

'Antimetabole'
in
English and Arabic
A Comparative Study

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Abstract

This study deals with 'antimetabole' as one of the figures of speech in English as well as Arabic. 'Antimetabole' is a figure in which words are repeated in reverse grammatical order. The study aims at giving a somehow adequate investigation of 'antimetabole' in English and Arabic. Moreover, it aims at identifying the similarities and differences of this figure of speech in both languages.

This study consists of three main sections. The first main section which is devoted to 'antimetabole' in English is subdivided into three subsections. The first section deals with the concept of 'antimetabole'. The second section introduces the variations on the antimetabolic theme. The third section shows the rhetorical functions of 'antimetabole'. The second main section which is concerned with 'antimetabole' in Arabic has also three subsections. The concept of 'antimetabole' is dealt with in the first section. It is followed by a section on an antimetabolic variation and another on the rhetorical functions of 'antimetabole'. In the third main section, the similarities and differences of 'antimetabole' in both languages are illustrated. At last, the conclusion sums up the findings of the study.

الخلاصة

تعنى هذه الدراسة بالعكس بوصفه أحد الصور البلاغية في اللغتين الانكليزية و العربية. العكس هو صورة بلاغية تُعاد فيها الكلمات بترتيب نحوي عكسي. تهدف الدراسة إلى إعطاء توضيح وافٍ للعكس في اللغتين الانكليزية و العربية، فضلا عن ذلك تهدف الدراسة إلى بيان التشابهات و الاختلافات فيما يخص هذه الصورة البلاغية في كلتا اللغتين.

تتألف هذه الدراسة من ثلاثة أقسام رئيسة يتألف القسم الرئيسي الأول الذي كُرس للعكس في اللغة الانكليزية من ثلاثة أقسام فرعية. يتناول القسم الأول مفهوم العكس. يقدم القسم الثاني الاختلافات التي تحدث في موضوع العكس. فيما يبين القسم الثالث الوظائف البلاغية للعكس. أما القسم الرئيسي الثاني الذي يختص بالعكس في اللغة العربية فيتألف أيضا من ثلاثة أقسام فرعية. يبين القسم الأول منها مفهوم العكس . ويكون متبوعا بقسم يتناول الاختلافات التي تحدث في موضوع العكس وآخر يبين وظائفه البلاغية. أما القسم الرئيسي الثالث فقد كرس لعرض التشابهات و الاختلافات فيما يخص هذه الصورة البلاغية في كلتا اللغتين. وأخيرا، تعرض الدراسة النتائج التي توصلت إليها.

1. 'Antimetabole' in English

A description of 'antimetabole' is provided in this section:

1.1 The Concept of 'Antimetabole'

'Antimetabole' comes from a Greek word meaning 'to turn around in the opposite direction'. The Greek '*anti*' means 'against' or 'opposite' and '*metabole*' translates to 'turn about' (Ellis-Christensen, 2005:3; Nordquist, 2009:1). 'Antimetabole' is a rhetorical device which involves the repetition of words or phrases, in successive constructions, in transposed grammatical order (Cuddon, 1976:44; Corbett and Connors, 1999:394). This results in reversing or changing the grammatical functions of words or phrases, as in the following examples:

- (1) "**Pleasure's a sin, and sometimes sin's a pleasure.**"
(Byron cited in Vickers, 1988: 40)
- (2) "**Woe to those that call evil good, and good evil.**"
(Isaiah 5:20)
- (3) "**The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.**"
(Mark 2:27)
- (4) "**To be kissed by a fool is stupid; to be fooled by a kiss is worse.**"
(Redmoon cited in Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, 2007:1)
- (5) "**Now this not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end, but it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning .**"
(Churchill cited in Ellis-Christensen, 2005:1)
- (6) "**You have seen how a man was made a slave; you shall see how a slave was made a man.**" (Douglass cited in Lapidus, 2008: 1)
- (7) "**You have to know how to accept rejection and reject acceptance.**"
(Bradbury cited in Nordquist, 2009: 2)1

'Antimetabole' in the above examples is described as follows:

Example (1): The subject 'pleasure' in the first sentence becomes the subject complement in the second sentence. The subject complement 'sin' in the first sentence becomes the subject in the second sentence.

