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Linguistic misconceptions of tautology in the English second language context among student educators

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Abstract: There is a misconception that tautology is an emphasis rather than a semantic error in English second language contexts. Subsequently, it is considered enablement for emphasis to disambiguate the meaning of the phrases and statements. This effect has been widely observed on different platforms of communication. Hence, the explicit purpose of this article is to linguistically identify and evaluate common illusions of tautology by English student educators in their academic writing. The researchers adopted the contrastive analysis theory as the theoretical point of departure to pursue the study's aim. Furthermore, this article adopted a statistic descriptivism design embedded in the qualitative approach. The data for this study were collected through essay scripts from 30 purposively selected third-year English major students enrolled for a bachelor's degree in education at the University of Venda. The researchers read and analysed the selected essay scripts for prevalent error tagging and classified them into error types. The findings of this study reported the following categories of redundancy errors exhibited: semantic redundancies, double comparatives, double superlatives, redundancy, and double negation. The major causes of redundancy errors are ascribed to fossilisation, ignorance of rule restrictions, overgeneralisation and false concepts hypothesised. Moreover, the key contribution of this article is addressing and changing the predominant misconception of semantic standard error through mitigating strategies. More attention needs to be paid to this area because tautology is considered stylish writing, while it is a semantic error.

Introduction

The rapid development of distinct aspects of language studies has led to the widespread and growing interest in the activities of linguists, who have sought to provide solutions to unfamiliar problems (Yang and Pan 2023), even though certain areas of language studies have become so familiar that they have continued to be expanded in terms of analysis and discoveries. Subsequently, this effect has widely been reported in the literature. It is a prevalent area of significance because the repetition of synonymous words, concepts, and phrases in a second language context is usually undesirable. It can make a person sound wordier than they need to be and make them appear unintelligible. Occasionally, redundancy can help to add emphasis or clarity or introduce intentional ambiguity (Al-Marsumi 2017).

As academic literacy lecturers, we have observed many English tautological errors in students' academic writing, hence the relevance of the current study to uncover tautological errors committed by students in their academic writing and to provide their descriptive backing (Lambani and Nengome 2017). The student's academic essays largely contained syntactical and semantical errors in different paragraph responses and essay tasks assigned in different programmes.

The students seemed to have misconceptions about semantic and syntactic aspects, and these continue to be the problem among the different groups of students. Moreover, tautology has been a critical concern for non-native speakers studying English as a second language due to their exposure to social media and different mediums of communication. In a multilingual country such as South Africa, the largest student population is English second language speakers (Hussein and Al-Majdawi

2021). Moreover, most students in South African higher education institutions learn English as a second language, and their African language skills interfere with their English acquisition and proficiency. This affects their academic writing skills as most of them make grammatical mistakes such as tautology. This is more evident among students at rural universities (Hussaini 2024).

Moreover, it has widely been observed in the literature that rural-based students' lack of access to English leads to incompetency in their use of the language, especially in writing, since this is where they often make grammatical errors. In addition, the study conducted by Lambani and Nengome (2017) shows that most of these grammatical errors are attributed to overgeneralisation, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, hypotheses of incorrect concepts, petrification, and carelessness. In addition, their study reports that most students suffer the fate of erroneously establishing English concepts in an academic context. This is because it is believed that most of the mistakes, they make are due to constantly listening to incorrect grammar outside the classroom, such as on social media, radio, and television. Balhoug and Ethelb (2023) explain that the logical problem of language is caused by cluttered and fragmentary input, which creates abstract concepts based on limited language examples. In grammar, redundancy is a statement with repetitive or redundant formulations. It is considered a stylistic rather than a grammar error. Hussaini (2024) defines redundancy as saying the same thing twice when repeating a sentence's entire meaning of a sentence.

Student educators of English are expected to be eloquent in academic writing and not make mistakes such as tautology because they are on the verge of being launched into society as experts in English teaching, and learners have an overreliance on their teachers' language proficiency (Zitha 2023). While many previous linguistic studies have investigated grammatical errors and other pertinent mistakes, tautology remains a grey area as this concept is rarely reported in the literature. Moreover, this still causes some confusion in research communities due to a lack of well-established literature in the existing body of knowledge in multilingual contexts.

