Omission as a Problem and a Solution in Literary Translation: A Study of Hemingway's *Hills Like White Elephants* and Joyce's *The Sisters* and Their Arabic Translations

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Abstract

Omission has a multifaceted nature with regards to literary translation. It functions as a cohesive device represented in ellipsis, as a literary device, and as a translation strategy. Ellipsis, as both a cohesive device and a literary device in a text, poses a challenge for the literary translator who is to render faithfully the author's style and the identity of the text. On the other hand, literary translators may resort to omission as a translation strategy to overcome specific translation problems. This paper aims at investigating this multifaceted nature of omission and foregrounding its role as both a problem and a solution in literary translation. The corpus of the study is taken from Hemingway's *Hills Like White Elephants* and Joyce's *The Sisters* which are known with their frequent use of ellipsis. Categorization of ellipsis in this study is based on Halliday and Hasan (1976), Quirk et al. (1985), and Biber et al. (1999). The paper also studies the translation strategies used to overcome omission as a problem, and at the same time, analyzes the use of omission to overcome other translation problems. The results show that literary translators mostly resort to four translation strategies when translating omission. Such strategies should be cautiously used; otherwise they may have adverse effects. The same rule applies to the use of omission as a translation strategy.

Keywords: Omission, ellipsis, literary translation, translation problem, translation strategy

1. Introduction

Linguistic omission is considered an important phenomenon in all languages. Exceptions can only be found if there is a language that expresses all aspects of meaning and thoughts completely in communication, which seems impossible and unrealistic. In fact, omitted words or expressions are as vital as the unomitted ones; ellipsis as a type of omission is a cohesive device in a language. Omission is also used as a literary device in literature; therefore, it constitutes a problem in translation as being both a cohesive device and a literary device. On other hand, translators may use omission as a translation strategy to avoid misunderstanding on the target reader's side. That is why this study focuses on the multifaceted nature of omission.

People, naturally, choose to express what they want to say in an economic way to communicate rapidly and efficiently. Therefore, omission is a common and necessary linguistic phenomenon. Obviously, the main aim behind omission is rhetorical: avoiding redundancy and making the information become clear and concise. Omission as represented by ellipsis generates a cohesive textual relation which invites the speaker to interpret and recover some unexpressed meaning (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Halliday, 2004). Quirk et al. (1985) state that "such preferences for reduction is not merely a preference for economy; it can also contribute to clarity, by reducing items which are shared as given information, so that will be focused on fresh materials or new information" (p. 860).

Apart from the fact that ellipsis is a common cohesive device in discourse, the literary dialogue often uses ellipsis as a stylistic or rhetorical device or as a way to confer idiolectal or sociolectal features on characters (Arhire, 2018). By using omission, writers can cover a lot of ground without indulging in unnecessary details; it helps them to intensify the focus on the point they are trying to make.

Thus, omission can be used for reasons of economy, emphasis, or style (Crystal, 1985), and this makes it more challenging in translation. The challenge of omission lies in the fact that while the translator tries to be faithful to the source text (ST), the result may be ungrammatical and

unidiomatic in the target text (TT) (Allaithy, 2020). Due to structural differences between languages, an equivalent to ellipsis could not always be found in the target language. Translators may overcome this problem by providing "what is missing" as an addition to the TT, but this may waste the rhetorical value and significance of the omission employed in the ST (Protopopescu & Vișan, 2008).

Omission is particularly challenging for the literary translators as they have to face the double challenge of both rendering the content and form. Style is the core of an author's expression, so rendering it as closely as possible is a must in literary translation. Literary translation, particularly, plays a vital role in enabling rapprochement among cultures, and helps much in enriching literatures and cultures. In addition, literary translation is to some extent risky; decisions made by the translator may reverse those of the author in the original work. Moreover, the translation of omission cannot follow precise rules, but each case needs individual assessment (Arhire, 2017). No doubt studying the translation of omission contributes to the literature on translator studies.

On the other hand, omission may be a solution to a translation problem. As a translation strategy, it can be defined as "a strategy by means of which professional translators delete words, phrases, sentences, sometimes even more consistent parts of the source texts in order to adjust– linguistically, pragmatically, culturally, or ideologically–the translated text for their target audiences" (Dimitriu, 2004, p. 165). Omission is not a common translation strategy as it is traditionally identified with the translator's failure to translate some information or effect in the ST (Tso, 2010). Delisle et al. (1999) define omission as "a translation error where the translator fails to render a necessary element of information from the source text in the target text" (p. 165). It is easily associated with negative connotations as it prevents telling the whole story of the ST, breaking the fundamental translation principle of "faithfulness". However, practically it functions as a translation strategy that can be used to present information in a more concise manner (Chesterman, 1997) or to deal with non-equivalence problems at word level and above (Baker, 2000).

