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Mirroring Meaning: Reduplication in Vietnamese Literary Prose and Its English Translation- A Contrastive Perspective

Phản chiếu ý nghĩa: Hiện tượng láy trong văn xuôi văn học Việt Nam và bản dịch tiếng Anh- Góc nhìn đối chiếu

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Keywords

Reduplication; Translation; Vietnamese Literature; Contrastive Analysis

Abstract

In Vietnam, the increasing use of translated texts reflects the growing effort to introduce Vietnamese literature to a global audience. This study examines the use of both partial and full reduplication in the Vietnamese version of Cánh đồng bất tận and its English translation, exploring how each type is employed in both languages and analyzing the similarities and differences in their usage. Based on the novella Cánh đồng bất tận and its English translation, the research examined 96 Vietnamese sentences and 105 English sentences to explore the phenomenon. The sentences were purposively selected from the novella to focus on examples of reduplication, and the contrastive analysis was conducted using a linguistic framework that compares morphological and phonological features across the two languages. The findings revealed that (1) Both English and Vietnamese employed similar methods for using reduplication in the novella, utilizing repetition of sounds or words to create emphasis, express intensity, and add a rhythmic or playful quality to the language, (2) Although reduplication is not a fundamental morphological process in English, it occurs more frequently than in Vietnamese in this text, primarily as a stylistic or emphatic device rather than a grammatical one, and (3) The rules governing letter- and word-groupings, such as the use of reduplication in both Vietnamese and English, contribute to making the text more engaging for readers by adding rhythm, emphasis, and expressiveness. Additionally, the findings also revealed that pairs of tonal patterns combined with descriptive words using the suffix -ish, create a unique and interesting linguistic feature in English. This study uncovers how reduplication functions differently in Vietnamese and English within a bilingual novella, revealing nuanced strategies translators can use to preserve stylistic emphasis and cultural meaning, thereby improving the fidelity and expressive quality of translations for diverse audiences.

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Từ khóa

Từ lấy,
Dịch thuật,
Văn học Việt Nam
So sánh đối chiếu

Tóm tắt

Nghiên cứu này khảo sát việc sử dụng từ láy toàn phần và một phần trong văn bản tiếng Việt và bản dịch tiếng Anh của truyện ngắn Cánh đồng bất tận, nhằm tìm hiểu cách hiện tượng này được vận dụng trong hai ngôn ngữ và phân tích những điểm tương đồng cũng như khác biệt về mặt hình thái và ngữ âm. Tổng cộng 96 câu tiếng Việt và 105 câu tiếng Anh được chọn lọc có chủ đích từ tác phẩm để phục vụ cho quá trình phân tích đối chiếu. Kết quả cho thấy: (1) cả tiếng Việt và tiếng Anh đều sử dụng từ láy như một biện pháp tạo nhấn mạnh, tăng cường sắc thái biểu cảm và thêm tính nhịp điệu hoặc vui nhộn cho văn bản; (2) mặc dù lặp lại không phải là một quá trình hình thái phổ biến trong tiếng Anh, hiện tượng này lại xuất hiện thường xuyên hơn trong bản dịch, chủ yếu với vai trò phong cách hoặc biểu cảm; và (3) các quy tắc liên quan đến âm vị và tổ hợp từ ngữ, như hiện tượng lặp lại, góp phần làm tăng tính sinh động và hấp dẫn của văn bản đối với người đọc. Ngoài ra, nghiên cứu còn phát hiện sự kết hợp giữa các mẫu thanh điệu tiếng Việt với từ ngữ sử dụng hậu tố -ish trong tiếng Anh, tạo nên nét ngôn ngữ độc đáo. Nghiên cứu góp phần làm rõ sự khác biệt trong cách sử dụng từ láy giữa hai ngôn ngữ và gợi mở các chiến lược dịch thuật giúp bảo tồn giá trị văn hóa và phong cách trong quá trình chuyển ngữ.

1. Introduction

Reduplication has been explored by several researchers worldwide (Inkelas, 1983; Motomi, 2005; Travis, 2001; Kołłątaj, 2010; Xu, 2012; Downing & Inkelas, 2015; Jin & Fang, 2019; Su, 2024). Reduplication in literary prose refers to the repetition or duplication of a word, phrase, or part of a word within a sentence or passage for emphasis, rhythm, or stylistic effect (Inkelas & Downing, 2015). This literary device can serve various functions, such as reinforcing meaning, creating a sense of urgency or intensity, enhancing the musicality of language, or contributing to the tone or mood of the text. Reduplication can occur at different levels, including full repetition, partial repetition, or through variations like reduplicative compounds (Okamura, 1991; Moravcsik, 1992; Urbanczyk, 2011; Terfa, 2020). However, reduplication has not been widely recognized, as it is not typically considered a standard device in the language (Okamura, 1991). Normally, the expression of reduplication and translation were not clearly seen. A series of repeated letters and words could represent a specific meaning which was very important to translate into the target text.

