



# Unveiling Meanings: A Pragmatic Study of Non-Standard Yemeni Arabic in Hajjah City

Haifa Mohammad Nassar\*

Department of English, Faculty of Education, Sciences & Arts, Hajjah University, Hajjah, Yemen

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**Abstract:** This study investigates the Gricean theory of Conversational Implicature of the Yemeni Arabic variety. It is also an attempt to clarify the sorts and functions of these implicatures. The study followed the descriptive qualitative approach and the semi-structured interview was employed as an instrument of the study. With 16 respondents, the interviews were recorded, translated and analyzed. The data of study was interpreted both qualitatively and quantitatively. The results of this study show the conversational implicatures relating to the Quality and Quantity maxims applied the Yemeni variety (a dialect of Standard Arabic). In addition, the analysis reveals that the particularized conversational implicatures were prevalent in the Yemeni dialect than the generalized ones. The implicatures further function in different ways as irony, overstatement, surprise, appreciation, admiration, and criticism. The study presents a significant contribution to the field of pragmatics and develops teachers' and students' pragmatic and communicative competence at the university level.

**Keywords:** Conversational Implicature; Flouting Maxims; Quality and Quantity Maxims; Spoken Interaction; Yemeni Arabic language.

## 1. Introduction

Grice's theory has become a cornerstone of contemporary research into the distinction between semantics and pragmatics, presenting negotiation on the relation between language and mind. Grice presented implicature to scholars and philosophers, offering a foundational model that expresses the mechanisms through which conversational implicature emerges from linguistic content and Cooperative Principle. His theory is considered as an intervention to linguistics, depicting communicative processes as complying with the cooperative principle where interlocutors aim to cooperate to make meaningful conversation.

Gricean theory (1975,1989) states that people in communicative acts are controlled by a principle that creates the most efficient and effective language use to create successful and rational interaction. He names this social rule the Cooperative principle, asserting that a speaker should adjust their speech to align the direction of the ongoing conversation. Gricean Cooperative Principle includes nine sub-principles that work as regulations for communication. These principles are also organized into four conversational maxims: the Quality maxim (truthfulness), the Quantity maxim

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\* Corresponding Author: [dr.haifa@hau.edu.ye](mailto:dr.haifa@hau.edu.ye)

(informativeness), the Manner maxim (clarity), and the Relation maxim (relevance). The process of analyzing utterances requires listeners to incorporate their realization of such maxims with their knowledge about the world to get the speaker's implied meaning behind the literal content (Cook, 1989).

Additionally, Hirschberg's (1985) framework identifies five primary features, the first of which is Deniability: The speakers' capacity to reject the implied meaning without negating what they literally said. Reinforceability: The implicature can be strengthened or made more explicit by additional statements. Non-lexicality: Implicatures arise from context and conversational principles, not from the specific words or their dictionary meanings. Non-detachability: The implicature is tied to the way the utterance is expressed and cannot simply be removed by rephrasing the sentence. Calculability: Listeners can infer the implicature through rational reasoning based on the conversational context and shared knowledge. In the light of understanding these properties, conversational implicature will be perceived because it is truly conversational. It is a form of negotiation. What is more, Grice (1989) identifies three types of general conversational implicatures. The first type is a scalar implicature which relates to the conventional uses of words such as "all" or "some" in conversation. (Thomas 2013) also states that conventional implicature can be identified through the use of semantic and discourse markers such as "but", "therefore", "even", "for", and "and". The second type is conversational implicature which depends on the Cooperative Principle along with its four conversational maxims. The third type is implicature versus entailment that means that it can be contrasted with cases of entailment. Entailment refers to when the proposition A is true, then a proposition B must likewise be true. Therefore, proposition A implies proposition B. Similarly, unlike implicatures, entailments cannot be cancelled; there is no qualification that can be added to A, which would stop it from involving B and at the same time preserve the meaning of A.

Taking the importance of the notion of conversational implicature in consideration, it can be stated that the literature which investigated the application of Grice's theory to the Yemeni Arabic language is scarce. To the researcher's knowledge, the studies of Al-Duais (2012) and Al-Qaderi (2015) are the only ones which investigated the Yemeni Arabic conversational implicature. Beyond Yemeni Arabic itself, recent research has also begun to examine how Yemeni EFL learners comprehend pragmatic meaning in English, including conversational implicatures (Alrefaee & Al-Shammari, 2025) and presuppositions (Alrefaee & Mudkanna, 2024), underscoring the broader relevance of pragmatic competence to the Yemeni context. It is expected that the findings of this study could be useful to researchers, interested readers and most importantly to teachers and learners. This is because teachers and learners, especially EFL teachers and learners, should be aware pragmatically of the use of conversational implicatures in their native language and have a good understanding of the tools necessary to make appropriate pragmatic choices in their first or target language. This study is an attempt to enrich and enhance the ability and analysis skills of Arab teachers and educators, in general, and Yemeni teachers and educators, in particular in terms of the use of conversational implicature.

### **1.1. Problem statement**

Yemeni Arabic is a distinct dialect within the Arabic language, characterized by its unique linguistic features and cultural nuances. By examining the conversational implicatures in Yemeni Arabic, it is possible to gain insights into the specific ways in which implicatures are generated and interpreted within this linguistic and cultural context. This serves to add depth and scope to our understanding of the broader domain of pragmatics, and variation in implicature use. In addition, Yemeni Arabic is used by people in Yemen and elsewhere where Yemenis have resided. Comprehending such implicatures in Yemeni Arabic is a must to provide successful communication

and interaction with its speakers. The study of implicatures in this dialect also has applied significance for language learners, translation workers, interpreters and people involved in cross-cultural exchange or diplomacy with Yemeni Arabic speakers.

Moreover, investigating conversational implicatures in Yemeni Arabic serves to salvage and witness the language. Yemeni Arabic is a valuable component of the Yemeni people's unique heritage and understanding some of its pragmatics can be useful to document this language that possesses particular communicative customs. This type of work can be helpful to language revitalization attempts and help spread the awareness, appreciation, and documentation of Yemeni Arabic as a significant cultural-linguistic asset. Additionally, studying the implicatures in Yemeni Arabic can provide insight into sociolinguistic environment and social conventions in Yemen. Language use reflects societal values, power structures, and interpersonal relationships. By investigating the implicatures in Yemeni Arabic, the underlying social and cultural factors that influence communication modes, politeness strategies, and the meaning-making in everyday conversations might be offered and uncovered.

Based on what has been discussed, conversational implicature in Yemeni Arabic language should be given more consideration. Nevertheless, there have been few studies that undertook this theory and its principles to analyze Yemeni Arabic language. As far as the researcher knows that (Al-Duais 2012) and Al-Qaderi (2015) studies are the only ones that deal with the notion of conversational implicature in the Yemeni Arabic language. Accordingly, the current study aims at investigating conversational implicature in Yemeni Arabic non-standard language and explaining their types. Therefore, this study is an attempt to explore and identify some of Yemeni Arabic conversational implicatures that usually tended to be generated in the everyday spoken interactions. Hopefully, this helps to understand areas of Yemeni socio-cultural aspects. As language functions as a cultural component through which individuals express various aspects of their identity, including traditions, beliefs, and emotional experiences. It is further hoped to promote the development of more effective communication skills for both teachers and students by showing how people abide by those principles in order to understand and to be understood.

## **1.2. Study objectives**

This research seeks to:

1. Investigate conversational implicature in Yemeni Non-standard Arabic language (a dialect spoken in Hajjah City).
2. Identify the types of Yemeni Arabic conversational implicatures used in Yemeni Arabic.

