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Grammatical redundancy and the process of teaching literary Arabic as a foreign language

Every living literary language in the world functions in two versions; the written, or formal one, and the spoken one. The difference between them depends mainly on the degree of normativeness of a given language on one hand, and the scope of redundancy on the other. The redundancy means here, as defined by Cherry (1978), *a property of languages, codes, and sign systems which arise from a superfluity of rules*¹. As a common linguistic phenomenon, redundancy can occur in every layer of the language, starting with phonetics, through morphology up to syntax. Nevertheless, its scope may differ from one language to another. According to Cherry, the superfluity of rules is a natural mechanism of language that protects communication in case some of the rules are broken.

Redundancy in the literary Arabic is particularly significant on the grammatical level. It manifests itself in the omission of a number of morphological and syntactical formants in the spoken language like the indefinite article suffix, case and gender affixes etc. This property of the Arabic language had drawn attention of the earliest Arab philologists as they were working out principles of the so-called *waqf*, i.e. the syntactic pause. Those principles, however, applied only to the techniques of recitation of poetry and sacred texts as well as oratorical speeches². But the mere fact that the neutralization of some grammatical morphemes was in specific contexts considered permissible is nothing else but a clear signal that these morphemes are to a certain degree redundant.

A fundamental nature of recited texts is the tendency to keep continuity of the phonic chains between subsequent pauses for breath. It adds some rhythmicity to the uttered text. The breath pause determines the

¹ Cherry, C., *On Human Communication*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1978, 3rd edition, p. 19.

² Much attention to this issue was paid by Sibawayhi – see Sibawayhi, *Al-Kitāb*, ‘Ālam al-Kutub, Bayrūt n.d., ed. ‘Abd as-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn, vol. 4, pp. 166-202.

end of a logical syntactic entity. In a word chain contained between two pauses, the ultima of one word merges, in some measure, with the onset of the following word (the so-called *external sandhi*). It creates a kind of internal cohesion of such a word chain and causes that, as far as the rhythm of speech is regarded, it is perceived as a single long word.

In normal oral language communication, text, by its nature, is more segmented. There are of course many extralinguistic factors that have impact on it, like individual easiness or difficulty in formulating thoughts, degree of eloquence, congenital or acquired speech defects, emotional condition of an interlocutor, etc. Thus the way of articulating cannot be formalized or brought under control. As a consequence, pauses between subsequent phonic segments are more frequent and less regular or even quite irregular. And if so, the changes that can result because of that, must automatically be more frequent. And that is exactly what takes place in the Arabic literary language.

1. First of all, elision of short vowels in absolute final position. Treated as redundant are not only those short vowel endings that function merely as inter-word vocalic links, as final *a* and *i* in forms like: *taḍhabīna* → *taḍhabīn*, *yaḍhabūna* → *yaḍhabūn*, *yaḍhabāni* → *yaḍhabān*, *fallāḥūna* → *fallāḥūn*. The phenomenon applies also to situations in which the final short vowels are assigned some specific morphological function, namely:

a) In some imperfect personal forms³, where the timbre of a short vowel in a given verb ending points to an adequate modal form of a verb: *u* – for the indicative, *a* – for the subjunctive and \emptyset (zero vowel) – for jussive. Thus, omission of the final short vowel in those imperfect inflectional forms leads to a situation in which no formal distinction among syntactic categories exists any more. For example, the original contrast *yaḍhabu* ≠ *yaḍhaba* ≠ *yaḍhab* is replaced by a single form *yaḍhab*. However, this neutralization of modal features does not result in any disturbance in the semantic layer, since there are additional factors that prevent it, like various kinds of conjunctions (*'an*, *kay*, *li-*, *ḥattā* etc.) and particles (*lam*, *lan*, *'in* etc.). While in case of the lack of such conjunctions or particles there still remain factors like the syntactic-semantic context, word order and intonation. Hence, one can say *'Urīd 'an 'usāfir 'ilā 'l-Maḡrib* instead of *'Urīdu 'an 'usāfira 'ilā 'l-Maḡrib*, or *Sawfa 'a'mal*

³ In the singular it applies to 1st pers. and the 2nd pers. masc., whereas in the plural and dual only to the 1st. pers.