Reduplication is a widespread linguistic phenomenon that involves the repetition or partial repetition of a word or a part of a word, and it plays a vital role in the grammatical and semantic structures of various languages (Inkelas, 1983; Downing & Inkelas, 2015; Odiegwu & Faraclas, 2025). This phenomenon can be defined and categorized in diverse ways, depending on the linguistic framework used and the type of language under examination (Pots & Dirix, 2023). One study by Kołłątaj (2010) classifies reduplication into two broad categories: exact and non-exact reduplication. In this context, exact reduplication refers to the precise repetition of a word or part of it, while non-exact

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reduplication involves the alteration of the repeated form in some way, such as through phonological changes. Kołłątaj (2010) also points out that in informal or colloquial contexts, particularly in slang, rhythm often becomes a dominant feature of reduplication. This rhythmical repetition is not only a linguistic device but also a stylistic marker in the creation of informal, playful, or emphatic expressions (Downing & Inkelas, 2015). Therefore, the study aims to answer the following questions:

- How is the partial reduplication used in the Vietnamese version of Cánh đồng bất tận and its English translation?
- How is the full reduplication used in the Vietnamese version of Cánh đồng bất tận and its English translation?
- What are the similarities and differences of using reduplication in the Vietnamese version of Cánh đồng bất tận and its English translation?

2. Literature Review

Reduplication is generally divided into two main forms: phonological and syntactic. Phonological reduplication, which is by far the most common type, involves the repetition of sounds or parts of words. This type of reduplication frequently occurs through affixation, where a prefix or suffix is added to a base word, and the repeated part of the word often serves a grammatical function. Linguists such as Kajitani (2005), Downing & Inkelas (2015), Terfa (2020), and Lieber (2021) have emphasized that phonological reduplication is closely linked to word formation and morphological processes. In this sense, affixation is a fundamental mechanism of word expansion and lexical innovation. A notable type of phonological reduplication is affixal reduplication, where a prefix or suffix is attached to a root word, and the base or root itself is copied in some form. This repetition can modify the meaning of the word, indicating nuances such as intensity, plurality, or a diminutive form.

Inkelas (1983) highlighted the role reduplication since it was a significant interest for both morphologists and phonologists. It offers unique insights into the internal structure of words and challenges reductionist theories that attempt to combine morphology with phonology or syntax. It is frequently created in creoles and during the process of first language acquisition, and it spreads easily between languages. Among the various features in language games, reduplication is arguably the most common in standard grammar. It is both widespread, found in nearly every language, and enigmatic, with its historical development remaining unclear.

Travis (2000) and Halle and Marantz (1993) have examined the role of affixation in reduplication in great detail. According to Travis (2000), affixal reduplication operates by attaching an affix to the head of a word, with the repeated elements appearing as subparts of the word structure. This process facilitates the creation of new lexical items and grammatical categories within the language. For example, in some languages, reduplication serves to form diminutives or augmentatives, or it may indicate repetitive

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action, as in the formation of verbs that imply repetition or habitual action. The repetition, then, plays a role not just in lexical expansion but also in the generation of new meanings and grammatical functions.

On the other hand, syntactic reduplication involves the repetition of entire phrases, words, or even clauses within a sentence structure. This type of reduplication is typically linked to the syntactic and structural aspects of language. Travis (2001) and Pi (1995) have discussed syntactic reduplication in terms of its role in sentence construction. Pi (1995), in particular, highlights the use of prepositions in syntactic reduplication, pointing out that words like after or upon often accompany the repeated elements in a syntactic structure, providing further context or clarification to the action or event described in the sentence. For instance, a phrase like I went to the market after I finished my homework exhibits syntactic reduplication where the word "after" is repeated to emphasize the temporal relationship between two events. The syntactic form of reduplication can be used to convey various meanings, such as emphasis, clarification, or continuity of action, often within a specific syntactic or discourse context.

Downing and Inkelas (2015) pointed out that reduplication is often examined separately from other morphological and syntactic structures in language. However, what we aim to demonstrate in this overview is that reduplication is not a single, unified morphological process, nor is it isolated in its morphological function. Instead, reduplication consists of a variety of morphological constructions that are linked by the common characteristic of identity in some form. Each reduplication construction coexists, interacts with, and shares properties with other morphological and syntactic constructions within the same language.

