

## Rhetorical Devices

**1. A Sentential Adverb** is a single word or short phrase, usually interrupting normal syntax, used to lend emphasis to the words immediately proximate to the adverb. (We emphasize the words on each side of a pause or interruption in order to maintain continuity of the thought.) Compare:

- But the lake was not drained before April.
- But the lake was not, in fact, drained before April.

In the second sentence, the words *not* and *drained* are naturally stressed by the speaker or reader in order to keep the thought in mind while entertaining the interruption.

**2. Asyndeton** consists of omitting conjunctions between words, phrases, or clauses. In a list of items, asyndeton gives the effect of a natural character, rather than a measured list or count:

- On his return he received medals, honors, treasures, titles, fame.

The lack of the "and" conjunction gives the impression that the list is perhaps not complete. Compare:

- She likes pickles, olives, raisins, dates, pretzels.
- She likes pickles, olives, raisins, dates, and pretzels.

Sometimes an asyndetic list is useful for the strong and direct climactic effect it has, much more emphatic than if a final conjunction were used. Compare:

- They spent the day wondering, searching, thinking, understanding.
- They spent the day wondering, searching, thinking, and understanding.

**3. Polysyndeton** is the use of a conjunction between each word, phrase, or clause, and is thus structurally the opposite of asyndeton. The rhetorical effect of polysyndeton, however, often shares with that of asyndeton a feeling of multiplicity, energetic enumeration, and building up.

- They read and studied and wrote and drilled. I laughed and played and talked and flunked.

**4. Understatement** deliberately expresses an idea as less important than it actually is, either for ironic emphasis or for politeness and tact. When the writer's audience can be expected to know the true nature of a fact which might be rather difficult to describe adequately in a brief space, the writer may choose to understate the fact as a means of employing the reader's own powers of description. For example, instead of endeavoring to describe in a few words the horrors and destruction of the 1906 earthquake in San Francisco, a writer might state:

- The 1906 San Francisco earthquake interrupted business somewhat in the downtown area.

The effect is not the same as a description of destruction, since understatement like this necessarily smacks of flippancy to some degree; but occasionally that is a desirable effect.

**5. Litotes**, a particular form of understatement, is generated by denying the opposite or contrary of the word which otherwise would be used. Depending on the tone and context of the usage, litotes either retains the effect of understatement, or becomes an intensifying expression. Compare the difference between these statements:

- Heat waves are common in the summer.
- Heat waves are not rare in the summer.

**6. Parallelism** is recurrent syntactical similarity. Several parts of a sentence or several sentences are expressed similarly to show that the ideas in the parts or sentences are equal in importance. Parallelism also adds balance and rhythm and, most importantly, clarity to the sentence.

Any sentence elements can be paralleled, any number of times (though, of course, excess quickly becomes ridiculous). You might choose parallel subjects with parallel modifiers attached to them:

- Ferocious dragons breathing fire and wicked sorcerers casting their spells do their harm by night in the forest of Darkness.

**7. Chiasmus** might be called "reverse parallelism," since the second part of a grammatical construction is balanced or paralleled by the first part, only in reverse order. Instead of an A,B structure (e.g., "learned unwillingly") paralleled by another A,B structure ("forgotten gladly"), the A,B will be followed by B,A ("gladly forgotten"). So instead of writing, "What is learned unwillingly is forgotten gladly," you could write, "What is learned unwillingly is gladly forgotten." Similarly, the parallel sentence, "What is now great was at first little," could be written chiasmically as, "What is now great was little at first." Here are some examples:

- He labors without complaining and without bragging rests.

- Polished in courts and hardened in the field, Renowned for conquest, and in council skilled. --Joseph Addison
- For the Lord is a Great God . . . in whose hand are the depths of the earth; the peaks of the mountains are his also. --Psalm 95:4

**8. Zeugma** includes several similar rhetorical devices, all involving a grammatically correct linkage (or yoking together) of two or more parts of speech by another part of speech.