Example (2): The object 'evil' in the first clause functions as an object complement in the second clause. The object complement 'good' in the first clause functions as an object in the second clause.

Example (3): In the first sentence, 'Sabbath' is the subject. In the second sentence, 'Sabbath' functions as a prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase 'for the Sabbath'. In the first sentence, 'man' is the prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase 'for man'. In the second sentence, 'man' functions as a subject.

Example (4): In the first clause, 'kiss' is the verb whereas in the second clause it becomes a noun functioning as a prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase 'by a kiss'. In the first clause, 'fool' is a noun functioning as a prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase 'by a fool' whereas in the second clause it functions as a verb.

Example (5): In the first sentence, 'beginning' is a subject complement. In the second sentence, it functions as a prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase 'of the beginning'. In the first

sentence, 'end' is a prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase 'of the end '. In the second sentence, it functions as a subject complement.

Example (6): The subject 'man' in the first clause is made the subject complement in the second clause. The subject complement 'slave' in the first clause is made the subject in the second clause.

Example (7): In the first clause, 'accept' is the verb whereas in the second clause it becomes the noun 'acceptance' functioning as an object. In the first clause, 'rejection' is a noun functioning as an object whereas in the second clause it becomes the verb 'reject'.

In addition to the element of inversion, it is obvious that 'antimetabole' has another essential element which is repetition. Accordingly, it is called a figure, or more accurately a scheme, of repetition (Niquette, 2005, 1).

In 'antimetabole', one of the constructions shifts the meaning of the other. This happens via the reversal of the key words in them, as in the following example from Kennedy, the American ex-president:

(8) "Ask not what **your country** can do for **you**, but what **you** can do for **your country**." (Ellis-Christensen, 2005:3)

In the first clause, ' your country ' is a subject. In the second clause, it functions as a prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase 'for your country '. In the first clause, ' you ' is a prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase ' for you '. In the second clause, it functions as a subject .In this example, it is obvious that the second clause shifts the meaning of the first one, by reversing the words 'your country' and 'you' .This reversal results in a person not wondering what he/she will get from his/her country but wondering what he/she can give to his/her country (Ibid.).

Sometimes, however, 'antimetabole' does not alter meaning, as in:

(9) "**Freedom** requires **religion** just as **religion** requires **freedom**." (Romney, 2007:1)

The subject 'freedom' in the first sentence becomes the object in the second sentence whereas the object 'religion' in the first sentence becomes the subject in the second sentence. Here, the reversal of the words 'freedom' and 'religion' is meant to equate the importance of the two relationships described: freedom's reliance on religion and religion's reliance on freedom.

Moreover, antimetabolic structures have a special capacity to capture the essence of things described, often in a very succinct way (Robert, 1988:37).For example, in

the following two definitions, 'antimetabole' is used to capture the essence of the 'architect' and the institution that is called 'home':

(10) "An architect is a person who **drafts** a **plan** of your house, and **plans** a **draft** of your money." (Bierce cited in Corbett and Connors, 1999:396)

(11) "Home is where **the great** are **small** and **the small** are **great**." (Ibid.)

In (10), 'draft' is the verb in the first clause whereas it is the object in the second clause. The word 'plan' is the object in the first clause whereas it is the verb in the second clause. As for (11), the phrase 'the great' is the subject in the first sentence whereas it becomes the subject complement in the second sentence. 'Small' is the subject complement in the first sentence whereas it becomes the subject in the second sentence.

