A pragmatic study of hyperbole in selected English and Arabic children's folktales

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دراسة براجماتية للمبالغة في حكايات شعبية مختارة للأطفال باللغتين الإنجليزية والعربية

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Abstract

Hyperbole is one of the most important figurative devices that are used in most languages. It can be found in literary works whether they are spoken or written. Its main purpose is to exaggerate point of views, emotion, feelings, attitudes and thoughts by the author or even the speakers, since it can be found in everyday language of various speech communities. This study conducts a pragmatic study of hyperbole in selected English and Arabic children's folktales ("The Story of the Three Bears as English Folktale by Robert Southey, and "The Man who never Laughed" as Arabic Folktale by Charles John Tibbitts). Also, the study aims to show the definitions, uses, ways in which hyperbole is used as well as to search what are the purposes behind using this device. The study analyzes the occurrences of hyperbole within the selected data which is two folktales in two different languages, English and Arabic in light of Kreidler's Speects Acts (1998). Keywords: Hyperbole, Metaphor, Exaggeration, Attributing, Pragmatics, Folktales Contrastive.

الملخص

يُعدّ "التضخيم (Hyperbole) "أحد أهم الأساليب البلاغية المستخدمة في معظم اللغات، ويظهر في الأعمال الأدبية سواء كانت منطوقة أو مكتوبة. والغرض الرئيسي منه هو المبالغة في التعبير عن وجهات النظر، والعواطف، والمشاعر، والمواقف، والأفكار من قِبل المؤلف أو حتى المتحدثين، حيث يمكن ملاحظة هذا الأسلوب في اللغة اليومية لمختلف المجتمعات اللغوية. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقديم دراسة براغماتية حول التضخيم في حكايات الأطفال المختارة باللغتين الإنجليزية والعربية (قصة الدببة الثلاثة" كحكاية إنجليزية لروبرت ساوذي، و"الرجل الذي لم يضحك أبدًا" كحكاية عربية لجون تيبيتس). كما تهدف الدراسة إلى توضيح تعريفات التضخيم وأغراضه وطرق استخدامه، وكذلك البحث في الأهداف الكامنة وراء استخدام هذا الأسلوب. وتُحلّل الدراسة وجود التضخيم في البيانات المختارة، وهي حكايتان شعبيتان بلغتين مختلفتين، الإنجليزية والعربية، في ضوء نظرية أفعال الكلام لكريدلر .(1998) الكلمات المفتاحية: التضخيم، الاستعارة، المبالغة، الإسناد، المقارنة، علم التداولية، الحكايات الشعبية

1. Introduction: Hyperbole is one of the primary forms of figurative language, when the speaker uses words that have entirely distinct meanings. It has been linked to metaphor and irony. It is an important aspect of common language in almost every speech community. Exaggeration is the primary instrument by which we may describe hyperbole since it is used to overestimate or exaggerate. Whether the messages are written or spoken in a formal setting, hyperbole is utilized to express things and ideas (Burgers, Brugman, Lavalette, & Steen, 2016). Through certain tools and strategies, hyperbole may be utilized to assist persuasive speeches. It can also be found in political speeches, the media, ads, poetic language, and other slogans, such as environmental ones. It is used in sagas to describe the valiant actions of mythical kings and warriors, and in love romances to express the lover's deep adoration and devotion for his beloved. It has been in use for many years and dates back to Aristotle; handbooks from antique Greece made reference to it. Hyperbole is really used on a regular basis by everybody, even peasants and the uninformed, according to the Roman Rhetorician Quintilian. (Al-Hashimi, 1964)

2. Problem of the Study: Hyperbole is used to convey concepts and ideas, whether in written or spoken forms in formal contexts. Hyperbole may be used to support persuasive presentations with specific techniques and instruments. Political speeches, the media, advertisements, lyrical language, and other slogans, such environmental ones, can also contain it. However, it is used in literal ways in Literature. So, the concern of this study is a pragmatic study of hyperbole in selected English and Arabic children's folktales. In light of Kreidler's Speects Acts (1998), the study examines instances of hyperbole in the chosen data, which consists of two folktales in Arabic and English.

