# Lecture 7 STYLISTIC SYNTAX:

# REDISTRIBUTION, TRANSPOSITION

SEMINAR OUTLINE

* Syntactical stylistic devices based on redistribution
* Syntactical stylistic devices based on transposition

# Syntactical stylistic devices based on redistribution

In syntactical stylistic devices based on redistribution we deal with the unusual arrangement of the components of the utterance. The tolerably fixed word order in English is Subject – Predicate (Verb) – Object. Any change in this predominant structure becomes stylistically relevant and charged with meaning.

**Inversion** involves foregrounding certain sentence components to the front position in the sentence (*Out he hopped; Up you go*; *Very pleasant was their day*). **Secondary inversion** involves the direct word order in yes-no questions (*You know him? You remember me?*). **Detachment** is a seemingly independent part of a sentence separated graphically from the rest of the sentence by means of dashes, brackets, or commas (*He wasn’t much of a business man – too emotional*). **Parcellation** consists in dividing the structurally complete sentence into autonomous parts by means of full stops (*I need to beg you for money. Daily!*). **Retardation** reflects the speaker’s inability to express the idea coherently and logically. **Enumeration** is a syntactical syntactical stylistic device by means of which homogeneous parts of an utterance are made semantically heterogeneous. **Suspense** is a syntactical compositional stylistic device consisting in withholding the most important idea till the end of the sentence, passage, text (R. Kipling’s poem “If”). **Gradation** is the arrangement of words, phrases, clauses, or sentences with gradual increase in their significance or emotional tension (*It’s done – past – finished*). **Anti-climax** consists in sudden drop from a serious or elevated idea to a trivial and commonplace one (*This was appalling – and soon forgotten*).

# Syntactical stylistic devices based on transposition

Syntactical transposition implies the shift of grammatical meaning. Syntactical forms and constructions are employed in the unusual function, in the meanings alien to them.

**Rhetorical question** is no longer a question (expecting an answer) but a statement expressed in the form of an interrogative sentence. **Quasi-affirmative sentences** are rhetorical questions containing a negative predicate but presupposing positive answer (*Don’t I remember?* (implication: I do remember)). **Quasi- negative sentences** are rhetorical questions containing the affirmative predicate but implying the negative idea (*Did I say a word about money?* (implication: I did not say)). **Represented speech** presents the mixture of the author’s words and the words of a character. It is the representation of the actual utterance through the author’s language (uttered represented speech) or the representation of the thoughts and feelings of the character (inner represented speech).