recreant

can be used as a noun or adjective; archaic

1. cowardly, coward

2. unfaithful to a belief; apostate.

But G.O.P. pols go along publicly because they are recreants, slavishly trying to hold onto voters who are more intensely aligned with Trump than old-style Republicans.

-- “Republicans, the Real Chickens of Kiev.” by Maureen Dowd, The New York Times, November 16 2019

recension

a revised edition of a text; an act of making a revised edition of a text

"Under the Carolingians new recensions of the code were made."

arrogate

“arrogating to himself”

take or claim (something) without justification.

fusty

1. smelling stale, damp, or stuffy.

"the fusty odor of decay"

2. old-fashioned in attitude or style

transmogrify

transform in a surprising or magical manner

"the cucumbers that were ultimately transmogrified into pickles"

varietal

adjective

1. (of a wine or grape) made from or belonging to a single specified variety of grape.

2. botany/zoology

relating to, characteristic of, or forming a variety

“varietal names"

alembic

1: a distilling apparatus, now obsolete, consisting of a rounded, necked flask and a cap with a long beak for condensing and conveying the products to a receiver

2: something that refines or transmutes as if by distillation; philosophy … filtered through the alembic of Plato's mind

“the alembic of hell” -- Edmund Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France, Burke

repine

verb

LITERARY

feel or express discontent; fret

inure

accustom (someone) to something, especially something unpleasant

"these children have been inured to violence"

synonyms: harden, toughen, season, temper, condition

pendant

an artistic, literary, or musical composition intended to match or complement another.

"the triptych's pendant will occupy the corresponding wall in the south transept"

limpsy

adjective

limp especially from lack of physical strength: WEAK

suddenly the half-frozen and lifeless body fell limpsy in their hands -- Walt Whitman

(runaway slave; Song of Myself)

immiserate

verb

cause to become poor or impoverished.

"the colonial policy immiserated the populace

rakehell

noun

libertine; a licentious or dissolute man; rake

quell

verb

put an end to (a rebellion or other disorder), typically by the use of force.

"extra police were called to quell the disturbance"

subdue or silence someone.

"he quelled him with a look"

suppress (a feeling, especially an unpleasant one)

"he spoke up again to quell any panic among the assembled youngsters"

pansophy

universal wisdom or encyclopedic knowledge; also, a system of universal knowledge

pansophic

1: of or relating to pansophy

2: omniscient

griot

noun

a member of a class of traveling poets, musicians, and storytellers who maintain a tradition of oral history in parts of West Africa

jape

noun: a practical joke.

verb: to say or do something in jest or mockery.

“… it was as a columnist that Mr. Baker made his name. Based at first in Washington, he recalled that he had to feel his way in the new genre of spoof and jape. “Nobody knew what the column was going to be,” he told the writer Nora Ephron. “I didn’t. The Times didn’t.”

-- “Russell Baker, Pulitzer-Winning Times Columnist and Humorist, Dies at 93,” By Robert D. McFadden, The New York Times, January 22, 2019

facticity

the quality or condition of being fact

"the facticity of death"

whilom

adverb; archaic

formerly

pericope

an extract from a text, especially a passage from the Bible

magisterium

the teaching authority of the Roman Catholic Church, especially as exercised by bishops or the Pope

the official and authoritative teaching of the Roman Catholic Church.

periphrasis

the use of indirect and circumlocutory speech or writing

an indirect and circumlocutory phrase.

plural noun: periphrases

GRAMMAR

the use of separate words to express a grammatical relationship that is otherwise expressed by inflection, e.g., did go as opposed to went and more intelligent as opposed to smarter.

amphibology

a phrase or sentence that is grammatically ambiguous, such as she *sees more of her children than her husband*.

obtrusion

1: an act of obtruding

2: something that is obtruded

obtrude

1. become noticeable in an unwelcome or intrusive way.

"a sound from the reception hall obtruded into his thoughts"

2. impose or force (something) on someone in an intrusive way.

"I felt unable to obtrude my private sorrow upon anyone"

“The generality of my scheme does not admit the frequent notice of verbal inaccuracies which Bentley, perhaps better skilled in grammar than in poetry, has often found, though he sometimes made them, and which he imputed to the obtrusions of a reviser whom the author's blindness obliged him to employ.”

-- Samuel Johnson, Lives of the Poets, “Milton”

sublunary

adjective; literary

belonging to this world as contrasted with a better or more spiritual one.

"the concept was irrational to sublunary minds"

pravity

Moral perversion or corruption; wickedness, depravity; an instance of this. Now archaic.

Origin: Early 16th century; earliest use found in John Irland (c1440-1495), theologian. From Middle French pravité and its etymon classical Latin prāvitās crookedness, distortion, perverseness, depravity from prāvus + -tās. Compare Catalan pravitat, Spanish pravedad, Italian pravità.

Samuel Johnson, Lives of the Poets (“Milton”): “Ariosto’s pravity is generally known.”

pawky

adjective

BRITISH

having or showing a sly sense of humor.

"a gentle man with a pawky wit"

shrewd.