Moreover, we observe that the subject of tautology, especially in the English second language context, appears to be a daunting task for students to consider as erroneous. As such, tautologies are common in everyday speech and do not diminish clarity, but they should be avoided in formal writing so as not to repeat oneself unnecessarily (Msuya and Wayimba 2024). Student educators are working to be trained teachers whom learners would have undue reliance on for their pedagogical knowledge and expertise.

This study focuses on the linguistic misconception of tautology among student educators in the context of English as a second language (ESL). The area of tautology has been studied in the linguistic field, literature, and language teaching, but minimal studies have been conducted in the context of ESL. We chose to investigate this topic because of our interest in teaching and learning ESL. Diko (2023) argues that a linguist's chief concern is knowing the language system. The lack of knowledge of this area among student educators and the absence of the topic in ESL materials have influenced us to conduct this study.

Purpose of the study
This article provides a detailed linguistic evaluation of English tautology errors committed by third-year student educators in their academic writing at a comprehensive rural university in South Africa. The aim of the study was realised through the following objectives:

- To identify common English redundancy illusions committed by student educators in their academic writing at a rural comprehensive university and
- To determine the causes of English tautology illusion prevalence in the written works of student educators with English didactics at a rural university.

Literature review
Theoretical perspective
This article explores the application of the contrastive analysis theory, originally proposed by Fries in 1945, which posits that the language produced by second language learners exhibits systematic characteristics. Contrastive analysis (CA) serves as a method to systematically compare the

structures of two or more languages to identify linguistic differences that can create challenges for learners. This approach was developed further by Lado in 1957, who emphasised the significance of understanding these differences to facilitate language acquisition.

The primary goal of CA is to pinpoint specific areas where learners may struggle due to interference from their first language. For instance, languages may differ in their grammatical structures, phonetic systems, or vocabulary usage, which can lead to misunderstandings and errors when students attempt to communicate in English. The impetus behind the development of contrastive analysis was the need to enhance the effectiveness of teaching English as a second language, particularly in contexts where students' primary languages are structurally distinct from English.

In our application of contrastive analysis, we observed that many English students face difficulties that stem from the influence of their native languages. Their existing language patterns often conflict with the conventions of English, making it challenging for them to grasp certain concepts. As evidenced by Khosa and Zitha (2024), these discrepancies highlight the importance of carefully analysing the linguistic backgrounds of learners to address their specific learning needs better and improve their mastery of English. By leveraging contrastive analysis, educators can develop targeted instructional strategies that cater to these individual challenges, ultimately leading to more effective language learning outcomes. In the context of South Africa as a multilingual country, the Constitution of 1996 recognises 12 official languages. Each of these languages is given meticulous attention on various occasions since it is a multicultural nation (Van Heerden 2007). Moreover, due to diglossia, English is mostly used as the formal language of business and education among speakers of different languages in all sectors. Consequently, English is used as the mode of communication and medium of instruction in almost all the modules offered in higher education institutions in South Africa.

Moreover, it is imperative to note that the phonological systems, syntax, and lexical meanings of these languages (English and other first languages of the study's participants) are not the same. The use of CA theory is an attempt to find the points of difference that aid in finding the main source of language students' difficulty from the comparison of their native language to English, where some of the rules used in the student's primary language do not apply. Marton (1981: 150) underscores the considerable influence of the mother tongue on the process of language acquisition. He details how the linguistic structures, vocabulary, and pronunciation of a learner's native language can interfere with and shape their understanding and use of a new language. His research provides substantial evidence illustrating the complexities involved in navigating between the mother tongue and the target language. From a psychological standpoint, it can be asserted that genuine peaceful coexistence between two language systems within a learner is not attainable. Instead, a continuous conflict exists. This struggle does not occur solely during the cognitive processing of new information; it persists throughout the retention of newly acquired concepts in memory.