Omission as a translation strategy is used for different purposes: observing editorial norms or avoiding cultural taboos [standardization]; supporting specific ideology [institutional or self-censorship] (Baker, 2006; Dweik, & Khaleel, 2017; Tso, 2010); the translator's desire to eliminate redundant and irrelevant elements to make the text more fluent [functional equivalence] (Alajlan, 2016; Leppihalme, 1997) and to avoid confusion that may happen when using lengthy explanations that may distract the reader, especially if the omitted particular item or expression is not vital enough to the development of the text (Davies, 2003, 2007; Hashemian & Arezi, 2015); presenting only essential information in contrast to secondary information well-known to the TT readers (Elewa, 2015); observing text-type and genre-related norms; keeping the aesthetics of the literary text (Buitkuvienė, 2012); or a particular translation skopos (Laver & Mason, 2018).

The use of omission can be a necessity in translating specific types of texts such as subtitles, where limitations of duration and space can be found (Warachananan & Roongrattanakool, 2015), or to avoid using vulgar words which do not have equivalents in the TT or which may not be accepted by the receptor. Arab translators, for instance, omit taboos when translating English movies into Arabic taking into consideration Arab receptors who might not tolerate their use. Omission may sometimes be a necessary translational strategy for preserving or reproducing the semantic and stylistic features of the ST (Hawamdeh, 2014; Kabara, 2015).

The omission strategy corresponds to Aixelá's (1996) "Deletion" strategy, in which the culture-specific item disappears in the TT. The translator may consider the culturally specific item not vital for the comprehension of the target reader. Aixelá (1996) argues that this strategy may be preferred by translators if they "consider the [culture-specific item] CSI unacceptable on ideological or stylistic grounds, or they think that it is not relevant enough for the effort of comprehension required of their readers, or that it is too obscure" (p. 64). Omission in literary translation can be of two types: omission of meaning and form and omission of form only. The first type is more critical, and it applies

to the omission of a part of the text. There seem to be two possible reasons for omission of such a large extent. The translators, personally, might have considered that the content of the passage contains offensive uses of language for the target readers, or the omission might be the result of interference by the publishing houses to the translation process. The Following section sheds more light on the studies concerned with this area of research.

2. Literature Review

Because of its role as a translation barrier, translation scholars studied the translation of ellipsis (omission) in relation to various fields such as automatic or machine translation (Mutal, et al., 2020) or different types of texts such as subtitling (Izwaini & Al-Omar 2019; Warachananan & Roongrattanakool, 2015). Other studies concerned with the translation of omission between Arabic and English (such as Abd-Rahman, Yeob & Abdul-Rahman 2015; Abdulrahman, 2012; Allaithy, 2020; El-Rays, 2017) focused on the translation of omission in Qur'an. For research purposes, this section focuses on the previous studies concerned with the translation of omission and using it as a translation strategy in literary translation.

In some previous studies, translation of omission (ellipsis) was not the main focus of the study, i.e., it is included alongside other phenomena such as reference or cohesive devices in general. Sujono, A. (2014) is an example. It investigates the translation of ellipsis and event reference in JK Rowling's *Harry Potter* and the *Goblet of Fire* from English into Indonesian. The study provides significant remarks concerning the translation strategies or "adjustments" used in translating ellipsis and event reference such as literal translation, explicitation, and omission. Another example is Arhire (2017) which examines some cohesive devices in student translations with a special focus on the translatability of ellipsis, substitution and reference taking into consideration their stylistic, sociolectal and rhetorical values. The study is related to translator's training and the pedagogy of translating cohesive devices in particular.

Other studies focused on the translation of a specific type of omission.

Shahabi & Baptista (2012), for example, is concerned with pinpointing the patterns of translation into Persian when dealing with English verb phrase ellipsis. The study seeks to help develop rules for improving the performance of English-Persian Machine Translation (MT) systems—an area which is not directly related to the focus of the current study. Likewise, Algryani (2020) discusses the translation of noun phrase (NP) ellipsis from English into Arabic, how NP ellipsis is translated into Arabic and what effects its translation has on the TT. The study does not focus on the translation of a specific type of text relying on different "authentic English texts" even though the type of text is to play a critical role in this concern. The study drags the attention to mistranslations of NP ellipsis found in existing English-Arabic translations and how such mistranslations create ambiguity and convey different meanings to the TT readers.

One of the studies interested in the translation of omission in literary translation is Arhire's (2018). It discusses the translation of ellipsis as an identity marker in the literary dialogue. It examines instances of ellipsis contributing to the development of the identities of the literary characters through their speech, supplying them with traits distinguishing them from other characters in terms of either social identity or emotional state. The analysis is concerned with the translation of ellipsis from English into Romanian and focuses on the situations where interlingual structural differences prevent formal equivalence, triggering a significant loss of information. The research discovered that the translation of ellipsis is mostly not possible due to structural differences between English and Romanian, causing certain losses of either information or stylistic effect. The translation of such omissions lies beyond the formal equivalence level; therefore, a functional equivalence technique is necessary even though formal equivalence might be desired.

