

Figurative vs. literal language: which is more beneficial?

[Business](#)



Gorgeous scenery decorated with fluttering butterflies, or a blue canvas with butterflies created with oil paint? Which drew you in more: the vivid figurative depiction or the literal explanation? Figurative language may urge a customer of handcrafts to purchase because of the stirring description, however, literal language must be written for the consumer to know what they're buying.

What is more beneficial to a hand-crafter and a customer: figurative language, literal language, or a combination? The definitions of figurative and literal language are the exact opposite of each other. Figurative language "appeals to the senses". It vibrantly illustrates an image in the reader's mind using metaphors, similes, personification, and hyperboles. In particular, figurative language is seen in fantasy, science-fiction and other genres. In contrast, literal language is factual and accurate; it uses a word's definite meaning.

For instance, literal language is found in scientific writings, economic reports, and more. How would these two languages apply to descriptions of handcrafted products? I asked the opinions of two Etsy crafters to see what they preferred and why. I interviewed two Etsy crafters named Amanda and Misty. Amanda's shop, "Animals by Amanda", consists of animal paintings while Misty's shop, "Hootie Avenue" sells colorful felt key chains. Both artists were asked the same questions.

The first question asked was, "Do you use figurative language, literal language, or both when describing your products? Why?" Amanda's response was focused on literal language. She wrote, "I use literal language

when describing my products. This ensures that buyers know exactly what they are getting. This is a safe route.” On the other hand, Misty’s was more detailed, explaining why figurative and literal language is important to include in a description: I use both figurative and literal language when describing my products. I use literal language because it’s important that my customers know exactly what they are getting when it comes to the materials and design used to create the product.

I use figurative language when it comes to describing the selection of scents that I offer. For example, the scent pink lemonade smells like pink lemonade. There isn’t a way to describe this unless I use figurative language. Further on in the questionnaire, Amanda made a decision to try to use more figurative language and stated, “ I would certainly like to revise some listings with more figurative text. I would not exclude literal language because I think it’s important for customers to know the exact details of their purchase. I currently have literal-only descriptions and have not had any Etsy sales (I’ve sold in the past on other websites).

” Finally, both concluded that using both of these languages may pique the interest of their customers, as Amanda noted that it can be “ a good way to grab people’s interest” so more crafts are purchased. They believe using literal and figurative language will give a customer a clear description of what the craft is and what it’s made out of, as well as an imaginative portrayal of the creation. In addition, articles written about marketing products describe the use of literal and figurative language, and how it should be consistent with descriptions. An article titled “ How to Write

Descriptions That Sell Your Craft Products”, published on craftyscrappyhappy.net provides straightforward advice on selling crafts.

Its second implication states, “ Say exactly what you have for sale. Tell potential buyers what you are selling, what it’s used for and what size, shape and color it is... Don’t leave anything up for guess work. Customers don’t like to guess what they are buying.” The third suggestion says, “ Use rich imagery in your words to capture the beauty of your products. Don’t fill the space with purple prose, but do use creative language to paint a picture.” Furthermore, another article titled, “ Excellent Advertising Words & Advertising Phrases For Ad Writing” has advice that can be applied to any product.

The first sentence of the article says these words were used in “ successful ads” and are handy for advertising. It proposes figurative words such as, “ Tremendous.. Unconditional..

Unique.. Unlimited.. Unparalleled”, and literal words, “ Security.

. Proven.. Quality.. Improved.

.” and “ Informative.” After researching the uses of figurative language, literal language, and how they were utilized by Etsy shop owners, I learned the importance of combining the two to create a well-rounded advertisement for any kind of item. The articles based on selling crafts and other materials made it clear that both need to be made use of in order to be a successful business owner. Together, interviewing business owners and reading articles

regarding the subject were informative and helpful for selling to customers and improving business. Works Cited Bryant, Misty.

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