

Figurative language versus literal language essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

It is important for one who speaks figuratively to take in consideration the audience might not be able to fully follow or understand them completely. Although figurative language can be entertaining, it can be interpreted in a way other than what was intended. Therefore, it will need some explanation.

The word "idiom" is an expression whose meaning is not literally what's said, but it is what is to be understood based on its premise. The idiom functions as a substitute for could be considered a less interesting way of expression. "Play your heart out" is an idiom that literally be translated as someone's heart is leaving their body while they are playing; but by my basketball coach used this idiom when he wanted us play to the best of our ability.

An analogy is a similarity between of two things that have common features, on which a comparison may be made (Harper, 2010). I use analogies when I am trying to explain an idea so that my audience will have a point of reference, and hopefully get a better understanding of what I am trying to explain. "Her tears ran like the waters of rushing river", is an analogy that compares tears to waters of rushing river.

A metaphor is an implied comparison between two things (Kirby/Goodpaster, 2007). "Michael Jordan is a beast", is a metaphor that describe his great ability as a basketball player. The literal translation could make the reader afraid to be around him because of the descriptive word beast.

A simile is a figure of speech in which two unlike things are explicitly compared. "We are like sheep" is simile comparison that speaks to behavior, nature, and dependency of mankind. As sheep depend on mankind

<https://assignbuster.com/figurative-language-versus-literal-language-essay-sample/>

for their protection, likewise, mankind depends on God for its protection. The literal interpretation could suggest many other things such as, we look like sheep, we smell like sheep, we think like sheep...

The word cliché is an expression or an idea that is no longer new (has become worn-out, trite) (Macmillan, 1994). As a child I would always ask my mother to buy me the most expensive things, she would sometimes use the cliché “do I look like a money tree?” If one were not familiar with this cliché or its intent, they might attempt to answer the question literally with a yes or no.

The word amphiboly is a grammatical construction that has a double or doubtful meaning. In the ghetto or hood, we use to have illegal lottery operators that were known as “number runners”. “They are running numbers” is a construction that could imply that someone is running number or they are called running numbers.

A flame word is a word that is used to insult someone. I like to think of it as a word that can get things heated. Some examples of a flame word are; dumb, stupid, lazy, etc... These kinds of words only be used descriptively or when trying to get under another’s skin.

A hyperbole is a word or group of words that are exaggeration used for effect and not to be taken literally. “He is fast as a jet plane” is an example of a hyperbole. The idea of the phrase is to suggest that the runner is very fast, not that he is as fast as a jet plane. I would use a hyperbole when I am trying to convince or persuade someone.

The word euphemism is noted as the substitution of an agreeable or inoffensive expression for one that may offend or suggest something unpleasant (Macmillan, 1994, p. 468). In other words, it's a nicer, more acceptable way of saying something that's used when trying not to offend another's. Asking someone to lower their voice versus telling them to shut up is an example of euphemism.

Colloquialism is noted as a colloquial expression; characteristic of spoken or written communication that seeks to imitate informal speech (Macmillan, 1994, p. 275). When I bought my first car, I did know that it wasn't in good shape. The car I bought was a lemon. Using the word lemon instead of wreck is an example of colloquialism. This expression is used in everyday leisure conversation.

In conclusion, I realize the necessity of literal language, however, in terms of expression, I choose figurative language. The use of figurative language can help different groups separate themselves in many ways from everybody else. Slang words can be considered a form of figurative language. Lastly, I think that is a great deal of creativity that can be expressed from speaking or writing figuratively. I use it when I'm writing poetry, or when I'm trying to put lyrics to a song. It is all about how the writer or speaker wants to express themselves. However, figurative language is not preferred in more literal matters. Literal language is preferred when the message could get lost or misunderstood in translation.

References:

<https://assignbuster.com/figurative-language-versus-literal-language-essay-sample/>

Harper, D. (2010). Dictionary. com. Retrieved 1 25, 2013, from [http://dictionary. reference. com/browse/analogy? s= t Kirby/Goodpaster](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/analogy? s= t Kirby/Goodpaster).
(2007). Thinking. Upper Saddle: Prentice Hall. Macmillan, S. &. (1994).
Webster's New Word Dictionary. In S. &. Macmillan. Simon & Schuster.