LANGUAGE IN INDIA

Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow

Volume 12 : 2 February 2012

ISSN 1930-2940

The Use of Figures of Speech as a Literary Device – A Specific Mode of Expression in English Literature

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Abstract

English language is versatile having excellent qualities to fascinate the readers by its beauty of narration and expression. The particular quality comes from within through its vast variety of uses. It has some distinct categories of words called figures of speech. It is a mode of expression in which words are used out of their literal meaning or ordinary use to create an effect, often where they do not have their original or literal meaning. It is also used to add beauty, intensify emotion and present a meaning familiar to reader by comparing one thing with another. As an integral part of language, figures of speech are found in oral literatures as well as in polished poetry and prose and in everyday speech. Common figures of speech include simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, irony, alliteration, onomatopoeia, pun, apostrophe, euphemism, repetition, oxymoron, imagery, allegory etc. (Ref.5)

Introduction

The figures of speech play a major role in creative writings and rhetoric expression. It has been used in all ages and in all languages; but in ancient times, the Greeks were the first to use figures of speech in their works; they called them schema (schemes). It gives a different and beautiful look to the piece of writing by exposing the inherent inert qualities. One must be cautious while

using figures of speech because if the writer has used them in excess or he has used in a wrong way, then the whole piece of art will be a failure because the thought which he or she is trying to address will be expressed in a wrong manner and may give a very wrong impression. As Longinous, the first Greek critic, believes, the usage of excessive decoration may be harmful for the piece of art. You will probably remember many of these terms from your English classes. Figurative language is often associated with literature-and with poetry in particular. But the fact is, whether we're conscious of it or not, we use figures of speech every day in our own writing and conversations.

Using original figures of speech in our writing is a way to convey meanings in fresh and unexpected ways. They can help our readers understand and stay interested in what we have to say.

For example, common expressions such as "falling in love," "racking our brains," "hitting a sales target," and "climbing the ladder of success" are all metaphors--the most pervasive figure of all. Likewise, we rely on similes when making explicit comparisons ("light as a feather") and hyperbole to emphasize a point ("I'm starving!").

If someone says he is 'starving', he does not mean that he is in fact dying of hunger, but that he is very hungry. This is a simple example of a figure of speech, where the word is used to heighten or increase the state that he is describing.

It is a departure from the ordinary form of expression, or the ordinary course of ideas in order to produce a greater effect.

Figures of Speech may be classified as under:

a) Those based on Resemblance such as Allegory, Apostrophe, Euphemism, Imagery, Metaphor, Pathetic Fallacy, Personification and Simile

b) Those based on contrast such as Antithesis, Epigram, Oxymoron, Paradox and Pun

c) Those based on association such as Metonymy, Symbol and Synecdoche

d) Those based on construction such as Anticlimax, Climax, Colloquialism, Exclamation, Interrogation, Pathos, Rhetorical Question and Transferred Epithet

e) Those based on repetition such as Alliteration, Anaphora, Assonance, Refrain and Repetition

f) Those based on overstatement or vice versa such as Hyperbole and Litotes

g) Those based on moral and criticism such as Fable, Parable and Irony

h) Those based on sound and music such as Caesura, Cacophony, Internal Rhyme, and Onomatopoeia

A. Figures of Speech Based on Resemblance

1. Allegory

Allegory is a literary device employing narrative, an extended metaphor, figurative speech, etc., to convey one idea under the surface of another. It is a representation of abstract ideas or principles by characters, figures, or events in narrative, dramatic, or pictorial form. A story, picture, or play employing such representation. John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress and Herman Melville's Moby Dick are allegories. Also, it presents some moral but it is a story of greater length. The people and places in it stand for other ideas. One of the best examples is "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress". An allegory is a narrative where similarities between the narratives are used symbolically to suggest something else; a journey could be used allegorically to suggest a person's journey through life, etc.

2. Apostrophe

Apostrophe as a literary term is a direct address to the dead, absent or a personified object or idea. It denotes a figure of speech in which someone absent, inanimate or dead is addressed as if were alive and present and able to reply. The literary apostrophe enables the speaker to develop ideas that might arise naturally and to create a vivid image expressing intense emotion. The speaker's yearning is dramatized to stress the permanence of place and eternity to contrast it with earthly permanence (Ref. 2). It is very close to personification, even then, the speaker assumes by using apostrophe, objects or abstractions that the thing being addressed is in his presence.