- Fred excelled at sports; Harvey at eating; Tom with girls.
- Alexander conquered the world; I, Minneapolis.

**9. Antithesis** establishes a clear, contrasting relationship between two ideas by joining them together or juxtaposing them, often in parallel structure. Human beings are inveterate systematizers and categorizers, so the mind has a natural love for antithesis, which creates a definite and systematic relationship between ideas:

- To err is human; to forgive, divine. --Pope
- That short and easy trip made a lasting and profound change in Harold's outlook.
- That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind. --Neil Armstrong

**10. Anaphora** is the repetition of the same word or words at the beginning of successive phrases, clauses, or sentences, commonly in conjunction with climax and with parallelism:

- To think on death it is a misery,/ To think on life it is a vanity;/ To think on the world verily it is,/ To think that here man hath no perfect bliss. --Peacham
- In books I find the dead as if they were alive; in books I foresee things to come; in books warlike affairs are set forth; from books come forth the laws of peace. --Richard de Bury
- She stroked her kitty cat very softly, very slowly, very smoothly.

**11. Epistrophe** (also called antistrophe) forms the counterpart to anaphora, because the repetition of the same word or words comes at the end of successive phrases, clauses, or sentences:

- Where affections bear rule, there reason is subdued, honesty is subdued, good will is subdued, and all things else that withstand evil, for ever are subdued. --Wilson
- And all the night he did nothing but weep Philoclea, sigh Philoclea, and cry out Philoclea. --Philip Sidney
- You will find washing beakers helpful in passing this course, using the gas chromatograph desirable for passing this course, and studying hours on end essential to passing this course.

**12. Anadiplosis** repeats the last word of one phrase, clause, or sentence at or very near the beginning of the next. It can be generated in series for the sake of beauty or to give a sense of logical progression:

- Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know,/ Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain . . . --Philip Sidney

Most commonly, though, anadiplosis is used for emphasis of the repeated word or idea, since repetition has a reinforcing effect:

- They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. --Jer. 2:13
- The question next arises, How much confidence can we put in the people, when the people have elected Joe Doax?
- This treatment plant has a record of uncommon reliability, a reliability envied by every other water treatment facility on the coast.
- In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. --John 1:1

Notice how the main point of the sentence becomes immediately clear by repeating the same word twice in close succession. There can be no doubt about the focus of your thought when you use anadiplosis.

**13. Conduplicatio** resembles anadiplosis in the repetition of a preceding word, but it repeats a *key word* (not just the last word) from a preceding phrase, clause, or sentence, at the beginning of the next.

- If this is the first time duty has moved him to act against his desires, he is a very weak man indeed. Duty should be cultivated and obeyed in spite of its frequent conflict with selfish wishes.
- The strength of the passions will never be accepted as an excuse for complying with them; the passions were designed for subjection, and if a man suffers them to get the upper hand, he then betrays the liberty of his own soul. --Alexander Pope
- She fed the goldfish every day with the new pellets brought from Japan. Gradually the goldfish began to turn a brighter orange than before.

Like anadiplosis, conduplicatio serves as an effective focusing device because with it you can pull out that important idea from the sentence before and put it clearly at the front of the new sentence, showing the reader just what he should be concentrating on. Since keeping the reader focused on your train of thought is critical to good writing, this device can be especially helpful as a transitional connector when the previous sentence has two or more possible main points, only one of which is to be continued in the discussion.

**14. Epanalepsis** repeats the beginning word of a clause or sentence at the end. The beginning and the end are the two positions of strongest emphasis in a sentence, so by having the same word in both places, you call special attention to it:

- Water alone dug this giant canyon; yes, just plain water.
- To report that your committee is still investigating the matter is to tell me that you have nothing to report.