Another close study is Nezam & Pirnajmuddin's (2012), which investigates the strategies adopted by Persian translators to translate the elliptical patterns of Hemingway's *The old man and the sea* and examines the effectiveness of the use of such strategies. It concluded that when translators pay attention to the author's style, they mostly choose

literal translation in translating ellipses as a stylistic feature to allow the reader to experience the author's style as closely as possible. It also found that some translators had expanded or omitted the elliptical element, thus deviating from the style of the ST, suggesting that literal translation could be the most effective strategy for translating omission as a feature of style in the case of literary translation from English into Persian.

On the other hand, many studies were concerned with the use of omission as a translation strategy including translation theorists such as (Baker 2000, 2006; Chesterman, 1997; Delisle et al., 1999; Laver & Mason, 2018; Leppihalme, 1997) and translation scholars (such as Alajlan, 2016; Buitkuvienė, 2012; Davies, 2007; Dimitriu, 2004; Dweik, & Khaleel, 2017; Elewa, 2015; Hashemian & Arezi, 2015; Tso, 2010). The use of omission in translation can be studied from different perspectives. Du (2015), for example, focuses on analyzing the use of omission in the Chinese/English translational discourse from a sociocultural perspective. It argues that the use of omission in translation is not only a matter of personal preference, but rather a justifiable means of adjustment in accordance with relevant social and cultural constraints. The use of omission was also studied in relation to other fields of translation such as media or journalistic translation. Khanmohammad & Aminzad (2015) seeks to explore the extent to which news was misrepresented when using additions/omissions in the English Translations of Persian-based social, cultural, and political news headlines.

Translational omission is sometimes studied alongside the strategy of addition. For example, Punga (2016) compares cases of omissions and additions occurring in two Romanian variants of the English tale Jack and the Beanstalk. It highlights the effect that omissions and additions may have on the TT readers, thus going beyond the identification of omission and addition as two of a range of translation options. It concluded that omissions, whether largescale or smaller-scale ones, reduce the quantity of information provided, and thus, reduce the propositional meaning though the key content elements are preserved. Commenting on such omissions it states that:

> The outcome of such omissions is much more serious at the level of expressive meaning, since a dramatic drop off in the number of emotionally loaded text units and at the same time, the cancellation of a captivating flow of the text influence the readers emotional reactions negatively (moreover, no compensation strategies are applied for the loss of emotional force). (p. 118)

Another close study is Wang's (2019), which, through a case study of comparing the English translation of Wolf Totem to its Chinese ST, investigates the use of omission and its impact on the shift that occurs in terms of characterization of the hero, Chen Zhen, in the TT. Chen Zhen tends to be thinly described in the TT, being of secondary importance when compared to the wolves and the plot. It concluded that in a larger sociocultural context, the underlying causes behind omission were the editorial intervention and the principle of translator's translation principle. The editor focuses on marketability by requesting some omissions to make the target text more accessible to the TT readers, and the translator omits information that may harm the readability and acceptability of the TT.

The contribution of my study is represented in discussing the two faces of omission in translation (a problem and a solution) and looking at them in a comparative way. It raises the general question "how can omission be a problem and a solution in translation". To the best knowledge of the researcher, this is the first study to fill this gap.

3. Methodology

3.1 Data collection

Examining the translation of omission in literary translation, the data of the study is taken from two short stories written in English and their Arabic Translations. These two literary pieces demonstrate a third side of omission—its use as a literary device. The first one is Hemingway's *Hills Like White Elephants*. It represents Hemingway's so-called Iceberg Theory or theory of omission. At the end of Chapter Sixteen of his nonfiction book *Death in the afternoon* (2009), Hemingway compares his theory about writing to an iceberg:

If a writer of prose knows enough of what he is writing about he may omit things that he knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough, will have a feeling of those things as strongly as though the

writer had stated them. The dignity of movement of an iceberg is due to only one-eighth of it being above water. A writer who omits things because he does not know them only makes hollow places in his writing.

Hemingway stripped everything but the essentials from his stories, leaving readers to examine the remainder of the dialogue and portions of the narration for themselves. In *Hills Like White Elephants*, for example, both of the American man and the girl communicate in short sentences and infrequently speak more than a few words at a time. Hemingway additionally avoids the use of dialogue tags, such as 'he said' or 'she said' and skips any internal monologues. Therefore, the characters' thoughts and feelings are completely left up to the reader's own interpretation. Omitting most of the clues of his narratives, how Hemingway crafts his dialogue becomes the most obvious expression of his creativity.

The second short story is Joyce's *The Sisters*, which is the first story in James Joyce's 1914 collection of short stories, *Dubliners*. It is narrated in the first person, by a young guy recalling his friendship, as a boy, with a Catholic priest. The story is entitled *The Sisters* although the two sisters are not actually the central focus of the story. *The Sisters* is a story based on omission, on what is not said. It is known by the frequent use of ellipses, and the text resists the filling of the gaps it presents, hinting at something more. Omission is used as a literary device for various purposes including giving the dialogue a conversational tone that represents the situation at hand or indicating what is also unsaid because of politeness.