CA theory is embedded in the notion that the students who have mastered their primary language seem to confuse the target language content and phonological and morphological rules with their native language due to a lack of equivalence in English as the language patterns differ. Mishra (2005) states that in learning a second language, a learner already has the habit of learning a first language and that there would be interference from the first language in second language learning. Such interference tends to be how second language students acquire the language, where most grammatical errors are not noticeable to them. As English language proficiency occurs at a later stage when these students have mastered and acquired their respective primary languages, mother tongue languages seem to interfere with the English language rules.

Moreover, it is important to apply this theory in understanding English tautology errors from mother tongue to a target language (English) through the process called interlanguage, which has certain features and characteristics that distinguish it from the language that the native speakers of the language speak. Significantly, there are lexical categories that are mostly used verbosely: adverbs and adjectives mostly contribute profoundly to this because the meaning contained in a verb, especially a verb that begins with a prefix such as 're-' (meaning 'again' or 'back') reiterate the meaning already expressed.

Tautology conceptualisation

Some of the pioneering work undertaken by Wierzbicka (1987) espoused that redundancies cannot be explained based on Gricean principles alone because many tautologies are language-specific constructions following a certain semantic pattern. For instance, redundancies containing an abstract noun, such as war is war, business is business, etc., express a sober attitude towards human activities. Thus, tautologies, by and large, have a conventional meaning, and their non-translatability supports the language-specificity of many tautologies. In examining the discourse surrounding Grice's theory of implicature, it is evident that there exists a divergence in authorial positions. For instance, Mishra (2005) presents a critical analysis that fundamentally challenges Grice's framework. In contrast, Fraser (1998) adopts a more cautious stance, expressing skepticism towards the tenets of Grice's model rather than outright rejection. This contrast highlights the varying degrees of acceptance and critique within the scholarly community regarding Gricean principles. A fresh look at tautologies reveals that they are not as non-informative or conventional as assumed by proponents of 'radical pragmatics' (Gonzalez-Diaz, 2021) or 'radical semantics' because they are predictive. It is generally agreed that these tautologies enable emphasis and disambiguation of the English synonymous words through the addition of existing words.

In concurrence, Al-Baldaw and Saidat (2011) state that redundancy is a faulty repetition of phrases, such as 'me, myself, and I'. Current definitions do not clarify repeated words or ideas and leave them unclear to illustrate this confusion: Ilson (2011: 1477) defines redundancy as 'the unnecessary repetition within a statement of the same thing in different words'. Hussain (2024) defines redundancy as the 'needless or useless repetition of the same idea in different words'.

The most influential work in this area is the works of Altakhaineh et al (2024), who articulate some common tautologies, why they are wrong and how to correct them: *I also like it, too* – also and too, in this context, mean the same. Another example from Knobbs is 'PIN number', where the last letter of the acronym stands for number. Other examples include GPS systems, SAT tests, HIV virus and ATM machines. *Dot.com* – the dot (.) is not needed. *In my opinion, I think that…* – They mean the same, so use one or the other. One after the other in succession – In succession means one after the other (Baym 2005). Therefore, it should be used alone. *4 am in the morning* – Very common among non-native English speakers unfamiliar with the meaning of am (ante-meridian – before noon). 'In the morning' is not needed. In the same vein, several studies articulate the tautological utterances that are needless and unnecessary in English language speaking and writing (Mattiello 2024).

- *To reiterate again* – Reiterate means to say something again, making the use of 'again' redundant. *Close proximity* – They mean the same. Close is usually fine in non-technical writing. *Necessary requirement* – If something is required, it is necessary. Use one of them (Jespersen 1917: 45).
- Today's modern technology – *Use modern technology or today's technology* – they mean the same. There is a great deal of debate around this concept, and this has been a controversial point widely discussed in the literature (Andersen 2000: 18).

There are limited studies on tautology and redundancy errors, particularly regarding how second language speakers perceive tautology as a form of emphasis in English expressions. Both native and non-native English speakers can make tautology errors (Zitha and Lambani 2024). This issue continues to cause confusion in research communities due to the misconception that tautology and redundancy errors serve to emphasize points in the context of a second language. Our observations suggest that tautology may be a stylistic issue in writing, as it is frequently found in literary works (Yang and Pan 2023). Many researchers have overlooked this area, viewing it as a credible style with specific features and functions across various communication platforms.