Many writers use epanalepsis in a kind of "yes, but" construction to cite common ground or admit a truth and then to show how that truth relates to a more important context:

- Our eyes saw it, but we could not believe our eyes.
- The theory sounds all wrong; but if the machine works, we cannot worry about theory.
- In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world. --John 16:33 (NASB)

**15. Hypophora** consists of raising one or more questions and then proceeding to answer them, usually at some length. A common usage is to ask the question at the beginning of a paragraph and then use that paragraph to answer it:

- There is a striking and basic difference between a man's ability to imagine something and an animal's failure. . . . Where is it that the animal falls short? We get a clue to the answer, I think, when Hunter tells us . . . . --Jacob Bronowski
- What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter?. . . What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God. --Rom. 4:1,3 (NIV)

This is an attractive rhetorical device, because asking an appropriate question appears quite natural and helps to maintain curiosity and interest.

**16. Rhetorical question** (erotesis) differs from hypophora in that it is not answered by the writer, because its answer is obvious or obviously desired, and usually just a yes or no. It is used for effect, emphasis, or provocation, or for drawing a conclusionary statement from the facts at hand.

- But how can we expect to enjoy the scenery when the scenery consists entirely of garish billboards?
- . . . For if we lose the ability to perceive our faults, what is the good of living on? --Marcus Aurelius
- Is justice then to be considered merely a word? Or is it whatever results from the bartering between attorneys?

**17. Procatlepsis**, by anticipating an objection and answering it, permits an argument to continue moving forward while taking into account points or reasons opposing either the train of thought or its final conclusions. Often the objections are standard ones:

- It is usually argued at this point that if the government gets out of the mail delivery business, small towns like Podunk will not have any mail service. The answer to this can be found in the history of the Pony Express . . . .
- To discuss trivialities in an exalted style is, as the saying is, like beautifying a pestle. Yet some people say we should discourse in the grand manner on trivialities and they think that this is a proof of outstanding oratorical talent. Now I admit that Polycrates [did this]. But he was doing this in jest, . . . and the dignified tone of the whole work was itself a game. Let us be playful..... [but] also observe what is fitting in each case . . . . --Demetrius

**18. Metabasis** consists of a brief statement of what has been said and what will follow. It might be called a linking, running, or transitional summary, whose function is to keep the discussion ordered and clear in its progress:

- Such, then, would be my diagnosis of the present condition of art. I must now, by special request, say what I think will happen to art in the future. --Kenneth Clark
- We have to this point been examining the proposal advanced by Smervits only in regard to its legal practicability; but next we need to consider the effect it would have in retarding research and development work in private laboratories.
- I have hitherto made mention of his noble enterprises in France, and now I will rehearse his worthy acts done near to Rome. --Peacham

**19. Distinctio** is an explicit reference to a particular meaning or to the various meanings of a word, in order to remove or prevent ambiguity.

- To make methanol for twenty-five cents a gallon is impossible; by "impossible" I mean currently beyond our technological capabilities.
- The precipitate should be moved from the filter paper to the crucible quickly--that is, within three minutes.
- Mr. Haskins describes the process as a simple one. If by simple he means easy to explain on paper, he is correct. But if he means there are no complexities involved in getting it to work, he is quite mistaken.
- The modern automobile (and here I refer to the post-1975, desmogged American car) is more a product of bolt-on solutions than of revolutionary engineering.

**20. Amplification** involves repeating a word or expression while adding more detail to it, in order to emphasize what might otherwise be passed over. In other words, amplification allows you to call attention to, emphasize, and expand a word or idea to make sure the reader realizes its importance or centrality in the discussion.

- In my hunger after ten days of rigorous dieting I saw visions of ice cream--mountains of creamy, luscious ice cream, dripping with gooey syrup and calories.
- This orchard, this lovely, shady orchard, is the main reason I bought this property.

