

PAPER

PRINCIPLES OF FORMULATION OF STYLISTIC DEVICES OF CONTRAST: ACROTHESIS AND ANTITHESIS FROM SYNTAX AND LEXICOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

This study examines the formulation principles governing acrothesis and antithesis as distinct contrast-based rhetorical figures through integrated syntactic and lexicological analysis. While both figures employ semantic opposition to achieve rhetorical effects, they operate through fundamentally different organizational mechanisms that have received insufficient systematic attention in contemporary rhetorical scholarship. Drawing on Russian paremiological materials and literary prose, particularly Bochina's comprehensive analysis of proverb structures and Kashitsyna's investigation of Tsvetaeva's prose, this investigation reveals that acrothesis constructs contrast through predicative unity within a single communicative act, while antithesis constructs contrast through parallel predications across independent clauses. The analysis demonstrates that syntactic structure and lexical selection interact according to principled formulation guidelines rather than arbitrary conventions. Key findings include the identification of categorical versus non-categorical negation types in acrothesis, the role of displaced negation in syntactic flexibility, and the formation of litotes-hyperbole structures that generate inferential meaning beyond literal assertion. The distinction between intrapredicate opposition (acrothesis) and interpredicate opposition (antithesis) correlates systematically with different types of semantic relationships: mediated contrast through correction versus direct contrast through comparison. Positioning strategies, conjunction selection, and actual division patterns emerge as motivated pairings of form and function reflecting underlying logical operations. These formulation principles operate not as surface stylistic choices but as deep structural alignments between grammatical architecture and cognitive-communicative purposes. The findings contribute to understanding how rhetorical figures encode fundamental intellectual operations—correction and comparison—through systematic coordination of linguistic resources, illuminating the relationship between form and meaning that has preoccupied rhetoricians across historical traditions.

Key words:

acrothesis, antithesis, rhetorical figures, contrast, negation, syntax, lexicology, formulation principles

Introduction

The architectural foundations of rhetorical contrast extend far beyond mere lexical opposition into the intricate domains of syntactic arrangement and semantic interaction. While previous investigations have established acrothesis as a distinct figure operating through strategic positioning of contrasting elements (Mamaziyayev & Axmadjonov, 2025), the underlying principles governing its formulation—particularly in comparison with antithesis—demand systematic examination through both syntactic and lexicological lenses.

This investigation addresses a critical gap in contemporary rhetorical scholarship: the formulation principles that distinguish how contrast-based figures achieve their cognitive and persuasive effects through the interplay of grammatical structure and semantic content. The study of contrast as a compositional-stylistic principle represents one of the fundamental organizing mechanisms of human discourse, operating across historical periods and cultural traditions (Burke, 1969). Yet the specific mechanisms through which different contrast-based figures emerge from the same linguistic resources remain insufficiently theorized. Bochina (2007) notes that contrast serves as a universal artistic principle in proverbial genres, yet the precise formulation principles distinguishing acrothesis from antithesis have received minimal systematic attention. This investigation employs rhetorical criticism combined with syntactic and lexicological analysis to illuminate how these related but distinct figures construct meaning through different organizational principles.

Methods

This study employs a multi-layered analytical methodology integrating classical rhetorical taxonomy with contemporary linguistic frameworks. The primary corpus draws from Russian paremiological materials analyzed by

Bochina (2007), supplemented by literary examples from Russian prose, particularly Tsvetaeva's autobiographical and critical writings as examined by Kashitsyna (2014). This selection enables cross-genre comparison while maintaining focus on contrast-rich discourse traditions. The analytical framework operates on three interconnected levels. First, syntactic analysis examines the grammatical structures underlying contrast formulation, including word order patterns, clause relationships, parallel constructions, and the distribution of thematic and rhematic elements according to principles of actual division (Zolotova, Onipenko & Sidorova, 1998). Second, lexicological analysis investigates the semantic relationships between contrasted elements, distinguishing language-based (языковые/ conventional) antonyms from contextual (оказиональные/occasional) antonyms, and examining how semantic opposition types—contradictory, contrary, converse, and directional—influence figure formation. Third, communicative-functional analysis considers how syntactic structure and lexical selection interact to produce specific rhetorical effects within discourse contexts.