3.2 Data analysis

Omission as a translation problem is represented in the forms of ellipses found in the ST. Categorization of ellipsis in this study is based on Halliday and Hasan (1976), Quirk et al. (1985), and Biber et al. (1999). Ellipsis is divided into the following categories:

3.2.1 Textual ellipsis

This refers to the omission of elements that are recoverable from the linguistic context. This can be found in coordinated clauses, question-answer sequences, and other contexts in which adjacent clauses are

associated in form and meaning. This type of ellipsis in turn is subdivided into three subtypes:

3.2.1.1 Nominal ellipsis

Nominal ellipsis refers to ellipsis within the nominal group (Head with optional pre-modifiers and post-modifiers). The modifier can be a deictic, numerative, epithet, classifier, or qualifier (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). In general, any nominal group having the function of Head filled by a word that normally functions within the Modifier position is an elliptical one. Therefore, nominal ellipsis entails the upgrading of a word from the status of Modifier to that of Head.

3.2.1.2 Verbal ellipsis

Verbal ellipsis is defined as ellipsis within the verbal group. In the verbal group, there is only one lexical element, that is the verb itself, and the whole of the rest of the verbal group expresses systematic selections, a choice of an either-or type. This type of ellipsis can be found in two cases. The first one is lexical verbal ellipsis in which the lexical verb is missing from the verbal group. Talking about English, lexical ellipsis is ellipsis "from the right": it always involves omission of the last word, which is the lexical verb, and only may extend "leftward", to leave only the first word intact. The second case is Operator verbal ellipsis which is ellipsis "from the left". This sort of verbal ellipsis involves only the omission of operators, and the lexical verb remains intact.

3.2.1.3 Clausal ellipsis

It is a kind of ellipsis in which the omission occurs within a clause. The clause in English, as Halliday and Hasan (1976) put it, has a two-part structure consisting of "a modal element" plus a "propositional element". The modal element includes the subject and the finite element in the verbal group. The propositional element, on the other hand, consists of the remainder of the verbal group and any complements or adjuncts that may be present. The clausal ellipsis occurs where one of these elements is missing.

3.2.2 Situational ellipsis

In this type of omission, its interpretation is dependent upon the situational context. According to Biber et al. (1999), this type of ellipsis

is termed "situational" because the missing elements are retrievable through situational knowledge, rather than through anaphoric reference to a previous mention. However, it is usually a condition of this sort of ellipsis that the omitted elements are so stereotyped as to be situationally predictable. Situational ellipsis gives rise to sentences that fail to comply with the grammatical principle that every sentence has a finite verb and each finite verb has a subject.

3.2.3 Structural ellipsis

According to Quirk et al. (1985), in this type of ellipsis, the ellipted word(s) can be identified purely on the basis of grammatical knowledge. Examples are provided by the common omission of determiners, pronouns, operators, and other closed-class words in headlines, book titles, notices, lecture notes, diaries, telegrams, etc.

3.3 Ellipsis as a literary device

Ellipsis is a literary tool that is utilized in narratives to omit some elements of a sentence or event, offering the reader a chance to fill the gaps. It is sometimes written as a series of three dots between sentences or parts of sentences. Apart from being convenient, ellipses additionally assist in advancing the story. Leaving out a part of a sentence is frequently done to either save time or as a stylistic element. The ellipsis may be dated back to Ernest Hemingway, who presented the theory of omission.

After determining the type of omission that constitutes a problem in translating each of the short stories, the study describes how the translators dealt with such problems and analyzes their choices (their causes and results). The study also attempts to analyze the use of omission as a translation strategy by the translators, particularly in translating unomitted words or expressions.

4. Discussion

4.1 Omission in the translation of *Hills Like White Elephants*

In *Hills Like White Elephants*, two characters are discussing an event for the duration of the story, an event which is never directly named throughout the narrative, representing Hemingway's theory of omission.

The whole story is mostly a conversation between two people waiting for the train. Their dialogue is the center of the story. The sentences are short, and the dialogue does not much tell of the situation. The short story was translated into Arabic by Mousa Al-Haloul and posted on 12 September 2018 on *antolgy.com*, an Arabic platform for publishing arts from all over the world, especially creative writing, inspirational articles, and short stories.

