universal concept. Life as journey is an old conceptual metaphor. This metaphor has universal appeal. It is not talking about a particular situation or a person. It stands true to every man. Also, if you see life as a journey, then you can also use many other metaphors like –

My life just halted.
I have reached crossroads.
I came into this world with no luggage.

So, Life is a journey is a conceptual metaphor.

14. Pataphor

Pataphors are metaphors that are stretched to such an extreme that they do not make sense. They are usually used to attract attention and introduce newness.
He put breaks on his fear, accelerated his anger and rammed into the house.

15. Simple or Tight metaphor

In simple metaphor, you don't need to do much. Just cool it. There is nothing to cool except just it. On a serious note, in a simple metaphor, the relationship between the vehicle (cool) and the tenor (it) is very intimate (tight).

Duck (bow) down.
He is mad (crazy).
You're a dinosaur (huge).

Usually, simple metaphors are very short. Just two or three words at most.

16. Implicit metaphor

Here, either the vehicle or the tenor is not specified clearly, but implied.

Shut your trap.
Watch your tongue.

Here, 'trap' and 'tongue' are used instead of mouth and words.

17. Compound or Loose metaphor

A compound metaphor is made of more than one similarity. In it, the writer extends a metaphor by using more than one association.

He ran towards the murderer, a wild beast *with a* beating heart*.*
The air smelt of fear*, the* fear of abandonment*.*

18. Complex metaphor

In a complex metaphor, you have a simple metaphor and his accomplice (not in crime). Instead of an explanation, an example would be better.

> *Let me* throw *some* light *on his character.*

Here, “throw” is used for “light” that in itself is non-existent.

Antanaclasis pun and Polyptoton pun

Antanaclasis pun

You will have more difficulty remembering this word rather than in knowing it's meaning. Very simply, in antanaclasis, you use a single word multiple times with a different meaning each time. For example – If you aren't fired with enthusiasm, you will be fired with enthusiasm. As you can see, antanaclasis is a kind of pun.

Examples of antanaclasis
(ant-an-uh-klas-is)

Antanaclasis in Othello by William Shakespeare
Othello:
"Yet I'll not shed her blood;
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,
And smooth as monumental alabaster.
Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men.
Put out the light, and then put out the light."

The first light refers to the candle or the lamp burning, and the second to Desdemona's life.

Antanaclasis in Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening by Robert Frost
"The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep."

In this stanza, the first sleep refers to rest and the second to death.

Other examples -

The craft of a politician is to appear before the public without craft.

Don't worry; the judge won't judge you.

Your argument is sound, nothing but sound.

Learn to play a tune before you try to play me.

That company is terrible company.

Are you working hard or hardly working?

We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately.

It is terrible to have a cold in the cold.

Learn some craft when young, that when old you may live without craft.

I'll dig out his murderers before I dig his grave.

Polyptoton pun

The use of same sounding words (not the same word like in antanaclasis) to convey different meanings is called polyptoton pun. For example – plain and plane, idle and idol, battle and embattled. Paronomasia is the act or practice of punning.

Polyptoton in King Henry Part I by William Shakespeare

Falstaff:
"Yea, and so used it that were it not here apparent
that thou art heir apparent…"

Polypototon in Troilus and Cressida by William Shakespeare

"The Greeks are strong and skilful to their strength,
Fierce to their skill and to their fierceness valiant;
But I am weaker than a woman's tear…"

Polypototon in Richard II by William Shakespeare

Act II Scene I
John of Gaunt:
"Methinks I am a prophet new inspired
And thus expiring do foretell of him" …
"He tires betimes that spurs too fast betimes;
With eager feeding food doth choke the feeder…"

Other Tropes –

Allusion
Allegory
Antanaclasis (see four types of tropes)
Anacoenosis
Anthimeria
Auxesis
Antonomasia
Aphorism
Apostrophe
Double negative
Epithet
Euphemism
Hyperbole
Hysteron proteron
Innuendo
Irony
Litotes
Meiosis
Malapropism
Neologism
Oxymoron
Onomatopoeia
Parable
Paradox
Periphrasis
Pun
Personification
Rhetorical question
Syllepsis
Truism
Tricolon
Zoomorphism
Zeugma

Allusion

An allusion is an indirect reference to a well-known person, place, book, event, movies, fictional character, television show, cartoon characters etc. With the help of an allusion, the author can, in a few words, make numerous associations between two things.

He is the Shakespeare of our class.

Immediately, 'he' takes on the qualities of Shakespeare, which are remembered till today.

Let us take a look at some examples from the works of famous writers to better understand how allusions are used.

Allusion in The Wasteland by T.S. Eliot

"The Chair she sat in, like a burnished throne,
Glowed on the marble, where the glass
Held up by standards wrought with fruited vines
From which a golden Cupidon peeped out…"

(Cupidon is French for Cupid)

"The Chair…marble" is an allusion to the bedroom of Imogen in Shakespeare's play Cymbeline; Cupid you all know.

"I Tiresias, old man with wrinkled dugs
Perceived the scene, and foretold the rest -
I too awaited the expected guest."

Tiresias was the famous blind prophet of ancient Greece. Tiresias is one of the major characters in The Odyssey by Homer.

Allusions in Inferno by Dante

"Greater fear I do not think there was when Phaethon abandoned the reins, whereby heaven, as is still apparent, was scorched; nor when the wretched Icarus felt his flanks unfeathering through the melting of the wax, his father shouting to him, "Ill way thou holdest," than mine was, when I saw that I was in the air on every side, and saw every sight vanished, except that of the beast."

Phaethon

Phaethon is a legendary character in Greek mythology. Phaethon, the son of Sun-god, wished to drive his father's chariot, but he didn't know that he won't be able to control it. The Sun-god promised him his wish without knowing what it was. When Phaethon took hold of the reins, he knew he couldn't control it. The uncontrolled chariot caused destruction wherever it went. At last, Zeus threw a thunderbold at Phaethon to stop the chariot, which killed him instantly.

Icarus

Daedalus, Icarus' father, made wings of feathers and clay for both of them to escape from the prison of king Minos. Before taking off, Daedalus warned Icarus not to go near the sun or the wax would melt. But Icarus got so excited by the flight that he went too close to the sun. The wax melted away and he fell down and died.

Biblical allusion in Master of Ballantrae by Robert Louis Stevenson

'"There!" says she, and taking the most unwomanly oaths upon her
tongue, bade me begone and carry it to the Judas who had sent me.
It was the first time I had heard the name applied to Mr. Henry; I
was staggered besides at her sudden vehemence of word and manner,
and got forth from the room, under this shower of curses, like a
beaten dog.'

It is believed that Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus.

"Yet what founded our particular
friendship was a circumstance, by itself as romantic as any fable
of King Arthur."

King Arthur is a legendary British king whose historicity is still being debated by scholars. His knights, the round table conference, his sword Excalibur, his wife - Guinevere, his rival in love - Lancelot, his magician mentor – Merlin, his court – Camelot, The Holy Grail etc. can also be used as allusions.

Greek allusions in The World is too Much with us; Late or Soon by William Wordsworth

"Great God! I'd rather be
A pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn."

In Greek mythology, Proteus is a sea-god who can foretell the future, but he will only do so when overpowered. He transforms himself to avoid being captured.

Triton is a Greek god, the son of Poseidon and Amphitrite. Triton is half man, half fish. He carries a conch shell (horn), which he blows so loudly that it shivers the earth. Today, Triton is associated with toughness and merman-like features.

Allusion in Musée des Beaux Arts by W.H. Auden

> "In Breughel's Icarus, for instance: how everything turns away
> Quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman may
> Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry,
> But for him it was not an important failure; the sun shone
> As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green
> Water; and the expensive delicate ship that must have seen
> Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,
> had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on."

This passage contemplates on a painting made by Breughel titled 'The fall of Icarus'.

Literary allusions in The Great Indian Novel by Shashi Tharoor

> "No country whose colonists' imagination had created an Adela Quested and a Daphne Manners could have denied its seed to the most yielding of its vicereines."

Adela Quested was a fictional character in *A Passage to India* by E.M. Foster. She "thought" she was raped by an Indian doctor, Dr. Aziz, in the Marabar Caves. It is suggested that she was attracted towards him and thus imagined the rape.

Daphne Manners is also a fictional character in *The Jewel in the Crown* by Paul Scott. In British India, Daphne falls in love with a young Indian, Hari. During civil war, she is raped by a gang (Hari is unable to save her). Later in court, she refuses to help the prosecution punish Hari and other Indian youth who are arrested in connection with the rape. She is seen as a traitor by the British.

Personalities and places that are widely known and can be used as allusions safely -

Apollo
Macbeth
Helen of Troy
Trojan horse
Eden
Adam
Eve
Herculean
Romeo
Juliet
Cupid
Catch-22
Jesus
Cain

Noah
Ark of Noah
(the battle of) Waterloo
Othello
Lady Macbeth
White House
The Taj Mahal
The Pyramids
Yossarian
Ishmael (in Moby Dick)
Dorian Gray
Hitler
Alexander
Zeus
Athena
Hector
Achilles
Paris
Odysseus
Penelope (Odysseus' wife)
Blind Pew
Long John Silver
Hiroshima
Nagasaki
The Godfather (movie)
Michael Corleone (in The Godfather)
Stephen Dedalus (in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man by James Joyce)
Hamlet
Area 51
Popeye
Bluto
Caesar
Superman
Beatles
Titanic

Allegory

Allegory is the use of fictional characters on the literal level of a story to unravel the abstract, philosophical, divine, historical, social, moral, mythological, religious or political meaning lying underneath its surface. Great allegories have many levels of meanings.

Sometimes, allegorical works use personification to underline the hidden symbolic meaning. At other times, the story runs like any other story at the surface, but for those who care to see, there is an underlying meaning. Allegory works well for both superficial and deep readers.

Allegory is also used for satire. Gulliver Travels uses allegory to show the discrepancy between what man thinks he is (cultured, rational, truthful, virtuous) and how he acts (brutally, selfishly, irrationally, viciously). Gulliver Travels has so many levels and they were so well covered by Swift with a fictional surface that Gulliver's Travels became a popular children's book.

In *Animal Farm*, George Orwell personifies animals to satirize the corruption in politics. In the book, Orwell shows how politicians dupe the public to come into power, enjoy life at their expense through manipulation and keep changing their ideals to suit their needs.

This is shown through the medium of an animal farm, which symbolizes the world; the pigs are the politicians, the farm animals the public. What better way than to call politicians pigs and then throw your hands up in allegorical innocence!

Some famous allegorical works –

The Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan (religious allegory)

The allegory of the cave, the divided line and the sun in The Republic by Plato (philosophical allegory)

Young Goodman Brown by Nathaniel Hawthorne (moral allegory)

The Fairie Queene by Edmund Spenser (moral allegory)

A Tale of a Tub by Jonathan Swift (religious allegory)

Everyman (moral allegory)

The Divine Comedy by Dante Alighieri (moral allegory)

Moby Dick by Herman Melville (moral allegory)

Poem – Piers Plowman by William Langland (moral allegory)

The Canterbury Tales by Chaucer (religious allegory)

Consolation of Philosophy by Boetheus (moral allegory)

Lord of the Flies by William Golding (social, moral allegory)

Anacoenosis

Anacoenosis (an-uh-si-noh-sis) is a writing technique in which a character speaks directly to an audience to know their opinion, perspective on an issue that interests both the sides.

Anacoenosis comes from Greek *anakoinoun* meaning to communicate. In writing, the communication is mostly to a crowd, which is not directly a part of the story.

Example of anacoenosis in The Book of the Prophet Isaiah
"And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?"

Example of anacoenosis in Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare
Act III Scene II
Brutus:
"Romans, countrymen, and lovers! hear me for my
cause, and be silent, that you may hear: believe me
for mine honour, and have respect to mine honour, that
you may believe: censure me in your wisdom, and
awake your senses, that you may the better judge.
If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of
Caesar's, to him I say, that Brutus' love to Caesar
was no less than his. If then that friend demand
why Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer:
Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved
Rome more."

Some of the questions Brutus rose with the Roman public after he had murdered Caesar. This is a very nice technique to highlight how Brutus tries to justify and convince the pubic that he killed Caesar for the good of Rome.