In addition to these broad classifications of phonological and syntactic reduplication, reduplication can also be divided into complete and partial reduplication, categories discussed by Okamura (1991) and Jin and Fang (2019). Complete reduplication involves the full duplication of a word or phrase, while partial reduplication refers to the repetition of only part of a word or phrase. The distinction between complete and partial reduplication can help linguists understand how the structure of language influences meaning. For example, in many languages, complete reduplication is used to indicate a full or intensified action while partial reduplication may convey a more subtle or diminished meaning (e.g., in some languages, a repeated part of a word can indicate a lesser degree or a repetition that is less emphatic). However, as noted by Okamura (1991), the categories of complete and partial reduplication are not always fixed, and the classification of reduplication can vary across languages and linguistic studies. The flexibility of reduplication types makes it a particularly rich field of inquiry, especially when examining cross-linguistic variations and the ways in which languages use repetition to construct meaning.

In the Vietnamese context, several studies have employed contrastive analysis to examine the linguistic features of both English and Vietnamese. Nguyen (1966) applied a tagmemic and transformational approach to English grammar and described these

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sentences as the fundamental grammatical units that can be expanded into simple, compound, and complex forms. In contrast, Vietnamese grammar emphasized word order and function words, shedding light on the structural differences between the two languages. This framework facilitated the comparison of linguistic features, ranging from basic units to more complex structures such as essays. Nguyen (1967) further argued that sentence construction in Vietnamese and English shared fundamental similarities. He suggested that while grammar plays a crucial role in both languages, it impacts the writing process differently, English grammar tends to focus more on necessity, while Vietnamese grammar emphasizes sufficiency.

In contrastive analysis, Nguyen (1967) highlighted the importance of distinguishing between deep structure (underlying grammatical forms) and surface structure (observable sentence structures). Nguyen (1970) extended this research into the area of phonology, concluding that a focused contrastive analysis of linguistic features between English and Vietnamese was essential for advancing the study of both languages. His contributions were foundational in the field, offering insights into both grammatical structures and phonological systems in a cross-linguistic context. The sentences emphasize the fact, the action or its result, so the recipients are mainly focused. In order to understand Vietnamese sentences, it was vital to depend on the semantic meaning and grammatical features. Besides, the English subjects agreed with the verbs while the Vietnamese ones do not. Those past studies were really important to notice both versions' characteristics and have an obvious comparison on one of the most well-known literary work. However, the use of reduplication between English and Vietnamese have not been explored in the existing literature.

Taken together, there are research gaps in the above studies of reduplication that the current study could address. First, the phenomenon of syntactic reduplication in Vietnamese remains underexplored, particularly in comparison to phonological reduplication, which is more commonly studied. Additionally, while phonological reduplication is recognized, there is limited research on non-exact reduplication, especially in informal contexts such as slang or digital communication. There is also a need for more research on regional variations in reduplication across the country's diverse dialects, as well as its role in Vietnamese learning and teaching, particularly for second-language learners. Furthermore, little is known about the cognitive and pragmatic aspects of reduplication in Vietnamese, such as how it is processed by speakers and how it functions in social contexts like politeness, identity, and social hierarchy. Exploring these gaps would enhance our understanding of reduplication's structural, social, and cognitive functions in Vietnamese.

3. Methodology

3.1 Data Collection

The data for this study were gathered from two versions of the same literary work: the original Vietnamese novel Cánh đồng bất tận (2019) by Nguyễn Ngọc Tư, and its

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English translation, Endless Field, by Duong Hung and Jason Picard. A total of 201 sentences were selected for analysis from both texts. The selection was based on the presence of reduplication in the original Vietnamese text, which is a prominent feature in the language. Reduplication in Vietnamese can take many forms, including full and partial reduplications, and serves various functions such as intensification, plurality, and evoking emotional or sensory imagery. The sentences chosen for this study feature different types of reduplication and were carefully compared with the corresponding sentences in the English translation to examine how these elements were translated. The goal was to explore how the linguistic phenomenon of reduplication in Vietnamese, which plays an important role in meaning and style, was conveyed (or altered) in English.

3.2 Analytical Approach

This study adopted a contrastive analysis approach, which is a useful method in translation studies to compare the similarities and differences between two languages and understand how specific linguistic features are transferred in translation. In this case, the contrastive analysis focused on the use of reduplication in the Vietnamese text and its English translation. The translation techniques are also referenced from Anis (2023) and Anis et al. (2022). First, all instances of reduplication in the Vietnamese source text were identified based on the framework of Okamura (1991), which have been suggested by Jin & Fang (2019). These instances were categorized according to their function in the text, such as emphasis or intensification, plurality or collectivity, vivid description, or onomatopoeia. Once identified, each instance of reduplication was compared to its English counterpart in the translated text to assess how the translator handled the feature. By comparing the Vietnamese and English texts in this way, the study aimed to identify patterns in the translation of reduplication and to explore how these patterns reflect the challenges of translating a stylistic feature from Vietnamese to English.

