EXPRESSIVE MEANS AND STYLISTIC DEVICES

Stylistic Syntax

Subject matter of Stylistic Syntax

The subject matter of SS is the specific form of the syntactical arrangement of the English speech, i.e. forms that are emotionally charged and impart additional shades of meaning to the utterance.

The specific form deviate from stylistically neutral syntactical forms of English.

Classification of stylistic expressive means

The 1ˢᵗ group: Syntactical expressive means based on an omission (absence) of one or more parts of a sentence (tendency towards economy).

The 2ⁿᵈ group: Syntactical expressive means based on the overabundance of expressions (redundancy of expression).

The 3d group: Syntactical means based on the unusual arrangement of the components of the utterance

The 4ᵗʰ group: Syntactical means based on the interaction of sentences coming in close succession

The 5ᵗʰ group: syntactic means based on the use of syntactic construction in the meanings alien to them

elliptical sentence, one-member sentence, aposiopesis, apocoinu constructions

syntactical tautology, repetition, polysyndeton

inversion, detachment

parallelism, chiasmus, gradation or climax, anticlimax, suspense or retardation, antithesis

syntactic transposition

Repetition

Repetition is based on a repeated occurrence of one of the same word or word-group.

Depending upon the place a repeated unit occupies in an utterance there are distinguished <u>4 types of repetition</u>:

Anaphora – the repetition of the first word (or word-group) in several successive sentences, clauses, phrases: *It was better for him, better for common sense, better for …*

Epiphora – repetition of the final word or word group:
I wake up and I'm alone and I walk around valley and I'm alone, and I talk with people and I'm alone.

Anadiplosis (catch repetition) – the last word or phrase of the first part of the utterance is repeated at the beginning of the next part, thus hooking two parts together: *All was old and yellow with **decay** and **decay** was the smell and being of that room.*

Framing (ring repetition) – the repetition of the same unit at the beginning and at the end of the utterance (paragraph)*: He ran away from the battle, he was an ordinary human being that he didn't want to kill and to be killed, so he ran away.*

Chain repetition based on anadiplosis is used several times in one utterance: *A smile would come into Mrs. Pickwick's face. The smile extended into a laugh. The laugh into a roar. The roar became general.*

Functions of repetition

The primary function of repetition is <u>to intensify the utterance</u> but like many other stylistic means repetition is polyfunctional and the rhythmical function mustn't be underestimated when studying the effects produced by repetition.

Polysyndeton

Polysyndeton is an insistent repetition of a connective (conjections, prepositions) between words, phrases, clauses:

The heaviest rain, <u>and </u>snow, <u>and</u> hail, <u>and</u> sleet, could boast of the advantage over him in only one respect.

The repetition of conjunctions and other means of connection <u>make an utterance more rhythmical </u>so much so that prose may even seem like a verse.

One of the most important functions of polysyndeton is <u>rhythmical.</u>

The repetition of *"and"* mainly creates <u>the effect of bustling activity</u>. The repetition of *"or"* may stress <u>equal importance of enumerated things</u>.

Asyndeton

Asyndeton is a deliberate avoidance of connectives.

It's used mostly to indicate tense, energetic, organized activities or to show a succession of actions immediately following each other.

Both these devices (polysyndeton and asyndeton - each other's opposites) are equal in expressiveness.

Both these devices are widely used in contemporary narrative prose. In the works of some writers their occurrence is quite prominent (as for ex. Joyce, Hemingway).

Inversion

Inversion is a violation of the predominant "Subject – Predicate – Object" word-order.

Inversion deals with the displacement of predicate (*complete inversion*) or with the displacement of secondary members of the sentence (*partial*).

If direct word-order is reestablished in questions (You know him?), we can speak of *secondary inversion.*

Stylistic inversion aims at <u>attacking logical stress or additional emotional colouring</u> to the surface meaning of an utterance.

Patterns of stylistic inversion

The following patterns of stylistic inversion are most frequently met in both English prose and poetry.

- **Pattern 1:** The Object is placed at the beginning of the sentence: *Talent Mrs. Black has, capital Mr.Black has not.*

- **Pattern 2:** The attribute is placed after the word it modifies. The model is often used when there is more than one attribute:

  Once upon a midnight dreary with figures weary and worn.

- **Pattern 3:** The predicative is placed before the subject:

  A good generous prayer it was.

- **Pattern 4:** The predicative stands before the link-verb and both are placed before the subject: *Rude am I in my speech.*

- **Pattern 5:** The adverbial modifier is placed at the beginning of the sentence (partial): *Eagerly I wished the morrow.*

- **Pattern 6:** Both modifier and predicate stand before the subject:

  In went Mr. Pickwick.

Detached construction

Detached construction (обособленная конструкция), sometimes one of the secondary parts of a sentence, by some specific consideration of the writer is placed so that it seems formally independent of the referent it logically referred to. Such parts of structures are called detached. The detached parts being torn away from the utterance, they assume a greater degree of significance and given prominence by intonation.

Types of detached constructions

There may be various types of detached construction:

- ☐ An attribute or adverbial modifier is placed not in the immediate proximity to its referent but in some other position: *He rose up, grinding his teeth, <u>pale,</u> and <u>with fury in his eyes</u>.*

- ☐ A nominal phrase may serve as a detached element: *And he walked slowly past again, along the river – an evening of clear, quiet beauty, all harmony and comfort, except within his heart. (John Galsworthy)*

This stylistic device is akin to inversion because their functions are almost the same. But detached constructions <u>produce a much stronger effect</u>.

Parallel Construction (Parallelism)

Parallelism based on a recurrence of systematically identical sequences which lexically are completely or partially different:

She was a good servant,

She walked softly.

