

ENGLISH (Hons) Part-I, Paper-II, Unit-IV Rhetoric & Prosody; Topic: Figures of Speech; Lec Series: 18
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Continuation of previous lectures

Figures of Speech:

(5) Invocation: If such an address is to a God or muse to assist the poet in his composition, it is called an Invocation. Milton invokes Divine guidance at the beginning of Paradise Lost:

And chiefly Thou, O Spirit,
that dost prefer
Before all temples th' upright heart
and pure, instruct me....

(6) Rhetorical Question: A rhetorical

question is a question asked, not to evoke an actual reply, but to achieve an emphasis stronger than a direct statement. The figure is most used in persuasive discourse and tends to impart an oratorical tone to a speech.

For example: When "fierce Thalestris" in Pope's "The Rape of the Lock" asks Belinda:

Gods! Shall the ravisher display
Your hair,
While the fops, envy and the ladies
stare?"

She does not stay for an answer, which is obviously "No"! Generally, common rhetorical question is one that would not take "yes" for an answer.

Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" closes with the most rhetorical question in English:

O, Wind,
If winter comes, can Spring be far
behind?

(7): Chiasmus: Chiasmus is a sequence of two phrases or clauses which are parallel in syntax, but with a reversal in the order of the words. Thus Chiasmus consists in a reversal of the position of the same phrase. For example, in this line from Pope the verb first precedes then follows, the adverbial phrase.

"Works without show and without
Pomp presides".

(8) Metonymy: In this figure of speech, we use one word for another and suggests it. It is we substitute one word for another that suggest it, and with which it has a certain relation. It may be the symbol of

Sign for the thing symbolised: for example

- He ascended the throne (a symbol of sovereignty)
- He was seized to the bench (the office of a judge)

→ In this figure of speech, the instrument or organ may be substituted for the agent.

Example:

"The pen is mightier than the sword."
Here "pen" represents the writer, whereas "sword" stands for the fighter.

The "press" is the fourth pillar of the democracy.

Here, "press" stands for "journalism".

→ In this figure of speech, the effect may be substituted for the cause, or the cause for the effect.

for ex: He is basking in the sun.
Here "sun" is used for its "sunshines".

→ In this figure of speech, the name of a person may be used for the object inspiring it: "He is the pride (object of pride) of this country."

→ In this figure of speech, the name of a person may be used for his works and place for the production: He is not well up in Shakespeare. Here Shakespeare is used for Shakespearian literature.

(9) Hyperbole: In 'Hyperbole' things are represented as greater or less, better or worse than they really are. It is a statement exaggerated fancifully for the purpose of effect.

Example: But for your words, they are
rob Hybla bees,
And leave them honeyless.

Ex:- There were thousands of people packed into that little carriage.

(10) Pathetic fallacy: A projection in which inanimate objects are shown as feeling emotions like human beings. For example:- "The tree wept with her in that dark night."

(11) Parable: Parable is a short, simple story containing a moral lesson. The parable of the greedy lion is one of the best known parable story.

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