

MECHANISMS OF INDICATING HYPERBOLE BEYOND HYPERBOLIC FORMS: A MORPHO-SEMANTIC STUDY IN ARABIC TEXTS

Dr. Ali Khalifa A. Abdullatif* and Hussein Khamis Mahmoud Shehata

¹Associate Professor of Grammar and Morphology, Department of Arabic Language, College of Arts, King Faisal University, Al Ahsa, Saudi Arabia

²Professor of Linguistic Sciences at the Faculty of Arts, Beni Suef University, Egypt

¹aabdulatif@kfu.edu.sa and ²dr.hussan78@yahoo.com

Abstract

This study revisits the concept of hyperbole (*mubālaghah*) in Arabic morphological scholarship, moving beyond its confinement to the conventional forms known as '*ṣiyagh al-mubālaghah*', and viewing hyperbole instead as a broader morphological, contextual, and rhetorical phenomenon that may manifest across structures not belonging to that narrow terminological category. The study proceeds from the hypothesis that hyperbolic meaning may arise from morphological structure, from deviation or substitution between forms, from context, or from the interaction between morphology and rhetoric. Adopting the descriptive-analytical method, the study concludes that the rule "an increase in form necessitates an increase in meaning" is insufficient on its own to establish hyperbole, since an addition may equally indicate request, receptiveness, participation, or gradation. The study organizes the semantic indications of hyperbole outside its conventional forms into four major pathways: hyperbole arising from morphological structure, from deviation and substitution, from context and situation, and from the interaction between morphology and rhetoric - while affirming that structures vary in their degree of indicating hyperbole: some do so predominantly, some only when contextually supported, and some remain semantically ambiguous.

Keywords: Contextual semantics, morphological alternation, morphological deviation, morphological structures, *mubālaghah*, *ṣiyagh al-mubālaghah*.

1. INTRODUCTION

Arabic morphological scholars have been really interested in hyperbolic forms, also known as '*ṣiyagh al-mubālaghah*'. This is because they are closely related to the chapter on derivatives, especially the active participle, or '*ism al-fā'il*'. Generally, morphologists think of hyperbolic forms as changed structures that come from the active participle. They use these forms to show how often an action happens, how strong the action is, or how deeply it affects the person doing it. So, when talking about hyperbolic forms in morphological and grammatical works, scholars usually follow certain patterns. These patterns include '*fā'āl*', '*mif'āl*', '*fā'ūl*', '*fā'il*', and '*fā'il*'. However, there's some variation in which patterns are considered analogical, or '*qiyāsī*', and which are conventional, or '*samā'ī*'. By studying hyperbolic forms, scholars can gain a better understanding of how Arabic words are formed and how they convey meaning. This knowledge can be useful for understanding Arabic texts and for communicating effectively in Arabic (Sibawayh, 1988, 1/110; Al Hamalawi, 2003, 80-81; Hasan, n.d., 3/257-258).

However, confining analysis to these forms does not reveal all of the Arabic language's means of expressing hyperbolic meaning. Classical texts, especially the Holy Quran and its readings, the speech of the Arabs, and the books of lexicography and exegesis, indicate that hyperbole may be realized through other

structures: a derived verb may indicate frequency or intensity of an event, a verbal noun (*maṣḍar*) may stand in place of the active or passive participle, an active participle may substitute for a passive participle or vice versa, and a quasi-passive adjective (*ṣifah mushabbahah*) or elative (*af'al al-tafḍil*) may extend to hyperbolic meaning according to context.

So, it's really important to look at hyperbole in a different way - not just as a set of specific rules and structures, but as a way of using language that involves meaning, context, and how we use words to persuade or make a point. This doesn't mean we should get rid of the distinction between '*ṣiyagh al-mubālaghah*', which is a specific term for hyperbole in morphology, and '*dilālat al-mubālaghah*', which is the broader meaning of hyperbole. If we confuse these two, we might end up making the rules for hyperbole too broad, so they don't make sense anymore, or too narrow, so they don't apply where they should. We need to find a balance and understand how hyperbole works in language, so we can use it effectively and understand what others mean when they use it. By looking at hyperbole in this way, we can see how it interacts with the context and the way we use language to create meaning, and how it can be used to make a point or persuade others. This approach can help us to better understand the complexities of language and how we use it to communicate.

1.1. Research Problem

The research problem lies in the fact that many morphological studies stop at the standard and conventional hyperbolic forms, treating them as the primary - and perhaps the sole - domain for studying hyperbole from a morphological perspective. Yet the books of Arabic language, exegesis, and rhetoric contain numerous examples that attribute hyperbolic meaning to structures outside this terminological category. When we look at examples of hyperbole, they're often given to us one at a time, without a clear explanation of where the meaning comes from. Does the exaggeration come from the way the words are structured, or from the fact that the form is being used in a certain way? Maybe it's the context that makes it hyperbolic, or the way different forms are used together. Could it be the metaphors or the way the words are used to make a point? This study aims to group together the structures that show hyperbole in a new way, based on how they create that exaggerated meaning. It wants to figure out what makes hyperbole work, whether it's the structure, the form, the context, or something else entirely.

1.2. Research Significance

This study is important because it helps us understand the relationship between word form and meaning in a complex linguistic area. It also brings together morphology, interpretation, and rhetoric within one analytical framework that examines different types of exaggeration, including figurative usage, contextual meaning, substitution between forms, and rhetorical emphasis in speech or writing. In this way, the study offers a clearer picture of how language works and how meaning is produced.