Analyzing the use of omission in the short story, 63 cases of ellipsis were found. This indicates the elliptical nature of the only-four-page short story. The story contains various types of ellipsis (textual: 48 cases; situational: 7 cases; structural: 6 cases; and narrative: 2 cases). In translating these cases of omission, Al-Haloul used four translation strategies: literal translation, addition, paraphrase and omission. The following figure shows the number of cases for each strategy and their percentage.
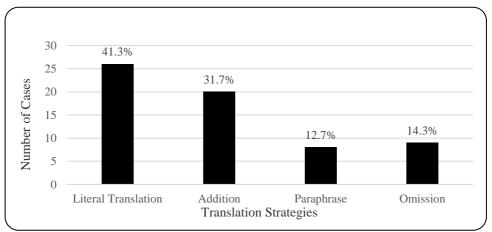

Figure 1: Strategies Used in Translating Omission in *Hills Like White Elephants*

Firstly, the high percentage of the use of the strategy of literal translation in rendering ellipsis indicates that about 40% of the cases did not constitute a problem in translation. This may be due to the proximity of the structure of the English sentence with the Arabic verbal sentence. Example (1) shows this:

1.	ST	TT
	"We can have everything."	"بإمكاننا أن نملك كل شيء"
	"No, we can't [have everything]."[1]	"لا، لا يمكننا [أن نملك كل شئ]"

This example provides a textual clausal ellipsis in a conversation. The propositional element in the second sentence (clause) is omitted as it is already mentioned previously in the first one.

Both English and Arabic do not mention the subject of the second and/or third clause in a compound sentence if it is the same subject of the first clause, provided that the subject in Arabic is a masculine third-person singular. That makes the omission of the subject in such positions simply translated by literal translation as in example (2) below:

2.	ST	TT
	He did not say anything but [he] looked at the bags against the wall of the station.	لم ينبس ببنت شفة، بل نظر[هو] إلى الحقائب بلصق جدار المحطة.

Likewise, the omission of the subject and verb in a response to a question in a conversation can be translated literally:

3.	ST	TT
	"What does it say?"	"ماذا يقول الرسم؟" سألته.
	"[It says] Anis del Toro. It's a drink."	" [يقول الرسم] أنيس دل تورو. إنه مشروب."

In addition, with situational ellipsis, in which the interpretation of the omitted units relies on the situational context, literal translation was useful especially with situations that can be described as universal such as ordering drinks in a café:

4.	ST	TT
	"[We need] Dos cervezas," the man said into the curtain.	"[نحن نريد] كأسان من الشراب،" وجه الرجل كلامه عبر الستارة.

Literal translation was also useful with structural ellipsis which manifests itself in the short story in the form of idioms and fixed expressions as well as the title of the story itself. The English exclamation "All right" is translated as the Arabic exclamation "لا بأس" and both of them contain

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[1] The omitted words are added in square brackets in both the ST and TT.

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ellipsis. However, literal translation of structural ellipsis in English does not always result in an ellipsis in the Arabic TT. In the case of the title of the story *Hills Like White Elephants* which is itself elliptical, the verb to be is conventionally omitted in accordance with the conventional way of writing titles in English: "Hills [are] like White Elephants". When it was translated literally into Arabic, the omission is lost in the TT as Arabic does not need the verb (to be) or any other linguistic unit in such cases. Although the strategy of literal translation seems helpful in translating unproblematic cases of ellipsis, sticking to this strategy sometimes results in imperfect sentences in the TT as in the following example:

5.	ST	TT
	[In the area that was] close against the side of the station	بلصق المحطة كان ظل المبنى دافئاً،

Secondly, the strategy of addition was used to translate textual and situational ellipsis as well as ellipsis as a literary device. It was used in the translation of two types of textual ellipsis: nominal and clausal. There is one case of nominal textual ellipsis in the story where the adjective "American" is upgraded and used to refer to the "American man". "American", which is a neutral adjective in English as the expression "the American" could refer equally to an American man or an American woman, is translated into Arabic as "الأمريكي" "The American male". Translating a general world containing a form of omission into a specific word is considered here a form of addition.

With clausal textual ellipsis, the addition strategy plays a role in providing the omitted propositional element of a clause in the TT as in (6) below:

6.	ST	TT
	"And you think then we'll be all right and be happy." "I know we will."	"وأنت تظن أننا بعدها سنكون سعيدين وعلى خير ما يرام." "أنا أعلم أننا سنكون *كذلك*."٢

In the example above, "I know we will" is translated as "I know we will *be so*".

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² The added part is italicized.

Providing the subject of the second clause in a compound sentence is another example of using this strategy:

7.	ST	TT
	"It tastes like licorice," the girl said and put the glass down.	«يشبه طعمه طعم السوس،» قالت الفتاة وهي تضع الكأس من يدها.

As for situational ellipsis, the Al-Haloul, in one case, chose to add a conjunction to clarify the relation between the girl's talk and the situation:

8.	ST	TT
	"And we could have all this," she said.	وقالت: «وبعدها يمكننا أن نملك كل هذا.

There are two cases of the use of ellipsis as a narrative device in the story and both of them are translated by the use of addition. One of them is on the small-scale or micro level in omitting the verb of saying in (9):

9.	ST	TT
	"I've never seen one," the man drank his beer.	«لم أر فيلا أبيض قط،» *قال* الرجل وهو يكرع شرابه

The second case is on the large-scale or macro level represented in omitting the clear reference to the topic of the story and this indicates Hemingway's theory of omission mentioned above. The use of addition in this case is too unsuccessful to the extent that it diminishes Hemingway's distinguished style. In the form of a footnote, Al-Haloul provides the TT reader with the topic of the story which was to remain omitted.

