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Hyperbole in Jordanian Spoken Arabic: A Lexico-Grammatical Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Hyperbole is a linguistic device used to exaggerate emotions, attitudes, beliefs, and ideas. This paper studies the lexico-grammatical forms of hyperbole in Jordanian-spoken Arabic. Specifically, it studies the forms and meaning of hyperbolic expressions in the everyday use of JSA. The study reports findings from a corpus of 1373 hyperbolic expressions collected from naturally occurring conversations between Jordanian friends and family members. This study uses content analysis methods to analyze its data. It also adopts an integrative approach, adapting lexico-grammatical categories from previous studies. The findings reveal that hyperbole in JSA manifests in various lexico-grammatical forms, which interact together to achieve the aim of hyperbole. In addition, single lexical words (nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs) and multi-words (phrases and clauses), thirteen prominent hyperbolic lexico-grammatical forms were identified in this study. They include idioms, similes, extreme terms, temporal, numerical, metaphorical, scale, negation, comparison, repetition, intensifiers, conditional, and proverbs. The findings reveal that idioms were the most frequently accruing prominent lexico-grammatical category, followed by similes and extreme terms. On the other hand, proverbs were the least frequently occurring form. All of these hyperbolic forms are used in JSA to emphasize feelings, attitudes, opinions, and ideas. The study also shows that context is essential in the interpretation of hyperbole in JSA. Finally, this study suggests some recommendations for future research.

Keywords: Hyperbole; Lexico-Grammatical Forms; Jordanian Spoken Arabic; Linguistics

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1. Introduction

Hyperbole (overstatement or exaggeration) is a linguistic device that offers significant insights into people's languages, cultures and societies. It provides substantial information about how people think, convey emotions, send messages, and socially interact. Claridge[1] argues that humans have the tendency to use hyperbolic language. Hyperbole is a trope that allows the hearer to make necessary changes to arrive at the correct interpretation of an utterance[2]. It is the most frequently used trope after metaphor[3]. Even though this powerful rhetorical device is universal, its lexico-grammatical forms and meanings vary across languages and cultures, which makes it a vibrant field for linguists.

There is a strong association between hyperbole, irony, and metaphor since all of them are figurative language by which the speaker says something and intends something else[4]. Hyperbole is an exaggeration used to communicate attitudes, emotions, beliefs, and opinions rather than cognition or behavior[5]. Hyperbole can also create strong emotional reactions and impressions[6]. According to previous research[1, 5, 7, 8], hyperbole can be realized by a variety of lexico-grammatical forms, such as words, phrases, clauses, idioms, numbers, times, negation, conditionals, and others. However, there may be differences between languages in the forms where hyperbole occurs.

Hyperbole, primarily used as an intentional exaggeration in different contexts[1, 9], is a common characteristic of Jordanian Spoken Arabic (henceforth JSA). JSA, a contextually rich dialect, has a good potential for investigating hyperbole from a lexico-grammatical viewpoint. Hyperbolic expressions in JSA reflect Jordanian culture's emotions, values, and humour. As such, they serve as a communicative tool that shapes cultural and interpersonal norms. Therefore, examining how Jordanian speakers employ hyperbole in their daily interactions will help linguists uncover the linguistic functions it serves.

Because of its pervasiveness and multi-functions in communication, hyperbole has attracted the attention of scholars across several fields[1, 7, 10]. Despite its ubiquity in JSA interactions, little scholarly attention has been paid to this linguistic phenomenon within Arabic linguistics. This paper addresses this gap by investigating the structures of hyperbole and their meaning in JSA. It aims to study the most frequently occurring hyperbolic lexico-grammatical forms

and their meaning in everyday JSA settings. Specifically, this study aims to answer the following questions: What are the most common lexico-grammatical forms of hyperbole in JSA? How do lexico-grammatical forms contribute to the meaning of hyperbolic expressions JSA?

This study is significant for linguists and intercultural communication specialists, who aim to understand how hyperbole is used and functions across languages and cultures. Furthermore, studying hyperbole in JSA enhances our understanding of the linguistic and cultural richness of this variety of Arabic. JSA was particularly chosen because it aligns with the interests of all the study's authors, who all come from a Jordanian background and are native speakers of JSA.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Definition and Characteristics of Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a universal aspect of language[1, 11]. It is broadly defined as a deliberate exaggeration that goes beyond the literal meaning to accomplish an emotional or rhetorical function or attract attention[1, 12]. The term hyperbole comes from the Greek word "hyperbole" (Lit. a throwing beyond)[13]. Abrams and Harpham[14] define hyperbole as "bold overstatement or the extravagant exaggeration of fact or possibility. It may be used for serious or ironic or comic effect." Hyperbole has an explicit meaning, which is the literal meaning, and an implied meaning, which is the figurative one.

Hyperbole is a type of trope. However, one feature that distinguishes it from other types of tropes is exaggeration[15]. According to Stern[4], there is a strong relationship between hyperbole, irony and metaphor in that they are all types of figurative language by which the speaker says something and means something else. Leech[10] and McCarthy and Carter[7] argue that hyperbole is a property of daily interaction and is a kind of extreme exaggeration that can show an actual situation as either larger or smaller than it actually is. One of the most comprehensive descriptions of hyperbole was introduced by Mora[5], in which she defines hyperbole as "a figure whereby the quantity or quality of an objective fact is, whether purposely or inadvertently, subjectively inflated or deflated in varying degrees but always to excess in an utterance which listeners do not normally interpret literally

or perceive as a lie."

Several characteristics of hyperbole can be concluded from the aforementioned definitions. Firstly, hyperbole is an overstatement or understatement of an element speakers wish to emphasize or downplay. For example, when someone says, "I am so hungry I can eat a horse", he/she is not describing the literal meaning but emphasizing the intensity of hunger. On the other hand, when someone is asked about the heavy rain they had the night before, he/she says, trying to downplay the amount of rain, "These are only drops of rain." Secondly, hyperbole can be either positive or negative, as in examples (a) and (b) below:

(a) He is the best friend I ever had.

(b) He is the worst friend I ever had.