"Had you rather Caesar were living and
die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live
all free men?"

"Who is here so base that would be a
bondman? If any, speak; for him have I offended.
Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman?"

"Who is here so vile that will not love his country?
If any, speak; for him have I offended.
I pause for a reply. All None, Brutus, none."

And

Act III Scene II
Brutus:
"Good countrymen, let me depart alone,
And, for my sake, stay here with Antony:
Do grace to Caesar's corpse…"

Act III Scene II
Antony:
"Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.
The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft interred with their bones;
So let it be with Caesar."

Anthimeria

When a word turns revolutionary and leaves its proper place in grammar to join another group, then you call it Anthimeria. Mostly a noun jumps places to become a verb. That's 'verbing of noun' for you.

Examples of Anthimeria

It's time that we should all have a good *sing*.

Don't worry. I'm *mapping* our progress.

Oh no, she will *architect* her own room.

Yeah, I am about halfway through. I have *milestoned* my life.

I am *cricketed* to the full.

Why don't you *gift* him a wig.

Ugh, they are *keyboarding* it all day long.

Table that article right now!

You never know. He might have *ploughed* her.

Yes, she's OK now. She just needed a good *cry*.

Isn't *weirding* language fun?

Antony and Cleopatra by William Shakespeare
Act II Scene V

Cleopatra:
"I'll unhair thy head."

King Lear by William Shakespeare
Act IV Scene VI

King Lear:
"When the rain came to
wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter; when
the thunder would not peace at my bidding; there

found ‘em, there I smelt ‘em out.”

Auxesis

Auxesis (og-zee-sis) is a kind of hyperbole in which a thing is exaggerated to produce an amplified effect. The word Auxesis in Greek means growth. Auxesis is mainly used for nouns unlike a hyperbole that can be used in anything for emphasis. It is the opposite of meiosis.

Hyperbole – His hands created America.

Auxesis – This is the world. (referring to America)

In auxesis, the speaker blew up a country and called it the world, whereas in hyperbole, the speaker gave a mammoth dimension to the work of a man, not the country itself.

Examples of auxesis

I have all the varieties of roses in my garden. (when you can see a couple of buds.)

I scored all the goals for my team. (when you know there was only one goal from their side)

In literature, auxesis can also be used by repeating a word and arranging them in an ascending order so that it gives the effect of a climax. Well, you can use any of the two techniques in writing.

Examples of auxesis in literature

Sonnet 65 by William Shakespeare
"Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea,
But sad mortality o'er-sways their power…"

Astrophel and Stella by Philip Sidney
Sonnet 47
"I may, I must, I can, I will, I do
Leaue following that which it is gain to misse."

Antonomasia

Antonomasia (an-to-no-maz-ya) is giving a proper name to something that has qualities associated with that name. For example – a philanderer can also be called Don Juan. Even the reverse of this, that is, using an epithet or a phrase for a proper noun, is also called antonomasia. For example – saying 'the little corporal' instead of Napoleon I.

The word antonomasia comes from Greek *antonomazein* meaning to 'name differently' or 'instead of'. It works both the ways, from proper name to general and visa versa.

In literature, this technique can be used to avoid naming a person (if controversial), to reduce repeating the name again and again or to denote the characteristics of a name to an individual by calling him by that name.

Examples of antonomasia

Tarzan - wild
Soloman – a wise man
Casanova – a philanderer
Beowulf – a myth
Rembrandt – an artist
Judas - Betrayer
Aristotle – a philosopher
Schwarzenegger - Arnie, The Austrian Oak, The Governator – tough
Cicero – orator
Gandhi – non-violence
Silicon Valley – where all the geeks go, high-tech hub
Beckham – footballer
Einstein – brainy

The other way around -

The Bard of Avon – William Shakespeare
The Iron Lady – Margaret Thatcher
The King of Pop – Michael Jackson
Son of Peleus – Achilles
The Comeback Kid – Bill Clinton

As for non-celebrities, a James Barrett can be his father, her husband, his son, her brother etc. That helps you get away from writing James Barrett every time.

Aphorism

Aphorism is a general truth or a deep observation expressed in a concise manner. The word aphorism comes from Greek *aphorismos* meaning to define.

Examples of aphorism
Children should be seen, not heard.
What doesn't kill you makes you stronger.
Artificial intelligence is no match for natural stupidity.
Better to say silent and be thought a fool than to open one's mouth and remove all doubt.
A conclusion is where you got tired of thinking.

Aphorisms by famous personalities

There are tones of voices that mean more than words." - Robert Frost

Man has been endowed with reason, with the power to create, so that he can add to what he's been given. - Anton Chekhov

Loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the most terrible poverty. - Mother Teresa

A lie told often enough becomes the truth. — Vladimir Lenin

Great minds discuss ideas. Average minds discuss events. Small minds discuss people. - Eleanor Roosevelt

Do not be too timid and squeamish about your actions. All life is an experiment. - Ralph Waldo Emerson

I shall pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again. - Mahatma Gandhi

To be or not to be, that is the question. – William Shakespeare

What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet. – William Shakespeare

Believe nothing you hear, and only half of what you see. — Mark Twain

Apostrophe (figure of speech)

When a speaker breaks his impassioned dialogue with another person and starts addressing a non-living, abstract thing like death, wind, heavens etc. then it's called apostrophe. In classics, the break mostly started with the letter O.

Apostrophe comes from Greek *apostrophé* meaning turning away. In apostrophe, the speaker turns away his dialogue from a living person to an abstraction.

Apostrophe in Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare

Act III Scene I

Antony:
Be it so.
I do desire no more.
Brutus:
Prepare the body then, and follow us.
Exeunt all but Antony
Antony:
O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth,
That I am meek and gentle with these butchers!
Thou art the ruins of the noblest man
That ever lived in the tide of times.
Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood!

And

Act III Scene II

Antony:
Mark how the blood of Caesar follow'd it,
As rushing out of doors, to be resolved
If Brutus so unkindly knock'd, or no;
For Brutus, as you know, was Caesar's angel:
Judge, O you gods, how dearly Caesar loved him!

Apostrophe in On A Certain Lady At Court by Alexander Pope

I know a thing that's most uncommon;
(Envy, be silent and attend!)
I know a reasonable woman,
Handsome and witty, yet a friend.

Apostrophe in Ode on a Grecian Urn by John Keats

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,

With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity.

Apostrophe in Leaves of Grass – Birds of Passage by Walt Whitman
…Could I wish the people made of wood and stone?
Or that there be no justice in destiny or time? …
O Liberty! O mate for me!
Here too the blaze, the grape-shot and the axe, in reserve, to fetch
them out in case of need…

Double Negative

When two negations are used in a sentence, then it's called double negative. In some languages and dialects, double negative is used to emphasize the positive while in others it is used to enforce the negative.

Double negative leading to a positive (Litotes)

Negative + Negative = Positive

For example:

Your work is not bad. (Your work is good.)

There isn't a day when he is not yelling. (He yells everyday.)

For more examples, check out litotes.

Double negative leading to a negative

Negative + Negative = Negative

The use of double negative in formal language is considered incorrect. 'I don't wanna go nowhere' will not sit well with Standard English. Instead, 'I don't wanna go anywhere' will be cool.

Double negatives are mostly used in American English, African American English and some dialects of colloquial English. If you have a character who is an African American, then using double negatives in his dialogues will help carve out his personality.

Examples of double negative

I ain't got none.

You can't take him nowhere.

He didn't get no sleep yesterday.

The pilot couldn't find nowhere to land.

We didn't have no rain this season.

I’m telling you, this love ain’t gonna last no more.

I ain’t heard nothing, man.

I didn’t see nobody.

You can’t do nothin’.

You ain’t seen nothing yet.

Double Negative in Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare
Act III Scene I
By innocence I swear, And by my youth
I have one heart, one bosom and one truth,
And that no woman has; *nor never none*
Shall mistress be of it, save I alone.

Double Negative in The Canterbury Tales by Chaucer
The Friar’s Portrait
…Curteis he was and lowely of servyse.
Ther nas *no man nowher* so vertuous

(Courteous he was and lovely of service.
There was no man nowhere so virtuous.)

And

The Knight’s Portrait
He *nevere yet no* vileynye ne sayde
In al his lyf…

(He never yet spoke with rudeness in all his life.)

Triple Negative

Triple negative is used rarely.

She ain’t never rode no horse.

I ain’t ne used no toothbrush.

No one shouldn’t ask nothing.

Epithet

An epithet is an adjective used to denote certain characteristics to a person or a thing. For example – That is a cheerful hello. In literature, adjectives for humans are used to describe things for creative purposes. For example – The restless night passed like a nightmare.

Examples of epithets

In the face of such a tragedy, his laughing happiness seemed queer.

Sitting by his side, I watched the peaceful dawn.

My careful steps reached the attic.

The idle road stretched for miles.

I had reached a delicate corner.

All I can say is that he had an honest end.

Her stifled laughter made everybody nervous.

Her depressing ways ruined her mother's health.

It was a sweet beginning to a tragic end.

Example of epithet in The Odyssey by Homer

Book one - Athena visits Ithaca

"I've come,
as you surmise, with comrades on a ship,
sailing across the wine-dark sea to men
whose style of speech is very different…"

Example of epithet in Lycidas by John Milton

"Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learn'd aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!"

Example of epithet in Ulysses by James Joyce

Episode 1

"God! he said quietly. Isn't the sea what Algy calls it: a great sweet

mother? The snotgreen sea. The scrotumtightening sea. Epi oinopa ponton. Ah, Dedalus, the Greeks! I must teach you. You must read them in the original. Thalatta! Thalatta! She is our great sweet mother. Come and look."

Example of epithet in the poem Beauty and Beauty by Rupert Brooke
"The earth is crying-sweet,
And scattering-bright the air,
Eddying, dizzying, closing round,
With soft and drunken laughter…"

In Blue Evening by Rupert Brooke
"My restless blood now lies a-quiver,
Knowing that always, exquisitely,
This April twilight on the river
Stirs anguish in the heart of me."

In The Great Lover by Rupert Brooke
"Now, ere the unthinking silence on that strife
Steals down, I would cheat drowsy Death so far,
My night shall be remembered for a star
That outshone all the suns of all men's days."

Example of epithet in the poem Bredon Hill by A.E. Housman
"Here of a Sunday morning
My love and I would lie,
And see the coloured counties,
And hear the larks so high
About us in the sky."

Euphemism

Euphemism is substituting a bad, unpleasant word for a good one. Words such as toilet, bullshit, forced death by poisoning, mad, shit, handicapped and dead are considered rude and unpleasant to hear so they are replaced with words like restroom, BS, lethal injection, mentally disturbed, defecate, physically challenged and no more, respectively. Euphemisms hide the gory picture behind such words to lessen the unpleasantness.

The origin of the word euphemism is from the Greek word *euphemo* meaning good speech.

Sometimes, abbreviations are used as euphemism.

Examples

SOB – Son of a bitch
Bra – Brazier
Execution – Lawful murder
Mal de mer (French) - Seasickness
Piss - Urinate
Groin – Genitals
Unplanned landing – Plane crash
Passed away, kicked the bucket, gone south, gone to heaven, passed on - Died
Executioner - Hangman
Chauffeur - Driver
Sleeping with, doing it - Having sex with
Substance abuse - Addiction
Break wind - Fart
Lose your lunch - Vomiting
House of ill repute - Brothel
Call of nature - Needing to go to the toilet
With child, knocked up - Pregnant
Laying off - Firing employees
Experiencing heavy casualties – soldiers being killed
Janitor - Caretaker, custodian
Senior - Old
Revenue enhancements - Tax increases
Ethnic cleansing - Genocide

Dysphemisms

Dysphemism is when a euphemism for a bad word itself becomes a bad word and needs another euphemism for it. For example, *crippled* became *handicapped*, but then handicapped also turned impolite, so another euphemism *physically challenged* came into being. This linguistic process is called pejoration.

When the euphemism becomes distasteful because it has taken on the negative characteristics of the actual word, then you need to coin another one. Simple.

Examples

Death camps - concentration camps – internment camps

Used – Second-hand – Pre-owned

Poor countries – Undeveloped countries - Third world countries

Hyperbole

In graduation, my heels gave competition to the Himalayas.

