

FIRST PART

The Composition

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The first part deals with questions regarding the composition of the texts.

First, it was necessary to make as complete an inventory as possible of the linguistic means which are used by the authors to construct their texts. Too often, beginners limit themselves to picking up lexical recurrences to identify the composition of texts. Even if the vocabulary is important, it is far from representing all linguistic phenomena.

The next chapter sets out to distinguish carefully between the various levels of text organization, from the minimum unit of the segment to that of the whole book, and even beyond. This is undoubtedly the most decisive chapter, as many researchers are often unclear on this crucial point.

The third chapter is devoted to the compositional figures: figures of parallelism, specular composition and concentric composition. It also makes reference to partial figures that are the initial, final, extreme, median and central terms.

Finally, rules of rewriting are presented. This way of arranging the text on the page so as to show its composition; these need to be as clear as possible and cover all the scenarios that the person analyzing the text might encounter.

Chapter 2

The relationship between linguistic elements

The signs of composition of a prose writing can be external, at least in part: in modern publications, chapters generally begin on an odd page, paragraphs are often separated with a blank line, or at least with a capital letter and an indentation of the first line. Technical and scientific works also involve a various array of titles and subtitles, hierarchized with different numbers and letters, using different characters. On the other hand, ancient manuscripts, like those of the Bible, are totally devoid of these signs as these would have taken up too much space considering that they were written when it was necessary to save as much as writing material – parchment or papyrus were costly; for example writing in large uncials does not even have spaces between words. Thus, the signs of composition are all internal to the text itself, that is, they are only linguistic.¹

For linguistic elements to have a rhetorical function and for them to play a role as a mark of composition by their position in the text, they must form figures. For this, they must relate to each other.²

Before presenting the basic figures of biblical rhetoric, it is essential therefore to establish as complete an inventory as possible of the relationships that may exist between linguistic elements, at successive levels of organization of language.

This is all the more necessary since until today some base their analyzes only on lexical relations, neglecting most of the others. This is what I did in my early work.³ In the account of the birth of Jesus (Lk 2:1–20), for example, I noted a

¹ The “capitulation”, or division of the books of the Bible into chapters in use today was made by Étienne Langton, when he was a professor at the University of Paris in the early 13th century. With some modifications, it quickly took the place of the multiple capitulations then in use. The earliest known capitulation, that of Vaticanus (B), dates back to the 4th century (see C.-M. Martini, *Novum Testamentum e Codice Vaticanus Graeco 1209*, xiiis). Since then, each chapter (kephálaion = capitulum) has been given a title in the margin of the text (is it necessary to remember that the titles of the pericopes of our modern translations of the Bible are no more part of the biblical text than the ancient *titloi*?). The Gospel of Luke, for example, has 152 sections in B and 83 in the Alexandrian (A: 5th century). The division of chapters into verses was introduced by Robert Estienne in 1551 (see E. MANGENOT, “Chapitres de la Bible” and B. HEURTEBISE, “ESTIENNE Robert”; B. METZGER, *The Text of the New Testament*, 22s). These divisions into chapters and verses are not made at random and correspond, each at its own level, to a certain semantic and syntactic organization of the text. Their primary function, however, is of a practical nature. The analysis must therefore not attribute to these divisions a value and importance that they do not have.

² On rhetoric in the field of linguistics see R. Meynet, *Luke*, 11-12.

³ In *Quelle est donc cette Parole ?* (1979), see in particular the pages devoted to what I called the “lexical chiasmus” (130-137).

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lexical chiasmus which “organizes the whole second side of Unity” (which I have called since the sequence A4):⁴

A angel 13
B plenitude 13
C praise 13
D glory 14
E shepherds 15
F sayings 15
G seeing – words – knowing 15

.....
THE NEWBORN PLACED IN THE MANGER 16
.....

