
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Redundancy and Ellipsis in the Translation into English of Selected Arabic Media Texts

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ABSTRACT

Redundancy and ellipsis are linguistic features used to ease language shift from the Source Text to the Target Text in translation. The problematic nature of redundancy stems from socio-cultural differences, religious, and linguistic issues. Languages differ on the degree of tolerance to redundancy; Arabic for example favors redundancy while English considers it a defect in writing. This study investigates how translation students in the Minor Translation Program at the University of Bahrain transfer these two elements in their translation of media texts into English. A news item loaded with redundancy in Arabic and 7 ellipsed headlines were distributed to the sample. The study revealed that a great degree of redundancy in both texts was transferred at the clausal and phrasal levels and a total absence of ellipsis in the news items. The ellipsed texts in the headlines were also loaded with redundancy (62% of the texts) and fewer ellipsed texts were translated correctly (38% were ellipsed) in the headline texts. The results reflect great interference from L1 to L2 translated texts. This is attributed to the impact played by L1 in translation.

KEYWORDS

Redundancy, Ellipsis, Source Text, Target Text, Genre, Media Headlines, Strategies.

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1. Introduction

Redundancy and ellipsis are linguistic features and translation techniques used by various translators to ease the language shift from the Source Text (ST) to the Target Text (TT). Yet, various translators have attempted to identify all related elements of both techniques to overcome their problematic nature which stems from socio-cultural differences, religious and linguistic issues (Assalam and Budiharjo, 2020). Redundancy and ellipsis have a very important functional role in translation. For instance, redundancy and ellipsis appear as cohesive devices that help facilitate overall comprehension and contribute to text-building and organization.

Ghazala (2008) defines redundancy as "the use of unnecessary extra words to express something. It is a long boring way of expressing meaning using two, three or more words instead of one word only" (p.253).

Miller (1963) defines redundancy as "superfluous information due to iteration of message components and their interdependence" (cited in Chernov, 1992). Lastly, Heltai (2005) gave a comprehensive description of redundancy by saying that "Redundancy is the expression of the same information or meaning component more than once or the expression of a piece of information or the meaning component that is felt to be so self-evident and it is best left to be inferred from other linguistic items in the utterance (discourse) or the situation and/or general world knowledge" (p.245).

Ellipsis is the process of omission or deletion of words or utterances in a text, which may have a negative and positive impact depending on the given information. Nezam & Pirnajmuddin (2012), Sujono (2014), Arhire (2018), and Lestari (2018) studied ellipsis to reveal to what extent it may or may not be operational.

One major factor in producing redundancy and ellipsis is the effect of the language learners' first language on the second language, which is also known as language interference. Any component of language can be affected, including grammar, vocabulary, accent, spelling, and so on. The larger the disparity between the two languages, the more adverse the interference effects are likely to be. It will inevitably happen in any setting when someone speaks a second language improperly. Arabic, belonging to Semitic languages is markedly different from English, which is an Indo-European language.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Arab students encounter many problems in translating Arabic texts into English. Among these is the habit to transfer the ST features and components into the TT literally. This results in translation of poor quality due to differences between languages. In addition, they may face linguistic competence problems, language differences, lack of training and inadequate practice, and above all lack of strategies. Among the serious issues, students may encounter during translation is how to make the ST look natural and acceptable to the reader in the TL.

Additionally, L1 learner's preconceived knowledge about their language is employed in the transfer to L2 causing inappropriate and even erroneous results in the process of transfer.

Furthermore, redundancy and ellipsis pose some problems to inexperienced translators, which results in making incorrect decisions in the selection of suitable strategies. Hence, this research will attempt to provide an inclusive overview of all the related aspects of ellipsis and redundancy while focusing on selected media texts. The research will also investigate the effect of specific L1 features in the process of translation to find certain solutions to such negative effects. To be specific, the researchers will study redundancy and ellipsis in translating selected media texts in which various translation strategies may be employed.

1.2 Research Questions

- 1- What are the most effective strategies employed in the translation of redundancy and ellipsis?
- 2- Is there a correlation between students' level of language competence and their Grade Point Average?
- 3- Are the functions that redundancy and ellipsis serve in the source text transferred appropriately by students in their translation of selected media texts?