In (a), the speaker exaggerates their negative feeling, whereas in (b), they exaggerate their positive feeling. Thirdly, hyperbole is not to be taken literally as it is a figure of speech concerned with the speaker's meaning. In hyperbole, the literal meaning and the speaker's meaning are distinct[1], and the more significant the difference between both meanings, the stronger the hyperbole and the emotions being conveyed[7]. Reference is also another feature of hyperbole. For example, the utterance "She has trillions" is regarded as hyperbolic based on the speaker's familiarity with the participant; however, it could also be taken literally if the speaker knows she has billions[15].

Additionally, hyperbole is not to be taken as a lie, for they are distinctively apart[16]. Hyperbole is a means of exaggeration, which cannot be taken literally, while a lie is a means of deception, which is often taken literally. Therefore, the hearer must distinguish between them and understand their distinct purposes[15]. Finally, hyperbole is context-dependent[1, 17]. It heavily depends on linguistic and socio-cultural factors. It also relies on the hearer's interpretation of a hyperbole in a given conversation. Norrick[18] identifies three main aspects of hyperbole: its affective dimension, its pragmatic nature, and its function as amplification, which means saying more than needed.

2.2. Forms of Hyperbole

According to Norrick[18], hyperbole is a pragma-linguistics category that can be realized in any lexico-grammatical form or word class. Hyperbole comes in various forms, including lexical, syntactic, and discursive strategies.

Lexical hyperboles, such as 'ten million times', 'impossible', or 'the best ever,' rely on quantitative exaggeration, while grammatical forms often include intensifiers, repetitions, and comparisons[19]. Discursively, hyperbole frequently co-occurs with other rhetorical devices, such as metaphors or irony, enhancing its stylistic and pragmatic impact. According to McCarthy and Carter[7], there are five basic lexical forms of hyperbole: Expressions of numbers, words that refer to significant amounts/quantities, adjectives referring to amounts and numbers, expressions of time, and expressions of size, degree and intensity. On the other hand, Claridge[1] classifies hyperbole into: (1) numerical hyperbole, (2) words of hyperbolic nature (nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs, (3) simile and metaphor, (4) comparative and superlative degrees (5) emphatic genitive (6) emphatic plural (7) whole sentences. Kreuz and Robert[3] divide hyperbole into explicit and implicit hyperbole. In their study of hyperbole in Iraqi Arabic, Saleh and Braime[8] report the following forms: expressions of number, words referring to large amounts/quantities, time expressions, nouns of hyperbolic nature, and emphatic plural. All words are prone to hyperbole. However, nouns and adjectives are the most frequently used[1, 7]. Spitzbardt[20] introduces the following categories for hyperbole: numerical hyperbole, words of hyperbolic nature (nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs), simile and metaphor, comparative and superlative degrees, emphatic genitive, emphatic plural, and whole sentences. Al-Dalawi and Al-Mahdawi[21] report the following forms in their study: Whole sentence (declarative and conditional), negation-exception, and clausal hyperbole.

2.3. Hyperbole in JSA

In Arabic-speaking cultures, hyperbole (*mubālagha*) is a prominent linguistic tool widely used to enhance emotions, humour, expression, and persuasion. Arabic has been characterized by exaggeration and overstatement[22]. In JSA, hyperbole is important in daily interactions, reflecting the community's sociocultural and emotional values. Jordanians are fond of hypebole[23]. Research points out that JSA hyperbole is usually used to express humour, affection, or admiration[24]. For instance, expressions like "الدنيا وما فيها بحبك قد" (I love you as much as the world and everything in it) show the exaggerative expressions of the language. Bani Melhem[23] argues that hyperbole serves affective and

relational functions that strengthen interpersonal relations and add humour to interactions. Moreover, Bani Melhem[23] reports that hyperbole in JSA most frequently appears in proverbs and idiomatic expressions, which are profoundly ingrained in social interactions, expressing cultural values and social experiences. Hijazin and Al-Khanji's[25] study of rhetorical expressions in JSA proverbial expressions underscores hyperbole as a frequently used figure of speech. He indicates that hyperbole and other rhetorical devices, such as metaphor and synecdoche, are commonly used in proverbs to reflect Jordanian society's cultural values and social norms[25]. Besides proverbial expressions, hyperbole appears in daily interactions, especially on social media networks. Migdadi et al.,[26] report the use of exaggeration in Jordanians' birth congratulation messages on Facebook. Despite its importance and prevalence, research on hyperbole in JSA is still limited. This study fills this gap by investigating the lexico-grammatical forms of hyperbolic functions of lexical words within Jordanian spoken discourse.

3. Methods

This study mainly adopts a qualitative approach, relying on natural data from ethnographic observations to explore the lexico-grammatical forms of hyperbole in JSA. It also relies on quantitative analysis to support the qualitative analysis. Using both methods helps obtain credible findings and also helps avoid the subjective aspect of the qualitative analysis[27]. The ethnographic approach studies individuals and communities in natural settings to understand their linguistic behaviour and social interactions[28]. It allows researchers to collect authentic real-time data.

3.1. Data Collection

The data were collected from the WhatsApp and Instagram accounts of (93) Jordanian students enrolled in two of the researchers' classes at Yarmouk University, Irbid, Jordan. The students come from six different Jordanian cities: Irbid (56), Amman (13), Mafraq (12), Zarqa (10), Salt (1), and Karak (1), making the sample relatively representative of speakers of JSA. Most students come from Irbid city because Yarmouk University is located in it. Having explained the study's purpose to the students and what hyperbole is, they were kindly asked to provide their teachers with several

hyperbolic expressions from conversations between them and their friends and family members. The students were asked to write their selected hyperboles on a separate sheet of paper and submit it to the teacher. The average number of expressions received from the students was (15.2). A total of (1415) hyperbolic expressions were obtained from the students' accounts. However, (42) expressions were excluded from the data because they were not hyperbolic. For example, the sentence "Yes! he earns 10,000 JDs a month in Dubai" could not be regarded as hyperbolic by the referees since this number might be true and reasonable. Therefore, the number of hyperbolic expressions subjected to data analysis was (1373). The data collected may be representative; however, it is far from being exclusive because hyperbole is very creative in JSA and many other languages. McCarthy and Carter[7] point out that the potential for linguistic creativity in hyperbole is unlimited. It should also be noted that ethical issues were carefully considered in this study. Every student was asked to sign an informed consent confirming their agreement to participate in the study. Besides, the students were assured that their identities and information would be kept confidential.