**21. Scesis Onomaton** emphasizes an idea by expressing it in a string of generally synonymous phrases or statements. While it should be used carefully, this deliberate and obvious restatement can be quite effective:

- We succeeded, we were victorious, we accomplished the feat!
- Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that deal corruptly. --Isaiah 1:4
- But there is one thing these glassy-eyed idealists forget: such a scheme would be extremely costly, horrendously expensive, and require a ton of money.
- Wendy lay there, motionless in a peaceful slumber, very still in the arms of sleep.
- May God arise, may his enemies be scattered, may his foes flee before him. --Psalm 68:1 (NIV)

Scesis onomaton does have a tendency to call attention to itself and to be repetitive, so it is not used in formal writing as frequently as some other devices. But if well done, it is both beautiful and emphatic.

**22. Apophasis** (also called praeteritio or occupatio) asserts or emphasizes something by pointedly seeming to pass over, ignore, or deny it. This device has both legitimate and illegitimate uses. Legitimately, a writer uses it to call attention to sensitive or inflammatory facts or statements while he remains apparently detached from them:

- We will not bring up the matter of the budget deficit here, or how programs like the one under consideration have nearly pushed us into bankruptcy, because other reasons clearly enough show . . . .
- Therefore, let no man talk to me of other expedients: of taxing our absentees . . . of curing the expensiveness of pride, vanity, idleness, and gaming of learning to love our country . . . .--Jonathan Swift
- If you were not my father, I would say you were perverse. --*Antigone*
- I will not even mention Houdini's many writings, both on magic and other subjects, nor the tricks he invented, nor his numerous impressive escapes, since I want to concentrate on . . . .
- She's bright, well-read, and personable--to say nothing of her modesty and generosity.

**23. Metanoia** (correctio) qualifies a statement by recalling it (or part of it) and expressing it in a better, milder, or stronger way. A negative is often used to do the recalling:

- Fido was the friendliest of all St. Bernards, nay of all dogs.
- The chief thing to look for in impact sockets is hardness; no, not so much hardness as resistance to shock and shattering.

**24. Aporia** expresses doubt about an idea or conclusion. Among its several uses are the suggesting of alternatives without making a commitment to either or any:

- I am not sure whether to side with those who say that higher taxes reduce inflation or with those who say that higher taxes increase inflation.
- I have never been able to decide whether I really approve of dress codes, because extremism seems to reign both with them and without them.

Such a statement of uncertainty can tie off a piece of discussion you do not have time to pursue, or it could begin an examination of the issue, and lead you into a conclusion resolving your doubt.

**25. Simile** is a comparison between two different things that resemble each other in at least one way. In formal prose the simile is a device both of art and explanation, comparing an unfamiliar thing to some familiar thing (an object, event, process, etc.) known to the reader.

When you compare a noun to a noun, the simile is usually introduced by *like*:

- I see men, but they look like trees, walking. --Mark 8:24
- After such long exposure to the direct sun, the leaves of the houseplant looked like pieces of overcooked bacon.
- The soul in the body is like a bird in a cage.

**26. Analogy** compares two things, which are alike in several respects, for the purpose of explaining or clarifying some unfamiliar or difficult idea or object by showing how the idea or object is similar to some familiar one.

While simile and analogy often overlap, the simile is generally a more artistic likening, done briefly for effect and emphasis, while analogy serves the more practical end of explaining a thought process or a line of reasoning or the abstract in terms of the concrete, and may therefore be more extended.

- You may abuse a tragedy, though you cannot write one. You may scold a carpenter who has made you a bad table, though you cannot make a table. It is not your trade to make tables. --Samuel Johnson
- He that voluntarily continues ignorance is guilty of all the crimes which ignorance produces, as to him that should extinguish the tapers of a lighthouse might justly be imputed the calamities of shipwrecks. --Samuel Johnson
- . . . For answers successfully arrived at are solutions to difficulties previously discussed, and one cannot untie a knot if he is ignorant of it. --Aristotle

**27. Metaphor** compares two different things by speaking of one in terms of the other. Unlike a simile or analogy, metaphor asserts that one thing *is* another thing, not just that one is like another. Very frequently a metaphor is invoked by the *to be* verb:

