



Literature and Coping Skills
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Lecture – 16
Rhetoric and prosody – 4

Hello, everybody, I am Ajit K Mishra, your course instructor for Literature and Coping Skills. As I told you in my last lecture, I am going to sum up our discussion of rhetoric and prosody with this lecture. So, I am back with another lecture on rhetorical prosody. If you remember, I talked about hyperbole. With a few examples I also talked about paradox with a few relevant examples. Then I moved you into the world of alliteration and into the world of sound, and its importance for embedded simulation.

And I concluded my last lecture with a brief introduction into the world of prosodic features, including stress, and what happens when stress goes wrong? What can it signify? What can it suggest? I told you that when somebody's stress pattern goes wrong we can easily guess that there is some problem. So, it is important that we get to understand the importance of the figures of speech and prosodic features in the making of this literary experience in the making of the embodied simulation, and the making of the verbal imagery, so that we can engage with it.

And we can enrich our perspectives and our behavior as well so that is the reason why it is important for all of us to understand rhetoric and prosody, very, very well. So, today, I am going to talk about some very important aspects related to the idea of rhetorical prosody, especially from the viewpoint of their implications for wellbeing. So, let us take a look at each of these components.

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Rhetoric and Prosody



- Figures of Speech
- Metaphor
- Anxiety Metaphors
- Paradox
- Fear Paradox
- Personification
- Anxiety Personification

Today, I am going to talk about figures of speech just to give you a recapitulation of what we have done so far. I am also going to talk about metaphor, not from the perspective through which we have already discussed it, but from a very different perspective from an applied perspective. I am going to talk about anxiety metaphors today. I mean metaphors that depict anxiety. So, therefore, I said, I am going to talk about metaphors from a different perspective.

I am going to talk about paradox, not from the perspective that we have already done. But from this perspective, I am going to talk about the fear paradox. I am going to talk about personification, from this perspective, anxiety, personification. So, today I am going to focus on certain applied aspects of rhetorical prosody so that we can develop a better understanding of those ideas, and prepare ourselves for the next segments that are in the queue.

Because our understanding of these components, including those that we have already discussed, the power of literary experience, components, including existential concerns, personality, emotional wellbeing, verbal imagery, simulation, higher order thinking, empathy, and emotional intelligence, all those and then we come to rhetoric and prosody. All these things taken together will definitely enhance our perspective, our understanding of the things that are yet to come. So, let us take a look at each of these elements.

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Figures of Speech

- Figures of resemblance or relationship (simile, metaphor, personification, metonymy, synecdoche)
- Figures of emphasis or understatement (hyperbole, rhetorical question, antithesis, bathos, paradox, oxymoron, irony)
- Figures of sound (e.g., alliteration, repetition, onomatopoeia)
- Verbal games and gymnastics (pun and anagram)
- Errors (malapropism, periphrasis, and spoonerism).

So, we have already done this figure of speech. So, it comes to figures of speech. We use certain figures in our speech or we integrate certain figures in our speech, so that it becomes more and more communicative and effective. So, therefore, we have a variety of figures of speech, starting with the figures of resemblance in which these things these figures of speech are categorized or placed simile, metaphor personification, metonymy and synecdoche we have discussed all these things.

So, they are generally called figures of resemblance or relationship, because they establish, they show the relationship of one thing with the other. Then we come to figures of emphasis or understatement. So, hyperbole rhetorical questions and antithesis, bathos, paradox, oxymoron and irony are those figures of emphasis that are understatement, if you want to exaggerate or de-exaggerate. We can use this figure of emphasis or understatement for that purpose.

Then we come to figures of sound. That is the reason why I tried to draw your attention towards alliteration, because it is such an important concept of sound, alliteration, repetition onomatopoeia in which the word suggests the sound like buzz, buzzing of the bees, hiss hissing of snakes. So, hiss is suggestive of that particular natural sound. So, we come to a verbal games and gymnastics that also happen through language like pun and anagram.