As English language editors, we have noticed that certain logical errors frequently occur among speakers of English as a second language. Many of the monographs we have edited and proofread often include tautological expressions that are grammatically incorrect. This issue has generated significant debate in the literature, yet few studies have addressed it. Consequently, this study aims to identify and analyse common tautological expressions and propose effective intervention strategies.

Context and method for the study

The researchers used a qualitative method to generate, collect and analyse data obtained from third-year English student educators enrolled for BEd at a rural comprehensive university. The qualitative method enables researchers to gain detailed information by engaging more with the student essays. This study sought to answer the following questions:

- What are the common redundancy illusions produced by student educators in their writing at a rural university?; and
- What underlying factors contribute to the prevalence of redundancy illusions in the written works produced by student educators at a rural university?

We used document analysis as a data collection method to explore the first objective. Thirty English essays were purposively selected and scrutinised from a systemic functional grammar perspective to uncover and assess redundancy errors prevalent in students' writing. The documents are considered effective because they contain pre-produced text that the researchers have not generated. Moreover, they are easily accessible and free and contain information that would take an investigator enormous time and effort to gather.

Hence, we interpreted and analysed third-year English student educators' essays to gather data on the types of redundancy errors committed. The collected data was analysed through critical discourse analysis, using theoretical tools extracted from the contrastive analysis theory (Danesi, 1985). This enabled us to contextualise the study and execute the analysis from theoretical to practical. The following procedure was adhered to, Ethical approval was not required for this study, as one of the researchers was the module instructor, and informed consent was sought for all participants before their participation.

- Setting the study objectives;
- Collecting 30 English student educator's essays;
- Identifying the type of redundancy errors evident in such discourses.
- Analysing the identified errors through critical discourse analysis and theoretical tools; and
- Classifying the analysed data per prevalent categories.

Findings and discussion

This section of the study presents and analyses data collected from third-year English major student teachers at a selected rural university. We employed document analysis as a method to gather data and explore our research objectives. A total of thirty English essays written by student educators in English didactics were purposively selected and examined from a systemic functional grammar perspective to identify and evaluate instances of tautology in the students' writing.

In our analysis, we identified several categories of tautological errors present in the students' essays. The essays came from 30 participants whose home languages included Xitsonga, Tshivenda, Sepedi, and siSwati. Among the respondents, 13 were Xitsonga speakers, 11 were Tshivenda speakers, 4 were Sepedi speakers, and 2 were siSwati speakers. All participants were learning English as a second language and were likely to encounter challenges related to redundancy and tautology errors due to the differences between English grammar rules and vocabulary and those of South African Indigenous languages. This disparity can lead to difficulties in understanding and avoiding such errors.

In the context of these students' primary languages, tautology errors are not viewed as illusions or misconceptions and are generally not given much attention in spoken discourse, which seems to be a stylistic choice in communication. In the context of contrastive analysis theory, it can be observed that the translation errors associated with the Xitsonga phrase '*Yimisani mavoko ya nwina henhla*' corresponds directly to the English expression "lift up your hands". This situation presents a notable case of tautology, where the translation effectively reiterates the same concept without contributing any new or additional information to enhance the meaning. This redundancy highlights the challenges that translators face when navigating between different languages, especially when idiomatic expressions may not translate seamlessly.

The findings revealed that 5 participants (17%) were aged between 35 and 39 years, 10 participants (33%) were aged 30 to 35, and 15 participants (50%) were between 25 and 29 years old. Research conducted by Shinde (2020) highlights the significant role of age in second language acquisition, as fossilization can occur when adults fail to correct persistent errors. Notably, the results of this study revealed that older participants made fewer errors compared to their younger counterparts.

The findings of this study provide a detailed breakdown of the gender distribution among the 30 participants in the study. Specifically, 17 participants, representing 56% of the total, identified as male, while 13 participants, comprising 44% of the total, identified as female. Language attitude refers to individuals' feelings about their language variety, which can be either positive or negative. These attitudes are crucial in promoting or hindering language development (Mishra, 2005). Language teachers and psychologists have frequently studied students' attitudes toward the languages they are learning. Most researchers agree that a positive attitude toward a language can lead to better learning outcomes. Conversely, negative perceptions of the language being studied are likely to result in poorer performance.