3.3 Data Analysis

The analysis of the 201 selected sentences was carried out using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative aspect involved a close textual analysis, focusing on the role of reduplication in the Vietnamese text and how it was rendered in the English translation. Each instance of reduplication was examined in terms of its function, whether it was used to intensify meaning, describe sensory experiences, convey emotional states, or indicate plurality, and how these functions were maintained or altered in translation. For instance, instances of reduplication that conveyed emphasis or emotional tone in the Vietnamese text were compared to their English equivalents to see if similar effects were achieved.

The quantitative aspect of the analysis involved counting the frequency of different types of reduplication and the corresponding translation strategies used in the English text. This allowed for a more systematic understanding of the extent to which reduplication was preserved, omitted, or substituted in translation. The frequencies of each translation

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strategy were compared to determine whether certain types of reduplication were more likely to be retained or altered in translation. By combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches, the study was able to provide a comprehensive picture of how reduplication, a key stylistic feature in Vietnamese, was handled in the English translation and the implications of these translation choices for the overall meaning and tone of the text.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Partial reduplication between English and Vietnamese

In literary prose, there was no obvious ideas about the classification of a reduplication which caused a lot of problems for the readers to fully understand the researcher's idea. However, as previously mentioned in the literature review, it was suggested to categorize into partial and total word formation process. In the study of reduplication, the frequency of individual letters in English system was analyzed. The results showed a relatively consistent distribution across the 26 letters, with *"e"* appearing most frequently, accounting for 13.2% of all instances in the target text. A total of 51,869 occurrences of letters were examined in the target text, and *"e"* emerged as the dominant letter used in reduplication.

This analysis of letter frequency highlights the patterns in reduplication, where certain letters are more prominent, and others are underrepresented. The study specifically categorizes this type of reduplication as involving the repetition of independent words, a pattern that reflects both phonological and syntactic structures in the text.

(1) *[...] Một người bảo không sao xa được người đàn bà có cái cười làm* ***lấp lánh*** *cả khúc song. (Cánh đồng bất tận, p. 30)*
'[...] One swore it was impossible to stay away from the woman whose smile made the whole river glisten…' (Endless field, p.30)

(2) *[...] Chúng tôi cùng ngó về chỗ khoang ghe, nghe tiếng thở* ***thênh thang*** *cùng gió… (Cánh đồng bất tận, p.8)*
'[...] We both turned toward the boat's hold, listening to the sound of her breathing...' (Endless field, p.8)

Moreover, the use of reduplication often reflects the speaker's emotional response to a particular idea or situation. It is not merely a linguistic tool for enhancing meaning, but also a way of conveying feelings and subjectivity. Take, for example, the phrase "chan chứa" in source text. This term expresses a deep, personal emotion, emphasizing the emotional state of the speaker or the subject. It does not simply describe an objective fact but conveys an emotional resonance that adds depth to the expression.

This distinction is important for translators to recognize because it affects the tone and emotional subtext of the translation. The subjective emotional weight conveyed by

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the reduplicated form of "chan chứa" cannot be fully captured by a simple direct translation. In this case, the emotional depth created by the reduplication in the original text would require careful consideration in the target language to maintain the same impact. The translator needs to understand the underlying emotional and stylistic function of the reduplication, ensuring that they choose a form in the target language that accurately reflects both the literal meaning and the emotional tone of the original text.

Thus, the role of the translator is not merely to convert words from one language to another but also to interpret the emotional and cultural context embedded in the original work. Translators must be attentive to the subtleties of the source text, especially when dealing with literary devices like reduplication, which can carry complex emotional connotations. They need to recognize which aspects of the original, whether it is the emotional tone, the rhythm, or the emphasis on particular characteristics, must be preserved in the translation to ensure that the meaning is fully conveyed. By carefully considering the implications of reduplication and its emotional resonance, translators can enhance the quality of the target text and offer readers an experience that is as close as possible to the original.

To sum up, the use of reduplication is a powerful tool in both Vietnamese and English that serves not just to emphasize specific qualities but also to create a particular tone or emotional atmosphere. For translators, the challenge lies in understanding the nuances of how reduplication functions in the source language and determining the best way to capture these nuances in the target language. By doing so, they can ensure that the translated text remains faithful to the original, both in meaning and in emotional depth, thus preserving the integrity and richness of the literary work.