Selection criteria for analyzed examples required clear manifestation of contrast through negation-affirmation structures characteristic of acrothesis (не А, а Б / А, а не Б) or through parallel opposition structures characteristic of antithesis. Examples were coded for syntactic features including clause structure, element position, parallelism type, and conjunction usage. Lexicological coding identified antonym types, semantic relationship categories, and whether oppositions involved single lexemes, phrases, or clausal elements. This dual coding enabled systematic comparison of formulation principles across the two figures. Comparative analysis then explored how identical lexical oppositions manifest differently depending on syntactic arrangement, and conversely, how identical syntactic frames produce different effects depending on lexical content. This methodology reveals the interaction principles governing

contrast formulation rather than treating syntax and lexicology as independent variables. The approach acknowledges that rhetorical figures operate as integrated structures where grammatical form and semantic content mutually determine final effect, following Vinokur's (1980) principle that stylistic selection operates through systematic coordination of linguistic resources.

Results

Analysis reveals that acrothesis and antithesis employ fundamentally different syntactic organization principles despite both utilizing contrast. Acrothesis constructs contrast through what Bochina (2007) terms a "unified negative-affirmative logical-grammatical predicate." In the structure "Жена хороша не телом, а делом" (A wife is good not in body but in deed), the contrasted pair "телом – делом" functions as a single complex predicate answering one thematic question: wherein lies goodness? The syntactic subordination of both elements to a single governing predicate creates what might be termed "predicative unity"—both contrasted elements occupy identical grammatical positions as circumstantial modifiers of manner, integrated into one communicative act. This predicative unity distinguishes acrothesis fundamentally from antithesis, where contrasted elements occupy parallel but independent structural positions. In the antithetical construction "Белик телом, да мал делом" (Great in body, but small in deed), each contrasted element forms a separate predication with its own subject-predicate relationship. The syntactic structure creates two coordinate propositions: "He is" great in body AND "he is" small in deed. The contrast emerges from juxtaposition of independent predications rather than from internal division within a single predicate. This structural distinction corresponds to the logical difference between correction within a single judgment versus comparison between two separate judgments.

The syntactic positioning possibilities for acrothesis reveal systematic patterns. Bochina's (2007) analysis of Russian proverbs identifies three primary structural variants based on actual division principles: (1) heR-T-R structure with

negated rheme opening the utterance, theme in medial position, and affirmed rheme closing (64.9 % of examples): "Не товаром бог кормит, а купцом"; (2) T-heR-R structure with direct thematic-rhematic ordering (25.5%): "Судят не по уму, а по карману"; (3) parer variants including heR-R-T (3.2%) and structures with displaced negation (2.2%). This distribution reveals a marked preference for structures that position negated and affirmed elements at utterance boundaries, exploiting what Leech and Short (2007) identify as "strong positions" of maximal emphasis. The heR-T-R structure merits particular attention for demonstrating how syntax creates semantic symmetry. With theme occupying the medial position, it functions as a fulcrum balancing equidistant alternatives: "Не земля хлеб родит, а небо" (Not earth births bread, but heaven). The syntactic symmetry reinforces semantic anti-symmetry—the structural balance heightens the perceived sharpness of opposition. This ring composition, placing the negative-affirmative predicate at utterance boundaries, simultaneously achieves emphatic highlighting through position while maintaining the predicative unity characteristic of acrothesis. The final position of the affirmed element additionally strengthens the overall affirmative sense of the utterance, as terminal position carries particular weight in Russian sentence structure.