So, then we come to errors in language. So, language can also go absolutely chaotic at times. For example- malapropism, periphrasis, and spoonerism. There are some examples that can make language erroneous, although they also perform a certain role. So, that is how the figures of speech have been classified under these five categories, starting with figures of resemblance, and figures of emphasis or understatement, figures of sound figures that include verbal games and gymnastics, and then figures that include errors so that is the domain of figures of speech.

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Metaphor

- **Metaphor** offers an explicit comparison between two unlike entities
- In poetry, a metaphor performs varied functions — from the mere noting of a likeness to the evocation of a swarm of associations
- Metaphors are not only literary devices but also devices for thinking. They can put a picture in the public's mind where none existed before—and they can reshape and update our shared mental images of social and personal issues



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We will quickly start with- metaphor. We have already discussed metaphor in detail, so I will not take you into greater detail. Instead, I will just quickly give you a recapitulation of what we have discussed so far, in case you have missed any critical aspect of it, so that is a metaphor for you. So, metaphors are not only literary devices, but also devices for thinking. Therefore, there is a very famous phrase that is called metaphorical thinking.

So, today the modern day leaders are expected to be good at two things that are metaphorical one metaphorical intelligence, and the other is metaphorical thinking. If you can think metaphorically that means you are good enough to leave an impact or create an impact. So, because these metaphorical thinking helps us update our shared mental images of social and personal issues.

So, when we become a part of the embodied simulation process, our personal issues and social issues are brought into account and they are addressed. And that is the reason why; immersing in literature or engaging in literature is such a powerful experience. And metaphor makes it possible, along with other figures of speech metaphor makes it possible.

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Anxiety Metaphors

1. Anxiety is like walking down a dark and scary alley without knowing what is waiting for you.
2. Anxiety is like swimming in the ocean with no land in sight.
3. Anxiety is like trying to memorise all of the conversations within a crowded restaurant.
4. Anxiety is like making a decision to eat raw horse brains or a rat's guts.
5. Anxiety is like being the only person that knows the world is ending but everyone calls you crazy.
6. Anxiety is like being strapped to a chair whilst looking at an open door.
7. Anxiety is like being randomly, brutally beaten at different points throughout the day but you don't know when the beating will occur.

Imagine you have to use metaphors to talk about or express your anxiety. I talked about name it to tame it phenomenon, which is such an important instrument to help everyone with overcoming the fear of our minds, our executive brain. So, when our executive brain has lost contact with our self, we will not be able to express what we feel, or what we experienced and how we feel about that experience.

So, it is very, very important that we always give a verbal lead to the executive brain, so that it quickly expresses that particular experience, and to prepare us for the challenges. So, I have picked a few anxiety metaphors. For our discussion, let us start with those. Anxiety is like walking down a dark and scary alley without knowing what is waiting for you that can be an expression of anxiety. Because anxiety is so uncertain, it makes it extremely difficult for us to know what it is, how it is.

So, if that is the case, then I can use metaphors to talk about my anxiety, why am I doing this? Why have I selected these examples? Let me tell you all that. When it comes to expressing our experiences and emotions, we adopt different points of view. So, how I approach a certain psychological challenge will be different from how somebody else approaches the same psychological challenge.

For example, five people may be experiencing anxiety, the generic anxiety, a generic word, with a generic meaning anxiety. But for each of them, the experiencing of that particular challenge will mean different or will mean differently. It is very important that we understand how somebody perceives and presents that particular experience of feeling that makes it clear, no two people can perceive the same thing in the same manner.

And if those two people perceive the same problem differently, then it makes it easy for us to approach their problems in a focused manner. So, for me to develop certain coping skills or to develop certain coping strategies, it is very important that I first understand what exactly and how exactly I am feeling about that particular experience, which is a challenge or psychological challenge. So, this is one perspective.

Anxiety is like walking down a dark alley, without knowing what is waiting for you. Then the second is anger. Anxiety is like swimming in the ocean with no land in sight. And you can now realize how different these two points of view are. They are so different in understanding or comprehending that the problem is the same as anxiety. But in this case, it is like swimming. In the first case, it is like walking. Two very different activities.