She was a determined woman,

She walked precisely.

Parallelism may be **complete or partial.**

Parallelism strongly effects a rhythmical organization of an utterance and <u>gives it a special emphasis</u>.

Parallelism may be encountered not so much in the sentence as in the mega-structures (in the supraphrasal units and paragraphs).

Parallel constructions are often bound up by repetition of words (lexical repetition) and polysyndeton.

Parallel constructions are most frequently used in enumeration, antithesis, thus consolidating the general effect achieved by these stylistic devices.

Chiasmus

Chiasmus (reversed parallel construction) – based on the repetition of the syntactical pattern but it has a cross order of words or phrases.

The word-order of one of sentences being <u>inverted</u> as compared with that of the other:

☐ *As high as we have mounted in delight*
  In our dejection do we sink as low.
☐ *Down dropped the breeze,*
 *The sails dropped down.*

inversion

Chiasmus can appear only when there are two successive sentences or coordinate parts of a sentence.

This device is effective that it helps <u>to lay stress on the second part of the utterance</u>, which is opposite in structure.

Chiasmus

There are two types of chiasmus: **syntactical** (the previous ex) and **lexical**:

In the days of old men made the manners, manners now made men.

no inversion
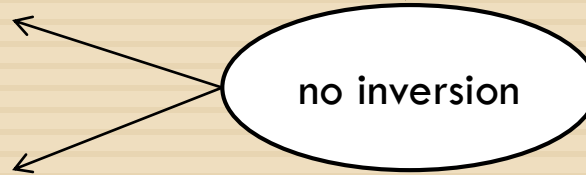
His jokes were sermons and his sermons (were) jokes.

(Byron)

Such a witty arrangement of words gives an utterance epigrammatic character.

Syntactical chiasmus is sometimes used <u>to break the monotony of parallel constructions.</u>

Chiasmus always brings <u>some new shade of meaning or additional emphasis</u> to the sentence.

Gradation or climax (нарастание)

It is an arrangement of a sentence or of the homogeneous parts of one sentence which secures a gradual increase in significance, importance or emotional tension in the utterance:

Parlourmaid was ugly on purpose: malignantly criminally ugly.

A gradual increase of significance may be maintained in 3 ways: **logical, emotional, quantitative.**

Gradation or climax

Logical gradation is based on <u>the relative importance of the component parts</u> looked at from the point of view of the concept embodied in them:

There are drinkers, there are drunkens, there are alcoholics but these are only steps down the ladder.

Emotional gradation is based on <u>the relative emotional tension</u> produced by words with emotive meaning:

I'll smash you, I'll crumble you, I'll powder you, go to the hell, devil!

Quantitative climax is based on the evident <u>increase in the volume</u> of the correspondent concepts:

They looked at <u>hundreds</u> of houses, they climbed <u>thousands</u> of stairs, they inspected <u>innumerable</u> kitchens. (Maugham)

Gradation or climax
Anticlimax

The stylistic function of gradation <u>is to show the relative importance of things</u> as seen by the author especially in emotional climax or <u>to impress on the reader the significance of the things</u> or <u>to depict phenomena dynamically.</u>

Anticlimax is the reverse of climax. The ideas expressed may be arranged in ascending order of significance or they may be poetic elevated but final one which the reader expects to be the culminating one is trifling or farcical. The sudden reversal usually bring force a humorous or ironic effects:

In moments of utter crises my nerves act in a most extraordinary way. I size up the situation in a flash, set my teeth, contract my mussels, take a firm grip of myself and without a tremor always do the wrong thing.

Suspense (retardation)

Suspense (retardation) is a deliberate delay in the completion of the expressed thought.

A suspense is achieved by a repeated occurrence of phrases or clauses expressing conditions, supposition, time and the like all of which hold back the conclusion of the utterance:

*Mankind, says a Chinese manuscript, which my friend M. was obliging enough to read and explain to me, for the first seventy thousand ages **ate their meat raw**.*

The main purpose of this device is to prepare the reader for the only logical conclusion of the utterance.

It must be noted that suspense due to its partly psychological nature since it arouses a *feeling of expectation* is framed in one sentence and there mustn't be any break in the intonation pattern. Separate sentences would violate the principle of constant emotional tension which is characteristic if suspense.

Antithesis

Antithesis is a phrase, sentence or a group of such in which a thing or a concept is measured against or contrasted to its opposite: _A saint abroad and a devil at home_,
too brief for our passion, too long for our peace.

Antithesis emerge as a result of opposition of two words.

Any opposition will be based on the contrasting features of two objects.

These contrasting features are represented in pairs of words which we call antonyms: _saint-devil, hell-heaven, etc._

Parallelism is an organizing axis of antithesis.

Syntactic transposition

Each of the following types of sentences (declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory) may be used in the meaning of the other type and as a result acquire emotive and expressive connotation.

The shifts in the usage of syntactic structures resulting in additional emotional characteristics are called transposition in syntactical structures:

Syntactic transposition

- Rhetorical question – a statement in a form of a question. This form makes this construction a kind of an emotional appeal to the listener. Such structures are typical in oratory and colloquial styles.

- Negative meaning can be rendered with the help of a peculiar combination of lexical and syntactical means which don't include negative words as such: *The hell he did it = He did not do it.* Negative form may be used to express an emphatic affirmation: *Oh, if it isn't Pete!*

- Subordinate clauses of comparison used absolutely may express negation: *As if I ever stopped thinking about you (= I never stopped …).*

- The imperative sentence may be used to express disagreement, mistrust, irritation, etc.: *Catch me do it again!*