Article

A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Hyperbole among Kirkuk's Kurdish Population

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Abstract: This study focuses on hyperbolic expressions in everyday conversations among the Kurdish Sorani-speaking population in Kirkuk, Iraq. Hyperbole, a linguistic phenomenon characterized by deliberate exaggeration, servers to amplify or minimizes entities, emotions, or actions, creating meanings that contrast with reality yet are perceived as natural. Hyperbole is a technique for exaggerating someone or something to make them appear larger, better, worse, or more than they are. Hyperbole produces a meaning that contrasts with reality but is perceived as natural, not as a falsehood. This study aims to shed light on the sociolinguistic dimensions of hyperbole, which has been underexplored in formal texts. By analyzing a various selected hyperbolic expressions, the study identifies the unique features and communicative functions of hyperbole in Kurdish discourse, considering the influence of social factors such as cultural knowledge, social status and situational context.The findings shows that hyperbole plays an important role in expressing emotions, establishing of social relationships and the reinforcing of cultural norms within the Kurdish community. The primary purpose of this study is to investigate the unique features of rhetorical devices used by Kurdish speakers, especially in Kirkuk City. It highlights in everyday conversations and the use of hyperbole across various lexical contexts. Therefore, the study analyzes these expressions from a sociolinguistic perspective. It is widely recognized that linguistic context along with metalinguistic factors such as cultural norms and social cues - significantly influences how concepts are structured and comprehended.

Keywords: Hyperbole, Realizations of Hyperbolic Expression, Lexical Hyperboles

1. Introduction

Hyperbole is a rhetorical device that involves the intentional exaggeration of statements that are not entirely accurate. Hyperbole functions both as a figure of speech and a method of gradually elaborating on concepts in classical rhetoric [1]. Additionally, hyperbole is considered a form of extreme exaggeration employed to make a point. This exaggerated language is typically absent in non-fiction disciplines, such as legal or medical writing, despite its frequent use in literature and spoken communication. It is particularly effective in fiction, where it can enhance character traits or introduce humour into narratives. Hyperbole is a literary technique that intentionally exaggerates information, emotions, or statements to accomplish a particular effect [2].

In their daily conversations, people employ numerous figures of speech in Kirkuk city, particularly in Suleimani. They try to fill in their conversation using different hyperbolic statements that cover a variety of figures of speech to produce forceful effects and communicate their messages. Hyperbole is one of the most commonly utilized figures of speech, widely employed in Kurdish society. Furthermore, hyperbole stands as a sociolinguistic phenomenon in the Kurdish community; they utilized diverse statements

that express exaggerations in showing various functions by making things seem more significant and better than they are in real situations. Understanding sociolinguistics in foreign language learning is substantial since the learners, who might be in the target language community, must be familiar with the cultural values underlying speech acts.

According to Leech, hyperbole is a common attribute in everyday language [3]. It is fundamentally emotional and describes, understands, and evaluates subjective experiences. Hyperbole is not considered lying but exaggerated statements that are incorrect or unwarranted. Clark, defines hyperbole as a breach of quality maxims that leads to conversational implications [4]. Moreover, "Hyperbole or 'exaggeration' is defined as the use of overstatement as a rhetorical device or figure of speech" [5].

Hyperbole is a rhetorical device that exaggerates or minimises an actual situation to an extreme degree [6]. It is not meant to be interpreted in a literal sense, and it generates mockery or satire when applied to mundane subjects. The phrase originates in Aristotle's work and has been consistently present in the study of rhetoric throughout history [7]. It refers to excessive exaggeration to depict something as much more or lesser, better or worse, or involving a higher intensity than it is or might be. It can also describe a statement that is exaggerated fancifully due to excitement or to create an impression. Hyperbole, a bold and exaggerated statement, can give the listener a new, often profound, meaning. It's a tool prevalent in formal situations for persuasion and later finds its place in literature and fashion, where its impact is undeniable [8]. Hyperbole conveys emotional and mental states clearly and crystallinely [9]. Both hyperbole and exaggeration overemphasize ideas, but they vary in degree and application.

