

FIGURES OF SPEECH

Dr.Shobha
Assistant Professor
PG Dept of English
JSSCACS

- A figure of speech is a word or phrase using figurative language—language that has other meaning than its normal definition. In other words, figures of speeches rely on implied or suggested meaning, rather than a dictionary definition. We express and develop them through hundreds of different rhetorical techniques, from specific types like metaphors and similes, to more general forms like sarcasm and slang.

Alliteration

- Alliteration is the repetition of the beginning sounds of neighbouring words.
- Examples include:
- She sells seashells.
- Walter wondered where Winnie was.
- Blue baby bonnets bobbed through the bayou.
- Nick needed new notebooks.
- Fred fried frogs' legs on Friday.

Anaphora

- Anaphora is a technique where several phrases or verses begin with the same word or words.
- Examples include:
- I came, I saw, I conquered. - Julius Caesar
- Mad world! Mad kings! Mad composition! - *King John II*, William Shakespeare
- It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness. - *A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens
- With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right. - Abraham Lincoln
- We shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end... we shall never surrender. - Winston Churchill

Assonance

- Assonance is the repetition of vowel sounds (not just letters) in words that are close together. The sounds don't have to be at the beginning of the word.
- Examples include:
- A - For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels named Lenore. (Poe)
- E - Therefore, all seasons shall be sweet to thee. (Coleridge)
- I - From what I've tasted of desire, I hold with those who favor fire. (Frost)
- O - Oh hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn. (Wordsworth)
- U - Uncertain rustling of each purple curtain (Poe)

Euphemism

- Euphemism is a figure of speech that refers to figurative language designed to replace words or phrases that would otherwise be considered harsh, impolite, or unpleasant.
- Last night, Joe's grandfather passed away (died).
- She was starting to feel over the hill (old).
- Young adults are curious about the birds and bees (sex).
- I need to powder my nose (go to the bathroom).
- Our company has decided to let you go (fire you).
- 'A little thin on top' instead of 'going bald.'
- 'Fell off the back of a truck' instead of 'stolen.'
- 'Letting you go' instead of 'firing you.'
- 'Passed away' instead of 'died.'
- 'Economical with the truth' instead of 'liar.'

Hyperbole

- Hyperbole is a figure of speech that utilizes extreme exaggeration to emphasize a certain quality or feature.
- I have a million things to do.
- This suitcase weighs a ton.
- This room is an ice-box.
- I'll die if he doesn't ask me on a date.
- I'm too poor to pay attention.
- I've told you to stop a thousand times.
- That must have cost a billion dollars.
- I could do this forever.
- She's older than dirt.
- Everybody knows that.

Irony

- Irony occurs when there's a marked contrast between what is said and what is meant, or between appearance and reality.
- Examples include:
- "How nice!" she said, when I told her I had to work all weekend. (Verbal irony)
- A traffic cop gets suspended for not paying his parking tickets. (Situational irony)
- The Titanic was said to be unsinkable but sank on its first voyage. (Situational irony)
- Naming a tiny Chihuahua Brutus. (Verbal irony)
- When the audience knows the killer is hiding in a closet in a scary movie, but the actors do not. (Dramatic irony)

Metaphor

- A metaphor is a figure of speech that compares two different things without the use of the terms “like” or “as.”
- He is a fish out of water.
- She is a star in the sky.
- My grandchildren are the flowers of my garden.
- That story is music to my ears.
- Your words are a broken record.
- Heart of stone
- Time is money
- The world is a stage
- She's a night owl
- He's an ogre

Metonymy

In this figure of speech, a thing is not called by its true name, but by something related to it.

eg: The pen is mightier than the sword.

The Lok Sabha was in an up-roar.

I drank the poisoned cup.

I like reading Milton.

He succeeded to the throne

Climax

- The figure is an arrangement of grading of ideas in an ascending scale. In using this figure the writer leads up to his main point by degrees. He begins with the least important idea and ends with the most important.
- I came, I saw, I conquered.
- An average teacher explains.
- A good teacher teaches.
- The best teacher inspires.
- Beg, borrow or steal.
- Some foods are to be tasted, others to be swallowed and some others to be chewed and digested.
- Awake, arise, stop not till the goal is reached.

Onomatopoeia

- Onomatopoeia is the term for a word that sounds like what it is describing.
- Examples include:
- Whoosh
- Splat
- Buzz
- Click
- Oink

Oxymoron

- An oxymoron is two contradictory terms used together. An oxymoron is a figure of speech that connects two opposing ideas, usually in two-word phrases, to create a contradictory effect.
- Open secret
- Peace force
- Sweet sorrow
- Alone together
- true lies
- controlled chaos
- pretty ugly
- Free market

Personification

- Personification is a figure of speech that attributes human characteristics to something that is not human.
- I heard the wind whistling.
- The water danced across my window.
- My dog is telling me to start dinner.
- The moon is smiling at me.
- Her alarm hummed in the background
- The flowers nodded.
- The snowflakes danced.
- The thunder grumbled.
- The fog crept in.
- The wind howled.

Antithesis

- Antithesis, which literally means “opposite,” is a rhetorical device in which two opposite ideas are put together in a sentence to achieve a contrasting effect.
- Antithesis emphasizes the idea of contrast by parallel structures of the contrasted phrases or clauses. The structures of phrases and clauses are similar, in order to draw the attention of the listeners or readers. For example:

- Some famous antithetical statements have become part of our everyday speech, and are frequently used in arguments and discussions. Below is a list of some common antithetical statements:
- Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice.
- Man proposes, God disposes.
- Love is an ideal thing, marriage a real thing.
- Speech is silver, but silence is gold.
- Patience is bitter, but it has a sweet fruit.
- Money is the root of all evil: poverty is the fruit of all goodness.
- You are easy on the eyes, but hard on the heart.

Simile

- Simile is a figure of speech in which two dissimilar things are compared to each other using the terms “like” or “as.
- As slippery as an eel
- Like peas in a pod
- As blind as a bat
- Eats like a pig
- As wise as an owl
- She’s as pretty as a picture.
- I’m pleased as punch.
- He’s strong like an ox.
- You are sly like a fox.
- I’m happy as a clam.

Pun


- A pun is a figure of speech that contains a “play” on words, such as using words that mean one thing to mean something else or words that sound alike in as a means of changing meaning.
- A sleeping bull is called a bull-dozer.
- Baseball players eat on home plates.
- Polar bears vote at the North Poll.
- Fish are smart because they travel in schools.
- One bear told another that life without them would be grizzly.

Paradox

- A paradox is a figure of speech that appears to be self-contradictory but actually reveals something truthful.
- You have to spend money to save it.
- What I've learned is that I know nothing.
- You have to be cruel to be kind.
- Things get worse before they get better.
- The only rule is to ignore all rules.

Apostrophe

- An apostropher is a direct address to the dead, to the absent, or to a personified object or idea. This figure is a special form of personification.
- Milton! Thou should'st be living at this hour.
- O friend! I know not which way i must look.
- Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean –roll!
- O death! Where is thy sting? O grave! Where is thy victory.

- 
- O liberty, what crimes have been committed in thy name?
 - Wave, Munich, all thy banners wave.
 - And charge with all thy chivalry!
 - O judgement! Thou art fled to burish beasts.
 - O solitude! Where are the charms. That sages have seen in thy face?



THANK YOU