ma‘a Zaynab instead of *Sawfa ‘a‘malu ma‘a Zaynab*, or *Lan yanğah fi ‘l-‘imtiḥānāt* instead of *Lan yanğaha fi ‘l-‘imtiḥānāt*.

b) Omission of the short final vowels in the perfect singular 1st pers., as well as 2nd and 3rd pers. masc., as for example:

1st pers. sing.: *katabt, kunt, malalt* instead of *katabtu, kuntu, malaltu,*

2nd pers. sing. masc.: *katabt, kunt, malalt* instead of *katabta, kunta, malalta,*

3rd pers. sing. masc.: *katab, kān, mall* instead of *kataba, kāna, malla.*

Such a modification stands in no contradiction with the fact that as a result of it the formal distinction between the 1st pers. and 2nd pers. masc. completely disappears.

c) In the nominal forms in which the timbre of the short final vowel points to the case: *u* – for the nominative, *i* – for the genitive and *a* – for the accusative, as in: *‘Aḥmad fi ‘l-bustān* instead of *‘Aḥmadu fi ‘l-bustān*, or *fi ‘l-bustān ‘Aḥmad* instead of *fi ‘l-bustāni ‘Aḥmad*, or *‘inna ‘Aḥmad fi ‘l-bustān* instead of *‘inna ‘Aḥmada fi ‘l-bustān*. Omission of the declension ending vowel in any of the above examples has no impact on the syntactic-semantic status. The order of sentence components, including adequate prepositions and particles, is a sufficient guarantee of linguistic correctness. So, the case ending is here a kind of a surplus element⁴.

2. Unification of the *verba ultimae w/y* conjugational endings. Here, the irregular forms like *rağaw, qağaw, tansayna* or *tansawna* recommended by generations of Arab grammarians and consistent with the correctness norms applicable up to now are commonly replaced with *rağū, qağū, tansīna, tansūna* by way of analogy to the regular verbs paradigm.

3. Redundancy applies also to some consonantal affixes, namely:

a) Indefiniteness formant *-n* (Ar. *‘at-tanwīn*), as for example: *‘inda-nā kitāb ġamīl ġadīd* instead of *‘inda-nā kitābun ġamīlun ġadīd*, or *ta‘rrafat ‘alā ‘ašarāt min mudarrisāt ġadīdāt* instead of *ta‘rrafat ‘alā ‘ašarātīn min mudarrisātīn ġadīdāt*. The opposition definiteness ≠ indefiniteness is realized on the grammatical level mainly through the presence or lack of the article *‘al-*. Thus relevancy of the indefiniteness affix *-n* is close to zero.

⁴ Even if some short vocalic element appears in the position of the affix, its timbre is in practice functionally insignificant. The role of such a vowel, especially in *status constructus* is restricted to an inter-word vocalic link only. Very frequently it is a kind of a neutral vowel or a variant of *i*. The same applies to the short vowel verbal affixes.

b) The singular feminine gender affix *-t-* (Ar. *tā' marbūta*), as for example: *'al-Mamlaka 'l-'Arabiyya 's-Su'ūdiyya* instead of *'al-Mamlakatu 'l-'Arabiyyatu 's-Su'ūdiyya*, or *marar-nā bi-ḥadīqa ṣaḡīra malī'a bi-'z-zuhūr* instead of *mararnā bi-ḥadīqatin ṣaḡīratin malī'atin bi-'z-zuhūr*. What occurs in this case is actually only the reduction of the essential part of the affix and not the whole affix, since the feminine gender ending in the above quoted examples does not consist of the consonant *t* only. It includes also the preceding vowel *a*, which never undergoes elision, being a sufficient determinant of the feminine gender. The only position in which the *-t-* of the feminine gender affix never can be omitted is the *status constructus* of the attributive phrases like *zawḡat[u] 'Aḥmad*. Elision of *-t-* would disturb the syntactic rules and in some circumstances lead to ambiguities, as for example in the following pair of phrases: *ḥadīqat(u) ḡamīla ≠ ḥadīqa ḡamīla*. In the first phrase the word *ḡamīla* stands for a woman's name and the meaning is "Jameela's garden", whereas in the second phrase it stands for a common adjective, so the phrase means "a beautiful garden".

