Pattern Analysis Summary

An Innovative Approach to Literary Structures

A Structural-Rhetorical Methodology for Pericopes

https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/pattern-analysis-summary.pdf

Note: This PDF works best when downloaded and opened with Adobe Acrobat

This Manuscript

This manuscript is a summarization of *Pattern Analysis Methodology* (PAM) by Thomas B. Clarke. This summarization is prepared with the hope that a few select people would be willing to critique PAM. Most examples are posted on the internet for efficiency's sake. The entire manuscript may be viewed at https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/.

My professional background in designing and developing computer software should prove helpful to those with a background in biblical studies. https://ThomasBClarke.com/ or Tom@ThomasBClarke.com

Research Approach

This research was initially inspired by Jerome Walsh's methodology in *Style and Structure in the Biblical Hebrew Narrative*.[1] In applying that methodology to the entire Bible, I found it necessary to make modifications to his literary structure and rhetorical methodologies. Many of his techniques, such as forward symmetry and asymmetry, are well founded. Pattern Analysis adds some new methods, some of which are augmented by computer software.
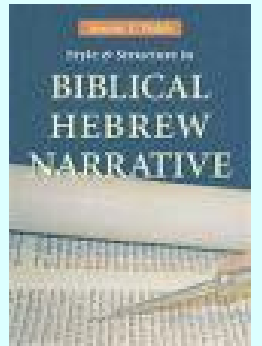
1. Jerome Walsh, *Style and Structure in the Biblical Hebrew Narrative*, (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2001)

Abstract

Pattern Analysis presents a consistent methodology to analyze literary structures and rhetoric of pericopes throughout the Bible. It reveals the Holy Spirit's thematic inspirations

- There are three models: a *demarcation model* (placement of markers), a *structural model* (organization of parallelism), and a *rhetorical model* (recognition of persuasive and emphatic messages)

- A *software prototype* exists to analyze, document, and view the analyses

- Based on 26,000 of the 31,000 Bible verses, it is consistent across all genres

Technique

Pattern Analysis presents a *pericope-level* approach that averages 18-verses per analysis, not a *micro-level* or *book-level* approach. It uses a *theme-based* look at the organization of each pericope.

- It accounts for *irregularities* that appear as missing text, reorganized text, substructures, and other deviations in the text from a symmetric structure

- It looks *outside the symmetrical areas* for preliminary information, summarizations, and markers that are relevant

- Each of those techniques, many of which can be emphatic within a pericope, point to an understanding of the text's persuasion

Requirements for Every Pericope

- Use a nearly-literal Bible translation (NASB 95 was selected)

- Include *every word* of the Bible without deletion or revision

- Clearly *demark* every literary unit

- *Account for* those portions of the pericope outside the parallelism

- Identify the *theme* for each element: e.g. A, b', X, or SUM

- Document the *pericope's persuasion* based on the structure

Current Progress

- [Some of the larger Old Testament books](#) have not been completed

- That is, 26,000 of the 31,000 verses (84%) of the Bible

- Every verse of the N.T. and Minor Prophets have been analyzed

- So far, *every verse conforms* to the Pattern Analysis methodology

- That is, no verses seem randomly placed, without a home

Books analyzed: https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/books-analyzed.html

Three Models

Pattern Analysis uses computer software to add integrity to each analysis. The goal is to understand how the rhetoric persuades and motivates:

- The _Demarcation Model_ adds rigor to the analysis by requiring good documentation of where a pericope begins and certain positions within it

- The _Structural Model_ identifies the parallelism(s) and adds rigor by requiring certain rules be followed such as good logic and documentation of a _theme_ for each element

- The _Rhetorical Model_ is based on key locations within the structure which are potentially emphatic such as _first/last_ elements in a chiasm. It documents how the student is persuaded by those key locations

Demarcation Model

- Twenty (20) possible *marker identifiers* such as:

  - Change of location, change of time, divine oracle, personal address, etc.