In John Keats's sonnet "Bright Star," the speaker addresses a distant and inanimate star as though the star had human understanding and divine power. The speaker addresses the star because it has qualities that the speaker desires. This rhetorical device addresses things which are personified; absent people or gods as demonstrated by Shakespeare who writes in Julius Caesar. Act 3, Scene 1 -

"O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth,
That I am meek and gentle with these butchers!
Thou art the ruins of the noblest man,
That ever lived in the tide of times."
"O judgment! Thou art fled to brutish beasts. O death! Come soon" (Ref.1) Page-298, Chapter-XXXI.

3. Euphemism

This literary device is used to replace an evil and inauspicious word with a good or auspicious word called Euphemism. An inoffensive word or phrase substitutes for one considered offensive or hurtful, esp. one concerned with religion, sex, death, or excreta. The deliberate or polite use of a pleasant or neutral word or expression to avoid the emotional implications of a plain term, as departed or passed over for "dead"; sleep with for "have sexual intercourse with", relieve oneself for "urinate". You are telling me a fairy tale (i.e. a lie). (Ref.1) Page-299, Chapter-XXXI,

4. Imagery

The suggestion of vivid mental pictures, or image, by the skilful use of words is called imagery. Poets have three ways of making us see mental pictures. (a) By description (verbal) (b) By use of Simile, Metaphor and Personification (c) By Picturesque Epithet a poet can also call up a picture with a single illumination word or phrase such as "All in a hot and copper sky, the bloody sun at noon". (3) Furthermore, The elements in a literary work used to evoke mental images, not only of the visual sense, but of sensation and emotion as well. While most commonly used in reference to figurative language, imagery is a variable term which can apply to any and all components of a poem that evoke sensory experience, whether figurative or literal, and also applies to the concrete things so imaged.

5. Metaphor

A Metaphor is an implied simile and a comparison, between two dissimilar things or persons on all points, is cent per cent made that actually has something in common. For example, we can say: The camel is the ship of desert. Life is a dream.

It is also a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one object or idea is applied to another, thereby suggesting a likeness or analogy between them, as it is expressed in the line "The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one" by Edward Fitzgerald in the "The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám". Another example is "I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!" by Percy Bysshe Shelley in the immortal poem "Ode to the West Wind" and "The cherished fields put on their winter robe of purest white" by James Thomson in the poem, "The Seasons". While most metaphors are nouns, verbs can be used as well, "Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas, Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high, Are each paved with the moon and these" by Percy Bysshe Shelley in the poem "The Cloud". (Ref.1) Page-298, Chapter-XXXI,

6. Pathetic Fallacy

Sometimes Nature is regarded as taking active interest in human affairs. It attributes human emotions or characteristics to inanimate objects or to nature; the earth has been used as a living object which was hurt and nature is crying as in the following lines, "Earth felt the wound,

Nature wept on her agony, Angry clouds; a cruel wind. It has been frequently used in poetic practice of attributing human emotion or responses to nature, inanimate objects, or animals. The practice is a form of personification that is as old as poetry, in which it has always been common to find smiling or dancing flowers, angry or cruel winds, brooding mountains, moping owls, or happy larks. The term was coined by John Ruskin in “Modern Painters” (1843-60). In some classical poetic forms such as the pastoral elegy, it is actually a required convention. In Milton's "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity," all aspects of nature react affectively to the event of Christ's birth. “The Stars with deep amaze stand fixt in steadfast gaze” is the best example of classical form.

7. Personification

Personification is used in speech and writing for giving inanimate objects, abstract concepts or actions, human or near human characteristics, having the quality of metaphor since it is a metaphoric way of spicing up writing, and making the abstract more relatable. In it, distinctive human characteristics, e.g., honesty, emotion, volition, etc., are attributed to an animal, object or idea such as "The haughty lion surveyed his realm" or "My car was happy to be washed" or "'Fate frowned on his endeavors." It is commonly used in allegory and sometimes lifeless or inanimate things and abstract ideas are treated as if they are human beings having life and intelligence. For example: Death lays his icy hand on kings. Laughter holding both her sides. (Ref.1) Page-298, Chapter-XXXI

In literature, it is easy to find examples of personification. Fog “creeps.” Thoughts “explode.” Trees “menace.” Clouds “portend.” Death becomes a “messenger.” These examples are all ways in which a writer can use personification to make ordinary objects or abstract concepts essentially come alive and provide more of an emotional feel for the reader. The examples above also give the things personified human characteristics, which connect to the reader’s understanding of the human world, and human actions.