That's not me. That's a hyperbole. I was more of a tomboy with sports shoes. ☺

By definition, a hyperbole is a way of expressing the excess or exaggerating a thing to such an extent that it becomes unbelievable. Hyperboles are commonly used in literary fiction, drama and poetry.

As always, examples describe best.

Hyperbole in Drama

Hyperbole in Othello by William Shakespeare

"... On horror's head horrors accumulate;
Do deeds to make heaven weep, all earth amazed;
For nothing canst thou to damnation add
Greater than that."

Hyperbole in Much Ado About Nothing by William Shakespeare

"…*he is sooner caught than the pestilence*, and the taker
runs presently mad."

Hyperbole in Macbeth by William Shakespeare

"What hands are here? ha! they pluck out mine eyes.
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas in incarnadine,
Making the green one red."

Hyperbole in poetry

Hyperbole in Paradise Lost by John Milton

"…I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight *intends to soar*
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme."

Hyperbole in A Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock by T.S. Eliot

"…(They will say: "How his hair is growing thin!")
My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the chin,
My necktie rich and modest, but asserted by a simple pin--
(They will say: "But how his arms and legs are thin!")
Do I dare
Disturb the universe?"

Hyperbole in Concord Hymn by Ralph Waldo Emerson

"By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood
And fired the shot heard round the world."

Hyperbole in prose

Hyperbole in The Adventures of Pinocchio by C. Collodi

"He cried all night, and dawn found him still there, though his tears had dried and only hard, dry sobs shook his wooden frame. *But these were so loud that they could be heard by the faraway hills*…"

Hyperbole in The Hundred Years of Solitude by Gabriel Garcia Marquez

"*He was a fugitive from all the plagues and catastrophes that had ever lashed mankind*. He had survived pellagra in Persia, scurvy in the Malayan archipelago, leprosy in Alexandria, beriberi in Japan, bubonic plague in Madagscar, an earthquake in Sicily, and a disastrous shipwreck in the strait of Magellan."

Hyperbole in Moby-Dick by Herman Melville

"Next morning the not-yet-subsided sea rolled in long slow billows of mighty bulk, and striving in the Pequod's gurgling track, pushed her on like giants' palms outspread. The strong unstaggering breeze abounded so, that sky and air seemed vast outbellying sails; *the whole world boomed before the wind.*"

Hyperbole in To Kill A Mockingbird by Harper Lee

"A day was twenty-four hours long but seemed longer. *There was no hurry, for there was nowhere to go, nothing to buy and no money to buy it with, nothing to see outside the boundaries of Maycomb County.*"

A list of my hyperboles:

She nearly drowned in her tears.

The gaping hole would have swallowed an America.

I jumped up to the moon and came back till she finished her makeup.

If I were to become any richer, I would have bough a cloud.

Dullness spread to the core of the world when he opened his mouth.

Exhausted, I dropped down dead.

He is not a man; he's a giant, a titanic.

I lost my sense of humor in 127 B.C, to be precise.

Her beauty eclipsed the sun.

The sound of the shot echoed in the world.

The size of her diamond dictated her mood.

If her masks were to fall, it would fill the earth.

Her voice brought on earthquakes.

You are telling me this one hundred and two million times.

Hysteron proteron/Preposterous

Hysteron Proteron (latter first) is a rhetorical device in which the more prominent word or concept comes before the less important one.

> *For example – The thunder and the lightening dipped my spirits* or *Put on your shoes and socks.*

Everybody knows that lightening comes before thunder, and you put on socks before shoes, but sometimes words are arranged inversely depending on what you want to emphasize.

Examples of Hysteron Proteron

Hysteron Proteron in Antony and Cleopatra by William Shakespeare Act III Scene X

"The Antoniad, the Egyptian admiral,
With all their sixty, fly and turn the rudder."

Well, you can't fly before turning the rudder.

Hysteron Proteron in The Divine Comedy – Paradiso by Dante Alighieri Canto II

"Beatrice gazed upward and I gazed on her;
And in the time perhaps it takes an arrow
To strike the bull's-eye, fly, and leave the bow…"

Hysteron Proteron in The Indian Seranade by Persy Bysshe Shelley

"O lift me from the grass!
I die! I faint! I fail!"

Hysteron Proteron in Aeneid by Virgil

"Let us die, and rush into the midst of the fray."

Innuendo

An innuendo is a hint or a veiled pointer at a person or a thing. It is used to insult, humiliate, accuse, make fun of or act as a cover for sexual talk. Taken literally, an innuendo seems totally harmless. The use of an innuendo is always intentional. For example – He bit hard on the pillow to stop himself from moaning.

The word Innuendo comes from Latin *innuere* meaning to signal or suggest.

The use of sexual innuendo is widespread in movies, sitcoms and cartoons, and everywhere. It was Oscar Wilde who said, "What other type of innuendo is there?"

Innuendo on TV and Movies

Charlie's Angles: Full Throttle, The Wedding Singer, The Ex, Delta Farce, American Pie, Aladdin, The Little Mermaid, The Lion King, The Simpsons, Family Guy and Shinchin carry sexual innuendo.

Mild Innuendo in Literature

To his Coy Mistress by Andrew Marvell
"Now therefore, while the youthful hew
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing Soul transpires
At every pore with instant Fires,
Now let us sport us while we may;
And now, like am'rous birds of prey,
Rather at once our Time devour,
Than languish in his slow-chapt pow'r."

Ode to the West Wind by Persy Bysshe Shelley
"If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power…"

Irony

(see four major kinds of tropes and schemes at the very beginning of this e-book)

Litotes

It's quite simple. Litotes is a figure of speech in which a person uses a negative statement to enforce the positive. For example, saying *not bad* instead of *good*. It's really an understatement.

The word lilotes comes from Greek *litos* means simple, plain.

> Literary example of litotes in The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger
> "It isn't very serious. I have this tiny little tumor on the brain."

> Example of litotes in poetry - To His Coy Mistress by Andrew Marvell
> "The grave's a fine and private place,
> But none I think do there embrace."

> Example of litotes in Beowulf (author unknown)
> Episode 23
> "The hall he scanned.
> By the wall then went he; his weapon raised
> high by its hilts the Hygelac-thane,
> angry and eager. That edge was not useless
> to the warrior now."

A List of Litotes

It won't be easy to find crocodiles in the dark.

She's no idiot.

That's not a meager sum.

You're not doing badly.

That's no mean feat.

He is no Einstein.

It's not impossible.

(delightedly) I'm not unhappy.

She's not a bad writer at all.

Go ahead. The dog won't eat you.

He is not unlike his dad.

That's no small accomplishment.

He is not the kindest person I've met.

That is no ordinary boy.

He is not unaware of what you said behind his back.

That wasn't surprising. (with eyes rolling and a surprised expression. Imagine Chandler.)

You're not unattractive.

This is no minor matter.

The weather is not unpleasant at all.

She's no doll.

That was no small issue.

I have a few friends. (when you're standing with a dozen)

The city is not unclean.

Meiosis

Meiosis is a figure of speech in which a speaker intentionally understates something in order to lessen the effect of its largeness or acuteness. It is the opposite of auxesis. Meiosis comes from Greek *meioo* meaning to make smaller or lessen.

Examples of meiosis

He is a rhymester. (for a poet)

Shakespeare was a playwright of some genius.

There were no serious intentions behind it. It was a prank. (when a teenager fired two shots at his parents. Lucky, he missed.)

They must have faced some difficulty in building the pyramids.

Anybody can own a tiny island.

In democracy, a President is the people's puppet.

He is a bit lost at all times. (referring to a patient with chronic mental illness.)

The Spider and the Fly by Mary Howitt

"Will you walk into my parlour?" said the Spider to the Fly,
'Tis the prettiest little parlour that ever you did spy…"

Malapropism

Malapropism is substituting a word with an incorrect one with a similar sound for comic effect. Malapropism is unintentional on the part of the speaker and arises out of the speaker's limited vocabulary or confusion of words due to their similar sound.

The word malaprop comes from French *mal* à *propos* meaning inappropriate.

Malapropism came into being after the popularity of the humorous character of Mrs. Malaprop in the play *The Rivals* by Richard Brinsley Sheridan.

Malapropisms of Mrs. Malaprop in The Rivals by Richard Sheridan

"…the point we would request of you is, that you will promise to forget this fellow…to *illiterate* him, I say, quite from your memory." (obliterate)

"Make no *delusions* to the past." (allusions)

"He is the very *pineapple* of politeness." (pinnacle)

"I am sure I have done everything in my power since I *exploded* the affair." (exposed)

"…as headstrong as an *allegory* on the banks of Nile." (alligator)

"Don't attempt to *extirpate* yourself from the matter; you know I have proof *controvertible* of it!" (extricate, contrary)

"…she might *reprehend* the true meaning of what she is saying." (apprehend)

"Your being Sir Anthony's son, captain, would itself be a sufficient *accommodation*." (recommendation)

Malapropisms by Dogberry in Much Ado About Nothing by William Shakespeare

Act III Scene III

Dogberry:
First, who think you the most *desertless* man to be constable? (deserving)

Act III Scene V

Dogberry:

Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you that *decerns* you nearly. (concerns)

Act III Scene V
Dogberry:
Comparisons are *odorous*: palabras, neighbour Verges. (odious)

Act III Scene V
Dogberry:
One word, sir: our watch, sir, have indeed
Comprehend two *aspicious* persons, and we would
Have them this morning examined before your worship. (suspicious)

Act VI Scene II
Dogberry:
Is our whole *dissembly* appeared? (assembly)

Other Malapropisms

I won't *extract* revenge on anybody. (exact)

I had no *conclusion*. The bride escaped by the window. (illusion)

I will perform to the best of my *mobility*. (ability)

There is a general *dissension* in crime in my city. (descent)

Neologism

A neologism is a word or a phrase that has been newly created or 'coined'. The word neologism comes from French néologisme meaning new word. A change in the meaning of an existing word is also called neologism. For example: gay meant happy in the 19th century, but now it means a homosexual.

There has been a rainfall of neologisms after the recent technological changes, especially in the IT sector. Widgets, chat, e-mail, outsourcing, e-book, call-center, Internet, blog, website, WiFi, SMS, PageRank, MP3, mobile phone and hundreds other neologisms have been added to the English language.

Neologisms of the 19th century have now become a part of Standard English. In the same way, today's neologisms will become a part of the dictionaries of the 22nd century. As the world changes, so do words.

J.K Rowling came up with a few neologisms in her fantasy series Harry Potter. Words such as Muggles and Quittich have become so popular that they are now being used in day-to-day conversations.

Examples of Neologisms

Catch-22
Wardrobe malfunction
Blogger
Pseudo-presidentialism
Grok
Pupkus – the moisture on a glass surface when a dog presses its nose against it.
Scrooge
Webinar
Geek
.com
Shakespearized
AJAX
SERP
McDonaldization
Search
Sexaholism
ITunes
Doork – when you push the door when it's marked 'pull' and visa versa.

Protologism

A Protologism is an infant word that has not become public as yet. Protologism is the larva while neologism is the butterfly. As opposed to protologism, neologisms are words that have been used by people other than the author.

Oxymoron

The combination of contradictions is called an oxymoron. Silent scream, deafening silence, dark day, pretty ugly, darkness visible etc. are some oxymora. (oxymora: correct plural of oxymoron; not oxymorons)

Objective oxymoron

Those oxymora that use apparent contradictions like angry saint or bitter sweet are called objective oxymora. They are quite literal, without any hidden meanings.

A list of objective oxymoron

Cruel to be kind
Guns ‘n’ Roses
Abundant poverty
Old news
Alone together
Living dead
Sweet sorrow
Accurate estimate
Sad smile
Accidentally on purpose
Sublimely bad
Act naturally
Permanent change
Same difference
Desirable calamity
Holy war
Recent history
Wicked good
Chaste whore
Wise fool
Hellish paradise
Terribly popular
Diet ice cream
Organized mess
Icy hot
Eloquent silence
Proud humility
Pious hate
Serious fun
Cheerful pessimist

Despairing hope
Poor millionaire
Jumbo shrimp

Subjective or opinion oxymoron

In subjective oxymoron, the contradiction between two objects is a matter of opinion, like *Microsoft works*. As you can see the words do not contradict each other.