Thirdly, Al-Haloul sometimes chose to change the structure of an elliptical expression in the form of a paraphrase. This strategy is used to translate cases of textual, situational and structural ellipsis. In such cases, instead of translating the elliptical expressions literally or providing the omitted elements, Al-Haloul changes the structure of the sentence:

10.	ST	TT
	But I don't want you to do it if you don't really want to [do it]."	لكنني لا أريدك أن تفعلي إن لم تكوني حقاً راغبة.»

In this example, "if you don't really want to [do it]" is translated as "if you are not really willing". Sometimes, paraphrase is a must especially with situational ellipsis when meaning depends on the context of the situation:

11.	ST	TT
	"Well, I care about you."	"ولكنني أبالي بك."
	"Oh, yes."	"أوه، طبعاً."

Using "yes" in an elliptical expression as a response to a declarative sentence in a conversation usually indicates that the declarative sentence is correct. However, in the specific situation above, the girl says "yes" although she doubts the correctness of the declarative sentence. Therefore, translating "yes" as "طبعا" "of course" helps in conveying the irony behind the word. Likewise, the meaning of some exclamations, which are considered examples of structural ellipsis in this study, depends on the respective situation. An example is the exclamation "well", which is translated literally as "حسنا" and "على أي حال", was translated using paraphrase as "ولكن" "but".

Fourthly, Al-Haloul chose to omit 9 cases of elliptical expressions. In the first case, he chooses to omit the elliptical expression because mostly it is repeated three times. Al-Haloul translated that elliptical expression literally two times and ignored the third although this sort of repetition in a conversation gives the impression of a real conversation. When two people argue with each other, one of them or both may repeat a specific expression to emphasize and confirm their idea. This is lost in the TT.

The other 8 cases occur in the last part of the story which was totally omitted by Al-Haloul. He unjustifiably did not translate the last part of the story which is about 154 words. The Arabic version of the story posted on the *Antolgy.com* website does not provide the translation of this last part. Whether this is the translator's choice or the publisher's, a reason should be provided in a footnote, otherwise it is considered as a mistake. Such use of omission has a negative impact on the value of the literary work in the TT.

On the other hand, omission as a translation strategy was used as a

solution to translation problems or to reach a better translation from the translator's point of view. It was used in 3 cases. One of them was to avoid the confusion of literal translation as in translating "the line of hills" as "التلال" "the hills". In another case it was used to indicate the short time of an event through omitting details known by the reader:

12.	ST	TT
	The man called "Listen" through the curtain. The woman came out from the bar.	نادى على النادلة عبر الستارة، فجاءت.

The two sentences in English are translated into a short sentence in Arabic. The woman comes in the TT faster than in the ST. In addition, the translator may omit the translation of the word "it" if it functions as an object indicating "the matter": "you started it" is translated as " أنت الذي بدأ" "you who started".

4.2 Omission in the translation of *The Sisters*

The Sisters is one of the short story collection entitled *Dubliners*, which revolves around the everyday lives of people in Dublin during the Victorian age. The stories focus on human emotions such as self-hatred, vanity, disillusionment and loss. Gottfried (1992) argues that Joyce has a satiric purpose that can be observed through the stories because "there lay the indifference of style, or more exactly a 'paralysis' of style" (p. 154). Joyce narrates his stories in a realistic manner, criticizing and exposing a culture that he considered to be in a state of paralysis. He wishes to show "a chapter of [his country's] moral history" in the paralyzed features of Dublin (Gottfried, 1992, p. 153). *The Sisters* relates life, death and retrospective perspectives within an everyday experience. A priest dies of paralysis and the whole story revolves around "paralyzed" conversations and actions, demonstrating a state that Joyce rejects. The whole collection of the short stories, including *The Sisters*, was translated into Arabic by Osama Manzagly and published in 2000 by Dar Al-Hewar, Syria.

Analyzing the use of omission in the short story, 74 cases of ellipsis were found. This indicates how the use of ellipsis is frequent in the story. The story contains various types of ellipsis (textual: 45 cases; situational: 15

cases; structural: 14 cases). In translating these cases of omission, Manzagly used four translation strategies: literal translation, addition, paraphrase, and omission. Figure 2 shows the number of cases for each strategy and its percentage.

Firstly, like in the translation of *Hills Like White Elephants*, the use of the strategy of literal translation is of a high percentage, indicating that about half of the cases did not constitute a problem in translation. The following is an example:

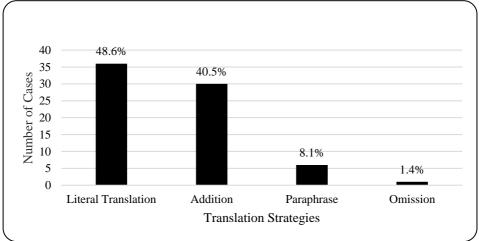| 13.	ST	TT
	"Well, so your old friend is gone, you'll be sorry to hear." "Who [is gone]?" Said I. "Father Flynn [is gone]."	"إذن فقد مات صديقك الحميم، ويسوءك أن تسمع النبأ" قلت: "من[مات]؟" "الأب فلين [مات]"

Figure 2: Strategies Used in Translating Omission in *The Sisters*

This example provides a literal translation of a textual clausal ellipsis in a conversation. The propositional element in the second and third sentences is omitted as it is already mentioned previously in the first one.