c) An interesting fact is the reduction of the relative adjective affix *-iyy-* (Ar. *nisba*) in masculine forms, to the long vowel *ī*. It seems that the change must have been forced by the former elision of the case and indefiniteness formants. Thus, in place of three complex endings, i. e.: *-iyyun*, *-iyyin* and *-iyyan* only one has remained, namely *-ī*⁵, as for example *fī 'l-wāqi 'i 's-siyāsī 'l-'irāqī* instead of *fī 'l-wāqi 'i 's-siyāsīyyi 'l-'irāqīyyi*, or *barnāmiḡ 'iqtisādī siyāsī miṣrī* instead of *barnāmiḡūn 'iqtisādīyyun siyāsīyyun miṣrīyy*.

In the so far discussed instances there is basically no divergence between the phonetic realization and writing. The affixes omitted in speech because of their considerably high redundancy, are predominantly also omitted in written texts. The exception is the sing. feminine gender morpheme *-t-* which is always preserved in writing as well as the sing. and broken plural unidentified accusative forms (except for words ending with *tā' marbūta*), in which both the inflectional form and the indefiniteness

⁵ With the exception of situations where the accusative form denotes adverbial meanings. In such cases the affix *-iyy-* is regularly preserved, in the spoken version of literary Arabic, as for example in *'amniyyan*. It also happens (depending on regional usage of the language) that the affix *-iyy-* is regularly preserved in masculine adjective forms. In such cases, the original accentuation is maintained as well, as for instance in: *'iqtisādīyy 'iqtisādīyyun*. Whereas there where *-iyy-* is reduced to *ī*, the accent falls back to the preceding syllables.

morpheme are indicated in writing with the 'alif letter at the end of words. The omission of this letter is always considered a grammatical and spelling error. Whereas in the spoken version of the literary Arabic, this bimorphemic ending *-an* can be (and most frequently *is*) omitted without any undesirable consequences. The word order as well as the syntactic-semantic context constitute here sufficient protection. Only where the accusative form is used adverbially, the ending *-an* is normally preserved in speech, i. e. *ḡiddan*, *ḡadan*, *yawmiyyan*, or *dāhiban 'ilā 'l-madrasa*.

4. Exceptions to the standard that are triggered in the spoken version of the literary Arabic because of low relevancy of the declensional endings, are not restricted to the omission of the singular short vowel affixes with no impact on spelling. They apply also to the sound plural (*pluralis sanus*) forms where the opposition between the nominative affix *-ū-* and the genitive/accusative affix *-ī-* (as for example in *muslimūn[a] ≠ muslimīn[a]*)⁶ is quite commonly replaced with the single affix *-ī-*. This tendency, although in speech not treated as an error, stands in contradiction to the grammatical norm of the written language. And consequently, can result in spelling mistakes.

5. There is one more interesting tendency that accompanies the neutralization of the distinction among indicative, subjunctive and jussive⁷ forms in the spoken literary Arabic. It concerns the *mediae w//y* and *ultimae w//y* verbs in structures that require the usage of jussive, especially in the prohibitive phrases. According to the classical Arabic norm the 1st pers. sing. as well as 2nd and 3rd pers. sing. masc. forms of the above mentioned verb classes require the shortening of the stem long vowel. Whereas, in speech this rule is mostly ignored. Hence, for example, *lā taqūl*, or *lā tarmī-hā* instead of the correct *lā taqul* and *lā tarmi-hā*. Also here, as it seems, the reason lies in applying the analogy to the corresponding regular verbs. While in speech, such an evident violation of the grammatical rules is practically not perceptible because of the commonness of this phenomenon, it is in writing unambiguously considered as a grammatical error.

⁶ The grammatical information is carried here only by the suffix vowel - its timbre indicates the grammatical case, whereas its length points to the number. The consonant *-n-* that follows it, constitutes most probably the remains of the indefinite affix, as one can deduce from the fact that it obligatorily drops out in *status constructus*. As for the final sound *-a* it functions only as an inter-word vocalic link.

⁷ See par. 1a above.