Hyperbole, a general linguistic phenomenon, and exaggeration, a rhetorical device used explicitly in literary contexts, often need clarification. Exaggeration, a broader concept, includes hyperbole, the main form of exaggeration used in cases where it goes through a literary style. The main difference is that hyperbole is a common linguistic phenomenon in everyday speech and writing, while exaggeration is a metaphor intended for formal, persuasive use. The concept of hyperbole has an ancient tradition originating in Aristotle and is fundamental to the study of rhetoric. One refers to hyperbole as exaggeration, a representation of something as more, less, better, worse, or of higher intensity than it is. These kinds of exaggeration are often used to evoke or produce an emotional effect or to make a point reinforce an idea without needing to explain itself.

Sociolinguistics is highly relevant to foreign language learning, especially for students exposed to the target language. These students need to understand the cultural norms and values that underpin speech acts in the language. "The sociolinguistic part deals with the influence of some sociolinguistic variables" [10]. A study of Hyperbole cannot be comprehensive because it can take both traditional and creative forms, and the possibilities for linguistic creativity are endless. However, this study aims to describe some of the most common lexical-grammatical overlaps in sentences and clarify more in everyday conversations. Sociolinguistics is essential for foreign language learners to understand the cultural basis of language practices.Research on Hyperbole is inherently limited but focuses on types commonly used in everyday conversational contexts.

A. The limit of the Study

This study was conducted in the governorate of Kirkuk, with a specific focus on the Kurdish people. The use of various lexical words related to Hyperbole was observed. Notably, a significant portion of the individuals who employ hyperbole-related expressions have a low academic background. The scope of the investigation was limited to the residents of Kirkuk City, encompassing a diverse range of age groups, with a particular emphasis on language usage.

B. The main Objectives

1. To identify the basic lexical and grammatical structures and patterns of expression of hyperbole in everyday Iraqi Kurdish conversation and communication.

2. To examine the communicative purposes and practical functions of hyper language in Iraqi Kurdish speakers, such as emphasis, irony, relationship building, or the communication of social status and power dynamics.
3. To expect the sociocultural factors and norms affecting the production and interpretation of hyperbole in a group of Kurdish speakers, especially in Kirkuk, including regional/linguistic variation, gender, age, and socioeconomic status.
4. To study how hyperlinguistics reflects and reinforces specific sociocultural values, attitudes, and beliefs in the Iraqi Kurdish language and culture.
5. To conduct a comprehensive analysis of the use of hyperlinks in different discourses in Kurdish speakers, such as casual conversation, journalistic speeches, and religious/political statements, to understand its versatility and context-dependency.
6. Offering a comprehensive explanation of hyperbole in English, with the realization of the Kurdish dialect
7. Hyperbole is a figure of speech that is employed in daily oral communication, as well as in literature and rhetoric.
8. Hyperbole is a discourse function that can be employed to achieve the objective of an exaggerating speaker.

C.   The hypothesis

Social Language Concept:
1. Hyperboles can be utilized for particular functions such as emphasis, impressing others, and expressing strong emotions.
2. Hyperboles can be associated with lies, untruths, and fraud.
3. Hyperboles examine hypertext through sociolinguistics, providing insight into the relationship between language and social context in Kurdish communities.
4. To understand how linguistic choices such as hyperbole form and are, in turn, shaped by the social and cultural realities of the Kurdish community.

D.   Sociolinguistic Perspective

1. Redundant words can differ from Kurdish dialects and geographic areas.
2. Among the Kurdish people, gender, age, and social status may influence the production and perception of extreme events.
3. This research underscores the influence of cultural norms, values, and beliefs specific to the Kurdish context on the structures and functions of the transnational language, providing a deeper understanding of the social and cultural realities that shape linguistic choices such as hyperbole in the Kurdish community.

E.   Literature Review

Although hyperbole has long been studied as a metaphor in a broader rhetorical context, the main focus has been describing, classifying, and modeling this metaphor. Still, much contemporary linguistic theory and research has yet to find studies specific to excess. This is likely because hyperbole has traditionally been viewed as an archaic rhetorical device, and its study has been limited to rhetoric rather than being explored extensively in other academic disciplines such as linguistics, psychology, philosophy, and literary criticism.

