

## Pragmatic Deficits in Iraqi Patients with Schizophrenia: A Descriptive Study

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### Abstract

Patients with schizophrenia often experience impairments in several cognitive domains. One domain of particular interest is pragmatics, i.e., the ability to match language to context. This study aims at (a) investigating the pragmatic abilities of Iraqi patients with schizophrenia on both the production and comprehension level; (b) identifying which Grice's (1975) maxims do those patients most frequently violate; and (c) determining which of the demographic variables (gender, education, and age) has an influence on both the production and comprehension performance and violations. To this end, thirty patients were required to orally perform six pragmatic tasks using the Assessment of Pragmatic Abilities and Cognitive Substrates (APACS) (Arcara & Bambini, 2016). Results revealed that first, patients' performance in comprehension is worse than that in production. Secondly, the most frequently violated maxim is that of quality. Thirdly, there were statistically substantial differences among patients on the comprehension level for education and age only, whereas results of violations of Grice's maxims recorded significant differences for all the three variables. The study concluded that people with schizophrenia might suffer from pragmatic deficits, particularly on the comprehension level, and that the degree of the difficulty of the task assigned along with the three variables could play a vital role in the degree of their performance. The findings of this study may be applied to the development of effective treatment strategies in schizophrenia.

**Keywords:** APACS, Grice's maxims, Iraqi patients, pragmatic deficits, schizophrenia

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