3. Objectives of the Study: The main objective of this study is to investigate a pragmatic study of hyperbole in selected English and Arabic children's folktales.

4. Significance of the Study: One of the main types of figurative language is hyperbole, which occurs when a speaker employs words with completely different meanings. Irony and metaphor have been associated with it. In practically every speech community, it is a crucial component of the common language. Since exaggeration is used to overstate or exaggerate, it is the main tool by which we may characterize hyperbole. Hyperbole is used to convey thoughts and objects, whether in written or spoken forms in formal contexts. (Ferré, 2014)

One of the reasons for attributing exaggeration to pragmatics is its close relationship to context. Hyperbole and other tropes, such as metaphor, are related to context because they aid the reader in accurately understanding the speech. The context comprises extralinguistic aspects (physical elements and location), participant-related elements (their social interaction, shared knowledge, psychological state, etc.), and other elements proposed by some linguists. As a result, it is extremely difficult to comprehend or identify any hyperbolic word without context. To understand inflated statements, one must have at least a fundamental understanding of the world and its customs. (Al-Dalawi, & Al-Mahdawi, 2019)

5. Hypotheses of the Study: a. Hyperbole is often used for specific different purposes one of them is expressing feelings which is so clear within folktales.

b. The strategies of Hyperbole share oath objects that can be analyzed into different types of hyperbole.

c. Hyperbole is usually attached with lying, deceiving and lying as well as unreal misinterpretations. Hyperboles are not taken in literal way.

6. Review of Literature:

6.1. Pragmatics: Every level of linguistics has its own analysis and research, with several researchers, schools, and ideas that have been established and dispersed around the world over the ages. By all means, this diversity demonstrates the depth and critical significance of linguistics to humanity, whose primary method of communication and participation in the social fabric is language. (Leech, 1983)The emphasis here is on meaning, the most contentious linguistic concept, in addition to syntax and phonology, the so-called physical components or levels of language. It is so difficult to approach and deal with meaning that one cannot get out of the tangle that exists between pragmatics and semantics. More precisely, pragmatics, which studies communicative or contextualized meaning, is emphasized here rather than semantics, which studies literal, decontextualized meaning. (Al-Dalawi, & Al-Mahdawi, 2019)Because it has been given the very broad connotation Morris intended, the term pragmatics is still used in book titles that cover subjects as diverse as the development of sign systems and the psychopathology of communication. Nonetheless, even in this setting, pragmatics has been referred to as a branch of language semiotics and not as being related to sign systems in general. On the Continent, the word is still most commonly used in this wide meaning, encompassing sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and other fields. (Allott, 2010)

6.2. Definitions of Hyperbole: When a speaker states anything other than X but does not mention X, it is hyperbole. Hyperbole is defined as an exaggerated statement or claim that is not intended to be taken literally. It can also be defined as language that describes something as better or worse than it actually is, or as a type of figurative language in which the speaker uses one meaning while implying another, meaning that the wording does not match the intended meaning. (Carston, & Wearing, 2011) According to Quintilian, a Roman rhetorician, exaggeration is simple to make and understand since both educated and uneducated people frequently employ it in ordinary conversation. Even though speakers have a good understanding of it, not enough research has been done on it. (Claridge, 2010)Hyperbole is defined as "an expression that is more extreme than justified given its ontological referent." In other words, they state that there are three key components that are very useful in defining hyperbole: the first is the switch from the prepositional meaning to what the speakers wish to produce, the second is exaggeration, and the third is the presence of a definite referent

within the speaking. (Ferré, 2014) So, a type of extreme exaggeration that either exaggerates or downplays an actual situation is called hyperbole.