Most of the work on hyperbole has taken the form of comparative analyses of frequency and use across cultures, as evidenced in Spitzbard, Cohen, and Edelman et al.'s studies [11], [12], [13]. However, detailed theoretical and research applications of hyperbole as a linguistic communicative phenomenon are surprisingly rare in contemporary academia. The study by Ohlrogge and Tsang, which examined the frequency of hyperbole in academic discourse, stands as a rare example [14]. Their research raised important questions about the tone of academic writing and the potential for hyper-verbal, hyper-linguistic context in live, spoken communication.

In addition to these cross-cultural studies of the use of over language, most scholarly interest in this linguistic phenomenon has focused on the cognitive processes involved in

cases at the core of understanding and interpreting overstatement. McCarthy and Carter advocated the importance of a conversational and discourse analytic approach to studying the role of exaggeration in authentic speech, which occurs naturally and collaboratively between conversational participants without purpose, as an activity a combination of types [7].

In other words, McCarthy and Carter argue that to understand the use and interpretation of hyper language better; one must examine it in the context of natural, dynamic, interactive conversations rather than dealing with it in isolation, which is isolated. Speaker and listener responses and contributions are essential in determining the understanding and impact of overspeech in real-time speech.

2. Materials and Methods

This study uses a qualitative research approach on sociolinguistic theory to explore based hyperbolic expressions among the Kurdish population in Kirkuk.. This approach provides a deeper understanding of the nuances and contexts of hyperbole on a daily conversation outlined by Creswell, which emphasize the importance of understanding social phenomena in their context [15].

A. Data Collection

Data was collected through field-based observations of spontaneous dynamic speech during natural conversational interactions among Kurdish speakers in Kirkuk. The sources of the data are the official books, articles.The focus was on capturing a diverse range of hyperbolic expressions that reflect the community's linguistic practices.

3. Results

The researcher discovers various types of hyperbolic expressions that are commonly used and familiar among young Kurdish people, and occasionally among older individual in Kirkuk. Different expressions can be used in various situations during daily informal conversations. Each is based on the theme described in the discussions below. Thus, the researcher can assert that Hyperbole is a common and versatile linguistic tool speakers use to express their mental experiences, emotions, and opinions. There are various lexical items used to construct sentences that convey the hyperboles, such as "food" "number" "world" "love" "laught" and so on, as described in detail with examples for each to clarify the points. For instance, someone may say, "I've been waiting for hours!" when in reality, it has only been a few minutes. This exaggeration effectively emphasizes the speaker's perseverance or frustration.

4. Discussion

A. The first expression that can be related to "Number" such as

Text	I phoned you **one hundred times,** but you didn't answer me.	Page: No
Translated	سەد جار تەلەفونم بۆت کرد بەڵام وەڵامت نەبوو	Translated
Text	I read for the exam 50 times last night but failed.	
Translated	پێنجا جار خوێندم و کەوتم	Translated
Text	I told her a thousand times that I love you but she didn't trust me.	

Translated	هەزار جار پێیم وت خۆشتمەوێ بەس باوەری پێم نەکرد	

The expressions in the table above relate to exaggerating numerical hyperboles that may boast about quantity, even the actual numbers are much lower. The hyperbolic category of numbers includes expressions such as "millions, hundreds, or thousands, as well as combination of these forms, all of which play an important role in creating hyperbolic meaning. These number-based hyperboles enable the speaker emphasize the significance of repeated statements the effort the people invest. Alternatively, mathematical expressions like those in the examples above, are a common ways to express frequency or magnitude. The speaker claims to perform actions often – tens/hundreds/thousands of times. The adverbial phrase "ten times/thousands/ hundreds" provide the quantitative detail. In addition to, using a specific number clearly shows the speaker's knowledge and involvement in the subject matter. To summarize, hyperbolic expressions powerfully communicate intense emotions, dissatisfaction, or disappointment by making exaggerated statements about quantity or effort. Rhetorical tactics accentuate the intensity of emotions or the enormity of action, even in the face of described unfavorable consequences.