## **1.3. Limitation of the study**

This study is restricted to Yemeni Arabic conversational implicatures that are used in Yemeni Arabic. The identified implicatures were limited to professors, neighbors, university classmates and craftsmen/women in everyday spoken interactions in the City of Hajjah. It dealt only with Arabic variety spoken in Hajjah City. That is, it excludes all other Yemeni Arabic varieties. Moreover, the semi-structured interview format employed in this study may have preferentially elicited responses aligning Grice's Maxims of Quality and Quantity as the participants were encouraged to provide truthful, evidence-based contributions in response to the questions requiring factual accounts, and to offer sufficiently informative responses without excessive elaboration. As a result, the data may show these two maxims much more clearly than the Maxims of Manner and Relevance. In addition, although the sample included a higher proportion of female participants 75% compared to male

participants 25%, which may limit the extent to which the findings can be generalized to more gender-balanced populations, this imbalance is not expected to substantially compromise the exploratory aims of the study. Future research with more evenly distributed gender representation is recommended to confirm and extend these results.

## 2. Related studies

Having reviewed the studies conducted on Yemeni Arabic conversational implicature, it is crucial to point out that the related literature shows that studies that examine the theory of conversational implicature and its maxims in Yemeni Arabic language have been scarcely undertaken. They were just two studies: Alduais's (2012) and Al-Qaderi's (2015). Alduais (ibid) aimed to examine whether Grice's theory of Conversational Implicature is universal and applicable across all languages. The data for his study came from a thirty-minute recorded conversation between the researcher and a friend, both speakers of the Yemeni dialect from Ibb city. According to this study's findings, the maxims of Quantity, Quality, Manner, and Relation were flouted, producing an implicature in each case. Moreover, it was concluded that that Grice's theory of conversational implicature is applicable to all languages worldwide. Al-Qaderi (ibid) further conducted a study to investigate the application of Gricean Conversational Implicature theory in the Arabic language. The findings demonstrated that Grice's theory can be applied to Arabic language, particularly the Yemeni dialect. It is also found that the maxim of Quantity was most frequently flouted and then the maxims of Relation, Quality and Manner respectively. Considering this lack of conversational implicature regarding Yemeni Arabic language, it is strongly believed that conducting studies concerning Yemeni Arabic conversational implicature is extremely vital. As aspects of Yemeni Arabic Language in the everyday exchanges are required to be studied in their pragmatic mechanisms.

## 3. Introduction

This section offers an overview of pertinent scholarly works, exploring the theory of conversational implicature and universal theory as well as a discussion of the previous studies.

### 3.1. Gricean Theory of Conversational Implicature

Gricean framework on conversational implicature (1975) rests on the premise that speakers share fundamental communicative objectives, guided by the Cooperative Principle: "make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (Grice 1989).

Grice (1975) introduced the Cooperative Principle, which encompasses four key maxims—quantity, quality, relation, and manner. These maxims encourage participants to communicate sincerely, relevantly, clearly, and with sufficient detail to foster effective and collaborative dialogue (Levinson, 1983). Therefore, Gricean Theory of Conversational Implicature and the Cooperative Principle explain how successful communication occurs in everyday interactions, predicated on the expectation that speakers adhere to this principle and its maxims. Here are the Maxims of the Cooperative Principle:

Maxim of Quantity: This maxim pertains to the appropriate volume of information provided through an utterance. When people converse, they assume that they neither purposely hold back any important information, nor give more information than what is needed. This maxim has two sub- maxims:

- a. Provide as much information as the ongoing exchange requires.
- b. Avoid providing more information than necessary.

**Maxim of Quality:** It advises participants to try to make their contribution one that is true. Therefore, speakers assume that what they say is not deliberately untruthful; and the truthfulness of what they say does not need to be stated. It comprises two sub-maxims:

- a. Avoid stating what you believe to be untrue.
- b. Refrain from asserting anything without sufficient evidence.

**Maxim of Relation:** Be relevant. That is, in any cooperative conversational exchange, participants presume that what they say pertains to the topic of conversation.

**Maxim of Manner:** Be perspicacious. It is assumed that what the speakers say is being said as straightforwardly as they can say it. Under this maxim, there are four sub-maxims:

- a. Ensure clarity by avoiding obscure phrasing
- b. Prevent ambiguity in expression
- c. Maintain brevity
- d. Present ideas in a logical order

Grice differentiates between generalized and particularized conversational implicatures. A generalized implicature arises without needing specific contextual details for inference. A particularized implicature, on the other hand, it depends on unique contextual elements to convey its implied meaning. Grice describes a specific form of indirectness that happens when a speaker violates a conversational maxim, anticipating that the listener will understand the maxim is not being observed. Consequently, this leads the addressee to infer something beyond what was said and Grice refers to this as flouting the maxims.

### **3.2. Definition of Conversational Implicature**

Grice's concept of conversational implicature denotes the implied communicative content derived through non-conventional means. Subsequent scholars have proposed various additional definitions of conversational implicature as (Huang 2011) and (Nassar 2020). They are as follows:

(Huang 2011), for example, states that "a conversational implicature is any meaning implied or expressed by, and inferred or understood from, the utterance of a sentence which is meant without being part of what is strictly said". (Nassar 2020, 15) further defines conversational implicature as "a pragmatic inference which conveys an additional level of meaning that beyond the literal meaning of the utterance. That is, communicators can deduce and predict this meaning on the bases of a talk exchange". Accordingly, these definitions capture the way people understand implied meaning in conversation beyond what is explicitly said. To comprehend an utterance, the listener must understand the literal meanings of the words, make inferences based on context and extra-linguistic cues, and trust that general communication principles are being followed (Blakemore, 1992).

Implicature is considered a universal feature in all languages and a common communicative strategy (Leech 1983, Levinson 1983, & Harris, 1995). (Green 1989), for example, asserts that conversational implicature is a typical event in the everyday life. Additionally, (Green 1989, 70) states that "rationality and cooperativeness are characteristics common to all the speakers in the world; therefore, non-cooperative conversations should be regarded as cooperative considering more global themes including listener and speaker".

What is more, (Levinson 1983, 121) claims that Gricean Cooperative Principle and its four conversational maxims are universal as follows:

"If the maxims are derivable from considerations of rational co-operation, we should expect them to be universal in application, at least in co-operative kinds of interactions".

Levinson is of the opinion that universality may turn out to be one of the important tests which will provide a refined view of the presence of conversational implicature.

#### 4. Theoretical Framework of the Study

The study used the enterprise of Gricean Conversational Implicature (1975,1989), which states that for a conversation to be effective and smooth, participants should follow the cooperative principle linked to the four maxims: Quality, Quantity, Relation, and Manner. This approach is seen as less significant because the maxims are usually clear, and speakers mean what they say. However, speakers can also signal that they are deliberately ignoring a maxim through flouting. Flouting or exploiting occurs when a speaker intentionally breaks a maxim, creating a conversational implicature. This is considered the most important way because it allows speakers to convey meanings beyond or different from the literal words spoken. For this reason, the researcher has restricted the study to the latter way. Additionally, although the study extracts were randomly selected, the study findings show that only the maxims of Quantity and Quality were flouted. It seems that these two maxims, especially Quality, hold greater importance than the maxims of Relevance and Manner. As Grice (1989, 27) contends that "other maxims come into operation only on the assumption that this [super] maxim of Quality is satisfied". (Al-Qaderi 2015) further confirms that the Quality maxim was the most commonly exploited, and then the maxim of Quantity. In generating conversational implicatures, maxims are violated, specific implied meanings arise and are understood by the listener. Grice offered an eminent thought of the topic of maxims and flouting, and his concept of conversational implicature has been a focus of both philosophical and linguistic discussion.