8. Simile

A figure of speech in which an explicit comparison is made between two essentially unlike or different things, usually by using like, as or than, designed to create an unusual, interesting, emotional or other effect as in Burns', "O, my love's like A Red, Red Rose" or Shelley's "As still as a brooding dove," in the poem “The Cloud”.

Some specific similes in which the parallel is developed and extended beyond the initial comparison, often being sustained through several lines, are called epic or Homeric similes. It is well-defined in ´ Book IV, lines 335 onwards; Odysseus's rage is compared to the courage of the lion in the lines given below.

"But as it chances, when the hart hath lay’d Her fawns new-yean’d and sucklings yet, to rest

Within some dreadful lion's gloomy den, She roams the hills, and in the grassy vales

Feeds heedless, till the lion, to his lair, Return'd, destroys her and her little-ones,

So them thy Sire shall terribly destroy."

There are some common comparisons with the qualities associated with animals and other objects (as sly as a fox, as brave as a lion, my heart is like a singing bird. The righteous shall flourish as the palm tree etc.) (Ref.1) Page-297 Chapter-XXXI,

B. Figures of Speech Based on Contrast

1. Antithesis

A striking opposition or contrast of words or sentiments is made in the same sentence. A figure of speech in which sharply contrasting ideas are juxtaposed in a balanced or parallel phrase or grammatical structure can be seen in Milton's writing "He for God only, she for God in him". It is related to personification, although in apostrophe, objects or abstractions are implied to have certain human qualities (such as understanding) by the very fact that the speaker is addressing them as he would a person in his presence. Another example of contrasting ideas is "Man proposes, God disposes" and "To err is human, to forgive divine". (Ref.1) Page-299, Chapter-XXXI,

2. Epigram

An epigram is a brief pointed usually memorable saying introducing contrasting ideas which excite surprise and assert attention that is derived from the Greek. For example, I can present this statement, "The child is the father of man" that best represents the idea. (Ref.1) Page-299, Chapter-XXXI,

In early English literature the short couplet poem was dominated by the poetic epigram and proverb, especially in the translations of the Bible and the Greek and Roman poets. Since 1600, two successive lines of verse that rhyme with each other, known as a couplet featured as a part of the longer sonnet form, most notably in William Shakespeare's sonnets. Sonnet 76 is an excellent example.

3. Oxymoron

Basically, an oxymoron is a phrase or figure of speech that takes two words together that appear to have opposite meanings, i.e., a contradiction in terms. It comes from two words in Greek: oxy, meaning sharp, and moros, meaning dull. These are two opposites - so you could say the word oxymoron is an oxymoron! It is defined in dictionaries as a rhetorical figure in which

incongruous or contradictory terms are combined, as in a deafening silence and a mournful optimist. J. A. Cuddon in his monumental work on Literary Theory describes oxymoron as an old but common device in literature especially in poetry, closely related to antithesis and paradox. Among the examples of oxymoron cited by him are:

1. "I like a smuggler. He is the only honest thief' (Charles Lamb)

2. Another example is Milton's description of hell in Paradise Lost.

"No light, but rather darkness rather visible"

Two terms or contradictory qualities, which are opposite in meaning, are placed side by side at once of the same thing. Here, the writer presents the conflicting ideas which generally look opposite to each other, so the reader is stunned at the beauty and the depth of the hidden meaning. Example: So innocent arch, so cunningly simple. (Ref.1) Page-299, Chapter-XXXI,

4. Paradox

A Paradox is a precise statement having a lot of sense at bottom but almost no sense on the surface. It is a statement or concept that contains conflicting ideas. In logic, a paradox is a statement that contradicts itself; for example, the statement "I never tell the truth" is a paradox because if the statement is true (T), it must be false (F) and if it is false (F), it must be true (T). In everyday language, a paradox is a concept that seems absurd or contradictory, yet is true. In a Windows environment, for instance, it is a paradox that when a user wants to shut down their computer, it is necessary to first click "start". Another example from a grammar book is; “There is none so poor as a wealthy miser”.