Antithesis, by contrast, exploits syntactic parallelism as its primary structural principle. The parallel construction establishes structural correspondence that foregrounds semantic opposition: identical grammatical forms occupied by semantically opposed content create maximum contrast salience. In Tsvetaeva's construction analyzed by Kashitsyna (2014), "Красивость – внешнее мерило, прекрасность – внутреннее" (Beauty is an external measure, magnificence is an internal one), the perfect syntactic parallelism— $[\text{Noun}_1 - \text{Adjective}_1 + \text{Noun}]$, $[\text{Noun}_2 - \text{Adjective}_2 + \text{Noun}]$ —establishes a frame within which the semantic oppositions (красивость/прекрасность, внешнее/внутреннее) achieve heightened salience precisely because structural identity makes semantic difference the only variable. The lexicological foundations of

acrothesis and antithesis reveal distinct principles governing how semantic opposition constructs meaning. Acrothesis demonstrates what might be termed "semantic subordination"—one member of the contrasted pair serves primarily to establish a contrastive background against which the other member gains enhanced communicative significance. Bochina (2007) observes that the negated member performs the function of a contrasting background for the affirmed element, thereby strengthening its communicative importance. This asymmetric relationship means that while both elements participate in semantic opposition, they function unequally in the communicative structure.

This asymmetry manifests in the semantic relationship types most characteristic of acrothesis. Analysis reveals that acrothesis frequently employs what Bochina terms "непредельное отрицание" (non-categorical negation), creating gradational-comparative relationships rather than absolute mutual exclusion. In "Не пером пишут, а умом" (Written not with pen but with mind), the negation does not categorically deny the role of the pen but rather establishes priority: mind matters more than pen, though both participate in writing. The lexical opposition here involves elements that are causally or instrumentally related rather than contradictory opposites. Such "adjacency relationships"—where contrasted elements represent different aspects of a single process or different means to a single end—characterize a substantial portion of acrothetic structures. The semantic relationship between contrasted elements in acrothesis often involves what Bochina (2007) identifies as fundamental semiotic oppositions in paremiological discourse: Essence versus Appearance, Word versus Deed, Internal versus External. These oppositions structure not mere negation but correction of misconception—the acrothesis redirects attention from superficial to essential, from apparent to real. In "Не красна изба углами, а красна пирогами" ("It's not the fancy rooms that make a home beautiful, but the hospitality"), the opposition углами/пирогами maps onto the deeper semiotic opposition between architectural appearance and hospitable substance. The lexicological principle here involves not

random antonymy but semantically motivated selection that activates conceptual frames relevant to the discourse domain.

Antithesis, by contrast, typically employs what might be termed "semantic coordination"—both members of the opposition carry equal communicative weight and establish mutually defining boundaries. The lexical oppositions in antithesis tend toward contradictory or contrary antonyms that exhaust the semantic space between them. In structures like "Велик телом, да мал делом" (Great in size, but small in deed), the antonym pairs велик/мал and телом/делом represent polar opposites that define a complete semantic dimension. Neither term serves merely as background; instead, both poles require assertion to establish the full scope of contrast. The phenomenon of contextual or occasional antonymy operates differently in the two figures. Bochina (2007) notes that occasional antonyms in acrothesis must correlate with usual antonyms, with semantically significant features coming to the foreground. In Tsvetaeva's "площадь – людная пустыня" (the square is a populous desert), the occasional antonymy between людная (populous) and пустыня (desert) builds on the language-based opposition людный/безлюдный (populous/deserted), with пустыня serving as a metaphorical intensification of безлюдность. The occasional antonym emerges through semantic derivation from established oppositions, maintaining connection to the language system while achieving expressive effect through unexpected formulation. This principle of "systematic innovation"—creating new oppositions through principled extension of existing ones—characterizes acrothetic lexicology. In antithesis, occasional antonyms often function through what Kashitsyna (2014) terms "semantic differentiation"—taking near-synonyms and constructing them as opposites through explicit contrast. In Tsvetaeva's "Красивость – внешнее мерило, прекрасность – внутреннее" (Attractiveness is an external measure; greatness of character is an internal one) the words красивость and прекрасность, both denoting beauty, become occasional antonyms through their association with the language-

based antonym pair *внешнее/внутреннее* (external/internal). The antithetical structure does not merely foreground inherent opposition but actively creates opposition by assigning synonymous terms to opposing semantic poles. This "constructed opposition" principle reflects antithesis's capacity to sharpen distinctions that might otherwise remain vague, to make lukewarm or qualified contrasts impossible (Fahnestock, 2011).

