

Figures of Speech – Part II

We have seen that a metaphor is an implied simile. Every simile can be compressed into a metaphor and every metaphor can be expanded into a simile.

Compare:

Life is like a dream. (Simile)

Life is a dream. (Metaphor)

Personification

In personification inanimate objects and abstract ideas are spoken of as if they have life and intelligence.

Example

Pride goeth forth on horseback, grand and gay'
But cometh back on foot, and begs its way.

Apostrophe

An apostrophe is a direct address to the dead, the absent or a personified object or idea. It is a special form of personification.

Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean – roll!

O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?

O Solitude! where are the charms

That sages have seen in thy face?

Hyperbole

In hyperbole a statement is made emphatic by overstatement.

Here's the smell of blood still; all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.

O Hamlet! thou has cleft my heart in twain.

I Loved Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not with all their quantity of love
Make up the sum.

Euphemism

In Euphemism, a disagreeable thing is described by an agreeable name.

For example, we often say 'He has fallen asleep' or 'He has passed away' instead of 'He has died.'

Other examples are given below:

Old Sam is pushing up the daisies.

= Old Sam is dead.

He is a little careless of the truth.

= He is a liar.

She has become hard of hearing lately.

= She has become deaf.

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