#### 5. Methods and Procedures

This section discusses the methodological process which has been used to investigate the present topic. It provides a description of the target population, sampling techniques, and the participants involved in the study. Subsequently, the instrument used for data collection is presented.

##### 5.1. Design of the Study

This study was conducted in June, 2023 for about 10 hours and it adopted a qualitative discourse analysis approach for data analysis, using the framework of Conversational Implicature of Grice (1975,1989). This qualitative method appears appropriate because it involves individual interviews, while observations and focus groups are also commonly used. This is pointed out by (Patton 2002) who argues that a key benefit of interviews is that they allow the researcher to explore aspects of participants' experiences that cannot be directly observed.

##### 5.2. Population

The population of the study includes the people of Hajjah city who are about 1,479,568 individuals. This city is to the northwest of Sana'a, Yemen. It also consists of 31 districts. Hajjah people work in different jobs and have different backgrounds of education and experience. Due to the time limitation of the present study, a sample was selected as discussed in the next section.

##### 5.3. Sampling

Because the researcher was unable to obtain a probability sample due to the large size of the study population, quota sampling was used to construct a sample that closely reflects the characteristics of the study population (Kumar, 2011). It was employed because it does not necessitate a sampling frame nor the rigorous application of random sampling procedures so it is easy to administer. This kind of sampling is considered as non-random sampling technique and is based on the researcher's judgment (ibid). Consequently, a total of 16 participants (12 females and 4 males) were selected based on their profession and district within Hajjah Governorate. The gender imbalance stems from

the practical constraints inherent in quota sampling. While this sample was used to ensure representation of both genders, female participants were more readily available and willing to participate in this study. This reflects common patterns in qualitative research, where women often demonstrate higher recruitment response rates (Rogers & Ballantyne, 2008). It is believed that the number of participants involved in the study was sufficient. During data collection and analysis, it was observed that after roughly twelve interviews, no substantially new themes emerged in relation to the research questions, and the subsequent interviews largely reinforced existing patterns. Given the narrow focus of the study, the use of established pragmatic theory to guide analysis, and the depth and richness of semi-structured interviews, the researcher judged that a total of sixteen participants provided sufficient information power for the study's aims. Nevertheless, due to the non-probability nature of quota sampling the findings should not be generalized to the broader population.

All participants were interviewed individually in a quiet site. They, ranging in age from 20 to 60, represented four groups: professors, craftsmen/women, college students, and college students' neighbours. The first group (n=4) comprised professors, teaching at the Faculty of Education, Sciences and Arts, University of Hajjah. The second group was craftsmen/women (n=4). The third group was the students (n=4) who were enrolled at University of Hajjah. The fourth group was the college students' neighbours (n=4) who are non-literate women. All the participants speak Yemeni Arabic language. The study sample consisted of 75% female participants and 25% male participants. The study incorporated a good representation by incorporating diverse perspectives: academic insights from professors, practical expertise from craftspeople, and contemporary social viewpoints from college students and local residents.

#### **5.4. Instrument of the Research**

The data was derived from semi-structured interviews. This method is advantageous as it synthesizes structured and unstructured approaches, effectively balancing between interviewer-led inquiry with the respondent's own input (Arksey & Knight, 1999). Those interviews were conducted to identify the conversational implicatures that are produced by the Yemeni Arabic people. One aim of conducting such interviews is to give illiterate people the chance to provide their useful and relevant examples of implicature. The interviews consisted of over 10 questions, which were shared with the study participants prior to conducting them. The questions were the same for all the groups: they did not generally pertain to a designated topic or theme, or to the participants' privacy. But they were general questions which prompted them to talk. Permission was obtained from the participants to conduct and record these interviews. A quiet location was selected to conduct the interviews, each lasting between 5 to 20 minutes. The interviews were recorded by using a mobile phone and Arabic language, specifically the Yemeni dialect, was used throughout them.

Then, the participants were kept anonymous by giving them letters to protect their anonymity. After writing the conversations, the participants' Arabic transcripts were kept apart in different files, which included the required data. To conduct the process of analysis, some utterances in these transcripts were selected and rendered into English. They were the most important extracts because they represent Yemeni Arabic conversational implicatures regarding Grice's Conversational Implicature Theory. The extracts were given to an expert majoring in Translation to be checked. All the necessary modifications were made. The utterances/extracts were analyzed based on types and functions of conversational implicature. Finally, the data initially analyzed qualitatively was further subjected to quantitative analysis, focusing on the maxims that flouted in the interviews were presented in tables and figures.

## 6. Findings

This section outlines the results obtained from the analysis of the collected data. It also discusses these findings in the following two sections: the first section addresses the Yemeni Arabic conversational implicatures flouted by Gricean maxim of quality while the second section addresses the ones exploited by the maxim of quantity.

### 6.1. Exploiting the Quality Maxim

In analyzing the data, it was found that many utterances mentioned in the present study interviews were used metaphorically. The first implicature is انكأتي الجرح! (anka'ati aljurch) which literally means "you make my wound bleed!". This implicature arises by flouting the Quality maxim within the cooperative principle. It is a metaphor as well as overstatement. The second implicature, "اضرب لك" (adhreblak fi mayit), translates to "beat the dead!" and represents another instance of overstatement. It also functions as a metaphor to convey the difficulty of communicating scientific information to certain students. The third implicature, "تحصليهم كلهم كأنهم عائلة واحدة" (tahsalihum kuluhom ka'anahum a'aila'a wahedah), can be translated as "you find them as if they are one family." This metaphorical expression falls under the category of figures of speech and is widely recognized for flouting the maxim of Quality. The fourth conversational implicature is "الوزير السابق كان له لمسات كثيرة على" (Al-Wazeer Asabeg kan louh lamasat katheerah ala almostwaa lakadeemi au alidari), which translates to "the former Minister of Higher Education, had many personal touches either at the academic or administrative levels". This metaphorical expression highlights the unique contributions and personal involvement of the former Minister of Higher Education in his role. The fifth conversational implicature is "ما حملت عائلتي الثقيل" (ma hamalt a'ailati atheqeel), which translates to "I never made my family carry the burdens." This utterance also employs metaphor. The sixth implicature is "تحسي بالحياة في صنعاء" (tahusi bilhaiah fi sana'a), which translates to "one feels alive in Sana'a". By using the Yemeni Arabic expression "one feels alive in Sana'a," the speaker deploys metaphor to describe the beauty of Sana'a. The seventh Yemeni metaphorical implicature is "تجي و تديه كومه!" (tejai wagdaih Koumah) "you find her a mass!". Koumah (a mass) in Yemeni Arabic language is the thing that does not have a definite and regular form or shape. Here, the utterance is figuratively used to convey that that woman is very old or super-aged. The eighth Yemeni metaphorical implicature is the utterance "هذه قديه خرفه!" (hathi gedaih Kharfah), which translates to "those women suffer senility!". The ninth implicature is "هذا يلطم في هاذاك وهاذاك ينخز في هاذاك" (hatha yeltum fi hathak wahathak yenkhez fi hathak) (the literal translation: this person slaps that one across the face and how the later pricks the other!). It is another Yemeni conversational implicature in a form of metaphor.

### 6.2. Exploiting the Maxim Quantity

In discussing the flouting of the quantity maxim, some examples of Yemeni Arabic conversational implicatures were also extracted. Here, the quantity maxim is flouted as the utterance is not informative as required. These utterances are "من عاندني اها" (wamen a'adani a'ah) "since I was 'a'ah"; "ما معيش حتى حق النزول" (ma ma'aish hataa hag alnuzool) "do not have a bus fare"; "ما نفسش الا تبسريهن!" (ma nefesh elaa tebsarihen) "you want to gaze at them for hours!"; "تعال جنبي" (Ta'al Jenbi) "get near to me (him)"; "ما هي المؤهلات!" (ma hi almua'ahlat) "what (are) the qualifications!"; "ما هو من برامج!" (ma ho men baramaj!) "what (are) TV programs!" which are particularized implicatures in which the Quantity maxim is exploited.

