



Classification of Epithet

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Abstract: *Epithets may be classified on the basis of their semantic and structural properties. Semantically, epithets fall into two groups: epithets associated with the noun modified and epithets not associated with the nouns modified. Associated epithets point out typical features of the objects which they describe. Such typical features are implied by the meaning of the nouns themselves*

Key words: *semantically, associated, structural, unassociated, communication, objects*

Epithets may be classified on the basis of their *semantic* and *structural* properties.

Semantically, epithets fall into two groups: *epithets associated* with the noun modified and *epithets not associated* with the nouns modified.

Associated epithets point out typical features of the objects which they describe. Such typical features are implied by the meaning of the nouns themselves:

if forest, then-dark;

if attention, then-careful;

if seas, then-salty;

if tears, then-bitter;

if sky, then-blue;

Unassociated epithets describe such qualities to objects which are not inherent in them.

As a result of this, metaphors emerge fresh, unexpected, original and expressive:

voiceless sands, helpless loneliness, thirsty deserts, blank face, murderous weather



Unassociated epithets may be called "speech epithets" because they are created right in the process of communication.

Original *unassociated* epithets are used in belles-lettres style and poetry in abundance. In newspaper style we can come across a lot of cases of phrase and sentence epithets. Tried epithets are most powerful expressive means of the language in abundance.

Associated epithets are mostly language epithets. Their use with certain nouns has become traditional and stable. Thus, they are language as a system elements.

As to their **Structural composition**, epithets are divided into simple, compound, phrasal and clausal.

Simple epithets are ordinary adjectives;

magnificent sight, tremendous pressure, overwhelming occupation

Compound epithets are expressed by compound adjectives:

mischief-making pupil, curly-headed boy, heart-burning desire

Phrasal epithets are expressed by word-combinations of quotation type:

do-it-yourself command, go-to-devil request, head-to-toe beauty

Clausal epithets are expressed by sentences:

I-don't-want-to-do-it feeling, I-did-it-myself statement

There is no clear barrier between associated and unassociated epithets. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between these two notions [restless sea].

Not every adjective is an epithet. An epithet is especially recognizable when its function is largely decorative, such as if "cloud-gathering Zeus" is employed other than in reference to conjuring up a storm., Walter Burkert has noted that "The epithets are decorative insofar as they are neither essential to the immediate context nor modelled especially for it. Among other things, they are extremely helpful to fill out a half-verse".

subjective, new, renders evaluation and modality, is stronger than trite>. [a joyful mountain top - an epithet based on metonymical periphrasis].



5. From the point of view of distribution of the epithets we distinguish transferred epithets which are originally logical attributes and describe a state of a human being, but they be referred to an animate objects [sleepless pillow].

String of epithets which gives a many-sided depiction of the object [rosy-cheeked, aple-faced young woman].

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Oxymoron

Oxymoron is a stylistic device based on the interrelation of primary logical and emotional types of meanings. structural models:

adjective + noun [sweet sorrow]

verb + adverb [peopled desert]

It can be trite [awfully happy] and geniune [proud humidity]. It can be used widely to create a humorous effect in advertising, publicistic and belles-lettres style.

Antonomasia

Antonomasia is the interplay between the logical and nominal meanings of a word. Nominal meaning is that one, which, expressing concepts indicate a particular object out of it. [Society is now one polished horde, is formed of two mighty tribes: the Bores and the Bored - geniune antonomasie].

It is very important to know that this device is mainly realized in the written speech , because generally the capital letters are the only signals to denote the presence of this stylistic device. In this example of the use of antonomasie the



nominal meaning is hardly perceived, the logical meaning of the word being too strong. It is intended to point out the leading, most characteristic feature of a person or event at the same time pinning this leading trait as a proper name to the person or event concerned. It is a much favoured device in the belles-lettres style. In Russian literature it is employed by many of our classic writers [Korobochka, Sobakevich]. Now it is falling out of use. It's now not confined to the belles-lettres style, though it's often found in publicistic style - magazines, articles, essays, military language [I suspect that the Nos and Do Not Knows would...]

An epithet is an adjective or adjectival phrase that characterizes a place, a thing, or a person that helps make the characteristics of this thing more prominent. These descriptive phrases can be used in a positive or negative way that benefits the orator. "It will generally happen, that the Epithets employed by a skillful orator, will be found to be, in fact, so many abridged arguments, the force of which is sufficiently conveyed by a mere hint; e.g. if anyone says, 'We ought to take warning from the bloody revolution of France,' the Epithet suggests one of the reasons for our being warned; and that, not less clearly, and more forcibly, than if the argument had been stated at length." [16] With persuasion being a key component of rhetoric, it is rational to use epithets. The use of persuasive wording gives leverage to one's arguments. Knowledge along with descriptive words or phrases can be a powerful tool. This is supported in Bryan Short's article when he states, "The New Rhetoric derives its empiricist flavor from a pervasive respect for clarity and directness of language." Rhetoricians use epithets to direct their audience to see their point of view, using verbal forms of imagery as a persuasive tactic.

Orators have a variety of epithets that they can employ that have different meanings. The most common are fixed epithets and transferred epithets. A fixed epithet is the repetitive use of the same word or phrase for the same person or object. A transferred epithet qualifies a noun other than the person or thing it is describing.



This is also known as a hypallage. This can often involves shifting a modifier from the animate to the inanimate; for example, "cheerful money" and "suicidal sky".

Orators take special care when using epithets so as to not use them as smear words. Orators could be accused of racial or abusive epithets if used incorrectly. American journalist William Safire discussed the use of the word in a 2008 column in The New York Times: "I am working on a piece about nationalism with a focus on epithet as a smear word,' writes David Binder, my longtime Times colleague, 'which was still a synonym for 'delineation' or 'characterization' in my big 1942 Webster's but now seems to be almost exclusively a synonym for 'derogation' or 'smear word.' ... In the past century, [epithet] blossomed as 'a word of abuse,' today gleefully seized upon to describe political smears."

Descriptive bynames were given to a person to distinguish them from other persons of the same name. In England bynames were used during the period when the use of surnames had not been extensively adopted. As an example the Domesday Book of 1086 identifies 40 individuals with the given name of "Richard". Most (40%), such as "Richard of Coursey" are identified with a locational byname, indicating where they came from, or in some cases where they lived. Others (25%), such as "Richard the butler" and "Richard the bald" are identified with an occupational or a personally descriptive byname. Some of the individuals, such as Richard Basset, made use of what we would recognize as a surname.

The distinction between a byname and a surname lies in the fact that the byname is not usually heritable, and may change for any given person as his circumstances change. Richard the bald, for example, was presumably not always bald, and Richard of Brampton may not have always lived at Brampton.

The use of bynames did not end with the adoption of surnames. In some cases, before the adoption of middle names, government records, such as taxes lists, included persons with both the same given name and the same surname. This led to the use of



bynames to further distinguish the person. For example, one "John Smith" might be described as "John Smith of the mill", while another might be described as "John Smith the short".

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