

# **A Study of 'Pleonasm' with Reference to some Biblical Verses**

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## **Abstract**

This study deals with 'pleonasm' as one of the figures of speech in English. Pleonasm is defined as the use of superfluous words , phrases or sentences in speaking or writing. Such a use often results in repetition of the same idea, as in " I heard the conversation with my ears. ". What is superfluous is the phrase "with my ears" because it repeats a notion which is already part of the meaning of the verb "heard" : One hears with his ears.

In this study, it can be hypothesized that the superfluity of expressions in pleonasm is only apparent .The extra words, phrases or sentences used in pleonasm are not useless. Accordingly, the present study aims at giving a somehow adequate investigation of pleonasm and the phenomenon it describes. Moreover, it aims at identifying the rhetorical functions of this figure of speech in any text and analyzing various verses from the Holy Bible to show the purposes of using it in this selected literary work.

The present study has shown some conclusions , the most important of which is that the superfluous words, phrases and sentences used in pleonasm are not useless at all ; in fact in some situations they can be essential . By repeating part of a message ,pleonasm emphasises or clarifies a particular idea. This conclusion validates the hypothesis above .

The first part of this study is devoted to the theoretical framework of pleonasm. It involves five main sections. Section one presents a description of pleonasm . Section two shows types of pleonasm. Section three offers examples of pleonasm affecting sentences. Section four introduces the rhetorical functions of pleonasm. Section five deals with pleonasm as a fault. The second part of this study provides the practical analysis of the device of pleonasm in some texts which are taken from various books of the Holy Bible . The analysis includes identifying the pleonasms in these texts. Then these pleonasms will be analyzed according to types of pleonasm and the functions it achieves. Finally, the conclusion sums up the results of the study.

## **1. The Concept of Pleonasm**

The term "pleonasm" comes from the Greek for "excess" .It is a figure of speech which belongs to the main category of tropes ( Myers and Wukasch , 2003:279; Keaney and Lamberton ,1996 : 97) .Pleonasm is one of the subspecies of redundancy which is "the umbrella term for superfluity and excess"(Cheney,2005:19).Generally, pleonasm denotes the unnecessary inclusion of words ( Cuddon , 1998 :675; Baldick,2001:195;Crystal , 2010:455). Gill and Dunne ( 2013:5) state that pleonasm is one of the forms of the figure of speech of repetition in which pleonasm repeats the same idea in different words or different grammatical constructions. For instance, a verb may be mirrored by an adverbial phrase:

- (1) Most falsely doth he lie.
- (2) I saw it with my own eyes.

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The given pleonasm examples suggest that pleonasm entails "the addition of a superfluous expression which is already included in that which is said" (Bussmann, 1996:911). In ( 1) *most falsely* gives details already presented by the verb *lie* : To lie is to give false information. In

(2) *with my own eyes* provides information already given by the verb *saw* : One can see with his eyes. Obviously, the expressions in the two examples are superfluous to the literal meaning of the sentences having them .

In discussing the relationship between the head of a construction and any dependent item ,Cruse ( 1986:105) says that a dependent item is expected to convey to a construction semantic qualities not already expressed in the head. Cruse ( ibid.) adds that if the dependent item expresses nothing new, the consequential combination is pleonastic. Under such circumstances , one can say that "the head encapsulates the meaning of the dependent item"( ibid.). Accordingly, in

(3) Essex had a sole monopoly of the sweet wines. (Gill and Dunne , 2013:5)

the dependent item ( or adjective ) " sole" is distinctly pleonastic since it introduces nothing new . The trait "sole" is contained in the head " monopoly". Monopoly of the sweet wines occurs when there is only one seller.

Murphy and Koskela ( 2010:121) , Cruse ( 2006: 128) and Maienborn et al. (2011: 466) state that pleonasms are semantically anomalous or odd. According to Murphy and Koskela ( 2010:121) , pleonasms have this feature because they merely function as a copy of a property that is already part of the definition of the constituent they modify .For instance :

( 4) I kicked it with my foot.

The meaning of " kick" includes the fact that it is done with one's foot (Cruse , 2006 : 128 ) .This prepositional phrase adds no new information to the sentence . Therefore, the sentence is odd ( or anomalous) (Maienborn et al. ,2011: 466).

However , the sentence " I kicked it with my left foot " is not pleonastic since the modifying expression " with my foot" is made more specific by the adjective "left" . So , the noun "foot" is essential to allow "left" to be specified (Cruse , 2006 : 128 ).