## 7. Findings

This study aims to examine the Yemeni Arabic implicature in the light of Grice's Theory of Conversational Implicature and identify what sorts of these implicatures. In this section, the interpretation of the results regarding violations of the Quality and Quantity Maxims is presented.

### 7.1 Flouting the Maxim of Quality

According to (Grice 1975 & 1989) metaphor functions as a technique to create conversational implicature by deliberately violating the maxim of quality. Below are nine examples of Yemeni particularized conversational implicatures (PCIs) triggered off by the use of metaphor:

Table 1. Excerpt 1

| Arabic Conversation  |
|--|
| هل تحب الرحلات؟<br>الدكتور: لقد أنكأني الجرح! نعم أحب الرحلات و كنا ننسق أنا و زملائي الرحلات سوء و نحن ندرس الماجستير أو الدكتوراه أما في الوقت الراهن و بسبب انقطاع المرتبات و الأوضاع التي تمر بها اليمن هذه الأيام من حرب و حصار فاني أصبحت لا أغادر مدينة حجة.  |
| Its English translation  |
| Interviewer: Do you like to travel from one place to the other all the time?<br>Professor: Yes. You make my wound bleed! I love trips and travelling, so I and my classmates have been arranging numerous travel plans during our M.A. degree or Ph.D. studies. Nowadays, I've never left Hajjah City because of a severance of salaries and Yemen's current difficult situation including climate of war and siege. |

As observed in Excerpt 1, the utterance *انكأني الجرح!* (anka'ati aljruh) which literally means "you make my wound bleed!" , the speaker compels the listener to deduce the intended meaning based on the particular context, particularly when stating that the interviewer made their wound bleed. The utterance *انكأني* (anka'ati) is a dialectal form from Yemeni Arabic, specifically from Hajji variety. It represents a non-standard variant that differs from Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) *نكأني* (naka'ti), showing characteristic, morphological and phonological features of Yemeni dialectal speech. The metaphorical expression signifies that the speaker feels unhappy and upset due to the question being asked. It conveys the idea that the speaker is emotionally wounded, much like someone whose wound is accidentally touched, causing them pain. The speaker intends to convey that the interviewer's question serves as a reminder of what they are trying to move on from. The speaker is experiencing distress because they can no longer engage in travel as they once did. Ultimately, this particularized conversational implicature (overstatement) is employed to express profound sadness over the loss of an activity or experience that the speaker can no longer partake in.

In fact, a metaphor is generated by exploiting the first sub-maxim of Quality according to Grice as in this example:

"You are the cream in my coffee".

Grice (1975) argues that "the most plausible supposition is that the speaker is ascribing to their audience certain characteristics in relation to which the audience bears some resemblance (how fanciful) to the mentioned entity".

Table 2. Excerpt 2

| Arabic conversation  |
|--|
| ما هي الصعوبات التي تواجهها أثناء التدريس؟<br>الدكتور: ... عندنا بالكلية بعض الطلاب مستواهم متدني لدرجة أن لديهم أخطاء إملائية في كتابة أسماهم، تستغرب تقول ايش صعد هذا الطالب لمستوى رابع؟ كيف يخرج هذا الطالب يدرس؟ و مهما حاولنا رفع مستوى هؤلاء الطلاب نجد صعوبة، يعني في عندنا مثل يقول: " اضرب لك في مبيت!". |

**Its English translation**

Interviewer: What difficulties do you've during teaching university students?

Professor: ... We have some of the university students who have too low levels of education to write their names without spelling mistakes. You get wondered how those students on this high level! And how will such students teach in future? And as much as we try to improve student outcomes, we find it hard. We have a Yemeni saying that states: "beat the dead!".

This utterance "اضرب لك في ميت" (adhreblak fi mayit), translates to "beat the dead!" and as Table 2 above shows that the study participants reported that "اضرب لك في ميت" is a Yemeni Arabic proverb. However, the exact formulation is not documented in major published Yemeni proverb collections. This utterance indicates a sense of pessimism or resignation regarding the potential for improvement in the students' level of understanding. It is a further example of overstatement. By using the phrase "beat the dead!" the speaker emphasizes the futility of their efforts, as the dead do not feel anything. Thus, the speaker suggests that attempting to enhance the scientific aptitude of these students would be equivalent to beating a lifeless body. This metaphor underscores the perceived hopelessness of the situation and the challenging nature of conveying scientific knowledge to such individuals.

**Table 3.** Excerpt 3

| <b>Arabic conversation</b>   |   |
|--|---|
|  | الزميلة 1: بما تتميز صعدة عن حجة؟   |
|  | الزميلة 2: ما بش اختلاف كثير بين صعدة و حجة بالنسبة للتضاريس، يعني الجبال و درجة الحرارة و البرودة متشابهة لكن في صعدة مناطق خضرة أكثر و زراعة أكثر و حسن تعامل فيما بين أهلها أكثر من حجة، تحصيلهم كلهم كأنهم عائلة واحدة. |
| <b>Its English translation</b>   |   |
| Classmate 1: What makes Sa'ada'a distinguished from Hajjah?  |   |
| Classmate 2: There's not a lot of difference between them with regard to the two cities' terrain.  |   |
| That's, their mountains and temperature are alike. But, there are more green and agricultural areas in Sa'ada'a than Hajjah. Moreover, Sa'adi people have more good civic relations than Hajji. You find them such a family. |   |

In this example, "تحصيلهم كلهم كأنهم عائلة واحدة" (tahsalihum kuluhom ka'anahum a'aila'a wahedah), translates to "you find them as if they are one family", one classmate asks other about the distinctive features of Sa'ada'a City. The classmate's response flouts the maxim of Quality by using hyperbole. The utterance, "you find them such a family," communicates the idea that people of Sa'ada'a share strong emotional bonds. It conveys a profound excellent relationship and fraternal intimacy among those people. The utterance تحصيلهم (tahsalihum) is a Yemeni Arabic dialectal form meaning "you find them". It does not conform to Modern Standard Arabic usage in terms of lexis as it was being used in place of another utterance namely تجديدهم (tajjadinahum).

This conversational implicature underscores the deep-seated affection and unity among the people of Sa'ada'a, revealing their harmonious relationships and mutual understanding. Thus, the metaphorical language generates a particularized conversational implicature. It underscores not only the spirit of camaraderie but also the profound emotional bonds and intimacy that unify the Sa'ada'a people. The use of this hyperbole is to depict the community as closely-knit family \_one that instinctively understands and supports each other. The speaker highlights the inherent intimacy and mutual interest at its core.

Consequently, the three Yemeni Arabic utterances, "you make my wound bleed!", "beat the dead!", and "you find them such a family," use metaphorical language to create hyperbole. This expressive rhetorical device is common in Classical Arabic, where it is chiefly associated with strategies for conveying fervor and boasting. Yemeni Arabic, a dialect of Standard Arabic, is characterized by the persistent use of hyperbolic language\_ a feature deeply rooted in the broader Arabic cultural traditions. In everyday Yemeni Arabic discourse, speakers commonly use overstatement to intensify descriptions and engage their audience, often to achieve specific aims.

Such figurative language enables them to vividly express notions of pain, hardship, strength, beauty, and other common experiences.