Affliction then is ours; / We are the trees whom shaking fastens more. --George Herbert

- Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life." --John 6:35 [And compare the use of metaphor in 6:32-63]
- Thus a mind that is free from passion is a very citadel; man has no stronger fortress in which to seek shelter and defy every assault. Failure to perceive this is ignorance; but to perceive it, and still not to seek its refuge, is misfortune indeed. --Marcus Aurelius
- The mind is but a barren soil; a soil which is soon exhausted and will produce no crop, or only one, unless it be continually fertilized and enriched with foreign matter. --Joshua Reynolds

**28. Catachresis** is an extravagant, implied metaphor using words in an alien or unusual way. While difficult to invent, it can be wonderfully effective:

- I will speak daggers to her. --*Hamlet* [In a more futuristic metaphor, we might say, "I will laser-tongue her." Or as a more romantic student suggested, "I will speak flowers to her."]

One way to write catachresis is to substitute an associated idea for the intended one (as Hamlet did, using "daggers" instead of "angry words"):

- "It's a dentured lake," he said, pointing at the dam. "Break a tooth out of that grin and she will spit all the way to Duganville."

**29. Synecdoche** is a type of metaphor in which the part stands for the whole, the whole for a part, the genus for the species, the species for the genus, the material for the thing made, or in short, any portion, section, or main quality for the whole or the thing itself (or vice versa).

- Farmer Jones has two hundred head of cattle and three hired hands.

Here we recognize that Jones also owns the bodies of the cattle, and that the hired hands have bodies attached.

This is a simple part-for-whole synecdoche. Here are a few more:

- If I had some wheels, I'd put on my best threads and ask for Jane's hand in marriage.
- The army included two hundred horse and three hundred foot.
- It is sure hard to earn a dollar these days.
- Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. --Genesis 2:7

**30. Metonymy** is another form of metaphor, very similar to synecdoche (and, in fact, some rhetoricians do not distinguish between the two), in which the thing chosen for the metaphorical image is closely associated with (but not an actual part of) the subject with which it is to be compared.

- The orders came directly from the White House.

In this example we know that the writer means the President issued the orders, because "White House" is quite closely associated with "President," even though it is not physically a part of him. Consider these substitutions, and notice that some are more obvious than others, but that in context all are clear:

- You can't fight city hall.
- This land belongs to the crown.
- In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread . . . . --Genesis 3:19
- Boy, I'm dying from the heat. Just look how the mercury is rising.
- His blood be on us and on our children. --Matt. 27:25
- The checkered flag waved and victory crossed the finish line.
- Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

**31. Personification** metaphorically represents an animal or inanimate object as having human attributes-- attributes of form, character, feelings, behavior, and so on. Ideas and abstractions can also be personified.

- The ship began to creak and protest as it struggled against the rising sea.
- We bought this house instead of the one on Maple because this one is more friendly.
- This coffee is strong enough to get up and walk away.
- I can't get the fuel pump back on because this bolt is being uncooperative.
- Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. --Genesis 4:10b (NIV)

**32. Hyperbole**, the counterpart of understatement, deliberately exaggerates conditions for emphasis or effect. In formal writing the hyperbole must be clearly intended as an exaggeration, and should be carefully restricted. That is, do not exaggerate everything, but treat hyperbole like an exclamation point, to be used only once a year. Then it will be quite effective as a table-thumping attention getter, introductory to your essay or some section thereof:

- There are a thousand reasons why more research is needed on solar energy.

Or it can make a single point very enthusiastically:

- I said "rare," not "raw." I've seen cows hurt worse than this get up and get well.