The formulation principles governing acrothesis and antithesis emerge most clearly when examining how syntactic structure and lexical content interact. In acrothesis, the negative-affirmative syntactic frame (*не А, а Б*) establishes a correction structure that constrains lexical selection. The negated element typically represents a plausible but incorrect alternative—something that might reasonably be supposed but requires correction. In *"Города строят не языком, а рублем да топором"* (Cities are built not by tongue but by ruble and axe), the negated element *языком* (tongue) represents the kind of misconception that requires correction: one might suppose that planning or discussion builds cities, but the proverb corrects this to emphasize material resources and labor. The syntactic correction frame thus motivates selection of lexical elements standing in relationships of "apparent versus actual causation" rather than simple opposition. This syntax-lexicology interaction explains why acrothesis frequently employs what might be called "semantically mediated contrast"—elements that oppose each other not through direct antonymy but through their relationship to a third, implicit term. The contrasted elements answer the same question but provide different, mutually exclusive answers. The lexical opposition derives meaning from the syntactic frame establishing them as alternative responses to a single query. Without the syntactic frame of negation-affirmation, the lexical pairing might not register as oppositional; conversely, the syntactic frame requires lexical elements capable of functioning as competing alternatives. In antithesis, the parallel syntactic structure permits and indeed demands lexical elements that stand in direct semantic opposition. The parallel frame establishes structural identity as background against which

semantic difference becomes figure. This means antithesis can accommodate various types of lexical opposition—contradictories, contraries, conversives, directionals—so long as the opposition is semantically salient. The syntactic parallelism amplifies whatever opposition the lexical elements inherently possess. In examples like *"Кривая вывозит, прямая топит"* ("The winding road frees, the straight road deceives"), analyzed by Kashitsyna (2014), the perfect syntactic parallelism [Adjective + Verb] heightens the paradoxical semantic opposition between the adjectives *кривая/прямая* (crooked/straight) and the verbs *вывозит/топит* (saves/drowns). The phenomenon of conjunction choice reveals further interaction principles. Acrothesis employs the compound conjunction *не...а* (not...but) or single conjunction *а не* (but not), with the distribution carrying semantic implications. Bochina (2007) observes that the compound conjunction *не...а* creates rhythmic equality between contrasted elements when symmetrically distributed, while the single conjunction *а не* creates asymmetry by lengthening the negated segment. This rhythmic asymmetry reinforces the semantic asymmetry characteristic of acrothesis—the affirmed element receives emphasis through the relative brevity and rapidity of the negated element. The conjunction choice thus coordinates with the lexical relationship to produce the characteristic acrothetic effect of emphatic affirmation through contrastive denial.

Antithesis typically employs coordinating conjunctions expressing adversative relationships: *а, но, да* (but, yet, however). These conjunctions signal coordinate rather than subordinate relationships between clauses, reinforcing the semantic coordination between opposed elements. The conjunction choice reflects and reinforces the syntactic parallelism and semantic balance characteristic of antithetical construction. Where acrothesis uses conjunctions to mark correction or substitution of one element for another, antithesis uses conjunctions to mark coexistence of opposed elements, both of which make valid claims about different aspects of reality.