Although 'antimetabole' exists in various sources, political speeches remain one of the most frequent sources from which antimetabole is gleaned(Ellis- Christensen,2005: 1; Lapidos ,2008:1; Romney,2007:1).'Antimetabole' enables the politician to draw the attention of the audience to his/her speech. Moreover, this device helps the politician express his/her ideas clearly in only a few

words. In addition to examples (5), (6), (8), and (9) mentioned so far, the following are some other political examples:

(12) "**The Negro** needs **the white man** to free him from his fears .**The white man** needs **the Negro** to free him from his guilt."

(Luther cited in Niquette, 2005, 2).

(13) "**America** did not invent **human rights**. In a very real sense, **human rights** invent **America**". (Carter cited in Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia,2007:3)

(14) "Each **increase of tension** has produced an **increase of arms**; each **increase of arms** has produced an **increase of tension**." (Kennedy cited in McQarrie and Mick,2009:1)

(15) "Let's make sure that the **Supreme Court** does not pick the next **president**, and this **president** does not choose the next **Supreme Court**."

(Gore cited in Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, 2007:3)

'Antimetabole' is often confused with another figure of speech termed as 'chiasmus' .In fact, most of the sources on the subject agree that while 'antimetabole' is an inversion of repeated words in successive constructions, 'chiasmus' is an inversion of parallel grammatical structures only. 'Antimetabole' changes the grammatical functions of the words reversed whereas 'chiasmus' reverses the order of the elements of the sentence. Moreover, unlike 'antimetabole', 'chiasmus' does not need to repeat the same words in its reversal. The following are two chiasmic examples, the first of which is by the poet Samuel Johnson:

(16) **Increase his riches, and his peace destroy.**

(Kermode and Hollander (eds.), 1973:2080)

(17) He **labours without complaining** and **without bragging rests.**

(Harris, 2008:1)

Example (16): In the first construction, the verb (increase) precedes the object (his riches). The second construction has the inversion of the grammatical structure of the first one: The verb (destroy) follows the object (his peace).

Example (17): In the first construction, the verb (labour) is followed by the adverbial (without complaining). In the second construction, the verb (rest) follows the adverbial (without bragging).

1.2 Antimetabolic Variations

All examples of 'antimetabole' share the same structure- a reversal of repeated words in two constructions. However, there are certain variations on the antimetabolic theme. They are examined as follows:

1.2.1 Elliptical 'Antimetabole'

There are certain popular expressions which are shorthand ways of indicating 'antimetabole' and making it elliptical. The major and the most popular expression is 'vice versa' which is composed of Latin words. Literally, it means "the regular position turned around or reversed."(Herbert, 1989:27).

(18) "**Good pitching** will always stop **good hitting**, and vice versa."

(Stengel cited in Eco, 1979: 66)

(19) The **coach** likes the **front four**, and vice versa.

(Malamute, 2008:1)

In (18), 'vice versa' stands for the sentence 'good hitting will always stop good pitching.' In (19), it stands for the sentence 'the front four like the coach'. Here, 'vice versa' is not merely a shorthand way of indicating an antimetabolic reversal. It is also a more effective way of expressing the thought. Instead of laying out all the words of an obvious 'antimetabole', one can use 'vice versa' to get people to finish the thought on their own. This method of expressing 'antimetabole' has the additional benefit of involving people in a dialogue with the writer or speaker, since they must complete the thought themselves (Herbert, 1989:27).

1.2.2 Implied 'Antimetabole'

This antimetabolic variation occurs when the words of a popular saying are deliberately reversed (Shapiro, 2008:1).

(20) "**Invention** is the mother of **necessity**."

(Walter, 1989:40)

(21) "Only the **young** die **good**."

(Shapiro, 2008:1)

(22) "A **hard** man is **good** to find."

(Walter, 1989:40)

The term 'implied antimetabole' is coined for quotes like these since the original saying which is being reversed is only implied. In the examples of 'implied antimetabole', the words of a saying – generally a popular or well-known one – are reversed, but without explicit reference to the saying being altered (Shapiro, 2008:1).