A list of subjective oxymoron

Army intelligence
Attentive husband
Honest lawyer
British fashion
Taped live
Government organization
Internet security
Postal service
Responsible government
Rap music
Domestic cat

Examples of Oxymoron in Literature

Oxymoron in A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare

"A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus
And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth.'
Merry and tragical! tedious and brief!
That is, hot ice and wondrous strange snow.
How shall we find the concord of this discord?"

Oxymoron in Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare

"Why, then, O brawling love! O loving hate!
O any thing, of nothing first create!
O heavy lightness! serious vanity!
Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire,
sick health!
Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!
This love feel I, that feel no love in this.
Dost thou not laugh?"

"Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.
Good night, good night! parting is such
sweet sorrow,
That I shall say good night till it be morrow."

Oxymoron in Hamlet by William Shakespeare

"I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night.
I must be cruel, only to be kind:
Thus bad begins and worse remains behind.
One word more, good lady."

Oxymoron in Julius Caesar by William Shakespare

"Tut, I am in their bosoms, and I know
Wherefore they do it: they could be content
To visit other places; and come down
With fearful bravery, thinking by this face
To fasten in our thoughts that they have courage;
But 'tis not so."

Oxymoron in Moby Dick by Herman Melville

"There are some enterprises in which a careful disorderliness is the true method."

Oxymoron in Paradise Lost by John Milton

"…As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames
No light; but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of woe…"

Oxymoron in Devotions Upon Urgent Occasions by John Donne

"And can the other world name so many venomous, so many consuming, so many monstrous creatures, as we can diseases of all these kinds? O miserable abundance, O beggarly riches! how much do we lack of having remedies for every disease, when as yet we have not names for them?"

Oxymoron in Lancelot and Elaine by Lord Tennyson

"…but now
The shackles of an old love straitened him,
His honour rooted in dishonour stood,
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true."

Oxymoron in An Essay on Criticism by Alexander Pope

"The bookful blockhead ignorantly read,
With loads of learned lumber in his head,
With his own tongue still edifies his ears,
And always list'ning to himself appears."

Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is a word that uses the imitation of a sound, thus hinting at its origin. Examples – meow (cat), beep (alarm), slam (door), croak (frog), pop (balloon) etc.

The word onomatopoeia originated from Greek *onomatopoiia* meaning to create.

Examples of Onomatopoeia

Quack	Bang
Zip	Crash
Purr	Snap
Wham	Creak
Tinkle	Slash
Growl	Gargle
Mumble	Chime
Hiss	Clap
Bam	Tick tock
Hoot	Zoom
Hush	Ouch
Vroom	Crackle
Hiccup	Whoosh
Buzz	Wheeze
Flutter	Swish
Thud	Crunch

Onomatopoeia in Poetry

Onomatopoeia in Morte D'Arthur by Lord Alfred Tennyson

"…Three Queens with crowns of gold--and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land…"

Onomatopoeia in The Highwayman by Alfred Noyes

"And he rode with a jeweled twinkle,
His pistol butts a-twinkle,
His rapier hilt a-twinkle, under the jeweled sky."

Onomatopoeia in The Bells by Edgar Allan Poe

"Hear the sledges with the bells
Silver bells!
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!"

Onomatopoeia in Essay on Criticism by Alexander Pope

But when loud Surges lash the sounding Shore,
The hoarse, rough Verse shou'd like the Torrent roar.
When Ajax strives, some Rocks' vast Weight to throw,
The Line too labours, and the Words move slow;
Not so, when swift Camilla scours the Plain,
Flies o'er th'unbending Corn, and skims along the Main.

Onomatopoeia in Honky Tonk in Clevelnad, Ohio by Carl Sandburg

"It's a jazz affair, drum crashes and cornet razzes.
The trombone pony neighs and the tuba jackass snorts.
The banjo tickles and titters too awful.
The chippies talk about the funnies in the papers."

Onomatopoeia in Shakespeare

The Tempest
Act I Scene II

"Then meet and join. Jove's lightnings, the precursors
O' the dreadful thunder-claps, more momentary
And sight-outrunning were not; the fire and cracks
Of sulphurous roaring the most mighty Neptune
Seem to besiege and make his bold waves tremble,
Yea, his dread trident shake."

Every language has its own onomatopoeia and variations of it. The same onomatopoeia can take different voices in different languages. For example, ancient Greeks called the croaking of the frog, *krax*, whereas in English it's called *croaking*.

In the same way, the beating of the heart is called *thump thump thump* in English while in Hindi it is *dhak dhak*. In Korea, the barking of a dog is called *meong meong* whereas in Russia it's *gaf gaf*.

Parable

A parable is a short fictitious narration with the aim of delivering a moral, religious or philosophical message. *Jesus of Nazreth*, *Parable of the Cave and the Sun in Plato's Republic*, *Parable of the Good Samaritan* are some of the examples of parable.

The word parable comes from Greek *paraballo* meaning to cast beside.

The narrative of the parable casts beside the moral lesson and uses extended metaphors that are easily understandable to the general public. The main aim of a parable is to teach people how to behave properly and live their life according to the teachings of the sacred scriptures. The meaning of a parable is partly evident and partly hidden.

Examples of Parable

The parable of the broken window by Frédéric Bastiat

The parables of Jesus

The Emperor's New Suit by Hans Christian Andersen
http://hca.gilead.org.il/emperor.html

Parable of the Prodigal Son

Paradox

A paradox is a statement or a theory that is self-contradictory in nature or leads to a contradiction without seeming to. For example – 'I tell lies only to truthful people.' Now, the speaker is telling a lie if he thinks the other person is a truthful person, but the speaker is telling the truth if he doesn't think of the other person a liar. Here, only the speaker knows what he thinks of the other person, so one can never know whether he is telling a lie or not. Sometimes a paradox leads to a conclusion and sometimes not.

The word paradox comes from Latin *Paradoxum* meaning contrary to opinion.

Examples of paradoxes

God exists.

None of the sentences in this pair is true.

This sentence is not true.

I always tell lies.

We must go to war to make peace.

I can resist anything except temptation – Oscar Wilde

Extreme rationalism, by 'seeing through' all 'rational' motives, leaves us creatures of wholly irrational behaviour. - C. S. Lewis

Each new power won by man (over nature) is a power over man as well. Each advance leaves him weaker as well as stronger. - C. S. Lewis

To believe with certainty we must begin with doubting. - King Stanislaw II

Freedom is not doing what you want, freedom is wanting to do what you have to do...this kind of freedom is always rooted in practiced habit. - Northrop Frye

Examples of Paradox in Literature

Paradox in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll

Chapter - A Mad Tea-Party

'Take some more tea,' the March Hare said to Alice, very earnestly.

`I've had nothing yet,' Alice replied in an offended tone, `so I can't take more.'
`You mean you can't take less,' said the Hatter: `it's very easy to take more than nothing.'
`Nobody asked your opinion,' said Alice.
`Who's making personal remarks now?' the Hatter asked triumphantly.

Paradox in Catch-22 by Joseph Heller
Chapter 5 – Chief White Halfoat
There was only one catch and that was Catch-22, which specified that a concern for one's own safety in the face of dangers that were real and immediate was the process of a rational mind. Orr was crazy and could be grounded. All he had to do was ask; and as soon as he did, he would no longer be crazy and would have to fly more missions. Orr would be crazy to fly more missions and sane if he didn't, but if he was sane he had to fly them. If he flew them he was crazy and didn't have to; but if he didn't want to he was sane and had to. Yossarian was moved very deeply by the absolute simplicity of this clause of Catch-22 and let out a respectful whistle.

And

Chapter 10 - Wintergreen
'That's just what I mean,' Dr. Stubbs answered. 'That crazy bastard may be the only sane one left.'

And

Chapter 16 – Luciana
'I will. I'll marry you.'
'Ma non posso sposarti.'
'Why can't you marry me?'
'Perche sei pazzo.'
'Why am I crazy?'
'Perche vuoi sposarmi.'
Yossarian wrinkled his forehead with quizzical amusement. 'You won't marry me because I'm crazy, and you say I'm crazy because I want to marry you? Is that right?'

Paradox in The Holy Sonnets – Death Be Not Proud by John Donne
"Death be not proud, though some have called thee
Might and dreadful . . .
. . . One short sleepe past, wee wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; death, thou shalt die."

If death is proud, then certainly it mustn't have died or defeated. If you read the whole sonnet, you will find that the paradox between the power and inevitability of death is put against the poet's wish to demean death by calling it a short sleep.

Paradox in Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare
Act I Scene V
"For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,

And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss."

Here, holiness is juxtaposed with physical love, which in itself is a paradox because holiness shuns physical love.

Paradox in 1984 by George Orwell
Chapter 1
"War is peace.
Freedom is slavery.
Ignorance is strength."

Circumlocution or Periphrasis

Circumlocution is the use of many words or indirect reference to express something instead of directly addressing it through minimum words. The word circumlocution originates from Latin *circumlocutio* meaning 'talking around'.

Circumlocution can be used intentionally for diplomatic purposes. Politicians are experts at using circumlocutions. For example – Some corrupt people who have the power to elect other corrupt people, are doing it. What he means is - The opposition is full of corrupt politicians.

Circumlocution can also be used in writing to create anticipation or a build-up for effect. For example Hamlet's dialogue with Queen Gertrude in the play Hamlet by Shakespeare

Act III Scene IV
"Such an act
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love
And sets a blister there, makes marriage-vows
As false as dicers' oaths: O, such a deed
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words: heaven's face doth glow:
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act."

Circumlocution is also used for comic effect. For example Falstaff's conversation with Hal in the play King Henry Part I by Shakespeare

Act I Scene II
"O, thou hast damnable iteration and art indeed able
to corrupt a saint. Thou hast done much harm upon
me, Hal; God forgive thee for it! Before I knew
thee, Hal, I knew nothing; and now am I, if a man
should speak truly, little better than one of the
wicked. I must give over this life, and I will give
it over: by the Lord, and I do not, I am a villain:
I'll be damned for never a king's son in
Christendom."

Circumlocution is also used while learning a new language. For example – knife: a sharp-edged tool you use to cut things.

It can be used as a euphemism; to talk about some private issues by avoiding the intimate words. For example Laertes' talk with Opherlia (his sister) in the play Hamlet by Shakespeare.

> Act I Scene III
> "Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
> If with too credent ear you list his songs,
> Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
> To his unmaster'd importunity."

Using circumlocution unconsciously is called wordiness. In it, a writer uses too many unnecessary words to express something that can be expressed in a few. For example – I was replacing the switch, but I couldn't. (I couldn't replace the switch.) Such kind of circumlocution is considered bad for writing.

Circumlocution is also used for politeness. For example – Could you please give me an idea of how long this meeting will continue? (In short, when will this meeting end?)

Examples of circumlocution

The Circumlocution Office (chapter 10) in Little Dorrit by Charles Dickens
The Circumlocution Office is a place of utter confusion where official work is passed around and around indefinitely. It is a satire on the efficiency of government offices.

Jonathan Swift in A Preface to the Bishop says: "…for my own part, I much prefer the plain Billingsgate way of calling names, because it expresses our meaning full as well, and would save abundance of time, which is lost by circumlocution…"

Antanaclasis pun and Polyptoton pun

(See four major types of tropes at the very beginning of the e-book)

Personification

Personification for Ornamentation

Revealing self-species-love, personification is an ontological metaphor in which you give human attributes to abstractions, inanimate objects, and any other living being except, of course, humans.

If horses were ruling, it would be like – “Gosh, these humans neigh all the time.”

Anyways, as we are ruling, why not see our country as mother, a forest as a beautiful enchantress or a train whistling in the dewy morn. Give them human qualities; make them feel!

Personification is different from anthropomorphism where human attributes are bestowed to non-living things, animals etc. A perfect example would be *Animal Farm* by George Orwell.

Personification allegory

You can also use personification to convert an object or a concept into a character.

That night, Death opened its loving arms and enveloped me in oblivion.

