Rhetorical and stylistic devices, the rhetorical pentagon + a little bit about language and sentence structure

**Alliteration**: Alliteration refers to repetition of a particular sound in the first syllables of a series of words and/or phrases.

E.g. “**d**ark and **d**esolate.”

**Anaphora**: A rhetorical term for the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive sentences or paragraphs. [Learn to pronounce the word here](https://www.dictionary.com/browse/anaphora?s=t). Contrast with *epistrophe*.

E.g. “I have a dream.”

Enjambement [/ɪnˈdʒæmb.mənt/]: in [poetry](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/poetry), the [continuing](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/continuing) of a [sentence](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/sentence) from one [line](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/line) of a [poem](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/poem) into the [start](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/start) of the next [line](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/line)

**Epistrophe**: A rhetorical term for the repetition of a word or phrase at the end of successive sentences or paragraphs. [Learn to pronounce the word here](https://www.dictionary.com/browse/epistrophe?s=t). Contrast with *anaphora*.

E.g. "She's safe, just like I promised. She's all set to marry Norrington, just like she promised. And you get to die for her, just like you promised."

**Imagery**: A critical term covering those uses of language in a literary work that evoke sense-impressions by literal or figurative reference to perceptible or ‘concrete’ objects, scenes, actions, or states, as distinct from the language of abstract argument or exposition Imagery using  visuals: *The night was black as ever, but bright stars lit up the sky in beautiful and varied constellations which were sprinkled across the astronomical landscape.*

Elements in a literary work used to evoke mental images, not only of the visual sense, but of sensation and emotion as well.E.g. “You’re the light through the dark shining right through my heart.”

**Exposition** is a literary device used to introduce background information about events, settings, characters, or other elements of a work to the audience or readers. The word comes from the Latin language, and its literal meaning is “a showing forth.” Exposition is crucial to any story, for without it nothing makes sense. E.g. ““It was incredible visiting the pyramids in Egypt. They’re just so big and strange against the rest of the landscape. Archaeologists still aren’t completely sure how they were built.”

**Metaphor:** A type of comparison where a word or phrase is transferred from its literal meaning to stand for something else. Unlike a simile in which something is said to be “like” something else, a metaphor says that something ***is*** something else. Personification and anthropomorphism below are types of metaphors.

E.g. “The Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity.”

**Personification**: Abstract things are brought to life, e.g. ”Happiness has begun to smile at me”

**Anthropomorphism** (besjæling): Concrete things are brought to life, ”The moon is smiling at me”

**Simile:** Comparison in which the words “like” or “as” are used.

E.g. “He runs as fast ***as*** lightning.” "For hope grew round me ***like*** the twining vine."

**Repetition of key themes/words**: Repetition in forms like anaphora is quite *obvious*, but there are more *subtle* ways to use repetition as well. One way is to repeat key theme words throughout a speech, e.g., “freedom” and “justice” in *I Have a Dream*.

**Tricolon**: The expression of related thoughts in a group of three usually using the same grammatical form (for example the same word class). Learn to pronounce the word here.

E.g. “We mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.”

 “I have nothing to offer but blood, sweat, and tears.”

 “(…) that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

**References**: Evoking historic and literary references is a powerful speechwriting technique which can be executed specifically (by a direct quotation) or implicitly (allusion).

**Contrasts**/**antithesis**: Putting two opposites together to emphasize your point e.g. dark/light, night/day, imprisonment/freedom. [Learn to pronounce antithesis here](https://www.dictionary.com/browse/antithesis?s=t).

**Rhetorical questions**: When one asks a leading question in order to give an answer to it or show that the answer is obvious.

E.g.: "With all the violence on TV today, is it any wonder kids bring guns to school?"

**Hyperbole**: When one uses exaggerated words or ideals for emphasis and not to be taken literally. [Learn to pronounce the word here](https://www.dictionary.com/browse/hyperbole?s=t).

E.g.: "I've told you a million times not to call me a liar!"

**Litotes:** The use of a negative statement in order to emphasize a positive meaning, for example "a not inconsiderable amount of money (= a considerable amount of money)"

**Sponsorship effect**: A speaker may borrow ethos from someone else - by having someone with strong ethos introducing the speech or by quoting or mentioning such a person.

**Lists**: especially of three items = tricolon, building to a climax: *“Friends, Romans, Countrymen”/”the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth”*

**List: (**An even longer) list of more or less related items e.g. “Policemen, janitors, nurses, shopkeepers, roadworkers, teachers…”

**Parallelism**: *“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I may remember. Involve me and I will learn”* (Benjamin Franklin, American President)

* the use of successive verbal constructions in poetry or prose which correspond in grammatical structure, sound, metre, meaning, etc. "parallelism suggests a connection of meaning through an echo of form"

**Plus/minus words** – loaded words; negative or positive connotations

**The use of a particular word class** (e.g. personal pronouns, adjectives, verbs)

**Sentence structure**: simple or complex, paratactic or hypotactic, long or short, incomplete or complete

**Vocabulary**: concrete or abstract, simple or complex, colloquial or elevated language, slang, formal or informal, contractions

**Punctuation** and *italics*, CAPITAL LETTERS etc.

**correct/incorrect** grammar, spelling - **dialect/sociolect/ethnolect/slang** vs. Standard English (as taught in school).