B. The second expression that can be utilized is " the whole world" such as

Text	The whole world knows that he has a bad behaviour	Page: No
Translated	هەموو دونیا ئەزانێ رەفتاری خراپه	
Text	She travelled the whole world in one day	
Translated	به رۆژێ هەموو دونیام کرد	

The expressions above illustrate exaggerated speech to demonstrate that many people were aware of his inappropriate behavior, suggesting that such behaviour is both acceptable and widely tolerated. Additionally, the second expression implies that he travelled far and wide, visiting many places quickly. There is important exaggeration in this speech. Phrases like "the whole world" serve effective rhetorical because they emphasize the scope or importance of the subject. Such a metaphorical expressions can enhance the clarity and impact of the message.

C. The third expression that can be used is food such as

Text	I died of hunger	Page: No
Translated	مردم له برسا	
Text	He is so hungry that he can eat <u>all</u> the dishes.	
Translated	ئەوەنده برسییتی بویه ئەتوانی بتوانێت هەموو چێشتەکان بخوات	

Analyzing the sentences in the table above shows important insights into the cultural and linguistic expressions in both languages. For instance, the phrase "I died of hunger" indicates a common hyperbolic expression utilized in English to convey extreme hunger. This hyperbole not only highlights the speaker's precarious situation but also reflects the broader cultural trend toward hyperbole in everyday speech.

These references to food are common in everyday speech, and emphasize the speaker's hunger or desire to consume an entire portion. The term "All" highlights the quantity or completeness of food. Food-related hyperboles are also be prevalent, and these exaggerations allow the speaker convey a sense of abundance or their voracious appetite. In contrast, the Kurdish translation "مردم له برسا" (They died of hunger) retains this hyperbolic quality, reflecting shared linguistic structures across cultures. Both terms tap into the universal experience of about hunger by using hyperbole to heighten the emotional impact of the story.

The second example, "He's so hungry he can eat all the dishes," reveals as much, emphasizing not only the speaker's hunger but his ability to eat a whole meal. The use of the word "anything" in both languages conveys the idea of fullness it was enough to eat, reinforcing the idea that hunger can be overwhelming and all-consuming

Overall, the findings suggest that grammar and language use are not static but evolve with social change. Understanding these changes, especially in relation to everyday expression, is important for effective communication and the preservation of linguistic richness. As language undergoes transformation in the face of technological progress and globalization, examining these nuances will provide deeper insights into the intersections of language, culture and identity.

D. The fourth expression that can be used are "affection / Feeling: such as

Text	You are **my everyone"**	Page: No
Translated	تۆ هەموو کەسی منی	
Text	I will die without you.	
Translated	بێ تۆ ئەمرم	
Text	You are the light of my eyes.	
Translated	تۆ ڕووناکی چاومی	
Text	You are my breath of mine..	
Translated	تۆ هەناسەی منی	

These expressions mentioned above are clear examples of hyperbole--the use of exaggerated language for emotional impact, and they are especially evident in romantic relationship. These romantic exaggerations allow the speaker express deep love and interest. While such expressions may not be taken literally , they serve as an intensely emotional way of conveying feelings, suggesting that the beloved permeates the speaker's entire life. Exaggeration is used to express love and affection. Love is what the other eats first. An exaggerated expression of love is actively showing the depth of feeling and personal significance that two people share in their relationship. As long as the basic rules of grammar are followed, these high levels of symbolism can add depth and passion to romantic communication.

Notably, these expressions are popular among people to convey their affection. Hyperbole can be repeatedly used in love and relationships, for example, one might say that their partner is "the most beautiful person in the world" despite objective beauty standards.

E. The sixth expression that can be related to "Burn" such as

Text	I burned in the heat	Page: No
Translated	سووتام له گەرما	

Notably, these expressions relate to the description of profound fatigue in someone who feels as if their body is physically splitting due to heat. This exaggeration suggests that the heat was so intense it felt as if they were constantly on fire. Such hyperbole conveys that the person worked so hard and became so exhausted that they felt their soul could was leaving their body, highlighting their overwhelming fatigue and overwork.

F.   The eighth expression that can be related to "soul" such as

Text	<u>**My soul**</u> came out of working too much	**Page: No**
Translated	<u>**ڕۆحم دەرچوو ئەوەنە نیش بکەم**</u>	

Hyperbole is a figure of speech that uses exaggerated words of emphasis or effect. For instance, the phrase "My soul has come out of overwork" is clearly employed to convey the extreme fatigue and exhaustion resulting from excessive work. Such hyperbolic expression is common in everyday speech and is often used to express emotions in a very dramatic way. By saying that their spirits "emerged," the speaker implies that they feel disconnected from their well-being, revealing the intensity of their job stress. This overstatement serves to create a tax of work showing that the speaker feels not only physically tired but also spiritually tired.

