



Circumlocution

Circumlocution (also called periphrasis) means “talking around” or “talking in circles.” You use circumlocution – intentionally or not, when you talk around something rather than speaking directly about it. Circumlocution is always longer and more complicated than it needs to be. Although circumlocution can be accidental, or simply poor writing, it can also be intentional, either as a manner of descriptive writing, or as a way to make a point.

DIRECTION: Underline the circumlocution in each sentence. Do you think it is intentional or unintentional? Explain your answer.

1. I am not overburdened with a surplus of good looks.

Intentional

unintentional

Explain: _____

2. Due to the unavoidable circumstances, changes were made.

Intentional

unintentional

Explain: _____

3. In response to a direct question about the past: “I’m not here to talk about the past.”

Intentional

unintentional

Explain: _____