1.3. Research Objectives

This research aims to:

- Clarify the difference between hyperbolic forms as specific morphological patterns and hyperbolic meaning as a broader semantic phenomenon.
- Identify sentences or phrases that convey hyperbolic meaning without using the typical forms of exaggeration.
- Classify the sources of hyperbolic meaning according to whether they arise from structure, non-standard usage, context, or rhetorical function.
- Determine when hyperbole is the primary meaning, when it is only a possible interpretation, and when it depends on context.

1.4. Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

- What kinds of structures can convey exaggerated meaning beyond the usual hyperbolic forms?
- Where does hyperbolic meaning come from: structure, context, deviation from ordinary usage, or rhetorical function?
- How can these structures be categorized without confusing consistent meaning with contextual or probable meaning?
- How can different types and levels of signification be clearly distinguished?

1.5. Previous Studies

The subject of hyperbole has received attention from a number of studies, though most have focused on the well-known conventional forms:

Salih's study (2005), "Hyperbolic Forms and Their Methods in the Holy Quran", adopted a statistical-morphological-semantic approach in tracing analogical and conventional forms.

Al Awsi's study (2014), "Styles of Hyperbole in the Holy Quran", took a broader rhetorical approach, highlighting hyperbole as a stylistic device of Arabic, especially in contexts of encouragement and warning.

Abbadi's (2020) study, "Analogical Hyperbolic Forms in the Holy Quran between Morphological Function and Quranic Context", highlighted how the context of a situation affects the meaning, especially when it comes to the Names and Attributes of God. For example, forms like '*al-ṣabūr*', '*al-ʿAlīm*', and '*al-Ghaffār*' show constancy and perfection, rather than just how often something is done. These studies help us understand the Quran better by exploring the subtle meanings of hyperbolic forms. By looking at how these forms are used in different contexts, we can gain a deeper appreciation for the complexity and richness of the Quran's language.

Al Musay's (2021) study, "Hyperbolic Forms in the Holy Quran: A Morpho-Semantic Study", took a closer look at how these forms add deeper meanings in the Quran. It brought together the work of many scholars and examined both analogical and non-analogical forms.

The study by Ismail and Ali (2025), entitled "The Semantic Implications of Non-Analogical Hyperbolic Forms in the Prophetic Hadith: Sunan Abī Dāwūd as a Model", examined non-analogical forms in Sunan Abī Dāwūd. While it shares with the present study an interest in non-analogical forms, it remained within the framework of hyperbolic forms themselves and did not extend to other structures such as augmented verbs, verbal nouns, deviation among derivatives, or the effect of context.

The gap addressed by the present study lies in the shift from studying '*ṣiyagh al-mubālaghah*' to studying '*ʿāliyyāt al-dilālāh ʿalā al-mubālaghah*' (mechanisms of indicating hyperbole) outside these forms; that is, when hyperbole arises from an augmented verb, a verbal noun, deviation among derivatives, a quasi-passive adjective, an elative, or from context, situation, and rhetoric.

1.6. Methodology

This research uses a method that describes and analyzes things, looking at examples of structures that clearly show hyperbolic meaning or seem to have this meaning based on their context. It then examines these examples in detail, considering their original meaning, how they differ from this original meaning, the context in which they are used, and what experts in language, interpretation, and rhetoric have said

about them. The study doesn't try to list every single example, but instead chooses specific models to analyze and categorize.

2. THE CONCEPT OF HYPERBOLE AND ITS BOUNDARIES BETWEEN FORM AND MEANING

2.1. Hyperbole in Language and Terminology

The "root" originally meant to reach or arrive at a limit. For example, you might say '*balagha al-shay*'', which means "he reached the thing" or "he attained it". You could also say '*bālagha fī al-amr*', which means "he was thorough in the matter" word or "he reached its utmost". From this idea of reaching a limit, the concept of hyperbole was born. Hyperbole is when something is in a way that's stronger or more intense than it really is. It's like taking the usual meaning of a word and stretching it to its limit. This idea of hyperbole has been discussed by many scholars (Al Zamakhshari, 1922, 1/62-63; Ibn Manzur, 1999, 1/486-488; Al Zabidi, 2000).

Hyperbole is often associated with specific word forms that come from the active participle, which show how often something happens or how strong it is. Some examples of these word forms can be found in the works of Ibn Faris and Al Hamalawi (Ibn Faris, 1993, 227; Al Hamalawi, 2003, 80-81; Hasan, n.d., 3/257). But what's interesting is that hyperbole can show up in language in a lot of different ways. It's not just about using certain words or phrases that are obviously exaggerated. Sometimes, it can be as simple as using a verb that means something more than usual, or a noun that comes from a verb, but also about the context in which they're used. This means that hyperbole can be really subtle, and it's not always easy to spot. So, hyperbole is a pretty flexible and creative tool that can be used in many different ways to add emphasis and emotion to our language.

2.2. Hyperbolic Forms and Hyperbolic Meaning

Hyperbolic forms are special structures that show a big change in how often, strongly, or constantly something happens. For example, the word '*ghāfir*' means someone who forgives, but '*ghaffār*' and '*ghafūr*' mean forgiving a lot, strongly, or all the time, depending on the situation. But hyperbole is more than just these special forms - it can also be shown in other ways, like using a stronger verb, a noun that describes something, or changing from one form to another. This can make the meaning of what we're saying more intense or frequent, even if we're not using a traditional hyperbolic form.