6.3. Hyperbole and Pragmatics: Two criteria may be used to provide light on exaggeration from a pragmatic standpoint: its reliance on context and its indirectness. The reliance on context comes first, followed by the indirectness phenomena. (Alm-Arvius, 2003) First of all, pragmatics' strong connection to context is one of the arguments for attributing exaggeration to it. Because it helps the reader understand the speech correctly, hyperbole and other tropes like metaphor are tied to context. The context includes participant-related elements (their social interaction, shared knowledge, psychological state, etc.), extralinguistic elements (physical components and location), and additional elements that some linguists have suggested. Therefore, without context, it is very hard to understand or recognize any hyperbolic phrase. One needs at least a basic awareness of the world and its conventions in order to comprehend exaggerated claims. (Altikriti, 2016) Second, indirectness arises when the suggested meaning and the explicit meaning diverge. In pragmatics, intentional indirectness is a fascinating subject. There are several justifications for employing indirect meaning. On the other hand, being indirect is quite reasonable if it helps the speaker accomplish objectives or stay out of trouble. These objectives include: a) demonstrating the speaker's skillful use of language, b) influencing the listener's emotions, and c) avoiding the use of direct meaning when it is preferable to refrain from doing so, such as when discussing taboo subjects. Since figurative language suggests meaning that differs from the expression's precise meaning, it is an example of indirectness. (Al-Dalawi, & Al-Mahdawi, 2019)

6.4. The Concept of Folktales: Folktales are being passed down orally rather than in writing from one generation to the next. Animal characters are typically used in these brief, creative stories to impart traditional knowledge, assist the reader in understanding human nature, and discuss appropriate human conduct(Zipes, 2012). In every civilization, folktales are told to amuse, educate, and preserve the culture. They are regarded as important for both national and global culture. Folktales can be considered useful tools for fostering cross-cultural understanding and communication (Hynynen, 2015). Folktales may be broadly divided into four categories: fables, pourquoi tales, trickster stories, and fairy tales. Stories with a smart protagonist who causes trouble for the other characters and typically escapes punishment are known as trickster tales (Mello, 2001). Fables are tales that include animals with human traits and impart a lesson that is never explicitly expressed but must be understood by the audience. Pourquoi stories, which include the majority of myths and tall tales, describe how something came to be and why it is the way it is. Fairy stories have heroes and heroines, magic, good and bad characters, and problems that are settled by wisdom, bravery, and kindness. (M. Kodaman, 2014)

6.5. Kreidler's Speech Acts (1998) Kreidler (1998) divides speech acts into phatic, directive, expressive, verdictive, assertive, and performative categories. *I state that I voted for Aaronson in the last election, We announce that the majority of plastics are derived from soy beans, etc.* These are examples of illocutionary acts that are intended to express what the speaker knows or believes and whose primary purpose is to inform. Performatives are those that are employed to create the situation they are named for. If these speech actions are performed by suitable individuals, they are deemed legitimate. For instance, the phrase "I pronounce you husband and wife" is only legally binding if it is said by a Catholic priest or another authorized individual. Verdictives are speech acts used to rate, evaluate, appraise, and condone the actions of the addressee. For instance, I thank you for assisting me with my homework; I congratulate you on receiving the best score on the general language test; etc. Expressive utterances are ones that speakers use to evaluate their own actions. For instance, I admit that I did not do what I should have done. (Allott, 2010) The expressive acts reflect the speakers' feelings, whereas the verdictives focus on the actions of the addressees. Directive utterances, such as "I order you to bring the provision," "Do not hesitate to consult your problems," etc., are meant to compel the addressees to do something or stop from doing it. Commissive statements, such "Tomorrow I'm coming on time," "I'll be there," etc., bind the speaker to the action they indicate. Finally, phatic utterances, such "How are you," "Nice to meet you," and so on, are used by speakers to build rapport with members of the same community. (Altikriti, 2016)

6.6. Hyperbole between English and Arabic Languages: It is commonly recognized that the primary component of hyperbole in both Arabic and English is exaggeration; every exaggerated statement is a kind of hyperbole in some manner. Irony, metaphor, and other rhetorical strategies are used to convey hyperbole in both languages. In order to highlight a point, speakers frequently exaggerate some aspects of their speech. This is the difference between the intended and genuine meaning that may be observed in order to be able to exaggerate aspects that aid the addressee in understanding that this is not real or exaggerated; otherwise, the

hearer will not be able to recognize that the speech or sentence is hyperbolic, for example: (McCarthy & Carter, 2004)

1- It is extremely hot.

