

alliteration

Alliteration

Alliteration refers to the repetition of a sound at the beginning of several words in close proximity to each other. For example: "I see also the **d**ull, **d**rilled, **d**ocile, brutish masses of the Hun soldiery plodding on like a swarm of crawling locusts" (Winston Churchill on the German invasion of Russia).

allusion

Allusion

Allusion is an expression or phrase in one text that calls to mind an expression or phrase from another text without direct reference. For example: "I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted..." (Martin Luther King in *I Have a Dream*, 1963, alluding to the Bible, Isaiah 40:4-5).

amplification

Amplification

A figure of speech that repeats a word or expression while adding more detail to it, in order to emphasize something. For example: "I know I have but the body of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart of a king, **and of a king of England, too**" (Queen Elizabeth I, 1533-1603)

analogy

Analogy

An analogy is a comparison of two things or abstract ideas. A simile is a an expressed analogy. A metaphor is an implied one. For example: "Never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another and suffer the indignity of being the **skunk of the world**." (Inaugural address, Nelson Mandela, 1994).

anaphora

Anaphora

Anaphora refers to the repetition of words or phrases as a rhetorical or stylistic device. For example: "**We shall** fight on the beaches, **we shall** fight on the landing grounds, **we shall** fight in the fields and in the streets, **we shall** fight in the hills; **we shall** never surrender..." (Winston Churchill, 1940).

anadiplosis

Anadiplosis

The repetition of the last word of a clause or sentence at the beginning of the next. For example: For example: "Men in great place are thrice **servants**: **servants** of the sovereign or state; **servants** of fame; and **servants** of business." (Francis Bacon 1561-1626).

anastrophe

Anastrophe

A rhetorical device in which there is a departure from normal word order for the sake of emphasis. For example: "The path to the dark side, fear is" (Yoda, *Star Wars*).

anecdote

Anecdote

An anecdote is a small story or tale that is interesting, humorous or biographical.

Anecdotes often contain a lesson for life. For example: "I am honored to be with you today at your commencement from one of the finest universities in the world. **I never graduated from college.** Truth be told, this is the closest I've ever gotten to a college graduation" (Stanford Commencement, Steve Jobs, 2005).

antithesis

Antithesis

Antithesis is a rhetorical device in which two ideas are contrasted, using parallel syntactical structures. For example: "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind" (Neil Armstrong, 1969).

asynдетон

Asyndeton

A lack of conjunctions (e.g. 'and') between successive phrases or words. For example: "We shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardships, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty" (Inaugural Address, John F. Kennedy, 1961).

chiasmus

Chiasmus

A rhetorical device where the phrase in one sentence is reversed in the next sentences. For example: "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."
(Inaugural address, John F. Kennedy, 1961).

diacope

Diacope

This rhetorical device involves the repetition of a phrase, with the interruption by another word or phrase. For example: "Free at last, free at last; thank God almighty, free at last!" (*I Have a Dream*, Martin Luther King, 1963).

distinctio

Distinctio

A rhetorical device in which one elaborates on a particular word to prevent misunderstanding or ambiguity. For example: "The task could be described as difficult, if by difficult we mean that it will entail hardship" (Winston Churchill, 1940).

eponym

Eponym

The act of using a famous person's name to convey an idea. For example: "You don't have to be Einstein to figure this out."

ethos

Ethos

Ethos, in the art of rhetoric, refers to a speaker's appeal to ethics and credibility. For example, your doctor may say to you: "For the sake of your own health, I forbid you from drinking alcohol."

expletive

Expletive

An expletive is a short phrase that is inserted into a sentence, as an interruption, to clarify a point. For example: "And this city – this Golden City which is both ancient and youthful – stands as a living monument to your unconquerable spirit" (Barack Obama, 2009).

hyperbole

Hyperbole

Hyperbole is form of figurative language that is so dramatic and exaggerated, one could hardly believe it true. For example; “I’m so hungry, I could eat a horse.”

hypophora

Hypophora

Hypophora is a rhetorical device, often found in speeches, where the speaker asks a question and then proceeds to answer it. For example: **“You ask, what is our policy?”** I will say: It is to wage war, by sea, land, and air, with all our might and with all the strength that God can give us; to wage war against a monstrous tyranny never surpassed in the dark, lamentable catalogue of human crime. That is our policy.” (Winston Churchill, 1940)

litotes

Litotes

Litotes are a figure of speech in which understatement is used to 'soften' the meaning of a word. For example: saying 'not unattractive' to refer to something that's ugly.

logos

Logos

Logos is an appeal to logic in rhetoric. It is when a speaker aims to convince an audience by presenting logical arguments.

meiosis

Meiosis

Meiosis is the opposite of hyperbole; it is a form of understatement. It is similar to litotes and euphemism, in that it softens the impact of a phrase or word. 'The Troubles' is an example of meiosis, referring to the violence in Northern Ireland. 'The pond' is also an example of meiosis, referring to the Atlantic Ocean.

mesodiplois

Mesodiplosis

The repetition of a phrase in the middle of successive sentence. For example: "Today in America, a teacher spent extra time with a student who needed it, **and did her part to** lift America's graduation rate to its highest level in more than three decades. An entrepreneur flipped on the lights in her tech startup, **and did her part to** add to the more than eight million new jobs." (Barack Oabama, 2014)

parallelism

Parallelism

The use of successive verbal constructions in poetry or prose which correspond in grammatical structure, sound, metre, or meaning. For example: "My fellow citizens: I stand here today **humbled by the task before us, grateful for the trust you have bestowed, mindful of the sacrifices borne by our ancestors**" (Barack Obama, 2008).

pathos

Pathos

Pathos is an appeal to emotion in rhetoric.

It is when a speaker connects to the audience emotionally. For example: “the time for the healing of the wounds has come. The moment to bridge the chasms that divide us has come. The time to build is upon is” (Nelson Mandela, 1994).

polysyndeton

Polysyndeton

Polysyndeton is the repetition of a conjunction between each word or phrase in a list. For example:

"Time and again these men and women struggled **and** sacrificed **and** worked till their hands were raw so that we might live a better life" (Barack Obama, 2008).

symploce

Symploce

Symploce is the repetition of both the first and last part of a sentence over successive sentences. For example: "Much of what I say might sound bitter, but it's the truth . Much of what I say might sound like it's stirring up trouble, but it's the truth. Much of what I say might sound like it is hate, but it's the truth" (Malcolm X).

tricolon

Tricolon

Tricolon is a rhetorical device in which three ideas are listed, using similar syntactical structures. In this sense it is a form of parallelism. It is also related to the 'rule of three', which states that ideas are often best presented in lists of three. "Veni, vidi, vici" (I came, I saw, I conquered) is often cited as an example of tricolon.

varied sentence
length

Varied sentence length

Speeches often contrast long sentences with very short ones. For example: "We dedicate this day to all the heroes and heroines in this country and the rest of the world who sacrificed in many ways and surrendered their lives so that we could be free. **Their dreams have become reality**" (Nelson Mandela, 1994).