Moreover, both English and Arabic do not mention the masculine third-person subject of the second and/or third clause in a compound sentence if it is the same subject of the first clause. That makes the omission of the

subject in such positions simply translated by literal translation as in example (14) below:

14.	ST	TT
	My uncle saw me staring and [he] said to me:	ورآني عمي أحدق فقال [هو]:

Literal translation was also used in translating situational ellipsis which at the same time represents ellipsis as a narrative device used by Joyce in this story in the form of "paralyzed" sentences:

15.	ST	TT
	Let a young lad run about and play with young lads of his own age and not be... Am I right, Jack?'	"دعوا أطفالكم يركضون ويمرحون مع أترابهم وأن لا... ألست على حق، يا جاك؟"

In addition, with structural ellipsis, literal translation was useful. The translation of the priest's death announcement card is an example:

16.	ST	TT
	[On] July 1st, 1895 The Rev. James Flynn (formerly of S. Catherine's Church, Meath Street) [died], [when he was] aged sixty-five years. R.I.P	[في] الأول من تموز ١٨٩٥ [توفي] المحترم جيمس فلين (التابع سابقا بكنيسة القديسة كاترين، شارع ميث)، [وكان] عمره يناهز الخامسة والستين. رحمه الله

Manzagly here managed to translate the announcement in a similar form containing all elements of omission except the last one, where "R.I.P" (which is itself a short form of "Rest in peace") was translated as " رحمه الله" "May God be merciful with him" using the strategy of paraphrase.

On the other hand, the use of literal translation was not 100% successful, it did fail to present a good Arabic style as in the following case:

17.	ST	TT
	You were both very kind to him, I must say.'	"لقد كنتما معا في منتهي اللطف معه، يجب أن أقول"

Secondly, the strategy of addition was used to translate textual, situational, and structural ellipsis. It was used in translating clausal ellipsis, for example, to provide a pronoun referring to the subject of the

first clause in a compound sentence.

18.	ST	TT
	I drew the blankets over my head and [I] tried to think of Christmas.	وسحبت الغطاء فوق رأسي وحاولت أن أفكر في عيد الميلاد.

Unlike the verb "tried" which is not preceded directly by a subject, its Arabic equivalent "حاول" in the translation is supplemented by "ت" which is an enclitic pronoun indicating that the subject of the verb is the speaker. In other cases, ellipsis cannot be translated into Arabic, so the translator has no choice except to add the omitted item(s):

19.	ST	TT
	[What a] Tiresome old red-nosed imbecile!	يا له من عجوز غبي ممل أحمر الأنف!

The same case can be found with structural ellipsis in translating fixed expression used in specific occasions:

20.	ST	TT
	"[May] God have mercy on his soul"	"ليرحم الله روحه"

Sometimes the use of addition may not help in translating ellipsis as a narrative device. This is evident in the following case of translating situational ellipsis:

21.	ST	TT
	"No, I wouldn't say he was exactly..."	"لا، لا أستطيع القول إنه كان هكذا..."

The TT sentence is complete unlike the ST one, causing loss of the rhetorical function of ellipsis in such cases.

Thirdly, the translator sometimes chose to paraphrase the elliptical expression. This strategy was used to translate cases of situational and structural ellipsis. In cases of situational ellipsis, the translator may paraphrase the sentence in order to use words acceptable to the TT readers in such situations:

22.	ST	TT
	"No, no, not for me," said Old Cotter.	قال العجوز كوتر: "لا، لا، لم أعد أستطيع".

Offering your guest more food to eat on the dining table may be responded to using different expressions depending on culture. Sometimes, paraphrase may be used to avoid translating a specific expression in a repetitive way. "Night after night" which is once translated literally as "ليلة بعد ليلة" is translated by paraphrase as "كل ليلة" "every night". It is worth mentioning that there is one case of ellipsis seems to be translated by paraphrase; however, it is considered by the study as a case of mistranslation because such paraphrase here resulted in a change of meaning:

23.	ST	TT
	"Father O'Rourke was in with him a Tuesday and anointed him and prepared him and all."	كان الأب أوروك معه يوم الثلاثاء، وقد مسحه بالزيت وأعد له كل شئ"

In this case, "prepare him and all" is translated as "وأعد له كل شئ" "prepared everything for him".

