

Peculiarities of Syntactical Stylistic Devices Used in Poetry

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Abstract: The sentence, as a unit of a certain level, is a sequence of relatively independent lexical and phrasal units (words or word combinations), and what differentiates a sentence from a word is the fact that the sentence structure is changeable; it does not have any constant length: it can be shortened or extended, complete or incomplete, simple, compound or complex.

Key words: sentence, syntactical level, ellipsis, asyndeton, parallelism, inversion.

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So, to analyze the sentence stylistically on the syntactic level, we will admit that most common and currently used are two-member sentences containing subject and predicate and perhaps, some secondary elements, having normal word order and the function.

Syntactic expressive means and stylistic devices of the English language:

- based on reduction of the initial sentence model: ellipsis, aposiopesis, nominative sentences, asyndeton;
- based on extension of the initial sentence model: repetition, enumeration, tautology, polysyndeton, "it is (was) he, who...", the emphatic verb "to do", parenthetical sentences;
- based on change of word-order: inversion, detachment;
- based on interaction of syntactic structures in context: parallel constructions;
- based on transposition of meaning and connection of constituent parts: rhetoric questions, parceling [5, 45].

An elliptical sentence is such a syntactic structure in which there is no subject, or predicate, or both. The main parts of elliptical sentences are omitted by the speaker intentionally in cases when they are semantically redundant.

In poetry, the omission of words whose absence does not impede the reader's ability to understand the expression. For example, Shakespeare makes frequent use of the phrase "I will away" in his plays, with the missing verb understood to be "go." T.S. Eliot employs ellipsis in the following passage from "[Preludes](#)" [1, 14].

You curled the papers from your hair,
Or clasped the yellow soles of
In the palms of both soiled hands.

The possessive "your" is left out in the second and third lines, but it can be assumed that the woman addressed by the speaker is clasping the soles of her own feet with her own hands [7, 1].

Ellipsis saves the speaker from needless effort, spares his time, reduces redundancy of speech. Elliptical structures may also reveal such speakers' emotions as excitement, impatience, delight, etc. As a stylistic device, ellipsis is an effective means of protagonists' portrayal.

In the poem "Dream Variations," Langston Hughes uses ellipses to indicate a dreamy trailing-off, a kind of pause in rhythm that lets the reader take a moment to picture the dream he describes [3, 12].

Rest at pale evening . . .
A tall, slim tree . . .
Night coming tenderly
Black like me.

A nominative sentence is a variant of one-member structures: it has neither subject nor predicate. It is called nominative or nominal because its basic (head) component is a noun or a noun-like element (gerund, numeral). For example:

Morning. April. Problems.

A sequence of nominative sentences makes for dynamic description of events. Sets of nominative sentences are used to expressively depict the time of the action, the place of the action, the attendant circumstances of the action, the participants of the action.

Like ellipsis, aposiopesis is also realized through incompleteness of sentence structure, though this incompleteness is of different structural and semantic nature: it appears when the speaker is unwilling to proceed and breaks off his narration abruptly:

Your bags were packed
and left at the door, the vase you
filled with shells, wrapped in tissue,
your books boxed. I have the whelk

In typical syndetic writing, the underlined portions would have conjunctions. In the poem “Dear friend” by Blas Falconer, though, the lines benefit from asyndeton which relaxes and effortlessly merges the images being described in a peaceful voice.

Asyndeton has a variety of uses in everyday conversation, literature, and pop culture. It can imply a trailing off or overwhelming feeling or it can reflect a certain mood based on the subject matter of the composition. Sometimes less is more, and asyndeton proves this is true of conjunction use.

Stylistic repetition of language units in speech (separate words, word-combinations or sentences) is one of the most frequent and potent stylistic devices.

Repetition is when words or phrases are repeated in a literary work. Repetition is often used in poetry or song, and it is used to create rhythm and bring attention to an idea. Repetition is also often used in speech, as a rhetorical device to bring attention to an idea. For example:

The woods are lovely dark and deep
But I have promises to keep
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

These are very famous lines from “Stopping by the woods in the snowy evening” of Frost. Here the person is standing in the snowy evening along with his horse. He is pondering at the beauty of surrounding when his horse alarmed him. He is ready to go back because he has to perform worldly duties and tasks. Here through repetition, the poet wants to express his devotion towards his responsibilities and also gives rhythm to the lines [2, 25].

Parallelism is a stylistic device of producing two or more syntactic structures according to the same syntactic pattern:

We real cool. We
Left school. We
Lurk late. We
Strike straight. We
Sing sin. We
Thin gin. We
Jazz June. We
Die soon.

The parallel structures in the poem “We real cool” by Gwendolyn Brooks” give it a little waltz and jingle feel. Each parallel sentence follows a basic pattern, starting with pronouns and ending with nouns and adverbs, except the first line, which ends with an adjective [6, 1].

Syntactic parallelism is polyfunctional. It creates rhythm and is typical of poetry. It makes speech persuasive and is a feature of the publicistic and oratory styles. It underlines important information and is widely used in everyday speech. Parallel structure creates fluency in writing and enhances readability, as it uses patterns of words in a way that readers can easily follow, and relate them to each other. It makes language appear refined, especially in writing and advertising. It also lends consistency to professional writing, as it

provides rhythm and balance that lead the readers to the exact idea, without any misguidance. In addition, parallel structures synchronize, repeat and emphasize the words and thoughts of the writers.

Inversion is the syntactic phenomenon of intentional changing word order of the initial sentence model:

Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed,
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course untrimmed:
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

William Shakespeare in "Sonnet 18" used many examples of inversion in his plays and poetry, both anastrophe and anaclysis. In this famous sonnet, Shakespeare changes around some of the word order to make lines more poetic and stylized. We see this in the first line of the excerpt, "Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines." In syntactically correct order, the line would read, "Sometimes the eye of heaven shines too hot." By ending the line with "shines," Shakespeare can create a rhyme with "declines." The line also places the emphasis on the parallel between "too hot" and "shines." There is also inversion in the final couplet of the poem in the unusual phrasing, "So long lives this." This creates a nice repetition at the beginning of the two lines of the couplet with "so long" and antimetabole of "lives this" with "this gives life" [4, 25].

References

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