So, we can't just call any structure that uses hyperbole a '*ṣīghat mubālaghah*', or hyperbolic form. That would be confusing the way something looks with what it actually does. It's better to say that a structure shows hyperbole, or that it's a way of conveying hyperbole. By making this difference, we can keep our study focused on the specifics of how language works, without getting too caught up in the bigger picture of how meaning is used in Arabic. This way, we can avoid making our study too narrow or too broad, and make sure we're looking at the right things.

2.3. Limits of the Rule "An Increase in Form Indicates an Increase in Meaning"

When we look at words, we can see that a small change can make a big difference in what they mean. This idea is often called "an increase in form indicates an increase in meaning". Many scholars, like Ibn Jinni and Al Zarkashi, have used this idea to explain why some words are different from others (Ibn Jinni, n.d.; Al Zarkashi, 1957, 3/34). For example, they've looked at words like '*ṣabara*' and '*iṣṭabara*', or '*ghalaqa*' and '*ghallaq*', and tried to figure out what makes them unique. But here's the thing: just because a word gets a little longer or changes slightly, it doesn't always mean its meaning gets bigger or more extreme. Sometimes, adding something to a word can show that someone is asking for something, trying hard, being open to something, taking on a new role, joining in, or changing in some way. It's not always about making something sound more exaggerated.

3. HYPERBOLE ARISING FROM MORPHOLOGICAL STRUCTURE

When we talk about hyperbole coming from the way words are structured, we're referring to a meaning that's directly affected by the pattern or addition that's used to intensify an action, make it happen more than once, or show it in a stronger way than the original verb. This doesn't mean that every time a word is made stronger, it's an example of hyperbole - instead, some structures can be used in certain situations where the addition has the effect of making the action more intense, showing effort or repetition, or highlighting the power of the action.

3.1. The Pattern '*ifata'ala*' between Request, Exertion, and Hyperbole

The pattern '*ifata'ala*' is really interesting because it can mean lots of different things, like being open to something, taking something in, asking for something, or putting in a lot of effort to make something happen. One reason it might have such strong meanings is that it's related to the idea of working hard and practicing something, so it's not just something that happens easily, but something that you have to try for, or search for, or make happen after putting in some effort.

The Quran has a clear example of this: "Worship Him and be steadfast (*waṣṭabir*) in His worship" (Al Zarkashi, 1957, 3/34). The word used here, '*iṣṭabara*' is more emphatic than '*iṣbir*' because it means struggling more, persevering more, and enduring harder times. But there's another word, '*ifata'ala*', that can mean different things - it's not always about exaggerating. It only means that when the context is about trying hard, making an effort, or really feeling something deeply.

3.2. The Pattern '*fa'ala*' and the Signification of Multiplication and Intensification

The pattern '*fa'ala*' is really important when it comes to multiplication and making things stronger. This is because when you repeat a sound in the middle of a word, like '*fa'ala*', it often means that something is happening again and again, or that something is getting bigger or stronger. Lots of linguists have talked about this. They've noticed that words like '*qaṭa'a*' and '*qaṭṭa'a*', or '*kasara*' and '*kassara*', or '*ghalaqa*' and '*ghallaqa*', are related in special ways. These words are like pairs, and the difference between them is like the difference between doing something once and doing it many times (Sibawayh, 1988, 4/64; Al Iṣṭabadi, 1982, 1/92; Ibn Yaish, 2001, 4/439; Al Hamalawi, 2003, 39).

A notable example is the Quranic verse describing the story of Joseph: "And she locked the doors (*wa-ghallaqat al-abwāb*)" (Al Zamakhshari, 1998; Al Andalusi, 1993; Ibn Ashur, 1984). The choice of '*ghallaqat*' with gemination depicts the thorough, repeated, emphatic act of locking, and the doer's extreme exertion therein, rather than merely the occurrence of locking. Nevertheless, '*fa'ala*' is not exclusive to hyperbole; it may occur for transitivity, attribution, or causation, and therefore not every usage of it is to be interpreted as hyperbole without a contextual clue.

3.3. The Pattern '*istaf'ala*' and Hyperbole in Request or Reaching the Limit

The primary meaning of '*istaf'ala*' is often to indicate request, as in '*istaghfara*' (he sought forgiveness) and '*istanṣara*' (he sought help), but it may convey hyperbole when the request transitions to the meaning of reaching the limit or the intensity of engagement. An example is the Quranic verse: "And when they despaired (*istay'asū*) of him, they conferred privately" (Al Zamakhshari, 1998, 3/312; Al Samin Al Halabi, n.d., 6/537). '*Istay'asū*' is more emphatic than '*ya'isū*' because it depicts the culmination of despair after review, attempt, and waiting.

Similarly, the Quranic verse: "And they drew their garments over themselves (*wa-istaghshaw thiyābahum*)"; The word '*istaghshaw*' doesn't just mean covering themselves, it means they were desperately trying to

cover up and protect themselves. It's like they used their clothes as a shield to block out what they were hearing or seeing (Al Alusi, 1994, 15/80).

