

# Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

Av Helge Ridderstrøm (førsteamanuensis ved OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet)

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Om leksikonet: [https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no/gallery/om\\_leksikonet.pdf](https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no/gallery/om_leksikonet.pdf)

## Kiasme

(\_litterær\_praksis) “Kryssvis plassering” av ord eller ordgrupper, eller en slags speilvendt språklig formulering. En (poetisk) speil-symmetri rundt en akse. Eksempler: “Jeg er sjefen. Sjefen det er meg.” “Man må spise for å leve, ikke leve for å spise.”

“A chiasm (or chiasmus if you rather) is a writing style that uses a unique repetition pattern for clarification and/or emphasis. Chiasm is pronounced ky’-az-um. Often called the chiastic (ky’-az-tic) approach or the chiastic structure [...] Simply put, a chiasm is a repetition of similar ideas in the reverse sequence. The importance of the chiastic structure is found in its hidden emphasis.” (Thomas B. Clarke i <http://www.bible-discernments.com/joshua/whatisachiasm.html>; lesedato 30.04.14)

“According to the OED [Oxford English Dictionary], a *chiasmus* is a “grammatical figure by which the order of words in one of two parallel clauses is inverted in order.” It seems that around 1870 this term, whose etymology derives from the Greek letter “chi” ( $\chi$ ), began to enter the English language and in time to replace the rhetorical term *antimetabole*, which the OED defines as a “figure in which the same words or ideas are repeated in inverse order” and which the Renaissance rhetorician Richard Puttenham aptly called “counterchange” in his *The Arte of English Poesie* of 1589. In modern critical parlance, hence, the expression *chiasmus* is generally applied to a “balancing pattern in verse or prose, where the main elements are reversed.” [definert av J. A. Cuddon] The term “elements” in this definition indicates that the chiastic patterning *abba* may occur not just on the sentence level but on *all* levels of a literary text: on the level of sounds (including rhymes and rhythm), words, sentences, lines, stanzas, narrative elements (plot, character) and concepts. It goes without saying that chiasmus may be combined with other rhetorical figures such as parallelism, antithesis (dialectical chiasmus), polyptoton, anadiplosis, etc.” (Nänny 1987)

Det er fire elementer som stilles opp, med relasjonen A-B & C-D, der A og D ligner hverandre eller står i en klar sammenheng, og B og C har en tilsvarende likhet.

“Chiasmus is one of the linguistic figures of speech that make the ordinary extraordinary. It is employed to indicate an outburst of verbal creativity. It can be defined as the criss-cross placing of sentence elements that correspond in either syntax or meaning, with or without word repetition [...] Putting the sentence elements in an inverse order results in a perfect cross, an X, which is a defining feature of chiasmus [...] the *chi* in *chiasmus* stands for the letter X in the Greek alphabet (Lederer, 2012: 40). It is defined according to different perspectives: grammatical, syntactic, semantic, rhetorical, and finally the stylistic perspective. Grammatically, the venerable Oxford English Dictionary defines chiasmus as a grammatical figure of speech referring to the crossing, diagonal arrangement in which the order of words in one of two successive clauses is inverted in the other (Raffa, 2000: 137) [...] the terms come back on themselves with a different and often opposite meaning [...] Apart from identical words, chiasmus can use words that are related in some recognizable way, i.e. either *synonyms* or *antonyms* [...]

Napoleon was *defeated* by a *Russian winter*  
And the *snows of Leningrad* *destroyed* Hitler.

[...]

Semantically speaking, the chiastic order of words will be as such:

Invader: Russian winter / Russian winter: invader

[...]

Chiasmus also includes the repetition of opposed lexis, i.e., in reverse order.

However, it does not repeat its terms precisely. An instance is a translation, by Luther, of the answer of the man blind from birth whose sight was restored by Jesus (cited in Fahnestock, 1999: 124):

[...]

That I *blind* was and am *now seeing*.”

