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Hyperbol

(_litterær_praksis) Også kalt hyperbel. En stilfigur som består i å overdrive for å framstille noe på en slående måte (Debailly 1992 s. 52). Overdrivelse og overbud (Groddeck 2020 s. 231), f.eks. "Jeg gråter blod", "Smellet kunne vekke døde", "Folket har ventet en evighet på å få en norsk verdensmester", "Vi døde av latter", "Jeg har sagt en million ganger at du ikke skal ha beina på bordet." En figur for overdrivelse og emfase, brukt for å forstørre eller forminske (Fresnault-Deruelle 1997 s. 26). Det brukes ofte superlativer.

Det er en overdrivelse som skal forsterke en effekt og vise talerens/forfatterens følelser, f.eks. begeistring eller forakt. Det er en slags meningsutskeielse (Sollers 1986 s. 262). Uttrykket er overdrevet, som i "Han er gal av kjærlighet" og "Han brukte utrolig mye penger" (Garapon 1988 s. 70). I noen tilfeller kalles også en underdrivelse for en hyperbol, f.eks. en usannsynlig og overdreven forminskelse (Groddeck 2020 s. 232).

"Hyperbole is a figure of speech and literary device that creates heightened effect through deliberate exaggeration. Hyperbole is often a boldly overstated or exaggerated claim or statement that adds emphasis without the intention of being literally true. […] The purpose of hyperbole is to create a larger-than-life effect and overly stress a specific point. Such sentences usually convey an action or sentiment that is generally not practically realistically possible or plausible but helps emphasize an emotion. […] Hyperbole plays an important role in literature because it invigorates our speech and gives us an emotional and mental state as the author or narrator of the text." (Urazbaeva D. Ruzimbaevna i https://zienjournals.com/index.php/tjm/article/view/1398/1157; lesedato 18.06.26)

"Hyperblen kan fremtræde gennem det blotte ordvalg, fx absolutte udtryk som "ingen", "alle", gennem målsangivelser og vurderinger: kæmpemæssig, vidunderlig, og være indeholdt i metaforer og sammenligninger. Overdrivelsen er ofte et udtryk for stærke følelser: begejstring, sønderknuselse, som det fx ses i barokkens salmer og

lejlighedsdigtning. I ekspressionismens lyrik giver hyperblen konfrontations-oplevelsen sproglig form. Men overdrivelsen kan også virke komisk og grotesk og således fungere som et signal for ironi. I eventyr og skæmteviser er hyperblen et fast træk i beskrivelsen af personer og handlinger." (Jørgen Lorenzen i https://metode bogen.dk/index.php?id=8305; lesedato 02.10.26)

"Fogelin (1988: 13) points out that hyperbole is uttered 'with the intention of having it corrected away from the extreme, but still to something *strong*' (emphasis original), e.g., *famished* or *starving* would be corrected to *very hungry*. This is certainly the case, and the amount of contrast that exists between literal and hyperbolic expression will determine how strong an interpretation is chosen. The greater the contrast, the greater the force or intensity of the utterance will be. The contrast thus carries the attitudinal content of the message." (Claridge 2011 s. 12)

"The term hyperbole has ancient origins. It combines one Greek term that means "over" and another that means "cast" or "throw." So hyperbole describes the sense of over-reaching, or grasping beyond what is necessary in order to describe a certain feeling, an experience, or response. There's a great example of hyperbole in the famous scene from *Romeo and Juliet* in which Romeo sees his true love on her balcony in the moonlight. Since falling in love is by no means an everyday experience, so Romeo must communicate with language that reaches past the everyday. He sees her looking up at the sky and says:

Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.

Without hyperbole, you'd have to hear Romeo saying something more grounded and realistic, like "I find myself significantly attracted to that appealing-looking young lady, her eyes are very beautiful indeed." Thankfully, Shakespeare instead employs hyperbole so that Romeo can describe her eyes as bright enough to make the stars in the sky want to offer her a job:

"her eyes in heaven / Would through the airy region stream so bright / That birds would sing and think it were not night." (2.1.19-22)

Juliet's eyes, to Romeo, are so gobsmackingly beautiful that they could be put in the sky in place of the stars – an impossible concept! And what's more, Romeo says that if her eyes were up there in the dark sky with the Big Dipper and Cassiopeia, all the sleeping birds on the planet would feel the light they cast, think that the sun had risen, and then start chirping. […] the hyperbolic claim that Romeo makes in that special

moment helps the audience understand that what he's feeling is anything but commonplace. Simply looking at Juliet is an experience so overwhelming that it defies logic. […] what's happening is larger than life." (Elena Passarello i https://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/wlf/what-hyperbole; lesedato 08.08. 22)