"she shakes her head with a look of pawky, knowing skepticism"

antimony

noun

a trivalent and pentavalent metalloid element with atomic number 51 that commonly occurs in a brittle, metallic, silvery white crystalline form and that is used especially in alloys, semiconductors, and flame-retardant substances

a silvery-white, brittle, nonmetallic chemical element of crystalline structure, found only in combination: used in alloys with metals to harden them and increase their resistance to chemical action; compounds of antimony are used in medicines, pigments, and matches, and for fireproofing: symbol, Sb; at. no., 51

At the intellectual heart of this most controversial of his political tracts is both a primary text supportive of empire in four parts and a subversive subtext scornfully meditating the end of empire with little regret. First, he began with a defense of government's authority to tax subjects (Samuel Johnson, Political Writings, Yale Works, 10:411-19); second, he differentiated ancient and modern empire to demon­strate Great Britain's prerogatives (10:419-28); then thirdly, he attacked the self-righteous demands of the First Continental Congress (10:428-45); and lastly, be sarcastically called for the imposition of armed peace even while he could imagine the rise of an independent America indifferent to England (10:445-55). Paradoxically, for all this opening insistence on the unequivocal truth of parliamentary sovereignty, the pamphlet positively seethes with un­resolved dualities and dichotomies symptomatic of an underlying ideological impasse soon to sweep antagonists into unavoidable civil war. Oppositions abound: order/chaos, civilization/savagery, loyalty/rebellion, obedience/free­dom, sovereignty/autonomy, coercion/conciliation, and love/hatred for one's country. The entire dispute, like the Johnsonian logic of disputation, rested on stark ANTINOMIES, beyond peaceful reconciliation. Concerning the conceptual contrarieties dividing belligerents, a climactic statement says it all: "Liberty is the birthright of man, and where obedience is compelled, there is no liberty. The answer is equally simple. Government is necessary to man, and where obedience is not compelled, there is no government" (10:448). Here was a di­lemma without apparent solution: "Nothing remains but to conquer or to yield; to allow their claim of independence, or to reduce them by force to submission and allegiance" (10:444). War was inevitable.

-- Thomas M. Curley, “Samuel Johnson and *Taxation No Tyranny*,” in in *New Essays on Samuel Johnson: Revaluation*, edited by Anthony W. Lee

skulk

verb

keep out of sight, typically with a sinister or cowardly motive.

"don't skulk outside the door like a spy!"

noun

a group of foxes.

“he sculked from the approach of his king:

-- Samuel Johnson, “Milton,” The Lives of the Poets, pg. 156

concatenate

verb

link (things) together in a chain or series

"some words may be concatenated, such that certain sounds are omitted"

deciduous

(of a tree or shrub) shedding its leaves annually.

galoot

a clumsy or oafish person (often as a term of abuse).

synonyms: oaf, lug, lummox, knuckle-dragger, ape, klutz

"I was expecting the big galoot to trip over his own feet"

Ms. Leavy is generous with examples of entertainingly mawkish media coverage of Ruth, much of it supplied to reporters by Walsh, though it seems everyone participated in painting the man they knew to be a boozer, womanizer and midnight rambler as a clean-living, uxorious, adorable GALOOT.

-- review of “The Big Fella: Babe Ruth and the World He Created” by Jane Leavy; reviewed by Katherine A. Powers, The Wall Street Journal, October 5, 2018

expletion

1. The action of filling something; the state of being filled to the full, satisfaction, fulfilment.

2. A word, expression, or passage that merely fills out a sentence, line, or text, without adding anything to the sense; = "expletive".

3. An exclamation, an oath, a swear word; = "expletive". Also, as a mass noun: such expletives collectively.

pusillanimous

showing a lack of courage or determination; timid

synonyms: timid, timorous, cowardly, fearful, faint-hearted, lily-livered, spineless, craven, shrinking

natter

verb

gerund or present participle: nattering

talk casually, especially about unimportant matters; chatter

"they nattered away for hours"

Spiro Agnew used "pusillanimous pussyfoooters" and "nattering nabobs" in a speech to criticize antiwar protesters

perspicuous

(of an account or representation) clearly expressed and easily understood; lucid

"it provides simpler and more perspicuous explanations than its rivals"

(of a person) able to give an account or express an idea clearly

BUT NOTE

perspicacious

having a ready insight into and understanding of things

"it offers quite a few facts to the perspicacious reporter"

synonyms: discerning, shrewd, perceptive, astute, penetrating, observant, percipient, sharp-witted, sharp, smart, alert, clear-sighted, farsighted, acute, clever, canny, intelligent, insightful, wise, sage, sensitive, intuitive, understanding, aware, discriminating

emulous

adjective; formal

seeking to emulate or imitate someone or something

motivated by a spirit of rivalry.

"emulous young writers"

“emulous waves”

Walt Whitman, “The Ship Starting”

appanage

noun; archaic

1. a gift of land, an official position, or money given to the younger children of kings and princes to provide for their maintenance

2. a necessary accompaniment

"there is a tendency to make microbiology an appanage of organic chemistry"

gibbosity

plural gibbosities

protuberance, swelling

“his veinous cheeks resembled the kind of vine-leaf which is swollen with violet, purple, and often multi-coloured gibbosities.”

-- Balzac, Lost Illusions

nettle

1. a herbaceous plant that has jagged leaves covered with stinging hairs.

verb

1. irritate or annoy (someone).

"I was nettled by Alene's tone of superiority"

synonyms: irritate, annoy, irk, gall, vex, anger, exasperate, infuriate, provoke

2. (archaic) beat or sting (someone) with nettles.

'Tis dangerous to take a cold, to sleep, to drink; but I tell you, my lord fool, out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety. The purpose you undertake is dangerous, the friends you have named uncertain, the time itself unsorted, and your whole plot too light for the counterpoise of so great an opposition.