- Pericopes must begin with a *beginning marker* or *first-element frame*

- No requirement to know Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek

- An *ending marker* is not necessary and often may not exist

- A *sub-unit marker* appears within a pericope, often at a change in flow

Frequencies: https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/freq-demarcation-devices.html

Elements and Themes

Jeremiah 28:1-17 is an example of a completed analysis:

- An *element* is the biblical text: a verse, part of a verse, or multiple verses

- A *theme* is a brief paraphrase of an element

- On the dynamic webpages, the themes appear to the right of the text

- In every parallelism, the themes of paired elements should show their relationship, either similar or antithetical

- The consistent evidence within Pattern Analysis points to the Holy Spirit who inspired the various biblical authors with each element's theme

Structural Model

Including the demarcation devices, there are thirty (30) structural devices:

- The *basic structure* devices are the major organization of the pericope. Their *elements* are marked in uppercase letters: A, B', X, or SUM

- The *non-lettered* devices extend literary structure to the pericope edge

- Each *substructure* enhances the understanding of its parent element

- The *asymmetric* devices point to unmatching elements for emphasis' sake

- The *structure combinations* detail how disjointed pericopes are merged

Definitions with examples: https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/structural-devices.html

Basic Structures

Chiasm: an **a**-**b**-**c**-**x**-**c**-**b**-**a** type of sequence

Chiasm (imperfect): a **chiasm** with an imperfection

Parallel Symmetry: an **a**-**b**-**c**-**a**-**b**-**c** type of sequence

Parallel Symmetry (imperfect): a parallel symmetry with an imperfection

Immediate Repetition: an **a**-**a**-**b**-**b**-**c**-**c** type of sequence

List: an **a**-**b**-**c**-**d**-**e** type of sequence

Frequencies: https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/freq-basic-structures.html

Non-lettered Devices

Demarcation: Beginning markers, sub-unit markers, and ending markers

Frames: A pair of elements that surround a parallelism

Preliminary: Background information normally located near the beginning

Opening Summary: Summarization near the beginning of a pericope

Closing Summary: Summarization near the end of a pericope

Substructure Summary: Summarization within a substructure

Frequencies: https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/freq-non-lettered-devices.html

Substructures

Identification of substructures should help students with their analyses:

- A parallelism within a parallelism, marked by lowercase letters: a, b', x, or sum

- Can be applied to any basic element, lettered or non-lettered

- Adds detail about the parent element

- Includes chiasm substructures, parallel symmetry substructures, immediate repetition substructures, and list substructures

- Substructures can include summarizations, frames, preliminary, etc.

Frequencies: https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/freq-lettered-devices.html

Asymmetric Devices

Asymmetry means there is a lack of perfect symmetry. It is rare for more than one of these devices to appear in a pericope:

- Extra: An intentional insertion of an element where its pair is blank

- Absence: An intentional omission of an element, indicates missing data

- Transposition: A relocation of elements from their normal position

- Variation: When two otherwise corresponding have different themes

Thirty percent (30%) of the chiasms and parallel symmetries are asymmetric

Frequencies: https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/freq-asymmetric-devices.html

Structure Combinations

Composite: A combination of two (or more) basic structures

Structure Split: Continues a literary unit at a place later in the book

Link: Connection of an OT literary unit to the NT, which adds emphasis

Drill: A hyperlinking technique to connect related literary units for presentation purposes, can be subjective

Structure Validation

- Once the demarcation and structure has been entered in the computer, a *validation process* looks for numerous logical discrepancies such as:
  - If identified as a chiasm, do all elements obey that structure?
  - Are substructures entered properly?
  - Has the sequence of verse numbers changed?