It is like swimming in the ocean with no land in sight. You are swimming and swimming and swimming. And you do not know whether you will ever hit land or not- because there is no land in sight. So, that also leads to uncertainty but in a different way. A third example- anxieties like trying to memorize all of the conversations within a crowded restaurant. Just imagine, it helps you to visualize that particular scene. You are in a crowded restaurant. And then you are asked to memorize all of the conversation.

In the presence of so much disturbance around you, you are asked to memorize how difficult will you find. So, for the third person, anxiety is like that. And this point of view is different from the previous two. So, each of them is different, I mean is different from the other. A fourth person's point of view- anxiety is like making a decision to eat raw horse brains are a rat's guts.

It is so disgusting. If you remember while talking about basic human emotions, I said disgust is also a basic human emotion. So, on so surprise, so for a fourth person, the perspective is absolutely different. It is bizarre even anxiety is like making a decision to eat raw horse brains are a rat's guts. That means anxiety is absolutely disgusting. It is so abominable that you just hate it. A fifth person's perspective or point of view-Anxiety is like being the only person that knows the world is ending. But everyone calls you crazy. So, just imagine you are the only person who knows the world is ending, and everybody else is unaware of that fact. And you go out screaming that the world is ending, do something to save our species, a variety of things that you would like to do. How are people going to treat you, they will call you crazy. So, that is exactly how you feel when you experience anxiety.

This is a fifth person's point of view see how different they all are from one another. Of six perspectives, anxiety is like being strapped to a chair, whilst looking at an open door. What is interesting about all these perspectives or statements is that they all are trying to visualize. So, that is the power of visualization, I talked about the power of visualization, I talked about the power of positive visualization.

But visualizing challenging negative experiences is equally helpful. Because that way, you are preparing, you are creating a condition in which you are about to perform, you are about to act. So, that is it. Anxiety is like being strapped to a chair, whilst looking at an open door. So, somebody is strapped to a chair that means that person is captivated, seized. And you can see the open door right in front of you. But you cannot move out of that open door and free yourself.



Because you are strapped, you are not free. Although there is the door to your freedom, you are still not free. So, that is the kind of experience somebody else has. So, this is a different perspective altogether. Then a seventh anxiety is like being randomly, brutally beaten at different

points throughout the day. But you do not know when the beating will occur. Just imagine, you know that the beating will occur. It is going to cause you pain, suffering, and torture.

The beating will occur throughout the day. But you do not know when exactly it will occur. Just imagine the condition of the person who will be experiencing the pain twice, well before the pain is caused, and when the pain is being caused. So, that is the perspective of another person. So, by sharing all these perspectives, with all of you what I mean to say is, it is very, very important that we try to visualize first.

The second is, it is also important that we speak about it, we express, because when we look at each of these expressions we will see that there is some kind of scene that is created. And now, it is completely up to the person to act in that particular scene. If you are disgusted, you will not eat that. And you will do something to overcome that particular challenge. So, that is the reason why I shared all these perspectives or points of view, with you related to anxiety metaphors.

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Paradox


- **Paradox**, apparently self-contradictory statement, the underlying meaning of which is revealed only by careful scrutiny. The purpose of a paradox is to arrest attention and provoke fresh thought
- In George Orwell's anti-utopian satire *Animal Farm* (1945), the first commandment of the animals' commune is revised into a witty paradox:
"All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others."

That brings us to a paradox. So, quickly paradox, we have already discussed what paradox is all about. And then this is an example taken from George Orwell, his anti-utopian satire *Animal Farm*, you might have read this short novel or novella. So, there is a paradoxical statement that

occurs in that book. And that reads, this, all animals are equal. But some animals are more equal than others.

So, this is highly paradoxical in nature. If all animals are equal, then how can some animals be more equal than others, but we know how some animals are more equal than others. So, that is the paradoxical statement. So, that is the power of paradox, because it drives us towards the core of an issue. So, I will quickly take you to certain applied examples, like we did with metaphors. So, let us go to those examples.