5. Pun

Pun is a figure of speech which plays on words and gives double meanings, one is serious and another is humorous. According to dictionary.com, a pun is the following: “The humorous use of a word or phrase so as to emphasize or suggest its different meanings or applications, or the use of words that are alike or nearly alike in sound but different in meaning”.

An example can be given as follows: If a woman loses her husband, she pines for a second (60th part of a minute, another) (Ref.1) Page-300, Chapter-XXXI,

C. Figures of Speech Based on Association

1. Metonymy

An object is designated by the name of something which is generally associated with it.

Some familiar examples: The bench for the judges, the crown for the king, the laurel for the success. Author for the book, the kettle boils (container for the thing), Instrument for the agent (Ref.1) (Page-300, Chapter-XXXI). Since there are many kinds of associations between objects, there are several verities of Metonymy.

Thus a Metonymy may result from the use –

(1) The sign for the person or thing symbolized; as,
You must address the chair (i.e., the chairman).
From the cradle to the grave (i.e., from infancy to death).

(ii) The container for the thing contained; as,
The whole city went out to see the victorious general.
The kettle boils.
Forthwith he drank the fatal cup.
He keeps a good cellar.
He was playing for the gallery.
He was undoubtedly the best stable in the country.

(iii) The instrument for the agent; as
The pen is mightier than the sword.

(iv) The author for his work; as,
We are reading Milton. Do you learn Euclid at your school?

(v) The name of a feeling or passion for its object;
He turn'd his charger as he spake
Upon the river shore,
He gave the bridle-reins a shake,
Said 'Adieu for evermore.
My love!
And adieu for evermore.'

There are certain examples in literature given below.

"Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears" (Act III, scene II, lines 74-77). The page number varies in different versions of the book.

Metonymically — "ear" represents "attention" (because we use ears to pay attention to someone's speech). When we hear the phrase "lending ear (attention)", we stretch the base meaning of "lend" (to let someone borrow an object) to include the "lending" of non-material things (attention).

2. Symbol

An image transferred by something that stands for or represents something else, like flag for country, or autumn for maturity. Symbols can transfer the ideas embodied in the image without stating them, as in Robert Frost's "Acquainted with the Night", in which night is symbolic of death or depression, or Sara Teasdale's The Long Hill, in which the climb up the hill symbolizes life and the brambles are symbolic of life's adversities.

3. Synecdoche: A figure of speech in which a part is used to represent the whole (for example, ABCs for alphabet) or the whole for a part ("England won the World Cup in 1966"), (as hand for sailor), the whole for a part (as the law for police officer), the specific for the general (as cutthroat for assassin), the general for the specific (as thief for pickpocket), or the material for the thing made from it (as steel for sword). Some more examples: He has many mouths to feed (people) India (cricket team) beat Pakistan. (Ref.1) Page-301, Chapter-XXXI,

D. Figures of Speech Based on Construction and Structure

1. Anticlimax

Anticlimax is the opposite of climax – a sudden descent from higher to lower. It is chiefly used for the purpose of satire or ridicule. A decline viewed in disappointing contrast with a previous rise: the anticlimax of a brilliant career. Something trivial or commonplace that concludes a series of significant events: After a week of dramatic negotiations, all that followed was anticlimax. It is a sudden descent in speaking or writing from the impressive or significant to the ludicrous or inconsequential, or an instance of it:

Some more examples:

1. Here thou, great Anna! Whom three realms obey,
   Dost sometimes counsel take – and sometimes tea.

2. And thou, Dalhousie, the great god of war,
   Lieutenant - Colonel to the Earl of Mar.

2. Climax

Climax (Greek Klimax = a ladder) is the arrangement of a series of ideas in the order of increasing importance. In rhetoric, mounting by degrees through words or sentences of increasing weight and in parallel construction (see auxesis), with an emphasis on the high point or culmination of an experience or series of events

i. The point of greatest intensity or force in an ascending series or progression; a culmination. See Synonyms at summit.

ii. a. It is series of statements or ideas in an ascending order of rhetorical force or intensity. **b.** The final statement in such a series.

iii. a. It presents a moment of great or culminating intensity in a narrative or drama, especially the conclusion of a crisis. **b.** The turning point in a plot or dramatic action.