2. It is boiling.The statement would not be exaggerated at all if (1) were said when the temperature was just 26 degrees. Instead, it would serve as a clue to the addressee to observe the difference: it is hot, but the addresser may be the type of person who cannot handle the heat. As a result, the hearer can interpret it literally. However, phrase number two demonstrates that there is a significant discrepancy between the literal meaning and the intended meaning, which is "It is very hot." (Norasetkosol, Timyam, & Sriussadaporn, 2012)Ferrré (2014) states that the quality and quantity scales are the two types of scales that can be used to measure the feature of exaggeration. The quality scale measures the value of the object being discussed, so it can be either positive or negative, while the quantity scale measures the object's evaluation. (Stern, 2000)To exaggerate is to make anything more than it actually is or what is true, according to Aristotle (1976), who described exaggeration as an excessive way to make things more conspicuous. Exaggeration is typically used by language users to convey ideas that shouldn't be taken literally. Additionally, exaggeration is a feature of language use in daily life and is crucial for comprehending, describing, and assessing experiences. It is frequently used in poetry and other literary works.(Aristotle, 1976)

7. Methodology:

7. Model of the Study: The study's model is eclectic. Numerous authors hold varying opinions about how hyperbole may be expressed in both languages using various approaches, such as personification, similes, metaphors, attributing, and exaggeration. The study's model is built on Kreidler's (1998) framework for speech act kinds and uses an eclectic approach to analyze the selected data.

7.2. Data for Analysis: The data for analysis are two different folktales. This study conducts a pragmatic study of hyperbole in selected English and Arabic children's folktales ("The Story of the Three Bears as English Folktale by Robert Southey, and "The Man who never Laughed" as Arabic Folktale by Charles John Tibbitts).

7.3. The Procedures: Here are the procedures followed in the current study:

1. Surveying the related literature about both pragmatics and hyperbole.

2. Reading the two children folktales by skimming and scanning on the accessible sites. prior to collecting the data scripts—copying the scripts of the excerpts) just to paste (or type them again) for the sake of analysis, on a Microsoft Word Document, and then describing the data involved.

3. Designing an eclectic model for the analysis of the chosen data based on the framework adopted by Kreidler (1998) on speech act types.

4. Analyzing the data in question depending on the eclectic model by using qualitative analysis which is based on linguistic theories and analysis.

5. Drawing conclusions to test the validity of the hypotheses.

7.4. Analysis of The Story of the Three Bears, the original Goldilocks story:

7.4.1. Hints: There are several variations of the 19th-century British fairy tale Goldilocks and the Three Bears, often called The Story of the Three Bears. However, only three of these versions are particularly notable in today's literary culture. The well-known story "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" was originally recorded about 200 years ago. The story's plot has evolved throughout the years to become the one we know today. The three bears—the Great Big Bear, the Middle-sized Bear, and the Little Wee Bear—are the primary protagonists, while Goldilocks is the primary adversary.

7.4.2. The hyperbole: In order to highlight her choice, Goldilocks exaggerates the temperature variations in "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" by describing the porridge as being too hot, too cold, and just perfect.The three bears are on a stroll waiting for their porridge to cool when an ugly, elderly woman breaks into their house in the original version of the story. The elderly woman chooses to sleep in one of their beds, eat their porridge, and sit in their chairs. She wakes up, jumps out the window, and the three bears never see her again when they discover her in the small bear's bed when they go home. Goldilocks, a mischievous but adorable little girl with blond hair, replaces the ugly old woman in the second version of the story. The third version, which is also the most well-known because it was adapted for the youngest children, substitutes Papa Bear, Mama Bear, and Baby Bear for the original tale of the three male bears The fairy tale employs the literary "number three" to indicate that there are several instances or items that are repeated three times. There are three main characters, three pots, three chairs, and three beds in this fairy tale. When the three bears see that someone has eaten their porridge, sat in their chairs, or slept in their beds, they also utter three sentences. This draws attention to the