"We know we have a pleonasm," says Quinn (2010 : 103) , "when we can eliminate words without changing meanings. Pleonasms are what blue pencils remove." . Cheney ( 2005:22) adds that deleting a pleonasm would not affect the sentence structure . *Example (4) proves this blatantly* .The deletion of *with my foot* would leave the speaker's meaning undamaged, and he would trust that the listener would not suffer confusion about the ball or anything else being kicked by something else . Further , omitting *this pleonastic phrase would not change the structure of the sentence. The sentence remains grammatical* : I kicked it. After deleting the pleonastic phrase *with my foot*, the sentence "I kicked it" achieves "brevity" which is,

according to Nicolson (1914: 46) , the opposite of pleonasm .Contrasting brevity with pleonasm, Nicolson (ibid.) states that brevity is the employment of no more words than are essential to state one's meaning sufficiently .

## 2. Pleonasm Types

There are two types of pleonasm : syntactic and semantic ( " pleonasm", 2014:3).

### 2.1 Syntactic Pleonasm

Bullinger (n.d.: 431) mentions that pleonasm occurs "when more words are used than the grammar requires". This definition refers to one aspect of pleonasm , i.e. syntactic pleonasm and it suggests that ([syntactic](#)) pleonasm occurs when certain [function words](#) are added in spite of their being grammatically unnecessary to the sentence.

#### 2.1.1 Types of Syntactic Pleonasm

The following are the types of syntactic pleonasm :

##### 2.1.1.1 Pleonastic Subject Pronouns

Normally, a subject pronoun is not needed where the subject is present in the sentence . Sometimes , however, the subject is repeated by means of a personal pronoun later in the sentence. The pleonastic pronoun directly follows the subject ( Hodgson ,1881 : 73; Roscow, 1981: 66). An example is a verse taken from the poem " In Summertime on Bredon" written by A.E. Housman:

(5) The bells they sound so clear.( *ibid.*)

Below are other examples :

(6) Our producer, she is going to New Hampshire. (O'Conner and Kellerman, 2015:1)

(7) That man, he can play on Sunday. (O'Conner and Kellerman, 2015:1)

In all the examples above , the pronoun duplicates the subject: "The bells *they*" ... "our producer, *she*"... "That man, *he*". In other words ,the subject pronouns *they* , *she* and *he* are pleonastic since the sentences in which they are used already have subjects. So, they are grammatically unnecessary.

Such constructions are employed to emphasize the connection between the performer of the action earlier specified and the action itself ( Hodgson,1881 : 73; Roscow, 1981: 66).For example, in ( 5 ) ,the pleonastic subject pronoun is employed to emphasize the relationship between the actor *bells* and their action of sounding obviously.

##### 2.1.1.2 Multiple Affirmation

In English, an affirmative statement can be emphasized by repeated affirmation ( "Pleonasm",2014:5). When one says

(8) I do love you.

one is using double affirmation. The sentence "I love you" is already affirmative, and adding the superfluous "do" only adds emphasis .Hence, it is called **emphatic do** (Stein , 1990: 272). It does not affect the literal meaning of the statement . Do is employed as an

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"empty auxiliary verb" ("Pleonasm",2014:5). Accordingly , it is called **pleonastic do** ( Crystal , 2003 : 357) . Another example is taken from Shakespeare's Twelfth Night:

( 9 ) Not so ,Sir; I do care for something ; but in my conscience, Sir, I do

not care for you. (Stein , 1990: 272)

By using *do* ,the speaker emphasizes the fact that he devotes care to something which is not the listener .

### **2.1.1.3 Multiple Negation**

Repeated negation may be used for emphasis, as in:

(10) There is not nothing wrong with that.

The literal interpretation of this sentence would be "There is something wrong with that". The intended meaning is in fact the contrary: "There is nothing wrong with that" or "There isn't anything wrong with that." The repeated negation is used pleonastically for emphasis.( "Pleonasm",2014:5).

### **2.1.1.4 Double Possession**

An example of this possession phenomenon might be a phrase like, "a friend of mine" (i.e. my friend). Pleonasm here lies in the use of **mine** in place of the usual prepositional pronoun **me**. This phenomenon "has a long history of use by careful writers". ( ibid.)

