

Non- Literal Communication

1. Irony / Sarcasm. The speaker utters sentence S, but intends the opposite.

Jack: Rex locked himself out for the third time this week.

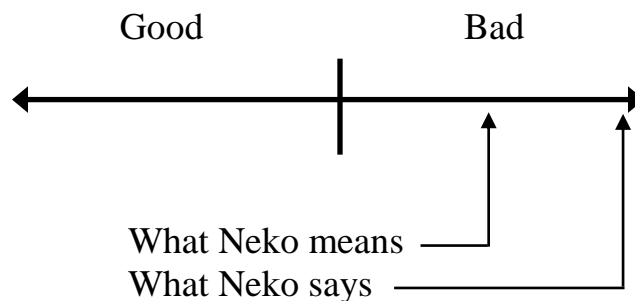
Neko (shaking her head and rolling her eyes): That guy's a real genius.

Neko (non-literally) communicates that Rex is very stupid, by stating (ironically) that's he's very smart.

2. Overstatement. Communicating that something falls on one side of a range of possibilities, by stating that it falls on the extreme end of that side.

Example:

Neko: That was the worst sushi ever made in the history of the universe.



Neko (non-literally) communicates that the sushi is bad, by stating that the sushi is on the extreme end of the bad range.

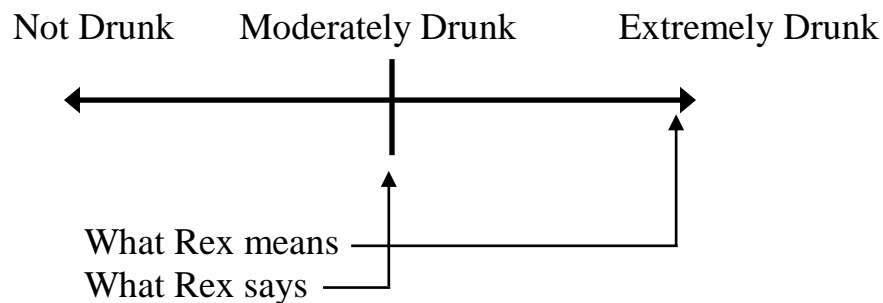
3. Understatement. Communicating that something falls on extreme end of a range of possibilities, by stating that it one that side of the range.

Example:

(Background: After drinking an entire bottle of tequila, a student strips naked, jumps through the window, and runs down the street screaming.)

Jake: What's the matter with him?

Rex: He was a little drunk.



Rex (non-literally) communicates that the student was very drunk, by (understatedly) stating that he was on the drunk side.

4. Metaphor. Pointing out that something has a feature like certain type of object, by stating that it is such an object.

Example:

Jack: Neko is a regular Power-Vac when it comes to sushi.

Jack (non-literally) communicates that Neko is in certain respects like a vacuum cleaner – say, in quickly taking in objects – by stating that Neko *actually is* a vacuum cleaner.