Appeal forms/modes of persuasion

**Ethos**: Credibility of the speaker.

The [sender](https://app.minlaering.dk/bog/44/kapitel/66457/sektion/66458#_2494) may possess credibility beforehand on account of things such as their education, experience, title or because the [receiver](https://app.minlaering.dk/bog/44/kapitel/66457/sektion/66458#_2496) considers the sender a trustworthy person. However, the sender can also create credibility through the text or speech, e.g. by being calm and composed during a discussion or by being [eloquent](https://app.minlaering.dk/bog/44/kapitel/66457/sektion/66458#_4237). When using ethos as a mode of persuasion, you typically use an objective vocabulary and a clear sentence structure.

* How is this established in the speech? Think both of wording and of physical presence.

**Pathos**: Appeal to the emotions of the audience.

This mode of persuasion is used to engage the receiver. The emotions of the receiver can be reached by appealing to sympathy, compassion, a sense of community, indignation, antipathy etc. Linguistically, this mode of persuasion appeals to the emotions with [loaded words](https://app.minlaering.dk/bog/44/kapitel/66457/sektion/66458#_749), [figurative language](https://app.minlaering.dk/bog/44/kapitel/66457/sektion/66458#_753) and other [rhetorical devices](https://app.minlaering.dk/bog/44/kapitel/66457/sektion/66458#_2498).

* Consider what kinds of emotions the speaker appeals to and the effect.

**Logos**: Appeal to the logic of the audience.

Logos is based on factual arguments, documentation and substantiation. For instance, using statistical or financial arguments in a political discussion, referring to what research shows etc. [Linguistically](https://app.minlaering.dk/bog/44/kapitel/66457/sektion/66458#_4259), this can be shown through argumentation markers (*thus, therefore, thereby, hence, consequently* etc.).

* However, remember that one can appeal to logic without speaking the truth.

**For more detail on the modes of persuasion read** [**here**](https://www.artofmanliness.com/articles/classical-rhetoric-101-the-three-means-of-persuasion/)**.**

**Sentence structure**

**Parataxis:**

Parataxis is derived from a Greek word that means “to place side by side.” It can be defined as a rhetorical term in which phrases and clauses are placed one after another independently, without coordinating or subordinating them through the use of conjunctions. It is also called “additive style.

**Hypotaxis:**

Hypotaxis is subordination of one clause to another, or when the clauses are coordinated or subordinated to one another within sentences.

Difference Between Hypotaxis and Parataxis

Parataxis is opposite of hypotaxis. In parataxis, the sentences, clauses, and phrases are not coordinated or subordinated. Such as, “Veni, vidi, vici” or, “I came, I saw, I conquered.” (Life of Caesar, by Plutarch). However, in hypotaxis, the phrases, clauses, or sentences are coordinated or subordinated.

Examples of Hypotaxis in Literature

Example #1: Mrs. Bridge (By Evan S. Connell)

“One December morning near the end of the year when snow was falling moist and heavy for miles all around, so that the earth and the sky were indivisible, Mrs. Bridge emerged from her home and spread her umbrella.”

The remaining clauses explain the first/main clause. These subordinated clauses help in recounting the individual thought expressed in the beginning.

Source: https://literarydevices. net/hypotaxis/



More on sentence structure: <https://www.englishclub.com/grammar/sentence/sentence-structure.htm>



**The rhetorical pentagon **

**In what context was the text created?**

What events - relevant to the topic - have led up to the writing of the text?

What events - relevant to the topic - in the personal history of the writer/speaker have led up to the writing of the text?

What is the writer/speaker’s opinion/attitude to these events?

What words in the text can show you all this?

**Who is the writer/speaker**?

What part of his/her background is relevant to the topic?

What is the writer/speaker’s motivation for talking about the topic?

How does the writer/speaker appeal to his/her audience? (logos, pathos, ethos)

What words in the text can show you all this?

**What is the writer/speaker’s primary intention with the text**?

To inform, to persuade, to delight/entertain?

**What language features characterises the text?** (rhetorical devices, use of word classes, sentence structure, slang, dialect, sociolect, etc.)

How do these language features reflect the speaker/writer’s motivation for speaking about the topic?

How do these language features show us who the intended readers/audiences are?

How do these language features reflect the speaker/writer’s intention with the text?

**What is the topic?**

Is it controversial/uncontroversial considering who the audience and writer/speaker is?

What words in the text can show all you this?

**Who are the intended readers/audiences?**

Are their ages, ethnicities, educational backgrounds, political sympathies etc. relevant considering who the writer/speaker is and what the topic is? If yes - what are they?

What words in the text can show you all this?

*NB. Consider both primary and secondary audiences.*