3.4. The Pattern *'if'aw'ala'* and the Signification of Intensity and Fullness

The pattern *'if'aw'ala'* is one way that hyperbole is used in language. This pattern can be seen in words like *'ikhshawshana'*, *'i'shawshaba'*, and *'ihlawlā'*. According to Ibn Sidah, Ibn Yaish, and Ibn Manzur, this pattern is used to show that something is filled with a certain quality or has reached a high degree (Ibn Sidah, 1996, 4/313; Ibn Yaish, 2001, 4/443; Ibn Manzur, 1999). For example, *'ikhshawshana'* suggests a more intense roughness than *'khashuna'*, and *'i'shawshaba'* implies a greater abundance of grass than *'a'shaba'*. the use of *'if'aw'ala'* can add emphasis and create strong images in the mind of the reader or listener. Despite its limited use, the pattern *'if'aw'ala'* is still an important part of the language, and understanding it can help us better appreciate the nuances of expression.

3.5. The Pattern *'fā'ala'* between Participation and Hyperbole

The primary meaning of *'fā'ala'* is to indicate mutuality or reciprocity, but it may be used to convey the intensity of the action or hyperbole therein when the action is depicted in a context of resistance or contention. An example is the Quranic verse: "They seek to deceive (*yukhādī'ūna*) God and those who believe" (Al Zamakhshari, 1998, 1/174-175). The verb does not indicate genuine mutuality between servants and their Lord; rather, it is cast in the form of reciprocity to depict the intensity of engagement in the action, or the actors' delusion that they are performing the deception in a manner of contention.

4. HYPERBOLE ARISING FROM MORPHOLOGICAL DEVIATION AND SUBSTITUTION

Morphological deviation is when we use a word or phrase in a way that's different from its original meaning, but still keeps the same basic idea. This can make the meaning stronger, clearer, or more interesting. Just because we use a word in a different way, it doesn't always mean we're exaggerating - but often it can add emphasis or make the meaning more powerful. For example, using a word in a new way can help us convey a bigger idea or make a point more forcefully than if we stuck to the usual way of saying things.

4.1. The Active Participle Substituting for the Passive Participle

The original function of the active participle *'ism al-fā'il'* is to indicate the performer of an action, and the passive participle *'ism al-maf'ūl'* to indicate the recipient of an action. However, Arabic may use the active participle in the position of the passive participle, so that the deviation serves as a means of intensifying or concretizing meaning. Among the most well-known examples is the Quranic verse: "And he is in a contented life (*'ishahin rāḍiyatin*)" (Al Farra, 1983; Al Zamakhshari, 1998; Al Qurtubi, 2006; Al Alusi, 1994). The meaning is *mardīyyah* (a life that is pleasing), yet the expression *rāḍiyah* is more emphatic because it depicts the life itself as though it possesses contentment, or as though contentment has permeated it until it became characterized by it from its own perspective.

Another example is the Quranic verse: "Have they not seen that We have made (the sanctuary) a secure refuge (*ḥaraman āminan*)?" (Al Thaali, 2002, 1/229; Al Tabari, 2001, 2/521, 18/288-289; Al Razi, 1981, 25/94). The word *āminan* appears formally as an active participle, with the meaning of: a sanctuary that is safe, or one possessing security. But describing the sanctuary itself as secure makes security an inherent characteristic of the place, rather than an accidental condition for those who enter it.

4.2. The Passive Participle Substituting for the Active Participle

The passive participle can have the same meaning as the active participle, and when it's used in a different way, it can add emphasis to what's being described. An example is the Quranic verse: "A veil concealed (*hijāban mastūran*)" (Al Shinqiti, 2006, 3/703-705; Al Zamakhshari, 1998, 3/523). Some people think it means the veil is doing the concealing, while others think it means the veil itself is hidden from view. Both ways of understanding it show how strong the expression is, because the veil is not just hiding something, it's also hidden itself, or it's hiding things in a very strong way. This use of language can make the description more vivid and powerful.

Another example is the Quranic verse: "Indeed, His promise has always been fulfilled (*ma'tiyyan*)" (Al Tabari, 2001, 15/575; Al Wahidi, n.d., 14/274-275; Al Zamakhshari, 1998, 4/34; Al Razi, 1981, 21/237-238). The form '*ma'tiyyan*' places the promise at the level of a realized thing that must inevitably be reached, as though the promise comes and is arrived at, and never fails.

4.3. The Verbal Noun Occupying the Position of the Descriptor

Among the clearest chapters of hyperbole is the use of the verbal noun '*maṣḍar*' in place of a descriptor; the verbal noun denotes the action in abstract form, and when it is used to describe a person or thing, there is hyperbole therein, since the described entity becomes not merely the doer of the action but as though it is the very embodiment of the action itself. Ibn Jinni noted that describing something with the verbal noun renders it as though it is fashioned from that meaning due to the frequency of its engagement with it or the intensity of its characterization by it (Ibn Jinni, n.d., 3/259; Ibn Yaish, 2001, 4/61).

Among examples of the verbal noun with the meaning of the active participle is the Quranic verse: "It would have been an inevitable (*lizāman*) punishment" (Al Andalusī, 1993; Al Alusi, 1994). *Lizām* is a verbal noun meaning *lāzim* (inevitable), but it is more emphatic because it makes the inevitability itself as though it is the very thing occurring. Similarly, the Quranic verse: "Or its water (*mā'uhā*) becomes sunken (*ghawran*)" (Ibn Yaish, 2001; Ibn Atiyyah, 2007; Al Andalusī, 1993). '*Ghawran*' is a verbal noun meaning '*ghā'ir*' (sunken), and it depicts the water as though it has itself become the very act of sinking, reaching the utmost in its disappearance.