Some more examples: Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime. What a piece of work is man! How noble is reason, how infinite in faculties! In action how like an angel! In apprehension, how like a god! (Ref.1) Page-301, Chapter-XXXI,

3. Colloquialism

Words or phrases which are informal, familiar part of everyday speech are not used in formal writing. *Colloquialism* - a word or phrase used in an easy, informal style of writing or speaking. It is usually more appropriate in speech than formal writing. Colloquialisms appear often in literature since they provide a sense of actual conversation and use the pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary of everyday speech. The word is taken from the Latin *colloqui*, which is a joining of com, meaning "with or together," and *loqui*, meaning "to speak" and "conversation."

4. Exclamation

In this figure of speech the exclamatory form is used to draw a greater attention to a point than a mere bald statement of it could do. The followings are the perfect examples.

1. What a piece of work is man!
2. How sweet the moonlight upon this bank!
3. O what a fall was there, my countrymen! (Ref.1) Page-301, Chapter-XXXI,

5. Interrogation

Interrogation is the asking of a question not for the sake of getting an answer, but to put a point more effectively. This figure of speech is also known as Rhetorical Question because a question is asked merely for the sake of rhetorical effect.

Examples: 1. Am I my brother's keeper?
2. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?
3. Shall I wasting in despair – Die because a woman's fair?
4. Who is here so vile that will not love his country?
5. Breaths there the man with soul so dead

Who never to himself hath said, this is my own, my native land? (Ref.1) Page-301, Chapter-XXXI,

6. Pathos

It is a feeling of great sadness or tone of pity in literature. Pathos is a Greek word for deep emotion, passion, or suffering, so when emotion is used to affect the reader: such as in Romeo & Juliet; Othello and Pride & Prejudice, Thomas Hardy's 'Far from the Madding Crowd" and many more books, the reader feels sorry for someone.

7. Rhetorical Question

A rhetorical question is one that requires no answer because the answer is obvious and doesn't need to be stated. The speaker (of the rhetorical question) is not looking for an answer but is making some kind of a point, as in an argument. Asking a question as a way of asserting something, or asking a question not for the sake of getting an answer but for asserting something (or as in a poem for creating a poetic effect)

8. Transferred Epithet

It is a fine figure of speech in which an epithet (or adjective) grammatically qualifies a noun other than the person or thing it is actually describing. Also, it is known as hypallage. It often involves shifting a modifier from the animate to the inanimate, as in the phrases "cheerful money," "sleepless night," and "suicidal sky." Example: He passed a sleepless night. She used a thorny pillow" (Ref.1) Page-301, Chapter-XXXI

E. Figures of Speech Based on Repetition

1. Alliteration

Alliteration has a gratifying effect on the sound, gives a reinforcement to stresses, and can also serve as a subtle connection or emphasis of key words in the line, but alliterated words should not "call attention" to themselves by strained usage. The use of words beginning with the same letter or sound is called Alliteration i.e. repetition of sound. For example we can see this fabulous line "**F**aithful **F**riends **F**rom **F**lattering **F**oe" from the poem, (Ref.4) "The frog and the nightingale" by Vikram Seth. Also called head rhyme or initial rhyme, the repetition of the initial sounds (usually consonants) of stressed syllables in neighboring words or at short intervals within a line or passage, usually at word beginnings, as in "wild and woolly" or the line from Shelley's The Cloud: I bear light shade for the leaves when laid Sidelight: Alliteration has a gratifying effect on the sound, gives a reinforcement to stresses, and can also serve as a subtle connection or emphasis of key words in the line, but alliterated words should not "call attention" to themselves by strained usage. Alliteration also may be carried beyond the limits of a single line and may even operate in elaborate patterns throughout a poem as a counterpoint to other relationships indicated by different sorts of repetition, such as rhyme, metrical pattern, and assonance.

Front-rhyme, or alliteration the repetition of initial sounds of accented syllables frequently supplements the use of other unifying devices, although in Old English poetry it formed the basic structure of the line and is still so employed occasionally in modern poetry, as by Gerard Manley Hopkins and in W. H. Auden's The Age of Anxiety. The exact repetition of sounds within a line serves as a variety of internal rhyme ("Come here, thou worthy of a world of praise," Chapman, "The Odyssey").