### **2.1.1.5 Multiple Quality Gradation**

English degrees of comparison, i.e. comparatives and superlatives, are formed through a morphological change to an adjective (e.g. "prettier", "fastest") or a syntactic construction (e.g. "more complex", "most impressive"). Pleonasm is produced by combining both forms for further emphasis: "more bigger" or "bestest". This may be regarded ungrammatical, but is common in informal speech for some English speakers ( ibid.). A further example is taken from Shakespeare's Julius Caesar (concerning Brutus' stabbing of Caesar) :

( 11) This was the most unkindest cut of all. ( ibid.:6)

Surely, Shakespeare is not ignorant of the English rules of comparison. He wants to create a certain effect, i.e. emphasis . He "expresses the degree to which Brutus' unkindness outdid that of all the others". He achieved this pleonastically by using both the adverb 'most' and the superlative ending -est ( "List of Rhetorical Terms" , 2013 :7).

### **2.1.1.6 Emphatic Reflexive Pronouns**

Grammarians talk about emphatic reflexive pronouns when one uses ordinary pronouns with reflexive pronouns (Kperogi, 2013 : 1), as in the following two verses taken from T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land ":

(12) Tell her I bring the horoscope myself :

One must be so careful these days.

(13) I didn't mince my words , I said to her myself,

Hurry up please its time .

Another example is taken from Elster ( 2012: 1)

(14) He himself will go.

Although "myself " and "himself " , in the above examples, are surplus to the grammar of the sentence , they are perfectly correct. They perform an important function: to give emphasis to the pronouns **I** and **he** (Kperogi, 2013 : 1).

### **2.2 Semantic Pleonasm**

Semantic pleonasm is related more to style and usage than to grammar (Elster, 2012: 2). Horberry ( 2010: 33) states that semantic pleonasm shows "a big dollop of redundancy". Linguists usually call it "redundancy" to avert confusion with syntactic pleonasm (Elster, 2012: 2). This kind of pleonasm is so prevalent in everyday language that "it can be difficult to catch without a keen eye (or ear) ("[Semantic pleonasm, or “Is that how you say things up North?”](#), 2011:1 ). Semantic pleonasms come in two forms:

#### **2.2.1 Overlap**

In this kind, "one word's semantic component is subsumed by the other". To put that another way, one word is implied by another. (Stevens, 2007: 28; "pleonasm",2014:6) , as in:

(15) Receive a free gift with every purchase. (One doesn't pay for a gift so it's implied that it's for free.)

(16) Michael Jordan , it is often said, is a famous superstar.( A superstar, by definition, is famous.) ( Moore and Paker, 2004:50)

Vizental ( 2009 :50) describes overlap semantic pleonasm as a kind of pleonasm in which "one word is a hyponym of another". Accordingly, this kind of pleonasm occurs when one employs a specific word that implies a more general term one has used with it( Anson and Schwegler, 1998:425). For instance, the word "colour" is used with its hyponym "blue" in :

(17) The car is blue in colour.

The word "blue" obviously implies the general category "colour"( ibid.). Other examples are "aggressive by nature", "first in order" and "small in size" (ibid.: 426).

Wasko ( 2012:2) presents some overlap semantic pleonasms with their explanations:

(18) advance warning — If it doesn't come in advance it is not a warning.

(19) close proximity — A characteristic of proximity is closeness.

(20) foreign imports — Imports usually come from foreign places.

(21) sudden impulse — One doesn't ever take time when acting

impulsively.

(22) overused cliché — What makes an expression a cliché is its being overused .

Kumar ( 2010: 127) proposes the following types of overlap semantic pleonasm:

1. Unnecessary modifiers : personal opinion, free gift, past memories etc.

Similarly, T.S. Eliot uses this type of overlap semantic pleonasm in his poem "The Waste Land ":

(23 ) Dry bones can harm no one.

The modifier ( or adjective) "dry" is unnecessary since it is implied by "bones". Bones are by definition dry.

Another example is taken from Murphy and Koskela ( 2010:121):

( 24 ) He kissed the child with his lips.

The modifying adverbial phrase " with his lips" shows an overlap semantic pleonasm because the sense of the verb "kiss" includes the fact that it is done with one's lips( *ibid.*).

2. Unnecessary pairs , in which either of the paired words is good enough : first and foremost, full and complete, various and sundry etc.

A further example is the following phrase taken from the play All's Well That Ends Well by William Shakespeare:

(25) " the inaudible and noiseless foot of time." (Quinn ,2010:103)

Here , either of the paired words is sufficient enough. Deleting "inaudible" or "noiseless" would leave the meaning of the phrase intact.

3. Unnecessary broadening of a definition : attractive in appearance , small in size, expensive in cost etc.

The general categories "appearance, size and cost" are needless. They result in superfluous broadening of the description in which they are used .Their hyponyms "attractive ,small , expensive" are adequate enough.