(Dunya M. M. I’jam og Zahraa A. Fadhil i <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1115917.pdf>; lesedato 08.02.23)

“Chiasmus is also used aphoristically, i.e. it is designed to be noticed, just as epigrams and slogans are designed to be remembered. Thus, the surface crossover of linguistic content implies a dovetailing of ideas at a deeper level. For those ideas to be driven home, chiasmus relies on repetition. Here, the explicit repetition of words becomes a hallmark of chiasmus, as in the popular slogan of the American gun lobby:

26. When *guns* are *outlawed*,  
only *outlaws* will have *guns*.”

(Dunya M. M. I’jam og Zahraa A. Fadhil i <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1115917.pdf>; lesedato 08.02.23)

“[T]he chiastic series *abba* may be seen as a dynamic or temporal sequence that reverses its movement or inverts its development. Hence, chiasmus may be used as an “emblem” or icon of reversal or inversion generally. Furthermore, the return to

the initial element *a* at the end of a chiasmic sequence may, on a somewhat more metaphorical level, suggest circularity and, ultimately, a certain form of closure or non-progressive stasis. But the same chiasmic pattern *abba* may also be considered statically or spatially as a symmetrical arrangement of elements which stand in a relationship of balance, opposition, reciprocity or mirroring. However, the first and last elements *a* of the chiasmus *abba* may as well be looked upon as framing, centering or enclosing the inner elements *bb*. All these possible interpretations of chiasmus may reinforce, reflect or be parallel to the semantically indicated meaning of a literary passage or text.” (Nänny 1987)

“The return of the chiasmic sequence to its beginning may also be used as an emblem of circularity or a circular movement such as a dance. [...] A chiasmic sequence that leads back to its beginning may also suggest coming full circle or, more metaphorically, non-progression, stasis or a deadlock. [...] Seen in more spatial terms a chiasmic arrangement of textual elements is an ideal emblem to indicate balance, symmetry or equality. [...] In John Keats’s “Ode on a Grecian Urn” the chiasmus of the famous phrase “Beauty is truth, truth beauty” 1.49) may be also meant to mirror the perfect symmetry of the urn’s “Attic shape” 1.41). But assuming that the Grecian urn is a burial urn, it may also function as an icon of enclosure: the beautifully shaped and decorated urn enclosing the truth that life and love (“for ever warm,” 1.26) turns to ashes preserved in a “Cold Pastoral” 1.45) of marble.” (Nänny 1987)

Kiasmen kan framstille noe som like riktig og med samme nødvendighet som sannheten i den matematiske formelen  $a \times b = b \times a$  (Reboul 2009 s. 157).

“Kiasmer tillater forskjellig bruk i prosa og i poesi. Resultatet av dens kryss-disposisjon er spesielt dette:

- å stille ideer opp mot hverandre eller å gjøre dem paradoksale;
- å bidra til rytmen i ytringen;
- å få elementer til å nærme seg eller stå i motsetning til hverandre for å vekke leserens fantasi

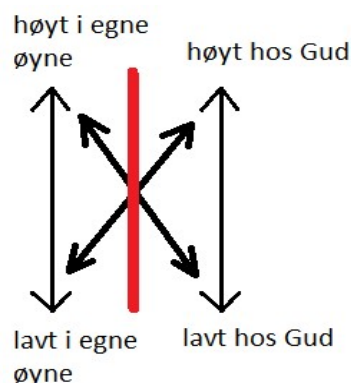
[...]

Det finnes fire overordnede typer kiasmer:

- den grammatiske kiasmen består i å krysse to grammatiske ordklasser (spesielt substantiver og adjektiver)
- den fonetiske kiasmen gjentar ved å snu om posisjonen til identiske fonemer [språklyder]
- den semantiske kiasmen innebærer en kryss-disposisjon av ord med forskjellig mening
- den rytmiske kiasmen spiller på en repetisjon via omsnuing av lignende rytmer” (Johan Faerber og Sylvie Loignon i <https://www.cairn.info/les-procedes-litteraires--9782200619947-page-60.htm>; lesedato 24.01.23)

Omsluttende rim (rimskjemaet *abba*) kalles kiastiske rim.