-- Shakespeare: Henry IV Part 1: Act 2

zeugma

a figure of speech in which a word applies to two others in different senses

e.g., John and his license expired last week

or to two others of which it semantically suits only one

e.g., with weeping eyes and hearts

litotes

ironic understatement in which an affirmative is expressed by the negative of its contrary

e.g., you won't be sorry, meaning you'll be glad

anaphora

GRAMMAR: the use of a word referring to or replacing a word used earlier in a sentence, to avoid repetition, such as do in I like it and so do they.

RHETORIC: the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses.

a rhetorical term for when a writer or speaker repeats the same beginning of a sentence several times. Writers and speakers use anaphora to add emphasis to the repeated element, but also to add rhythm, cadence, and style to the text or speech.

example: “The wrong person was selected for the wrong job, at the wrong time, for the wrong purpose.”

an anaphoric usage; especially: being a word or phrase that takes its reference from another word or phrase and especially from a preceding word or phrase -- compare cataphoric

In linguistics, anaphora is the use of an expression whose interpretation depends upon another expression in context (its antecedent or postcedent). In a narrower sense, anaphora is the use of an expression that depends specifically upon an antecedent expression and thus is contrasted with cataphora, which is the use of an expression that depends upon a postcedent expression. The anaphoric (referring) term is called an anaphor. For example, in the sentence Sally arrived, but nobody saw her, the pronoun her is an anaphor, referring back to the antecedent Sally. In the sentence Before her arrival, nobody saw Sally, the pronoun her refers forward to the postcedent Sally, so her is now a cataphor (and an anaphor in the broader, but not the narrower, sense). Usually, an anaphoric expression is a proform or some other kind of deictic (contextually-dependent) expression. Both anaphora and cataphora are species of endophora, referring to something mentioned elsewhere in a dialog or text.

Anaphora is an important concept for different reasons and on different levels: first, anaphora indicates how discourse is constructed and maintained; second, anaphora binds different syntactical elements together at the level of the sentence; third, anaphora presents a challenge to natural language processing in computational linguistics, since the identification of the reference can be difficult; and fourth, anaphora tells some things about how language is understood and processed, which is relevant to fields of linguistics interested in cognitive psychology.

anaphora

noun

1. GRAMMAR

the use of a word referring to or replacing a word used earlier in a sentence, to avoid repetition, such as do in I like it and so do they.

2. RHETORIC

the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses.

anaphora

the repetition of opening words

asyndeton

the omission or absence of a conjunction between parts of a sentence

polysyndeton

a stylistic device in which several coordinating conjunctions are used in succession in order to achieve an artistic effect

In case any of you have been living under a rock for the past week (or aren’t from the US), the Denver Broncos are going to the Super Bowl. This is a Very Big Deal for the city of Denver, and people are going nuts. We’re all trying to make plans for Sunday so that we make sure that we have a couch to sit on and a TV to yell at. The guys who hosted the AFC Championship watch party are also hosting a Super Bowl party, and we’re getting the same crew together for beer and chips and wings and pizza and football and popcorn and probably some weird commercials.

Also, in case you were wondering, that last sentence was a textbook example of polysyndeton.

What Is Polysyndeton?

Polysyndeton is a literary technique in which conjunctions (e.g. and, but, or) are used repeatedly in quick succession, often with no commas, even when the conjunctions could be removed.

It is often used to change the rhythm of the text, either faster or slower, and can convey either a sense of gravity or excitement. It can also be used to intentionally overwhelm the reader, giving them very little room for mentally or visually breathing with the lack of commas.

Below are a few more examples now that you know what to look for.

Example from Charles Dickens’ A Tale of Two Cities:

… Jerry stood: aiming at the prisoner the beery breath of a whet he had taken as he came along, and discharging it to mingle with the waves of other beer, and gin, and tea, and coffee, and what not, that flowed at him, and already broke upon the great windows behind him in an impure mist and rain.

Example from Mark Twain’s The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn:

I got into my old rags and my sugar-hogshead again, and was free and satisfied. But Tom Sawyer he hunted me up and said he was going to start a band of robbers, and I might join if I would go back to the widow and be respectable. So I went back.

Example from Jane Austen’s Pride and Prejudice:

Mrs. Hurst and her sister allowed it to be so—but still they admired her and liked her, and pronounced her to be a sweet girl, and one whom they would not object to know more of.

Austen uses polysyndeton frequently to convey a sense of enthusiasm and breathlessness.

Example from Herman Melville’s Moby Dick:

There was a low rumbling of heavy sea-boots among the benches, and a still slighter shuffling of women’s shoes, and all was quiet again, and every eye on the preacher.

The Opposite of Polysyndeton: Asyndeton

Asyndeton is what would result if you replaced all the conjunctions in the sample sentence above with commas, as in the famous Julius Caesar quote, “Veni, vidi, vici.”

It is important to note that polysyndeton and asyndeton are not necessarily indicative of a run-on sentence. A run-on sentence has no conjunctions or commas to indicate transition of ideas or phrases, but barrels on as if it were two sentences properly separated by a period. Polysyndeton and asyndeton maintain the elements of transition or connection, and are grammatically functional techniques.

… a parallel construction can be made to stand out by, for example, beginning each part of the parallelism with the same word or phrase. This device is called anaphora.

“asyndeton and polysyndeton … are actually quite uncomplicated matters of connectives. The former means the absence of connectives, generally and' s, and the latter is just the opposite, the repetitive use of connectives.

-- Mary P. Hiatt, Artful Balance: The Parallel Structures of Style (Teachers College Press, 1975)

epistrophe

RHETORIC

the repetition of a word at the end of successive clauses or sentences

symploce

the simultaneous use of anaphora and epistrophe.