3.2. Data Analysis

This study adopts an integrative approach, adapting lexico-grammatical categories from previous studies, such as those by, Claridge[1] McCarthy and Carter[7] Mora[5]. This approach focuses on integrating different theories or perspectives by combining diverse elements to establish a cohesive understanding of a phenomenon. The adopted model comprises the lexico-grammatical forms of hyperbole, presented in **Figure 1** below. Content analysis was also employed in the data analysis of this research. Content analysis (CA) is a research methodology used to make sense of the (often unstructured) content of messages – be they texts, images, symbols or audio data[29]. All the authors participated in the data analysis, which was done collaboratively and simultaneously. It is worth noting that classifications of hyperbole were somewhat problematic, although appealing, because there is a significant overlap between categories. For example, there is an overlap between metaphor, simile, and metonymy[7] and between superlative and extreme terms. Moreover, lexical items, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, can be regarded as separate categories or in-

cluded in other categories like idioms, proverbs, and whole clauses. The referees did their best to locate overlapping expressions and classify each hyperbolic expression into one category.
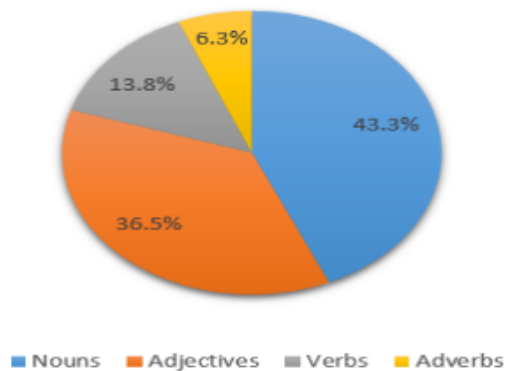
Hyperbolic Lexical Items

Figure 1. Hyperbolic lexical items.

4. Findings and Discussion

This section presents the findings of the data analysis. Specifically, it shows the lexico-grammatical categories of hyperbole, which were obtained from JSA naturally occurring conversations and discusses them respectively, from a semantic-pragmatic perspective, about the findings of Claridge's[1] and McCarthy and Carter's[7]. Claridge[1] argues that hyperbole is a complex cross-categorical issue at the semantics-pragmatics intersection. Illustrative examples selected randomly are given from the data to explain the hyperbolic proneness of lexico-grammatical items and their meanings. English translations are provided for each example.

4.1. Lexico-Grammatical Categories of Hyperbole in JSA

Our data shows that hyperbole in JSA manifests in a variety of lexico-grammatical forms. They are classified into three categories: single words (nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs), multi-words (phrases and clauses), and prominent forms (idioms, simile, extreme terms, temporal, numerical, metaphorical, scale, negation, comparison, repetition, intensifiers, conditionals, and proverbs). The single-word and multi-word hyperboles will be presented and discussed first,

followed by the prominent hyperbolic forms. As for the third category, every hyperbolic expression consists of a word, phrase, or clause. They are presented through a lexical item, phrase, or clause. Thus, it will be presented and discussed independently of the single-word and the multi-word categories and in more detail, although they were all presented in one table in section (3.2).

4.1.1. Single Word Hyperbole

The findings of this study show that single lexical words are most often used in the hyperbolic expressions in our data. Nouns and adjectives were the most frequently occurring lexical items in the hyperboles. This finding is consistent with Al-Dalawi and Al-Mahdawi[21], Claridge[1], Hassan[30], Mora[5], and Spitzbardt[20], who conclude that adjectives and nouns are the most frequent hyperbolic expressions. Contrary to the findings of these studies, verbs were identified in the formation of hyperbolic expressions in JSA, but not too many adverbs were found. The same finding was reported by Khalifa[31]. In this category, nouns were the most frequent lexical item (43.3%), followed by adjectives (36.5%), then followed by verbs (13.8%), and adverbs (6.3%). **Figure 1** presents the hyperbolic lexical items identified in the data.

We will begin with nouns, the most frequent single-word hyperbole. The presence of nouns in our data is overwhelming. It is the most recurrent item in this category. It includes primarily metaphors and quantitative terms that express description, such as (e.g., هامور"mogul", أسطورة "legend", سفاح "butcher"); intensity (e.g., دمار "destruction", صدمه "shock"); size (e.g., خيال "incredible", جمل "camel", حيط "wall", ملعب "playground"); amount (e.g., فلس "penny", حبه "piece); container (e.g., نقطه "drop", حمل "load of"; measurement (e.g., حاويه "container", شوال "sack", كيلوغرام "kilogram"; متر "meter", شبر "handspan", numerical (e.g., الف "a thousand", مليون "a million", ميه "a hundred); Temporal (e.g., دقيقه "a minute", سنه "a year", دهر "era"). Even though less frequent than single nouns, plural nouns also appeared in the data, such as جبال "mountains", شوالات "sacks", أساطير "legends", ملايين "millions", شهور "months", أطنان "tons", etc. Adjectives come in the second place in this category. They include words that attributive and predicative adjectives: خرافي "mythical", أسطوري "legendary", رهيب "awesome"; comparative adjectives: اكبر "bigger", اغبى "more stupid", أسرع "faster"; and superlative adjective: حلى "most beautiful", ازكى اكله "most

delicious", **اعقد** "most complicated". The comparative and superlative classification and meaning depend on the context in which they are used. Positive and negative adjectives appear in our data, such as **غبي** "stupid" and **غني** "rich", respectively. Verbs in JSA also carry hyperbolic meanings, such as **يوكل** "eat", **يشرب** "drink", **غرق** "drown", **يلعب** "play", **جرح** "cut", **بتكسر** "break", **انجن** "went crazy", **مت** "died", **يوكل** "eat", **انفجر** "explode". Finally, adverbs were also found in JSA hyperbolic expressions, but not frequently only (6.3%) of the included adverbs. Some of the following adverbs that were found are the following: **جدا** "extremely", **كتير** and **كثير** "a lot", **بالتأكيد** "certainly", **عالاخر** "totally". They are all intensifying adverbs, similar to those reported by Omar and Khalaf[22].