2. Anaphora

It is a deliberate repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of several successive verses, clauses, or paragraphs; as it can be seen in the writing of Winston S. Churchill, "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". Further, we get another fine example "The ice was here, the ice was there, the ice was all around" (line 59-60) in the poem "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" by S. T. Coleridge.

3. Assonance

In assonance, we repeat a vowel sound often in the middle of words, in poetry, when two syllables in words are close together. Another repetition device used chiefly in a decorative or supplemental function rather than in a structural one is assonance, the use of similar vowel sounds with identical consonant clusters. Such a poem as G. M. Hopkins' "The Leaden Echo" will illustrate abundantly how these "supplemental" devices of internal rhyme, alliteration, and assonance may be made into the chief features of the poetic line to support an unconventional system of metrics.

The relatively close juxtaposition of the same or similar vowel sounds, but with different end consonants in a line or passage, thus a vowel rhymes, as in the words, date and fade. Example: Pale, brave, sonnet, escaped, scooped. Another repetition device used chiefly in a decorative or supplemental function rather than in a structural one is assonance, the use of similar vowel sounds with identical consonant clusters. Such a poem as G. M. Hopkins' "The Leaden Echo" will illustrate abundantly how these "supplemental" devices of internal rhyme, alliteration, and assonance may be made into the chief features of the poetic line to support an unconventional system of metrics.

4. Refrain

A Refrain is the thematic line in the poem which appears again and again to highlight its effect. The refrain is the stanza that keeps on repeating after some lines in a poem. You'll see it frequently in songs (which are often a form of poetry). There will be a first verse, then the refrain, then the second verse, then the refrain. The refrain is the part that gets sung over again between verses. A fine example "For men may come, and men may go, but I go on forever" can be given from the poem "The Brook" by Lord Tennyson. Frequently also, the exact repetition of words in the same metrical pattern at regular intervals forms a refrain, which serves to set off or

divide narrative into segments, as in ballads, or, in Lyric poetry, to indicate shifts or developments of emotion.

Such repetitions may serve as commentary, a static point against which the rest of the poem develops, or it may be simply a pleasing sound pattern to fill out a form ("hey downe adowne"). As a unifying device, independent of conventional metrics, repetition is found extensively in free verse, where parallelism (repetition of a grammar pattern) reinforced by the recurrence of actual words and phrases governs the rhythm which helps to distinguish free verse from prose (e.g., Walt Whitman, "I Hear America Singing"; Carl Sandburg, Chicago, The People Yes; Edgar Lee Masters, Spoon River Anthology).

The repetition of similar endings of words or even of identical syllables (rime riche) constitutes rhyme, used generally to bind lines together into larger units or to set up relationships within the same line (internal rhyme). Such repetition, as a tour de force, may be the center of interest in a poem, as Southey's "The Cataract of Lodore" and Belloc's "Tarantella," or may play a large part in establishing the mood of a poem, as in Byron's Don Juan.

The repetition of a phrase in poetry may have an incantatory effect as in the opening lines of T. S. Eliot's "Ash-Wednesday":

Because I do not hope to turn again
Because I do not hope
Because I do not hope to turn....

The remaining 38 lines of the opening section of the poem might well be studied as an example of the effects of phrasal repetition, containing as they do no less than 11 lines clearly related to the opening 3 and serving as a unifying factor in a poem otherwise very free in structure.

5. Repetition

Sometimes the important word in a sentence is repeated to give expression to some deep emotion such as “Alone, alone, all alone, Alone on a wide, wide sea” (Ref.3). The repetition of a sound, syllable, word, phrase, line, stanza, or metrical pattern is a basic unifying device in all poetry. It may reinforce, supplement, or even substitute for meter, the other chief controlling factor in the arrangement of words into poetry.

Sometimes the effect of a repeated phrase in a poem will be to emphasize a development or change by means of the contrast in the words following the identical phrases. For example, the shift from the distant to the near, from the less personal to the more personal is emphasized in Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" by such a repetition of phrases:

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;

I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay. (Ref.3)

Allusion or quoting is a special case of repetition, since it relies on resources outside of the poem itself for its effect. Here, as with the pun, the effect of the repetition is diffusive rather than unifying, seeming frequently to be an extraneous, if graceful, and decoration. Hence, with the exception of a few poets who have used it as a basic technique (Ref.6), its chief use has been humorous, as in Robert Frost's "A Masque of Reason" or in W. S. Gilbert's "Bab Ballads."