"**Necessity** is the mother of **invention**.", "Only the **good** die **young**.", "A **good** man is **hard** to find." are the familiar sayings which are reversed by the previous quotes.

Many examples of 'implied antimetabole' are extremely thought-provoking, like example (20). From one point of view, 'necessity is the mother of invention' because so many inventions are based on attempts to solve important problems. However, 'invention is also the mother of necessity', for countless inventions (like electricity, automobiles and telephones) have become necessities. Other examples have become part and parcel of the popular culture, like example (22) (Walter, 1989:40).

1.2.3 Phonetic 'Antimetabole'

In this variation, 'antimetabole' has a special appeal to those who are interested in the playful use of language. One of the reasons why 'antimetabole' has been so popular among language-lovers is that extraordinary antimetabolic lines can be created by inverting the sounds of words in a subsequent construction.

(Harris, 2005:5)

(23) "I'd rather have a **bottle** in **front** of me than a **frontal** lobotomy."

(Hanzlick cited in Poonks, 2008:5)

(24) "I find **Paul** appealing and **Peale** appalling."

(Stevenson cited in Harris, 2005:5)

(25) "Here's **champagne** to our **real** friends, and **real** pain to our **sham** friends"

(Toast cited in Poonks, 2008:2)

As it is obvious from the examples above, phonetic 'antimetabole' sometimes involves out-straight puns.

1.2.4 Numerical 'Antimetabole'

Antimetabole could occasionally be achieved by simply reversing numbers. Through this, it can achieve delightful results. Examples of numerical 'antimetabole' have a clever light-hearted quality (Nordquist, 2009:2).

(26) " A man is a person who pays **two** dollars for a **one-** dollar item he wants.
A woman pays one dollar for a **two-** dollar item she doesn't want".

(Binger cited in Omaha, 2008:6)

(27) " **One** father is better at caring for **ten** children than **ten** children for **one** father."

(Shakespeare cited in Nordquist, 2009:2)

Commenting on these examples, Nordquist (Ibid.) notes that (26) is an observation capturing one of the essential differences between the speaker and his wife. He is always paying more for an item since he really wants it. His wife is always buying something she doesn't need because it is such a bargain. As for (27), it is a saying which describes some of the difficulties of life , especially the pain and heartache older people experience when they feel neglected by the children they sacrificed for during the growing up years.

1.3 Rhetorical Functions of 'Antimetabole'

In its use, 'antimetabole' can achieve certain rhetorical functions .They are as follows:

1.3.1 Effectiveness

When great content is combined with the intriguing structure of 'antimetabole', the result can be effective and unforgettable. 'Antimetabole' can have a punchy and significant impact (Romney, 2007:1).This figure of speech involves the repetition and inversion of words to achieve a dramatic rhetorical effect .The repetition involved in 'antimetabole' can form such an interesting part of speeches and writing .

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Moreover , 'antimetabole' can achieve effectiveness because it is memorable - anyone who recalls the first half of a construction can probably summon the second by inverting the key words (Lapidos,2008: 2) . For instance, the example "Freedom requires religion just as religion requires freedom.", which has been cited previously (See 1.1), is effective because it is antimetabolic. Being antimetabolic, this line attracts the attention of the reader/ hearer. Furthermore, 'antimetabole' makes this line memorable and so pithy (Ibid.).

1.3.2 Emphasis

'Antimetabole' is a figure of emphasis. It is often used to emphasize the contrast or opposition between the ideas expressed by the words or phrases which are reversed (Ellis-Christensen, 2005:1).

In Kennedy's previous example: "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." (See 1.1), the use of antimetabole is meant to emphasize the contrast between two ideas. The reversal of the order of "your country" and "you" offers a dramatic verbal illustration of what is desired (collective action as a nation) vs. what is not desired (individual demands on the community).