4.1.2. Multi-Words

Hyperbole in JSA was also expressed using multi-words, such as phrases and clauses. Their frequencies, percentages, and some examples are given in **Figure 2** below.
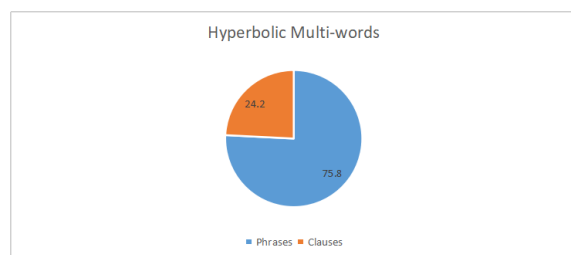

Figure 2. Hyperbolic multi-words.

Hyperbolic phrases include nouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs, and prepositional phrases[1]. Following are some examples of the hyperbolic phrases found in our data: **الف مره** "a thousand times", **دمار شامل** "total destruction", **فظيع جدا** "very horrible", **عشرين ساعة ضحك** "twenty hours of laughter", **نص عمره** "half of his life", **فوق الستين مره** "more than sixty times", **ونص كلها خطوه** "only a step and a half", **لزيز كتير** "very delicious", **احلى بنت** "most beautiful girl", **مباراة أغرب** "strangest game". Concerning clauses, this category includes complete meaningful sentences, such as **لو بتطلع براسك شجره ماورجيتك اياهم** "Even if a tree grows in your head, I will not show them to you.", **العمر كله مابتمل** "You will never get bored if you talk to him the **لو بتحكي معه** whole life", and **البنت ضرة أمها** "The girl is her mother's rival". This category also includes conditional clauses having only the condition clause, as in **لـ قمبتو** "If you die", **من مغرب حتى تطلع الشمس** "If the sun rises in the west", and

حتى تنطبق السما عالارض "Until the sky collapses on earth".

4.1.3. Prominent Lexico-Grammatical Forms of Hyperbole

This section includes the prominent forms of lexico-grammatical categories found in the data. They include 13 forms of hyperboles shown in **Figure 3**. They will be discussed individually with illustrative examples in the following sections.
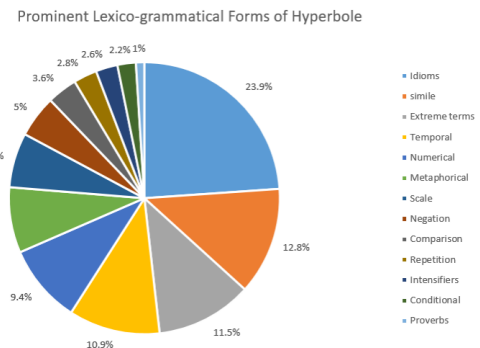

Figure 3. Prominent lexico-grammatical forms of hyperbole.

1. Idioms

An idiom is "a term used in grammar and lexicology to refer to a sequence of words which is semantically and often syntactically restricted so that they function as a single unit"[32]. Idioms are cultural expressions sometimes used hyperbolically to exaggerate a statement or express a strong emotion or meaning. These idioms are not intended to be taken literally. Some of them are culture-specific[22]. This category is the most frequent in our data, accounting for (23.9%) of the whole data. **Table 1** below presents examples (1–3) that illustrate how idioms convey hyperbole in JSA.

The above-mentioned hyperbolic idioms reflect common everyday experiences using figurative images. In example 1, in which the literal meaning is excluded since there is no actual eardrum piercing, the idea that the speaker's loud voice can "pierce" the "eardrum" of the hearer is an exaggeration meant to stress the intensity of the annoyance caused by the harsh sound of the speaker. In example 2, the hyperbolic phrase "carved through rocks" highlights the intensity of effort, struggle, and perseverance required for success. It describes the arduous task of overcoming the challenges of life. This hyperbolic expression also expresses the speaker's respect and admiration for the father for enduring all the hardships to attain his current status. The phrase "tore myself apart" in example 3 cannot be taken literally. The

Table 1. Examples of Idioms.

No.	Example	Translation
1	صوتو خزق طبلة اذني.	"His voice pierced my eardrum."
2	بابا حفر بالصخر لوصل لهون.	"My father carved through rocks to get to this position."
3	قطعت حالي وانا اشرحلهم فيها.	"I tore myself apart explaining it to them."

speaker here uses this hyperbolic expression to exaggerate the effort, be it physical or emotional, they exerted in explaining the issue and making it clear. It implicitly suggests that the speaker pushed the envelope, trying to communicate successfully, making others better understand the explained idea.

2. Similes

The second most frequent category in our data is simile, accounting for (12.8%) of the hyperbolic expressions in our data. This type of hyperbole is qualitative[1]. A simile is a figure of speech used to draw a comparison between two things having common characteristics, using words such as "like" or "as"[33]. Using a simile, one may compare something to an entity, such as a person, animal, or concept, that magnifies its properties beyond the normal situation. Simile hyperbolic expressions exaggerate personal traits, highlight emotions and attitudes, and magnify situations. Consider examples (4–6) in **Table 2**.

In (4), comparing a person to an imp does not stand unless its purpose is to exaggerate certain traits of the person described. This exaggeration implies that the appearance or actions of the individual are so striking that he can be compared to an imp. This hyperbolic expression also involves a humorous or playful effect. In Jordanian culture, a monkey represents agility, ugliness, and playfulness, depending on the context. Example (5) is also a comparison depicting a female as a camera that can capture all the little details. In real life, this is impossible because no human can notice and record all the specific details like a camera does. Therefore, this hyperbole is an overstatement of the female's strong observational ability, emphasizing her exceptional skill. In example (6), the person's heart is metaphorically likened to a pomegranate. The statement amplifies the emotional profoundness and kindness of the person's heart because pomegranates in Jordanian culture are associated with richness, beauty, vitality, and health. It suggests that the female's heart is full of kindness, love, and warmth.