Here, death is Death; a character, a proper noun. This writing technique is known as personification allegory. It was mostly used in morality plays of medieval literature. A perfect example would be the play *Everyman* where all the characters are personifications. There is Everyman, Death, Messenger, Good Deeds, Goods, Cousin, God etc. Today, it sounds funny, but in those days it was fashion.

Today, personification allegory is hardly used, so we’ll leave it at that and get some examples of personification used for ornamentation.

Examples of Personification for Ornamentation

Personification in Paradise Lost by John Milton
“…Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar
Stood ruled, stood vast infinitude confined;
Till at his second bidding Darkness fled,
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung…”

“…the setting sun

Slowly descended, and with right aspect
Against the eastern gate of Paradise
Levelled his evening rays…"

Personification in To Autumn by John Keats

"Thee *(autumn)* sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers…"

Personification in Earth's Answer by William Blake

"Earth raised up her head
From the darkness dread and drear,
Her light fled,
Stony, dread,
And her locks covered with grey despair."

Personification in Once by the Pacific by Robert Frost

"The clouds were low and hairy in the skies,
Like locks blown forward in the gleam of eyes.
You could not tell, and yet it looked as if
The shore was lucky in being backed by cliff,
The cliff in being backed by continent…"

Personification in Because I could not stop for Death by Emily Dickinson

"Because I could not stop for Death,
He kindly stopped for me;
The carriage held but just ourselves
And Immortality."

Personification in The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock by T.S. Eliot

"The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes
Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,
Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,
And seeing that it was a soft October night,
Curled once about the house, and fell asleep."

Personification in The Railway Train by Emily Dickinson

"I like to see it lap the miles,
And lick the valleys up,
And stop to feed itself at tanks;
And then, prodigious, step

Around a pile of mountains,
And, supercilious, peer
In shanties by the sides of roads;
And then a quarry pare…"

Personification in Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare
"Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death,
Gorged with the dearest morsel of the earth,
Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,
And, in despite, I'll cram thee with more food!"

A list of my personifications

All the dogs stopped to stare at me.

I put coins into the box, and whoop; they double themselves.

My laptop hates petting.

They spear my country's heart with every injustice.

My pen is my constant companion.

The words conspired with each other and proposed a strike.

The burning lash of the sun, whipped the ovary-shaped town.

The heat swallowed towns and cities.

The clouds intervened between the blazing fire of the sun and the suffering citizens.

After a noiseless victory, the eternal sun regained his empire from the clouds, vanishing them altogether.

The afternoon held on to the heat like a massive weapon, scaring people from leaving their homes.

The burning wind blew across the town in frenzy.

The hot wind charged into the room from the window, stung Kesha on the cheek, then comfortably spread out like an unassuming guest.

Thousands of obese drops of water curtained the view.

In the other room, like a well-nourished pet, fear came galloping towards Amma and bit her hard.

Sitting in the dark room, an army of hatred collected in her heart.

Darkness and light rebelled against time.

Lovingly, death held her hand and she floated away into the white light.

Rhetorical question

Rhetorical question is a type of question that is used to emphasize emotions rather than expect an answer in reply. For example – "Gowd! When will you stop being so loud?" The aim here is to show that the speaker is immensely irritated by the other person's loudness.

Examples of rhetorical question

"Could you please polish my shoes," the brother requested.
"Yeah! Won't I?" replied the sister.

"How did she ever fell in love in such a stupid man?"

"Is it possible that contrary to all the hoopla we may have already lived out the high tide of our democracy?"

"Is that comedy or are you just used to making faces?"

"Has it been two years since we first met?"

"How's that?" or "Howzat!"

Examples of rhetorical question in Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare

Act III Scene II

Antony:
"Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?
When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept. . .
. . . I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse: was this ambition? . . .
. . . You all did love him once, not without cause:
What cause withholds you then, to mourn for him?"

Example of rhetorical question in King Lear by William Shakespeare

King Lear: But goes thy heart with this?
Cordelia: Ay, good my lord.
King Lear: So young, and so untender?

Zeugma and Syllepsis

Zeugma consists of a verb or a noun used to join two or more parts of a sentence. The meaning is mostly parallel, not startlingly out of place like in syllepsis.

The word Zeugma (pronounced as zoogmuh) comes from Greek *ζεύγμα* meaning yoke. Maybe from the yoke are hanging two buckets with two different meanings.

Nowadays, the difference between zeugma and syllepsis has disappeared. Syllepsis has merged into zeugma.

Example of Zeugma

Zeugma in The Rape Of The Lock by Alexander Pope

"Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law,
Or some frail china jar receive a flaw;
Or stain her honour, or her new brocade,
Forget her pray'rs, or miss a masquerade;
Or lose her heart, or necklace, at a ball;
Or whether Heav'n has doom'd that Shock must fall."

More zeugma

Lust conquered shame, boldness fear, madness reason.

As Virgil guided Dante through Inferno, the Sibyl Aeneas Avernus.

Zeugma is further broken down into sub-categories according to the place (beginning of a sentence, middle or end) of the connecting verb or sometimes noun.

Prozeugma or Synezeugmenon

Here, the connecting verb is found at the beginning of a sentence.

Riches vanished the strength of humility, clarity of perspective and simplicity of joy.

Her hopes drowned with it her belief in idealism, trust in heaven, certainty in goodness and purity of heart.

Mesozeugma

In mesozeugma, the connecting verb is in the middle of a sentence.

It was fearful how he was neither an alien, nor a human walking on two legs, neither a creepy insect, nor a handsome apparition.

Hypozeugma

As you can predict, here the connecting verb is at the end of a sentence.

"Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears." – William Shakespare in Julius Caesar

Diazeugma

In diazeugma, a noun connects two or more verbs. The subject may appear at the beginning or the middle of a sentence.

He threw a bomb and killed soldiers, maimed children, injured women and blinded men.

Syllepsis

Syllepsis is a kind of zeugma in which the clauses, which are usually added as a pun, do not stick to the sentence grammatically and ideologically. You can remember it as a union of incongruous elements. Syllepsis is mostly used to lend a comic or a satiric effect. For example - "If we don't hang together, we shall hang separately."

Examples of Syllepsis

Syllepsis in The Rape Of The Lock by Alexander Pope

"Here Thou, great Anna! whom three Realms obey,
Dost sometimes Counsel take—and sometimes Tea."

Syllepsis in The Importance Of Being Ernest by Oscar Wilde

Cecily:
"Oh, flowers are as common here, Miss Fairfax, as people
are in London."

Syllepis in The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien

"He carried a strobe light and the responsibility for the lives of his men."

And

"Than Khe, and he went down under an exceptional burden, more than 20 pounds of ammunition, plus the flak jacket and helmet and rations and water and toilet paper and tranquilizers and all the rest, plus an unweighed fear."

A list of syllepsis -

After he got drunk he shed his clothes and his manners.

She took God's name and drugs first thing in the morning.

A parlor utensil for subduing the impenitent visitor. It is operated by depressing the keys of the machine and the spirits of the audience.

The fire burned the house and the memory of her childhood.

Miss Bolo went home in a flood of tears and a sedan chair.

She lost her boyfriend and her mind.

At the burial, he closed the coffin and his heart.

She looked at the object with suspicion and a magnifying glass.

And now a rabble rages, now a fire.

She soon forgot her sorrows and me.

When she left, she waved goodbye to the house and happiness.

Our motives and the corpse have been uncovered.

I fancy you were gone down to cultivate matrimony and your estate in the country.

He carried a strobe light and the responsibility for the lives of his men.

Are you getting fit or having one? – From the T.V. program M*A*S*H

The queen of England sometimes takes advise in that chamber, and sometimes tea.

Truism

A truism is an observation that is taken as common knowledge and is widely acceptable. Some undeniable truths are also called truisms.

For example –

All men die.

There is no smoke without fire.

Satisfaction is its own reward.

All organisms reproduce.

Seeing is believing.

Examples of truism

"It is better to deserve honours and not have them than to have them and not to deserve them." - Mark Twain

"No question is so difficult to answer as that to which the answer is obvious." - George Bernard Shaw

A conclusion is the place where you got tired of thinking.

He who hesitates is probably right.

Half the people you know are below average.

Tricolon

A tricolon is a sentence in which there are three equal parts, usually independent clauses. For example: I came; I saw; I conquered. Tricolon is a powerful writing technique that is concise yet explanatory.

There are two types of tricolon, the ascending tricolon (tricolon crescens) and the descending tricolon (tricolon diminuens). In the ascending tricolon, the words increase with each pause; and in descending tricolon, the words lessen in length after every break.

Examples of tricolon

“A happy life is one spent in learning, earning, and yearning.”

“And if you can't kill him, I go kill him, and then I'm gonna kill you.”

“What I offer you is freedom;
Freedom from Arthur's tyrannical dream;
Freedom from Arthur's tyrannical law;
Freedom from Arthur's tyrannical God.”

“Ours is the age of substitutes: Instead of language we have jargon; instead of principles, slogans; and instead of genuine ideas, bright suggestions.” - Eric Bentley

Tricolon in Dirge without Music by Edna St. Vincent Millay

Down, down, down into the darkness of the grave
Gently they go, the beautiful, the tender, the kind;
Quietly they go, the intelligent, the witty, the brave.
I know. But I do not approve. And I am not resigned.

Zoomorphism

Zoomorphism is the attribution of animal characteristics or form to Gods. For example: Hanuman (the monkey god) in Indian mythology or the Holy Spirit represented as a dove in Christianity.

The use of animal figures in decoration, art or literature is also called zoomorphism. Also, seeing human behavior in terms of animal behavior is zoomorphism.

Examples of zoomorphism

Fenrir, the giant wolf, in Norse mythology.
All Egyptian Gods have heads of different animals or birds.
Ganesha, the Indian elephant-headed god.
That kid is as greedy as a dog.
You have the claws of a cat.
You are tall as a giraffe.
He is parrot-nosed.
Why are you barking?
You roar.
I can hear the roar of the storm.

Schemes

When there is a change in the usual order of words for rhetorical effect, then it's called a scheme. Schemes deal with word order, letters, syntax and sounds whereas trope deals with modifying the meaning of a word.

Scheme comes from Greek *schēma* meaning "form" or "shape".

Types of Schemes -

Anacoluthon
Anadiplosis
Anaphora
Antimetabole
Aposiopesis
Assonance
Asyndeton
Alliteration
Antithesis
Chiasmus
Elliptical construction
Epanalepsis
Epistrophe
Hendiadys
Hendiatris
Hypallage
Hyperbaton
I socolon
Paradiastole
Paraprosdokian
Parenthesis
Parallelism
Pleonasm
Polysyndeton
Spoonerism

Synonymia
Tautology
Tmesis

Anacoluthon

When there is a change in syntax within a sentence that leads to a jarring, broken effect, then it's called anacoluthon. When consciously used, it leads to unusualness, newness or excitement; when unconsciously used, it is considered ungrammatical and therefore incorrect. Anacoluthon is mostly used in dramatic monologue and stream of consciousness.

The word anacoluton comes from Greek *anakolouthon* meaning inconsistency in logic or not following on.

Examples of anacoluthon

Example of anacoluthon in King Lear by William Shakespeare
Act II Scene IV
"No, you unnatural hags,
I will have such revenges on you both,
That all the world shall--I will do such things…"

Example of anacoluthon in Lycidas by John Milton
Line 57
Had ye bin there — for what could that have don?

Example of anacoluthon in King Henry V by William Shakespeare
Act IV Scene III
"…That he which hath no stomach to this fight,
Let him depart…"

13th Prime Minister of Canada, John Diefenbaker said:
Agreements entered into when one state of facts exists — are they to be maintained regardless of changing conditions?

More anacolutha (plural of anacoluthon)

I told him liquor is bad for him, but does he listen?

Go bring me some cookies – stay before you go.

Anadiplosis

Repeating the same word(s) at the end of a sentence or a clause and in the beginning of the following sentence or clause is known as anadiplosis. For example: "The general who became a slave; the slave who became a gladiator; the gladiator who defied an Emperor." It's a good way to give rhythm to your writing.

The word anadiplosis comes from Greek *anadiplōsis* meaning repetition or to double.