Similarly, overstatement is a multifaceted feature of English discourse. It frequently realized through idiomatic expressions like "it's raining cats and dogs," "in no time at all," "I'm so hungry, I could eat a horse," and "pool of tears". These examples underscore the universality of hyperbole as a rhetorical device across diverse languages and cultures. Metaphorical language is further used in spoken English. In a study conducted by Banikalef et al. (2026) about President Donald J. Trump's rhetorical strategies during the joint press conference with Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, metaphors came out in (24) out of (241) clauses used by Trump. It comprised of 10% of the whole number of the clauses.

In summary, the prominent use of metaphoric expressions in Yemeni Arabic, is fundamentally shaped by the influence of Standard Arabic and its attendant culture norms. The primary function of this linguistic practice is to secure audience engagement while communicating intensified emotions and vivid imagery. Therefore, the strategic use of overstatement\_ in both Yemeni and English contexts\_ affirms its universal function as a powerful tool for impactful communication.

Functioning as a rhetorical device, overstatement employs deliberate exaggeration to amplify the significance of a subject or imbue it with heightened meaning (Dung, 2011, p. 8). This deliberate exaggeration, while often making a lasting impact on the listener, naturally prioritizes an effect over literal truth. As a consequence, as overstatement is prevalent in everyday discourse, its use is context-dependent. Gibbs (2000, 5) corroborates this, demonstrating that its frequency varies significantly across a communicative situation. In professional domains such as business or journalism, where factual accuracy is essential, overstatement is typically avoided. Conversely, in informal settings marked by a congenial tone, its occurrence is far more frequent.

Thus, overstatement functions as a strategic tool for speakers to heighten emphasis and convey layered meanings beyond the literal. It operates as a rhetorical figure that makes a strong, lasting effect or exaggerates the reality. However, the frequency and appropriateness of overstatement usage vary depending on the context. In formal situations, where factual accuracy is prioritized, overstatement is less common. In contrast, in informal settings that encourage a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, overstatement, in the form of hyperbole, is more likely to be employed.

(Levinson 1983) further argues that in case a speaker uses metaphors, either s/he wants to be uncooperative or s/he intends to convey something beyond the words, such as in the following utterance (p.110):

- John is a baby.

By comparing the properties of 'John' with 'babies', John will have some of baby-like characteristics such as a way of speaking, babies' walk, etc. Therefore, those qualities are attributed to 'John' based on the utterance, and the interpretation of this statement depends on the context. Whether a speaker refers to John's speech or refers to John's walk. Thus, the Yemeni Arabic metaphors act in the same way as follows:

**Table 4.** Excerpt 4

| <b>Arabic conversation</b>  |  |
|---|--|
|   | قدم لنا نبذة عن نفسك؟<br>الدكتور: ... أنا كنت من ضمن الطلاب الأوائل. و وزير التعليم العالي الله يرحمه آنذاك ، قدم لي منحة إلى العراق و الوزير السابق كان له لمسات كثيرة على المستوى الأكاديمي أو الإداري |
| <b>Its English translation</b>  |  |
| Interviewer: Could you introduce yourself, please? Professor: ... I was one of the excellent university students and then the former Minister of Higher Education, bless him. offered me a scholarship to Iraq. Therefore, I won a scholarship to one of the Iraqi university. The former Minister of Higher Education had many personal touches either at the academic or administrative levels. |  |

At first glance, the utterance " (Al-Wazeer Asabeg kan louh lamasat katheerah ala almostwaa lakadeemi au alidari) " the former Minister of Higher Education, had many personal touches either at the academic or administrative levels" may appear contradictory to our factual background information. It raises the question of how an individual's "touches" can effectively contribute to running an organization, both academically and administratively. However, it is through metaphorical meaning and conversational implicature that we find clarity. This Yemeni Arabic metaphor "someone has personal touches" is employed to express admiration for the former Minister of Higher Education's meaningful contribution. Specifically, it honors the former Minister of Higher Education for his diligent service and dedicated efforts. It conveys that his strategic decisions and actions had a constructive and defining impact on the administration during his tenure. The phrase "personal touches" serves as a metaphor for the Minister's uniquely principled leadership. It implies that his policies and actions were not just generic, but also carefully tailored, which meaningfully improved the Ministry's functioning. The use of this Yemeni Arabic figure of speech, therefore, carries the conversational implicature of deep admiration, acknowledging the concrete outcomes of his diligent tenure.

**Table 5.** Excerpt 5

|  |
|--|
| <b>Arabic conversation</b>   |
| من هو الداعم لك في دراستك العليا<br>الدكتورة: ما سافرت إلا و معي مرتبي و مرتبي كان يكفي مصروف و كذا و في الأخير حصلت على مساعدة مالية من وزارة<br>التعليم العالي و ما حملت عائلتي التقييل.   |
| <b>Its English translation</b>   |
| Interviewer: Who supported you in your high studies at abroad?<br>Professor: I didn't travel abroad without my salary. My monthly salary was enough for me for personal expense, etc. Eventually, I obtained a financial grant from the Ministry of Higher Education and "I never made my family carry the burdens". |

The fifth conversational implicature is " (ma hamalt a'ailati atheqeel) " ما حملت عائلتي التقييل", translates to "I never made my family carry the burdens". This statement also draws on metaphor. In this context, it indicates that the speaker did not impose financial burdens on her family in relation to her education. Rather, she independently managed the costs while pursuing her studies abroad. This implicature is triggered when the Yemeni Arabic words for "expenses" "التقييل" (the burdens) and "place/put" "حملت" (made them carry 'something') deliberately flout the maxim of quality. The metaphor presents the cost of studying abroad as an overwhelming weight which the speaker never imposed on her family. This figurative language highlights the speaker's financial independence and personal accountability.

The expression "never made someone carry burdens of..." conveys a powerful ethos of self-reliance and individual agency. This implies a person has deliberately taken on life's challenges alone and never become a burden of others. Through this culturally specific metaphor, the professor strategically highlights her own determination and resilience, portraying her academic journey as one defined by autonomy and responsibility.

The implication, then, is that the professor self-funded her education abroad, having deliberately opted not to rely on family support. This metaphor emphasizes her economic self-sufficiency and resilience in the face of hardship. Ultimately, it underscores a self-made identity and the resilient perseverance needed to achieve her goals.

**Table 6.** Excerpt 6

|                                  |
|----------------------------------|
| <b>Arabic conversation</b>       |
| الجارّة! أئين أحسن حجة أو صنعاء؟ |

الجارّة2:صنعاء، تحسي بالحياة في صنعاء! تحسي انك عايشة.

**Its English translation**

Neighbour1: Is Sana'a or Hajjah better?  
 Neighbour2: Sana'a, one feels alive in Sana'a.

Furthermore, the Yemeni Arabic utterance, "تحسي بالحياة في صنعاء" which translates to "one feels alive in Sana'a," (tahusi bilhaiah fi sana'a) is a conversational implicature. Here, the speaker employs an unconventional and rhetorically striking approach to convey a particular idea. Through this metaphor, the speaker evokes the city's profound, and life-affirming spirit. This metaphor flouts the maxim of quality by departing from the literal truth. It replaces a factual assessment with a subjective, and evocative claim about Sana'a's inherent vitality.

(Broeck, 1981) argues that metaphor is used either creatively, when it is necessary and indispensable, or decoratively, when it enhances the aesthetic appeal of the text. This Yemeni Arabic metaphor, "one feels alive in Sana'a" functions primarily to foreground the city's exceptional appeal. It extends beyond mere aesthetics. It suggests that Sana'a embodies the vitality and comprehensive amenities of a fully developed urban center which offers services and experiences that visitors seek. At its core, the utterance conveys profound admiration that presents a stay in the city as not only pleasant, but also a deeply stimulating and enlivening experience.