3. Extreme Terms

They are highly exaggerated terms that signal all-inclusive claims. They are also called all-encompassing terms[1]. They usually express potent emotions and attitudes and emphasize ideas and concepts; they involve terms such as "everyone, everybody, no one, nobody, never, forever, not even one, the whole world, etc." This category constitutes (11.5%) of the data. **Table 3** presents some of these examples.

The three expressions (7–9) are all hyperbolic, employing exaggeration to emphasize the described emotions or situations. In example (7), the expression "the whole world" exaggerates the speaker's feeling that everyone in this world is against them. This is an exaggeration that stresses their sense of aggravation, isolation or injustice. In example (8), the sentence "I could never find anything to wear" overstates the speaker's frustration, which implies that their attempt to search for something to wear was never-ending, impeding them from being on time. The statement in (9) takes beauty to a high extreme, comparing paradise, which is used as an exaggeration to call attention to how beautiful the place looks, describing it as a place far beyond beauty. In all three examples, the extreme hyperboles highlight the speaker's emotions, attitudes, or perceptions, making their statements more intense than they would be if used in their literal sense.

4. Temporal

It is a form of exaggeration that amplifies the duration of time used to express annoyance, discomfort, excitement, and impatience. It is a quantitative type of hyperbole[1]. In our data, 149 (10.9%) hyperbolic temporal expressions were identified. This hyperbole uses times-related lexical terms, such as يوم"hour", ساعه, "second", دقيقه "minute", ثانيه "day", سنه "year", عقد "century", and دهر "era", and among others. Consider the following three examples shown in **Table 4**:

In examples (10–12), the speakers express their frustration by exaggerating the time expressions used in their statements. In reality, the temporal expressions "100 hundred years, century, and lifetime" used do not align with the

Table 2. Examples of Similes.

No.	Example	Translation
4	مبارح شفته ما في شي مثل القرد.	"I saw him yesterday. Nothing wrong with him; like an imp."
5	كأنها كاميرا بتلقط كل التفاصيل.	"She is like a camera that captures every detail."
6	قلبها زى الرمانة.	"Her heart is like a pomegranate."

Table 3. Examples of Extreme Terms.

No.	Example	Translation
7	العالم كله واقف معها ضدي.	"The whole world is standing with her against me."
8	اتأخرت لأني ما لقيت شي البسه ابدا.	"I was late because I could never find anything to wear."
9	المكان هون احلى من الجنه .	"The place here is more beautiful than paradise."

described situation. The speaker in (10) expresses their frustration for not eating *Mansaf*, one the most popular meal in Jordan, for a long time and simultaneously shows their yearning for that dish. Of course, the expression "one hundred years", usually beyond most people's lifespan, intensifies the idea that *Mansaf* has not been cooked for a very long time, making it look like a significant event in the speaker's life. In (11), the annoyance and frustration of the speaker about traffic is evident and exaggerated by the use of the time expression "century", which expresses a very long time for people to get somewhere. However, the actual time is much shorter. It is an extreme exaggeration of how long the journey home takes. Example (12) also uses a hyperbolic expression, "lifetime", to exaggerate a state of affairs. In reality, no task will take a whole life to be done; however, the expression is used hyperbolically to emphasize how difficult and time-consuming understanding one idea is when, in fact, it does not require this amount of time in real life. That is why hyperbolic expressions cannot be taken literally. This hyperbole here is intended to make the difficulty of understanding an idea appear far more complex than it is.

5. Numerical

This category uses numbers to exaggerate magnitude, emphasize size, quantity or idea, and express strong emotions and feelings. It occupies the fourth place in the table and accounts for (9.4%) of the data. This category, it is very creative[34] and brings about extremely rich hyperboles[7]. Numerical hyperbole in JSA utilizes numbers, such as ميه "hundred", ألف "thousand", مليون "million", ألف مليون "one thousand million/ billion". It also uses percentages like بالميه "one hundred per cent", مليون بالميه ميه "one million per cent", and others. Numerical hyperbolic expressions

also come in plural forms, as in بلايين "billions" ملايين "millions", الالاف "thousands", and مئات "hundreds". This category often appears in a single-word category. This finding is in line with the findings of[1, 7, 34]. In our data, the most prominent terms in this category were hundred, thousand, and million. **Table 5** includes some examples representing this category.

Examples (13–15) all use hyperbole to communicate strong emotions or bring to light a point through intentional exaggeration. These statements should not be taken as a lie by the listener. In (13), the assertion of asking someone "a thousand times" to do something is a clear exaggeration used to emphasize the speaker's frustration although the true number of times is far less. Likewise, the claim about receiving "more than a million messages" in a short period of time in (14) exaggerates the volume of interaction intended to stress the speaker's feeling of being bombarded by the messages. The number of messages received is indeed unbelievable. Lastly, the statement that someone read a book 50 times, as in (15), amplifies the speaker's admiration of the book. This suggests that the book was extremely interesting that the speaker metaphorically had to keep revisiting it. These hyperboles create a serious effect by accentuating the quantity, frequency, or intensity of the situations, making them more intense, more rhetorical, and emotionally charged.

6. Metaphorical

This type of hyperbole uses metaphorical language to overstate meaning, intensify the description of a person, object, or idea, and add emotional weight to the talk. Metaphor is "a process in which one SEMANTIC FIELD of reference is carried over, or transferred, to another"[33]. Simply put, metaphorical hyperbole is an exaggeration through direct

Table 4. Examples of Temporal Hyperbole.

No.	Example	Translation
10	من<u>100</u> سنة امي مش طابخه <u>منسف</u>.	"My mother has not cooked Mansaf in <u>100 years</u>."
11	مشوار البيت صار بده <u>قرن</u> من الزحمة.	"To get home, you need a <u>century</u> because of the traffic."
12	الدرس هذا صعب، بدك <u>عمر كامل</u> عشان تفهم فكرة وحده.	"This lesson is so complex; It takes <u>you a lifetime</u> to understand one single idea."