The findings of this study reveal that synonymous words and concepts are rarely realised as a repetition of the same meaning. The essay samples of the students contained these tautological errors. Subsequently, semantic tautological errors refer to expressions that are universally ridiculed as needlessly repetitive. These redundancy errors are detailed in Table 1 below.

The findings of this study revealed that nine student essays committed tautology errors that are attributive to semantic redundancies. The study is validated by the findings of Brown (2007), who expanded on the false concepts hypothesised, which reveals that students could not identify the tautological expression of the phrase '*can be able*' as erroneous. Native language played a significant role in the above errors.

This is probably due to the tendency to think in the first language before writing. The phrase '*short summary*' is a circumlocution because '*summary*' is the shortened version of something in its description. While the phrase '*fellow classmates'* contains more necessary words to describe fellow students, instead of using both '*fellow and mates*,' students made direct translations from their home language:

- '*New innovation'* – An innovation is a new method or idea and as such, there is no need to use *new* to describe the word *innovation*.
- '*Two twins*' – as for twins, there can only ever be two of them.

Table 1: Semantic redundancy error

Short summary
Return back
Come together to unite
Am in the morning
Each and every
Close proximity
Can be able
Necessary requirement
Adequate enough
New innovation
Fellow classmates
Two twins
In my personal opinion

- *'Adequate enough'* – the word *enough* is unnecessary because it repeats the meaning that is already contained in the other word, *adequate*, which has the same meaning as the first word.
- *'Discuss about'* – has unnecessary reiteration of words due to the presence of the word *about* which is already addressed in the word *discuss*.

Semantic tautologies frequently occur because of the interlanguage phenomenon, a concept that describes the transitional state learners experience when acquiring a new language. In this case, learning English can be particularly challenging, requiring considerable effort and the development of new linguistic habits. Misuya and Wayimba (2024) have conducted research highlighting students' difficulties in academic writing when English is not their home language. One significant challenge arises when learners have already achieved a high level of proficiency in their home language. This fluency can lead to linguistic interference, where established patterns and habits from their home language disrupt the acquisition of English.

As a result, students might unconsciously apply rules or structures from their home language, which often differs significantly from English. Errors that exemplify semantic tautologies include phrases such as 'I also like it too' and 'I heard it with my own two ears'. These redundancies occur because learners may not fully grasp the nuances of English grammar or often overlook the differences between English and their various African languages. Understanding these challenges is essential for educators and language learners alike, as addressing the roots of such errors can ultimately enhance proficiency and clarity in academic writing.

Table 2 below displays redundancy errors found in student essays, particularly focusing on the use of double comparatives. The study identified these errors in six essays, with examples including 'more better', 'more prettier', 'more bigger', 'more fatter', 'more smaller', 'more brighter', and 'more clearer'. In these cases, the term 'more' is improperly used alongside adjectives that already express a comparative meaning, such as 'better' and 'prettier'. Consequently, the use of 'more' with these particular adjectives is unnecessary.

Understanding the relationship between adjectives and their comparative forms is essential for preventing double comparatives in English. Such errors are generally considered grammatically incorrect and are a common issue among English learners, who might use this construction for emphasis. For instance, someone might say, 'This is clearer than I thought', to emphasize the visibility of an object. This tendency may arise from a limited grasp of the topic or insufficient proofreading.

The findings align with those of Mishra (2005), who noted that double comparatives involve adjectives that contain more than one comparative marker. Al-Baldaw and Saidat (2011) further clarify that these errors occur when individuals fail to recognise adjectives with comparative suffixes. For example, in the term more beautiful', 'more' is appropriate because 'beautiful' does not have the suffix 'er'. The study indicates that respondents who do not identify adjectives with the 'er' suffix are more likely to commit double comparative errors, which can also be classified as tautology errors. Zitha and Lambani (2024) also support these findings, emphasizing the importance of using appropriate language registers in academic writing, which includes avoiding double comparatives. A misunderstanding of the rules regarding degrees of comparison has significantly affected the

Table 2: Double comparative

This building is more prettier,
My assumptions are more better than Hazel,
The Chemistry building is more bigger than the other buildings,
The picture is more clearer when is not zoomed,
My sister is more fatter in the family,
This man is more smaller,
This light is more brighter.

student educators' grasp of these concepts, as these distinctions are often not present in their primary languages.