The repetition of a complete line within a poem may be related to the envelope stanza pattern, may be used regularly at the end of each stanza as a refrain, or in other ways. The multiple recurrence of a line at irregular intervals as in Catullus' 64th Ode, or the line "Cras a met qui numquam amavit, quique amavit cras a met," which occurs ten times in the 92 lines of the Pervigilium Veneris, illustrates the effect of a repetition of a specific line apart from a set place as furnished by stanzaic structure. Rarely a line may be repeated entire and immediately as a means of bringing a poem to a close, an extension of the method of bringing a sequence of terza rima to a close with a couplet:

And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.
(Robert Frost, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening")

(F) Figures of Speech Based on Overstatement or Vice Versa

1. Hyperbole

It is overstatement or exaggerated language that distorts facts by making them much bigger than they are if looked at objectively. It is an extreme exaggeration which can be found in literature and oral communication used to make a point.

Ten thousand saw I at a glance. O Hamlet! Thou has cleft my heart in twain (Ref.1) Page-299, Chapter-XXXI.

The media use it a lot to make stories seem more important or interesting than they really are (an apparently unfair boxing decision was described as the 'crime of the century' by one newspaper which seems excessive when compared to murder). It may be used to entertain or more seriously. They would not be used in nonfiction works, like medical journals or research papers, but are perfect for fictional works, especially to add color to a character or humor to the story. They are extravagant and even ridiculous. Similarly, a boring story can come to life or become comical with the use of hyperbole. Some examples of hyperboles would be: “I’ve told you a million times” and “It was so cold; I saw polar bears wearing jackets”

2. Litotes

An affirmative is conveyed by negation of the opposite to suggest a strong expression by means of a weaker. Litotes is a kind of understatement, where the speaker or writer uses a negative of a word ironically, to mean the opposite. It is to be found in English literature right back to Anglo-Saxon times e.g. She's not the friendliest person I know (= she's an unfriendly person). The man is no fool (very clever). I am a citizen of no mean (very celebrated) city. (Ref.1) Page-301, Chapter-XXXI,

G. Figures of Speech Based on Moral and Criticism

1. Fable

A fable is a type of story in which birds, beasts and insects are treated like human beings with an aim to teach some moral. And usually a short narrative making an edifying or cautionary point and often employing as characters animals that speak and act like humans. The stories composed of supernatural happenings, fables usually employ the personification of animals or inanimate objects and are intended to teach a moral or lesson. The Western fable originated in Greece with Aesop's Fables, in India fables date back to the 5th century BC and the Panca-tantra, a Sanskrit collection of beast-fables. In Japan, fables fill the 8th-century histories, Kojiki and Nihon shoki.

Examples

One of Aesop's most famous fables is that of "The Tortoise and the Hare," the moral of which is "slow but steady wins the race," and Vikram Seth's "The Frog and the Nightingale".

2. Irony

Irony is generally used in literature to criticize somebody; it is a type of statement which has double meaning - surface meaning and inner meaning. The inner meaning is opposite to the surface meaning. The real meaning is exactly the opposite to that which is literally conveyed.
For example: Here under leave of Brutus and the rest

> (For Brutus is an honorable man:
> So are they all, all honorable men)
> Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.
> He was my friend, faithful and just to me;
> But Brutus says he was ambitious,
> And Brutus is an honorable man.

Here Antony in Julius Caesar bitterly criticizes Brutus and he actually means to say that Brutus is dishonorable (Ref.1) Page-300, Chapter-XXXI. Irony is common in English, especially in humor. When the speaker or writer says one thing but wants you to understand something different, they are being ironic. Sometimes the implied meaning is the opposite of the words being used, or the person could be trying to be rude, even though the words used are seemingly

polite etc. **A** general **e**xample of irony is as follow; your friend turns up in ripped jeans. With a smirk, you say, "I see you have put on your best clothes!"