Table 5. Examples of Numerical Hyperbole.

No.	Example	Translation
13	<u>ألف</u> مرة حكيتلك تطفي الضو.	"I have told you <u>a thousand times</u> to turn the light off."
14	أجاني اليوم مسجات <u>فوق المليون</u>.	"I received more than <u>a million messages</u> today."
15	الكتاب حلو لدرجة قرأتو <u>خمسين</u> مرة.	"The book is very interesting that I read it <u>50 times</u>."

comparisons that state one thing is another. This category represents (7.8%) of the data. Consider the following examples of metaphorical hyperbole in **Table 6**:

Example (16) is a strong hyperbolic metaphor that represents and emphasizes the strength, steadfastness, greatness, and resilience associated with mountains. The speaker here attributes these features to the person being addressed, implying that they are standing steadily in the face of challenges and hard times. The speaker also highlights the person's physical and emotional strength, saying that nothing can bother them, even the winds. The exaggeration expresses the speaker's admiration and respect for the person. The metaphor "drowning in housework" in (17) relates "drowning" with "housework" to exaggerate the intensity of the speaker's negative emotions and feelings. This hyperbolic metaphor expresses both emotional and physical overwhelming and exhaustion caused by the enormous amount of housework. In (18), the person's way of speaking is expressed by the metaphor "his tongue is electricity" to stress speed and energy because electricity signals something extremely energetic and fast. No one's tongue can be made of electricity, but metaphorically, this expression can exaggerate the fast pace at which the person speaks, which may make it difficult for the listener to follow up. Therefore, the speaker may be conveying his displeasure with the person's way of talking. Overall, metaphorical hyperbole is a very expressive way of delivering intentions, emotions, and attitudes.

7. Scale

This type of hyperbole was found in (6.5%) of our data. They are words or phrases that exaggerate size, amount, container, measurement, and distance. They are everyday quantitative hyperbole used to create exaggeration about some state of affairs. These sub-categories were reported by [1, 5, 7, 22]. According to McCarthy and Carter [7], scale or quantity words are very productive in making hyperbole. The following examples use these ideas to convey an emotional or rhetorical effect. Examples (19–23) in **Table 7** below represent this category.

Examples (19–23) all use hyperbolic expressions by employing different scale types, including size, amount, container, measurement, and distance. The exaggeration of these elements is intended to amplify their original meaning to create a hyperbolic impact. For instance, example (19) exaggerates the house's size by comparing its size to the size of a dunam, a landscape unit in Jordan equaling 1000 square meters. Using such a term in this kind of comparison is nothing but an overstatement, indicating that the house is so huge, which may express astonishment and surprise at the size of the property. Example (20) is an exaggeration using an amount. The speaker in this expression emphasises their shortage of money, stating that they cannot even afford a minimal amount of money (10 piasters) to buy a very cheap sandwich. This hyperbole overstates the challenging financial status of the speaker, implying that they are flat broke and can use a little help. In (21), the speaker uses the phrase شوالات مصاري "big sacks of money", a kind of container, to indicate the wealth of the person's father. It implies the father has so much money that he could fill large sacks. However, despite the father's wealth, the son is in debt, exaggerating the scale of the father's affluence to contrast with the son's ability to pay his dues to people. Exaggerating measurement is also used by Jordanians to express unease and frustration. The speaker in (22) uses the measurement phrase "a ton" hyperbolically to overstate the enormous

Table 6. Examples of Metaphorical Hyperbole.

No.	Example	Translation
16	نت جِبِل، محدش يهزك.	"You are a mountain. Nobody can shake you."
17	صارلي يومين غرقانه بشغل البيت.	"I have been drowning in housework for two days."
18	ما بفهم عليه بحكي بسرعه ولسانه كهربا .	"I cannot understand him. He speaks fast, and his tongue is electricity."

Table 7. Examples of Scale.

No.	Example	Translation
19	ماشا الله عندهم بيت بجي دونم.	"Praise God! They have a house the size of a dunam."
20	والله مامعي عشر قروش اشتري سندويشه.	"I swear to God! I do not even have 10 piasters to buy a sandwich."
21	ابوه عنده شوالات مصاري وهو مديون للناس .	"His father has big sacks of money, yet he cannot pay his dues to people."
22	عندي طن واجبات لازم اسلمها يوم الاحد.	"I have a ton load of assignments that I have to submit on Sunday."
23	المسافه للمكتبه بتيجي من هون لنيويورك.	"The distance to the library is as far as New York."

amount of assignments. In real life, it is impossible to have a ton of assignments; this exaggeration communicates the speaker's sense of responsibility and the monumental task required. The last example in this category (23) exaggerates the distance between the speaker's location and the library. Comparing the distance to that of New York expresses how long and tiresome the trip feels, highlighting the physical or mental readiness of the speaker to go to the library. In the examples above, hyperbole is accomplished by employing an exaggerated scale, bypassing the actual situation.

8. Negation

Negation is a grammatical and semantic construction that typically conveys the contradiction of the meaning of some or all of a sentence [32]. In English, it is expressed by the presence of the negative particle (not) using prefixes such as un-, non, or words such as never. In Arabic, it is described by the use of particles, such as ما, لا, and لم (all meaning not). Negation can be used to exaggerate feelings and attitudes, expressing hyperbolic meaning. It accounts for (5%) of the data. Consider the following examples in **Table 8**:

Negation in examples (24–26) expresses hyperbole by intensifying the speaker's emotions and attitude about a particular state of affairs and further amplifying the situation's magnitude. For example, in (24), the negation indicated by "never" shows the remarkable characteristics of the person spoken about, implying that the person's kindness is unique and incomparable. It is an exaggerated expression of admiration, respect, and uniqueness. In (25), the negation expressed in "not normal" exaggerates the impact of the act or event. It indicates an extraordinary act that goes against normal expectations, which dramatically impacts the expression uttered.

The negation in example (26) conveys the speaker's ultimate objection, highlighting their extreme emotions of frustration or anger. The speaker's hyperbolic refusal is further intensified by the phrase "do not want to hear", expressing a total rejection.