The speaker uses the evocative phrase "one feels alive in Sana'a" to highlight the city's deep aesthetic and emotional impact. This rhetorical device goes beyond merely acknowledging the city's beauty. It conveys a profound feeling of awe and captivation felt by both its residents and its visitors. It implies that Sana'a's significance stems not only from its visual impact, but also from its role as a potent symbol of complete, and modern metropolis equipped with all necessary amenities.

Therefore, the metaphorical implication serves two functions: it highlights the exceptional beauty of Sana'a and also portrays it as a developed and hospitable place. Ultimately, this metaphor stands as a tribute to the city's magnificence which suggests that to be in Sana'a is to partake in an exceptionally unique experience.

**Table 7.** Excerpt 7

**Arabic conversation**

الجارّة: لكن المره الكبيرة في حجة لو لبست أي شي قالوا هذه قديه خرفه! لكن في صنعاء ما احد يتحাকা من احد، تجي وقديه كومه! لكن ما شاء الله صدق.

**Its English translation**

Neighbour: But, if the Hajji old women (old women live in Hajjah City) dress beautiful clothes like what the Sana'ani ones do, people say that those women suffer senility (people make them feel awkward). However, Sana'ani people mind their own business and never stick their nose into matters that do not concern them. You find her (the Sana'ani old woman) as a mass! but how a beautiful she is, Mashallah.

The Yemeni figurative phrase "تجي وقديه كومه!" (tejai wagdaih Koumah) translates into "you find her a mass!" is another implicature. Koumah (a mass) refers to an entity that lacks a clear, consistent, and well-defined form or structure. It also means that thing is untidy and unorganized. The utterance is metaphorically employed to express that the woman is extremely old or has exceeded the typical expectations of age. In spite of the probable negative meaning of this utterance (irony), the intended meaning is that the Sana'ani women are still pretty and lovely, although they are very old. The speaker hinted at this meaning by using the utterance "but how a beautiful she is, Mashallah" that followed the statement "you find her a mass!". The Yemeni Arabic phrase "Mashallah" is usually used to show admiration. It is considered to be a religious phrase. And as it is known that Yemen is

a part of Islamic and Arab world where Islamic culture and religion are dominated. Consequently, this has its effect on the language in that religious utterances are often used to express feelings and morale in various everyday exchanges. "You find her a mass!" is an utterance that conversationally implicates that the speaker likes the old Sana'ani women and what they wear, rather than figuratively depict those old women. Moreover, irony is sometimes used to convey complaints. AL-Khawaldeh (2016) has found that speakers of the Jordanian dialect use ironic phrases to express complaints.

**Table 8.** Excerpt 8

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>Arabic conversation</b></p> <p>الجارّة: لكن المره الكبيرة في حجة لو لبست أي شي قالوا هذه قديه خرفه! لكن في صنعاء ما احد يتحاكا من احد، نجي وقديه كومه!<br/>لكن ما شاء الله صدق.</p>   |
| <p><b>Its English translation</b></p> <p>Neighbour: But, if the Hajji old women (old women live in Hajjah City) dress beautiful clothes like what the Sana'ani ones wear, people say that those women suffer senility (people make them feel awkward). However, Sana'ani people mind their own business and never stick their nose into matters that do not concern them. You find her (the Sana'ani old woman) as a mass! but how a beautiful she is, Mashallah.</p> |

The utterance "هذه قديه خرفه!" (hathi gedaih Kharfah), which translates to "those women suffer senility!" is ironic and serves as a conversational indicator that in Hajjah City, old women are made to feel uncomfortable if they show an interest in wearing makeup, beautiful clothes, jewelry, or traditional Yemeni attire. The people around believe that these women should make appropriate clothing choices based on their age to be socially accepted. They consider them too old to wear such attire and often blame them for wearing such clothes, make-up, etc. Hence, they criticize their manner and frequently deride them with the expression "those women suffer senility."

This implicature highlights societal attitudes and expectations regarding the appearance and behavior of old women in Hajjah City. This reveals a deeper-seated bias suggesting that old women have lost the social license for sartorial agency. By deploying this metaphor "suffer senility", the speaker elucidates the intense socialist scrutiny and censure directed at these women for seeking to express their identity through clothes.

It highlights the societal disapproval and mockery faced by these women when they dress in a way that is perceived as inappropriate for their age. The utterance "those women suffer senility" serves to ridicule and criticize their choices of what they wear, reflecting the rigid norms and expectations placed upon them.

**Table 9.** Excerpt 9

|  |
|--|
| <p><b>Arabic conversation</b></p> <p>الزميلة 1: كيف البرامج الرمضانية حتى تبه السنة؟<br/>الزميلة 2: ماهومن برامج! زمان كنا نراعي للبرامج الرمضانية مراعاة، برامج حاله ألاحق اليوم سياسة، هذا ايلطم في هاذاك وهاذاك<br/>ينخزفي هاذاك، ما عديش حاجة حاله طفي التلفزيون اخرجلش.</p>   |
| <p><b>Its English translation</b></p> <p>Classmate 1: What do you think about the Ramadan TV programs of this year?<br/>Classmate 2: What (are) TV programs! In the past, we anxiously awaited the Ramadan TV programs which were good and enough quality programming, but today the present programs just talk about politics and how this person slaps that one across the face and how the later pricks the other. There is nothing interesting, so the best thing to do is to shut the TV off.</p> |

Obviously, the metaphorical implicature *هَذَاكَ يَنْحِزُ فِي هَذَاكَ وَهَذَاكَ يَلْطِمُ فِي هَذَاكَ* (hatha yeltum fi hathak wahathak yenkhez fi hathak) (the literal translation: this person slaps that one across the face and how the later pricks the other!) is grasped by the use of the Yemeni Arabic verbs " يَلْطِمُ " (slap) and " يَنْحِزُ " (prick) as they flout the quality maxim. At face value, it seems strange and nonsensical to use the verb " يَلْطِمُ " and " يَنْحِزُ " in the above utterance. Furthermore, the use of " يَلْطِمُ " and " يَنْحِزُ " contradicts our established factual background, as mature individuals behave in a sensible and reasonable way as it is expected. Such things cannot further be done because of various social restrictions and principles. The intended meaning of the utterance is that people beat up others and get kicked around for overcoming their opponents. The meaning is that each individual or group facilitates the demonizing of others, which in turn, predisposes public opinion using different methods and styles. In this context, criticism is performed indirectly by metaphor. The implicature is used to implicate discord and conflicts that have arisen among individuals or groups in a society. ((Glucksberg, 2006, p. 74) further points out that:

"metaphors are understood via a three-stage process that begins with

the automatic generation of literal meaning:

1. Derive the literal meaning of the utterance;
2. Assess the meaning against the context of the utterance;
3. If the literal meaning does not make sense in context, seek an alternative meaning that does".

Metaphor and overstatement are two particularized conversational implicatures as well as two devices of the figurative language in Yemeni Arabic language. (Kreuz and Roberts 1993) found in the analysis of figurative language in literary texts that metaphor made up 29% of the instances, while overstatements comprised 27%. These figures serve as valuable indicators of how frequently metaphor and overstatement appear in spoken language. Considering the above discussion, it seems that Yemeni people usually use those types of implicatures in their oral exchanges.