“The seminal modern work which has proven to be foundational to the contemporary recognition of the importance of chiasmus as a literary device/form in biblical literature is *Chiasmus in the New Testament* by Nils Lund, first published in 1942. [...] In an important work on biblical interpretation entitled *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, [Grant R.] Osborne affirms the strategic importance of chiasmus in biblical literature: “[A] technique that highlights major themes [in the Old Testament writings] is chiasm, which reverses words or events in successive parallel clauses or sections.” He goes on to affirm, “Chiasm is also found frequently in the New Testament.” To validate this statement, Osborne specifically refers to the work of the renowned Johannine scholar, Raymond Brown, who has identified chiasms both in short passages and in longer pericopes in the Gospel of John (including 6:36-40; 15:7-17; 16:16-31; 18:28-19:16a; 19:16b-42). He has also written on the chiastic structuring of Matthew 27:62-28:20. [...] since chiasm involves the parallel inversion of corresponding components in a particular discourse, resulting in an overall structural balance revolving around the distinct central component of the overall unit, a recognition of chiastic structure leads the interpreter properly to appreciate the pivotal function and the emphatic importance of that central thought unit. Breck emphasizes that, due to “its central focus, chiasmus accentuates the main idea or theme the writer is concerned to convey to his readers.” In a similar way, an appreciation of chiastic structuring also encourages the interpreter to take special note of the corresponding thought units on the outer extremities of the overall discourse (A/A’), which also tend to be highlighted, albeit to a lesser degree than the pivotal central component (X), in the employment of chiasm.” (Brad McCoy i [https://faithconnector.s3.amazonaws.com/chafer/files/v9n2\\_2chiasmus.pdf](https://faithconnector.s3.amazonaws.com/chafer/files/v9n2_2chiasmus.pdf); lesedato 08.02.23) I 1. Mosebok kapittel 9, vers 6, står det: “Den som utøser menneskeblod, ved mennesker skal hans blod øses ut”. Lukasevangeliet kapittel 18, vers 14: “Jeg sier dere: Tolleren gikk hjem rettferdig for Gud, den andre ikke. For den som setter seg selv høyt, skal settes lavt, og den som setter seg selv lavt, skal settes høyt.”



“Chiasmus is commonly explained as a means of focusing the reader’s attention on the center of the unit, where the central idea or turning point is situated. I propose an alternative explanation that illuminates many chiastic passages. The reader

appreciates the skillfulness and the well-planned composition of chiasmus, which require determination of all components in advance, and word choice that is concordant with its context while resembling the parallel component of the chiasmus. Awareness of the reader's response led biblical authors to employ chiasmus to reflect the inner world of a character: to present the character's deeds or discourse as deliberate and premeditated. Chiasmus appears especially where one would otherwise regard the character's actions or discourse as spontaneous or unaccounted for. In other cases, words of advice are formed chiastically to cast the adviser's idea in a premeditated and convincing manner. Contrary to the common conviction of biblical scholars that chiasmus is largely a schematic phenomenon that indicates the main idea, I claim that chiasmus is a stylistic and rhetorical phenomenon that must be considered in a comprehensive literary analysis." (Elie Assis i [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236804671\\_Chiasmus\\_in\\_Biblical\\_Narrative\\_Rhetoric\\_of\\_Characterization](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236804671_Chiasmus_in_Biblical_Narrative_Rhetoric_of_Characterization); lesedato 24.01.23)

"Toward the end of his epic work *Histories*, Herodotus describes the amazement of Xerxes at reports of Artemisia's heroic actions in connection with the Battle of Salamis. Responding to this unexpected good news in the midst of a larger disaster, Xerxes chiastically (in a non-technical sense) exclaimed, "My men have behaved like women, and my women like men!" [...] its inherent benefit as a mnemonic aid. "Relatively unconcerned about a linear ... flow of ideas, biblical communities relished sayings ... that were memorable, and they appreciated repetition that we might consider redundant." Without ready access to inexpensive pen and paper to make notes, they used chiasmus for memorization. Breck notes, "The ancients learned by rote. ... Once [an individual] had in mind the first half of ... a chiastic structure, it was a relatively easy matter to recall the rest." [...] In the preface to a volume of essays on the use of chiastic structures in oral and written discourses in the ancient world entitled *Chiasmus in Antiquity*, David Noel Freedman states, "Chiasm occurs to one degree or another in most languages and literatures." " (Brad McCoy i [https://faithconnector.s3.amazonaws.com/chafer/files/v9n2\\_2\\_chiasmus.pdf](https://faithconnector.s3.amazonaws.com/chafer/files/v9n2_2_chiasmus.pdf); lesedato 08.02.23)