The verbal noun may also occur with the meaning of the passive participle, as in the Quranic verse: "And they sold him for a paltry price (*bakhs*)" (Al Alusi, 1994; Al Zamakhshari, 1998; Al Andalusī, 1993). '*Bakhsin*' is a verbal noun meaning '*mabkhūs*' (undervalued), and the use of the verbal noun makes the price the very embodiment of diminution and injustice. Similarly, the Quranic verse: "Fighting has been ordained for you, though it is hateful (*kurhun*) to you" (Al Zamakhshari, 1998, 1/432). '*Kurhun*' is a verbal noun meaning '*makrūh*' (disliked), and it embodies the meaning of hardship and aversion.

4.4. The Quasi-Passive Adjective and the Elative

The primary meaning of the quasi-passive adjective (*ṣifah mushabbahah*) is to indicate the constancy or deep-rootedness of a quality, as distinct from the active participle, which typically implies occurrence. However, constancy is not always hyperbole; hyperbole is realized when context or situation indicates that the quality has reached a high degree of deep-rootedness. An example is the Quranic verse: "The accursed (*al-rajīm*) Satan" (Al Razi, 1981, 1/72; Al Samarrai, 2006, 53-54). '*Rajīm*' is fa'īl with the meaning of '*maf'ūl*' (passive), and is more emphatic than '*marjūm*' because it indicates a constant, permanent quality, not merely the occurrence of repulsion.

As for the elative (*af'al al-tafḍīl*), its primary function is to indicate that two things share in a quality with one exceeding the other; however, it may be used to convey the attainment of the utmost degree, as in the muezzin's call: '*Allāhu akbar*,' where no mere numerical comparison is intended, but the affirmation of absolute greatness beyond all measure. Similarly, the Quranic verse: "Your Lord knows best (*a'lamu*) what

is in your souls" (Al Istrabadi, 1982, 4/444; Ibn Yaish, 2001, 4/120), where the context indicates the perfection and comprehensiveness of knowledge, not a limited comparison.

5. HYPERBOLE ARISING FROM CONTEXT AND SITUATION

When we look at how words are structured, we can often tell if they're being used to exaggerate or not. But the context in which they're used is still really important. By looking at the context, we can get a better sense of what the speaker or writer is trying to convey, and whether they're using hyperbole to make a point or not (Ibn Ashur, 1984).

5.1. Context as a Determiner of Formal Signification

When we look at complex structures, we see that they can have many different meanings. A single form can be used to show a request, an effort, a willingness to receive, a desire to participate, or even an exaggeration. For instance, the form "Istaf'ala" can be used to ask for something, to show a change, or to indicate that a limit has been reached (Al Istrabadi, 1982, 1/100-101; Ibn Yaish, 2001, 4/438; Al Hamalawi, 2003, 41). The key point is that we can't just look at the form itself to understand its meaning - we need to consider the context in which it's being used.

'*Istay'asū*' is more emphatic than '*ya'isū*' not merely because of the '*sīn*' and '*tā*' alone, but because the narrative context indicates that despair came after review and attempt. '*Istaghshaw thiyābahum*' conveys hyperbole because the context depicts the people of Noah having reached such an extreme in their aversion that they sought their garments to cover and shield them entirely. Likewise, '*iṣṭabara*' occurred in the context of a command to worship and remain steadfast, thus indicating perseverance and struggle.

5.2. The Contrast between Forms and Quranic Readings

When we look at words that come from the same root, we can see how some forms can have a stronger meaning than others. For example, if we compare '*ṣabara*' and '*iṣṭabara*', or '*ghalaqa*' and '*ghallaq*', or '*ya'isa*' and '*istay'asa*', we can see how one form can be more emphatic than the other in a certain situation. This means that it can take on a stronger meaning when compared to its counterpart. This kind of emphasis is relative, not absolute, and it depends on the context in which the words are used.

When we look at Quranic readings, we can see how different structures can have different meanings. This is because small changes in the way something is read can make a big difference in what it means. But we have to be careful when looking at these readings. We can't just say that one way of reading something is better or more accurate than another. Instead, each reading gives us a unique perspective on the meaning, and one might emphasize certain aspects, like exaggeration or repetition, more than the other (Ibn Al Jazari, 1998; Al Andalusī, 1993; Al Samin Al Halabi, n.d.; Ibn Ashur, 1984).

5.3. The Context of Dread and Deprecation and the Transformation of Constancy into Hyperbole

When we're talking about something that's really scary or bad, our words can take on a stronger meaning. This happens because the whole situation is trying to get a point across. So, it doesn't make sense to look at words that describe punishment or disapproval on their own, without thinking about the context they're being used in. It's all about how the words fit into the bigger picture, and how they're used to convey a certain message.

Among the subtle issues is that some forms indicate constancy by their original meaning, yet constancy does not equal hyperbole. Constancy only transforms into hyperbole when the context indicates that the quality has reached a high degree of deep-rootedness. Thus, in "the accursed (*al-raḥīm*) Satan", the form does not merely indicate the occurrence of repulsion or expulsion, but a constant, continuing quality attached to Satan's condition and fate (Al Razi, 1981, 1/72; Al Alusi, 1994; Al Samarrai, 2007, 53-54).