G.   The seventh expression that can be related to "Laught" such as

Text	I <u>**separated**</u> in laughter	**Page: No**
Translated	<u>**بجرام لە پێکەنینا**</u>	

This phrase uses hyperbole to clearly reveal the intensity of laughter, suggesting that the joy is so overwhelming it feels as if it could physically tear the person apart. When someone says "بجرام لة بیکةنین" (*bichram la pek*anin), they exaggerate the intensity of their laughter to express how tremendously funny they find something. This expression is an exciting way to convey amusement or joy. The use of such clear imagery makes this expression particularly compelling, as it captures not only the act of laughter but also the transformative power of laughter showing that laughter can be so powerful that it overwhelmed a person , and brings depth to a shared experience of joy. This linguistic flourish is a fun way to have fun, highlighting the sheer power of laughter that can make you feel almost spoiled for fun

H.   The Findings

The analysis of hyperbolic expressions among the Kurdish population in Kirkuk reveals several key findings:

1. **Hyperbolic Expressions**: observed various examples of hyperbolic forms such as numerical hyperbole, emotional intensity, and everyday experiences include in the statements such as "I called you a hundred times" and "I could conquer the whole world," indicating frequency using hyperbole to build emotions and experiences
2. **Social Factors Influencing Usage**:
    a. **Age**: Younger speakers often utilize hyperbolic expressions more frequently than older individuals, indicating a generational difference in language use.
    b. **Gender**: Male speakers were observed to use hyperbole more often than female speakers, suggesting potential differences in communicative styles.
    c. **Educational Background**: Individuals with lower educational attainment exhibited a higher frequency of hyperbolic language, which may reflect different communicative norms.
3. **Functions of Hyperbole**: The study reveals several communicative purposes of hyperbole, including:
    a. **Emphasis**: Hyperbolic expressions serve to underscore the speaker's emotions or the significance of a situation.

b. **Humor**: Many hyperbolic statements are used to create a humorous effect, enhancing interpersonal connections.

c. **Social Dynamics**: Hyperbole often reflects social status and power dynamics, as speakers use exaggerated language to assert their identity and relationship with others.

b. **Contextual Variability**: The use of hyperbole varies across different contexts, with informal settings allowing for more fluid and expressive language. This variability highlights the adaptability of hyperbole in everyday communication.

Generally, the findings denote that hyperbole is a versatile linguistic tool in the Kurdish language, serving both expressive and social functions within the community. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of how hyperbolic language reflects cultural values and social relationships among Kurdish speakers in Kirkuk.

5.   Conclusion

This study explores the rich and nuanced area of hyperbole everyday discourse among the Kurdish population in Kirkuk. The findings, based on empirical data collected from speakers in the region, highlight the multifaceted nature of hyperbole as a rhetorical device. It is clear that hyperbole is more prevalent in informal conversations than in informal communication settings. The analysis shows that hyperbolic expressions are commonly used in daily interactions, allowing speakers to convey emotions, experiences, and social nuances effectively. Notably, lexical and syntactic features of hyperbole are not only about individual expressions but also reflect broader syntactic and discursive processes within the community. Patterns of repetition and collective narratives suggest that understanding hyperbole requires examining these expressions in their social and communicative contexts.

Additionally, this study underscores how hyperbole contributes to humor, social bonding, and the reinforcement of cultural values among community members. By adopting a sociolinguistic approach, the research provides insights into the contextual and pragmatic aspects of language use, moving beyond traditional focuses on formal linguistic characteristics. Furthermore, examining hyperbole in communicative contexts has revealed expression and interpersonal activity in these regions. In addition to its role in reinforcing language, studies have shown how exaggeration contributes to humour, entertainment, and social bonds among community members.

In the end, this study contributes to the broader academic discourse on language, identity, and culture by illustrating how hyperbole serves as a vital tool for expression and communication in Kurdish society. It also opens avenues for future research on the use of hyperbole in various cultural contexts.

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