9. Comparison

This hyperbolic category expresses exaggerated comparison or superiority. It holds (3.6%) of the total data. This finding is consistent with the finding of [1], in which this category occupies (3.4%) of her data. It has two types: comparative (35%) and superiority (65%). A similar conclusion was revealed by Al-Dalawi and Al-Mahdawi [21]. The frequent use of hyperbolic comparison shows how Jordanians are linguistically creative and expressive in their communication. This hyperbole combines exaggeration and comparison to emphasize the intensity of the matter. It mainly uses adjectives in their comparative and superlative forms to exaggerate the comparison at hand. They often involve similes and metaphors, which were discussed earlier. The following examples (27–29) in **Table 9** explain this category.

The claim in (27) expresses hyperbole through comparative exaggeration. By mentioning Prophet Noah, who is believed to have lived for 9 centuries and a half, the statement impossibly exaggerates the life span of the person referred to far beyond everyday reality because no human being's life today can extend to this age. This particular type of exaggerated comparison can add emphasis and humour to the situation under discussion. Similarly, example (28) reveals hyperbolic emotions by indescribably emphasizing the joy of graduation using superlative comparison. The use of the superlative adjective "sweetest" (أحلى) highlights the

Table 8. Examples of Negation.

No.	Example	Translation
24	بصراحة ما شفت لطف مثل هيك .	"Frankly, I've never seen such kindness."
25	اللي صار معنا مش طبيعي اكيد.	"What happened with us is not normal indeed."
26	ما بدي اسمع ولا كلمه ولا عذر صحيح او كذب .	"I do not want to hear a word or an excuse, whether true or false."

Table 9. Examples of Comparison.

No.	Example	Translation
27	عمره طول من عمر سيدنا نوح.	"His life is longer than the life of our Prophet Noah."
28	أحلى فرحه فرحة التخرج.	"The sweetest joy is that of graduation."
29	فعلا انه كان اجمل إحساس.	"Indeed, it was the best feeling."

profound emotional importance associated with academic accomplishments in Jordanian culture. The superlative comparison in this example implies that no other joy can surpass the pleasure experienced during graduation. It conveys the speaker's pride and recognition of their academic achievement as a lifetime event. Example (29) also employs the superlative adjective "best" (أجمل) to exaggerate the depth of an emotional experience. It intensifies the speaker's satisfaction and deep appreciation of the emotional feeling they are experiencing, and it is a feeling like no other. It is significant to note that positive and negative comparisons were identified in the data, such as "He is the best teacher in our department" and "It was the worst experience".

10. Repetition

Repetition is another strategy used in JSA to exaggerate feelings or ideas. For Claridge[1], p. 67, repetition is "the re-occurrence of the same item or phrase in strict sequence without interruption by other material". It was found in (2.8%) of the overall data. Speakers of Jordanian Arabic tend to deliberately repeat certain words and phrases to strongly express their attitudes and emotions and enhance their intentions when using language. It is also used to intensify the importance and severity of the conveyed message. Hyperbolic repetition is regarded as a stylistic device that is not meant to be taken literally and has to be deliberate to count as hyperbolic[1]. The more repeated material, the more intense and emotional the statement is[34]. Examples of repetition are shown in **Table 10** below.

In Example (30), the repetition of the word كثير "many" underscores a significant quantity of encounters with such "types" of people. This implies that the speaker has been overwhelmed by such types or occurrences. The overly repetition exaggerates the frequency to emphasize frustration and familiarity with these encounters. Similarly, in (31), the repetition of the phrase كل مره "every time" exaggerates the frequent occurrence of the event. It implies that the situation is continuous and repetitive, leading to a sense of frustration. This repetition also highlights the speaker's disbelief and dissatisfaction, intensifying the emotional effect. In (32), by repeating the adverb "ابدا" (never), the speaker strengthens the denial, which means that the event or action never occurred at any time. The hyperbolic nature lies in the insistence, which exceeds what is necessary to communicate the point, emphasizing the speaker's determination or frustration. Not only does the repeated word ابدا "never" negate the action, but it also amplifies the speaker's confidence in the statement, leaving no room for ambiguity. Consider examples (33–35) in **Table 11**.

11. Intensifiers

According to Crystal[32], an intensifier is a term used in grammar to refer to words, a class of adverbs, which affect the meaning of another in the sentence. As hyperbolic expressions, they are words or phrases that emphasize intensity. They include adverbs, such as very, terribly, definitely, hardly, incredibly, entirely, unbelievably, and so on. In our data, 36 intensifiers were identified, accounting for (2.6%). Our intensifiers included only adjectives and nouns.

Examples (33–35) all include hyperbolic intensifiers. They employ exaggerated terms to reveal strong emotions or to show extreme qualities. For example, the expression in (33) uses the term "خرافي" (mythical) as a hyperbolic intensifier to convey intense satisfaction with the food offered. It communicates that food is extraordinary by comparing it with something mythical. In (34), to exaggerate the teacher's

Table 10. Examples of Repetition.

No.	Example	Translation
30	شفت من هالاشكال <u>كتير كتير كتير.</u>	"I have seen <u>many, many, many</u> of such types."
31	<u>كل مره كل مره</u> ياهديل مش معقول اشي بنهر.	"<u>Every time, every time</u>, Hadeel. I cannot believe it; It is really annoying."
32	ماحكيت معها <u>ابدا ابدا ابدا.</u>	"I did not speak to her, <u>never, ever, ever</u>."

Table 11. Examples of Intensifiers.

No.	Example	Translation
33	كلكو كان <u>خرافي</u> ماعرفت اشبع.	"Your food was <u>mythical</u>. I could not get enough."
34	هذا الدكتور فعلا <u>رهيب</u> محاضرته مابتنمل.	"This professor is indeed <u>fabulous</u>; His lecture is never boring."
35	الحفله رح تكون <u>اسطوريه</u> وبشارطك.	"The party will be <u>legendary</u>. I bet you."

traits as extraordinary, the speaker employs the term رهيب "fabulous", associating it with the term فعلا "indeed" to add more emphasis. The phrase مابتنمل "never boring" also intensifies the teacher's outstanding quality in delivering his classes. The exaggeration here conveys the speaker's praise for the teacher's skills. The speaker in (35) emphasizes their prediction about how great the party will be by using the hyperbolic intensifier اسطوريه "legendary". By comparing the party to something legendary, the speaker is trying to intensify the fun and excitement of the upcoming event, daring others or convincing them to attend.