"Hyperbole is a rhetorical trope by means of which statements are made that are obviously exaggerated and thus untrue or unwarranted. […] Although hyperbole exaggerates how things are in reality, and thus involves saying something which is strictly speaking untrue, or unwarranted, it is not considered as a form of lying. […] Since hyperbole can only be recognized if the listener notes that there is a distinction between what is literally said and what is actually the case, the role of context is crucial in the interpretation of hyperbolic utterances (Claridge, 2011, p. 12). […] A first distinction that can be made is that between *basic* and *composite* hyperbole. Basic hyperbolic expressions are non-metaphorical, such as (1). Composite hyperboles, such as the expression 'petrified' in example (2) are not just hyperbolic, but metaphorical as well (Claridge, 2011, pp. 40-41):

(1) It was so cold in the restaurant I was *freezing*.

(2) When I saw him walking down the street I was *petrifyed*.

Hyperbolic expressions can be words (as in example 1 and 2), phrases or clauses. Within the categories of phrasal and clausal hyperboles, there are two regularly occurring patterns: comparison, as in example (3), and repetition, as in example (4) (Claridge, 2011, p. 48).

(3) I avoid beaches *like the plague*.

(4) He put *loads and loads* of cream on his cake." (Henkemans 2013)

Å være sulten som en løve er et eksempel på både en metafor og en hyperbol.

Bruk av hyperbol uttrykker ofte at språket ikke strekker til for å uttrykke noe, f.eks. til å uttale en skuffelse eller beundring (Reboul 2009 s. 130). Men hyperboler kan også være sarkastiske uttalelser, f.eks. hvis en person på en sarkastisk måte kalles "en sann dverg" (overdrivelse av hvor liten personen er) (Dolores og García 2013 s. 15).

"Hyperboles involving extremes are the most obvious ones to recognise (often without or with only minimal context) and perhaps the most frequent, but hyperbole could in principle use any part of the scale in order to express something bigger, more, etc., than is the case, as long as the contrast between the stated point and the actual

point is significant, i.e., large enough. A small contrast would mean either that the hyperbole is not registered at all or that the force is so weakened as to be uninteresting for the hearer. It is impossible to fix a general lower limit for hyperbole […] On the other hand, the contrast should perhaps not be too great either (cf. Quintilian (VIII, 6, 73) on the dangers of overdoing it), but the hearer should still be able to see the connection easily – Hübler (1983: 22) calls this the reconcilability of the contrast. Reconcilability means that there are commonsensical links between elements of the factual situation and its exaggerated depiction" (Claridge 2011 s. 9-10).

"Hyperbole and overstatement are often used interchangeably, and they can serve as synonyms foreach other. However, overstatement and hyperbole have subtle differences in their use and intended effect. An overstatement is an exaggeration or a statement in excess of what most would consider reasonable. A hyperbole is also an exaggeration, yet it is often more extreme than an overstatement and its intended effect is as a literary or rhetorical device. Both overstatement and hyperbole are figures of speech and are not meant to be understood literally. […] The statement that his words are music could be an overstatement but not always. Hence it is a metaphor. However, to say that his words are the greatest melody that was ever heard is an exaggeration and this is hyperbole, which is always meant to exaggerate things. As hyperbole is meant to overstate and exaggerate things, it is also meant to bring humor. Therefore, using hyperbole in satire makes things or ideas or persons larger than life or lesser than life with exaggeration or even understatement. […] Hyperbole is effective as a literary device in many ways. By exaggerating something in an extreme way, whether it is a character's traits, writer's tone, theme, or idea, hyperbole can capture a reader's attention. In addition, it can cause the reader to question a narrator's reliability, reflect on the writer's true intention, or provide a level of absurd humor for entertainment." (Urazbaeva D. Ruzimbaevna i https://zienjournals.com/index.php/tjm/article/view/1398/1157; lesedato 18.06.26)

"Overstatement can take various forms: the lexico-grammatical repertoire for hyperbole includes numerical expressions, expressions of spatial extent, intensifying and extreme adjectives and adverbs, comparatives and superlatives (Spitzbardt 1963). According to McCarthy and Carter hyperbolic utterances often describe entities and events in the most extreme way possible (2004, p. 157). They contain lexical items such as *completely*, *every time*, and *everyone*." (Henkemans 2013)

