FIGURES OF SPEECH
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A figure of speech is a rhetorical device that achieves a special effect by using words in distinctive ways.
FIGURES OF SPEECH

• A figure of speech is a use of a word that diverges from its normal meaning, or a phrase with a specialized meaning not based on the literal meaning of the words in it such as a metaphor, simile, or personification.

• Figures of speech often provide emphasis, freshness of expression, or clarity.
FIGURES OF SPEECH

1. Simile:
A stated comparison between two different things that have certain qualities in common.

a. "My face looks \textit{like} a wedding-cake left out in the rain."
   - (W.H. Auden)

b. Her words were \textit{as} dull \textit{as} a dirt.
FIGURES OF SPEECH

2. Metaphor:
An implied comparison between two unlike things that actually have something important in common.

a. I fall upon the thorns of life.
   - P B Shelley

b. The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.
   - Edward Fitzgerald
3. Personification:

A figure of speech in which an inanimate object or abstraction is endowed with human qualities or abilities.

a. My car was happy to be washed.
b. Fate frowned on his endeavors.
c. The haughty lion surveyed his realm.
FIGURES OF SPEECH

4. Hyperbole:

An extravagant statement or the use of exaggerated terms for the purpose of emphasis or heightened effect, but not to be taken literally.

a. I'd give my right arm for a cup of tea.
b. My backpack weighs a ton!
FIGURES OF SPEECH

5. Irony:

The use of words to convey the opposite of their literal meaning. A statement or situation where the meaning is contradicted by the appearance or presentation of the idea.

a. He was no notorious malefactor, but he had been twice on the pillory, and once burnt in the hand for trifling oversights.

   — DIRECCIONS FOR SPEECH AND STYLE

b. Taking money from the poor and giving it to the rich.
**FIGURES OF SPEECH**

**6. Antithesis:**

The juxtaposition of contrasting ideas in balanced phrases.

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| a. | "Love is an ideal thing, marriage a real thing."  
   | - (Goethe) |
| b. | "We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools."  
   | - (Martin Luther King) |
| c. | "You're easy on the eyes; Hard on the heart."  
   | - (Terri Clark) |
FIGURES OF SPEECH

7. Litotes:

Deliberate understatement or denial of the contrary.

a. "The grave's a fine a private place,
   But none, I think, do there embrace."
   - Andrew Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress"

b. "for life's not a paragraph
   And death I think is no parenthesis."
FIGURES OF SPEECH

8. **Paradox:**
   A statement that appears to contradict itself.

   a. “The child is father to the man.”
   b. “You always hurt the one you love.”
FIGURES OF SPEECH

9. **Synecdoche:**

A figure of speech is which a part is used to represent the whole, the whole for a part, the specific for the general, the general for the specific, or the material for the thing made from it.

a. "Robby got wheels this summer."
   wheels = car

b. "... the hand that wrote the letter ..."
   hand = person
FIGURES OF SPEECH

10. **Pun:**

A play on words, sometimes on different senses of the same word and sometimes on the similar sense or sound of different words.

a. Writing with a broken pencil is pointless.

b. Tigers do not eat clowns because they taste funny.

c. Syrup is a source of sugar.
FIGURES OF SPEECH

11. Oxymoron:

A figure of speech in which incongruous or contradictory terms appear side by side.

a. cold fire
b. honest thief
c. darkly lit
d. fearful joy
FIGURES OF SPEECH

12. Understatement:
A figure of speech in which a writer or a speaker deliberately makes a situation seem less important or serious than it is.

a. "It's just a flesh wound."
   - (Black Knight, after having both of his arms cut off, in Monty Python and the Holy Grail)

b. "I am just going outside and may be some time."
   - (Captain Lawrence Oates, Antarctic explorer, before walking out into a blizzard to face certain death, 1912)

c. "I have to have this operation. It isn't very serious. I have this tiny little tumor on the brain."
   - (Holden Caulfield in The Catcher In The Rye, by J. D. Salinger)
FIGURES OF SPEECH

13. Parenthesis:
- a word, phrase, or sentence inserted as an aside in a sentence complete by itself.

a. The number of living languages (currently about 6000, by most estimates) is decreasing rapidly.

b. "The English (it must be owned) are rather a foul-mouthed nation."

- (William Hazlitt)
FIGURES OF SPEECH

14. Apostrophe:
- a diversion of discourse from the topic at hand to addressing some person or thing, either present or absent.

a. "Hello darkness, my old friend
   I've come to talk with you again . . .."
   - (Paul Simon, "The Sounds of Silence")

b. "Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art"
   - (John Keats)
FIGURES OF SPEECH

15. **Onomatopoeia:**

The formation or use of words that imitate the sounds associated with the objects or actions they refer to.

- **“Achoo”:** -used to represent the sound of a sneeze.
- **“Meow”:** -the cry of a cat.
THE END