G' seeing – knowing – words 17
F' sayings (bis) 17
E' shepherds 18
D' glory 20
C' praise 20
B' filled 21
A' angel 21

I was then following in the footsteps of other researchers, as Sister Jeanne d'Arc, even though I was critical of her analyzes.⁵ More recently, Marc Girard also gives absolute priority to recurrences of signifiers. :

The vast majority of the biblical texts analysed have as their backbone a structure based mainly on recurrences. And very often a structure based exclusively on recurrences.⁶

The linguistic elements which play a role as a mark of composition are much more numerous than the vocabulary alone; they extend to all other linguistic components, morphology, syntax, rhythm and speech.⁷

The relationships between the elements can only be of identity or of opposition.

⁴ R. MEYNET, *Quelle est donc cette Parole ?* Planche A4, verso.

⁵ Sr JEANNE D'ARC, *Les Pèlerins d'Emmaüs*; “Un grand jeu d'inclusions dans “les pèlerins d'Emmaüs””; see my article ‘Comment établir un chiasme. À propos des Pèlerins d'Emmaüs’, especially tables I e IV.

⁶ M. GIRARD, *Les Psaumes redécouverts*, I, 100.

⁷ Thomas Boys had already drawn up a large inventory, even if it was not systematic (see *A Key to the Book of the Psalms*, p. 50-52.153-155).

A. RELATIONS OF IDENTITY

Identity can be total or partial; in the latter case, some might prefer to speak of resemblance, or even analogy, rather than identity.

1. ON THE LEXICAL PLAN

1.1 TOTALLY IDENTICAL LEXEMES⁸

Two lexemes (or lexical monemes) are completely identical when their signifier⁹ and the signified¹⁰ are the same and they belong to the same grammatical class.

➤ So in Psalm 96, the first three phrases: (Ps 96:1–2a)

- . **Sing** to YHWH, a song new !
- . **Sing** to YHWH, all the earth !
- . **Sing** to YHWH, bless his name !

contain two identical lexemes, “sing” and “YHWH”.

➤ In James 4,11bc :

- | | | | | |
|-----------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| : The one | SPEAKING AGAINST | <i>his brother</i> | or <i>JUDGES</i> | <i>the brother of him</i> |
| : | SPEAKS AGAINST | the Law | and <i>JUDGES</i> | the Law. |

Numerous lexemes are repeated within each member: “brother” and “law”; and from one segment to the other, “speaks against” and “judges”.

1.2 PARTIALLY IDENTICAL LEXEMES

1.2.1 Belonging to different classes

Lexemes with the same root belong to different grammatical classes.

➤ Thus, in the first sub-sequence of the last sequence of Luke (24,1–12), “remember” (*mimnēskomai*) is of the same root as “grave” (*mnēma*) et “tomb” (*mnēmeion*), which is of interesting significance.¹¹

1.2.2 Homonymous lexemes

Two lexemes are homonyms¹² when their signifiers/spelling are identical but their signified/meaning is different.

⁸ A distinction must be made between lexical monemes or lexemes and grammatical monemes or morphemes. Lexemes belong to unlimited inventories: they are found in the lexicon and not in the grammar; see A. MARTINET, *Elements of general linguistics*, Chicago 1966.

⁹ Phonic form of a linguistic sign.

¹⁰ Meaning or value of a linguistic sign.

¹¹ See R. MEYNET, *Luke*, 802-803.

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➤ Thus in Jer 31: the same *tamrûrîm* is understood by commentaries “very bitter” in verse 15 and “landmarks” (meaning “sign posts”) in 21.¹³

➤ In Amos 2:7–8, the two occurrences of the verb *yattû* are interpreted as two different forms of verbs from the same root (as a *hiphil* the first time, and as a *qal* the second time):

The way of the humble	pervert	7
And on clothes taken in pledge	they lie down	8

➤ In the Letter of James, the same Greek noun *ios* is found in 3:8 and in 5:3. The first time it is translated as “venom”; the second as “rust”. The meaning is different even if both indicate something “destructive”.¹⁴

1.2.3 Synonymous lexemes

Two lexemes are synonymous when their meaning is the same¹⁵ and their signifiers are different.