"Classical rhetoric had a long afterlife; it was influential and in use up to at least the eighteenth century, and this applies in particular to the part of elocution. Therefore, I would like to start this section with a political speech from the early eighteenth century. It is the speech John Hamilton, second Lord Belhaven and Stenton, delivered in November 1706 to the Scottish parliament in the context of the debate about the

proposed union between England and Scotland. The issue was an extremely important one, with potentially very grave consequences, whichever way the decision would fall, and, significantly, the decision was by no means a foregone conclusion. Any contribution to the ongoing debate could influence the final vote. However, given the final outcome, Swartz's assumption that hyperbole is a resource of lost causes used by speakers in the view of formidable opposition (1976: 114) is also relevant here. Lord Belhaven was arguing strongly against the union, which meant that he had to emphasise the positive aspects of an independent Scotland and the negative aspects of a Scotland within the union. In doing this, he applied various maximisation and hyperbolic strategies. One might think that it is hard to exaggerate, given an event that is of such supreme importance, but in fact, almost 10 per cent of the whole speech can be regarded as more or less clearly hyperbolic in nature. The beginning of the speech is already noteworthy in this respect. He started his speech with the following thirteen visionary statements, each beginning *I think I see*, which paint the future of Scotland in the union in very dark colours, partly in contrast to a glorious past, and which contain various very extreme statements." (Claudia Claridge i https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/hyperbole-in-english/rhetoric-of-hyperbole/2897CCEA4F15FA3573E56192BF7DD93; lesedato 18.06.26)

En såkalt "rosende hyperbol" er overdrevet og ironisk ros. Jo mer overdrevet de rosende ordene er, jo større er muligheten for at ytringen oppfattes som ironisk (Bähler, Gantert og Imboden 2008 s. 56).

"Apart from with metaphor, hyperbole may also be combined with other tropes and figures, such as for instance rhetorical questions and irony. An example of a combination of hyperbole and irony could be: "He managed not to spill any egg on his shirt. A heroic feat"." (Henkemans 2013)

"Jeg har ventet evig" er både en hyperbol og en synekdoke (del for helhet), fordi det omfattende "evig" står for "lenge" som i tid er en del av evigheten (Groddeck 2020 s. 232).

Det er "en forstørrelse gjennom billedlighet. Som nevnt karakteriseres ofte barokkstilen som hyperbolsk. Se igjen Petter Dass' "Herre Gud! dit dyre Navn og Ære". […] Ville vi f.eks. i et nordnorsk miljø berette slik: - Der kommer Jens Olsen løpende nedover den våte marka så sølesputen står...? Denne versjonen er vel ikke usannsynlig: - Der kjem han Jens settanes nedetter våtmarska så sjettauren står som en partiell solformørkels' omkring mannj. […] I hverdagen gjør vi ofte bruk av forstørrende ord eller orddeler: veldig, enorm, kolossal, rå-sterk, gør-dårlig osv." (Texmo 1982 s. 59)

Det kan være tallhyperbol ("titusen" i stedet for "mange") og bildehyperbol ("mitt gjesp er like stort som hele verden") (Gehse 1993 s. 53).

"A favoured demonstration is a 'human tide' whereas an unfavoured one is a 'mob rampage'. We can always look for the use of hyperbole in texts and think about what they are used to conceal and how they evaluate persons, places and events." (https://semioticon.com/sio/files/downloads/2012/01/Lectre_7_Rhetorical_Tropes11.pdf; lesedato 03.05.18)

"According to Norrick, by using hyperbole the speaker communicates 'that his utterance *seems to him* to literally represent the objective state of affairs, given his emotional involvement' (Norrick, 1982, p. 172)." (Henkemans 2013)

"Claridge adds that one of the characteristics of hyperbole is that it can *at the same time* emphasize something and convey emotions. Although emotions are important in the case of hyperbole, and the trope is therefore often associated with pathos in particular, Claridge argues that this trope can have an influence on all of the three Aristotelian aspects of persuasion, logos, pathos and ethos: "With respect to *logos*, it can be useful to maximize or hyperbolically inflate some aspects of proofs while downplaying others […] With respect to *pathos*, hyperbole can make things appear more important, more frightening or more desirable, thus arousing specific attitudes and feelings. […] Finally, with respect to *ethos*, a constantly exaggerating speaker may appear untrustworthy […] while one who always minimizes may not be convincing, or boring; the degree of hyperbole may need to be carefully calibrated." (Claridge 2011, p. 217) In classical rhetoric, hyperbole and other forms of amplification were already seen as techniques that can be used to exaggerate certain facts or value judgements and thereby strengthen the arguer's defence or attack. […] Such a role is given to hyperbole and amplification in Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*, in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, and in Cicero's *De Oratore*." (Henkemans 2013)

"Hyperbole is commonly used even by ignorant people and peasants, which is understandable, as all people are by nature inclined to magnify or to minimise things and nobody is content to stick to what is really the case. We tolerate this habit, because we are not really asserting facts." (den romerske retorikkeksperten Quintilian sitert fra Claridge 2011 s. 1)

En "adynaton" er en type hyperbol som uttrykker umuligheter og ikke-realisme (Fresnault-Deruelle 1997 s. 26). "A declaration of impossibility, usually in terms of an exaggerated comparison. Sometimes, the expression of the impossibility of expression. Examples: I will sooner have a beard grow in the palm of my hand than he shall get one of his cheek, – Shakespeare *2 Henry IV* 1.2.20-22; I cannot speak enough

of this content / It stops me here; it is too much of joy. – Shakespeare, *Othello* 2.1.196-97" (http://rhetoric.byu.edu/figures/a/adynaton.htm; lesedato 21.09.12).