### **2.2.2 Prolixity**

Another kind of semantic pleonasm is "prolixity" ( "Pleonasm" , 2014:7). Prolixity is "the mention of things not worth mentioning" (Cheney,2005:24).Prolixity means tiresome and excessive consideration for unimportant details ( Brown, 2011: 108).

(26) They have nine separate cars. (Cars are always separate.)

(27) He discovered four different [species](#).( They are merely " four species", as two non-different species are together one same species.)

The words " separate" and "different" introduce nothing, or nothing logical or pertinent , to the meaning( "Pleonasm" , 2014: 7-8).

A further example is taken from Elster (2012:3):

(28) "Their home is still in the process of being renovated after Hurricane Katrina"

The phrase *in the process of* adds nothing but an excess of words to the sentence ( *ibid.*).

### 3. Pleonasm Affecting Sentences

[Sentences](#) can enter the realm of pleonasm. In all the examples of the previous sections, pleonasm affects single words or phrases. Sometimes , pleonasm affects [sentences](#) .This is achieved through the method in which an entire sentence is "repeated in another form, and thus put in another way"( Bullinger , n.d. : 441).This can be done in two ways : affirmatively or negatively.

#### 1. Affirmatively

This occurs when the same meaning of a sentence is repeated affirmatively (Duncan, 2008: 43; Bullinger , n.d. : 441) ,as in :

- (29) The report could not attempt to be comprehensive. It deals with some issues more thoroughly than others. (Duncan, 2008: 43)

The meaning of the sentence " The report could not attempt to be comprehensive " is affirmatively repeated in the sentence "It deals with some issues more thoroughly than others". Both sentences convey the fact that the report is not comprehensive. So, one of these sentences can go.

- ( 30 ) Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ( John 1: 22)

The meaning of the interrogative sentence "Who are you?" is affirmatively repeated in another interrogative sentence ,i.e. "What do you say about yourself?".

#### 2. Negatively

In this way, the meaning of a sentence is put in an opposite form. It "is first put positively and then negatively , or vice versa". This "greatly emphasizes the original statement, and calls very special attention to it "( Bullinger, n.d.: 442). In addition , this method is employed to make it impossible for the sense to be lost (*ibid.*: 431).

- ( 31 ) Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.  
(Romans 12:14)

The sense of the imperative "bless" is negatively repeated by the pleonastic imperative "do not curse" .Here is another example:

- (32) The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; he forgot him. ( Genesis 40 :23)

The meaning of the sentence " The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph " is repeated in the sentence " he forgot him ".It is repeated in an opposite way , namely positively .

Obviously, the examples above have "affirmation of one part and denial of another" .This way is "very usual in the Scripture" and it is employed "to set down things of importance and earnestness." (Bullinger, n.d.: 431).

#### **4. Rhetorical Functions of Pleonasm**

Pleonasm can aid in performing the following functions:

##### **1. Clarity**

Horberry ( 2010:32) mentions that the idea of pleonasm is that "more words mean more clarity". Further, if a speaker wishes to avert confusion with another use of the same word, he or she may add a pleonasm to create better clarity in the expression. If someone , in a party , employs the pleonastic phrase "*invited guests*" ,he or she makes it clear that the guests he or she means are invited, in contrast with being not invited or surprise guests (Goodman, 2014:1; Sharma,2014 :222 ).

Horberry ( 2010: 34-35) states that pleonasms exist in legal language for creating more clarity and more understanding." The law is written to exclude as much as uncertainty as possible "( Anson and Schwegler , 1998:427) .Some examples are 'null and void, 'cease and desist' , 'aid and abet', 'legal and valid', 'power and authority'. ( Crystal ,2010: 406; Horberry,2010: 34; Cao, 2007: 90; Ingels,2006:60) . The words in these legal expressions have one meaning which can be communicated through a single word (Cao, 2007: 89).

It is argued that this is a continuation of a linguistic tradition in the legal system in early English history .Because of the historical influence of the invasion of Norman French on the British court system, that system used a mixture of Anglo-Saxon and French ( Crystal ,2010: 406; Stevens, 2007:28). When early legislators were not sure whether both terms had the same sense or thought that others might not have a clear understanding of the French designations, they put terms from both the Anglo-Saxon and French words in parallel, to be sure that others understood what was meant ( Stevens, 2007: 28).