(Romney, 2007:1)

In the following illustration:

(28)"The value of marriage is not that **adults** produce **children** but that **children** produce **adults**." (Vries cited in Vickers, 1988: 40)

'antimetabole' is employed to emphasize the contrast between two ideas concerning the importance and result of marriage , namely the expected result ,i.e. children, and the proper result, i.e. sons and daughters who are responsible for their actions.

In addition, 'antimetabole' is used to emphasize the final formulation created by its reversal (Harris, 2008: 35). For instance, Kennedy, in his line, places stress on the second clause, namely the contribution Americans might make to their country (Ellis-Christensen, 2005:1). As for the other example, Vries emphasizes the second clause which shows the proper result of marriage.

1.3.3 Expressing Truths

Sometimes, 'antimetabole' may be seen as a method for communicating truths, and doing so in very few words. The second part complements the first in a memorable and thought- provoking way. In each case, both thoughts seem equally true (Corbett and Connors, 1999:396).

(29) " **Love** makes **time** pass, **time** makes **love** pass."

(30) " In man, **mortal** sins **venial**; in woman, **venial** sins are **mortal**."

(31) "**Charm** is a woman's **strength**; **strength** is a man's **charm**."

(Ellis cited in Robert, 1988: 14)

The examples above are proverbs which suggest some general truths .For instance, example (29) is a French proverb. The first line contains what all people would regard as a great romantic truth: when people are concerned with love, time flies by. The second line describes a less romantic but equally compelling truth : as time goes by ,the ardor of love – and frequently even love itself – fades away .The Italian proverb in example (30) expresses the fact that men tend to trivialize their major sins and women tend to magnify their minor ones (Corbett and Connors , 1999:396) .Finally, the proverb in example (31) , according to the researcher , shows the fact that the power and influence of the woman lies in her beauty whereas the influence of the man lies in his strength.

1.3.4 Humour

'Antimetabole' can also imply humour, as in the following example:

(32) " In America, **you can** always find a **party**; in Soviet Russia, the **party** always finds **you**."

(Smirnoff cited in Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia,2007:3)

'Antimetabole' is a mechanic often used in joke punch lines (Poonks, 2008:2).For instance:

(33) Q: What's the difference between a teacher and a conductor?

A: One teaches you to **train** the **mind**, the other to **mind** the **train**.

Many jokes are built around phonetic 'antimetabole' (See 1.2.3). For example:

(34) Q: What's the difference between a boxer and someone who has a cold?

A: The first one **knows** his **blows** .And the second **blows** his **nose**.

(35) Q: What's the difference between a fisherman and a lazy student?

A: One **hates** **hooks**; the other **hates** **books**.

(Ibid.)

2. 'Antimetabole' in Arabic

An investigation of 'antimetabole' is shown in this section:

2.1 The Concept of 'Antimetabole'

In Arabic rhetoric, 'antimetabole' is the repetition of speech in reverse order (Wehba, 1974:21). In other words, it is a device where words in one construction are repeated in the opposite order in the next one (El-Meghribi, 2003 :514). This leads to changing the grammatical functions of the words reversed : each word acquires the grammatical function of the other.

Here are some examples:

(36) خير المقال مقال الخير فأصغ و دع عكس الصواب مع التبديل يستقم
(El-Mosuli cited in El-Hemewi, 2001:445)

(37) (يُولِجُ اللَّيْلُ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ النَّهَارُ فِي اللَّيْلِ) (الحج/61)
"Allah merges Night into Day, and He merges Day into Night." (A'li, 2001:838)

(38) بع دنياك بأخرتك تربحها جميعا ، ولا تتبع آخرتك بدنياك فتخسرهما جميعا

(El-Hassan cited in El-Baqilani, n.d.:98)

If you sell your present life for your hereafter, you will win them both. If you sell your hereafter for your present life, you will lose them both.

(1)

The poetic verses are not translated since translation cannot keep the meaning _____ of the Arabic verse. The English version of the Arabic verse would be poor.