**33. Allusion** is a short, informal reference to a famous person or event:

- You must borrow me Gargantua's mouth first. 'Tis a word too great for any mouth of this age's size. -- Shakespeare
- If you take his parking place, you can expect World War II all over again.
- Plan ahead: it wasn't raining when Noah built the ark. --Richard Cushing

**34. Eponym** substitutes for a particular attribute the name of a famous person recognized for that attribute. By their nature eponyms often border on the cliché, but many times they can be useful without seeming too obviously trite. Finding new or infrequently used ones is best, though hard, because the name-and-attribute relationship needs to be well established. Consider the effectiveness of these:

- Is he smart? Why, the man is an Einstein. Has he suffered? This poor Job can tell you himself.
- You think your boyfriend is cheap. I had a date with Scrooge himself last night.
- We all must realize that Uncle Sam is not supposed to be Santa Claus.
- An earthworm is the Hercules of the soil.

**35. Oxymoron** is a paradox reduced to two words, usually in an adjective-noun ("eloquent silence") or adverb-adjective ("inertly strong") relationship, and is used for effect, complexity, emphasis, or wit:

- I do here make humbly bold to present them with a short account of themselves and their art.....-- Jonathan Swift
- The bookful blockhead, ignorantly read, / With loads of learned lumber in his head . . . .--Alexander Pope
- Senator Rosebud calls this a useless plan; if so, it is the most helpful useless plan we have ever enacted.
- The cost-saving program became an expensive economy.

**36. Epithet** is an adjective or adjective phrase appropriately qualifying a subject (noun) by naming a key or important characteristic of the subject, as in "laughing happiness," "sneering contempt," "untroubled sleep," "peaceful dawn," and "lifegiving water." Sometimes a metaphorical epithet will be good to use, as in "lazy road," "tired landscape," "smirking billboards," "anxious apple." Aptness and brilliant effectiveness are the key considerations in choosing epithets. Be fresh, seek striking images, pay attention to connotative value.

**37. Hyperbaton** includes several rhetorical devices involving departure from normal word order. One device, a form of inversion, might be called *delayed* epithet, since the adjective follows the noun. If you want to amplify the adjective, the inversion is very useful:

- From his seat on the bench he saw the girl content-content with the promise that she could ride on the train again next week.

But the delayed epithet can also be used by itself, though in only a relatively few cases:

- She had a personality indescribable.
- His was a countenance sad.

Some rhetoricians condemn delayed epithet altogether in formal writing because of its potential for abuse. Each case must be tested carefully, to make sure it does not sound too poetic:

- His was a countenance friendly.
- These are rumors strange.

**38. Parenthesis**, a final form of hyperbaton, consists of a word, phrase, or whole sentence inserted as an aside in the middle of another sentence:

- But the new calculations--and here we see the value of relying upon up-to-date information--showed that man-powered flight was possible with this design.
- Every time I try to think of a good rhetorical example, I rack my brains but--you guessed--nothing happens.
- But in whatever respect anyone else is bold (I speak in foolishness), I am just as bold myself. --2 Cor. 11:21b (NASB)

**39. Alliteration** is the recurrence of initial consonant sounds. The repetition can be juxtaposed (and then it is usually limited to two words):

- Ah, what a delicious day!
- Yes, I have read that little bundle of pernicious prose, but I have no comment to make upon it.
- Done well, alliteration is a satisfying sensation.

**40. Onomatopoeia** is the use of words whose pronunciation imitates the sound the word describes. "Buzz," for example, when spoken is intended to resemble the sound of a flying insect. Other examples include these: slam, pow, screech, whirr, crush, sizzle, crunch, wring, wrench, gouge, grind, mangle, bang, blam, zap, fizz, urp, roar, growl, blip, click, whimper, and, of course, snap, crackle, and pop. Note that the connection between sound and pronunciation is sometimes rather a product of imagination ("slam" and "wring" are not very good imitations). And note also that written language retains an aural quality, so that even unspoken your writing has a sound to it. Compare these sentences, for instance:

- Someone yelled, "Look out!" and I heard the skidding of tires and the horrible noise of bending metal and breaking glass.
- Someone yelled "Look out!" and I heard a loud screech followed by a grinding, wrenching crash.