Another type of intensifier identified in our data is what is referred to by[22] (769) as "cognate accusative". It is a term that refers to a grammatical structure where a verb takes an object derived from the same root as the verb itself[35], for example, عظامي بتطقطق تقطق من البرد "My bones are cracking and creaking from the cold weather", and الدنيا بتكب كب "It is pouring rain in heavily". This repetition takes the exaggerated statement to another level of exaggeration to reflect emotions, feelings, and attitudes.

12. Conditionals

Conditional is a grammatical structure of a condition and a result[32]. Hyperbolic conditional clauses express exaggerated hypothetical conditions. Our data found that they express impossible situations by exaggerating events and impossible situations. The conditionals in our data include only imaginary, untrue, and unreal situations. This category represents (2.2) of the overall data, and some of its examples are included in **Table 12** below.

The image in (36) expresses an impossible situation in reality since it is unimaginable how someone's eyes will pop out of his head. However, this expression is hyperbolic as it stresses the speaker's absolute objection to agreeing to the request, irrespective of how desperate the other person is. This hyperbole also emphasizes the speaker's determination not to lend any help. Similarly, in (37), the hyperbolic clause "Until your late father comes out of his tomb" reflects an impossibility for an event because no dead person will come out of his grave. This hyperbole overstates the unlikelihood of a specific condition to be satisfied. It also highlights the speaker's tenacity and the fact that a change of mind is unlikely to occur on the speaker's part. It resembles a definitive "no" or "never" in an exaggerated manner, mainly when it is associated with mentioning a father, a close person. Example (38) is an exaggerated conditional structure that implies an action will never occur. This expression shows that black crows cannot turn grey. The speaker is trying to emphasize his determination by informing the listener that waiting for the action under discussion to happen is futile.

13. Proverbs

The final category in our data is the proverbs. Proverbs are short cultural sayings in which people advise or tell us about some general truth[36]. Proverbs are transmitted from one generation to another in a society[37]. They can be used to highlight an exaggeration. Proverbs with adverbs such as no, never, always, or numerical elements tend to have a hyperbolic meaning[17]. This lexico-grammatical category was found in the data to express hyperbole in JSA. It was detected in 14 examples (1%) in our data, some of which are mentioned in **Table 13** below. Generally speaking, hyperbolic proverbs are used to exaggerate a truth and emphasize cultural or moral values.

The proverb in (39) uses hyperbole to exaggerate human greed. It also emphasizes the notion that human desire

Table 12. Examples of Conditionals.

No.	Example	Translation
36	لو بطلعن عيونك من راسك مابعثتلك اياهم.	"Even if your eyes come out of your head, I will not send them to you"
37	حتى يطلع ابوك من القبر.	"Until your late father comes out of his tomb"
38	تايشيب الغراب .	"Until your late father comes out of his tomb"

Table 13. Examples of Proverbs.

No.	Example	Translation
39	بنى آدم ما بشبع إلا من التراب.	"Nothing satisfies a human except earth."
40	اللي استحوا ماتوا.	"All those who have a sense of shame have died."
41	اللقمة الهنية بتكفي ميه .	"A delicious bite is enough for a hundred people."

for material possessions is boundless and that nothing can satisfy them except death, suggesting that humans are constantly striving for more in this life, although true satisfaction is something beyond reach. In (40), the speaker uses hyperbole to emphasize that people who value shame and respect are rare nowadays. It implies that people who have shame have died, figuratively speaking. Example (41) is an exaggeration of the joy and satisfaction that can be achieved from one single bite. This proverb emphasizes quality (delicious bite), which could be a content source for many people. It proposes that the value of something is determined by its quality, not quantity. This hyperbolic proverb also highlights the importance of solidarity and agreement among people in a society.

5. Conclusions

This study has investigated hyperbole in JSA from a lexico-grammatical perspective, highlighting its structural patterns and functions. The findings reveal that hyperbolic expressions in JSA are deeply embedded in everyday speech. They are used as rhetorical strategy to emphasize emotions, strengthen arguments, and enhance storytelling. That is, speakers of JSA use all these hyperbolic expressions to exaggerate feelings, emotions, attitudes, opinions, and ideas. The data analysis reveals that hyperbole manifests in a wide range of lexico-grammatical forms, where lexical and grammatical categories interact to produce this linguistic phenomenon. Besides single lexical items (nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs) and multi-words (phrases and clauses), thirteen prominent hyperbolic lexico-grammatical forms were identified in this study. These prominent lexico-grammatical forms include the following: idioms, similes, extreme terms, temporal, numerical, metaphorical, scale, negation, comparison, repetition, intensifiers, conditional, and proverbs. They are arranged in a descending order from most frequent to least frequent. The findings also indicate that hyperbole is a productive strategy used by speakers of JSA to create non-literal and indirect meanings. The frequent use of hyperbole in different social contexts suggests that exaggeration is not merely a linguistic device but a cultural phenomenon that aligns with the communicative norms of Jordanian society. The interplay between lexical choices and grammatical structures in hyperbole further illustrates how speakers strategically manipulate language to achieve persuasive, humorous, or dramatic effects.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that context is essential in determining the interpretation of hyperbolic expression. This study indicates that analysing lexico-grammatical forms of hyperbole is tedious because there is a significant overlap between these forms, especially comparison and extreme terms, scale and numerical, idiomatic and simile, metaphor and idioms. The analysis was also tricky because one hyperbolic structure may contain more than one item expressing hyperbole. Future studies may explore hyperbole in JSA from a comparative perspective, examining its similarities and differences with hyperbolic expressions in other Arabic dialects. A future study may focus on gender differences in how males and females use hyperbole in their communication in JSA, whether face-to-face or online. Such a study could show gender similarities and differences in how genders use language and interact online.

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