One of the interesting features of the Vietnamese language was pairs of tones mentioned in the book since the use of reduplication in Vietnamese can convey a wide range of emotions and actions, often with subtle nuances that deepen the meaning of the text. The first case was illustrated by the below excerpts:

(3) *[...] Tôi cười, hớn hở. Thế giới của vịt mở ra. (Cánh đồng bất tận, p.106)*
'[...] I smiled with joy. The world of the ducks opened to us.' (Endless field, p.106)

The phrase "hớn hở" is a perfect example of how reduplication enhances emotional expression. "Hớn" refers to a feeling of happiness or excitement, while "hở" suggests the idea of something being opened or revealed. When combined, "hớn hở" describes a smile that is not just a simple expression but a visible manifestation of joy, typically with an open mouth. This combination of meanings creates an image of an emotional release or an outward expression of happiness, setting the tone for a new world "opening up". The use of reduplication here conveys the intensity and expansiveness of the emotion, tying the character's feeling to the broader context of the unfolding narrative.
The second case was reported by the below excerpts:

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(4) *"[...] Cái cảm giác mà cha tôi đã từ bỏ là yêu thương, che chở cho một sinh linh (yếu ớt, nhỏ bé) nào đó thật ngọt ngào" (Cánh đồng bất tận, p. 85)*
'[...] It felt so good to give love and care to another living being (smaller and weaker), a feeling that my father had discarded.' (Endless field, p. 85)

The phrase "che chở" is used to express the idea of protection or care. "Che" means to protect or cover, often in the sense of hiding or concealing, while "chở" means to carry or bear. Together, "che chở" refers to the act of caring for someone or protecting them from harm, usually in an emotional or nurturing sense. In this context, the phrase underscores the emotional weight of the father's abandonment, as he has given up his role in offering love and protection. The reduplication here highlights the depth of care that has been lost, showing that the father's action goes beyond just physical protection, touching on the emotional and spiritual neglect that the speaker feels. The third case was introduced by the below excerpts:

(5) *"[...] Không thể giải thích vì sao tôi lại hể hả." (Cánh đồng bất tận, p. 38)*
'[...] I cannot explain why I felt satisfied at the sight.' (Endless field, p. 38)

In this case, "hể hả" conveys a sense of satisfaction or happiness. "Hể" refers to happiness or contentment, while "hả" denotes showing or expressing something outwardly. When combined, "hể hả" refers to a visible expression of satisfaction or joy, often as a result of something fulfilling or expected. This phrase goes beyond just describing happiness; it suggests a kind of relief or emotional release, as though the speaker is expressing joy that has been long awaited or is finally realized. In this case, "hể hả" serves to emphasize the speaker's satisfaction, which is central to the narrative's emotional tone, yet it is portrayed as somewhat inexplicable, adding a layer of complexity to the emotion. The last case was illustrated by the below excerpts:

(6) *"[...] Chỉ có cha là hờ hững với thành quả của hai chị em tôi." (Cánh đồng bất tận, p. 11)*
'[...] Only Father was oblivious to our achievement.' (Endless field, p.11)

The above example uses "hờ hững" to describe emotional detachment. "Hờ" indicates a state of indifference or emotional coldness, while "hững" refers to neglect or disregard. Together, "hờ hững" conveys a sense of neglect, indifference, or even emotional apathy, suggesting that the father is detached or uninterested in the achievements of his children. This phrase paints a picture of a father who, rather than celebrating his children's successes, remains emotionally distant and indifferent. The reduplication emphasizes the father's lack of engagement with the children's accomplishments, making it clear that the neglect is not passive but actively felt by the

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speaker. It reflects a deep emotional distance and disconnection, adding to the overall tone of loss and emotional abandonment in the narrative.

These examples demonstrate the power of reduplication in Vietnamese, not just as a linguistic tool but as a way of expressing deeper emotional and psychological states. Whether it's the joy of a smile "hớn hở", the nurturing protection "che chở", a deep sense of satisfaction "hể hả", or emotional detachment "hờ hững", reduplication enhances the emotional texture of the text. It allows the speaker to convey complex feelings that go beyond simple descriptions, creating a richer, more layered meaning. This makes reduplication a valuable device in both literary creation and translation, as it enables translators to capture the nuanced emotional landscapes of the original text.

4.2 Full reduplication between English and Vietnamese

Reduplication is a powerful and persuasive linguistic device that plays a crucial role in language cognition, enriching both the structure and meaning of a language. It functions as a means of emphasizing or intensifying specific concepts, emotions, or actions, contributing to the overall expressiveness and effectiveness of communication. While different languages, such as inflectional languages like English and isolated languages like Vietnamese, employ different grammatical systems, the use of reduplication transcends these structural differences. Regardless of the linguistic system in play, understanding the form and function of stylistic devices like reduplication is essential for translators, as it helps bridge the gap between the source text (ST) and target text (TT).

The awareness of how reduplication operates in both the source and target languages enhances the translator's ability to convey not only the literal meaning but also the nuanced emotional, cultural, and stylistic elements embedded in the original text. In languages like Vietnamese, reduplication often carries significant emotional and aesthetic weight, serving as a means of intensifying expressions or creating a particular rhythm. In contrast, English may rely on different forms of repetition or emphasis, such as word choice or syntax, to achieve similar effects. Therefore, recognizing how reduplication functions in each language, whether through phonological repetition, morphological patterns, or rhythmic structures, enables translators to make informed decisions about how to maintain the integrity of the original message while ensuring the translated text resonates with the target audience.