2. Literature Review

Not many studies have dealt with redundancy and ellipsis in translated texts, particularly from Arabic. The studies included in this research only show the theoretical aspect of both redundancy and ellipsis in general. However, studies dealing with these elements in students' works are very limited. Only one study by Jassim M. Hassan (1992) discussed the practical aspect of redundancy and ellipsis concerning students' translation. This section will present previous studies and research on various types and functions of redundancy and ellipsis in translation, features of written and spoken Arabic and English, and viewing how ellipsis is a product of redundancy. These elements have many things in common which is the effect they hold on the translation process in one way or another.

The current study therefore will attempt to reveal the various strategies, approaches, and inaccuracies that students translated texts reveal in the final product. This will help to track sources of errors, gaps in training, and the impact of L1 as a source language on the target texts. The study explores issues related to the cultural impact on the translated texts' final product as cultures and languages have their own peculiarities. Redundancy may be used differently by different cultures and languages, and it may differ from genre to genre, and whether it is spoken or written.

2.1 Types and Functions of Redundancy

This section discusses the diverse types and functions of redundancy to understand its role in the translation process and to know the methodology used in interpreting the text.

2.1.1 Types of Redundancy

Chernov (1992) was one of the first scholars that dealt with subjective and objective redundancy. Objective redundancy indicates that certain pieces of information are objectively redundant due to their predictable behavior, since they are expressed formerly, or the information is completely predictable via interdependency. Subjective redundancy is the redundant words or utterances to distinctive recipients throughout the capacity of inferencing. He also adds that subjective redundancy has to be differentiated from felt or apparent redundancy, as discourse whether written or oral is to some degree always redundant.

In another study conducted by Najjar (2015), he showcases another set of redundancy, specifically Arabic redundancy. In his study, he cites Dickins et al (2002) book *Thinking Arabic Translation*, in which two main parts of redundancy in Arabic are discussed: lexical, phrase, and morphological. The following categories are from Dickins et al's (2002) book.

- Lexical redundancy: a common feature that gives a near-synonym of the exact word.

- Phrase redundancy: The repetition of a phrase several times in one context. Jawad (2009) comments that in Arabic, the repetition of the same phrase makes lexical cohesion maintained (p.10).
- Morphological redundancy: One of the significant classes of redundancy in Arabic is classified mainly into three classes: root, pattern, and suffix redundancy.

2.1.2 Functions of Redundancy

The functions of redundancy contribute significantly to the source text, as it plays a role linguistically, lexically, semantically, and rhetorically. According to Gillete and Wit (1999), redundancy is very functional because it dissolves ambiguity, develops comprehensibility, gives the text a poetic effect to beautify it and separates certain linguistic features to demonstrate them clearly to the target audience. Heltai (2005) also discusses the role of redundancy by showcasing its vitality via four main motives: (a) redundancy may be compulsory because some readers have memory limitations, (b) it allows time for comfortable processing by decreasing information density, (c) it can protect the loss of meaning and failure of communication and (d) presents emphasis which is realized through repetition or insertion of normally ellipsed items.

Hassan (1992) thinks that redundancy functions positively in translation since it contributes to making the meaning coherent as well as cohesive in structure. Madsen and Bown (1978) summarize the function of redundancy by saying that it presents content information in a less concentrated manner or in a way that can be measured at a lower rate, hence, making the reader have the capability of assimilating it (p. 159).

2.2 Types of Ellipsis

Ellipsis, on the other hand, has multiple types in texts in the translation process and has its own categorization. For instance, the first categorization is grammatical, semantic, and pragmatic (Heltai, 2005). The second categorization is predicate, nominal and clausal (Assalam and Budiharjo 2020).

Grammatical ellipsis is viewed as the deletion of compulsory grammatical elements. Yet, the ellipsed component has to be recovered through (a) other parts of the text, (b) comprehension of syntactic rules which is structural ellipsis, and (c) situational ellipsis which conversations heavily rely on, as spoken discourse ellipses non-significant elements.

Moreover, semantic ellipsis is the omission of components that are not obligatory but contain information relevant to a given context. It is more noteworthy and important than grammatical ellipsis.

Lastly, pragmatic ellipsis is identified as the world knowledge, involving cultural comprehension which is systematized into schemas and scenarios. Information that can be extracted from schemas, scenarios and/or certain situations is mostly ellipsed or presented only implicitly or indirectly.

2.3 Ellipsis: A Product of Redundancy

The relationship between redundancy and ellipsis is apparent in the translational process between two languages, considering the characteristics or features of both in terms of culture, linguistic boundaries, structural complexity, and so on. Ellipsis is a translational product of redundancy in the sense that ellipsis can be achieved when redundancy is not applied correctly to a text which is evident in the case of translating Arabic to English. Jassim Hassan, an Arab scholar conducted a study entitled '*Redundancy and Translation with Application to Arabic and English*' (1992). In his study, he showcased various concepts with their justification for the roots of the relation between redundancy and ellipsis. The description of redundancy and ellipsis in his own wording is economy in language (ellipsis) and communication load (redundancy).

