Rhetorical and literary terms

Rhetorical and literary terms

Accumulation	Heaping up similar ideas or images expressed in different ways
Alliteration	Repetition of similar consonants
	"Let us go forth to lead the land we love." J. F. Kennedy,
	"Veni, vidi, vici." Julius Caesar
Anacolouthon	Beginning a sentence in one grammatical structure and finishing in another
Anadiplosis	"Doubling back": the rhetorical repetition of one or several words; specifically, repetition of a word that ends one clause at the beginning of the next.
	"Men in great place are thrice <u>servants</u>: <u>servants</u> of the sovereign or state; servants of fame; and servants of business." Francis Bacon
Anaphora	Repetition of the same word at the start of successive clauses, sentences or verses
	"We shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France" Winston Churchill
	"Nihil agis, nihil moliris, nihil cogitas" Cicero
Antithesis	Presenting a contrast of ideas through balancing words
	"<u>Extremism</u> in defense of liberty is no vice, <u>moderation</u> in the pursuit of justice is no virtue."
	"Brutus: Not that I loved <u>Caesar less</u>, but that I loved <u>Rome more</u>." Shakespeare, Julius Caesar
Apostrophe	Suddenly turning away from the main narrative or discussion to address a person
Assonance	Repetition of similar vowels
	"O fortun<u>ata</u>m n<u>ata</u>m me consule Romam!" Cicero, de

consulate

Asyndeton	Omission of a conjunction
	"abiit, evasit, erupit" Cicero
Bathos	Deliberate anticlimax, lowering from a higher to a lower tone
Brevitas	Conciseness of expression
Chiasmus	Mirror-image word order (ABBA)
	pacis ornamenta et subsidia belli. Cicero
	A B B A
Ecphrasis	A self-contained departure within a passage into a particular topic, often a place in nature
Ellipsis	Omission of a word required for complete sense
	"quid multa?" for "quid multa *dicam*?"
Enjambment	Running over a clause from one verse line to the next without a pause
	"tum vero manifesta fides, Danaumque patescunt <u>insidiae</u>" Virgil, Aeneid 2
Exordium	Introduction to a speech
Hendiadys	Expression of a single idea by two nouns connected by "and", instead of a noun and an adjective
	"ingenium et audacia" – literally "character and audacity" i.e. "natural audacity"
	"It sure is nice and cool today!" (for "pleasantly cool")
Homoeoteleuton	Words in close proximity have the same ending
	"He is esteemed eloquent which can invent wittily, remember perfectly, dispose orderly, figure diversly"
Hypallage	Transference of an adjective to a noun to which it does not really belong

"ibant obscuri sola sub nocte" "they went, dark, beneath the lonely night" – when it is, literally, the night which is dark, and the people who are lonely

Hyperbaton   Emphatic change from usual word order (see also **hysteron-proteron** and **anastrophe**, types of **hyperbaton**)

"per te deos oro" = per deos te oro

"Speluncam Dido dux et Troianus eandem" Virgil, Aeneid 4
For "Dido et dux Troianus"

Hyperbole   Exaggeration

"Da mi basia mille, deinde centum,
Dein mille altera, dein secunda centum,
Deinde usque altera mille, deinde centum." Catullus

Hysteron-proteron The presentation of two or more ideas in an illogical order

"moriamur et in media arma ruamus" Virgil

Imagery   Identification or comparision of something with another idea (see **simile** and **metaphor**)

Intertextual reference Reference in one text to something in another

Irony   Where something is said but something else meant. In particular **dramatic irony**, where a character says one thing, but the reader/audience understands something else of which the character is unaware

Juxtaposition   Emphatic placing of two words/ideas next to each other

Litotes   Deliberate understatement

"non laudo" for "culpo"

"salve, nec minimo puella naso" Catullus

"a not very small nose"

Metaphor   Imagery which identifies something with some other idea

"sentina rei publicae" (the dregs of the Republic) for "turpissimi cives"

Metonymy	Change of name
	Mars = war
Onomatopoeia	Where the sound of the words reflects their meaning
	"At tuba terribili sonitu taratantara dixit." Ennius
	"tintinnant aures" Catullus "My ears are ringing"
Oxymoron	A deliberately self-contradictory idea
	"Festina lente." "I must be cruel only to be kind." Shakespeare, Hamlet
Parody	A humorous, exaggerated imitation
Pathetic Fallacy	The attribution of human emotions to inanimate things
Pathos	A feeling of sadness or pity
Periphrasis	Circumlocution, describing something in a roundabout way
Peroration	Conclusion
Personification	Describing something inhuman in a human way
Pleonasm	Deliberate verbosity
	"atra nox"
Polyptoton	Use of the same word in swift succession in different forms
	"*puer pueri*que parens"
Polysyndeton	Repeated, emphatic use of conjunctions (in a list)
	"Horae quidem cedunt et dies et menses et anni" Cicero, De Senectute
Praeteritio	Announcing that you intend to omit something and then going on to talk about it

Prolepsis	Anticipation
	"ducem missum" = "sent **to be** a leader"
Prosopopoeia	Addressing an idea or abstract concept as a real person
Rhetorical question	A question which expects no answer
Sarcasm	Biting irony
Satire	Exposure of the weaknesses of society or individuals through caricature
Sibilance	Repetition of the letter s
	"vidisse post sese serpentem"
Synechdoche	The part used to represent the whole
	"carinae" "keels" for boats; "tecta" "roofs" for buildings
	"Give us this day our daily bread" (for food)
Tricolon	Phrases or clauses arranged in a triplet (**tricolon crescendo** involves more weight being placed on the last part of the triplet)
	Veni, vidi, vici. —Julius Caesar
	"clarissimi ac fortissimi viri patriaeque amantissimi" Cicero
Variatio	Variation of usage or construction
Zeugma	The application of a verb or adjective to two nouns, with a different sense to each
	"torquem et cognomen induit" = "put on the necklace and the name" i.e. "put on the necklace and *assume* the name"