**41. Apostrophe** interrupts the discussion or discourse and addresses directly a person or personified thing, either present or absent. Its most common purpose in prose is to give vent to or display intense emotion, which can no longer be held back:

- O value of wisdom that fadeth not away with time, virtue ever flourishing, that cleanseth its possessor from all venom! O heavenly gift of the divine bounty, descending from the Father of lights, that thou mayest exalt the rational soul to the very heavens! Thou art the celestial nourishment of the intellect . . . .  
--Richard de Bury
- O books who alone are liberal and free, who give to all who ask of you and enfranchise all who serve you faithfully! -- Richard de Bury

**42. Enthymeme** is an informally-stated syllogism which omits either one of the premises or the conclusion. The omitted part must be clearly understood by the reader. The usual form of this logical shorthand omits the major premise:

- Since your application was submitted before April 10th, it will be considered. [Omitted premise: All applications submitted before April 10 will be considered.]
- He is an American citizen, so he is entitled to due process. [All American citizens are entitled to due process.]

**43. Climax** (gradatio) consists of arranging words, clauses, or sentences in the order of increasing importance, weight, or emphasis. Parallelism usually forms a part of the arrangement, because it offers a sense of continuity, order, and movement-up the ladder of importance. But if you wish to vary the amount of discussion on each point, parallelism is not essential.

- At 6:20 a.m. the ground began to heave. Windows rattled; then they broke. Objects started falling from shelves. Water heaters fell from their pedestals, tearing out plumbing. Outside, the road began to break up. Water mains and gas lines were wrenched apart, causing flooding and the danger of explosion. Office buildings began cracking; soon twenty, thirty, forty stories of concrete were diving at the helpless pedestrians panicking below.
- To have faults is not good, but faults are human. Worse is to have them and not see them. Yet beyond that is to have faults, to see them, and to do nothing about them. But even that seems mild compared to him who knows his faults, and who parades them about and encourages them as though they were virtues.

**44. Diacope:** repetition of a word or phrase after an intervening word or phrase as a method of emphasis:

- We will do it, I tell you; we will do it.

**45. Antimetabole:** reversing the order of repeated words or phrases (a loosely chiasmic structure, AB-BA) to intensify the final formulation, to present alternatives, or to show contrast:

- All work and no play is as harmful to mental health as all play and no work.
- Ask not what you can do for rhetoric, but what rhetoric can do for you.

**46. Antiphrasis:** one word irony, established by context:

- "Come here, Tiny," he said to the fat man.
- It was a cool 115 degrees in the shade.

**47. Epizeuxis:** repetition of one word (for emphasis):

- The best way to describe this portion of South America is lush, lush, lush.
- What do you see? Wires, wires, everywhere wires.
- Polonius: "What are you reading?" Hamlet: "Words, words, words."

**48. Aposiopesis:** stopping abruptly and leaving a statement unfinished:

- If they use that section of the desert for bombing practice, the rock hunters will--.
- I've got to make the team or I'll--.

**49. Anacoluthon:** finishing a sentence with a different grammatical structure from that with which it began:

- And then the deep rumble from the explosion began to shake the very bones of--no one had ever felt anything like it.
- Be careful with these two devices because improperly used they can--well, I have cautioned you enough.

**50. Enumeratio:** detailing parts, causes, effects, or consequences to make a point more forcibly:

- I love her eyes, her hair, her nose, her cheeks, her lips [etc.].
- When the new highway opened, more than just the motels and restaurants prospered. The stores noted a substantial increase in sales, more people began moving to town, a new dairy farm was started, the old Main Street Theater doubled its showings and put up a new building . . . .

**51. Antanagoge:** placing a good point or benefit next to a fault criticism, or problem in order to reduce the impact or significance of the negative point:

- True, he always forgets my birthday, but he buys me presents all year round.
- The new anti-pollution equipment will increase the price of the product slightly, I am aware; but the effluent water from the plant will be actually cleaner than the water coming in.