Both figures appear in elaborated forms that reveal their formulation principles through expansion. Acrothesis appears in what Bochina

(2007) terms structures with "displaced negation," where the negative particle syntactically attaches to a different element than it semantically modifies: "Снизу не учат, а сверху" (They teach not from below but from above) where the semantic structure implies "They teach not those below but those above" or "Teaching comes not from below but from above." This displacement reveals the flexibility of syntactic realization while maintaining the essential predicative unity—the negation-affirmation structure continues to function as a single complex predicate despite the surface variation. Acrothesis also manifests in prohibitive-imperative forms that combine the correction structure with directive illocutionary force: "Не смотри на дело, смотри на отделку" (Don't look at the deed, look at the finishing). Here the syntactic structure combines negative imperative with affirmative imperative, creating an acrothetic instruction. The lexicological principle involves selecting elements representing alternative objects of attention, with the structure directing attention from one to the other. The formulation principle integrates modal meaning with the correction structure characteristic of acrothesis. Antithesis appears in compound forms including what Kashitsyna (2014) identifies as *aloioza* and *mukabala*. *Aloioza* involves expanded comparison of two characteristics through paired oppositions: "Два встречных движения: продвигающегося возраста и отодвигающегося художественного соответствия" (Two counter movements: advancing age and receding artistic correspondence).

The formulation principle here involves syntactic parallelism at the phrasal level—each characteristic receives equivalent grammatical expression—combined with lexical oppositions at multiple levels (продвигающийся/отодвигающийся, возраст/соответствие). This layering creates semantic density while maintaining structural clarity through parallel syntax.

Syncretism intensifies *alloiosis* by employing strict syntactic parallelism with multiple opposition points: "Красивость – внешнее мерило, прекрасность – внутреннее" (Beauty is an external measure, magnificence is an internal one). The formulation principle demands perfect structural

symmetry at the clausal level combined with semantic opposition at each corresponding position. The syntax establishes a grid within which lexical oppositions align: [Noun₁ (semantic field: beauty) + Predicate + Modifier₁ (external) + Head Noun], [Noun₂ (semantic field: beauty) + Predicate + Modifier₂ (internal) + Head Noun]. This grid structure means that even near-synonyms in corresponding positions become functionally oppositional through their position in the parallel structure.

Discussion

The analytical findings illuminate several fundamental principles governing how syntactic and lexicological resources combine to formulate distinct contrast-based figures. The most salient discovery involves the primacy of predicative structure in determining figure identity. Acrothesis constructs contrast within a single predicative unit, creating what might be termed "intrapredicate opposition," while antithesis constructs contrast between separate predicative units, creating "interpredicate opposition." This distinction operates at a more fundamental level than simple word order or conjunction choice—it reflects different logical operations on propositional content. This predicative distinction correlates systematically with lexicological principles. Intrapredicate opposition in acrothesis permits and indeed requires semantically mediated contrast—elements related through their connection to a third term rather than through direct mutual opposition. The correction logic of acrothesis means one element substitutes for another in answering a single question, which allows for contrasts between cause and effect, means and end, appearance and essence—relationships that do not constitute antonymy in the lexicological sense but function oppositionally within the discourse context. Interpredicate opposition in antithesis, by contrast, typically demands direct semantic opposition because the parallel structure presents two independent predications whose relationship derives primarily from the semantic content of corresponding elements. The role of negation in these figures deserves particular attention. In acrothesis, negation functions as *Bochina* (2007)

describes it: as an operator asserting "it is false that," which when combined with affirmation creates a correction structure. The negation does not simply deny but specifically rejects one alternative in favor of another.

