

Figures of speech- Oxymoron

Created: Thursday, 11 June 2015 17:45 | Published: Friday, 14 August 2015 05:07 | Written by [Chander Madan](#) | [Print](#)

Words carry great power. In English, a number of words denote a different meaning depending on the situation. Some of these words represent a much more detailed information about a specific event, which you want to portray. For instance, I will be crushed in this train. The sentence doesn't actually mean that you will be crushed but instead it means the train is overcrowded.

Figures of speech when used appropriately causes a great impact in your sentence. Let us start with oxymoron. This figure of speech is a combination or mixture of two words with contradictory aspects and forming a meaning out of it. Oxymoron itself is 'oxymoronic' as it means sharp and dull. The contradictory words used in an oxymoron are placed side by side. The most common example we know about oxymoron is 'Civil War'.



Understanding Oxymorons

Some examples are as follows:

1. Only choice
2. Open secret
3. Living dead
4. Loud whisper
5. Old news
6. Plastic glasses
8. Seriously funny
9. Same difference
10. Falsely true
11. Working vacations

These are some of the oxymoron we come across on a regular basis.

Oxymoron can be used as,

Humor:

OXYMORONS ARE SERIOUSLY FUNNY.

Here we add oxymoron to give a humorous effect. For instance, 'Honest thief. We all know thieves are a bunch of liars and only spit out the truth when they surrender to the police. So adding "honest" as a word completely adds contradiction to the word thief which puts up a humorous effect.

Literature:

Not just for humor, this figure of speech is also widely used in literature, especially, in poems.

Examples:

"Play?"

Well actually, yes, but I consider play to be

A deeper outside thing, a dreamed role-pattern,
As in the division of grace these long August days
Without proof"

We will take another example through an extract of the poem by Devang Gandhi,

"Am I truly a big baby?
Well, it's a definite maybe.
Well I'm going to give you a practice test,
Tell me now, who is the second best."

Hope the above examples made you understand the basics of Oxymoron. This figurative language actually helps you [improve your English](#) better and to enhance your English speaking skills. Oxymoron adds an extra touch when it comes to writing. You can also join an online English tutor and explore more about the figures of speech.

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-By Chander Madan

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