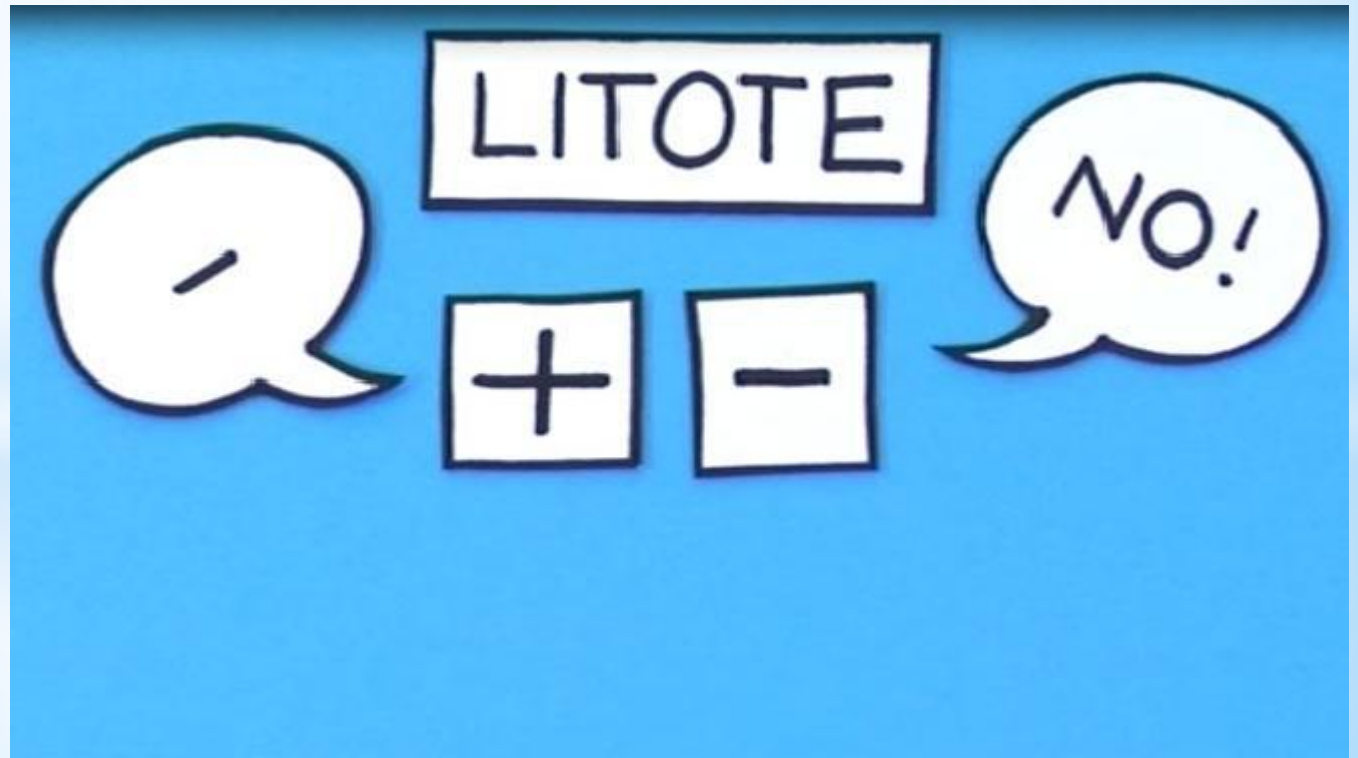


Litotes - ЛИТОТА
[laɪ'təʊtiːz]

Definition of Litotes

Litotes is a literary term for a figure of speech that uses negative terms to express a positive statement.



Understatement is a figure of speech that makes something seem less significant or less severe than it actually is.

Examples of Understatement:

- It's chilly out here. (When it is actually freezing)
- I'm a little tired. (I'm exhausted.)

A double negative is an expression that uses two negative terms to express a positive.

Examples of Double Negatives:

- I don't have no time for that.
 - * Intended meaning: I don't have any time for that.
- That won't do you no good.
 - * Intended meaning: That won't do you any good.

Litotes vs. Understatement and Double Negative

Common Litotes Examples

- They do not seem the happiest couple around.
- The ice cream was not too bad.
- New York is not an ordinary city.
- Your comments on politics are not useless.
- You are not as young as you used to be.
- I cannot disagree with your point of view.
- William Shakespeare was not a bad playwright at all.
- He is not the cleverest person I have ever met.
- She is not unlike her mother.
- Ken Adams is not an ordinary man
- A million dollars is no small amount.
- You are not doing badly at all.
- Your apartment is not unclean

Function of Litotes

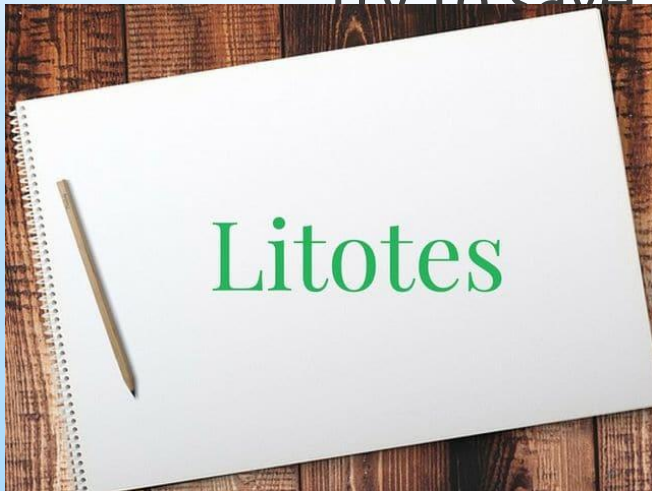
- Litotes uses ironic understatement in order to emphasize an idea or situation.

J.R. Bergmann, in his book *Talk at Work: Interaction in Institutional Settings*, talks about litotes in the following words:

“I want to claim that the rhetorical figure litotes is one of those methods which are used to talk about an object in a discreet way. It clearly locates an object for the recipient, but it avoids naming it directly.”

The Purpose of Litotes

- Litotes is often used in rhetoric.
- Litotes are a way to actually emphasize the positive by using a double negative. Litotes causes the listener to think and consider the statement.
- Litotes are also a way to skirt an issue or to try to save face.



**Thank you for your
attention!**