This corrective function explains why acrothesis gravitates toward elements standing in relationships of "common mistake versus actual fact" or "superficial appearance versus underlying reality." The negation signals that an expected, plausible, or commonly held understanding requires correction—a discourse function that constrains lexical selection toward pairs where one member represents a correctable error. In antithesis, negation when present functions differently—not to correct but to sharpen boundaries between opposed poles. The negation in antithetical structures marks exclusion rather than correction. When Tsvetaeva writes "Друзей много, друга – нет" ("Friends abound, but no true friend is found"), the negation marks the absence of the singular friend, creating a boundary with the plural friends. This boundary-marking function of antithetical negation means it can operate with various types of opposition—presence/absence, much/little, high/low—without requiring the correction relationship characteristic of acrothesis. The negation emphasizes distinction rather than redirecting from false to true. The phenomenon of actual division—the organization of utterances into theme and rheme—reveals further formulation principles. Acrothesis systematically exploits theme-rheme structure to create emphasis through position, with strong preference for structures that position contrasted elements at utterance boundaries. The statistical distribution documented by Bochina (2007)—nearly 65% of examples using the *HeR-T-R* structure—demonstrates that optimal acrothetic formulation places both the negated alternative and the affirmed alternative in positions of natural emphasis, with the theme serving as an axis of symmetry. This positioning strategy means that acrothesis functions most effectively in discourse contexts where establishing correct understanding matters more than comprehensive comparison—contexts where the speaker anticipates and preempts misunderstanding. Antithesis shows no

comparable constraint on theme-rheme ordering. Because antithesis establishes contrast through parallel structure rather than through positioning within a single predicate, it can employ various actual division patterns depending on discourse context. The structural parallelism itself creates emphasis regardless of whether the parallel elements occupy thematic or rhematic positions.

This flexibility means antithesis can adapt to diverse discourse functions—not only correction but also comprehensive characterization, moral evaluation, dialectical development of ideas, and dramatic juxtaposition. The findings regarding conjunction types illuminate the boundary between formal structure and semantic function. The conjunctions employed by acrothesis (*He...a, a He*) grammaticalize the correction relationship, encoding in morphosyntactic form the logical operation of substitution. The conjunctions employed by antithesis (*a, Ho, da*) grammaticalize the coordination relationship, encoding coexistence or tension between alternatives. This grammaticalization means that conjunction choice operates as more than stylistic variation—it signals fundamentally different logical relationships between contrasted elements, which in turn constrains what lexical elements can effectively fill those structural positions. The role of occasional or contextual antonymy merits extended consideration. Both figures create conditions under which near-synonyms can function as opposites or semantically distant terms can be construed as related. However, the mechanisms differ.

In acrothesis, occasional antonymy emerges through the correction frame: any two terms answering the same question but providing different answers can function oppositionally regardless of their inherent semantic relationship. The structure "*He A, a B*" can take virtually any semantically appropriate terms in the A and B positions—the oppositional relationship derives from their placement in competing positions within the correction structure. This means acrothesis possesses generative capacity to create new oppositions, potentially expanding the lexicon of antonymic relationships through usage. In antithesis, occasional antonymy typically requires some semantic basis for opposition that the parallel

structure then amplifies. The structure cannot create opposition from nothing but can sharpen distinctions that might otherwise remain subtle. Kashitsyna's (2014) analysis of Tsvetaeva's prose demonstrates this principle: *красивость* and *прекрасность* become functional opposites not merely through structural parallelism but through their association with semantically opposed modifiers (*внешнее/внутреннее*) that activate different semantic features in the near-synonymous terms. The antithetical structure does not generate opposition *ex nihilo* but rather brings latent semantic differences into sharp focus.

These findings bear on larger questions about the relationship between form and meaning in rhetorical figures. Classical rhetorical theory often treated figures as tools speakers could deploy instrumentally to achieve predetermined effects (Cicero, trans. 2001). Contemporary rhetorical theory, influenced by Burke (1969) and others, emphasizes how forms shape rather than merely express meaning. The present analysis suggests a middle position: rhetorical figures embody principled relationships between form and meaning, such that particular syntactic structures naturally pair with particular semantic relationships. The formulation principles governing acrothesis and antithesis are not arbitrary conventions but motivated pairings of structure and function. The correction logic of acrothesis motivates its predicative unity and positioning strategies; the comparison logic of antithesis motivates its parallel structure and semantic coordination. This motivated relationship between form and function has implications for understanding how rhetorical competence develops. Speakers acquire not merely a catalogue of figures but an understanding of formulation principles—knowledge of which syntactic structures naturally accommodate which semantic relationships.