➤ At the beginning of Psalm 2 (Ps 2:1),

. Why	do rage	the NATIONS	
. and	the PEOPLES	murmur	in vain?

Where “do rage” is synonymous of “to murmur” and “nations” to “peoples”.

¹² In vocalized Hebrew and in Greek (academic pronunciation), where orthography problems do not arise, there is no difference between homography (identity of the graphic form) and homophony (identity of the form / sound).

¹³ Albert Condamin accorded to these two homonyms a statute of composition (printed in bold characters): “*Des signaux*: ce mot, avec ce sens, n’est pas ailleurs dans la Bible. Targ. et Vulg. l’ont traduit par *amertume* le confondant avec le mot de forme identique, rare aussi (trois fois dans la Bible), qui se trouve au v. 15 du même chapitre. Remarquer l’emploi de ces deux vocables si caractéristiques, l’un au premier vers de la strophe, l’autre au premier vers de l’antistrophe” (*Le Livre de Jérémie*, 226-227).

¹⁴ See T. Kot, *Jacques*, 178, note 13 ; 246.

¹⁵ Absolute synonymy is rare; it presents degrees which cannot be discussed here.

➤ In the Prologue of the Gospel of John (Jn 1:12–13)

¹² As many as however received him,
 he gave them authority to **become children** of God,
 to those believing in the name of him,
¹³ who not of blood, nor of will of flesh,
 nor of will of man, but **were born** of God.¹⁶

the words¹⁷ “become children” and the verb “were born” can be said to be synonymous because they have the same meaning.

1.2.4 Paranomastic lexemes

There is a paronomasis (play on words) between two lexemes when they have different meanings but partly similar signifiers.

➤ In the song of Hannah (1Sam 25), there is a paronomasis in “full” (*šēbē’îm*) and “seven” (*šib’â*) because, except for the suffices *-îm / et /-â/*, all their consonantal phonemes are either identical (*/b/ et /’/*) or only differ in their points of articulation (*/š/ et /š’/*) and follow each other in the same order.¹⁸

[Those who were] *full* for bread have hired themselves out
 And the hungry have ceased to hunger
 Even the barren has borne *seven*
 And she who has many children has become feeble.

➤ In the Prologue of John (Jn 1:12–13), there is a paronomasis in *genesthai* (“to happen”) and *egennēthēsan* (“were begotten”) with which the segments 12b and 13b conclude (see below, p. 7).

1.2.5 Lexemes belonging to the same semantic field

Although not being synonymous, two or more lexemes may belong to the same semantic field.

➤ Thus in Si 24,12-17, the wise person declares:

¹² I have taken root in a privileged people,
 in the Lord's property, in his inheritance.
¹³ I have grown tall as a *cedar* on LEBANON,

¹⁶ Several examples will be taken from John's Prologue. See R. MEYNET, “Analyse rhétorique du Prologue de Jean”.

¹⁷ Any combination of monemes; a phrase that begins with a preposition is called a “prepositional phrase”.

¹⁸ On paronomase and its variables, see L. ALONSO SCHOEKEL *Estudios de Poética Hebrea*, 71–117 (bibliography, p. 72-77); see also A. STRUS, *Nomen-Omen, la stylistique sonore des noms propres dans le Pentateuque*. On paronomase as a the structuring principle of a text, see the two authors cited: “Salmo 122: canto al nombre de Jerusalén”.

