

1. Rhetoric

Qn. What do you mean by Rhetoric?

Ans: As we all know that a thorough study of grammar is the first step to good composition. Grammarians have laid down certain rules relating to the form and construction of words, the structure of sentences, punctuations, etc., and composition can be faultless unless these rules are carefully observed. But mere grammatical accuracy is not sufficient to make our composition perfect. Our language may be free from any grammatical inaccuracy, and yet it may not express our ideas clearly, or it may be lacking in force and beauty. It is Rhetoric which teaches us to remove these defects, and lays down the conditions essential to effective composition.

Rhetoric is (a Greek word which means public orator) the art of the orator, the art/way of persuasive public speaking.

The word, rhetoric, is, however, now generally used to mean the whole art of elegant and effective composition, whether spoken or written.

The difference between Grammar and Rhetoric is that while grammar aims only at the correctness of language, Rhetoric aims at the beauty and force of style. The function of rhetoric is to consider all the means by which we can enhance the effect of our language on the minds of those to whom it is addressed.

2. Figure of speech

Any intentional deviation from literal statement or common usage that emphasizes, clarifies, or embellishes both written and spoken language. Forming an integral part of language, figures of speech are found in primitive oral literatures, as well as in polished poetry and prose and in everyday speech. Greeting-card rhymes, advertising slogans, newspaper headlines, the captions of cartoons, and the mottoes of families and institutions often use figures of speech, generally for humorous, mnemonic, or eye-catching purposes. The argots of sports, jazz, business, politics, or any specialized groups abound in figurative language.

Thus, when we say of Nelson, that he was his country's 'shield' not in the literal meaning/sense but in the figurative sense of 'defender'. Similarly when youth is termed as "the morning of life"/ old age - "the sunset of life"/ or moon - "queen of night", the expression used in each case is figurative.

Thus, figure of speech is like a rich and ornamental dress in which we clothe an idea for the purpose of making it remarkable and impressive.

A great many varieties of these rhetorical ornaments are met in English literature. The most important of these may be classified in the following way –

1. Figures based on similarity Simile, Metaphor, Allegory, Parable, Fable

2. Figures based on Association
Monotony, Synecdoche, Hypallage, Allusion

3. Figures based on Difference Antithesis, Epigram, climax, Anti-climax, The condensed sentence

4. Figures based on imagination Personification, Apostrophe, Vision, Hyperbole

5. Figures based on indirectness Innuendo, irony, Periphrasis, Euphemism

6. Figures based on sound Paronomasia, Onomatopoeia, Alliteration, Assonance

7. Figures based on construction
Interrogation, Exclamation, Chiasmus, Zeugma