En kjent "chiastic phrase in English literature" er hos Shakespeare "the witches' "Fair is foul and foul is fair" in the first scene of *Macbeth* (I, i, 11). For the perfect chiastic pattern *abcdcba* of this phrase [...] First, it enacts a reversal. "The main theme of the reversal of values is given out simply and clearly in the first scene," L. C. Knights comments, "... and with it are associated premonitions of the conflict, disorder and moral darkness into which Macbeth will plunge himself." By indicating a conflict between being and seeming, by creating doubt about categories, the witches' chiastic inversion reflects a world of semantic chaos. And this anarchy of the witches' chiastic line in turn reflects the social, political and emotional chaos depicted in the play. But in its static, formulaic symmetry and circularity of pattern this chiastic phrase is further expressive of both the atemporality of magic and of the circular dance movements of the witches' ritual."

(Nänny 1987) I Shakespeares sonett 105 står kiasmen “Kind is my love to-day, to-morrow kind”.

Den italienske barokkdikteren Giambattista Marino levde på slutten av 1500- og begynnelsen av 1600-tallet. Marino “makes frequent use of *chiasmus*, with its formula  $x y y x$ . In the following (*Marino ...*, p. 390), the words which are reversed are exactly the same: “Oh dolcezze! oh bellezze! / Oh bellezze! oh dolcezze!” (Oh sweets! oh beauties / Oh beauties! oh sweets!) In other cases, the words change their form, as in (*Lira*, III, p. 77): “Ti baciai sospirando / Ti sospirai baciando” (I kissed you sighing / I sighed for you kissing). In still other instances, there is only grammatical consistency (*Poesie varie*, p. 371): “Offre in lagrime perle ed oro in chiome” (Offers in tears pearls and gold in tresses). [...] “Shepherd among kings and king among shepherds.” [...] In the strict traditional sense, *chiasmus* refers to arrangements within a single line. If the last word of a line opens the following line, the device is *anadiplosis*. But I have included such cases in *chiasmus* because the reversal pattern is carried over to the next line, whereas in *anadiplosis* only repetition of a word may be involved.” (Mirollo 1963 s. 135)

Den engelske presten og dikteren John Donne “utilize chiasmus at the different linguistic levels as a stylistic device [...] Donne employs [i diktet “The Good-Morrow”, 1633] chiasmus structurally, to open the stanza with a chiastic sequence at the semantic level where it is called antimetabole:

*My face in thine eye,  
thine in mine appears,*

This chiastic order of the words employs the reversal of the same words with some grammatical changes that are meant to increase the stylistic effect of the line of verse. Such a chiastic sequence sheds light on the idea that the lovers constitute a complete world and at the same time it underscores the harmonious union in which they live where it is reflected in their eyes. [...] chiasmus constitutes a distinctive stylistic device in the poetry of Donne” (Dunya M. M. I’jam og Zahraa A. Fadhil i <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1115917.pdf>; lesedato 08.02.23).

Den franske 1600-tallsfilosofen Blaise Pascal skrev om et ideal innen kristendommen at den som roser seg selv, blir ydmyket og den som ydmyker seg selv, blir rost (nr. 420 i Pascals *Tanker*: Gud sier om mennesket: “If he exalt himself, I humble him; if he humble himself, I exalt him”). “Ingen likevekt, intet kompromiss, men alltid denne foreningen av motsetninger som finner sin løsning i en høyere sannhet” (gjengitt fra Genet 1973 s. 78). Kiasmer kan også uttrykke en tragisk visjon av verden (Reboul 2009 s. 135).