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Fear Paradox

- How Our Obsession with Feeling Secure Imprisons Our Minds and Shapes Our Lives – Frank Faranda
- Fear – which evolved to keep us safe and enhance our existence – has grown into the greatest single threat to our humanity
- No matter how many dangers, real or imagined, we neutralize, new ones emerge
- Superbugs arise from our battle with bacteria; industrial robotics are devouring our workforce

This is called the fear paradox. For example fear is one of the most basic of human emotions. We are constantly hounded by fear. Fear does not leave us even for a moment. So, whenever we are happy, we feel that we will be sad in no time. If you remember the poem that I talked about, Bhartrihari's fear of death. Yes, we are always in the grip of fear, we cannot release ourselves, we are hounded by fear every moment.

So, fear is something that we have to grapple with all the time. So, what we come across is a fear paradox. So, what is this fear paradox? In fact, there is a title of a very interesting book written by Frank Faranda. Frank Faranda has written the book, Fear Paradox, with a subtitle on how our obsession with feeling secure, imprisons our minds and shapes our lives. The book is written by Frank Faranda. So, how our obsession with feeling secure, imprison some minds and shapes our lives. That is exactly what I have been trying to talk about.



We all are obsessed with life instinct, safe mode protection, happiness, enjoyment and joviality. So much that we tend to either escape or ignore the call, or the message that is communicated to us by challenging experiences by negative emotions. So, Faranda's book, fear paradox, how obsession with feeling secure, imprisons our minds and shapes our lives is a wake-up call for most of us. So, if you get an opportunity, do read this book.

So, fear which evolved to keep us safe and enhance our existence has gone into the greatest single threat to our humanity. So, paradoxically that is a paradox. Because of fear, we have this emotion fear in us because as a result of our evolution, it has been associated with us so that we can enhance our existence. If I am afraid of something, I have to devise ways through which I can protect myself. I can overcome that fear.

But people tend to escape or run away from fear. So, that is the reason why it has turned out to be one of the greatest threats to our humanity. As a result of which, no matter how many dangers are real or imagined, we neutralize, because we try to neutralize our dangers. New ones similar to that is exactly what I meant when I said fear never leaves us.

It is constantly with us. So, for example, superbugs- superbugs arise from our battle with bacteria, industrial robotics are devouring our workforce. That is too paradoxical for each of us. So, we all have to grapple with this fear paradox every now and then. So, that is a big problem.

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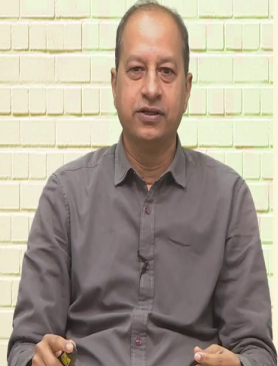

Personification

- Personification is a figure of speech in which an idea or thing is given human attributes and/or feelings or is spoken of as if it were human.
- Writers create life and motion within inanimate objects, animals, and even abstract ideas by assigning them recognizable human behaviors and emotions

That brings us to the last segment, personification, we have discussed personification in detail. So, I will just quickly walk you through the idea of personification again, so that we get to know more about it. So, that is how personification helps writers personification helps the users of

language to attribute human qualities to things that are either inanimate or non-human. So, we will take a quick look at the power of personification through certain applied examples.

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Anxiety Personification

Anxiety is a nebulous thing that exists in our minds. It has no form. It has no reason. It just is. It can come and go

- Give It a Personality (How it thinks, feels, and behaves)
- Give It Characteristics (make it a human. Don't make it some kind of monster)
- Talk to Your Anxiety (engage the anxiety. Now that you have someone to aim at, stand up for yourself)

I call this anxiety personification, if we have to personify anxiety, because we have to personify a variety of things. If we can personify a pleasing emotion, a positive emotion like love, we also need to personify negative and challenging emotions, like fear. So, when we do that, what happens? And how does that help us? So, let us see. We all know that anxiety is a nebulous thing that exists in our minds. Moreover, it has no form, it has no reason. It just is. It can come and go.