The following three excerpts of the spoken texts illustrate in a practical way the scale of the above presented redundancy of some grammatical rules in the literary Arabic. They were taken from the programs broadcasted by the Aš-Šarqiyya TV channel and published as sound files on its website. The vertical dashes in the text indicate the syntactic pauses. The morphemes dropped in speech due to their redundancy have been placed in square brackets. The texts have been written according to phonological transcription. Capital letters have been used to punctuate sentences as well as to distinguish proper nouns.

Text 1⁸

'Uḥayyī-kum marratan 'uḥrā | mušāhidī-nā 'l-kirām | 'alā šāsat[i] 'aš-šarqiyya | šāsat[i] 'al-ḥaqīqa⁹ | fī taḡṭiyya[ti]n] ḥayya[ti]n] wa-mubāšira | li-sayri 'l-'intihābāti 'l-barlamāniyya[ti] 'l-'irāqiyya | 'allātī ḡarat hādā 'l-yawm. | Wa-wašalat ma'lūmāt[un] kaṭīra | bi-ḥuṣūṣ[i] | 'al-'intihābāt | wa-mā ḡarā fī-hā | wa-ḥalf[a] kawālīs[i]-hā | wa-min hādihī 'l-ma'lūmāt | mā nušira fī ṣaḥīfat[i] 'Īlāf | 'allātī taṣdur[u] fī Landan | wa-tuwazza[u] iliktrūniyyan. | Našarat hādihī 'š-ṣaḥīfa | 'an 'intihākāt[in] kaṭīra | ḥašalat fī laḡnati 'l-intihābāt | 'al-mas'ūla[ti] 'ani 'l-'intihābāt[i] ḥāriḡa 'l-'Irāq. | Kānat hunāk[a] 'ittihāmāt[un] | muwaḡḡaha[tun] 'ilā 's-sayyida[ti] Ḥamdiyya 'l-Ḥusaynī | bi-ḥuṣūṣ | kān[a] hunāk[a] tafḍīl[un] | li-mu'assasāt[in] 'i'lāniyya[ti]n] ḡayr[i] 'irāqiyya | 'alā 'l-mu'assasāti 'l-'irāqiyya. | Kānat hunāk[a] 'uqūd[un] | ma'a šarikāt[in] wahmiyya[ti]n] fī 'Ammān | kāna hunāk[a] 'istihdām | li-sayyāra[ti]n] mufaḥḥaḥa | ma'a 'anna-hu 'al-'Urdunn | balad[un] mustaqirr[un] 'amniyyan. | 'Amalan bi-ḥurriyyati 'r-ra'yi | wa-li-'l-'amāna[ti] 'š-ṣaḥāfiyya | 'ammannā hādā 'l-'ittiṣāl | ma'a 'as-sayyida[ti] Ḥamdiyya 'l-Ḥusaynī | 'al-mas'ūla[ti] 'alā laḡnati 'l-'intihābāt[i] ḥāriḡa 'l-'irāq | li-tarudd[a] 'alā hādihī 'l-'ittihāmāt

8

<http://www.alsharqiyatv.com/display.asp?fname=interview\2005\05\153.txt&storzt itle storytitle=>

⁹ One should rather expect *šāṣati* 'š-Šarqiyya and *šāṣati* 'l-ḥaqīqa here. It is an example of a common tendency to separate pronunciation, i.e. alif separationis (*hamzat al-qaṭ'*) instead of the combined one, i.e. alif coniunctionis (*hamzat al-waṣl*).

| *wa-li-twaḍḍih[a]*¹⁰ *wuḡhat[a naḍar[i]-hā (...)* | *'anti sami'ti 'l-'ittihāmāt*
 | *wa-qad takūnīn[a qad qara'ti-hā*¹¹ *qabla-nā 'aw miṭla-nā.* | *Mā raddu-*
ki 'alā hādīhi 'l-'ittihāmāt | *'al-muwaḡḡaha[ti] 'ilā ḥaḍirtik* | *min qibal[i]*
ḡarīdat[i] 'Īlāf | *'allātī tuwazza'[u] iliktrūniyyan 'alā šabakati 'l-*
'intarnatt?