In rhetoric, symploce is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is used successively at the beginning of two or more clauses or sentences and another word or phrase with a similar wording is used successively at the end of them. It is the combination of anaphora and epistrophe.

tmesis

the separation of parts of a compound word by an intervening word or words, heard mainly in informal speech

e.g., shove it back any-old-where in the pile

illocutionary act

The concept of illocutionary acts was introduced into linguistics by the philosopher J. L. Austin in his investigation of the various aspects of speech acts.

In Austin's framework, locution is what was said, illocution is what was meant, and perlocution is what happened as a result.

When somebody says "Is there any salt?" at the dinner table, the illocutionary act (the meaning) is effectively "please give me some salt" even though the locutionary act (the literal sentence) was to ask a question about the presence of salt.

The perlocutionary act (the actual effect), was to cause somebody to offer salt.

mimesis

noun

imitation, in particular:

representation or imitation of the real world in art and literature.

the deliberate imitation of the behavior of one group of people by another as a factor in social change.

cursus

movement or flow of style; specifically: a pattern of cadence at the end of a sentence or phrase in medieval Latin prose which aimed by varying rhythm to avoid stressing the ultimate syllable

coxcomb

a vain and conceited man; a dandy

cully

British; archaic

a man; a friend

used by Daniel Defoe

remit

noun

1. the task or area of activity officially assigned to an individual or organization.

"the committee was becoming caught up in issues that did not fall within its remit"

2. an item referred to someone for consideration.

foregrounding

Foregrounding, in poetry is a way to make it stand out from ordinary writing. Foregrounding is when you manipulate words or sentences to be put in such a way that may seem to be grammatically incorrect but it attracts attention.

Foregrounding is the mother of literature and it sets apart literature from the norms of the ordinary language.

There are two kinds of foregrounding:

1. Parallelism is the repetition of a sound, word, idea etc. For instance, “I kissed thee ere, I killed thee...” —Othello, Shakespeare.

2. Deviation is to deviate from the said norm of the language. Example: “Ten thousands saw I at a glance.” (Wordsworth)

Foregrounding is the practice of making something stand out from the surrounding words or images. It is "the 'throwing into relief' of the linguistic sign against the background of the norms of ordinary language."

There are two main types of foregrounding: parallelism and deviation. Parallelism can be described as unexpected regularity, while deviation can be seen as unexpected irregularity.

When a poem deviates from “normal” language, this is called primary deviation. In addition, there is secondary deviation in that a line is unexpectedly different from the rest of the poem. Nursery rhymes, adverts and slogans often exhibit parallelism in the form of repetition and rhyme, but parallelism can also occur over longer texts. For example, jokes are often built on a mixture of parallelism and deviation. They often consist of three parts or characters. The first two are very similar (parallelism) and the third one starts out as similar, but our expectations are thwarted when it turns out different in end (deviation).

Foregrounding can occur on all levels of language (phonology, graphology, morphology, lexis, syntax, semantics and pragmatics). It is generally used to highlight important parts of a text, to aid memorability and/or to invite interpretation.

"in poetic language foregrounding achieves maximum intensity to the extent of pushing communication into the background as the objective of expression and of being used for its own sake; it is not used in the services of communication, but in order to place in the foreground the act of expression, the act of speech itself." (Jan Mukařovsky)

-- C. Carroll Hollis, Language and Style in Leaves of Grass (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), pg. 79

[F]foregrounding is ''the aesthetically intentional distortion of linguistic components" by which the message draws attention to itself. In conventional referential writing, the purpose of which is to convey information only, language becomes so habitual that we do not even notice it; it becomes what Mukařovsky) calls "automatized." This "automatized" language must be present as a background; in the literal sense, foregrounding brings language out of its background by whatever devices the writer chooses to use. In the previous sentence, if I had made every word, or even every major word, begin with the same letter, or the same syllable, or had them all rhyme, it would have drawn attention away from what the words were symbolizing to the words themselves. To have accidental alliteration or rhyming is actually a real blunder in serious expository prose, for it is a distraction that interrupts the developing flow of information.

*Background* can also apply to any type or form of writing against which the writer wishes his creation to be placed. For Wordsworth, in his Preface to and earlier practice in Lyrical Ballads, the background was eighteenth-century poetry. Whitman was not. quite so clear and forthright in his preface and practice in 1855, partly because his preface belonged to the act itself, and partly because he was working out his "foregrounding" as he went along and was still experimenting. The two, three, and four dots to indicate the length of pauses between word groups in speaking the lines, the occasional lack of punctuation or its use for rhetorical rather than grammatical reasons, the near-complete lack of parentheses even though parenthetical remarks are present, the failure to signify (by either italics or quotation marks) what is quoted material, all such reminders of the original oratorical impulse are still found in the 1855 edition, but most were gone in 1856, and all had vanished by the 1860 edition.

In Wordsworth, the "foregrounding" devices sharply differentiated his writing from that of his traditional eighteenth-century predecessors and contemporaries, but it was still recognized as poetry.

Whitman's foregrounding was even more drastic, so much so that many readers rejected *Leaves* as poetry altogether. Verse and verse forms might un­dergo various internal changes, but to reject verse altogether was to challenge not just one generation's literary fashion but what many considered the nature of poetry itself.