Table 3 below displays examples of double superlative errors found in student essays. The expression 'the most prettiest' exemplifies a grammatical error known as a double superlative. Other frequent occurrences include phrases such as 'most simplest', 'most bravest', 'most cheapest', "most nicest', and 'most fastest'. A recent analysis revealed that five student essays contained instances of double superlative errors. Such errors are classified as grammatical inaccuracies in standard English and are often detected and rectified by automated writing software.

Double superlative errors typically arise when students improperly employ the superlative forms of adjectives or adverbs. Individuals who are still developing their understanding of the rules governing superlative formation may mistakenly believe that adding an additional 'est' or 'iest' will enhance the degree of comparison. It is essential to recognise that the superlative form already denotes the highest or lowest degree of comparison, thus rendering the supplementary superlative modifier unnecessary.

The findings of this study correlate with the findings of Balhoug and Ethelb (2023) on the conceptualisation of double superlative errors committed by advertisers and non-speakers of the language where they exaggerate the use of adjectives and suffix 'est' concurrently in the sentence. Hussein and Al-Majdawi (2021) explored the concept of double superlatives. This occurs when both "most" and the suffix '-est' are used together to form the superlative of an adjective. For instance, one might say "my biggest fear" or "the unfriendliest teacher." In a multilingual context, interference and translation in terms of the theory employed in this study, there is a need to explore and engage these concepts to understand linguistic challenges from the interaction further.

The findings of this study identified double superlative errors, which are attributive to tautology errors. In this case, participants fail to avoid using double superlatives in their written discourse. Instances of '*most simplest', 'most nicest', 'most fastest, most cheapest, most bravest', 'most prettiest', which* all these superlatives make use of both most and the suffix -est to indicate the superlative form of an adjective, then it tends to be double superlative, as such 'most' and 'est' cannot be used together in the same phrase. All these adjectives can be grammatically and clearly used when the superlatives are not doubled in a word due to the use of 'most' while 'est' is already contained in the adjective.

Participants exhibited difficulty in recognising the grammatical inaccuracies present in the phrase that employs the superlatives "most" and "simplest." Both 'most' and 'simplest' can express the same degree of comparison, particularly the superlative, which can be redundant since adjectives that contain the suffix 'est' and 'most' can result in a double superlative. Moreover, false concepts hypothesised appear to be the major cause of this error. The student educators found it difficult to realise the circumlocutions in using superlatives because of an inadequate understanding of superlatives and the implicature of suffixes.

In Table 4 presented below, the findings of this study indicate that four of the student essays contained instances of double negative errors. These errors appear to stem from an overgeneralization of the rules associated with negative grammatical constructions. This observation suggests a potential misunderstanding or misapplication of these rules among the students, which can lead to a lack of clarity and precision in their writing. Consequently, it may be beneficial to consider additional instructional support focused on the appropriate use of negative forms to enhance students'

Table 3: Double superlative

The most simplest
The most bravest
The most cheapest
The most fastest

grammatical accuracy in future essays. Students frequently encounter difficulties with the use of double negatives in their writing. The words above exhibit the tautology errors that are attributive to double negative: *nobody did not see nothing, we did not do nothing, I won't do it no more, it wasn't none of my books, you will not receive nothing*. These tautology illusions are committed owing to the confusion that the use of negatives in some languages, or the use of multiple negative words, is used to increase emphasis, or to indicate a stronger negative meaning. In English, however, using two negatives in a sentence cancels them out and creates a positive meaning. Furthermore, students who have learned to use negative constructions such as 'don't' or 'can't' may mistakenly think that they can add 'no' or 'not' to any sentence to make it negative.