Examples of anadiplosis

Example of anadiplosis in Richard II by William Shakespeare
Act V Scene I
"The love of wicked men converts to *fear*;
That *fear* to *hate*, and *hate* turns one or both
To worthy danger and deserved death."

Example of anadiplosis in Richard III by William Shakespeare
Act V Scene III
"My conscience hath a thousand several *tongues*,
And every *tongue* brings in a several *tale*,
And every *tale* condemns me for a villain."

Example of anadiplosis in An Irish Airman foresees his Death by William Butler Yeats
"The years to come seemed waste of breath,
A waste of breath the years behind
In balance with this life, this death."

Example of anadiplosis in The Isles of Greece by Lord Byron
"The mountains look on *Marathon*---
And *Marathon* looks on the sea…"

Example of anadiplosis in The Eve of St. Agnes by John Keats
XLI
"*They glide*, *like phantoms*, into the wide hall;
Like phantoms, to the iron porch, *they glide*…"

Anaphora

When the same word is used at the beginning of each clause, sentence or line; that's anaphora. It's a cousin of *anadiplosis*. For example:

"Singing the song of procreation,
Singing the need of superb children and therein superb grown people,
Singing the muscular urge and the blending…"
- Walt Whitman.

Anaphora has been used in poetry for centuries, especially by Elizabethan and Romantic poets. Anaphora creates parallelism, lends rhythm to the lines, and stresses the word or the phrase that is being repeated. It's a good way to intensify emotions in verse or prose by repeating a certain poignant emotion stanza (or para) after stanza.

The word anaphora comes from Greek meaning carrying back.

Examples of anaphora

Example of anaphora in The Tyger by William Blake

"What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?"

Example of anaphora in Birds of Passage (Leaves of Grass) by Walt Whitman

"*O you* daughters of the West!
O you young and elder daughters! *O you* mothers and you wives!
Never must you be divided, in our ranks you move united,
Pioneers! O *pioneers*!"

Example of anaphora in A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens Book I – Recalled to Life

It was the best of times, *it was* the worst of times, *it was* the age of wisdom, *it was* the age of foolishness, *it was* the epoch of belief, *it was* the epoch of incredulity, *it was* the season of Light, *it was* the season of Darkness, *it was* the spring of hope, *it was* the winter of despair…"

Example of anaphora in Richard II by William Shakespeare

Act II Scene I
This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This fortress built by Nature for herself…"

Example of anaphora in Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare
Act I Scene I
"*And do you now* put on your best attire?
And do you now cull out a holiday?
And do you now strew flowers in his way
That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood? Be gone!"

Example of anaphora in The Wasteland by T.S. Eliot
Part III – The Fire Sermon
"*Sweet Thames, run softly* till I end my song,
Sweet Thames, run softly, for I speak not loud or long."

Winston Churchill speech during the Second World War is another example of anaphora:

"*We shall* go on to the end, *we shall* fight in France,
we shall fight on the seas and oceans,
we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be,
we shall fight on the beaches,
we shall fight on the landing grounds,
we shall fight in the fields and in the streets,
we shall fight in the hills;
we shall never surrender…"

Antimetabole

Antimetabole is repeating the same words or phrase in reverse order. For example: "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." It's all right if the flipped second half differs a bit from its twin.

The word antimetabole comes from Greek meaning turning in the opposite direction.

Examples of antimetabole

Exact replication. Identical twins.
"*The absence of evidence* is not *the evidence of absence*."

A bit haywire. Non-identical twins
"We do not *stop playing* because *we* are *old*; *we* grow *old* because we *stop playing*."

Only two words repeated. Two girls born on the same day; not sisters.
"Just because you're *born* in *the slum* doesn't mean *the slum* is *born* in you"

Examples of antimetabole in Literature

Example of antimetabole in Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare

Act I Scene V
Clown:
"…give the dry fool drink, then is
the fool not dry: bid the dishonest man mend
himself; if he mend, he is no longer dishonest; if
he cannot, let the botcher mend him. Any thing
that's mended is but patched: virtue that
transgresses is but patched with sin; and sin that
amends is but patched with virtue."

Example of antimetabole in Rasselas by Samuel Johnson

Chapter 41
"Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful."

Example of antimetabole in the biography Life of Johnson by James Boswell

"Johnson having now explicitly avowed his opinion of Lord

Chesterfield, did not refrain from expressing himself concerning that nobleman with pointed freedom: 'This man (said he) I thought had been a Lord among wits; but, I find, he is only a wit among Lords!'”

Aposiopesis

When a speaker intentionally leaves a sentence incomplete, but says enough so that the hearer can guess what he would have said. For example: "Shut your trap or I'll…" The tone and expressions also count here, but in writing you'll have to do that through words.

Aposiopesis is used to show overcharged emotions such as anger, disgust, grief, despair, nervousness, fear, and can also be used while giving bad news. An aposiopesis doesn't always end with ellipsis.

The word aposiopesis comes from Greek meaning becoming silent.

Examples of aposiopesis

Example of aposiopesis in Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare
Act III Scene II
"…men have lost their reason. Bear with me;
My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,
And I must pause till it come back to me."

Example of aposiopesis in King Lear by William Shakespeare
Act II Scene IV
King Lear:
"I will have such revenge on you both,
That all the world shall - - I will do such things,
What they are, yet I know not: but they shall be
The terrors of the earth."

Example of aposiopesis in Aeneid by Virgil
Quos ego - ! (Such rebels I - !)

Shakespeare used aposiopesis masterfully in Hotspur's final speech. The incomplete words are then filled in by Prince Henry in the play King Henry IV (Part I).

Act V Scene IV
Hotspur
"O, I could prophesy,
But that the earthy and cold hand of death
Lies on my tongue: no, Percy, thou art dust
And food for – "
Dies

Prince Henry:
For worms, brave Percy: fare thee well, great heart!

Example of aposiopesis in Hamlet by William Shakespeare
Act I Scene II
Hamlet:
“A little month, or ere those shoes were old
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears:--why she, even she--
O, God!”

Assonance

Assonance is the repetition of vowel sounds in words that don't rhyme. For example: I blew the balloon with my tool. (repetition of the sound oo) The repetitions are placed close together to create a rhythm. This writing technique is usually used in verse.

Examples of assonance

Free - Eagle
High as a kite
Make – Braid
Sweep - Sleep
Fathom - Father
Moon – June
Free as a breeze
Mad as a Hatter
Crumbling thunder

Example of assonance in The Bells by Allan Edgar Poe
"Hear the mellow wedding-bells
Golden bells!"

Example of assonance in The Princess by Lord Alfred Tennyson
VII
"The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees."

Example of assonance in Frost at Midnight by Samuel Taylor Coleridge
Line 5
"Have left me to that solitude, which suits
Abstruser musings…"

Example of assonance in The Ballad of the Long-Legged Bait by Dylan Thomas
"The bows glided down, and the coast
Blackened with birds took a last look
At his thrashing hair and whale-blue eye;
The trodden town rang its cobbles for luck."

Example of assonance in Annabel Lee by Edgar Allan Poe
"…And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling- my darling- my life and my bride…"

Example of assonance in The Lady of Shalott by Lord Alfred Tennyson
"On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And thro' the field the road runs by
To many-tower'd Camelot…"

Asyndeton

When conjunctions (but, for, so, or, and) are done away with after every successive clause or phrase for effect, then it's called asyndeton. For example: I came; I saw; I conquered. It is the opposite of polysyndeton.

The word asyndeton comes from Greek *asyndetos* meaning not bound together.

Examples of asyndeton

We met, we got engaged, we married.

She is addicted to chocolates, cakes, cookies.

I could have gone to war, I didn't.

He tried to betray you, to cheat you, to deceive you.

Smile, talk, bye-bye.

He received applause, prizes, money, fame.

He provided her education, allowance, dignity.

> Example of asyndeton in Bleak House by Charles Dickens
> Chapter I – In Chancery
> "Dogs, undistinguishable in mire. Horses, scarcely better; splashed to their very blinkers. Foot passengers, jostling one another's umbrellas in a general infection of ill-temper…"

> Example of asyndeton in Mrs. Dalloway by Virginia Woolf
> "Listlessly, yet confidently, poor people all of them, they waited; looked at the Palace itself with the flag flying; at Victoria, billowing on her mound, admired her shelves of running water, her geraniums; singled out from the motor cars in the Mall first this one…"

> Example of asyndeton in The Scholar-Gypsy by Matthew Arnold
> Lines 151 - 153
> "Thou hast not lived, why should'st thou perish, so?
> Thou hadst one aim, one business, one desire;
> Else wert thou long since number'd with the dead!"

Example of asyndeton in Idylls of the King by Lord Alfred Tennyson
"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!"

Example of asyndeton in Her Kind by Anne Sexton
"I have found the warm caves in the woods,
filled them with skillets, carvings, shelves,
closets, silks, innumerable goods…"

Alliteration

When you repeat letters or consonants to create rhythm or harmony, that's called alliteration. Mostly used in poetry and songs, alliteration can be used to spice up your prose too. If you're writing in blank verse, then alliteration is a good technique to give your poetry a cadence. Media uses alliterations A LOT.

Repeating letters in *Beowulf* (author unknown)

"Then, one after one, there woke to him,
to the chieftain of clansmen, children four:
Heorogar, then Hrothgar, then Halga brave;
and I heard that -- was --'s queen,
the Heathoscylfing's helpmate dear."

Repeating consonants in *Come Down, O Maid* by Lord Alfred Tennyson

"But cease to move so near the Heavens, and cease
To glide a sunbeam by the blasted Pine,
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire…"

Although alliteration is the repetition of single letter sounds, some writers repeat words and phrases to get the same effect.

Repeating words in *Tintern Abbey* by William Wordsworth

"Five years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters!"

Repeating phrases in *Tommy* by Rudyard Kipling

"…But it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins", when the band begins to play,
The band begins to play, my boys, the band begins to play,
O it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins", when the band begins to play.

Other examples of alliteration (including repetition of words and phrases) It's not always good to stick by the rules.

Alliteration in The Man with a Hoe by Edwin Markham

"Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?
Whose was the hand that slanted back this brow?
Whose breath blew out the light within this brain?

Alliteration in The Thorn by William Wordsworth
"Like rock or stone, it is o'ergrown,
With lichens to the very top,
And hung with heavy tufts of moss,
A melancholy crop…"

Alliteration in King Henry V by William Shakespeare
"Where that his lords desire him to have borne
His bruised helmet and his bended sword…"

"Thus with imagined wing our swift scene flies
In motion of no less celerity
Than that of thought."
(The chorus sings these lines.)

Alliteration in Moby Dick by Herman Melville
"Um, um, um. Stop that thunder! Plenty too much thunder up here. What's the use of thunder? Um, um, um. We don't want thunder; we want rum; give us a glass of rum. Um, um, um!"

Alliteration in London by William Blake
"In every cry of every man,
In every infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forged manacles I hear…"

Alliteration in The Highwayman by Alfred Noyes
"They had tied her up to attention, with many a sniggering jest;
They had bound a musket beside her, with the barrel beneath her breast!"

Alliteration in Long I Thought that Knowledge from Leaves of Grass by Walt Whitman
"…But now take notice, land of the prairies, land of the south savannas, Ohio's land,
Take notice, you Kanuck woods—and you Lake Huron—and all that with you roll
Toward Niagara—and **you** Niagara also…"

Antithesis

Antithesis is the bringing together of contrasting words, clauses or sentences to show the contradictoriness of an idea. Heaven is the antithesis of hell, but if you say (or John Dryden does) "too black for heaven, and yet too white for hell," then you're using an antithesis.

A fictional character can also be an antithesis to another if it has directly opposite qualities to another. Remember Dorothy Gale and the Wicked Witch of the West in The Wonderful Wizard of Oz? That's Good vs Evil, a faded antithesis.

The word Antithesis originated from Greek *antitithenai* where *antithé* means to oppose or set against.

Antithesis in Julius Caeser by William Shakespeare
Act III Scene II

"Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved
Rome more. Had you rather Caesar were living and
die all slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live
all free men?"

Antithesis in Othello by William Shakespeare

I follow him to serve my turn upon him:
We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
Cannot be truly follow'd.