Hassan (1992) showcases a set of examples. He gave his students some Arabic expanded structures to translate into highly reduced complex noun phrases to investigate the stylistic contrasts and how students attempted to preserve the expanded structures in their translation process.

The following are examples of his students' translations from English to Arabic and then to English.

- 1- The 200-milligram gold tablet drug.

(ان العقار عبارة عن أقراص من الذهب كل قرص يحتوي على ٢٠٠ ملغم من الذهب)

- 2- The first permanent artificial heart fitted person, Dr. Barney Clark.

(الدكتور بارني كلارك وهو اول شخص يزرع له قلب اصطناعي دائم)

- 3- Yesterday's early attacks.

(النوبات التي حدثت في وقت مبكر)

4- Heart surgery patients

(المرضى الذين تجرى لهم عمليات جراحية في القلب)

5- The 37 year-old conservative leader.

(زعيم المحافظين البالغ من العمر ٣٧ عاماً)

6- The 155 page, 44.000 word document.

(الوثيقة التي تضم ١٥٥ صفحة و٤٤ الف كلمة)

7- Our 'Buy British' Sales Campaign

(حملة المبيعات التي قمنا بها من أجل شراء ما هو بريطاني المنشأ)

2.4 Features of Written and Spoken Arabic and English

Knowing the main features of written and spoken Arabic and English contributes to understanding each language's nature and linguistic behavior. Thus we know how to approach each language in the translation process to avoid committing errors. In addition, it is important to know the features of languages to understand their nature and to show that redundancy and ellipsis can have a strong connection while exploring the differences between languages. There are various elements that play a role in this field, for instance, culture and religion. In Arabic, there is an extensive usage of honorific terms as Al-Jalili (2000) emphasizes in his study and references to religious texts i.e., Al-Quran and prophet's tradition.

To start with, all features mentioned below are extracted from Mahmoud's (2019) study.

Spoken English has various features such as the following:

- According to Jalili (2000), it relies on the pitch to be aware of what the speaker is saying by listening to his pitch as well as viewing his facial expressions (p.38).
- According to Brown and Yule (1985), the use of thinking gaps (pauses) whether they are long or short (p.20).
- The usage of exaggeration.
- The use of certain expressions to indicate certain conditions.

Written English is distinguished by the following features:

- The correct use of punctuation such as commas, full stops, and inverted commas.
- According to Al-Jalili (2000), written English is simplified and non-sophisticated which offers the least degree of vagueness (p.44).
- English lacks flexibility in the shapes of its letters
- and needs well-organization and arrangement of its elements.
- According to Kroll and Vann (1981), the rational organization of thoughts and aims of the writer (p.3).

After covering all the features of spoken and written English, the researcher will now present the features of Spoken Arabic. Spoken Arabic is characterized by the following:

- According to Stubbs (1983), the usage of kinship terms or any other distinguishing features of the person, the speaker, and the hearer are talking about (p.22).
- The serious use of Quranic verses and proverbs.
- The use of pronouns to express not only geographical distance but also social distance.
- Similar to English, Arabic uses pitch to express feelings, whether it be negative or positive.
- The use of gap fillers which exists in swearing (والله) (والقرآن).

Written Arabic is characterized by the following:

- Written Arabic is richer than English in aesthetic tools.
- Similar to Written English, the Arabic language depends on naturalness, simplicity, and non-complicated style. However, there is an exception for poets.
- The use of the definite article (ال) to refer to (the), (a), and (an).

3. Methodology

This section presents the methods used to collect data, samples, and procedure.

3.1 Participants

The participants used to collect data for this research were DELL students minoring in Translation. The participants were 3rd and 4th-year students who had completed several credits in their minor and were chosen to target students who are more experienced in their minor. The total number of students is (82) students, 69 females and 13 males.

3.2 Research Methods

The study uses a mixed approach: qualitative and quantitative. It contains a test that is divided into two parts and an interview with DELL students. On one hand, the two parts were concerned with the practical aspect of translating Arabic media texts to investigate how students translate and render redundancy and ellipsis. On the other hand, the interview aimed at exploring the theoretical aspect of how students dealt with redundancy and ellipsis to gain more information since not a lot of theoretical research has been conducted on their opinion. Both methods were deemed necessary to gain full access to how students view and render these elements due to their complex translational behavior. Furthermore, the methodology focuses more on how DELL students approach both redundancy and ellipsis to gain insight into the thought process that comes to their mind as they are translating, as well as to find out if they can render them properly to keep all elements comprehensible for the reader.