For translators, this understanding is crucial not just for accuracy but for the quality of the translation. The subtleties conveyed through reduplication, such as a sense of joy, affection, indifference, or intensity, must be carefully captured in the target language to ensure the text remains faithful to its original tone and emotional impact. This requires not only linguistic expertise but also cultural sensitivity, as the impact of a reduplicated phrase can vary across different cultural contexts. By paying attention to the form, function, and effect of reduplication in both the source and target texts, translators can create translations that are both faithful to the original and culturally resonant in the new language.

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Ultimately, understanding reduplication as a stylistic device in translation helps improve both the accuracy and the expressiveness of the translation process. It enables translators to achieve a deeper level of comprehension of the source text and to transfer its full meaning and emotional resonance into the target language. As a result, this awareness enhances the quality of translation, ensuring that the original message is not only conveyed clearly but also retains its intended impact on the reader.

(7) "[...] Mọi người cười ha ha, bữa nay vui quá chừng." (Cánh đồng bất tận, p.110)
'[...] The men burst into laughter, how funny this was.' (Endless field, p.110)

(8) "[...] Cha tôi cười nhẹ, "Vậy hả? Ờ ờ..." (Cánh đồng bất tận, p. 62)
'[...] Father answered with a light laugh, "Is that so? Yeah yeah..." (Endless field, p. 62)

The examples in (3) and (4) illustrate how reduplication can be used to imitate sounds rather than directly represent the things themselves. In sentence (3), "ha ha" is employed to replicate the sound of laughter, specifically the act of cười (smiling or laughing). The use of this literary device not only mimics the sound of laughter but also conveys the underlying emotion of happiness, enhancing the overall tone and rhythm of the prose. The repetition of "ha ha" adds a layer of expressiveness, emphasizing the joyful nature of the action and amplifying the emotional resonance of the moment.

Similarly, in sentence (4), "yeah yeah" is used to express satisfaction or approval, particularly in response to an event or situation. Here, the reduplication serves to convey the father's sense of contentment or agreement. The repeated yeah emphasizes the father's positive reaction, reinforcing the sense of approval and satisfaction. Just as with "ha ha", the repetition of "yeah yeah" helps to build a rhythmic flow, adding to the emotional tone of the sentence and drawing attention to the father's feelings. In both examples, reduplication is not merely a tool for imitating sounds but a way to enrich the text by reflecting the emotional states of the characters, while also contributing to the overall structure and rhythm of the prose. Interestingly, the readers have an overview of the descriptive words in the total word formation process.

(9) [...] Chị cười nôn khi thấy bùn bám dưới mũi tôi xám xanh nhưbộ râu củ ấu. (Cánh đồng bất tận, p. 28)
'[...] She burst out laughing at the mustache made from the greyish green mud beneath my nose.' (Endless field, p. 28)

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, the affix -ish is typically added to a root or base form to indicate a slight or partial characteristic of the described quality. This concept offers valuable insight for translating certain English adjectives into Vietnamese, particularly when conveying the sense of something being "slightly" a particular color.

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For example, the English word yellowish (meaning slightly yellow) could be translated as vàng vàng; brownish (slightly brown) becomes nâu nâu; greenish (slightly green) translates to xanh xanh; reddish (slightly red) is đỏ đỏ; and pinkish (slightly pink) can be rendered as hồng hồng.

In these examples, the reduplicated Vietnamese words such as vàng vàng or nâu nâu serve to reinforce the slightness or subtlety implied in the English adjective with the -ish affix. This reduplication technique emphasizes the nuance of the color being described, aligning with the -ish meaning of "slightly" while preserving the essence of the original English adjective. By using reduplication, the Vietnamese translations not only capture the color but also intensify the meaning, highlighting the subtle or moderate quality of the color being referenced.

The approach of translating -ish adjectives through reduplication proves to be an effective method for conveying the intended meaning in Vietnamese. It ensures that readers fully understand the slightness or moderate degree of the color being described. This finding is particularly significant for translation studies, as it provides a practical strategy for transferring meaning from English to Vietnamese, where reduplication is a common and useful linguistic feature. By adopting this method, translators can enhance the accuracy and richness of the translation, ensuring that the semantic nuances of adjectives are faithfully maintained across languages.

Overall, the use of reduplication in translating English adjectives with the -ish suffix into Vietnamese offers an effective solution for conveying subtlety and gradation in color description. It enriches the target text by adding emotional and perceptual depth, making it a valuable tool in the translation process. This approach not only aids in preserving the meaning but also in capturing the stylistic and tonal qualities of the original English text.