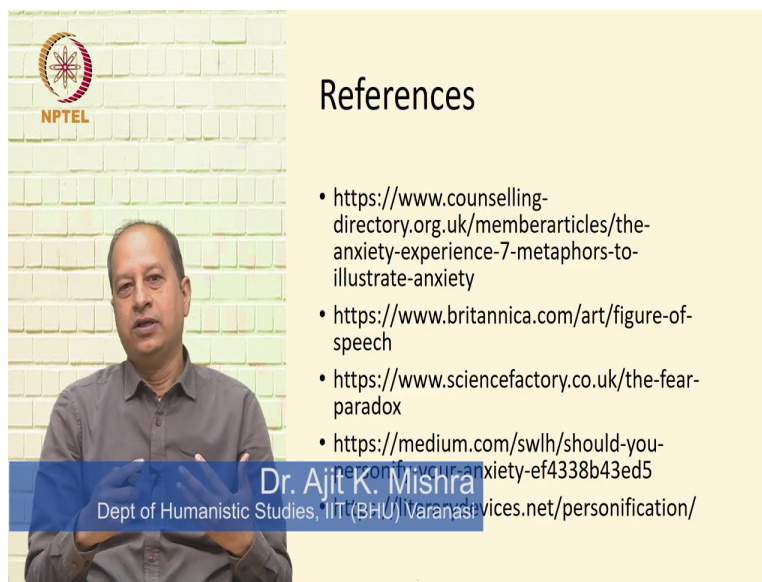
So, that is, anxiety, it is so unpredictable, unknowable that it makes us helpless to understand its behavior, but it is very much there with us, like fear. So, how do you overcome anxiety? So, there is a visualization technique that we can adopt, with the help of which we can overcome anxiety. First give your anxiety a personality. We have already discussed thinking, feeling and behaving in a certain way, how does your anxiety behave with you?

So, first, convert your anxiety into a person then give it a personality, a certain way of thinking, a certain way of feeling, a certain way of behaving, how does it behave with you? Does it try to scare you? Does it try to challenge you? Does it taunt you? Does it play tricks with you? So, first give personality to your anxiety by converting that into a person then give it characteristics. And the best way to do so is to make it a human.

The moment you turn it into a human big, if you turn it into some kind of a monster or a superhuman you will not be able to fight it because your task is to fight it to challenge it. So, the best way is to treat it as a human, make it a human and then you can give it a few characteristics. For example strength, height, stature, built and a variety of other things. And then third, now begin to talk to your anxiety.

Mr. Anxiety, What are you up to? What do you think? Are you going to scare me? Are you going to kill me? Are you going to make me a captive? What exactly are you going to do, try to talk to your anxiety because you have converted your anxiety into a person. So, you engage your anxiety. Now that you have someone to aim at, struggle with, challenge, fight with, you can think of standing up for yourself. So, this is a very powerful visualization technique. Because personification is a very powerful visualization tool with the help of which we can create visualizations, and then engage with those challenging issues.

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The slide is titled "References" and features a video inset of Dr. Ajit K. Mishra, a man in a grey shirt, speaking. The NPTEL logo is in the top left corner. The references listed are:

- <https://www.counselling-directory.org.uk/memberarticles/the-anxiety-experience-7-metaphors-to-illustrate-anxiety>
- <https://www.britannica.com/art/figure-of-speech>
- <https://www.sciencefactory.co.uk/the-fear-paradox>
- <https://medium.com/swlh/should-you-personify-your-anxiety-ef4338b43ed5>

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So, with that we come to the end of our discussion of rhetoric and prosody. And with that, we also come to the end of the second module that is, on the poetic power, and healing properties. So, that makes it possible for us to understand that it is all about poetry and healing. So, with all this in mind, we are now prepared, we are now ready to approach the next segments in which is

going to be our discussion oriented approach, in which we will see how we can take care of each of these emotional or psychological challenges through our engaged participation and embodied simulation. So, thank you again for joining me.