moment Goldilocks is found. Verdictives are speech acts used to rate, evaluate, appraise, and condone the actions of the addressee. For example, the "dialectical trio" refers to the three lines that the bears speak following their discoveries, where the first choice is incorrect, the second is insufficient or contradicts the first, and the third is just right, if not flawless. This idea is typically seen in writing when it is crucial to find a middle ground between two diametrically opposed possibilities in order to make a compelling tale. In addition to literature, the style has been employed in a wide range of other professions, including psychology, where the phrase "Golden Hair Principle"—which alludes to the Goldilocks story—is often used.

Blonde Hair: In reference to the blond hair, it is stated that Goldilocks had golden hair. Blond hair was a sign of freshness and purity in the past, but because Goldilocks was bad, it may represent her inexperience.

7.5. Analysis of The Man who never Laughed (Arabic Folktale) by Charles John Tibbitts:

7.5.1. Pragmatic aspects of Hyperbole:

7.5.1.1. Extract (1): There was a man, of those possessed of houses and riches, who had wealth and servants and slaves and other possessions; and he departed from the world to receive the mercy of God (whose name be exalted!), leaving a young son. And when the son grew up, he took to eating and drinking, and the hearing of instruments of music and songs, and was liberal and gave gifts, and expended the riches that his father had left to him until all the wealth had gone.

Analysis: Charles John Tibbitts exaggerates the young man luxuries in "The Man who never Laughed " by describing him as being so rich, liberal, and just wealthy. The guy left behind a young son after leaving the world to enjoy the compassion of God (whose name be glorified), who was among those who had houses, wealth, servants, slaves, and other goods. As he grew older, the son began to consume food and drink, listen to musical instruments and songs, be extravagant with gifts, and spend the cash his father had given him until it was all gone.

7.5.1.2. Extract (2):

Perhaps, also, God will restore to thee thine affluence by our means." The youth therefore replied, "I hear and obey." The sheykh then said to him, "I have a condition to impose upon thee." "And what is thy condition, O uncle?" asked the youth. He answered him, "O my son, it is that thou keep our secret with respect to the things that thou shalt see us do; and when thou seest us weep, that thou ask us not respecting the cause of our weeping." And the young man replied, "Well, O uncle."

Analysis: Exaggeration is as an excessive manner that makes things more prominent, so to exaggerate is to make something beyond the reality or truth. Users of language usually use exaggeration to express things that must not be taken literally. Here, God will use our ways to restore the wealth. Thus, the young person said, "I hear and obey." "I have a condition to impose upon thee," the sheykh replied to him. The boy enquired, "And what is thy condition, O uncle?" "O my son," he said, "is that you keep our secret about the things you see us doing; and when you see us crying, you ask us without considering the reason for our tears." "Well," the young man said, "O uncle." Exaggeration is a characteristic of everyday use of language, it is very effective in understanding, describing as well as it is very important in evaluating experience. It is widely used in literary works and poetic language in generalPerformatives are those that are employed to create the situation they are named for. If these speech actions are performed by suitable individuals, they are deemed legitimate. For instance, the phrase "I have a condition to impose upon thee" is only legally binding if it is said by the sheykh or a Catholic priest or another authorized individual.

8. Conclusion:

One of the most prominent figurative strategies present in the majority of languages is exaggeration. Both oral and written literary works contain it. Its main purpose is to accentuate the author's or even the speakers' ideas, feelings, sentiments, attitudes, and thoughts since it may be found in the common language of various speech groups. "The Man who Never Laughed" as an Arabic folktale by Charles John Tibbitts and "The Story of the Three Bears as an English folktale by Robert Southey" are two examples of children's folktales from both Arabic and English that are pragmatically analyzed for exaggeration. Furthermore, the research aims to illustrate the definitions, uses, and techniques of exaggeration and explore the reasons for its implementation. The study looks at examples of exaggeration in the selected material, which includes two Arabic and English folktales, in light of Kreidler's Speech Acts (1998).

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