-- C. Carroll Hollis, Language and Style in Leaves of Grass (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), pp. 235-236

orotund

1: marked by fullness, strength, and clarity of sound: sonorous

an orotund voice

2: pompous, bombastic

an orotund speech

orotundity

noun

late 18th century: from Latin ore rotundo ‘with rounded mouth.’

orotund

1. (of the voice or phrasing) full, round, and imposing.

synonyms: deep, sonorous, strong, powerful, full, rich, resonant, loud, booming

"an orotund singing voice"

(of writing, style, or expression) pompous; pretentious

synonyms: pompous, pretentious, affected, fulsome, grandiose, ornate, overblown, flowery, florid, high-flown, magniloquent, grandiloquent, rhetorical, oratorical

adventitious

adjective

1. happening or carried on according to chance rather than design or inherent nature.

"my adventures were always adventitious, always thrust on me"

synonyms: unplanned, unpremeditated, accidental, chance, fortuitous, serendipitous, coincidental, casual, random

"he felt that the conversation was not entirely adventitious"

2. coming from outside; not native.

"the adventitious population"

etui

noun; dated

a small ornamental case for holding needles, cosmetics, and other articles.

used by Walt Whitman

see Hollis pg. 230

prosody

1. the patterns of rhythm and sound used in poetry

"the translator is not obliged to reproduce the prosody of the original"

2. the theory or study of prosody

3. the patterns of stress and intonation in a language

erethism

1. excessive sensitivity or rapid reaction to stimulation of a part of the body, especially the sexual organs.

2. a state of abnormal mental excitement or irritation.

adjective: erethistic

excessively and inordinately responsive to sensory stimuli

epideictic

adjective; formal

characterized by or designed to display rhetorical or oratorical skill

stative

adjective; linguistics

(of a verb) expressing a state or condition rather than an activity or event, such as be or know, as opposed to run or grow

syntagma

a linguistic unit consisting of a set of linguistic forms (phonemes, words, or phrases) that are in a sequential relationship to one another

crackle

verb

gerund or present participle: crackling

1. make a rapid succession of slight cracking noises

"the fire suddenly crackled and spat sparks"

synonyms: sizzle, fizz, hiss, crack, snap, sputter, crepitate

"bits of dried mosses crackled in the fire"

2. give a sense of great tension or animation.

"attraction and antagonism were crackling between them"

gaggery

British

noun

the practice of telling jokes

oneiric

adjective

relating to dreams or dreaming

hobble

noun

a rope or strap used for hobbling a horse or other animal

variant: hopple

used by Walt Whitman

“the hopples fall from your ankles”

conation

an inclination (such as an instinct, a drive, a wish, or a craving) to act purposefully: impulse

conative: adjective

antinomian

relating to the view that Christians are released by grace from the obligation of observing the moral law.

a person holding antinomian beliefs.

vernal

of, in, or appropriate to spring

glossology

The science of language; linguistics.

illocutionary

relating to or being the communicative effect (such as commanding or requesting) of an utterance

"There's a snake under you" may have the illocutionary force of a warning

axil

BOTANY

the upper angle between a leaf stalk or branch and the stem or trunk from which it is growing.

horology

1. the study and measurement of time

2. the art of making clocks and watches

cimeter

or scimitar

a large, curved butcher's knife

tumultuary

adjective

tumultuous; turbulent

philology

the branch of knowledge that deals with the structure, historical development, and relationships of a language or languages

minacious

menacing; threatening

I had dinner with Vladimir Putin once. He made me lose my appetite.

The then-fledgling president of Russia was polite and smiling at first with me and the other journalists present at the 21 Club.

But then Katie Couric asked about his bloodless behavior in the wake of the Kursk submarine disaster in the summer of 2000, when the boat sank and all 118 on board were killed. She pressed him on why he didn’t come back from vacation when all those Russian sailors were suffering and dying in the submarine at the bottom of the sea.

His face completely changed, almost as though he had ripped off a “Mission Impossible” mask. Suddenly, he stared coldly at Katie, every inch the minacious K.G.B. agent. He looked like Richard Widmark playing a psychotic thug in a ’50s film noir.

-- Maureen Dowd, “Trump, Having a Bawl in Europe,” The New York Times, July 14, 2018

carding (British)

the process of preparing the fibres of cotton, wool, etc.

homiletics

the art of preaching or writing sermons

chiasmus

noun

a rhetorical or literary figure in which words, grammatical constructions, or concepts are repeated in reverse order, in the same or a modified form; e.g. “Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds.”

repetend

a recurring word or phrase; a refrain

paratactic

of or relating to parataxis

parataxis

the placing of clauses or phrases one after another, without words to indicate coordination or subordination, as in Tell me, how are you?

parataxis

Real speech comes, on average, in packets of 10 or so words at a time, rather sloppily juxtaposed. Rapid, spontaneous talk makes more use of parataxis -- the stringing of simple clauses together, such as in this segment:

Look, having nuclear – my uncle was a great professor and scientist and engineer, Dr. John Trump at M.I.T.; good genes, very good genes, O.K., very smart, the Wharton School of finance, very good, very smart – you know, if you're a conservative Republican, if I were a liberal, if, like, okay, if I ran as a liberal Democrat, they would say I'm one of the smartest people anywhere in the world – it’s true! – but when you're a conservative Republican they try – oh, they do a number – that’s why I always start off: "Went to Wharton, was a good student, went there, went there, did this, built a fortune”– you know I have to give my life credentials all the time, because we're a little disadvantaged – but you look at the nuclear deal, the thing that really bothers me …

In writing, this would likely be rendered using hypotaxis, which entails clearer subordinate clauses. The same sentence would be written as: “My uncle Dr. John Trump, who was a professor at M.I.T., had very good genes, which lent him considerable intelligence.”

hypotaxis

GRAMMAR

the subordination of one clause to another.

dependent relation or construction, as of clauses; syntactic subordination.