Antithesis in Richard III by William Shakespeare

"And if King Edward be as true and just
As I am subtle, false and treacherous…"

Antithesis in The Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens
Chapter I

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way…"

Antithesis in Rasselas by Samual Johnson

The astronomer discovers the cause of his uneasiness

Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful.

Antithesis in Howards End by E.M. Forster

“Death destroys a man: the idea of Death saves him … Death is his foe, but his peer, and in their age-long struggle the thews of Love have been strengthened, and his vision cleared, until there is no one who can stand against him.”

Antithesis in Life by Kahlil Gibran

“Life without rebellion is like the seasons without spring,
and rebellion without rights is like spring in a barren desert.”

Chiasmus

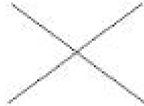
Chiasmus is creating a parallel by inverting the grammatical structure of the second clause of a sentence. You can repeat letters, words or whole phrases. For example: "A wit with dunces, and a dunce with wits." Here, the structure is AB – BA (wit dunce – dunce wit).

The structure can get more complex with ABC – CBA.

For example:
"Whoever sheds the blood of man,
by man shall his blood be shed..."
(sheds, blood, man – man, blood, shed)

The word chiasmus comes from Greek *khiasmos* meaning crossing. The "chi" of chiasmus comes from Greek meaning "crisscross" (X).

Quitters never win.



Winners never quit.

Chiasmus is different from *antimetabole* in that it doesn't always repeat words in both the clauses.

Examples of chiasmus:

"Never let a *fool kiss* you or a *kiss fool* you."

"Ask not what your *country* can do for *you*, but what *you* can do for your *country*." - JFK

"He's boring when he's funny, it's fine when he's bored."

"At home, the great are small and the small are great."

"...it's not the men in your life that counts, it's the life in your men."

Example of chiasmus in Macbeth by William Shakespeare
Act I Scene I
The three witches:

“Fair is foul, and foul is fair…”

Example of chiasmus in Othello by William Shakesperae
Act III Scene III
“…Who dotes, yet doubts, suspects, yet strongly loves!”

Here, “doubts” and “suspects”, and “dotes” and “strongly loves” can be read as the same emotion.

Example of chiasmus in The Vanity of Human Wishes by Samuel Johnson
Line 324
“…By day the frolic, and the dance by night…”

Example of chiasmus in Essay on Man by Alexander Pope
Epistle 1, Part II
“…His time a moment, and a point his space…”

Elliptical construction

An elliptical construction is a sentence in which certain word(s) are deliberately omitted because they seem too obvious and can easily be understood from the context. For example: I am taller than he (is).

Examples of elliptical construction

You are smarter than I (am).

She doesn't like her as much as (she likes) me.

He plays much better than I (do).

Is he older than I (am)?

Fire when (you are) ready.

If he can't read, how can I (read)?

He received all the praise, I (received) none.

Example of elliptical construction in Walden by Henry David Thoreau
Chapter II – Where I lived, and what I lived for
"Instead of three meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one; instead of a hundred dishes, five; and reduce other things in proportion."

Example of elliptical construction in The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams
"My callers were gentlemen-all!"

Epanalepsis

Repetition of words in the beginning and the end of a clause or a sentence is called epanalepsis. This figure of speech is used for emphasis and rhythm.

The word epanalepsis comes from Greek meaning repetition or resumption.

Examples of Epanalepsis

"Control, you must learn control."

"A lie begets a lie."

"Next time there won't be a next time."

"Common sense is not so common."

"The king is dead, long live the king."

Example of epanalepsis in Drum-Taps (Leaves of Grass) by Walt Whitman
"And the sturdy artillery,
The guns bright as gold, the work for giants, to serve well the guns,..."

Example of epanalepsis in Macbeth by William Shakespeare
Act III Scene IV
"It will have blood; they say, blood will have blood:"

Example of epanalepsis in Lycidas by John Milton
"*Weep no more*, woeful shepherds *weep no more*,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead…"

Example of epanalepsis in Itylus by Algernon Charles Swinburne
First two lines
"Swallow, my sister, O sister swallow,
How can thine heart be full of the spring?"

Example of epanalepsis in The Gift Outright by Robert Frost
"Possessing what we still were unpossessed by,

Possessed by what we now no more possessed."

Epistrophe

Epistrophe, also called epiphora, is a rhetorical scheme in which emphasis is put on the last word(s) of a clause, phrase or a sentence by repeating it. For example: The government is of the people, by the people and for the people.

The word epistrophe comes from Greek *epistrephein* meaning upon turning (turning to the same sound at the end).

Examples of epistrophe

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us." – Ralph Waldo Emerson

"When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child." – 1 Corinthians 13

Example of epistrophe in The Tempest by William Shakespeare
Act IV Scene I
"Hourly joys be still upon you!
Juno sings her blessings upon you."

Example of epistrophe in Paradise Lost by John Milton
Book I
Lines 105-106
"What though the field be lost?
All is not lost…"

Example of epistrophe in The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia by Sir Philip Sidney
Book III – Chapter 23
"…all that day and night he did nothing, but weepe Philoclea, sigh Philoclea, and crie out Philoclea…"

Example of epistrophe in Gift from the Sea by Anne Morrow Lindbergh
"Perhaps this is the most important thing for me to take back from beach-living: simply the memory that each cycle of the tide is valid, each cycle of the wave is valid, each cycle of a relationship is valid."

Hendiadys

When two nouns are used with a conjunction (storm *and* rain) instead of combining them as an adjective and a substantive (stormy rain), it's called hendiadys. This figure of speech is used for emphasis. Most of the time, you see an adjective turned into a noun, as in the case above.

The word hendiadys comes from Greek *hen dia dyoin* meaning "one through two". It's kind of splitting it up.

Examples of hendiadys

Despite the *alarm and fear*, he quickly accepted the challenge.

His *voracity and appetite* scared me.

The show went on despite of *wind and weather*.

38. they are the abstracts and brief chronicles of the time
39. The expectancy and rose of the fair state
40. And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
41. and the very age and body of the time
42. his form and pressure
43. So far from cheer and from your former state
from your former cheerfulness
44. That live and feed upon your majesty
live by feeding
45. But in our circumstance and course of thought
as far as we mere mortals can judge
46. That blurs the grace and blush of modesty
the innocent (blushing) grace of a modest young woman
47. Yea, this solidity and compound mass
solid compound mass (the earth)

This numbered list has been taken from http://mrshakespeare.typepad.com/mrshakespeare/2007/05/hendiadys.html.

Example of hendiadys in Hamlet by William Shakespeare
Act I Scene IV – Line 43
"*Angels and ministers* of grace defend us!"

Example of hendiadys in Othello by William Shakespeare
Act I Scene I – Lines 183-185

"Is there not charms
By which the property of *youth and maidhood*
May be abused?"

Example of hendiadys in Macbeth by William Shakespeare
Act V Scene V – Lines 29-31
"…it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of *sound and fury*,
Signifying nothing."

Hendiatris

When three words, parted by a comma, are used to express one idea, then it's a hendiatris. Hendiatris is unlike *hendiadys* where two words are used to express an idea. This figure of speech uses words that give off a certain common characteristic. For example: wine, women and song. These three point towards a certain lifestyle and also towards the character of the person who leads it.

The word hendiatris comes from Greek meaning one through three.

Examples of hendiatris

We *sat, ate and drank*.

The thieves took his *lock, stock and tomahawk*.

Those were the times of sex, drugs and rock 'n Roll.

We demand liberty, equality and fraternity. (motto of the French Revolution)

He could see that I was humbled, hungry and dehydrated.

Veni vidi vici. (I came; I saw; I conquered)

The thought that struck me as I entered was the formlessness, darkness and emptiness of the room.

Our history was made from blood, sweat and tears.

It is our right to have peace, land and bread.

Our God, Country and King need us. (Personally, I think it dogmatic.)

We are towards relief, recovery and reform.

The unity, justice and freedom is being threatened.

Example of hendiatris in The Lay of the last Minstrel by Sir Walter Scott

"To the vile dust from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung."

Example of hendiatris in Through the Looking Glass by Lewis Caroll

“The rule is, jam tomorrow and jam yesterday – but never jam today.”

Hypallage

Hypallage is a rhetorical scheme in which the syntactic relation between two words is inverted for effect. For example: "The smell has brought the well-known breezes." – Virgil. Without all the shifting, the sentence would have been – Breezes have brought the well-known smell.

The word hypallage comes from Greek *hypallagē* meaning "interchange".

Examples of hypallage

"A mind is a terrible thing to waste." (To waste a mind is a terrible thing.)

"Darksome wandering by the solitary night." (Solitary wandering by the darksome night.)

"to give winds to the fleets" – Aeneid (to give the fleets to the winds)

Example of hypallage in Henry V by William Shakespeare

Act IV Scene III
King Henry V:
"…Our gayness and our gilt are all besmirch'd
With rainy marching in the painful field…"

(With painful marching in the rainy field.)

Example of hypallage in A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare

Act IV Scene I
Bottom:
"The eye
of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not
seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue
to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream
was."

Example of hypallage in Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard by Thomas Gray

3rd line
"The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me."

Hyperbaton

When words that belong to one another logically are separated for effect, then it's called hyperbaton. The word hyperbaton comes from Greek □*πέρβατον* meaning transposition.

Examples of Hyperbaton

"You I love." (I love you)

"It's cheese I like." (I like cheese)

"To you I owe everything." (I owe everything to you)

"…roared the sea." (the sea roared)

Example of hyperbaton in Othello by William Shakespeare
Act V Scene II
"Yet I'll not shed her blood,
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow
And smooth as monumental alabaster."

Example of hyperbaton in The Tempest by William Shakespeare
Act V Scene I
Epilogue
"As you from crimes would pardon'd be,
Let your indulgence set me free."

Example of hyperbaton in The Rape of the Lock by Alexander Pope
"Bright as the Sun, her Eyes the Gazers strike,
And, like the sun, they shine on all alike."

Example of hyperbaton in The Tell-Tale Heart by Allan Edgar Poe
"It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain; but once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man."

Example of hyperbaton in Paradise Lost by John Milton
Book II
"…Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd

To that bad eminence; and from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
Vain Warr with Heav'n…"

Isocolon

When two or more clauses of the same length are used to create parallelism, then it's called isocolon. For example: Many enter; few win. A common kind of isocolon is tricolon, in which three equal parts are used for parallelism. The famous "I came; I saw; I conquered" is an isocolon and specifically a tricolon.

The word isocolon comes from Greek *isokolon* meaning equal member or same clause.

Examples of isocolon

"Glory is fleeting, but obscurity is forever." – Napoleon Bonaparte

"The louder he talked of his honor, the faster we counted our spoons. – Ralph Waldo Emerson

"First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win." – Mahatma Gandhi

"Forgive your enemies, but never forget their names." – John F. Kennedy

> Example of isocolon in A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man by James Joyce
> Chapter 5
> Pity is the feeling which arrests the mind in the presence of whatsoever is grave and constant in human sufferings and unites it with the human sufferer. Terror is the feeling which arrests the mind in the presence of whatsoever is grave and constant in human sufferings and unites it with the secret cause.

> Example of isocolon in the play Cymbeline by William Shakespeare
> Act IV Scene II
> Guiderius:
> No exorciser harm thee!
>
> Arviragus:
> Nor no witchcraft charm thee!
>
> Guiderius:
> Ghost unlaid forbear thee!
>
> Arviragus:
> Nothing ill come near thee!

Example of isocolon in Ulysseus by Lord Alfred Tennyson
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!

Example of isocolon in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell by William Blake
Proverbs of Hell
The pride of the peacock is the glory of God.
The lust of the goat is the bounty of God.
The wrath of the lion is the wisdom of God.
The nakedness of woman is the work of God.
Excess of sorrow laughs. Excess of joy weeps.

Paradiastole

Paradiastole is the use of a *euphemism* to turn a negative characteristic into a positive one. For example, saying "curvy" instead of "fat". Paradiastole can be used for politeness, diplomacy, irony, and as a way to defend something or somebody.

The word paradiastole comes from Greek *παραστολη* meaning beyond sending.