(2)

All the Arabic examples except the Quranic ayaas are translated by the researcher.

(39) إن من خوفك حتى تلقى الأمن خير ممن أمنك حتى تلقى الخوف
(El-Qizweeni, 1993: 36)

Who alarms you to feel safe is better than that who makes you safe to be alarmed.

(40) طواه الردى عني فأضحى مزاره بعيدا على قرب قريبا على بعد

(Ibn El-Roomi cited in Feyood, 2004:140)

(41) المعري شاعر الفلاسفة و فيلسوف الشعراء

(A'bdol Rehman, 2004:39)

Al – Meaa'ri is the philosophers' poet and the poets' philosopher.
'Antimetabole' in the above examples is described as follows:

Example(36):In the first construction, خير is the theme مبتدأ. In the second construction, خير becomes the noun in the construct مضاف إليه. In the first construction, مقال functions as the noun in the construct. In the second construction, it becomes the theme.

Example (37): In the first sentence, الليل functions as the object. In the second sentence, it is made the prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase في الليل. In the first sentence, النهار functions as the prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase في النهار. In the second sentence, it is made the object.

Example (38): In the first sentence, the phrase دنياك is the object. In the second sentence, it becomes the prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase بدنياك. In the first sentence, the phrase آخرتك is the prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase بأخرتك. In the second sentence, it becomes the object.

Example (39): In the first sentence, خوفك is the verb. In the second sentence, it becomes خوف which is a noun functioning as an object. In the first sentence, الأمن is the object. In the second sentence, it becomes the verb أمنك in أمنك.

Example (40): In the first phrase, بعيد is the predicate of أضحى. In the second phrase, it becomes the noun بعد functioning as a prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase على بعد. In the first phrase, قرب is a prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase على قرب. In the second phrase, it becomes the adjective قريبا functioning as is the predicate of أضحى.

Example (41): In the first sentence, شاعر is the predicate خبر. In the second sentence, it becomes the plural noun شعراء functioning as the noun in the construct مضاف إليه. In the first sentence, الفلاسفة functions as the noun in the construct. In the second sentence, it becomes the singular noun فيلسوف functioning as the predicate.

According to A'wwad (163 :2000)and El-Meghribi (515: 2003 'antimetabole' has a special capacity to enrich the meaning of the structure in which it is employed. In other words, the reversal involved in one construction adds another meaning which is different from that in the other. Moreover, using 'antimetabole' shows a kind of witticism, as in the following example manifesting a clever remark:

(42) لا خير في السرف و لا سرف في الخير

(Ibn Sehl cited in Feyood, 2004:139)

There is no benefit in waste and no waste in charity.

In the first sentence, خير is the subject of the generic لا. In the second sentence, it functions as a prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase في الخير. In the first sentence, سرف functions as a prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase في السرف. In the second sentence, it becomes the subject of the generic لا.

By inverting the words خير and سرف in the second sentence, Ibn Sehl communicates another meaning or idea to the reader / hearer .He intends to convey that there is no waste in charity. The sentence as a whole, therefore, has two different meanings: the lack of benefit in waste and the lack of waste in charity.

Here is another example:

(43) كلام الأمير أمير الكلام
(Shelhoob, 2004:499)

The prince's speech is the best speech.

Here, 'antimetabole' shows the clever remark that the speech made by the prince may be considered to be the best speech. Both constructions of this example have the same words .However; the reversal in the second construction is really meaningful. It results in a meaning which differs from that found in the first one.

The following poetic line is different from the examples above because the inversion found in the second part of it is not meaningful .In addition, it is empty of any witticism.

(44) زعموا إني خؤون في الهوى في الهوى إني خؤون زعموا
(A'wwad, 2000: 164)

2.2 An Antimetabolic Variation: 'Antimetabole' by Letter Reversal

In Arabic, 'antimetabole' is usually achieved by inverting words .However, for literary effect, it is sometimes achieved by reversing the letters of a word to become another one. In fact, this reversal occurs through reading the word from the left to the right .In addition, the speaker intends such kind of reversal and usually states it in his/ her speech (Feyood, 2004:141).