Hypotaxis is the grammatical arrangement of functionally similar but "unequal" constructs (from Greek hypo- "beneath", and taxis" arrangement"), i.e., certain constructs have more importance than others inside a sentence.

A common example of syntactic expression of hypotaxis is the subordination of one syntactic unit to another in a complex sentence. another example is observed in premodification. In the phrase "inexpensive composite materials", "composite" modifies "materials" while "inexpensive" modifies the complex head "composite materials", rather than "composite" or "materials". In this example the phrase units are hierarchically structured, rather than being on the same level, as compared to the example "Cockroaches love warm, damp, dark places." Notice the syntactic difference; hypotactic modifiers cannot be separated by commas.

A classical example of verbal hypotaxis is the blandly mocking Greek response King Leonidas reportedly made to the Persian messengers at Thermopylae, Molon labe (i.e., "Having come, take!").

Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale" has an example of hypotaxis in the second stanza: "O, for a draught of vintage! That hath been/ Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth, / Tasting of Flora and the country green," The "draught of vintage" is modified by the clauses in the successive lines.

In Blake's poem "The Clod and the Pebble", the phrase "So sang a little Clod of Clay,/ Trodden with the cattle's feet" is an example of hypotaxis; line 6 modifies the "Clod of Clay" in line 5.

proem

a preface or preamble to a book or speech.

polysemy

polysemous

adjective

definition of polysemous

having multiple meanings

1

polysemy

In one of the more extreme polysemous developments, a word can take on an opposite meaning, as dust (v.) can mean to clean up small particles (dust the furniture) or to apply small particles (dust the Bundt cake with powdered sugar).

Polysemy is an aspect of semantic ambiguity that concerns the multiplicity of word meanings. For a commonplace example, consider the meaning of the adjective good in the following sentences:

1. We had a good time yesterday.

2. Bring me a good banana.

3. That ticket is good for travel on any flight.

4. It’s a good ten miles to the next gas station.

In each case, good carries a different meaning:

1. Pleasurable, enjoyable, or satisfying.

2. Suitable for an intended purpose.

3. Generally valid and acceptable.

4. Emphatically full or complete.

Notice the range of meanings available for interpretation of good in these few sentences.

metalepsis

plural metalepses

a figure of speech consisting in the substitution by metonymy of one figurative sense for another

Metalepsis (from the Greek) is a figure of speech in which a word or a phrase from figurative speech is used in a new context.

"I've got to catch the worm tomorrow."

"The early bird catches the worm" is a common maxim, advocating getting an early start on the day to achieve success. The subject, by referring to this maxim, is compared to the bird; tomorrow, the speaker will awaken early in order to achieve success.

sequacious

adjective

1. following with smooth or logical regularity

2. Archaic. following, imitating, or serving another person, especially unreasoningly

noumenon

plural noumena

a posited object or event as it appears in itself independent of perception by the senses

adjective, noumenal

In metaphysics, the noumenon (from Greek) is a posited object or event that exists independently of human sense and/or perception. The term noumenon is generally used when contrasted with, or in relation to, the term phenomenon, which refers to anything that can be apprehended by or is an object of the senses.

midge

a small two-winged fly that is often seen in swarms near water or marshy areas where it breeds.

informal: a small person.

(used by Louisa May Alcott in her novel *Moods*)

risible

capable of laughing; disposed to laugh

arousing or provoking laughter; especially, laughable

associated with, relating to, or used in laughter … risible muscles

(Alcott, *Moods*)

shimmery ((Alcott, *Moods*)

shammer

1. someone shirking their duty by feigning illness or incapacity.

malingerer, skulker. shirker, slacker - a person who shirks his work or duty (especially one who tries to evade military service in wartime)

2. shammer - a person who makes deceitful pretenses.

swivet

a fluster or panic.

“the incomprehensible did not throw him into a swivet"

pleonasm

noun

the use of more words than are necessary to convey meaning (e.g., see with one's eyes), either as a fault of style or for emphasis

emulous

adjective; formal

seeking to emulate or imitate someone or something.

motivated by a spirit of rivalry.

"emulous young writers"

Whitman -- “emulous waves” (“Song of Myself”)

eidolon

noun

an idealized person or thing.

a specter or phantom

In ancient Greek literature, an eidolon (plural: eidolaor eidolons) (Greek εἴδωλον: "image, idol, double, apparition, phantom, ghost") is a spirit-image of a living or dead person; a shade or phantom look-alike of the human form. The concept of Helen of Troy's eidolon was explored both by Homer and Euripides. However, where Homer uses the concept as a free-standing idea that gives Helen life after death, Euripides entangles it with the idea of kleos, one being the product of the other. Both Euripides and Stesichorus, in their respective works concerning the Trojan Horse, claim that Helen was never physically present in the city at all.

isochronous

adjective

occurring at the same time

occupying equal time.

<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isochrony>

chaffer

verb

haggle about the terms of an agreement or price of something

irrupt

intransitive verb

1: to rush in forcibly or violently

2 of a natural population: to undergo a sudden upsurge in numbers especially when natural ecological balances and checks are disturbed

3: erupt

the crowd irrupted in a fervor of patriotism

(used by Louisa May Alcott in her novel *Work: A Story of Experience*)

swash

verb

gerund or present participle: swashing

1. (of water or an object in water) move with a splashing sound.