Den engelske dikteren Samuel Taylor Coleridges lange dikt “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” (1798) inneholder kiasmen “Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down”. Den engelske dikteren Gerard Manley Hopkins bruker i diktet “Felix

Randal” kiasmen “This seeing the sick endears them to us, us too it endears”. I den irske dikteren William Butler Yeats’ dikt “Coole Park, 1929” “[t]he depiction of the muscular gravediggers, who “thrust” the dead with sharp spades, chiasmically inverts the relation between the strength of death and the vulnerability of life.” (Ramazani 1990 s. 146)

“Det er ikke bevisstheten som bestemmer over livet, det er livet som bestemmer over bevisstheten.” (Karl Marx og Friedrich Engels i *Den tyske ideologi*, skrevet 1845-47) “In a familiar capitalist chiasmus, life is for striving, not striving for life” (Eagleton 2003 s. 249).

Et av briten Alfred Edward Housmans dikt er slik:

“The Grizzly Bear is huge and wild;  
    He had devoured the infant child.  
The infant child is not aware  
He has been eaten by the bear.”

“The fact that the first two lines are single end-stopped sentences prepares the reader to expect the third line to be the same, and then he discovers that the fourth line in fact continues the third. The patterning is what is called *chiasmus*, the crisscross reversal of elements. The grizzly bear is first at the beginning of a sentence, then at the end of a sentence. The infant child is first at the end, then at the beginning. The story begins with the bear and ends with the bear. The child is encompassed within the text, as indeed he is by the bear when he is eaten by him.” (Joseph Hillis Miller i Lentricchia og McLaughlin 1990 s. 76)

“Another rhetorical device that recurs in [Virginia Woolfs roman] *Mrs Dalloway* is the use of chiasmus. When Clarissa Dalloway enters Mrs Pym’s shop to choose her flowers, the names of the various flowers are mentioned with their appropriate colours but the pattern is inverted: “when every flower – roses, carnations, irises, lilac – glows; white, violet, red, deep orange”.” (<https://lisa.revues.org/2912>; lesedato 04.11.15)

Den spanske filosofen og forfatteren Miguel de Unamuno brukte påfallende ofte kiasmer i sine tekster: “Prompted by the existential aporias of a search for truth and characterized by recourse to the chiasmic paradox, Unamuno takes up this challenge and transforms it into an essential element of his modernist poetics. As an incipient but unconsummated form of dialectical argumentation, the chiasmus arrests progressive movement toward the resolution of the contradictions it generates. This master trope enables Unamuno to become all things yet rest in none, simultaneously to affirm and to deny momentous philosophical and moral positions, to offer multiple choices of being, and to avoid closure.” (Thomas Mermall i [https://www.jstor.org/stable/462560?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/462560?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents); lesedato 15.05.18)

Mardy Grothes bok *Never Let a Fool Kiss You or a Kiss Fool You* (1999) har en kiasme i tittelen og handler om kiasmer. “Never Let a Fool Kiss You or a Kiss Fool You is the first popular book ever published about chiasmus (ky-AZ-mus), the fascinating literary and rhetorical device that lies behind some of the most thought-provoking and memorable things ever said or written, including Cicero’s “One should eat to live, not live to eat,” Mae West’s “It’s not the men in my life, it’s the life in my men,” and Lenny Bruce’s “In the Halls of Justice, the only justice is in the halls.” [...] The first chapter introduces the concept and describes some details about chiasmus, including the fascinating etymology of the word and how every quote in the book can be “marked with an X.” The rest of the book is a collection of chiastic quotations, organized by category. [...] The noted poet X. J. Kennedy is the author of numerous volumes of poetry [...] his first piece of chiastic verse. His poem *Saphonisba* proves what happens when truly creative minds begin to explore the potential of chiasmus. [...] ‘say what you mean and mean what you say’ [...]

Chapter 1: Chiastic Wordplay

Chapter 2: Chiastic Maxims to Guide Your Life

Chapter 3: Chiastic Comparisons

Chapter 4: The Battle of the Sexes, Chiasmus Style

Chapter 5: Chiastic Compliments and Insults

Chapter 6: Chiasmus on Stage and Screen

Chapter 7: Political Chiasmus

Chapter 8: Chiasmus in the World of Sports

Chapter 9: Chiasmus in Advertising

Chapter 10: Chiasmus for CEOs [CEO = Chief Executive Officer]