Pleonasm is also employed in acronyms for the sake of clarity. Acronyms are made by writing the first letter from each word. When adding a word to an acronym , it results in the use of pleonasm. ( Sharma, 2014: 222; Dalmolin, 2009:461; Stevens, 2007:28) . For instance:

(33) HIV virus

( 34) ATM machine

( 35 ) PIN number

The acronyms " HIV ", "ATM", and "PIN" stand for "Human Immunodeficiency Virus" , "Automated Teller Machine" and "Personal Identification Number" respectively.( "Redundant Acronyms and Initialisms" , 2015: 1 ).Obviously , adding the words *virus* ,*machine* and *number* makes the above acronyms pleonastic because these words are already referred to by the letters *V* , *M* , and *N* . The using of pleonasm in the acronyms " HIV ", "ATM", and "PIN" makes them clear .For instance, using the pleonastic word *virus* with the acronym HIV makes it obvious to everyone that HIV generally stands for a kind of virus. Similarly, the acronyms "ATM machine" and "PIN number" are clearer than "ATM" and "PIN" respectively.

##### **2. Emphasis**

Pleonasm may serve as a [rhetorical](#) device used to secure special effect such as emphasis ( Atkinson ,2012: 63 ; Mark, 2013: 70 ; Cao , 2007 :90).Pleonasm "is one of the most natural forms of emphasis" says Dupries ( 1991: 345).The example "*advance planning*" may be thought as a pleonasm since planning normally occurs in advance of a project, but the speaker may want to emphasise that the planning was not neglected to the last minute (Goodman, 2014:1 ).



Another example is taken from Atkinson (2012: 63):

(36) The latest version is faster , quicker, and more rapid.

The expressions **quicker** and **more rapid** are superfluous since they repeat the meaning of the word **faster**. However, they are permissible on the grounds of emphasis. They are employed to emphasise the fact that the latest version they describe is faster than an earlier one.

Cao (2007 :90) presents an example from legal English .He ( ibid.) notes that **null and void** , though it is pleonastic, is more emphatic than simply saying **void**.

In everyday speech and informal writing, pleonasms used for emphasis are commonly allowed . An example is the following sentence which is the last one in a letter ending with the sentence

(37) *Thanks for your help; I really appreciate it.* ("Style :Clichés,  
Pleonasms and Verbosity", 2013: 4)

This sentence is completely acceptable although it is pleonastic since the appreciation of the help is already included in the act of thanking.

## **5. Non-functional Pleonasm**

Pleonasm becomes a fault when it does not achieve any function. Dupries ( 1991: 345) calls this non-functional pleonasm "perissology". Dupries ( ibid. )and Elster (2012: 1) describe it as "the involuntary or unconscious "pleonasm which produces an error.

Unconscious pleonasms arise from the innocent habits of childhood which are redundant , as in "My friend, she told me" (a double subject), and "reaches full flower in the countless excesses of adulthood that one utters without thinking", as in , "future plans" or "**past history**" ( ibid.) Unconscious pleonasm is widespread in the familiar speech. It "passes most of the time unperceived in the fire of the conversation" (Sheehan, 2012:1)

Elster (2012: 1) thinks that unconscious pleonasm is similar to " weeds". He says , "If the prose we edit is like a garden that we tend, taking care to remove any unwanted or unnecessary growth, pleonasm is the overgrowth we trim and the weeds we eradicate.". Strunk and White ( 2000: 23) warn of unconscious pleonasm. They write , " A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts". They ( ibid.) give the expression " he is a man who", which can be substituted with the pronoun **he**, as an example changing this principle.

## **6. Application**

This section deals with the application of what has been presented in the previous sections. The Holy Bible uses pleonasm as a figure of speech. The application in this study consists of verses taken from different books of the Holy Bible. The analysis includes identifying the pleonasms in these verses .Then these pleonasms will be analyzed according to types of pleonasm and the functions it achieves.

Text 1

Listen, O heavens, and I will speak;

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hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. (Deuteronomy 32:1 )

This verse is the introduction of the song delivered by Prophet Moses. Appointed by God, Prophet Moses delivered this song to the Israelites, to warn them against forsaking God ( Henry ,2012 : 1) .In this verse , God calls upon the inanimate creatures ,heaven and earth, to hear His words to rebuke the foolishness of the Israelites who " were more dull of hearing than" these inanimate creatures. Further, God calls on heaven and earth to make them witness "the truth of his sayings", and the fairness of his actions against the Israelites ( Poole , 2014 : 1).

In the above verse , the phrase "of my mouth" is an overlap semantic pleonasm. It is unnecessary modifier since it is implied by the word " words". This phrase provides information already given by the word " words" : Words are related to mouths. They are uttered by mouths.It has more emphasis than if only the phrase "my words" had been used. It emphasises the fact that these words are said by God Himself.