3.2.1 Text Analysis

A test has been distributed to DELL students, both remotely and physically. Also, plagiarism has been checked for the online test that to guarantee the reliability of the theoretical framework. The test is divided into two parts; the first part includes 7 media headlines from different sources such as BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation), Gulf News, and France 24. These headlines were chosen carefully to showcase whether students can render the ellipted elements in the headlines from Arabic to English while maintaining all elements.

The second part was a text consisting of a headline and 3 paragraphs, regarding the divorce of the famous Egyptian actress Yasmin Sabri and Egyptian businessman Ahmed Abu Hashima. This text was selected due to its seemingly complex nature in terms of redundant phrases, words as well as referents. The aim of both parts is to see students' ability to decipher both aspects from Arabic to English and know the strategy that lies behind such a translation process. Additionally, students' translations were compared to the ST to see how they rendered the text into English.

3.3 Procedure

The text analysis test was conducted physically at the University Campus and remotely via Blackboard to gain a larger sample. Also, the interviews were conducted remotely via WhatsApp to gain students' theoretical knowledge regarding redundancy and ellipsis.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the results and analysis of the research that are mainly related to redundancy and ellipsis.

As mentioned in Section 1, this study focuses on exploring redundancy and ellipsis in students' translations. In addition, it will reveal the impact of L1 on L2 as it appears from their translations in terms of inaccuracies, strategies, and approaches employed by them. The results will support the argument that the frequent use of redundancy in students' writings and the absence of ellipsis indicate a lack of knowledge and weakness in certain areas as well as the influence of L1 on L2, and the degree of freedom students manipulate during the process of translation. Additionally, the analysis will showcase whether there are other factors affecting students' translations.

The results are discussed in the ST and the TT regarding the frequency of redundant phrases, pertinent characteristics to the similarity of the number of frequencies, punctuation marks used, and students' level of performance as reflected in their Grade Point Average in their program. There will also be a discussion on whether students' language performance and Grade Point Average have any impact on the frequency or ellipsis. Results are based on the appropriate use of ellipsis, clarity, and other qualities found, such as literal translation, ambiguity, and the source of inaccuracy.

4.1 Results related to Redundancy

Table 1: Number of Frequencies of Phrases and Words in the ST.

Million	9
Cost	9
Pounds	7
Divorce	5
Egyptian	13
Official	4
Verbs	4
Artist/actress	2
Businessman	3
Ahmed	5
Yasmin	5

This table is compared with the Means of students' answers in the TTs to see whether the figures have any relation. This will indicate the impact of L1 on L2 as well as a sign of students' strategies in translation. It also gives a clue to other things related to ST production.

Table 2: Number of Frequencies of Phrases and Words in the TT.

Million	8.541
Cost	6.833
Pounds	6.875
Divorce	5.395
Egyptian	7.95
Official	3.5
Verbs	3.437
Artist/actress	1.729
Businessman	2.312
Ahmed	4.312
Yasmin	4.291

The comparison between the two texts shows that there is a correlation in almost all redundant items in the sample. The figures are almost similar and reflect great resemblance between both. Consequently, it is clear that students were very similar in terms of word frequency, despite English being a brief language characterized by not adding any extra information. However, the frequency level is not different in the TT which reflects that students do not focus on the characteristics of the English language and translated literally, given the fact that some words were less frequent than in the ST.

When students feel that a text is redundant, they resort to literal translation because students feel more safe translating literally than actually focusing on the meaning.

In the following section, a presentation of the overall figures related to redundancy per text will be illustrated.

Table 3: Frequency of Redundancy of Words in the Target Text for All Students

Words	Total	Average
Yasmin	206	4.29
Ahmed	207	4.31
Businessman	111	2.31
Artist/actress	83	1.72
Verbs	165	3.43
Official	168	3.5
Egyptian	382	7.95
Divorce	259	5.39
Pounds	330	6.87
Cost	328	6.83
Million	410	8.54

This table displays the frequency of redundant words and phrases as produced by students in detail. It illustrates the words that the researcher focused on in terms of redundancy in the text. This will reveal the differences between all students' texts to see how their overall performance was. The total number of male students represents (14.5%) of the sample and the rest (85.5%) are females. As to GPA, only 7 students have a score above 2.75 and the rest is below 2.75. The figures reflected in this table show that students have been affected by L1 in terms of repeating the same phrase, proper nouns, and adjectives.