- *Na'am.* | *Fī 'l-ḥaḡīqa* | *'anā qara't[u] hādīhi 'l-'ittihāmāt* | *wa-*
kuntu fī ya'nī ḡamrat[i] 'al-farḥa | *min ḡarrā'[i] naḡāh[i] barnāmiḡi 'l-*
'intihābāt | *ḥāriḡa 'l-'Irāq* | *wa-'alāwatan 'an-naḡāh[u]* | *huwa laysa*
'an-naḡāh[u] li-'l-'Irāq[i] faqaṭ | *naḡāh[un] li-'l-'Arab[i] 'aḡma'īn.* |
*Li'anna-hā barnāmiḡi*¹² *'l-'intihābāt* | *huwa 'awwal[u] taḡruba* | *fī*
manṭiqati 'š-Šarqi 'l-'Awsaṭ | *yatimm[u] min qibal[i] kādir[in] 'irāqī ḥālīš*
 | *lā tuwḡad[u] 'ayy[u] ma'ūna[ti]n duwaliyya* | *lā yuwḡad[u] 'ayy[u]*
ḥabīr[in] duwalī ma'a-nā. | *Bada'nā bi-hi mind[u]*¹³ *ḥamsa[ti]n wa-*
*tlāīn[a]*¹⁴ *yawm[an]* | *'intaqal-nā 'ilā 'Ammān* | *bi-taklīf[in] min maḡlis[i]*
'al-mufawwaḍīn. | *Wa-'indamā bada'nā bi-hi* | *kān[a] hunāka taḥaffuḍ* |
mina 'l-'Umami 'l-Muttaḥida | *ḥawla 'amal[in] bi-hi* | *li-'anna 'l-*
'amal[a] bi-h[i] 'tabarū(-hu) | *rāḥ*¹⁵ *yu'addī 'ilā 'l-faṣal* | *wa-rāḥ*¹⁶
*yi'aṭṭir[u]*¹⁷ *'alā 'l-'intihābāti 'l-'irāqiyya[ti] fī 'd-dāḥil.* | *Wa-kaḍālika*
waṣalat-nā taqārīr | *min mu'ḍami 'l-ḥubarā'[i] fī 'l-'ālam[i] mina 'l-*
'intihābāt | *'akkadū fī-hi* | *bi-'anna hādā 'l-barnāmiḡ* | *sa-yafṣal* | *wa-*
'anna-hu sa-yu'aṭṭir[u] 'alā 'l-'intihābāt. | *Wa hādā mā yaṣhad[u] bi-hi*
 | *maḡlis[u] 'al-mufawwaḍīn.* | *Wa-lakin maḡlis[u] 'al-mufawwaḍīn* | *wa-*
bi-qarār[in] šuḡā' | *šaḡḡa[a]-nī 'ayḍan* | *'alā 'anna-hu 'astamirr[u] bi-*
hādā 'l-'amal. | *Li'anna-hu lā yumkin[u] 'iḡfāl[u] dawr[i] 'al-ḡāliyyāti 'l-*
'irāqiyya[ti] fī 'l-ḥāriḡ | *wa-man'a-hum min mumārasat[i] ḥaḡqa-hum* | *fī*
hādā 'l-'arsi 'd-dimūqrātī 'al-kabīr | *min ḥilāl[i] 'adam[i] 'amal[in] bi-*
barnāmiḡi 'l-'intihābāt.

¹⁰ Colloquial pronunciation with the elision of the imperfect prefix vowel, i.e. *twaḍḍih* instead of the correct *tuwaḍḍih*.

¹¹ There should be *qara'ti-hā*. It is an example of a quite frequent in the literary Arabic (and commonly occurring in the Arabic dialects) lengthening of the 2nd pers. sing. fem. suffix vowel of the perfect tense.

¹² The final vowel functions here as an inter-word vocalic link only (see par. 1 above and the footnote 4).

¹³ Colloquial pronunciation instead of the correct *mind[u]*.

¹⁴ Colloquial pronunciation instead of the correct *talāīn*.