as a *cypress* on Mount HERMON;
¹⁴ I have grown tall as a *palm* in EN-GEDI,
as the *rose bushes* of JERICHO;
as a fine *olive* in the plain,
as a *plane* tree, I have grown tall.
¹⁵ Like *CINNAMON* and *ACANTHUS*, I have yielded a perfume,
like choice *MYRRH*, have breathed out a scent,
like *GALBANUM*, *ONYCHA*, *LABDANUM*,
like the smoke of *INCENSE* in the tent.
¹⁶ I have spread my branches like a *terebinth*,
and my branches are glorious and graceful.
¹⁷ I am like a *vine* putting out graceful shoots,
my blossoms bear the fruit of glory and wealth.” (BJ translation)

“Cedar”, “cypress”, “palm”, “rose bushes”, “olive”, “plane tree”, “terebinth” et “vine” belong to the semantic field of trees; “Lebanon”, “Hermon”, “En-gedi” and “Jericho” are proper names of places; “cinnamon”, “acanthus”, “myrrh”, “galbanum”, “onycha”, “labandum” and “incense” belong to the semantic field of perfumes. Though in a less apparent way, “to take root” (12), “to grow” (13, 14, 14) and the whole phrase “to spread its branches” also belong to the same, progressive series of development of a tree.

Semantic fields can be natural (or universal) like those of names of trees (although the species may vary from continent to continent); they can also be cultural, that is specific to a people or a culture: for example, in the Bible, “heart” and “understand” belong to the same semantic field. This is not the case in French where the heart is not the seat of intelligence, but of feelings.¹⁹

2. ON THE MORPHOLOGICAL PLANE

2.1 IDENTICAL MORPHEMES²⁰

Two or more morphemes are identical when their form(s) and signified(s) are identical.

➤ In the song of Hannah : (1Sam 2:2),

+	No one	is	Holy	LIKE	YHWH
	:	none			except you
+	and	no	Rock	LIKE	our God

the three members include the same negation; the first and the third have the same conjunction “like”.

¹⁹ Unfortunately, there is no systematic dictionary of synonyms and antonyms of the Bible, even the most common. To learn about the semantic fields of Hebrew, see, for example: H. W. WOLF, *Anthropologie de l’Ancien Testament*.

²⁰ Morphemes (or “grammatical monemes” or “tool words”) are monemes that belong to limited inventories (pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, articles, modalities, etc.).

➤ Also in the Song of Hannah (1Sam 2:10),

And **HE WILL** give strength to HIS King
HE WILL exalt the horn of HIS Christ

the last two members have two identical personal pronouns: not only because their signifier “he” (y- in Hebrew) is the same and because their references (3rd person + singular + masculine + subject) are identical, but also because they have the same referent,²¹ That is, they refer to the same person, “YHWH”. This is the case for pronouns “his” (possessive in French, personal suffixes in Hebrew).

2.2 MORPHEMES WITH COMMON MEANINGS

These morphemes obviously have different signifiers but have one or more meaning in common.

➤ Also in the Song of Hannah (1Sam 2:5),

[Those who were] full for bread have hired **THEMSELVES** out
 And the hungry [**THEY**] have ceased to hunger
 Even the barren [**SHE**] has borne seven
 And **SHE** who has many children has become feeble.

the four pronominal morphemes of the four verbs have in common the meanings of “third person” and “subject”, but, while the first two are also in the “masculine” and in the “plural”, the last two are in the “feminine” and “singular”.

➤ In the following verses (1Sam 2:6–7),

⁶ YHWH	kills	and makes alive,
he	brings down to the grave	and brings up;
⁷ YHWH	[makes] poor	and [makes] rich,
he	brings low	and lifts up

all verbs in the original are in the factitive (*hiphil*). What in verse 6 is translated as “makes” could not be translated in this way in verse 7.

²¹ The object that indicates a moneme; for example in ““He taught in their synagogues” (Lk 4:15), the referent of the pronoun “He” is Jesus.

3. ON THE SYNTACTICAL PLAN

3.1 IDENTICAL SYNTAX FUNCTIONS

3.1.1 Lexemes

Two lexemes can be identical by their syntactic function.