3. Parable

A Parable is a story that aims at answering a single question and offering a definite moral. The Bible has several parables meant to teach some moral lesson. Definition: Parable is a short, descriptive story that illustrates a moral attitude or religious idea. It differs from the fable in its lack of fantastic or anthropomorphic characters but is similar in length and simplicity. Parables are stories which serve to illustrate a moral point. Many parables are religious in nature, and can be found in religious texts such as the Bible or the Buddhist Tipitaka. There are also secular parables, including those in Aesop's Fables, such as The Boy Who Cried Wolf. Parables in literature can be an effective way to impart moral teachings, as stories can be recalled with clarity and interest and are often more memorable than other teaching tools.

H. Figures of Speech Based on Music and Sound

1. Cacophony (cack-AH-fuh-nee or cack-AW-fuh-nee)

Discordant sounds in the jarring juxtaposition of harsh letters or syllables, sometimes inadvertent, but often deliberately used in poetry for effect, as in the lines from Whitman's The Dalliance of Eagles:

The clinching interlocking claws, a living, fierce, gyrating wheel,
Four beating wings, two beaks, a swirling mass tight grappling,
In tumbling turning clustering loops, straight downward falling,

Sound devices are important to poetic effects; to create sounds appropriate to the content, the poet may sometimes prefer to achieve a cacophonous effect instead of the more commonly sought-for euphony. The use of words with the consonants b, k and p, for example, produce harsher sounds than the soft f and v or the liquid l, m and n.

2. Caesura (siz-YUR-uh)

A rhythmic break or pause in the flow of sound which is commonly introduced in about the middle of a line of verse, but may be varied for different effects. Usually placed between syllables rhythmically connected in order to aid the recital as well as to convey the meaning more clearly, it is a pause dictated by the sense of the content or by natural speech patterns, rather than by metrics. It may coincide with conventional punctuation marks, but not necessarily. A caesura within a line is indicated in scanning by the symbol (||), as in the first line of Emily Dickinson's, I'm Nobody! Who Are You?

I'm no | body! || Who are | you?

Sidelight: As a grammatical, rhythmic, and dramatic device, as well as an effective means of avoiding monotony, the caesura is a powerful weapon in the skilled poet's arsenal.

3. Internal Rhyme

Rhymes written within a line and not merely at the ends of lines also add music to a verse. Besides end rhyme, Coleridge also frequently uses internal rhyme. Following are examples.

i. The guests are met; the feast is set (line 7)

The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast (line 49)

And through the drifts the snowy clifts (line 54)

The ice did split with a thunder-fit (line 69)

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud (line 75)

The fair breeze blew; the white foam flew (line 103)

ii. The ice was here, the ice was there. (Ref.3)

4. Onomatopoeia (ahn-uh-mah-tuh-PEE-uh)

It is the formation of a name (or word) by imitating the natural sound that is associated with the object. An onomatopoeic word is suggestive of the sound or the quality of the object, i.e., sound suggests the meaning such as babble, croak, puff-puff, thud, and buzz. Strictly speaking, the formation or use of words which imitate sounds, like whispering, clang and sizzle, but the term is generally expanded to refer to any word whose sound is suggestive of its meaning. Sound is an important part of poetry, the use of onomatopoeia is another subtle weapon in the poet's arsenal for the transfer of sense impressions through imagery, as in Keats' "The murmuring haunt of flies on summer eves," in Ode to a Nightingale. Though impossible to prove, some philologists (linguistic scientists) believe that all languages originated through the onomatopoeic formation of words.

Conclusion

The figures of speech are the soul and spirit of the literature as it adds variety, beauty, flavor and various colors and shades to the writing. The literature will be colorless and ineffective in absence of the specific uses of literary devices and it will lose its versatility. The writers use it to add spices to their writing, criticize and comment upon others; they can express their feelings in

a novel and precise manner contrary to a long narration which will be boring and dull. Since time immemorial, the figures of speech have been used as a great tool in the formation of literature and it will continue to enrich in the time to come. By the passing of time, its significance and utility are growing more and more with new additions bewildering the readers of literature. The English literature has been remarkably musical, dramatic, and mystical and varied in nature; a lot of credit goes to the significant use of the figures of speech.

Acknowledgement:

I would like to express my gratitude to all my colleagues, especially Mr. Rajib Ahmed, who forwarded their sincere guidance to complete this article.

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