Fourthly, Manzagly chose to use omission once. Faced with a sentence with two introductory items, he chose to omit one of them:

24.	ST	TT
	'Well, so your old friend is gone, you'll be sorry to hear.'	"إذن فقد مات صديقك الحميم، ويسوءك أن تسمع النبأ"

"Well" is omitted in the TT, avoiding probable unacceptability.

On the other hand, omission as a translation strategy was used either as a solution to other translation problems or to reach a better translation from the translator's point of view. It is used in about 30 cases. One of them was to avoid the confusion of literal translation as in translating an active voice sentence into passive voice as long as the subject is unknown:

25.	ST	TT
	"and they say he had a great wish for him."	ويقال أنه كان شديد الولع به

Such a sentence is better to be in passive when translated into Arabic to avoid confusion. More than 20 of the cases can be attributed to one reason: the form of the verb in the simple past tense in Arabic without any addition indicates that the subject is masculine third-person singular. Therefore, when translating the narrator's description of the priest and his

death, Manzagly mostly did not mention the subject depending only on that form of verb to convey meaning. This helps in avoiding the annoying repetition of the subject alongside the verbs. Other uses of omission as a translation strategy had negative effects on meaning, represented in lessening the effect of an intended image in the ST. For example, omitting the adjective "little" from "A silence took possession of the little room" and the adverb "at all" from "Only for Father O'Rourke I don't know what we'd done at all" does not transfer the literary image completely to the TT.

5. Results

One important result of the above analysis is that the use of omission in short stories depends on two factors: the form of the story and the author's style of writing. Short stories of conversational nature such as *Hills Like White Elephants* tend to have cases of omission more than short stories with less use of conversations such as *The Sisters*. This can be attributed to the difference between the spoken and written versions of language. The spoken language is in its nature more elliptical. This explains why although *The Sisters* is nearly the double length of *Hills Like White Elephants*, it has about 74 cases of ellipsis compared to 63 cases in *Hills Like White Elephants*.

The two authors are different in the use of omission as a literary device. Hemingway's theory of omission represented in his style depends on not providing the main details especially the main topic of the story explicitly while Joyce's style depends on providing incomplete details, a puzzle of sentences you have to solve as indicated by the narrator of the story in the following quotation: "Though I was angry with old Cotter for alluding to me as a child, I puzzled my head to extract meaning from his unfinished sentences" (Joyce, 2000, p. 5). This difference in style as well as the fact that *Hills Like White Elephants* consists of one situation (one scene) seems to be the reason why the use of situational and structural ellipses is more apparent in *The Sisters*.

Both translators used four translation strategies to translate the cases of omission: literal translation, addition, paraphrase, and omission. The percentages of using literal translation are high and close in the

translations of both stories (41.3%) and (48.6%). This implies how useful this strategy is in translating omission—a result that goes in line with the findings of previous studies reviewed above. This also indicates that when translating omission from English into Arabic, about half of the elliptical cases can be translated directly without the interference of the translator—a result that should be verified by further research. On the other hand, although literal translation is helpful in translating elliptical cases from English into Arabic, sticking to this strategy may result in unacceptable Arabic expressions.

The use of the strategy of addition is naturally expected when translating omission for the translator has to clarify meaning to the TT readers. Its use in *The Sisters* is 40.5% compared to 31.7% in the translation of *Hills Like White Elephants*; however, its negative effect was worse in the latter when Manzagly chose to add information about the main topic of the story neglecting Hemingway's Iceberg Theory altogether. The positive effect of this strategy appears when used to fill grammatical gaps in the TT, but when filling semantic gaps, it may cause loss of the rhetorical function of using omission as a literary device in the ST.

Using the strategy of paraphrase was helpful in translating both of the short stories. It helped the translators to avoid awkward expressions due to literal translation and enable them to provide their TT readers with more eloquent use of language. It also helped them to translate pragmatic meanings, which rely on context or situation not the literal meaning of words, or to avoid repetition found in the ST.

The use of omission as a strategy for translating elliptical expressions was totally negative in the translation of *Hills Like White Elephants*; it caused the loss of a part of the story and lessened the factual nature of the conversation found in the ST. In contrast, it was only used once for translating elliptical expressions in "The Sister" to avoid having linguistic awkwardness. On the other hand, the strategy of omission was used in the translation of both short stories to overcome translation problems not related to ellipsis. It helped the translators to have better expressions in the TT free from repetition, confusion, and unnecessary items that can result from literal translation. In spite of this, it should be

used carefully as it may result in lessening the degree of literary images in the TT.

6. Conclusion

Omission plays a vital role as both a problem and a solution in literary translation. Omission as a translation problem manifests itself in various types of ellipsis including textual, situational, and structural ellipses. Omission or ellipsis also functions as a literary device and, in this case, it becomes more challenging to translators. Translators mainly use four translation strategies when translating omission: literary translation, addition, paraphrase, and omission. Each strategy has its own pros and cons, so they should be used cautiously. Further studies are needed to verify the degree of similarity between English and Arabic in relation to the use of omission whether as a cohesive device or as a literary device.

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