➤ In Psalm 15:5,

. His	MONEY	he does put out at usury
. the	BRIBE	against the innocent nor does he take

“money” and “bribe” are two compliments of the direct object.

➤ In the prologue of John,

¹ In the beginning was	THE WORD...
¹⁴ And	THE WORD flesh became...

“the Word” is the subject at both the beginning of verse 1 and 14.

3.1.2 Morphemes

Two morphemes can be identical by their syntactic function.

➤ In Psalm 15:2b–3,

. and speaks the truth	IN	his heart
. ³ He does not backbite	WITH	his tongue

The two prepositions “in” and “with” also mark the function of complement to “his heart” and “his tongue”.

➤ Likewise in the prologue to John (Jn 1:3):

. <i>All things</i>	THROUGH HIM	came
. and WITHOUT him	did not happen	<i>nothing</i>

3.2 IDENTICAL SYNTAXIS CONSTRUCTIONS

3.2.1 Syntagma

Two phrases may have the same syntactic construction, whether or not this syntactic identity is accompanied by the identity of lexemes or of morphemes.

➤ In Psalm 96, the three syntagma “Sing to YHWH” (see p. 5, § 1.1) are identical by their lexemes, their morphemes and their syntactic construction: (verb + subject) + (preposition + object).

➤ In Psalm 15:2b–3,

. and speaks the truth	IN HIS HEART
. ³ He does not backbite	WITH HIS TONGUE

the two members end with two phrases of the same syntactic construction, although prepositions and lexemes are different (only the pronouns are identical: in Hebrew, pronoun suffix -ô, “of him”).

➤ In the prologue of John (Jn 1:15),

. the one	after	ME	coming
.	precedence over	ME	has come
. because	before	ME	he was

The three phrases “after me”, “precedence over” et “before me” have the same construction, preposition + pronoun.

3.2.2 Prepositions

The construction can be completely identical:

➤ like at the beginning of the canticle of Hannah (1Sam 2:1),

. And prayed Hannah	rejoices	my heart	in YHWH
.	is exalted	my horn	in YHWH

with verb + subject (= substantive + personal pronoun) + complement (preposition + name);

➤ As also found in the Prologue of John (Jn 1:9.11),

⁹ COMING	<i>into the world</i>
¹¹ <i>to the own</i>	HE CAME

With verb and place complement.

The construction might be partially identical:

➤ as in Psalm 15:1 :

. ¹ Yhwh,	WHO may abide	in your	<i>tabernacle?</i>
.	WHO may dwell	on	<i>the mountain your holy?</i>

The two sentences are both interrogatives with the same subject, synonymous verbs with the same modalities, complements introduced by the same preposition (in Hebrew), but “Yhwh” is not repeated in the second. Even from the expansion, “your holiness”, has no equivalent in the first. In contrast, both

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sentences end (in the original) with the second-person singular masculine suffix pronoun (translated as the possessive “ta”).

➤ In the Prologue of John (Jn 1:8.9),

⁸ Not was he [John]	THE LIGHT	
⁹ Was [the Word]	THE LIGHT	true

“he” does not have its equivalent in verse 9 and “true” has nothing that corresponds to it in verse 8; however, the two sentences retain the same verb “was” and the same predicate “the light”.

4. THE RHYTHM PLAN

Although biblical poetry, especially Hebrew but also Greek, is not primarily based on a rigorous rhythm (regular alternation of long and short as in Greek and Latin poems, or a number of syllables as in French poetry), however, a certain quantitative equilibrium is not absent. Often, relationships, for example between the members of a segment, are primarily semantic but also rhythmic.

➤ For example, in the canticle of Hannah (1Sam 2:10),

He will give	strength	to his King
And exalt	the horn	of his anointed

➤ or in that of Mary (Lk 1:53):

[Those] hungering	he has filled	with good things
And [those] being rich	he has sent away	empty

Where each member has three terms.

It also happens, especially in segments whose members are “complementary” (to use Lowth's distinction), where the relationship between the members is primarily quantitative or rhythmic.

