



# THE COURSE OF STYLISTICS

## Lesson 5

## SYNTACTICAL EXPRESSIVE MEANS AND STYLISTIC DEVICES: COMPOSITIONAL PATTERNS OF SYNTACTICAL ARRANGEMENT

**INVERSION** - the reversal of the normal order of words in a sentence, for the sake of emphasis (in prose) or for the sake of the metre (in poetry): *Dark they were and golden-eyed.* (Bradbury)

The stylistic inversion has the following patterns:

- 1) the object is placed at the beginning of the sentence (before the subject);
- 2) the attribute is placed after the word it modifies;
- 3) the predicative is placed before the subject;
- 4) the predicative is placed before the link-verb and both are placed before the subject;
- 5) the adverbial modifier is placed at the beginning of the sentence.
- 6) both the adverbial modifier and the predicate are placed before the subject.



## **DETACHED CONSTRUCTION**

**(DETACHMENT)**- One of the secondary parts of the sentence is detached from the word it refers to and is made to seem independent of this word.

Such parts are called detached and marked off by brackets, dashes or commas or even by full stops or exclamation marks: "*I have to beg you for money! Daily!*"



**PARALLEL CONSTRUCTION** (or **SYNTACTIC PARALLELISM**) - a figure based on the use of the similar syntactic pattern in two or more sentences or syntagms:

1) *When the lamp is shattered*  
*The light in the dust lies dead –*  
*When the cloud is scattered*  
*The rainbow's glory is shed.*  
*When the lute is broken.*  
*Sweet tones are remembered not;*  
*When the lips have spoken,*  
*Loved accents are soon forgot.*  
(P.B. Shelley)

2) *I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison and ye came into me* (St. Matthew).



**CHIASMUS (REVERSED PARALLEL CONSTRUCTIONS)** - a figure of speech based on the repetition of a syntactical pattern with a reverse word-order (see: **SYNTACTIC PARALLELISM**):

1) *Let the long contention cease:*

Geese are swans, and swans are geese. (M. Arnold)

2) Beauty is truth, truth beauty, - that is all

*Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.* (Keats)

3) *But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first!* (St. Matthew).



**EXERCISE III. FIND AND ANALYSE CASES OF DETACHMENT, SUSPENSE AND INVERSION. COMMENT ON THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF EACH:**

1. She narrowed her eyes a trifle at me and said I looked exactly like Celia Briganza's boy. Around the mouth. (S.)
2. She was crazy about you. In the beginning. (R. W.)
3. Of all my old association, of all my old pursuits and hopes of all the living and the dead world, this one poor soul alone comes natural to me. (D.)
4. On, on he wandered, night and day, beneath the blazing sun, and the cold pale moon; through the dry heat of noon, and the damp cold of night; in the grey light of morn and the red glare of eve. (D.)
5. Benny Collan, a respected guy, Benny Collan wants to marry her. An agent could ask for more? (T. C.)
6. Women are not made for attack. Wait they must. (J. C.)
7. Out came the chase - in went the horses - on sprang - the boys - in got the travellers. (D.)
8. Then he said: "You think it's so? She was mixed up in this lousy business? (J. B.)
9. And she saw that Gopher Prairie was merely an enlargement of all the hamlets which they had been passing. Only to the eyes of a Kennicot was it exceptional. (S. L.)



**REPETITION** is based upon a repeated occurrence of one and the same word-group. *And a great desire for peace, peace of no matter what kind, swept through her. (A.B.)* Depending upon the position a repeated unit occupies in the utterance there are several types of repetition:

**ANAPHORA** – the beginning of some successive sentences, syntagms, lines, etc. (with the same sounds, morphemes, words or word-combinations) is repeated – *a... , a... , a...* The main stylistic function of anaphora is not so much to emphasize the repeated unit as to create the background for the nonrepeated unit, which, through its novelty, becomes foregrounded.



**EPIPHORA** – repetition of the final word or word-group especially in poetry when some stanzas end with the same line – ...*a*, ...*a*, ...*a*. The main function of epiphora is to add stress to the final words of the sentence.

**ANADIPLOSIS (CATCH REPETITION)** - a figure which consists in the repetition of the same word at the end of one and at the beginning of the following sense-groups (or lines). Thus the two or more parts are linked ...*a*, *a*.... Specification of the semantics occurs here too, but on a more modest level.

**CHAIN REPETITION** – a string of several successive anadiplosis: ...*a*, *a*...*b*, *b*...*c*, *c*... . It smoothly develops logical reasoning.





**FRAMING** - the beginning of the sentence is repeated in the end, thus forming the "frame" for the non-repeated part of the sentence (utterance) – *a... a*. The function of framing is to elucidate the notion mentioned in the beginning of the sentence. Between two appearances of the repeated unit there comes the developing middle part of the sentence which explains and clarifies what was introduced in the beginning, so that by the time it is used for the second time its semantics is concretized and specified.

**SUCCESSIVE REPETITION** is a string of closely following each other reiterated units - ... *a, a, a* .... This is the most emphatic type of repetition which signifies the peak of emotions of the speaker.



**ORDINARY REPETITION** emphasizes both the logical and the emotional meanings of the reiterated word (phrase). In this type of repetition the repeated element has no definite place in the sentence or utterance.

**PROLEPSIS (SYNTACTIC TAUTOLOGY)** – a figure of syntactic anticipation, the use of words not applicable till a later time. In prolepsis the noun subject is repeated in the form of a corresponding personal pronoun. “*Miss Tilly Webster, she slept forty days and nights without waking up.* (O. H.)

