

The difference between a figurative and a literal analogy

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Literal Analogy makes a direct comparison between objects, people or events. On the other hand, Figurative analogy compares the relationship between objects, people or events. An example of Literal Analogy: A self-defense course made me able to defend myself; it will make you able to defend yourself. The meaning of the sentence is that self-protection training has helped me to protect myself, in the same way it will help you in protecting yourself against any danger.

The sentence mentions the importance of a self-defense course for the two individuals. The Literal Analogy is re-written as a Figurative Analogy: As a coat of sharp spine help a Porcupine to defend it against predators, similarly a self-defense course will help you as it has helped me in defending yourself against any danger. The two types of analogies are Literal Analogy and Figurative analogy. Whereas, Literal Analogy compares two objects similar in nature, Figurative analogy shows the relationship between two objects that are of different kind.

For example, Literal Analogy uses precedence as a warrant for a particular action. The meaning is that an earlier case is quoted in order to justify a current action and it works because the earlier and current cases are essentially alike: ' Sarah listens to music at high speed, so why can I? ' Here it is implied that Sarah and I are more or less the same so we should have the same privilege. Figurative Analogy however does not directly compare two objects, rather shows the relationship that is contained in the theme and the phoros.

The theme is what we want to convey and phoros is the thing which is used to shed light on the theme: As the tiger needs claws for its internal needs, so does America need defense to meet domestic concerns. Here, ' America needs its defense to meet its domestic concerns' is the theme and ' As the Tiger needs its claws for its internal use' is the phoros. Figurative analogy effectively employs persuasion and Literal Analogy is logical. We should remember that Figurative Analogy do not have the same force as a Literal Analogy as a Literal Analogy compare objects that posses similar characteristics.

On the other hand, Figurative Analogy is a story and sometimes a metaphor created to compare dissimilar characteristics. This analogy helps to explain complex concepts by comparing them to familiar things. Figurative analogy provides a weak form of evidence than Literal Analogy as the objects compared are inherently different. Nevertheless, figurative analogies give vivid pictures and makes teaching easy. Also, figurative analogies help to make your speech emotionally appealing. The superiority of one analogy against another can only be judged on the basis of the purpose behind the two analogies.

Figurative Analogy does not give sound conclusion but the reasoning of Literal Analogy has its merit. Figurative Analogy that compares unlike things has the power to explain and the power to arouse emotions but it is not logical in nature. Literal Analogy which compares two like things, have the power of logic behind it. If the purpose is to give logical reasoning and sound

conclusion, Literal Analogy is better. However, if the purpose is to clarify any complex concept and evoke emotions, Figurative Analogy is better.