➤ Also in Psalm 113:3 :

From the rising	of the sun	to its setting,
Is to be praised	the name	of God.

More common in what has come to be called “poetry”, rhythmic identity can also be found in “prose” narratives.

➤ Also in the beginning of the third gospel (Lk 1:5):

There was	in the days	of Herod,	a king	of Judah
A priest	named	Zechariah,	of the class	of Judea
And wife of him	of the daughters	of Aaron,	and her name	Elizabeth.

5. ON THE PLAN OF DISCOURSE

Two textual units will be said to be identical if they share one or more characteristics specific to speech.

➤ Thus in 1Kings 3:22 sentences “of story” and “of dialogue” alternate.

And the other woman said:

“No, but my son the living one
And your son who is dead.”

And this woman [...] said :

“No, it is your son who is dead
And it is my son who is living”

B. RELATION OF OPPOSITION

There can be no opposition between two linguistic objects if they are not partially in some way related. Opposition, like synonymy, has degrees. To simplify, it is possible to distinguish globally between total and partial opposition.

For there to be total opposition, it is necessary that the differences relate to one only of the constituent elements of linguistic objects. In French, the phonemes /d/ and /t/ are in total opposition because they are only opposed by one of their relevant features:

	/d/	vs	/t/
Identical elements:	. consonant . occlusive . dental		
Different elements:	. voiced		. not voiced

It is this opposition that makes it possible to have the minimum pair²² /dy/ vs /ty/ ([dû] et [tu], passive participles de “ought” et de “stop speaking”).

²² Pair of monemes that can only be distinguished by a relevant trait of one of their phonemes.

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But the opposition can be partial if two traits are different at the same time, such as between / d / and / k /:

	/d/	vs	/k/
Identical elements:	. consonant . occlusive		
Different elements:	. dental . voiced		. palatal . not voiced

This opposition, without being total, however makes it possible to distinguish the two nouns / dyre / and / kyre / ([durée] and [curé]).

However, we cannot speak of an opposition between / i / and / m / because these two phonemes have no relevant common feature: / i / is a vowel, oral, anterior, closed, unrounded, while / m / is a consonant, occlusive, bilabial, nasal, voiced.

1. ON THE LEXICAL PLAN

Opposite lexemes necessarily have a different signifier, but they differ only in part of their signified.

➤ So in the following sentences (Deut 28:3.6),

– ³	blessed shall be you	in the city ,
– and	blessed you	in the countryside .
:: ⁶	Blessed shall be	you WHEN YOU IN
:: and	blessed shall be	you WHEN YOU GO OUT.

“City” is opposed to “countryside” and “when you go in” to “when you go out”. These last two lexemes can be broken down into elements of meaning: “movement” + “between an inside and an outside” are common to “entry” and “exit”; only the direction of movement changes, “from outside to inside” for “entry”, “from inside to outside” for “exit”. These oppositions can be said to be direct.²³

²³ The couple “city” and “countryside” can be considered as an example of merism, to say “everywhere”.

- In the prologue of John's gospel (Jn 1:4),

The **light** in the **darkness** shines

The opposition between "light" and "darkness" is direct.

Often the oppositions are less direct.

- For example in Ps 15:4,

⁴ Is DESPISED in whose eyes	a <i>VILE PERSON</i>
and those who <i>FEAR YHWH</i>	he HONOURS

here "despised" is opposed directly to "honours". The opposition between "vile person" and "fear-Yhwh" even though is indirect is none the less real.

- In the Prologue of John (Jn 1:13),

¹³ Who not	of blood ,	nor of will	of flesh ,
Nor of will	of MAN,	but of GOD	were born.

"God" is placed in direct opposition to "man" and indirectly to "flesh" and "blood".