### 7.2 Flouting the Maxim of Quantity

The interpretation of the six examples of conversational implicatures exploited from the quantity maxim is presented as follows:

**Table 10.** Excerpt 10

| Arabic conversation   |
|---|
| الخباطة: أول ما تتعلم الواحدة تتعلم في قطن في أدوات البنات الصغار، تخطي لهن أدوات الصلاة أو أرواب. الجارة: و الله يا أختي أنا نفسي أتعلم هذه المهرة... نفسي من زمان و من عادني اها. |
| Its English translation   |
| Dressmaker: First, you have to learn sewing the cotton cloth such as little girls' pyjamas and prayers' wears.  |
| Neighbour: In fact, I'd have wanted to learn this craft for a long time since I was "a'ah", a signifier (sound) that conveys the meaning of "a little kid" (signified).             |

The utterance *وا من عادني اها* (women a'adani a'ah) "since I was 'a'ah'" is a Yemeni Arabic conversational implicature. There is lack of match between the signifier *اها* "a'ah" and the signified "a little kid", as well as *اها* "a'ah" actually means more than it says. The sound "a'ah" flouts the Quantity maxim since the speaker in the above extract is being under-informative. In this situation, the implicature got conveyed by uttering such a signifier "a'ah". The maxim of Quantity regulates that speakers are expected to offer information that is sufficiently detailed to fulfill the immediate objectives of the interaction. In the conversation above, the neighbour uses the paralinguistic element "a'ah" which is

the verbal effect that accompanies oral language to convey her intention. She did not express her intention directly, but she just said "since I was 'a'ah" to communicate the idea and convey her attitude to the hearer. The function of this utterance is to inform the required information to the addressee. The speaker does not, here, need to say everything, but can rely on her addressee to fill any details that are not explicitly communicated. Consequently, "a'ah" is used to implicate the first years of human life. The speaker has been dreamt to be a dressmaker from an early age. That is, she wanted to learn sewing since she was a little kid.

**Table 11.** Excerpt 11

| <b>Arabic conversation</b>     |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
|                                | كيف تتعامل مع طلابك؟<br>الدكتور: أتعامل مع الطلاب كأبناء و كأخوة، و تعاملنا حالياً مع الطلاب مرتبط بالوضع الذي نمر فيه، من حرب و حصار و ما ترتب على ذلك من تبعات، و لان الطلاب يمروا بأزمة تتفاجأ أن بعض الطلاب يقول لك ما معيش حتى حق النزول، انزل الكلية.  |
| <b>Its English translation</b> |  |
| Interviewer:                   | How do you often deal with your students?  |
| Professor:                     | I often deal with them as though they were children and brothers. Actually, the way we (university teachers) deal with them is closely bound up with the current situation including siege and war, and their passive impact on Yemeni people's everyday lives in general, and university students' in particular. Therefore, we chose to deal with them in such a way. The students are really in crisis. Hence, you would find that some students telling you that they don't have a bus fare to go college. |

The above implicature "do not have a bus fare" (ma ma'aish hataa hag alnuzool) is a particularized one. The indirectness in this situation is captured as the professor gives too little information. He meant more than he said. That is, the students do not have the fare (little money) of bus which is supposed to drive them to college. The professor, here, wants to convey something beyond the words. His evaluation of the students' financial difficulties is perceived by such an utterance. A common conclusion that emerges from this utterance is that the speaker clarified how big a financial crisis and difficult living conditions the university students go through as some students do not even have the bus fare to go college. The intended meaning is that those students are so poor that they cannot pay the bus fees, let alone meeting the cost of the food or even wear. This implicature functions as a kind of informing.

**Table 12.** Excerpt 12

| <b>Arabic conversation</b>     |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
|                                | الجارّة 1: ما هو يميز صنعاء عن حجة؟<br>الجارّة 2: صنعاء جوها حالي، فيها كل شيء... المنتزهات و الحدائق و الصالات الفخمة و المزارع ، و لو تبصري النسوان الكبار في صنعاء كيفهن لايسات، مكياج و معصبات، ما نفسش الا تبسريهن!.  |
| <b>Its English translation</b> |  |
| Neighbour1:                    | What makes Sana'a better than Hajjah?  |
| Neighbour2:                    | Sana'a's weather is nice. Sana'a also has everything; parks, gardens, luxury wedding venues, and farms. In Sana'a, you further find old women, wearing beautiful clothes, make-up, and Osabat (a circle made of embroidered pieces of clothing placed on Yemeni women's heads to be more beautiful). You want to gaze at them for hours! |

The Yemeni Arabic utterance "you want to gaze at them for hours!" (ma nefsesh elaa tebsarihen) is another implicature relating to the Quantity maxim of the cooperative principle. It is a particularized implicature because the speaker flouted the Quantity maxim of the cooperative principle as the amount of information was too little. The speaker, in this situation, intended her

listener to go further in her interpretation than the literal meaning and to assume that she did not mean what she said to be taken literally. Therefore, the proposed meaning of the utterance is that you cannot keep your eyes off that person, scenery, etc; you gaze at them in admiration. In this context, this implicature is used to express the great admiration of Sana'ani old women and what they wear.

**Table 13.** Excerpt 13

|   |
|---|
| <b>Arabic conversation</b>  |
| ليش اخترت هذا الشغل؟<br>صاحب الحرفة: تعرفت على واحد من الرياض بيشتغل هذا العمل و قال لي: تعال جنبي  |
| <b>Its English translation</b>  |
| Interviewer: Why have you chosen to do this work?<br>Handicraft man: Because I've become acquainted with a person lives in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. He has been doing this work. He asked me to get near to him (Ta'al Jenbi). |

The Yemeni Arabic utterance تعال جنبي (Ta'al Jenbi) "get near to me (him)" is also a particularized conversational implicature in relation to the Quantity maxim of cooperative principle. This maxim states that the speaker should make themselves clear by providing the hearer with enough information, so that the speaker's request should be clear in the above utterance. The speaker should not also say neither less nor more than needed. The utterance تعال جنبي "get near to me" flouts this rule, as the sentence meaning, so the literal meaning, does not give enough information to decode the speaker's intended meaning, which in this case was an indirect request. What was said states only that the speaker asked the man to get near him, and does not state anything about offering the job. This implicature is carried through in virtue of contextual features which are not germane to the utterance of the sentence. Such the contextual utterance is used to offer somebody a job. The meaning of this conversational implicature is that the interlocutor asks the handicraft man if he would like to work with him.

**Table 14.** Excerpt 14

|  |
|--|
| <b>Arabic conversation</b>   |
| ما هي المؤهلات اللي لازم تكون عندك عشان تقوم بهذا العمل؟<br>خبرة بس... يعني ما هي المؤهلات! انك تقعد مع ناس شغالين في هذه الشغلة و تراقبهم.  |
| <b>Its English translation</b>   |
| Interviewer: What're the qualifications for this work?<br>Handicraft man: Only experience ...what qualifications! You must've been sitting with people doing the same job and watching them, nothing more. |

The utterance ما هي المؤهلات! (ma hi almua'ahlat) "what (are)the qualifications!" is another Yemeni Arabic particularized conversational implicature which is relating to the maxim of Quantity within cooperative principle. The handicraft man violates the maxim of quantity when he says "what (are)the qualifications! " and he does not give the answer to the query rather he uses the expression "what (are)the qualifications!" that is less informative, but at the same time generated an implicature. By giving this utterance, he succeeds in attracting the interlocutor's attention and generating signs of surprise and amazement risen of asking such a question. The handicraft man felt amazed of being asked such a question. Hence, the meaning is that there are not any qualifications for this job, but you have to spend time watching people doing the same job and acquiring your skills as a handicraft man.