Donald Trump ga ut en bok i 1987, mange år før han ble president i USA, der han anbefaler bruk av hyperboler. " "I Call It Truthful Hyperbole": The Most Popular Quotes From Trump's "The Art of the Deal". The most-highlighted excerpts from Trump's book take on new meaning, given the way he ran his campaign – and is running America. […] In 1987, Donald Trump published *The Art of the Deal*, a 402-page book outlining his worldview and strategies for making what he was known for at the time: deals. […] "The final key to the way I promote is bravado. I play to people's fantasies. People may not always think big themselves, but they can still get very excited by those who do. That's why a little hyperbole never hurts. People want to believe that something is the biggest and the greatest and the most spectacular. I call it truthful hyperbole. It's an innocent form of exaggeration – and a very effective form of promotion." " (Emily Price i https://www.fast company.com/3068552/i-call-it-truthful-hyperbole-the-most-popular-quotes-from-trumps-the-art-of-the-deal; lesedato 03.09.18)

"[S]ince many hyperbolic expressions possess a certain vagueness, they may be used by speakers as a way of avoiding to commit themselves to a precise specification of quantity or size. […] hyperbole is a form of indirect language use, which means that the arguer cannot be held committed to the literal speech act. This may, however, make it difficult in some cases to establish to what exactly the arguer can be held committed. […] Hyperbole can also be used to exaggerate the number of people who agree on some issue, so that an argument can be presented as an undeniable fact or starting point. This can be a strategy to evade the burden of proof. […] the use of hyperbole can in some cases be problematic because of its vagueness, which can lead to committing fallacies such as misusing unclearness, or immunizing one's arguments against criticism. […] In the argumentation stage the arguer's arguments can be made to look stronger by means of exaggeration. Also, criticism can be put forward in a more forceful way, either by ascribing more to an arguer than he can be held committed to, or by exaggerating the criticism in such a way that it becomes more difficult for those that are attacked to defend themselves against the criticism." (Henkemans 2013)

"Emphasis as such is not dependent on a degree scale, but generally heightens the force of the proposition and marks the intensity of speaker involvement and commitment. This means that while the speaker is certainly not bound to the literal meaning of his utterance, s/he is committed to the deeper emotional and interactional, thus social, truth of the statement. Emphasis or intensity is an automatic effect of hyperbole and certainly its *raison d'être*" (Claridge 2011 s. 12).

"In a corpus study analysis of the rhetorical functions of hyperbole in ordinary conversations, Cano Mora found that many hyperbolic utterances were used on the one hand to praise someone or to approve of something and on the other to complain, attack and criticize someone or something (2006, p. 205). A similar observation is made by Claridge, who found that particularly in a political context hyperbole is used for such purposes as "emphasising the seriousness of the situation, the urgency of action, criticising the political opponent and praising one's own party or policies" (2011, p. 265). […] Cano Mora found that emphasis was by far the most important function of hyperbole, followed by positive and negative evaluation. Other more or less prominent functions were expression of surprise, simplification, interest intensification, contrast of differences and humour (2006, p. 199)." (Henkemans 2013)

Sirkusplakater har ofte vist bilder preget av visuelle hyperboler, med scener som knapt lar seg realisere og som kan føre til skuffelse hos dem som kjøper billett (Fresnault-Deruelle 1997 s. 160). I karikaturer er det svært vanlig med hyperboler, så mange at de utgjør en hel "overdrivelses-estetikk".

"A German weekly called all politicians 'artists of exaggeration' (*Übertreibungs-künstler*) and suggested a reciprocal relationship between the use of hyperbole and a politician's success (*Die Zeit* 38, 2006). Politicians use overstatement for purposes which are often regarded as manipulative and deceiving by the public at large, such as denouncing the political opponent or praising their own achievements. Also, they may use it for producing points in quotable catchphrases, which are very memorable but through their briefness often implausibly exaggerated. A German politician, for example, once used the argument of a possible *Steuererklärung auf dem Bierdeckel* 'inland revenue declaration short enough to fit on a beer mat' in favour of his proposed tax reform. In this negative interpretation, hyperbole moves close to hype 'deception, publicity stunt' (cf. OED), which, though etymologically apparently unrelated, is not uncommonly understood to contain an element of exaggeration" (Claudia Claridge i https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/hyperbole-in-english/rhetoric-of-hyperbole/2897CCEA4F15FA3573E356192BF7DD93; lesedato 18.06. 26).

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