4.2 Results related to Ellipsis

The most common errors that may have affected students' performance are listed with some examples:

1. Verbatim translation
2. Ambiguity
3. Articles
4. Lexical errors
5. Syntactic errors
6. Semantic errors

To focus on the main variables, the researcher will limit the results to redundancy, ellipsis, and translational approaches.

Table 4: Correct and Incorrect Ellipsis, Redundancy, and Frequency Error.

	Total	Percentage
No. of Students	34	-
Correct Ellipsis	91	38%
Incorrect Ellipsis and Redundancy	147	62%
Frequency Error	122	-

The correct ellipsis is the correct implementation of ellipsis in the media headline made by students and, the incorrect ellipsis and redundancy are the mistakes and redundant words used by students.

As seen from the above table, the percentage of errors in ellipted headlines is 62% and the correct ellipted headlines is 38%. This result proves the assumption that there is a problem with translating ellipsis in general since the headlines are already ellipted in the ST. In addition, the analysis revealed various errors at the syntactic, semantic, and lexical levels.

This reflects that students need to improve linguistically before dealing with translation, as their performance presents that their level of general knowledge, writing skills, translation strategies, and comprehension does not meet the expected level of translators or writers. Hence, students need to be more comprehensive when it comes to such variables to excel in their field.

5. Conclusion

This study revealed various issues to people concerned with language and translation studies be it teachers, students, translators, and researchers. In the first place, it shed some light on a serious issue related to the impact of L1 on L2. A person who lives and studies in his language must build certain concepts and rules that may affect his performance when he speaks or writes another language. Consequently, Arabic speakers transfer certain norms to the target language as the results have shown in the case of redundancy.

The study emphasizes the need to create awareness among students about linguistic differences at the rhetorical level, as many students ignore the characteristics of their mother tongue and focus on L2. Each language has its own characteristics that may affect the process of translation. For example, Arabic tends to accept redundancy to a certain level, while English considers repetition a weak point in writing.

During the analysis of texts, it was found that there were many grammatical mistakes that reflect weaknesses in grammar, spelling, rhetorical rules, and text design. By this, it is meant that students are unaware of the need to transform the style of the text from Arabic into English correctly and appropriately. Most of the texts were similar in their style, tone, presentation, and mechanics. Hence, it is important to train students in genre analysis and stylistics.

Finally, the researchers believe that translation is a complicated mental activity that involves various factors, and therefore, more extensive studies on translation product is needed to improve the performance and the profession. Thus, it is essential to

investigate certain translation strategies deeply to improve students' understanding and performance. In addition, students must be encouraged to be creative and courageous in taking the right decision about their translation techniques and strategies. They must be aware of the need to explore further errors in dictionaries, encyclopedias, and search engines. They also need to know their mistakes and get feedback about their product. This also requires that translation courses should be revised and reorganized. Students also should be consulted about the Minor program and how it is organized.

5.1 Pedagogical Implications

The researcher believes that the results of this study will be of great benefit to translation students in the future, as it presents some practical and theoretical evidence that will contribute to easing the translational process for students. The practical aspect reflects the importance of knowing the genre of media generally, as not many students are aware of the procedure that accompanies translating this particular genre, making them realize that they should only focus on translating the text only, rather than the other components. The theoretical aspect will contribute to developing a realization regarding the genre of media, increasing their level of awareness in terms of knowing how to tackle certain issues in this field. Consequently, genre specifics should be included in the training of students so that they can build their strategies on it.

5.2 Recommendations

This study has tackled an important issue in translation which is redundancy and ellipsis in students' translations. However, it investigated only a limited number of students. Hence, the researcher suggests that such studies need to be conducted on a larger sample which may reflect more significant results, as well as exploring the redundancy and ellipsis aspect of other genres i.e., business, scientific, and legalese. It is advisable to extend the study at a large scale involving different genres to create genre awareness and analysis. In addition, translated works and products are rich in researchable areas that may benefit students and researchers to improve the quality of translation. Translation studies should be enriched through practical research in the field. Nowadays, the field is loaded with applications and research on machine translation that needs extensive investigation. Unfortunately, limited research is conducted on textual features like structure, typography, punctuation, and quality translation. Therefore, it is important to focus on these issues in the future.

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