As in the case of semantic fields, oppositions could either be natural or universal: "to enter" and "to go out" as an example. They can also be cultural, specific to a people, language or a civilization: for example, in the Bible, the opposition between "Israel" and "the nations" is taken up by Saint Paul as an opposition between the "the Jews" and "the Greeks".

One could also talk about opposition that is complementary or bipolar, when the two opposite lexemes mark a totality.

- As one finds in Pr 1:8,

. ⁸ Hear	my sons	the instruction	of your father
. and not do forsake		the teaching	of your mother

where "father" and "mother" form a complementary couple, which designates both parents. Likewise, when it is said that God created "the heavens and the earth," the bipolar opposition means the totality of creation.

2. THE MORPHOLOGICAL PLAN

2.1 THE PRONOUNS

The opposition can relate to only one of the signifieds.

➤ In the canticle of Hannah (1Sam 2:1.10),

¹ Rejoices	MY heart	in YHWH;
And is exalted	MY horn	in YHWH.
I smile	MY mouth	against MY enemies
for I have rejoiced in your salvation.		
.....		
¹⁰ He will give strength	to his king,	
And exalt the horn	of his anointed	

The opposition between the pronouns of the introduction (except the last) and of the conclusion relate to the “person”, the first at the beginning and the third at the end.

➤ Also in the canticle of Hannah (1Sam 2:1, 2),

¹ Rejoices	MY heart	in YHWH ;
And is exalted	MY horn	in YHWH.
I smile	MY mouth	against MY enemies
for I have rejoiced in your salvation.		
² [...]		
And there is no rock like <i>OUR</i> God.		

there is an opposition of “number” between the pronouns of the first person singular of verse 1 and that of the first person plural of verse 2 (“our God”).

2.2 THE VERBAL²⁴ MODALITIES

➤ In Psalm 15:2–3,

² He WHO WALKS	uprightly	
And WORKS	justice	
and SPEAKS	the truth	in his heart.
³ He does not backbite	with his tongue	
He does not do	to his neighbor	evil
And a reproach	does not take up	against his neighbor

the verbs of verse 2 are doubly opposed to those of verse 3: they are in the participle and are affirmative while the following ones are in the perfect and are affected by the negation.

²⁴ The modalities are the grammatical determinants of the lexemes (modes, voice, person, number, etc. of verbs; gender, number, etc. of nouns ...).

➤ In the prologue of John (Jn 1:8–9), the beginnings of verses 8 and 9 are opposed by the verbal modality, negation vs affirmation:

⁸ He was NOT the light
⁹ was the light

And in the last verse (Jn 1:18), the verbs are opposite in the same way

No one has ever seen
 He has made him known.

2. THE NOMINAL TERMS

Nominal lexemes (nouns and adjectives) can be in opposition by their modalities.

➤ In the song of Hannah (1Sam 2:5):

. THE FULL	for bread	<i>HAVE HIRED THEMSELVES OUT,</i>
THE HUNGRY		<i>HAVE CEASED</i> to hunger.
. the barren		<i>gave birth</i> seven times,
numerous	children	<i>has become feeble.</i>

“The full” and “the hungry” is opposed to “the barren” and “the numerous” both by number (“plural” vs “singular”) and by gender (“masculine” vs “feminine”). These oppositions are evidently found in verbs.

2.4 THE FUNCTIONAL MONEMES (PREPOSITIONS AND CONJUNCTIONS)

The main use of functional monemes is to mark the function of lexemes in relation to each other; some of them, however, also have their own meaning, which brings them closer to lexemes. They can therefore be opposed by their signified.

➤ As one finds in the prologue of John (Jn 1:3),

³ All THROUGH him came into being
 and WITHOUT him nothing came into being

the two prepositions “through” and “without” are opposed; the same in Jn 1:15 “after” and “before” are opposed:

. The one	AFTER	me	coming
.	BEFORE	me	he was.

3. THE SYNTACTIC PLAN

There may be opposition between the sentence modalities, for example between an interrogative sentence and a declarative.