(46) أهديت شيئاً يقل لولا
كرسي تفاعلت فيه لما رأيت مقلوبه يسرك
(El-Yemeni, 1995:379)

(45) كيف السرور بإقبال و آخره
إذا تأملنا مقلوب إقبال
(Feyood, 2004:141)

In the first poetic line, the inversion (or the reversed reading) of the word "كرسي" chair" is "يسرك" It pleases you ".Here, the poet is optimistic about كرسى as a present because, after reversing its letters, it becomes يسرك. In the second poetic line, the inversion of the word "إقبال" advent " is "لا بقاء" no survival".The poet wants to say that الإقبال doesn't remain forever.It is supposed to come to an end (Feyood, 2004:141)

On the other hand, 'antimetabole' involves the inversion of the letters of words within a sentence .This inversion is also achieved by reading the sentence from the left to the right. However, this reversed reading doesn't result in a new sentence. It leads to the same original one (EL-Soyooti, n.d.:318; Feyood, 2004:141). For example:

(47) (كُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ) (الأنبياء / 33)
"Each in its rounded course." (A'li,2001:802)

This Quranic ayaa will not be changed when the letters of its words are reversed, i.e. when it is read from the end to the beginning (El-Yemeni,1995 :379).

The same happens with the examples below:

(48) ارض خضراء
(Feyood, 2004:141)

Green land.

(49) مودته تدوم لكل هول وهل كل مودته تدوم
(El-Irjani cited in El-Henefi,2001:393)

El-Yemeni (1995:379) assures that the reversal of the letters of one word is more important than that of words within a sentence because the former reversal produces a word that is different from the original one.

2.3 Rhetorical Functions of 'Antimetabole'

In Arabic, 'antimetabole' is used to achieve the following rhetorical functions:

2.3.1 Effectiveness

This is the main function of 'antimetabole' .This figure of speech adds luster to structures. The repetition and reversal involved in it makes speech and writing interesting and memorable (El-Yemeni, 1995:378).Below is an example which is not antimetabole:

(50) العادات الصادرة من سادة الناس هي سادات العادات
(El-Meghribi,2003:515)

The customs related to superior people are the supreme customs.

When it is made antimetabole, the above example will be more effective:

(51) عادات السادات سادات العادات
(El-Teftazani, 2004:651)

The customs of superior people are the supreme customs.

In the first construction, عادات is the theme مبتدأ In the second construction, it becomes the noun in the construct مضاف إليه .In the first construction, سادات functions as the noun in the construct. In the second construction, it becomes the predicate خبر.

Both sentences suggest the meaning that the customs connected with superior people are considered the best ones because they are related with the upper class. Nevertheless, the antimetabole sentence in (51) is more effective. It attracts the attention of the reader / hearer through its interesting structure.

2.3.2 Expressing Truths

Sometimes, 'antimetabole' may be considered as a means of stating facts. The two parts of the antimetabole structure express facts that are equally true (El-Hemewi, 2001:439-441).This is obvious in the following Quranic ayaa which shows great facts about the splendid ability of Allah:

(52) (يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ)
" It is He Who brings out the living from the dead,
and brings out the dead from the living ." (A'li, 2001:1011-1012)

The ayaa expresses facts about the cycle of life and death .Allah's creative act produces life and living matter from dead matter .However, life and living matter again reach maturity and again die (Ibid.).

In the first sentence, الحي functions as the object .In the second sentence, it is made the prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase من الحي . In the second sentence, الميت functions as the prepositional complement in the prepositional phrase من الميت . In the second sentence, it is made the object.