4.3 A Contrastive Analysis of the use of reduplication between Vietnamese and English

In the English version of Cánh đồng bất tận, it showed the frequency of rhetorical devices. Overall, full reduplication represented 71% of the instances in the 105 sentences analyzed, while partial reduplication accounted for the remaining 29%. This suggests that the English translators heavily relied on full reduplication in their translation process. By opting for full reduplication, the translators likely sought to preserve the stylistic and emotional nuances of the original text, emphasizing certain concepts or qualities with greater intensity, much as the original Vietnamese text does. The substantial use of full reduplication in the target text highlights its importance in maintaining the tone and rhythm of the source text while conveying the intended meaning in English.

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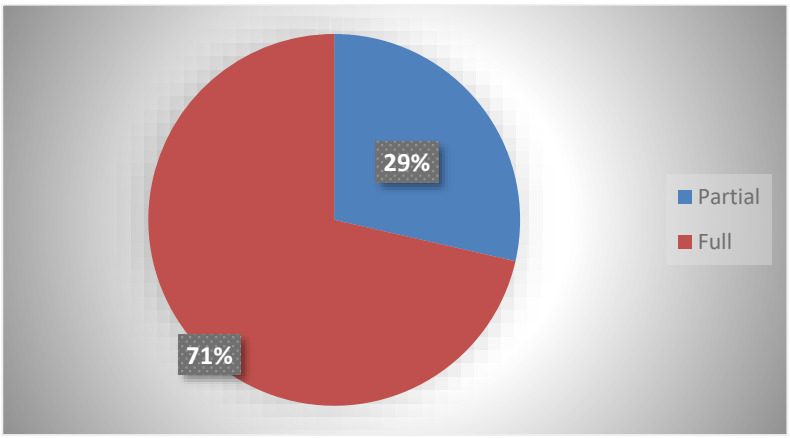


Figure 1. The use of reduplication in English text

In the Vietnamese version of Cánh đồng bất tận, the frequency of rhetorical devices is similarly distributed, though there are notable differences due to the distinct nature of the two languages, Vietnamese being an analytic language and English being an inflectional one. The data reveals that partial reduplication accounted for 33% of the occurrences among the 96 sentences examined, while full reduplication made up the remaining 67%. This shows that full reduplication is more commonly used in the Vietnamese source text. In Vietnamese, this linguistic feature is frequently employed by writers to reinforce meaning, create rhythm, and intensify emotions. The preference for full reduplication in the source language reflects the writers' tendency to repeat words in order to emphasize particular concepts or characteristics, a stylistic choice that enhances the overall expressiveness of the narrative. This contrasts with the English translation, where the use of full reduplication is less prevalent, highlighting the differences in how the two languages employ rhetorical devices to achieve similar effects, as illustrated in Figure 2.

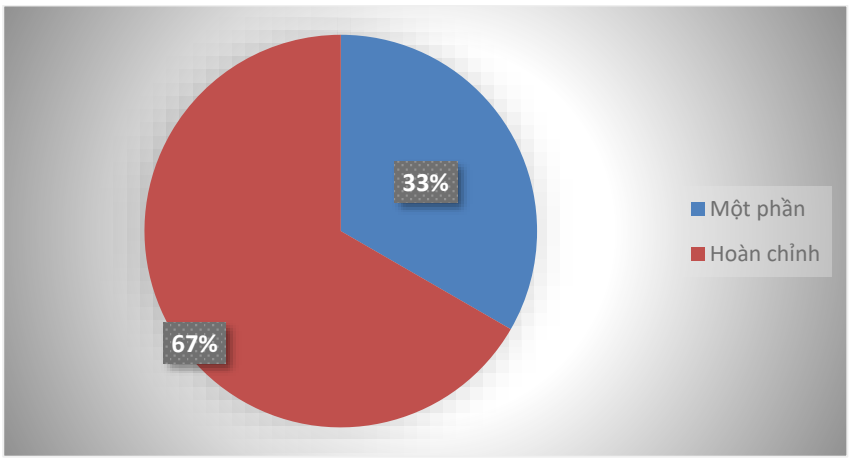


Figure 2. The use of reduplication in Vietnamese text

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5. Discussion

The provided table presents data regarding the frequency of occurrence of rhetorical devices used in the English text Cánh đồng bất tận - Endless Field. Upon analyzing over 105 sentences, it becomes evident that full reduplication constituted 71% of the cases investigated, with the remaining 29% utilizing other devices. It is worth noting that the English translators also incorporated total reduplication in their target text.