5.4. Context in Constraining the Rule of Form Increase

The importance of context appears in constraining the rule that "an increase in form indicates an increase in meaning." The addition may be for requesting an action, effort, participation, or adoption, and it does not serve hyperbole unless the context is in harmony with it. For this reason, in analyzing each example, the researcher should ask: What is the original meaning of the form? What is the possible additional meaning? What is the contextual clue that makes this additional meaning hyperbole rather than something else? If the clue is absent, the judgment of hyperbole remains probable rather than certain.

6. HYPERBOLE BETWEEN MORPHOLOGY AND RHETORIC

Hyperbole isn't just about the way something looks on the surface. It's also about how it interacts with the way we use language to persuade and communicate. A phrase or sentence might seem simple at first, but its true meaning and impact come from how it uses tools like metaphor, personification, and comparison to create a certain effect. To really understand hyperbole, we need to look at how it works beyond just its basic form, and explore how it uses these literary devices to convey meaning and create a sense of reality. This means examining the complex relationship between the structure of language and the way we use it to create powerful and evocative expressions.

6.1. Metaphorical Predication and Personification

When we look at how words are used in a special way, we can see that one of the most important tools is saying something is something else, but not really meaning it. This is called metaphorical predication (Al Jurjani, n.d.; Al Zamakhshari, 1998, 6/353; Al Alusi, 1994, 15/449). In the Quranic verse: "And he is in a contented life (*'ishahin rāḍiyatin*)", Here, the word "contented" is used to describe the life - even though it's really the person who is content - so that the bliss becomes an entity suffused with contentment. This way of using language helps us create powerful and evocative expressions. By giving life to an abstract concept, which can be really effective in conveying complex ideas and emotions.

6.2. The Verbal Noun and Hyperbole through Embodiment

The way words are used in place of descriptions is a great example of how the structure of words and the art of persuasion work together. In the Quranic verse: "And they sold him for a paltry price (*bakhsin*)", Here, the phrase "paltry price" doesn't just mean the price was low, it actually represents the idea of something being worthless or of little value. In another verse: "And it is hateful (*kurhun*) to you", the act of fighting becomes something that embodies hatred and difficulty, rather than just being something people don't like. Similarly, the Quranic verse: "Or its water becomes sunken (*ghawran*)" does not merely state that the water has sunk; it depicts it as though it has entirely become the sunkennes itself. Hyperbole here arises from the transformation of the quality into an embodied reality, and from the shift of the description from being accidental to being the very essence of the described in rhetorical depiction (Ibn Jinni, n.d., 3/259; Ibn Yaish, 2001, 4/61; Al Zamakhshari, 1998, 1/432).

6.3. Metaphor and Extension in the Passive Participle

The passive participle may acquire rhetorical force when used in a manner that expands its meaning or combines two significations. In the Quranic verse: "A concealed veil (*hijāban mastūran*)", '*mastūran*' may be interpreted as meaning '*sātir*' (concealing), or taken at face value, and in both interpretations hyperbole is generated; for it is a veil that conceals others, and yet so perfect in concealment that it is itself concealed. Likewise, "His promise has always been fulfilled (*ma'tiyyan*)" does not merely convey that the promise is forthcoming, but places it at the level of a realized thing that is come to and attained (Al Shinqiti, 2006, 3/703-705; Al Zamakhshari, 1998, 3/523; Al Tabari, 2001, 15/575; Al Razi, 1981, 21/237-238).

6.4. The Necessity of Governing the Relationship between Morphology and Rhetoric

The most precise approach is for the researcher to begin by identifying the morphological structure, then its original meaning, then the nature of the deviation or addition, and finally the rhetorical effect resulting therefrom - so that the form is not burdened with what it does not contain, nor its effect in generating meaning neglected. Not every hyperbole is metaphor, and not every morphological indication of intensity or multiplication is metaphorical. Hence, a distinction should be drawn between the morphological level, where hyperbole arises from the pattern or gemination; the contextual level, which determines one of the possibilities; and the rhetorical level, where hyperbole arises from metaphor, predication, personification, or embodiment.

7. CLASSIFICATION OF STRUCTURES ACCORDING TO THEIR DEGREE OF INDICATING HYPERBOLE

7.1. Structures in Which the Meaning of Hyperbole or Multiplication Predominates

Falling within this rank are structures whose usage most commonly indicates multiplication, intensification, or reaching the limit. Among the most prominent is the pattern *'fa' 'ala'* when its gemination indicates multiplication or thoroughness, as in *'qatta' 'a'*, *'kassara'*, and *'ghallaq'*. Also included are some examples of *'if'aw'ala'*, such as *'ikhshawshana'*, *'i'shawshaba'*, and *'ihlawlā'*, which typically indicate the intensity of a quality or the fullness of the locale with it. Also included is the use of the verbal noun in place of a descriptor in many examples (Sibawayh, 1988, 4/64; Al Istrabadi, 1982, 1/111; Al Hamalawi, 2003, 39; Ibn Jinni, n.d., 3/259; Ibn Yaish, 2001, 4/61).

7.2. Structures Conveying Hyperbole through Deviation and Substitution

This rank includes structures whose hyperbolic meaning does not arise from their own pattern, but from their use in other than their original position. These include: the use of the active participle in place of the passive participle in *'ishahin rāḍiyatin'* and *'haraman āminan'*; the use of the passive participle in place of the active participle in *'hijāban mastūran'* and *'wa'duhu ma'tiyyan'*; and the use of the verbal noun in place of the descriptor (Al Hamalawi, 2003, 39; Ibn Jinni, n.d., 3/259). This category confirms that hyperbole may be a functional effect arising from choosing one form over another.