- When the validation is successful, a *dynamic HTML webpage* is produced which indents the pericope, adds color changes as the cursor is moved, and allows substructures to be hidden or shown
- Validation produces a list of *potential locations* which shows where emphasis may be present – there are normally many in a pericope

Workflow

There are five (5) steps to this methodology including the Pattern Analysis Research Language (PARL) which was created for this process:

- *Download the Bible verses:* copy the raw text from the database

- *Prepare the structural analysis:* the text is marked up, using the PARL

- *Validate the structure:* catch many integrity issues, produce the HTML

- *Perform the rhetorical analysis:* document the rhetoric locations

- *Validate the rhetoric:* catch other integrity issues, get completed HTML

Raw text ➡ Structure analysis ➡ Dynamic webpage ➡ Rhetoric analysis ➡ Completed dynamic webpage

Consistency of the Structural Model

There are various frequency charts which reveal strong consistency across nine (9) genres

The best way to review each chart is compare the column entitled *Mean: All Genres* with the individual genres

- The demarcation, lettered, non-lettered, and asymmetric devices have been previously mentioned

- Another grouping is for the chiasm, parallel symmetry, and immediate repetition when the N (Total Devices) is larger, say 15 or more

Rhetorical Model

The consistency shown in the structural frequency charts gives evidence to the Holy Spirit as the voice in the Bible. The result of each Pattern Analysis is not the structure – it is an understanding of the Holy Spirit's rhetoric based upon that structure

- *Emphasis:* the rhetorical model searches for the persuasion in pericopes

- *Analysis:* a good analysis of the structure leads to the Holy Spirit's persuasion based on specific structural locations

- *Potential rhetoric:* potential structural locations are identified for review

Definitions with examples: https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/literary-devices-rhetorical.html

Potential Rhetoric for Lettered Devices

Basic structures and substructures have six (6) potentially emphatic locations:

Center Point of a chiasm, parallel symmetry, immediate rep, or list

First/Last elements of a chiasm, that is *A* and *A'*

First/First elements of a parallel symmetry, that is *A* and *A'*

Last/Last elements of a parallel symmetry

Corresponding Elements e.g. *B* and *B'* of a chiasm or parallel symmetry

Correlation of Sequences for *A-B-C* with *C'-B'-A'* or *A-B-C* with *A'-B'-C'*

Frequencies: https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/freq-lettered-devices-rhetorical.html

Potential Rhetoric for Non-lettered Devices

There are six (6) non-lettered devices which can have rhetorical value:

- Every Opening Summary, Closing Summary, and Substructure Summary was shown to have emphatic value

- The Preliminary device does not have emphatic value, but certain locations within the preliminary may be emphatic

- Frames often have emphatic value

- Some Parenthesis elements have emphatic value

Frequencies: https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/freq-non-lettered-devices-rhetorical.html

Potential Rhetoric for Asymmetric Devices

Walsh stated, "Asymmetry can be one of the most forceful stylistic devices in the biblical Hebrew narrative." (Walsh 2001, 101.) My analyses found:

- The Extra, Absence, and Transposition elements consistently have strong rhetorical value

- The fourth asymmetric device, the Variation, sometimes has rhetorical significance

For those new to asymmetry, these imperfections may seem forced – their consistent emphatic value gives considerable evidence to their importance

Frequencies: https://emphasisinbible.com/paf/freq-asymmetric-devices-rhetorical.html

Improved Rigor of Analyses

We can all make mistakes, I am fallible, yet poor analysis can be harmful. Pattern Analysis adds rigor through the preparation of themes, continuity, validation, and rhetorical analyses

- With each *theme documentation*, the student visually considers both the associated Scripture and its conjugate pair which forces better logic

- *Continuity* is considered by analyzing several prior and later pericopes

- If the validation finds *logic discrepancies*, those problems must be fixed

- During the *rhetoric documentation*, the exegete may find it necessary to rethink structures that point to non-emphatic locations

Benefits of Pattern Analysis

- *Provides evidence* of One inspiring author for all nine genres

- *Presents* the thematic understanding of each element

- *Adds* rigor to the structural analyses

- *Grasps* greater meaning

- *Models* the text consistently

- *Can be incorporated* into the exegetical process

- *Produces* attractive dynamic webpages through the software

Next Steps

Pattern Analysis has been developed without a mentor or any oversight. There is One who is infallible, I am fallible. I recommend others become involved in various capacities:

- Gather scholarly comments about "Pattern Analysis Methodology," and then revise it as appropriate

- Locate people willing to review the analyzed 26,000 verses

- Solicit a company that would commercialize the Pattern Analysis Software