➤ Thus in Ps 15:1–3, the declaratives of verses 2–3 are opposed to the double interrogative of verse 1, as the answer to a question:

<p>. ¹ YHWH, who may abide in your tabernacle ? . who may dwell in your holy mountain ? </p>	<p>² HE WHO WALKS uprightly and WORKS righteousness and SPEAKS the truth in his heart. ³ Not does he backbite with his tongue He does not do to his neighbor evil And a reproach he does not do to his neighbor.</p>
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The syntactic length and complexity may be in opposition.

➤ Also in Psalm 15:2 :

.. He who walks	uprightly	
.. and works	righteousness	
+ and speaks	the truth	in his heart

where the third member is longer than the first two.

➤ In John's Prologue, we can speak of a syntactic opposition between the two members of Jn 1:17,

– For	the Law	through Moses	was given
+	grace and truth	through Jesus Christ	came

because the second member is longer than the first (doubling of the subject and doubling of the proper name).

It must be remembered that, in all these examples, it is only possible to speak of opposition because there is identity elsewhere? The opposition is sensitive and relevant only in a background of identity.

4. THE DISCOURSE PLAN

Two passages are in opposition if they differ in some characteristic of speech.

➤ Thus in Sir 24, the long discourse on Wisdom, in the “direct style” (3–32), is introduced by a passage from the narrative (Sir 24:1–3):

¹ Wisdom sings her own praises
among the Israelites, her own people,
² in the assembly of the Most High,
in the presence of his power:
.....
³ “I am the word spoken by the Most High.
I covered the earth like a mist...”

The opposition could be of content.

➤ In Deut 28, in between the blessings (Dt 28:1–14 and the curses (Dt 28:15–68). At the beginning, the opposition was marked quite precisely at the lexical and morphological levels, on a broad background of identity:

“And if you obey
the voice of YHWH your God,
being careful to do
all his commandments
which I command you this day...
² And all these BLESSINGS
shall come upon you and overtake you:
³ BLESSED shall you be in the city,
and BLESSED shall you be in the field.

¹⁵ “But if you will *NOT* obey
the voice of YHWH your God
or *NOT* be careful to do
all his commandments...
which I command you this day,
then all these CURSES
shall come upon you and overtake you.
¹⁶ CURSED shall you be in the city,
and CURSED shall you be in the field.

The opposition could be of literary genre.

➤ In Mk 10:35–52, two stories (35–41 and 46–52) frame a discourse (42–45):

Jesus opens the eyes	of the sons of Zebedee	35–41
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Jesus opens the eyes of the Twelve to the true wisdom of service		42–46a
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Jesus opens the eyes	of Timaeus	46b–52
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➤ In the Gospel of Luke, the seventh sequence of the third section (Lk 18:31–19:46) includes seven passages which are distinguished by their literary genres:

A PROPHECY	18:31–34
B Story	18:35–43
C Story	19:1–10
PARABLE	19:11–28
B' Story	19:29–36
C' Story	19:37–40
A' PROPHECY	19:41–46.

When two elements do not maintain any relationship of identity or opposition, neither lexically, nor morphologically, nor syntactically, nor at the level of discourse, but occupy an identical position in a construction, one can speak of a relationship of homology. As one finds in Psalm 2:1:

a Why
 b **are agitated**
 c THE NATIONS
 c' and THE PEOPLE
 b' **whisper**
 a' in vain

If the relationships between b and b' on the one hand and between c and c' on the other are clear, then a and a' are common only in position, and it could be said that they are “homologous”.

This long enumeration was intended to show that the linguistic elements at their different levels of organization can have a rhetorical function, in addition to their semantic and syntactic functions. It will be necessary, therefore, to be careful not to limit oneself to one or other of these elements, the lexicon, for example, the pronouns or the tenses of verbs, but to take into account all the elements in order to identify those which are relevant. at the rhetorical level, that is to say, which serve as a mark of composition.