Text 2

Is this the way you repay the LORD,  
O foolish and unwise people ? (Deuteronomy 32:6)

This verse is part of the song of Prophet Moses which he delivered to the people of Israel . This part of the song shows that the Israelites had a bad character . In this verse , Prophet Moses describes them as "double fools" because of their ingratitude towards God's graces (Henry, 2012: 1-2).

In this verse, pleonasm occurs because two adjectives of essentially the same sense are included immediately prior to the noun "people". This verse has an overlap semantic pleonasm . The adjective "unwise" is implied by the adjective "foolish". Either of the paired words is sufficient enough. Deleting "foolish" or "unwise" would leave the meaning of the phrase intact. Here , pleonasm is used to achieve emphasis. The pleonastic "unwise" is used to repeat the idea of "foolishness" of the Israelites to impress it more strongly.

Text 3

And she made a vow, saying, “ O LORD Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant’s misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head.” ( 1 Samuel 1 :11)

The above verse includes the prayer and vow of Hannah, Prophet Samuel's mother . Hannah was childless , which was her sadness. (Clarke,2012:1).She prayed ardently to God for a son .She promised to make this son devoted to God's service in his temple from his infancy to his death (Poole, 2014: 1-3).Moreover, she promised to make the son a Nazarite , a Jew who must not shave his head. (Clarke , 2012:1-2)

The construction "not forget your servant" is pleonastic .It repeats the sense of the construction "remember me" in an opposite way, .i.e. negatively . The two sentences have the same petitions . Hannah wants to emphasise her petition that God remembers her.

The following text has the same example of pleonasm "Remember this and never forget" . It has the same function of emphasis.

Remember this and never forget how you provoked the LORD your God to anger in the desert . (Deuteronomy 9:7)

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Text 4

"How great you are, Sovereign LORD! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you, as we have heard with our own ears." ( 2 Samuel 7:22)

In this verse, Prophet David praises God. God is great both in authority and in kindness. There is but one God, the living and true God, the former and maker of all things; all others are but untrue and invented gods. Prophet David states that he has heard **all this** from his parents ( Poole, 2014:5; Gill ,2014:5) .

Pleonasm exists in the sentence "we have heard with our own ears". The phrase " with our own ears " is an overlap semantic pleonasm . This adverbial phrase is an unnecessary modifier since it is implied by the verb **heard** : One can hear with his ears. Using pleonasm, Prophet David

wishes to emphasise his act of hearing the holy attributes of God. Another pleonasm is the adjective **own** in "our own ears". Similarly, it is an overlap semantic pleonasm .This adjective is an unnecessary modifier since it is implied by the possessive pronoun **our** .This adjective is used to emphasise the idea of possession. Prophet David employs it to emphasize the fact that the act of hearing is connected with him .

Text 5

O LORD, how many are my foes!

How many rise up against me! (Psalm 3:1)

Here , Prophet David laments his situation. He complains of the multitude of his enemies. The enemies that revolt against him were his son Absalom and the people in Israel . The hearts of all Israel went after [Absalom](#) .Prophet David is amazed to find such a sudden and [general](#) uprising ( Constable, 2014: 1; Clarke, 2012 :1).

This verse has two sentences with the same sense. Both sentences refer to the enemies of Prophet David. The sentence "how many are my foes!" is affirmatively repeated by the pleonastic sentence "How many rise up against me!". In this verse, pleonasm is used to emphasise the idea of the abundance of Prophet David's enemies.

Text 6

I call on You, O God, for You will answer me;  
give ear to me and hear my prayer. (Psalm 17:6)

This verse is the prayer of Prophet David . In the psalm containing this verse , Prophet David prays to God to be preserved from the spite and oppression of Saul, King of Israel .Prophet David was working as a commander of Saul's troops. One day, he achieved success in battle against the Philistines. This made Saul envy Prophet David. Therefore, he at several times tried to kill him ( Henry, 2012: 1; " King David" , 2014: 1). This verse shows that Prophet David has strong confidence in God . He implores God to hear his prayer ( Henry, 2012: 1-2).

In the above verse, what is pleonastic is the sentence " hear my prayer". It repeats the meaning of the sentence " give ear to me" affirmatively. However, the pleonastic sentence is

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employed to achieve the function of emphasis. The prophet David may wish to emphasise his petition that God hears his prayer.

Text 7

May the LORD answer you when you are in distress;  
may the name of the God of Jacob protect you. ( Psalm 20:1)

The psalm containing this verse was written on some occasion when Prophet David was about going to war. This verse is the prayer of the people who were in the temple to which Prophet David came to offer sacrifice. They prayed that God would save Prophet David in the day of trouble; that the name of the God of Jacob would guard him (Clarke, 2012:1; Barnes, 2014:1-2).