Another example is a poetic line by El-Motenebi:

(53) لا مجد في الدنيا لمن قل ماله ولا مال في الدنيا لمن قل مجده
(El-Hemewi, 2001:441)

In the first sentence, مجد is the subject of the generic لا. In the second sentence, it becomes the object. In the first sentence, مال is the object. In the second sentence, it becomes the subject of the generic لا.

This poetic line is a proverb which states certain facts concerning the relationship between glory and money. According to El-Motenebi, one depends on the other. Money is necessary to have glory. When one does not have glory, money does not exist or have value.

3. 'Antimetabole' in English and Arabic: A comparison

In this section, an attempt is made to trace the similarities and differences of 'antimetabole' in English and Arabic.

1. The concept of 'antimetabole' is the same in both languages. 'Antimetabole' is the repetition of words in reverse grammatical order. The key here is the two essential elements of 'antimetabole', namely repetition and inversion.
2. 'Antimetabole' in both languages implies shifting of meaning: one of the constructions shifts the meaning of the other. In English, this characteristic does not always exist in 'antimetabole'. In Arabic, it is considered as an important feature. Any structure which does not have it is not considered as antimetabolic even if it involves the elements of repetition and inversion.
3. 'Antimetabole' is more common in English than in Arabic. Moreover, in English, 'antimetabole' is studied extensively and is given a lot of attention. 'Antimetabole' is not frequent in Arabic probably because, according to El-Hemewi (2001:439) and Abdol Rehman(2004,39), it is considered by the Arab rhetoricians and linguists as one of the lowest figures of speech which achieve few functions in speech and writing.
4. In English and Arabic, 'antimetabole' is rare in everyday language. In English, 'antimetabole' exists in various sources, for example, sayings, political speeches and proverbs. In Arabic, 'antimetabole' occurs in poetry and proverbs.
5. In English and Arabic, there are certain variations on the antimetabolic theme. In English, 'antimetabole' is made either elliptical or implied. Moreover, 'antimetabole' in both languages employs mainly words. However, in English, it sometimes reverses sounds of words or numbers. In Arabic, 'antimetabole' involves the inversion of the letters of words.
6. There are certain differences between English and Arabic concerning the antimetabolic variations. Unlike English, 'antimetabole' in Arabic is not made elliptical or implied. Moreover, 'antimetabole' in Arabic is not phonetic or numerical. In other words, it lacks the reversal of sounds of words or numbers. Unlike Arabic, English lacks the antimetabolic phenomenon in which the letters of one word or of words (within a sentence) are reversed.
7. The functions surveyed previously indicate that English and Arabic have similar functions. For instance, in both languages, 'antimetabole' is employed to achieve the function of effectiveness. Through its interesting structure, one can attract the attention of the reader/hearer to the

message. In addition, 'antimetabole' in English and Arabic can be made as a vehicle for expressing facts, which mostly occurs in proverbs.

8. Other functions are found in English but not stated by the Arab rhetoricians and linguists. These functions are those of emphasis in which 'antimetabole' is used to emphasize the contrast or opposition between the ideas expressed by the words or phrases reversed and humour in which it is used to make structures amusing.

Conclusion

It has been concluded that the principle governing 'antimetabole' in English and Arabic is basically the same. The discussion of the concept of 'antimetabole' in both languages reflects that linguists and rhetoricians, Arab and Western, share the same view that this figure of speech, available in various sources, is the repetition of speech in inverse order. However, in both languages, there are certain antimetabolic variations. In English, 'antimetabole' can be elliptical, implied, phonetic or numerical. In Arabic, it can only be achieved by letter reversal. In both languages, one of the constructions of the antimetabolic example shifts the meaning of the other. In Arabic, this is considered an important quality of 'antimetabole'.

In English and Arabic, 'antimetabole' is employed to achieve certain rhetorical functions, viz effectiveness and expressing facts. Unlike in Arabic, in English, 'antimetabole' is used to fulfill further functions namely emphasis and humour which are not mentioned by Arab linguists and rhetoricians.

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