"the water swashed and rippled around the car wheels"

2. archaic

(of a person) flamboyantly swagger about or wield a sword.

"he swashed about self-confidently"

“swashing sound” (Alcott, *Work: A Story of Experience*)

motley

adjective

incongruously varied in appearance or character; disparate

"a motley crew of discontents and zealots"

noun

1. an incongruous mixture

"a motley of interacting interest groups"

2. historical

the particolored costume of a jester.

"life-size mannequins in full motley"

“wear warm, true hearts under their motely”

(used in Alcott, *Work: A Story of Experience*)

jorum

(historical) a large bowl or jug used for serving drinks such as tea or punch

retiracy

1: retirement, seclusion

2: sufficient means or property to make possible retirement from business

saleratus

sodium bicarbonate (or sometimes potassium bicarbonate) as the main ingredient of baking powder.

rusk

a hard, dry biscuit or a twice-baked bread

anathemize

curse or declare to be evil or anathema or threaten with divine punishment

deplore; express strong disapproval of.

defalcation

1: (archaic) deduction

2: the act or an instance of embezzling

3: a failure to meet a promise or an expectation

Defalcation is misappropriation of funds by a person trusted with its charge; also, the act of misappropriation, or an instance thereof. The term is more specifically used by the United States Bankruptcy Code to describe a category of acts that taint a particular debt such that it cannot be discharged in bankruptcy.

dubersome

(archaic) doubtful

used by Louisa May Alcott

tatty

adjective, informal

1. worn and shabby; in poor condition.

"the room was furnished in slightly tatty upholstered furniture"

2. of poor quality

"his gap-toothed smile and tatty haircut"

early 16th century (originally Scots, in the sense ‘tangled, matted, shaggy’): apparently ultimately related to Old English tættec ‘rag,’ of Germanic origin; compare with tattered.

-- used in “Police’s Shifting Account of Black Man’s Death Raises Questions in Savannah,” The New York Times, April 28, 2018:

Its restaurants are more sophisticated, its airport has expanded to accommodate more visitors -- “The numbers are just exploding,” Mayor Eddie DeLoach says -- and its historic downtown, which once evinced a tatty charm, has been burnished to a high gloss.

settle

noun

a long seat or bench, usually wooden, with arms and a high back

dyscrasy

noun; countable and uncountable

1. (countable, literally) A bodily disorder; an imbalance of the humors; distemper; morbid diathesis.

2. (uncountable, figuratively) Disharmony; discord; disorder; dissonance.

albescent

becoming [white](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/white) or [whitish](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/whitish); moderately white

see “albescent honey”

Walt Whitman and the Body Beautiful

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rachitic

rachitic poets

(used in Harold Aspiz, *Walt Whitman and the Body Beautiful*)

1. (medicine) Pertaining to or affected by rickets

2. Feeble, in a weak or precarious condition.

esculent

adjective

fit to be eaten; edible.

noun

a thing, especially a vegetable, which is fit to be eaten

used by Walt Whitman

pathognomy

Pathognomy is the study of passions and emotions. It refers to the expression of emotions indicated by the voice, gestures and facial expression. While physiognomy is used to predict the overall, long-term character of an individual, pathognomy is used to ascertain clues about one's current character.

(used in Harold Aspiz, *Walt Whitman and the Body Beautiful*)

adumbrate

1: to foreshadow vaguely: intimate

the social unrest that adumbrated the French Revolution

2: to suggest, disclose, or outline partially

adumbrate a plan

3: overshadow, obscure

bubbling optimism, not at all adumbrated by difficulties

adumbration; noun

Antinomianism is any view which rejects laws or legalism and is against moral, religious, or social norms (Latin: mores), or is at least considered to do so.

In Christianity, an antinomian is one who takes the principle of salvation by faith and divine grace to the point of asserting that the saved are not bound to follow the Law of Moses. The distinction between antinomian and other Christian views on moral law is that antinomians believe that obedience to the law is motivated by an internal principle flowing from belief rather than from any external compulsion.

doughty

archaic; humorous

brave and persistent.

"his doughty spirit kept him going"

synonyms: fearless, dauntless, determined, resolute, indomitable, intrepid, plucky, spirited, bold, valiant, brave, stouthearted, courageous

cocotte

noun

1. a covered, heatproof dish or casserole in which food can be both cooked and served; a Dutch oven.

2. dated; a fashionable prostitute.

gallipot

noun

historical

a small pot made from glazed earthenware or metal, used by pharmacists to hold medicines or ointments.

crinoline

1. historical; a stiffened or hooped petticoat worn to make a long skirt stand out.

2. a stiff fabric made of horsehair and cotton or linen thread, typically used for stiffening petticoats or as a lining.

chivvy

verb

tell someone repeatedly to do something

an association that chivvies government into action"

limerence

noun

PSYCHOLOGY

the state of being infatuated or obsessed with another person, typically experienced involuntarily and characterized by a strong desire for reciprocation of one's feelings but not primarily for a sexual relationship

polyvalent

ADJECTIVE

Chemistry -- Having a valency of three or more.

Medicine -- Active against several toxins or strains of pathogen.

‘a polyvalent antivenin’

Having many different functions, forms, or facets.

‘the polyvalent character of his thought’

synoptic

adjective

1. of or forming a general summary or synopsis; taking or involving a comprehensive mental view

“a synoptic model of higher education"

2. relating to the Synoptic Gospels.

The gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are referred to as the synoptic Gospels because they include many of the same stories, often in a similar sequence and in similar or sometimes identical wording. They stand in contrast to John, whose content is largely distinct.

essentialism

1: an educational theory that ideas and skills basic to a culture should be taught to all alike by time-tested methods — compare progressivism

2: a philosophical theory ascribing ultimate reality to essence embodied in a thing perceptible to the senses — compare nominalism

3: the practice of regarding something (such as a presumed human trait) as having innate existence or universal validity rather than as being a social, ideological, or intellectual construct

essentialist

essentialism

noun -- education

1. a doctrine that certain traditional concepts, ideals, and skills are essential to society and should be taught methodically to all students, regardless of individual ability, need, etc.

swinge

verb

literary

strike hard; beat.

swinged; swingeing

transitive verb

chiefly dialectal

beat, scourge

swingeing

adjective

BRITISH

severe or otherwise extreme

"swingeing cuts in public expenditure"

anomie

lack of the usual social or ethical standards in an individual or group

"the theory that high-rise architecture leads to anomie in the residents"

immiserate

1. to make miserable.

2. to cause to become impoverished.

ostent

NOUN

rare, archaic

a portent or sign; a wonder, a prodigy

1: a significant sign; portent

the night waxed wan, as though with an awed sense of such ostent

-- Thomas Hardy

2: the act of showing or displaying; appearance, manifestation

be merry and employ your chiefest thoughts to courtship and such fair ostents of love

-- Shakespeare

3: excessive display; ostentation

the city of glorious ostent and vanity

-- Christopher Morley

dryad

(in folklore and Greek mythology) a nymph inhabiting a forest or a tree, especially an oak tree

apophatic

adjective

THEOLOGY

(of knowledge of God) obtained through negation

supernal

literary

relating to the sky or the heavens; celestial

of exceptional quality or extent

“he is the supernal poet of our age"

exercitant

one engaged in spiritual exercises

hyperbaton

RHETORIC

an inversion of the normal order of words, especially for the sake of emphasis, as in the sentence “this I must see.”

But the Democrats in the House aren’t all enthusiastic. Some have been saying they want a leader who’s younger, more open to new ideas, less likely to become a political meme for the opposition. “I do think it’s time to pass the torch to a new generation,” said Representative Linda Sánchez in a recent TV interview.

definition of meme

an element of a culture or system of behavior that may be considered to be passed from one individual to another by nongenetic means, especially imitation.

frowzy

adjective

1. scruffy and neglected in appearance.

synonyms: scruffy, unkempt, untidy, messy, disheveled, slovenly, slatternly, bedraggled, down-at-the-heels, badly dressed, dowdy, raggedy

"a frowzy old biddy"

2. dingy and stuffy

a frowzy nightclub"

synonyms:

dingy, gloomy, dull, drab, dark, dim

lucubration

study; meditation.

"after sixteen years' lucubration he produced this account"

a piece of writing, typically a pedantic or overelaborate one

plural noun: lucubrations

lucubrate

verb; archaic

produce scholarly written material

Origin

early 17th century: from Latin lucubrat -- ‘(having) worked by lamplight,’ from the verb lucubrare.

apostrophize

rhetoric

address an exclamatory passage in a speech or poem to (someone or something)

irrefragable

not able to be refuted or disproved; indisputable

lugubrious

looking or sounding sad and dismal

synonyms:

mournful, gloomy, sad, unhappy, doleful, glum, melancholy, woeful, miserable, woebegone, forlorn, somber, solemn, serious, sorrowful, morose, dour, cheerless, joyless, dismal

filiation

the fact of being or of being designated the child of a particular parent or parents.

"relationships based on ties of filiation as opposed to marriage"

the manner in which a thing is related to another from which it is derived or descended in some respect.

"the filiation of Old Norse manuscripts"

a branch of a society or language

gelid

adjective

icy; extremely cold

"the gelid pond"

synonyms: icy, very cold, icy cold, ice cold, frosty; frozen

"a gelid winter morning"

“I sing of winter and her gelid reign.” (James Thomson, *The Seasons*)

pleasaunce

A pleasure-garden; a region of garden with the sole purpose of giving pleasure to the senses, but not offering fruit or sustenance.

agonistic

combative; polemical

ZOOLOGY: of animal behavior associated with conflict

BIOCHEMISTRY: relating to or acting as an agonist.

glebe

archaic: land, specifically, a plot of cultivated land

a piece of land serving as part of a clergyman's benefice and providing income

supplejack

either of two New World twining plants

flange

a projecting flat rim, collar, or rib on an object, serving to strengthen or attach or (on a wheel) to maintain position on a rail

"the flanges that held the tailpipe to the aircraft"

chary

cautiously or suspiciously reluctant to do something.

"most people are chary of allowing themselves to be photographed"

synonyms: wary, cautious, circumspect, heedful, careful, on one's guard

umbrageous

1a: affording shade; 1b: spotted with shadows

2: inclined to take offense easily

prelusive

constituting or having the form of a prelude: introductory

georgic

a poem or book dealing with agriculture or rural topics

(adjective; literary) rustic; pastoral

early 16th century: via Latin from Greek gergikos, “farmer”

salvific

(theology)

adjective; leading to salvation

gammon

ham that has been cured or smoked like bacon; the lower or hind part of a side of bacon

informal, dated: nonsense; rubbish

verb: hoax or deceive someone

early 18th century: origin uncertain; the term was first used as criminals' slang in give gammon to “give cover to (a pickpocket)” and keep in gammon “distract (a victim) for a pickpocket”