This is an indication of an overgeneralisation, where students may have applied a rule too broadly and made errors as a result. The findings of this study are consistent with the findings from the study of Lambani and Nengome (2017), wherein participants were not competent in avoiding the use of the double negative. In this instance, double negatives are not yet fully mastered. For example, constructions such as 'we did not do nothing', 'we will not do it no more', and 'nobody did not see nothing' can lead to ambiguity. In these cases, the words 'not' and 'nothing' function similarly, which may inadvertently convert the intended negative meaning into a positive. A clearer expression would be to state, 'we do not do anything'. The double negatives in this instance*, It wasn't none of my book*, make the sentence's meaning ambiguous due to the use of both 'not' and 'none', which is quite unnecessary. This study aligns with findings by Yang and Pan (2023) regarding the differences between informal and formal language due to a discrepancy between prescribed guidelines and actual practice, which has a negative effect on learners' language proficiency.

Overgeneralisation: The students failed to grasp the powerful positive meaning that arises from using two negatives in these phrases. Understanding this concept can enhance their comprehension and appreciation of language. Students need to grasp the full meaning of using negatives, such that 'not' is an appropriate adjective that should be used in Participants exhibited a tendency to overgeneralise the rules regarding double negatives, specifically the use of 'not' in conjunction with 'nothing' to avoid tautological expressions. In addition to that, the overgeneralisation of the application of rules has been attributed to this double negation.

The researchers have conducted a thorough examination of tautology errors and have reached a conclusion that, in certain contexts, redundancy may serve a valuable purpose. Specifically, it can be used to underscore key points or to enrich the expressive quality of both spoken and written communication. In numerous instances, redundancy fails to provide additional information to a statement and should be removed from written communication. Furthermore, it can convey the impression that the writer does not fully comprehend the meanings of the words they are employing or that a non-native speaker is negligent in their word selection. To cultivate an effective writing style that eliminates redundant expressions, it is imperative to understand the meanings of words and to consult a dictionary when any uncertainty arises.

Strategies for the avoidance of redundancy errors

In light of the research findings, the researchers propose the implementation of strategic interventions to mitigate the extensive misunderstanding associated with tautology. Tautologies are phrases and are generally not considered essential in effective written or spoken communication.

Table 4: Double negation

We did not nothing
We will not do no more
Nobody did not see nothing
You won't receive nothing
It was not none of my business

Eliminating such redundancies enhances clarity and improves the overall quality of the message being conveyed. While they can sometimes serve a purpose in creative contexts—such as songs, poetry, or comedy—where repetition may be used for emphasis or to create rhythm, they are generally viewed as stylistic choices rather than necessities. In these artistic forms, the repetition can enhance the emotional impact or highlight a key theme. However, in formal communication, tautologies are typically regarded as unoriginal and undesirable mistakes that detract from the quality of the message.

To ensure clarity and coherence in writing, it is imperative to identify and eliminate tautologies. A thoughtful revision process is necessary to create prose that is orderly, straightforward, and free of unnecessary repetition. This can be achieved through several steps:

1. Re-reading the Text: Reading through the written material carefully allows the author to spot repetitive words or phrases that do not contribute to the overall meaning.
2. Spotting Repetitive Ideas: Look for synonymous expressions that convey the same message. For instance, phrases like 'free gift' or 'future plans' can be simplified to just 'gift' and 'plans', respectively, thereby improving the clarity of the writing.
3. Consulting Resources: Non-native English speakers should make use of dictionaries and thesauruses to enhance their vocabulary and avoid inadvertently using tautological phrases. Regular consultation of these resources can help understand nuances and select words more carefully.
4. Utilising Writing Guides: Classic writing guides often provide insights into common tautology errors and strategies for avoiding them. These guides can be invaluable for both novice and seasoned writers, offering tips that enhance the overall quality of their writing.
5. Focusing on Clarity and Conciseness: By applying comprehensive strategies to recognise and eliminate tautologies, writers can significantly enhance the clarity and conciseness of their work. These approaches not only address the specific issue of tautology but also contribute to the development of more effective and engaging written communication.