**52. Parataxis:** writing successive independent clauses, with coordinating conjunctions, or no conjunctions:

- We walked to the top of the hill, and we sat down.
- In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. -- Genesis 1:1-2 (KJV)
- The *Starfish* went into dry-dock, it got a barnacle treatment, it went back to work.



In this last example above, note that a string of very short sentences can be connected by commas when the elements are parallel. Longer sentences and unparallel sentence structures need at least semicolons to connect them.

**53. Hypotaxis:** using subordination to show the relationship between clauses or phrases (and hence the opposite of parataxis):

- They asked the question because they were curious.
- If a person observing an unusual or unfamiliar object concludes that it is probably a spaceship from another world, he can readily adduce that the object is reacting to his presence or actions when in reality there is absolutely no cause-effect relationship. --Philip Klass
- While I am in the world, I am the light of the world. --John 9:5

**54. Sententia:** quoting a maxim or wise saying to apply a general truth to the situation; concluding or summing foregoing material by offering a single, pithy statement of general wisdom:

- But, of course, to understand all is to forgive all.
- As the saying is, art is long and life is short.
- For as Pascal reminds us, "It is not good to have all your wants satisfied."

**55. Exemplum:** citing an example; using an illustrative story, either true or fictitious:

- Let me give you an example. In the early 1920's in Germany, the government let the printing presses turn out endless quantities of paper money, and soon, instead of 50-pfennige postage stamps, denominations up to 50 billion marks were being issued.

Examples can be introduced by the obvious choice of "For example," but there are other possibilities. For quick introductions, such as those attached to a sentence, you might use "such as," or "for instance." Examples placed into separate sentences can be introduced by "A case in point," "An instance," "A typical situation," "A common example," "To illustrate, let's consider the situation," and so forth.

**56. Pleonasm:** using more words than required to express an idea; being redundant. Normally a vice, it is done on purpose on rare occasions for emphasis:

- We heard it with our own ears.
- That statement is wrong, incorrect, and not true at all in any way, shape, or form.
- And lifting up their eyes, they saw no one, except Jesus Himself alone. --Matthew 17:8

**57. Assonance:** similar vowel sounds repeated in successive or proximate words containing different consonants:

- A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. --Matthew 5:14b (KJV)
- Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. --Matthew 5:16 (KJV)

**58. Dirimens Copulatio:** mentioning a balancing or opposing fact to prevent the argument from being one-sided or unqualified:

- This car is extremely sturdy and durable. It's low maintenance; things never go wrong with it. Of course, if you abuse it, it will break.
- . . . But we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. --I Cor. 1:23-24 (NASB; cf. Rom. 13:4-5)

**59. Symploce:** combining anaphora and epistrophe, so that one word or phrase is repeated at the beginning and another word or phrase is repeated at the end of successive phrases, clauses, or sentences:

- To think clearly and rationally should be a major goal for man; but to think clearly and rationally is always the greatest difficulty faced by man.

**60. Appositive:** a noun or noun substitute placed next to (in apposition to) another noun to be described or defined by the appositive. Don't think that appositives are for subjects only and that they always follow the subject. The appositive can be placed before or after any noun:

- Henry Jameson, the boss of the operation, always wore a red baseball cap. [This shows the subject (Henry Jameson) with the appositive (the boss of the operation) following the subject. This is the most commonly used variety.]

- A notorious annual feast, the picnic was well attended. [Here, the appositive (notorious annual feast) is in front of the subject (the picnic).]
- That evening we were all at the concert, a really elaborate and exciting affair. [Here the appositive (elaborate and exciting etc.) follows the noun, which is the object of a preposition (concert).]

With very short appositives, the commas setting off the second noun from the first are often omitted:

- That afternoon Kathy Todd the pianist met the poet Thompson.
- Is your friend George going to run for office?

Thank you very much:

<http://www.virtualsalt.com/rhetoric.htm>

Harris, Robert. "Evaluating Internet Research Sources."

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