Here the word "name" appears to be pleonastic. It means God Himself and has more emphasis than if only the term "God" had been used. The word "name" is an overlap semantic pleonasm since it is subsumed by the word "God".

Text 8

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,  
I will fear no evil,  
For You are with me;  
Your rod and Your staff,  
they comfort me. ( Psalm 23:4)

The above verse is said by Prophet David in one of his Psalms. This psalm is full of comforts and expressions of pleasure in God's great kindness and dependence upon him (Henry, 2012:1). In this verse, Prophet David uses the metaphor of the shepherd and his flocks. The shepherd might be required to guide his sheep through some risky, wooded valleys, where lions and other enemies of the sheep were lurking; but the protection of the sheep was assured by the attendance of the shepherd. In the human application of it, the soul that trusts in God will most surely pass through many gloomy valleys; but no fear will be felt because God will always be present (Coffman, 2015: 1-2). The shepherd uses a rod and a staff. The former is used in walking. The latter is used for guiding the sheep. Prophet David states that the sight of them comforts him. They show that the shepherd is there. They convey confidence, showing that God will not leave Prophet David alone, and that he will protect him (Barnes, 2014:4).

The sentence "Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me" has a pleonastic subject pronoun, i.e. *they*. The pronoun *they* is pleonastic since the sentence already has a subject: your rod and your staff. So, *they* is grammatically unnecessary. Accordingly, the type of pleonasm, here, is syntactic pleonasm. The pronoun *they* is permissible on the grounds of emphasis. It is employed to emphasise the relationship between the actor "the rod and staff" and their action of consoling Prophet David. To put that another way, Prophet David intends to emphasise the relationship between the guidance and protection of God and their act of comforting him.

Text 9

they parade their sin like Sodom;  
they do not hide it. ( Isaiah 3:9)

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This verse shows the rudeness of the people of Judah and Jerusalem . Like the Sodomites, they commit their sin publicly without fear of God. Moreover, they boast of it (Henry,2012: 1-3 ; Poole , 2014 : 2 ) . The sentence "they do not hide it" is pleonastic . It repeats the idea of the sentence "they parade their sin like Sodom" negatively. In this verse, pleonasm is used to add emphasis to the first sentence. It adds power to the idea of committing the sin by the people of Judah and Jerusalem overtly .

**Text 10**

Cursed be the day I was born!

May the day my mother bore me not be blessed!

(Jeremiah 20:14)

This verse belongs to Prophet Jeremiah in which he expresses his sadness and disappointment . He curses the day of his birth .Prophet Jeremiah suffered from certain circumstances. Because of "his prophesying evil concerning Judah and Jerusalem" , he was cruelly treated and cast into prison ( Clarke, 2012:2) .

The sentence "May the day my mother bore me not be blessed!" is pleonastic because its meaning is already expressed by the sentence "Cursed be the day I was born!".The sentence "May the day my mother bore me not be blessed!" repeats the sense of the first sentence negatively. Here, pleonasm is emphatic in function . It enlarges the sense of what is said .Prophet Jeremiah wants to emphasise the idea of his cursing the day of his birth.

**Text 11**

One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. ( Acts 18 :9)

This verse is part of the story of the apostle Paul .Being rejected by the Jews violently, the apostle Paul was much depressed and probably was in danger of being killed .Therefore, he was thinking of ceasing to preach, or forsaking Corinth, a city in Greece (Constable, 2014:1-3;Clarke, 2012:3). In a vision , Christ encouraged Paul to go on with his work of preaching the gospel at Corinth (Henry,2012:4) . He ordered him to speak the gospel bravely and not to be silent through any present opposition or future "apprehension" (Benson, 2014:2).

The imperative "do not be silent" is pleonastic since it has the same meaning of the imperative "keep on speaking". The sense of "keep on speaking" is negatively repeated by "do not be silent". Christ wishes to emphasise his first imperative .He wants to give it more power .

**Text 12**

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the word of life. ( 1John 1:1)

This verse shows the testimony given concerning the reality of the person and excellency of Christ ( Henry,2012: 1). The verse includes a strong confirmation that Christ "had appeared in the flesh" .The proof of this, the apostle says, was that he had seen him, heard him, and

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handled him, which means he had had all the proofs which could be represented by the senses (Barnes,2014:1)

The phrase "with our eyes" is an overlap semantic pleonasm. This adverbial phrase is an unnecessary modifier since it is implied by the verb **seen**: One can see with his eyes. The apostle wishes to emphasise his act of seeing Christ.