7.3. Structures Conveying Constancy That May Transform into Hyperbole

This rank deserves special attention because people often get confused between constancy and hyperbole, which is a major source of ambiguity. There's a type of adjective, called quasi-passive, like *'fa' 'il'*, which has a passive meaning. However, constancy by itself is not enough to create hyperbole - it's only when the context shows that the quality has reached a perfect state, is extremely necessary, or completely pervades the thing being described. For example, *'rajīm'* is stronger than *'marjūm'*, not just because it follows the *'fa' 'il'* pattern, but because in context, it shows a constant and settled quality (Ibn Jinni, n.d., 3/260). The context is what transforms constancy into hyperbole, making it more intense and emphasized.

7.4. A Proposed Classification Model

A classification model for structures indicating hyperbole outside the conventional forms may be built as follows:

Structural forms with a predominant signification, in which the pattern or gemination exerts an apparent effect on intensifying meaning, such as *'fa' 'ala'* and some examples of *'if'aw'ala'*.

Rhetorical forms, in which the aspect of hyperbole is only completed by considering metaphor, predication, personification, or embodiment.

Contextual forms, which convey hyperbole only when context indicates exertion or reaching the limit, such as some uses of *'ifata'ala'*, *'istaf'ala'*, and *'fā'ala'*.

Deviational forms, in which hyperbole arises from using one form in place of another.

Ambiguous forms that require corroborating contextual clues.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1. Results

- The study concludes that hyperbole in Arabic is not confined to the standard and conventional hyperbolic forms, but is a broader semantic phenomenon that may be realized across multiple verbal, nominal, and verbal-noun structures.
- It demonstrates that the rule of form increase is insufficient on its own to establish hyperbole, since an addition may indicate request, receptiveness, participation, effort, or transformation.
- It also confirms the necessity of not confusing constancy with hyperbole; the quasi-passive adjective and what resembles it may indicate deep-rootedness, but do not constitute hyperbole unless the context indicates that the quality has reached a degree of perfection or intense necessity.
- It confirms the necessity of distinguishing between *'ṣiyagh al-mubālaghah'* as a morphological term for specific structures, and *'dilālat al-mubālaghah'* as a semantic effect that may be realized in structures not termed hyperbolic forms.
- Substitution and deviation are among the most important mechanisms for generating hyperbole, such as the use of the active participle with the meaning of the passive participle, the passive participle with the meaning of the active participle, and the verbal noun with the meaning of a descriptor.

8.2. Recommendations

- The study further recommends studying the differences between Quranic readings from the perspective of the morphological structure's effect on meaning, preparing independent studies on each pathway of hyperbole.
- It recommends building an applied corpus of structures indicating hyperbole in the Holy Quran and its readings, classifying examples according to the source of signification: structure, context, deviation, or rhetoric.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was supported by the Deanship of Scientific Research, Vice Presidency for Graduate Studies and Scientific Research, King Faisal University, Saudi Arabia [Grant No. KFU262806].

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:

There is no conflict of interest.

REFERENCES

- Abbadi, N.A. (2020). *Siyagh al mubalagha al qiyasiyyah fi al quran al karim bayn al wazifah al sarfiyyah wa al siyaq al qurani* 'Standard intensive forms in the holy Qur'an between morphological function and qur'anic context'. *Journal of Basra Arts*, 94, 28-73. [in Arabic]
- Al Alusi, M. (1994). *Ruh al maani fi tafsir al quran al azim wa al sab al mathani* 'The spirit of meanings in the exegesis of the great Qur'an and the seven oft-repeated verses'. Beirut: Dar Al Kutub Al Ilmiyyah. [in Arabic]
- Al Andalusi, M.A.H. (1993). *Tafsir al bahr al muhit* 'The exegesis of the surrounding ocean'. Beirut: Dar Al Kutub Al Ilmiyyah. [in Arabic]
- Al Awsi, A.A. (2014). *Asalib al mubalagha fi al quran al karim* 'Methods of intensification in the holy Qur'an'. *Journal of Arabic Language and Literature*, 19, 211-282. <https://doi.org/10.36318/0811-000-019-008>. [in Arabic]
- Al Farra, Y. (1983). *Maani al quran* 'Meanings of the Qur'an' (3rd ed.). Cairo: Alam Al Kutub. [in Arabic]
- Al Hamalawi, A. (2003). *Shadha al arf fi fann al sarf* 'The fragrance of knowledge in the art of morphology'. Beirut: Dar Al Ghad Al Jadid. [in Arabic]
- Al Istrabadi, R. (1982). *Sharh shafiyyat ibn al hajib* 'Commentary on Ibn Al Hajib's Al Shafiyah'. Beirut: Dar Al Kutub Al Ilmiyyah. [in Arabic]
- Al Jurjani, A. (n.d.). *Dalail al ijaz* 'Proofs of inimitability'. Cairo: Matbaat Al Madani. [in Arabic]
- Al Musay, H.A.S. (2021). *Siyagh al mubalagha fi al quran al karim: Dirasah sarfiyyah dalaliyyah* 'Intensive forms in the holy Qur'an: A morphological and semantic study'. *Scientific Journal of Sheba Region University*, 2(1), 141-182. [in Arabic]
- Al Qurtubi, M. (2006). *Al jami li ahkam al quran* 'The comprehensive compilation of the rulings of the Qur'an'. Beirut: Muassasat Al Risalah. [in Arabic]
- Al Razi, M. (1981). *Al tafsir al kabir wa mafatih al ghayb* 'The great exegesis and the keys to the unseen'. Beirut: Dar Al Fikr. [in Arabic]
- Al Samarrai, F. (2006). *Balaghat al kalimah fi al ta'bir al qurani* 'The eloquence of the word in qur'anic expression' (2nd ed.). Cairo: Shirkah Al Atik. [in Arabic]
- Al Samarrai, F.S. (2007). *Maani al abniyyah fi al arabiyyah* 'Meanings of morphological structures in Arabic' (2nd ed.). Amman: Dar Ammar. [in Arabic]
- Al Samin Al Halabi, A. (n.d.). *Al durr al masun fi ulum al kitab al maknun* 'The preserved pearl in the sciences of the hidden book'. Beirut: Dar Al Qalam. [in Arabic]
- Al Shinqiti, M.A. (2006). *Adwa al bayan fi idah al quran bil quran* 'Lights of clarification in explaining the Qur'an by the Qur'an'. Mecca: Islamic Fiqh Academy and Dar Alam Al Fawaid. [in Arabic]
- Al Tabari, M. (2001). *Tafsir al tabari: Jami al bayan an tawil ay al quran* 'Al Tabari's exegesis: The comprehensive clarification of the interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an'. Cairo: Dar Hajar. [in Arabic]
- Al Thaalibi, A. (2002). *Fiqh al lughah wa sirr al arabiyyah* 'Philology and the secret of Arabic'. Cairo: Dar Ihya Al Turath Al Arabi. [in Arabic]
- Al Wahidi, A. (n.d.). *Al tafsir al basit* 'The simple exegesis'. Riyadh: Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University. [in Arabic]

