





Technical Terms

alliteration Successive words start with the same sound.

e.g. munere mortis

anaphora Pointed repetition of a specific word, often used in the

same point within successive clauses.

apostrophe A sudden address to an absent person/place/concept.

assonance The repeated use of a certain vowel sound.

e.g. comitante caterva.

asyndeton The absence of conjunctions.

caesura A break between words in the middle of a foot. Every

line of poetry has a main caesura which creates a pause, allowing a narrator to draw breath if s/he so chooses.

chiasmus When one idea is an inversion of the previous idea. This

could apply to vocabulary or to grammar. This is sometimes expressed as an "A B B A structure".

A B B A
The king is dead. Long live the king!

e.g. <u>The king</u> is *dead*! Long *live* <u>the king</u>!

dactyl A foot containing one long syllable followed by two short

syllables.

ekphrasis A section of a poem which breaks off the narrative to set

the scene for the next episode.

e.g. Near a river there is cave which ...

elision When one word ends in a vowel or the letter "m", and

the next word starts with "h" or a vowel, they slur

together. e.g. ib(i) ant(e) omnis ... templ(um) et ...

ellipsis

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The omission of a word which is considered unnecessary (usually because of context). Examples might include:

a) an adjective without a noun.

e.g. multa (verba) dixit.

b) a genitive without the word on which it depends.

e.g. Metella (uxor) Caecilii.

c) a verb without its object.

e.g. obiit (mortem).

d) a clause lacking all or part of a verb.

e.g. quid multa (dicam)? denique puer ingressus (est).

enjambment When one line runs into the next by a single word, isolating and therefore emphasising that particular word.

hendiadys

When a single idea is expressed by two coequal parts, often using two nouns where we might expect an adjective and a noun.

e.g. pateris et auro libamus (instead of pateris aureis).

hyperbole

Rhetorical exaggeration.

hyperbaton

Drawing attention to a word by moving it from its expected position.

litotes

Understatement, or the "diplomatic" underplaying of meaning. i.e. when less is said than is meant. e.g. laudare non possum (instead of culpare volo).

onomatopoeia

Words whose sound reflects their meaning. e.g. susurrare.

pleonasm

The use of more than one word or phrase with the same meaning.

polyptoton

The successive use of two alternative forms of the same word.

e.g. ... mihi meis ..

polysyndeton The use of numerous conjunctions within one sentence.

sibilance

When a group of words combine to suggest a hissing sound (created by letters called "sibilants" - mainly "s"). **spondee** A foot containing two long syllables.

synecdoche Use of a "part" to represent the "whole".

e.g. "carina" (keel) to represent "navis" (ship).

transferred epithet

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Describing a noun with an adjective which would normally be applied to a different noun, and thus has a dramatic impact on our impression of the noun.

e.g. sultry Jupiter.

tricolon When an idea is built on in two successive clauses or

sentences. If these increase in length it is a "tricolon

crescendo"; if they decrease it is a "tricolon

diminuendo".

e.g. We will fight them on the beaches. We will fight them on the hills. We will fight them in the fields.

zeugma Many words have more than one sense or meaning. If

such a word appears only once in a sentence, but more than one of its meanings is implied, this is "zeugma".

e.g. et torquem et cognomen induit. (She put on/took

on both his necklace and his name).

Other useful terms

antithesis appreciation atmosphere character contrast

convey describe effect

emphasis(e) exaggeration

explain express feeling frame humour imagery irony meaning metaphor mood moral

personification

picture reference rhyme rhythm simile

sound effect successful suggest vivid

word order word pattern