Table 15. Excerpt 15

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>Arabic conversation</b>     | الزميلة 1: كيف البرامج الرمضانية حق تيه السنة؟<br>الزميلة 2: ما هو من برامج!                                   |
| <b>Its English translation</b> | Classmate 1: What do think about the Ramadan TV programs of this year?<br>Classmate 2: What (are) TV programs! |

The utterance!ما هو من برامج!(ma ho men baramej!)"what (are) TV programs!" is further a particularized conversational implicature. The implicature is resulted from flouting the first sub-maxim of Quantity: Ensure your contribution is as informative as necessary. This utterance is less informative as it did not convey the classmate's intent clearly. In this context, the addressee is required to get the meaning and to move from the literal meaning to the intended meaning of a received utterance ما هو من برامج! "what (are) TV programs!". However, the intention behind the utterance is that there are no good and targeted TV programs. In this situation, the Yemeni Arabic utterance!ما هو من+اسم! (what +noun!) is used to express disapproval of what has been taking about. In the present situation, the interlocutor expresses strong disapproval and criticism of the Ramadan TV programs of this year.

In conclusion, the study data that analyzed qualitatively show the main findings. That is, Grice's theory of conversational implicature, to some extent, applies on the Arabic non-standard language (a dialect spoken in Hajjah City). It was also found that flouting the maxims did not occur in every interview. However, the conversation partners exploited the maxims in many of the study interviews. This finding is, to a certain extent, consistent with both studies of Al-Duais's study (2012) and Al-Qaderi's study (2015) regarding the Yemeni Arabic non-standard language. Nevertheless, Gricean four maxims were all flouted in Al-Duais's (ibid) and Al-Qaderi's (ibid) studies.

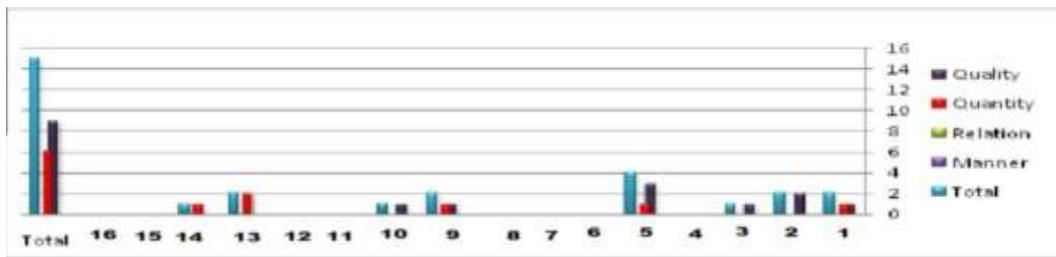
Furthermore, in the present study, the maxims of Quality and Quantity were the only flouted ones. This result, to some extent, accorded with the finding of Al-Qaderi's study (2015) that stated that the maxim of quantity was violated most often, followed in order by the maxims of relation, quality and manner. By contrast, Al-Duais's study (2012) stressed that the four maxims of Gricean cooperative principle were flouted in a balanced manner. This is because Duais's study (ibid) is a case study which limits its ability to generalize findings beyond cases similar to the one examined (Kumar, 2011).

According to this present study, the maxims of Quality and Quantity were the only flouted maxims of the cooperative principle in Yemeni Arabic Language. This finding goes in line with (Hatim 1991) study regarding 'the translation of irony'. He stated that the two of Grice's maxims\_ the maxims of Quantity and Quality \_ significantly influence the translation from English to Arabic. Moreover, the study of (Nassar and Al-Ghrafy 2020) titled "the understandable English conversational implicatures by Yemeni EFL university learners" confirmed that the most of English conversational implicatures perceived by Yemeni university students were the ones that related to Quantity and Quality maxims because of the familiarity of those implicatures in their first language. Moreover, (Merzah 2021) maintained that the maxim of quality was flouted most as it has not been observed by Iraqis in their Facebook comments. This acts as indicator that the most frequently flouted maxims in Arabic language are those two maxims. Additionally, Fadhly's study (2012) which deals with analyzing the presidential interviews of the President of Indonesia based on Grice's cooperative principle theory, the maxim of Quantity was flouted most often. The table below presents the number of maxims flouted in each interview in this current study.

**Table 16.** Number of maxims flouted in each interview

| Interviews | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | Total |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-------|
| Quality    | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 9     |
| Quantity   | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 2  | 1  | 0  | 0  | 6     |
| Relation   | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0     |
| Manner     | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0     |
| Total      | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1  | 0  | 0  | 2  | 1  | 0  | 0  | 15    |

Moreover, Figure 1..pinpoints the number of maxims flouted in each interview and the generated implicatures by the maxims of quality and quantity:



**Figure 1.** Number of maxims flouted in each interview

Significantly, the current study further identified the conversational implicatures in the Hajji dialect (a dialect spoken in Hajjah City, Yemen). However, the studies of (Al-Qaderi, 2015, p. 53) and (Al-Duais 2012) dealt with other different Yemeni dialect (idiolect). They did not also address the issue of kinds and purposes of using such implicatures. Therefore, by knowing the maxims, types, and the functions of those implicatures in the Yemeni Arabic language (Hajji dialect), this may enrich the knowledge of conversational implicature for the teachers and students who should be able to improve effective spoken and communication skills. This study is also expected to contribute to the field of pragmatics, as, to the researcher’s knowledge, research on conversational implicature in Yemeni Arabic remains limited. It is fundamental to emphasize that the findings of this study cannot be generalized to the entire population because the sample of this study was chosen non-randomly (the quota sampling). That is, the population of the study is limited to the City of Hajjah, therefore, the results should be generalized only to the variety of Arabic spoken in this particular Yemeni region. The suggestion for further research is to apply Grice's theory of conversational implicature to other dialects of non-standard Arabic.

**8. conclusion**

According to the present study findings, Grice's Theory of Conversational Implicature was, to some extent, applied to Arabic language (Yemeni Arabic language). Conversational implicature is commonly heard from people who have different ages, educational backgrounds and social rankings. They further showed that out of 16 interviews conducted, implicature occurred in 15 selected utterances which were generated through flouting the maxims of Quality and Quantity, with particularized conversational implicature (PCI) prevailing in everyday interactions among Yemeni speakers, rather than generalized conversational implicature (GCI). This is because all of the study conversations are informal and the study respondents felt relaxed and friendly. As a result, the maxim of Quality was frequently flouted in such conversations. Therefore, the participants often try to achieve communicative purposes in a striking way by using figurative language. Hence, metaphors and overstatements were more likely to appear. Moreover, as it is well established that culture and

language are closely connected and mutually influence one another (Kramsch, 1998; Sharifian & Palmer, 2007). Therefore, as it was highlighted above, generating of overstatement and metaphor is a feature of Classical Arabic language which Yemeni Arabic is an important part of. Metaphor and simile are widely used in spoken Arabic, particularly in Yemeni dialects (Al-Amer et al., 2016). In addition, since the participants mostly used expressions that are less informative, the maxim of quantity was flouted. They relied on their conversation partners to grasp such expressions overloaded with implicatures. Their intentions were to create expectations and to convey their intents in an attractive way. Thus, as the respondents using language freely, the maxims of quality and quantity were always exploited. They further tried to attract interlocutors' attention and plant the seeds of suspense and expectation by not providing the hearers with enough information. Furthermore, the implicatures generated by flouting the maxim of Quality through the use of metaphor function as overstatement, irony, appreciation, self-reliance, admiration, criticism. However, those were created by violating the maxim of Quantity function as informing, admiration, indirect request, surprise and amazement, and criticism. This study helps to understand some of Yemeni socio-cultural aspects. It is also expected to contribute to the pragmatic field, and promote the development of university-level teachers' and students' effective communication skills. As conversational implicature mainly investigates what language users mean, what they do, and how they do it.

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### Conflicts of Interest

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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