¹⁵ Dialectism instead of the literary *sawfa*.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Colloquial pronunciation instead of the correct *yu'aṭṭir[u]*

Text 2¹⁸

- *Tayyib duktūr* | 'in lam taṣilūn¹⁹ | 'ilā 't-tifāq[in] mu'ayyan | *hal sa-tansaḥib[u] mina* 'l-'i'tilāf | 'am sa-yakūn[u] 'al-ḥallu 'l-'āḥir | *huwa 't-taṣwīt[u] dāḥili*²⁰ 'l-'i'tilāf (...). |

- *Laday-nā 'āliyyatayn*²¹ | 'al-'āliyya[tu] 'l-'ūlā | *ḥasabi*²² 'n-niḍāmi²³ 'd-dāḥilī | *wa-huwa laysa niḍām[un] muttafaq[un] 'alay-h[i] | bi-šikil[in]*²⁴ 'iḡmālī. | *Naḥnu 'aydan | lā tazāl[u] laday-nā taḥaffuḍāt[un] | 'alā ba'ḍi 'l-faḡarāt | fī 'n-niḍāmi 'd-dāḥilī li-'l-'i'tilāf. | 'An-niḍāmi*²⁵ 'd-dāḥilī yanuṣṣ[u] | 'alā 'anna 'al-'aṣil | *fī ḥalli 'l-mašākil | huwa 'āliyyati*²⁶ 't-tawāfuq | *wa-yastahdimu 'l-'aṣl. | Fa-'idan | lā yumkin[u] luḡū[un] 'ilā wasīla[tin] 'uḥrā | 'illā ba'da 'an nastanzif[a] | kull[a] wasā'il[i] tawāfuq. | Wa-li-ḥaddi 'l-'ān | naḥnu fī 'āliyyati 't-tawāfuq | nabḥatī*²⁷ 'l-mas'ala | *wa-kull[a] 'ārā'. | Wa-kull[u] murašṣaḥ[in] yaṭraḥ[u] ru'yati-hi*²⁸ li-'l-'amur (...). |

- *Lākin naqūl* | 'in lam tatawaṣṣalū 'ilā ḥall[in] bi-tarīqat[i] 'at-tawāfuq | *mā huwa 'l-ḥall[u] 'al-muraḡḡaḥ | 'at-taṣwīt[u] dāḥili*²⁹ 'l-'i'tilāf | 'ami 'l-'insihāb[u] *mina* 'l-'i'tilāf? |

- *Fī-h[i] 'āliyya[tun] maṭrūḥa[tuni] 'l-'ān | wa-sa-tubḥat[u] | ḥilāl[a] ḥādā* 'l-'usbū'. |

- *Wa-hiya?* |

- *'Al-'āliyya[tu] 'l-badīla. | Fa-ṣār[a] 'ittiṣāl[un] ḥātifi | bayn-ī wa-bayn[a] mandūb[i]-nā fī 'l-'i'tilāf | wa-mumaṭṭil[i]-nā fī 'l-'i'tilāf | wa-qāl[a] 'anna 'l-mas'ala | tubḥat[u] 'al-'ān fī 'l-'i'tilāf | lākin lam*

¹⁸ <http://www.alsharqiyatv.com/display.asp?fname=interview\2006\018.txt&storytitle=>

¹⁹ It is an example of the relativization of rules governing the syntactic moods. Instead of the jussive form *taṣilū*, which is obligatory after the *lam* particle, the indicative form has been used.

²⁰ As in the footnote 12 above.

²¹ A result of low relevancy of grammatical case category. There should be '*aliyyatān* with a nominative ending.

²² As in the footnote 12 above.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Colloquial pronunciation instead of the correct *ṣakl[in]*.

²⁵ As in the footnote 12 above.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

yatimm[a] 'at-tawwaṣul | 'ilā qarār[in] nihā'ī bi-ṣadad[i]-hā. | Maṭrūh[un] mas'alati³⁰ 't-taṣwīt | lākin lam yuttafaq 'alay-hā | li-ḥadd[i] hādā 'l-yawm.

- Mā hiya | ya'nī | furṣat[u] ḥasmi 'l-mawqif[i] li-ṣāliha-k | 'an tarīqi 't-taṣwīt | bi-'tiqāda-k? |

- 'At-taṣwīt ġayr[u] maḍmūni 'n-natā'iġ[i] li-'l-ġamī'. |

- Kayf? |

- Fa 't-taṣwīt[u] 'awwalan | fī taqdīr[i]-nā | sa-yalḥaq[u] ḍararan kabīran fī 'l-'i'tilāf[i] nafsa-h³¹.