**SUSPENSE (RETARDATION)** is a deliberate delay in the completion of the expressed thought. What has been delayed is the main task of the utterance, and the reader awaits the completion of the utterance with an everincreasing tension. A suspense is achieved by a repeated occurrence of phrases or clauses expressing condition, supposition, time and the like, all of which hold back the conclusion of the utterance: “*Mankind, says a Chinese manuscript, which my friend was obliging enough to read and explain to me, for the firsteconomy thousand ages ate their meat raw.*” (Ch. L)



**CLIMAX (GRADATION)** is a figure based upon such an arrangement of parts of an utterance which secures a gradual increase in semantic significance or emotional tension: *I don't attach any value to money, I don't care about it, I don't know about it, I don't want it, I don't keep it, it goes away from me directly.*

The increase in significance may be: logical, emotional or quantitative.

Logical – the relative importance of the components is looked from the point of view of the concepts embodied in them. Every successive word or word-combination in logical climax is semantically more important than the previous one.

Emotive climax is based on the relative emotive meaning. It is mainly found in one sentence as emotive charge cannot hold long. It is usually based on repetition of the semantic centre, usually expressed by an adjective or adverb and the introduction of an intensifier between the repeated items.

Quantitative is an evident increase in the volume of the corresponding concepts: numerical increase, concepts of measure and time.



**ANTICLIMAX** is the reverse of climax. It is the descent from the sublime to the ridiculous. In this figure of speech emotive or logical importance accumulates only to be unexpectedly broken and brought down. The sudden reversal usually brings forth a humorous or ironic effect. Many paradoxes are based on anticlimax:

*America is the Paradise for women. That is why, like Eve, they are so extremely anxious to get out of it!*



**ANTITHESIS** (a variant of **SYNTACTIC PARALLELISM**) - a figure of speech based on parallel constructions with contrasted words (usually antonyms):

1) *Yet each man kills the thing he loves,*

*By each let this be heard,*

*Some do it with a bitter look,*

*Some with a flattering word,*

*The coward does it with a kiss,*

*The brave man with a sword!*

(O.Wilde)

2) *God made the country, and man made the town* (Cowper).

**NONSENSE OF NON-SEQUENCE** rests on the extension of syntactical valency and results in joining two semantically disconnected clauses into one sentence, as in: "*Emperor Nero played the fiddle, so they burnt Rome.*" (E.) Two disconnected statements are forcibly linked together by cause / effect relations.



**EXERCISE I. FROM THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES YOU WILL GET A BETTER IDEA OF THE FUNCTIONS OF VARIOUS TYPES OF REPETITION, AND ALSO OF PARALLELISM AND CHIASMUS:**

1. I wake up and I'm alone and I walk round Warley and I'm alone; and I talk with people and I'm alone and I look at his face when I'm home and it's dead. (J. Br.)

2. I might as well face facts: good-bye, Susan, good-bye a big car, good-bye a big house, good-bye power, good-bye the silly handsome dreams. (J.Br.)

3. I really don't see anything romantic in proposing. It is very romantic to be in love. But there is nothing romantic about a definite proposal. (O. W.)

4. I wanted to knock over the table and hit him until my arm had no more strength in it, then give him the boot, give him the boot, give him the boot - I drew a deep breath. (J. Br.)

5. On her father's being groundlessly suspected, she felt sure. Sure. Sure. (D.)

6. Now he understood. He understood many things. One can be a person first. A man first and then a black man or a white man. (P. A.)



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7. Obviously-this is a streptococcal infection. Obviously.  
(W.D.)

8. And everywhere were people-People going into gates and coming out of gates. People staggering and falling. People fighting and cursing. (P. A.)

9. Then there was something between them. There was..  
There was. (Dr.)

10. Living is the art of loving.  
Loving is the art of caring.  
Caring is the art of sharing.  
Sharing is the art of living. (W. H. D.)

11. I notice that father's is a large hand, but never a heavy one when it touches me, and that father is a rough voice but never an angry one when it speaks to me. (D.)



**EXERCISE II. DISCUSS THE SEMANTIC CENTRES AND STRUCTURAL PECULIARITIES OF ANTITHESIS:**

1. Mrs. Nork had a large home and a small husband. (S. L.)
2. I like big parties. They're so intimate. At small parties there isn't any privacy. (Sc. F.)
3. There is Mr. Guppy, who was at first as open as the sun at noon, but who suddenly shut up as close as midnight. (D.)
4. His coat-sleeves being a great deal too long, and his trousers a great deal too short, he appeared ill at ease in his clothes. (D.)
5. It is safer to be married to the man you can be happy with than to the man you cannot be happy without. (E.)





**EXERCISE III. INDICATE THE TYPE OF CLIMAX. PAY ATTENTION TO ITS STRUCTURE AND THE SEMANTICS OF ITS COMPONENTS:**

1. He saw clearly that the best thing was a cover story or camouflage. As he wondered and wondered what to do, he first rejected a stop as impossible, then as improbable, then as quite dreadful. (W. G.)

2. "Is it "shark?" said Brody. The possibility that he at last was going to confront the fish-the beast, the monster, the nightmare-made Brody's heart pound. (P. B.)

3. We were all in all to one another, it was the morning of life, it was bliss, it was frenzy, it was everything else of that sort in the highest degree. (D.)

4. "I shall be sorry, I shall be truly sorry to leave you, my friend." (D.)

5. After so many kisses and promises-the lie given to her dreams, her words, the lie given to kisses, hours, days, weeks, months of unspeakable bliss. (Dr.)

6. In marriage the upkeep of woman is often the downfall of man. (Ev.)

7. Women have a wonderful instinct about things. They can discover everything except the obvious. (O. W.)