Examples of paradiastole

Guts – Shamelessness
Frugal – Stingy
Unsociable – Loner
Craftiness – Hypocrisy
Freedom fighter – Terrorist
Foresight – Scheming
Caution - Slyness
Slightly severe – Cruel
Courageous – Furious
Unique - Cheap

Paraprosdokian

Paraprosdokian is a figure of speech where the latter part of a sentence twists in such an unexpected way that you are forced to read the former again to make sense of it. This rhetorical technique is used to surprise the reader, for introducing novelty and to emphasize an idea.

For example:
"If you are going through hell, keep going." – Winston Churchill

Here, 'keep going' has made us look at 'going through hell' with new eyes. The clichéd response to 'going through hell', which is of sympathy, has been changed into that of persistence. Obviously, you won't like to stop when you are going through hell. There is also a pun intended.

Example of paraprosdokian

"One must have a heart of stone to read the death of little Nell without laughing." – Oscar Wilde

"He was at his best when the going was good." – Alistair Cooke on The Duke of Windsor

"I belong to no organized party. I am a Democrat." – Will Rogers

"Stately swept he along, and under his feet were his chilblains (ulcers). – Aristotle

"There but for the grace for God, goes God." – Winston Churchill

"Where there is a will, I want to be in it."

"When the going gets tough, you quit."

"There is nothing in this world that can't be done, without money."

"I ran and ran and ran from the murderers till mom shook me awake."

"I want to die peacefully in my sleep like my father, not screaming and terrified like his passengers." – Bob Monkhouse

The car stopped on a dime, which unfortunately was in a pedestrian's pocket.

Parenthesis (rhetoric)

Parenthesis is an explanatory word(s) that interrupts the grammatical flow of a sentence through brackets, commas or dashes. For example: She told me, *as she told everyone else*, that she's moving to Australia. For some reason, the speaker here makes sure to include everyone else to cut out any misunderstanding. That's the role of parenthesis in this sentence.

The word parenthesis comes via Late Latin from Greek *parentithenai* meaning "alongside of" or "to place".

Examples of Parenthesis

He came at night, *at precisely 10:25*, to ask for you.

Dogs have (*like every other predator*) the killer instinct.

Him I must speak to – *if I can* – today itself.

Would you, *Kris*, listen to me?

"The sinews of war are five — men, money, materials, maintenance (food) and morale." – Ernest Hemmingway

Example of parenthesis in Hamlet by William Shakespeare
Act II Scene II
"I would fain prove so. But what might you think,
When I had seen this hot love on the wing --
As I perceived it, *I must tell you that*,
Before my daughter told me--what might you,
Or my dear majesty your queen here, think…"

Example of parenthesis in The Remains of the Day by Kazuo Ishiguro
Day Two – Afternoon
Mortimer's Pond, Dorset
Around the beginning of second page
What I am trying to say – and I do not think this an unfair comment – is that we were a much more idealistic generation.

Example of parenthesis in Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad
Chapter One
Page 44 in Wordsworth edition

"I've had to resist and to attack sometimes – that's only one way of resisting – without counting the exact cost, according to the demands of such sort of life as I had blundered into."

Example of Great Expectations by Charles Dickens
Chapter 2
Page 10 in Penguin
"She concluded by throwing me – I often served as a connubial missile – at Joe, who, glad to get hold of me on any terms, passed me on into the chimney and quietly fenced me up there with his great leg."

Parallelism

Parallelism is when certain word(s), clauses or phrases are structured similarly to give the sentence a distinct pattern. For example: I came; I saw; I conquered. Parallelism is mostly used for comparison. As the structure of the phrases or the words is almost identical, we are made aware of the distinctiveness of the content or its similarity.

The word parallelism comes from Greek meaning 'beside one another".

Examples of parallelism

He sang, he danced, he slipped.

Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country. - J.F.K.

I love my job, my family and myself.

For success, you need to aim high, to explore possibilities and to practice hard.

The more we do, the more we can do. – William Hazlitt

A little sincerity is a dangerous thing, a great deal of it is absolutely fatal. – Oscar Wilde

"The inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of blessing; the inherent virtue of socialism is the equal sharing of miseries." – Windsor Churchill

"It is by logic we prove, but by intuition we discover." - Leonardo da Vinci

"One friend in a lifetime is much, two are many, three are hardly possible." – Henry Brooks Adams

> Parallelism in Critical, Historical and Miscellaneous Essays by Lord Macaulay
> (on John Milton)
> "*We charge him with having* broken his coronation oath; and *we* are told that he kept his marriage vow! *We accuse him of having* given up his people to the merciless inflictions of the most hot-headed and hard-hearted of prelates …"

Pleonasm

Pleonasm is the use of extra words to explain the meaning or to get across an idea. This redundancy helps in emphasis, clarifying a complex idea and in explaining a concept. The word pleonasm comes from Greek *pleonasmos* meaning "excess".

Examples of pleonasm

Win a *free gift*.
That is the *real truth*.
I was *thinking in my mind*…
I saw him do it with my *own eyes*.
I am repeating it again.
The little child took my hand.
"At this moment in time…" (instead of 'now') – President Nixon
You both will get one each.
Let everybody gather together.

Example of pleonasm in Paradise Lost by John Milton
Book 8
Lines 331-333

"From that day mortal, and this happie State
Shalt loose, expell'd from hence into a World
Of woe and sorrow."

Example of pleonasm in Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare
Act III Scene II
Lines 192-196

"Judge, O you gods, how dearly Caesar loved him!
This was the most unkindest cut of all;
For when the noble Caesar saw him stab,
Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,
Quite vanquish'd him…"

Example of pleonasm in The Hawks of Hawk-Hollow by Robert Montgomery Bird

"And if he wore a mask in his commerce with men, it was like that iron one of the Bastile, which when put on, was put on for life, and was at the same time of iron,"

Polysyndeton

When conjunctions (and, or, but, so, yet, for) are used in close succession even when they are not required, then it's called polysyndeton. It is usually used for emphasis and rhythm. For example: He came *and* bowed *and* laughed *and* dropped into a chair.

The word polysyndeton comes from Greek *polysyndetos* meaning "bound together".

Examples of polysyndeton

Example of polysyndeton in Ulysseus by James Joyce

The last lines

I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes *and* then he
asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes.

Example of polysyndeton in The Merchant of Venice by William Shakespeare

Act I Scene I
Lines 20-22

"…Peering in maps for ports *and* piers *and* roads;
And every object that might make me fear
Misfortune to my ventures…"

Example of polysyndeton in In Another Country by Ernest Hemingway

"There was much game hanging outside the shops, and the snow powdered in the fur of the foxes and the wind blew their tails. The deer hung stiff and heavy and empty, and small birds blew in the wind and the wind turned their feathers. It was a cold fall and the wind came down from the mountains."

Example of polysyndeton in Me Imperturbe by Walt Whitman

"Me toward the Mexican Sea, or in the Mannahatta, or the Tennessee, or far north, or inland,
A river man, or a man of the woods, or of any farm-life in These States, or of the coast, or the lakes, or Kanada…"

Example of polysyndeton in Ode to a Grecian Urn by John Keats

"What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these?"

Example of polysyndeton in Prometheus Unbound by Percy B. Shelley
Scene II
"And each dark tree that ever grew,
Is curtained out from Heaven's wide blue;
Nor sun, nor moon, nor wind, nor rain,
Can pierce its interwoven bowers…"

Spooneerism

In a spoonerism, the initial sound of a word is interchanged with another word that leads to the creation of a humorous sentence. For example: You all are tons of soil. (sons of toil) In writing, spoonerisms are created consciously for humor.

Spoonerism is named after Rev. William Archibald Spooner (1844 to 1930) who was Warden of New College, Oxford. Due to his supposed speech problem (slip of the tongue), he would accidentally create funny and sometimes strange sentences. Although Spooner was the originator of spoonerisms, many of the spoonerisms attributed to him before have now been declared apocryphal.

Examples of spoonerisms

“Which of us has not felt in his heart a half-warmed fish?” (half-formed wish)

“Have you any signifying glasses?” (magnifying)

“The weight of rages will press hard upon the employer.” (rate of wages)

“Kinquering congs their titles take.” (Conquering kings)

“It is kisstomary to cuss the bride.” (customary to kiss)

“Go and shake a tower.” (take a shower)

“The Lord is a shoving leopard.” (loving shepherd)

“Let us raise our glasses to the queer old Dean. (dear old queen)

“You have hissed all my mystery lectures.” (missed all my history)

“Is the bean dizzy?” (dean busy)

“a blushing crow.” (crushing blow)

“this stink puff.” (pink stuff)

“well-boiled icicle.” (well-oiled bicycle)

“Iceland’s greasy mountains.” (Greenland’s icy mountains)

“You’ll soon be had as a matter of course.” (mad as a Hatter of course)

“When the boys come home from France, we’ll have hags flung out.” (flags hung out)

“What am I to tell this audience of beery wenches?” (weary benches)

“Having tasted two worms, you will leave by the next town drain.” (Having wasted two terms, you will leave by the next down train.”

“Mardon me, padam, this pie is occupewed. Can I sew you to another sheet?” (Pardon me, madam, this pew is occupied. Can I show you to another seat?)

Synonymia

When several synonyms are used in quick succession to heighten the emotional effect or to clarify a piece, then it's called synonymia. The word synonymia comes from Greek *synonoma* meaning "name alike".

Examples of synonymia

Example of synonymia in Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare
Act I Scene I
Lines 34-36
"What tributaries follow him to Rome,
To grace in captive bonds his chariot-wheels?
You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!"

Example of synonymia in Macbeth by William Shakespeare
Act II Scene III
Lines 123-125
"You are, and do not know't:
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopp'd; the very source of it is stopp'd."

And

Act III Scene IV
Lines 25-29
"I had else been perfect,
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,
As broad and general as the casing air:
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears."

And

Act I Scene VI
Lines 20-21
"All our service
In every point twice done and then done double…"

Tautology

Tautology is the unnecessary repetition of an idea by using different words. For example: “free gift”. As gift is offered without expecting anything in return, it is free. But to highlight “free”, it is used again with gift, which makes it a tautological statement.

The word tautology comes from Late Latin *tautologia* and from Greek *tautologos* meaning “same word”.

Examples of tautology

Dry desert
Joint cooperation
New innovation
Added bonus
Reiterate again
Widow woman
First priority
11 pm at night
Win great gifts!

Tautology in Multiple Languages

Sometimes, tautology is created due to the use of multiple languages. This one is a bit tricky because the words when translated change meaning. It also depends on what a certain word has come to mean to the local people. Those who know different languages and also understand the local influences can only understand this kind of tautology.

Examples:

Chai tea (Chai means tea in Hindi)
Pizza Pie (Pizza means pie in Italian)

Tautology in Acronyms

PIN number (Personal Identification Number)
ATM machine (Automated Teller Machine)
GPS system (Global Positioning System)
HIV virus (Human Immunodeficiency Virus)
R.S.V.P. please. (Respondez, s’il vous plait meaning “respond please”)

Tmesis

When a word is broken up into two by another word, then it’s called tmesis (TMEEsis). For example: La-dee-freaking-da. This figure of speech is used to create a linguistic effect or for humor. The word tmesis comes from Greek *temnein* meaning “to cut”.

Examples of tmesis

Fan-blooming-tastic

Here appear after

What place soever

What man soever

Abso-bloody-lutely

I’m-possible

See-By God-through

She is Miss Shapen

As-freaking-tounding

Un-bloody-believable

Hoo-blasted-ray

Safety gold pins

Stu-shucks-pendous

Sen-fuckin’-sational

Example of tmesis in Richard II by William Shakesperae
Act V Scene III
Lines 34-36
“Intended or committed was this fault?
If on the first, how heinous e'er it be, (however heinous)
To win thy after-love I pardon thee.”

Example of tmesis in Troilus and Cressida by William Shakespeare
Act III Scene III
Lines 100-101
"A strange fellow here
Writes me: 'That man, how dearly ever parted..." (dearly parted)

...

....

For any questions, comments, suggestions, advice or blabber, do write to me at: shruti@literayzone.com. Also, you can visit my website: www.literaryzone.com for tips on fiction writing, editing, short stories, novel and everything related to fiction writing. I hope you enjoyed my e-book. Ciao!