Text 13

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. (1John 1:5)

The above verse contains the message that St. John had heard from Jesus Christ. St. John, the apostle, declared this message to the Christians. It includes a description of God. In this verse, light refers to "purity" or "holiness", and darkness to "moral impurity", or "vice and wickedness". God is pure and perfect in his nature, "without any dark stain of impurity whatever (Coke, 2014:2).

The sentence "in him there is no darkness at all" is pleonastic. It repeats the sense of the sentence "God is light" negatively for emphasis. A further pleonasm in this verse is "no . . . at all" which is a syntactic pleonasm of the type of [multiple negation](#). It is also used for emphasis.

### **Conclusion**

Depending on both the theoretical and practical parts of this research, the researchers have *concluded that* pleonasm is really a quaint figure of speech which makes speaking and writing more effective. It is used in the literary language and in the familiar, everyday language. Moreover, the redundancy or superfluity of words found in the figure of speech of pleonasm is only apparent. These words are not really superfluous, nor are they useless or idle. On the contrary, they are necessary to emphasise or clarify a particular idea. They are necessary to fill up the sense. Without them, the sense would be incomplete. This conclusion validates the hypothesis of the study. Superfluous words put by pleonasm are really redundant or useless when they do not perform any function. Here, they are unconsciously employed. The writer or speaker expresses the same sense twice over in the belief that he is saying it once. In this aspect, pleonasm shifts from being a figure of speech into being a fault. Such pleonasm abounds in the familiar, everyday language. So, pleonasm can be good or bad depending on the manner in which it is used.

In the Holy Bible, emphasis is the function of all the examples of pleonasm. Moreover, most of the examples of pleonasm have pleonasm affecting sentences. Here, the sense of a whole sentence is repeated either affirmatively or negatively. It is a method used for setting forth the subject more fully or for enhancing in some way what has been already said. Moreover, the examples of the sentences repeated in an opposite form are more than those having sentences repeated affirmatively. This occurs because the Holy Bible is full of things and situations of significance and earnestness.

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#### الخلاصة

تعنى هذه الدراسة بالتطويل بوصفه أحد الأساليب البلاغية في اللغة الانكليزية، إذ يدل التطويل على استخدام كلمات أو عبارات أو جمل زائدة عن الحاجة في الكلام أو الكتابة. و غالبا يؤدي هذا الاستخدام إلى تكرار نفس الفكرة ، كما في " سمعت المحادثة بأذني". فعبرة "بأذني " هي عبارة زائدة عن الحاجة لأنها تكرر جزءًا من معنى الفعل " سمعت " فالمرء يسمع بأذنيه.

يمكن أن يفترض في هذه الدراسة أن الزيادة في التعبيرات في التطويل هي في الظاهر فقط . حيث أن الكلمات أو العبارات أو الجمل الإضافية ليست عديمة الجدوى. وفقاً لذلك ، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى إعطاء توضيح وافٍ للتطويل و الظاهرة التي يصفها. كما أنها تهدف إلى تمييز الوظائف البلاغية لهذا الأسلوب البلاغي في أي نص و تحليل نصوص متنوعة من الكتاب المقدس لتكون عينة للدراسة لتوضيح الغرض من استعمال التطويل في هذا العمل الأدبي المختار. خلصت الدراسة إلى بعض النتائج وأهمها أن استعمال الكلمات أو العبارات أو الجمل الزائدة في التطويل ليس غير ذي جدوى وإنما هو يمكن أن يؤدي وظيفة أساسية في تأكيد فكرة أو توضيحها وهذا ما يثبت فرضية الدراسة أعلاه.

كرس الجزء الأول من هذه الدراسة للإطار النظري لموضوع التطويل ، وهو يتألف من خمسة أقسام رئيسية، إذ يصف القسم الأول التطويل ، في حين يبين القسم الثاني أنواع التطويل و يعرض القسم الثالث أمثلة للتطويل المؤثر في الجمل، أما القسم الرابع فيستعرض الوظائف البلاغية للتطويل و يعنى الجزء الخامس بالحالة التي يكون فيها التطويل عيبا. يقدم الجزء الثاني من هذه الدراسة تحليلا عمليا للتطويل في نصوص متنوعة من الكتاب المقدس من خلال تحديد أمثلة التطويل ومن ثم تحليلها وفقا لأنواع التطويل والوظائف التي يؤديها. وأخيرا، تعرض الخاتمة النتائج التي توصلت إليها الدراسة.