Consequently, while tautologies may find a place in creative genres, they should be meticulously avoided in formal writing. By understanding and applying strategies to eliminate unnecessary repetition, writers can communicate their messages more effectively and professionally.

Conclusion

This study aimed to linguistically identify and evaluate common illusions of tautology by English student educators in their academic writing. The study's findings highlighted the importance of language error considerations for students' language proficiency and mastery of language rules. The findings of this study identified several categories of redundancy errors, including semantic redundancies, double comparatives, double superlatives, double negation. The primary causes of these redundancy errors include fossilization, ignorance of rule restrictions, overgeneralization, and flawed conceptualizations. Additionally, a key contribution of this article is to address and rectify the common misconception surrounding semantic standard errors by proposing effective mitigation strategies. It is essential to focus on this area, as tautology is often viewed as a stylistic choice despite being a semantic error. This is an important study, and it adds tremendously to the literature by proposing intervention strategies in the literature. The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) posits that the challenges encountered during the process of acquiring a new language primarily stem from the differences between that language and the learner's native language. This hypothesis emphasises that errors are likely to occur in specific areas where significant variation exists between the two languages, with these errors being a direct result of interference from the learner's first language. Furthermore, CAH advocates that these potential errors can be systematically anticipated and addressed through a thorough analysis of both languages. This allows for targeted teaching strategies to mitigate the impact of first language interference and facilitate more effective language learning.

The current consensus regarding redundancy errors is non-unanimous, considering stylish writing and emphasis to disambiguate the meaning. In contrast, English speakers—whether

they are second language learners, foreign speakers, or native speakers—often add adjectives to verbs or nouns to emphasize a particular statement or impression. This repetition typically conveys the same idea in a more pronounced manner. English second language student educators make various redundancy errors such as semantic redundancy, redundancy in acronyms, double comparative, double superlative, and double negative value, which can be traced back to numerous causes. Many learners in South African schools learn English as a second language or first additional language, and they speak various African languages, which interferes with their learning of English as an additional language. Mistakes are mainly made in learning English as an additional language due to failure to recognise certain rules and their implications. In addition, over-generalization, direct translation, and fossilization are the main causes of redundancy. This work analysed the types of tautology errors made by third-year students majoring in English as an additional language.

These are the most common errors non-native English speakers commit in different sectors, such as radio, television, and higher learning institutions. Moreover, contrastive analysis theory remains an influential construct in the field of second language acquisition, using comparisons of languages to explain areas of difficulty for non-native speakers. Following such a theory may contribute to a better understanding of the acquisition process of second language structures and the comprehension of errors committed in the context of English as a foreign language.

Implications and recommendations

Based on the findings of the article, the researchers provide several detailed recommendations for improving the proficiency of student educators in English:

Targeted Interventions: It is crucial that student educators undergo specific corrective actions and interventions aimed at enhancing their English proficiency. These interventions should be structured to ensure that they attain sufficient language competence before they are expected to teach English learners effectively. Understanding Semantic Misconceptions: Students must be educated about semantic misconceptions, which are common misunderstandings related to word meanings. By gaining insight into these misconceptions, future educators will be better equipped to identify and address them in their students.

Training in English Instruction: Comprehensive training programs should be implemented to teach student educators how to instruct effectively using the English language. This training should focus on pedagogical strategies that facilitate learning and foster a conducive environment for English language acquisition among their students.

Support from Faculty: English faculty lecturers play a vital role in this process. It is important for them to actively help students identify and eliminate detrimental habits that lead to errors in language use. Faculty should engage in discussions and offer feedback that guides students toward more effective communication practices. Broadening Error Analysis: The scope of error analysis research should be expanded to include a wider variety of speech errors beyond those currently identified. This broader approach will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges educators and their students face.

Dictionary Use for Vocabulary Building: Encouraging students to consult dictionaries regularly will help them familiarise themselves with the accurate meanings of words. This practice will enhance their vocabulary and reduce the likelihood of using words repetitively and incorrectly in their communication. Consequently, educational institutions can better prepare student educators to support English learners effectively and address the linguistic challenges they may encounter.

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