- Al Zabidi, M. (2000). *Taj al arus min jawahir al qamus* 'The bride's crown from the jewels of the dictionary'. Kuwait: Ministry of Guidance and Construction. [in Arabic]
- Al Zamakhshari, M. (1922). *Asas al balaghah* 'The foundation of eloquence'. Cairo: Dar Al Kutub Al Misriyyah. [in Arabic]
- Al Zamakhshari, M. (1998). *Al kashshaf an haqaiq ghawamid al tanzil* 'The unveiler of the realities of the subtleties of revelation'. Riyadh: Maktabat Al Obeikan. [in Arabic]
- Al Zarkashi, M. (1957). *Al burhan fi ulum al quran* 'The proof in the sciences of the Qur'an'. Cairo: Dar Ihya Al Kutub Al Arabiyyah. [in Arabic]
- Hasan, A. (n.d.). *Al nahw al wafi* 'The comprehensive grammar' (3rd ed.). Cairo: Dar Al Maarif. [in Arabic]
- Ibn Al Jazari, M. (1998). *Al nashr fi al qiraat al ashr* 'The publication on the ten qur'anic readings'. Beirut: Dar Al Kutub Al Ilmiyyah. [in Arabic]
- Ibn Ashur, M. (1984). *Tafsir al tahrir wa al tanwir* 'The exegesis of liberation and enlightenment'. Tunisia: Al Dar Al Tunisiyyah Lil Nashr. [in Arabic]
- Ibn Atiyyah, A. (2007). *Al muharrar al wajiz* 'The concise edited exegesis' (2nd ed.). Doha: Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs. [in Arabic]
- Ibn Faris, A. (1993). *Al sahibi fi fiqh al lughah al arabiyyah wa masailiha wa sunan al arab fi kalamiha* 'Al Sahibi on Arabic philology, its issues, and the arabs' norms in speech'. Cairo: Maktabat Al Maarif. [in Arabic]
- Ibn Jinni, U. (n.d.). *Al khasais* 'The characteristics'. Cairo: Dar Al Kutub Al Misriyyah. [in Arabic]
- Ibn Manzur, M. (1999). *Lisan al arab* 'The tongue of the Arabs' (3rd ed.). Cairo: Dar Ihya Al Turath Al Arabi. [in Arabic]
- Ibn Sidah, A. (1996). *Al mukhassas* 'The specialized lexicon'. Cairo: Dar Ihya Al Turath Al Arabi. [in Arabic]
- Ibn Yaish, M. (2001). *Sharh al mufasssal* 'Commentary on Al Mufasssal'. Beirut: Dar Al Kutub Al Ilmiyyah. [in Arabic]
- Ismail, H.S.M. and Ali, Y.M.H. (2025). *Dalalat siyagh al mubalagha ghayr al qiyasiyyah fi al hadith al sharif: Sunan abi dawud anmudhajan* 'The significances of non-standard intensive forms in the noble hadith: Sunan Abi Dawud as a model'. *Annual Journal of the Faculty of Arabic Language in Girga*, 29(3), 1391-1424. [in Arabic]
- Salih, K.H.R. (2005). *Siyagh al mubalagha wa taraiquha fi al quran al karim: Dirasah ihaiyyah sarfiyyah dalaliyyah* 'Intensive forms and their methods in the holy Qur'an: A statistical, morphological, and semantic study'. Unpublished Master's Thesis, An Najah National University, Palestine. [in Arabic]
- Sibawayh, A. (1988). *Al kitab* 'The book' (3rd ed.). Cairo: Maktabat Al Khanji. [in Arabic]