Chapter 11: Chiasmus for Book Lovers

Chapter 12: Chiasmus for Lovers

Chapter 13: Chiasmus in Marriage and Family Life

Chapter 14: Chiastic Insights from Great Philosophers

Chapter 15: Chiastic Repartee



Chapter 16: Implied Chiasmus” (<https://www.drmary.com/chiasmus/book>; lesedato 18.10.22)

““Quitters never win and winners never quit.”) [...] Svært utbredt på 70-tallet ble [kiasmen] like fram avvist for den volden den gjorde mot språkets kommunikative funksjon [...] Undersøkelsen av mening er meningen med undersøkelsen, etc. Du kunne framstå som dyp med hvilken som helst banalitet [...] typisk universitets-sjargong” (Christian Vandendorp i <https://aclanthology.org/F13-5012.pdf>; lesedato 08.02.23).

Hans Kirks *Fiskerne* (1928) og Dennis Gade Kofods *Nexø Trawl* (2007) er to danske kollektivromaner, dvs. romaner om grupper av mennesker, uten klare hovedpersoner. “*Nexø Trawl* opposes itself polemically to Kirk’s *Fiskerne* with a series of intertextual references. Beyond their shared thematic motif – the fishing industry as a factor in identity formation – a number of additional commonalities indicate that Kofoed is deliberately engaging in dialogue with Kirk. [...] the two works bear a chiasmic relation to one another: whereas a hypothesis fundamental to Kirk’s analysis in *Fiskerne* is that “religion is the opium of the masses,” *Nexø Trawl*’s analysis of Thomas Jensen implies that “opium is the religion of the masses.” Whereas in *Fiskerne* religion is analyzed as a mode of alienation – an escape from reality – in *Nexø Trawl* it is drugs that offer such escape. [...] The two works coincide strategically to the extent that they share a social preoccupation with the interaction between group, work, and identity formation, and point in good Marxist fashion to an interaction between base and superstructure. The difference is that *Nexø Trawl* has lost faith in the class struggle as a life-saving response.” (Bo Jørgensen i Auken, Lauridsen og Rasmussen 2015 s. 338)

Kjersti Annesdatter Skomsvolds diktsamling *Litt trist matematikk* (2013) er delt inn i seks deler, og “samlingens seks avdelinger har titler som presenterer oss for seks påstander om dødens, håpets og nådens sannhetsverdi. To og to av dem er gjensidig utelukkende, og de er ordnet slik at de til sammen danner et kryss, et kors eller en retorisk *kiasme*: døden er usann – håpet er usant – nåden er usann – nåden er sann – håpet er sant – døden er sann. I løpet av samlingen vendes med andre ord påstandenes verdi til det positive. Sånn sett virker den optimistisk. Men hva skjer egentlig i det øyeblikket påstanden om dødens usannhet vendes om til en påstand om dødens sannhet? Vil ikke det nettopp punktere både det eksistensielle håpets og den religiøse nådens sannhet? Denne intelligente punkteringen av enhver eksistensiell-religiøs trøst kan forstås som en trist matematikk; gitt at håpet og nåden blir tillagt en positiv verdi i menneskelivet. Det er det jo ikke sikkert at noen av dem har.” (Trond Haugen i *Morgenbladet* 22.–28. november 2013 s. 58)

“Den optiske chiasmen er en X-formet struktur dannet ved krysset av de optiske nerver i hjernen. Den optiske nerven knytter hjernen til øyet. For biologer antas den optiske chiasmen å være et vendepunkt i evolusjonen. [...] krysset og krosserende

optiske nervefibre [...] utviklet på en slik måte at de hjelper til med binokular syn og øyehåndskoordinasjon. [...] Ved den optiske chiasmen krysser nervefibrene fra halvparten av hver retina over til motsatt side av hjernen. Fibrene fra den andre halvparten av retina reiser til samme side av hjernen. På grunn av dette veikrysset mottar hver halvdel av hjernen visuelle signaler fra begge øyes synsfelt.” (<https://no.amenajari.org/articles/eye-health/what-is-the-optic-chiasm-and-how-does-it-affect-vision.html>; lesedato 08.02.23)

Litteraturliste (for hele leksikonet): <https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no/gallery/litteraturliste.pdf>

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