Likewise, in the Vietnamese version of the text, the utilization of rhetorical devices demonstrates a similar distribution. However, due to the inherent characteristics of the two languages - English being inflectional and Vietnamese being analytical - certain changes can be observed in comparison to their English equivalents. Upon examining more than 96 sentences, it becomes apparent that partial reduplication accounted for 33% of the cases investigated, while the remaining 67% utilized other devices. This suggests that the source language, Vietnamese, places a greater emphasis on the usage of total reduplication, with the Vietnamese writers repeating words to express particular meanings.

The findings of the analysis indicate a significant prevalence of full reduplication in both the English and Vietnamese texts. In the English version, this device was employed in approximately 71% of the investigated sentences. Full reduplication involves the complete repetition of a word or phrase, which often serves to emphasize or intensify a certain aspect of the text. The English translators chose to maintain this rhetorical device in their translation, thereby ensuring that the intended effect and meaning were preserved.

On the other hand, the Vietnamese version exhibits a higher utilization of total reduplication compared to its English counterpart. Total reduplication, a rhetorical device commonly employed in the Vietnamese language, involves the repetition of a word or phrase in its entirety. This linguistic feature is deeply rooted in Vietnamese grammar and culture, allowing for nuanced expressions and conveying specific shades of meaning. Thus, it is understandable that the Vietnamese writers opted to utilize total reduplication more frequently to capture the essence and intention of the source text accurately.

Although the overall distribution of rhetorical devices between the two versions is not identical, the fact that both texts employ reduplication highlights its significance as a rhetorical device in general. Reduplication, whether full or partial, serves as a tool to enhance emphasis, create rhythm, and reinforce certain ideas within the text. Its usage in both languages demonstrates a conscious effort by translators and writers to convey the intended meanings and effects of the original text effectively. Furthermore, the observed differences between the English and Vietnamese versions can be attributed to the inherent characteristics of the two languages. English, as an inflectional language, relies on various grammatical structures, word order, and vocabulary to convey meaning. In contrast, Vietnamese, an analytical language, utilizes word repetition and tonal inflections to express nuanced shades of meaning. Therefore, the adaptation of rhetorical devices, such as reduplication, in translation is influenced by these language-specific features.

Therefore, the analysis of the frequency of rhetorical devices in the English and Vietnamese versions of Cánh đồng bất tận - Endless Field reveals the prevalence of

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reduplication in both texts. While the English text primarily employs full reduplication, the Vietnamese version leans more toward total reduplication. These findings underline the importance of considering the linguistic and cultural characteristics of the source and target languages when translating and adapting rhetorical devices. By effectively utilizing reduplication, translators and writers can capture the essence and intended meanings of the original text while ensuring its resonance with the target audience.

6. Conclusion

The use of reduplication in Cánh đồng bất tận - Endless Field has played a key role in creating an engaging and vivid narrative, significantly contributing to the success of the story. This literary device not only enhances the emotional depth and rhythm of the text but also showcases the author's stylistic prowess. Through the strategic repetition of words, Nguyễn Ngọc Tư is able to convey complex emotions and life lessons, shaping the characters' experiences and their paths in life. In particular, the characters often face dilemmas and unexpected circumstances that force them to confront their fate, with the use of reduplication serving as a powerful tool to express their internal struggles, emotional responses, and life's ups and downs.

As a defining feature of Nguyễn Ngọc Tư's writing style, reduplication is a prevalent element across most of her works. It helps to create a unique narrative voice that resonates with readers, reflecting the themes of vulnerability, resilience, and personal growth. In Cánh đồng bất tận- Endless Field, the repetition of words emphasizes not only the characters' emotional states but also the broader philosophical reflections on life's uncertainties and challenges. However, the study also highlights some differences between the Vietnamese and English versions of the text. These differences primarily stem from the distinct linguistic structures of the two languages—Vietnamese being an analytic language and English being more inflectional, which creates potential barriers in translating the semantic and syntactic aspects of reduplication.

While this investigation has explored the effective use of reduplication in Nguyễn Ngọc Tư's Cánh đồng bất tận, it also points to areas that need further attention in future research. The linguistic nuances of reduplication, particularly in the context of translating between Vietnamese and English, suggest that there are still challenges in accurately capturing the full meaning of the source text. The study has contributed valuable insights into the translation process, but due to its focus on a single text and author, it cannot offer a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon across multiple works. The limited scope of the research, compounded by the brief timeframe in which it was conducted, means that some important aspects remain unexplored, and further studies are needed to address these gaps.

This paper makes a significant contribution to the understanding of reduplication in translation, highlighting both the challenges and opportunities it presents in bridging the linguistic and cultural differences between Vietnamese and English. As the study suggests, there is much more to be discovered in the translation of stylistic devices like

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reduplication, and future research is crucial to improving the quality and accuracy of translated texts.

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Declaration of conflicting interest
The authors declared no conflicts of interest to the article's research, authorship, and/or publication.

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