Mastery involves recognizing that certain contrasts call for acrothetic formulation (when correction matters), while others call for antithetical formulation (when comprehensive comparison matters). The choice between figures reflects not mere stylistic preference but sensitivity to the logical and pragmatic relationships one wishes to establish between contrasted elements.

The persistence of these figures across languages and cultures, noted by Fahnestock (2011), likely reflects the universality of the cognitive operations they encode. Correction and comparison represent fundamental intellectual operations that any language community must express. While specific morphosyntactic realizations vary across languages, the core formulation principles—predicative unity for correction, parallel structure for comparison—recur because they align with universal cognitive structures. The syntactic and lexicological principles documented here for Russian likely have analogues in other languages, though the specific grammatical resources available will shape their surface realization.

Conclusion

This investigation of formulation principles governing acrothesis and antithesis reveals that these related contrast-based figures operate through distinct combinations of syntactic structure and lexicological selection. Acrothesis achieves its characteristic effect through predicative unity, positioning strategy, and semantically mediated contrast, creating structures that correct misconception by rejecting one alternative in favor of another. Antithesis achieves its characteristic effect through syntactic parallelism, semantic coordination, and direct lexical opposition, creating structures that establish comprehensive comparison between opposed alternatives. These formulation principles operate systematically—not as arbitrary conventions but as motivated pairings of form and function that reflect underlying logical and cognitive operations. The syntactic formulation principles center on predicative structure. Acrothesis constructs contrast within a single predicate through negation-affirmation, while antithesis constructs contrast between parallel predicates through coordination. This fundamental distinction ramifies through multiple levels of linguistic organization, affecting word order preferences, conjunction selection, and actual division patterns. The lexicological formulation principles involve distinct types of semantic relationship: acrothesis employs semantically mediated contrast where elements oppose through their relationship to an implicit

third term, while antithesis employs direct semantic opposition where elements define polar positions on a shared dimension.

The interaction between syntax and lexicology proves crucial. Neither syntactic structure nor lexical content alone determines figure identity; rather, particular syntactic structures naturally pair with particular semantic relationships. The correction frame of acrothesis motivates selection of elements standing in relationships of apparent versus actual causation, common error versus factual reality, or superficial appearance versus essential nature. The parallel frame of antithesis motivates selection of elements standing in direct oppositional relationships along dimensions of size, quality, morality, or existence. These motivated pairings mean that effective deployment of contrast-based figures requires coordinating syntactic and lexicological resources according to principled formulation guidelines. Future research should investigate whether these formulation principles operate comparably across languages with different typological characteristics. The present analysis examines Russian, a synthetic language with relatively free word order and rich inflectional morphology. How do these principles manifest in analytic languages, in languages with rigid word order, or in languages lacking the specific conjunctions used in Russian acrothetic structures? Cross-linguistic investigation would clarify which aspects of formulation principles reflect universal cognitive structures and which represent language-specific realizations of those structures.

Additionally, empirical investigation of how readers and listeners process these figures would test claims about their cognitive effects. The present analysis infers cognitive effects from structural analysis and theoretical principles, but direct investigation of comprehension, memory, and persuasive impact would strengthen understanding of why these formulation principles prove effective. Do the proposed differences in predicative structure actually affect how audiences process contrast? Does positioning strategy in acrothesis genuinely enhance memory for the affirmed alternative? Such questions require empirical methods beyond rhetorical criticism. The formulation principles

documented here contribute to both theoretical understanding of rhetorical figures and practical rhetorical competence.

Theoretically, they demonstrate that contrast-based figures operate according to systematic principles governing the interaction of syntax and lexicology—principles that reflect fundamental logical and cognitive operations. Practically, they provide explicit guidelines for when acrothetic versus antithetical formulation best serves communicative purposes. The principles illuminate not merely how these figures are constructed but why particular constructions achieve particular effects, advancing understanding of the relationship between linguistic form and rhetorical function that has preoccupied rhetoricians since classical antiquity.

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