

Chiasmus

Chiasmus, sometimes called an inverted parallelism, is a Hebrew literary form where words or ideas are arranged in a certain order and then repeated in reverse order. This repetition emphasizes important ideas and words. In addition, the writer's main idea is often located at the center of the chiasmus. ¹

Did Joseph Smith know about chiasmus? It is possible, but not probably. There is evidence to suggest that Smith had evidence and guides for chiasmus close to him ^{2 3} but there will probably never be a definitive case for either side

Standard Chiasmus

Book of Mormon

The Late War

Doctrine and Covenants

Joseph Smith's diary 1834

Joseph Smith's letter to Emma 1838

Mediation and Atonement

Book of the Law of the Lord

Extended Chiasmus

Alma Chapter 36

According to the Book of Mormon Study Manual:⁴

Alma used chiasmus to tell the story of his conversion to his son Helaman. The presence of Semitic literary forms such as chiasmus in the Book of Mormon is an external witness that the book is what the Prophet Joseph Smith taught that it is: a translation of an ancient text written in a Middle Eastern language.

¹Book of Mormon Student Manual: Chapter 36-39

²Some reddit post

³some other post

⁴Book of Mormon Student Manual: Chapter 36-39

Cherry Picking Chiasmus

Chiastic intentionality must be measured with respect to repeated variables as mentioned in Edwards and Edwards ()⁵

Calculating a P-value

- Number of Elements: 16
- Element A: 8
- Element B: 2
- Element C: 6
- Element D: 3
- Element E: 5
- Element F: 7
- Element G: 2
- Element H: 2
- Element I: 10
- Element J: 4
- Element K: 4
- Element L: 2
- Element M: 5
- Element N: 14
- Element O: 3
- Element P: 2

or [8, 2, 6, 3, 5, 7, 2, 2, 10, 4, 4, 2, 5, 14, 3, 2]

⁵something