- 'Afwan duktūr | 'anta taḥḍā bi-ta'yīdi 't-tayāri 'ṣ-ṣadrī | wa-ġabhati 't-tawāfuq | wa-'l-qā'ima[ti] 'l-'irāqīyya | wa-murašṣah[i] qā'imati 't-taḥālufi 'l-kurdistānī (...). |

- 'At-taṣwīt[u] 'awwalan | fī-hi naḍra[tun] qāṣira | li-'anna-hu sa-yanḍur[u] li-'l-'amur | min zāwiya[tin] wāḥida | wa-naḥnu nurīd | 'an nanḍur[a] li 'l-'umūr | min zawāyā muta'addida | min zawāyā 'l-mukawwināti 'l-'uḥrā. | Fa-'t-taṣwīt | ma'nā-h[u] | 'al-ḥisābāt | wa-'t-taṣwīt yatimm[u] | min dāḥili 'l-'i'tilāf faqat. | Wa-min dāḥili 'l-'i'tilāf ma'nā-h[u] | 'anna hunālika naḍra[tun] wāḥida. | Naḍra[tun] wāḥida | lā takfī li-ḥalli 'l-muṣkilāti 'l-mu'aqqada | fī 'l-wāqi 'i 's-siyāsī 'l-'irāqī. | Wa-'alā hādā 'l-'asās[i] 'aqūl | ya'nī bi-ṣikil[in] mawḍū'ī | fī ḥāli 'l-luġū[i] 'ilā 't-taṣwīt | 'awwalan natā'iġ[un] ġayr[u] maḍmūna[tin] li-'l-ġamī'. | Da-'ki mina 'd-ḍaġiġi 'l-'i'lāmī 'l-lādī yuqāl | 'anna fulān[un] yaḥḍā bi-'l-'awlawīyya | wa-fulān[un] yaḥḍā bi-'l-'awlawīyya. | Fi 'l-ḥaqīqa | lā yuwġad[u] 'aḥad[un] dāḥila 'l-'i'tilāf | yaḍmin[u] natīġati³² 't-taṣwīt. | Wa-'alā hādā 'l-'asās | fa-'l-ġamī'[u] qaliq[un] min 'amaliyyati 't-taṣwīt | li'anna-hā rubbamā ta'tī | bi-ḥilāf[i] mā yurīd | wa-bi-'t-tālī | ba'ḍa 'l-'aṭrāf | rubbamā takūn[u] ġayr[a] rāḍiya | 'an natā'iġi 't-taṣwīt | 'aw tatafāġa 'u bi-natā'iġi 't-taṣwīt. | Naḥnu laday-nā 'idan | qadir[un] mina 't-ta'yīd | dāḥila 'l-'i'tilāf.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

Text 3³³

- *Diyānat*[u]-*kum min ḥayti* 'l-'*aqīda* | *'aqrab*[u] *'ilā 'd-dīni* 'l-'*islāmī*
 | *'am 'ilā 'l-'adyāni* 'l-'*masīhiyya*? |
 - *'Ilā 'd-diyāna*[ti] 'l-'*islāmiyya* | *min nāhiyati* 'l-'*wuḍū'* | *wa-'ṣ-*
ṣalawāt | *wa-'n-naḡāsāt* | *wa-hāl*[i] *muḥarramāt*. | *Naḥnu laday-nā*
kaṭīr[un] *min muḥarramāt*[in] *mulzīma*. | *'Awwalan* | *'aš-širk*[u] *bi-'l-Lāh*
 | *mina* 'l-'*muḥarramāt* | *'iṭṭayn* | *'al-ḡidf*[u] *'alā 'smi* 'l-'*Lāh* | *tlāṭa*³⁴
 | *'al-ḥilf*[u] *bi-'l-Lāh*. | *'al-ḥilf*[u] *bi-'l-Lāh* | *ḥatta wa-'in kāna ṣādiqan* |
yufaḍḍal[u] *'adam*[u] *'al-ḥilf* *bi-h*. | *'al-ḥamr*, | *'az-zinā*, | *'amali*³⁵ *'s-siḥr*
 | *wa-bi-'l-munāsaba* | *'as-siḥr*[u] *naḥnu muttahaḥmūna bi-hāḍihi* 'l-'
mas'ala | *wa-tuwḡad*[u] *nuṣūṣ*[un] *'adīda* | *tuḥarrimi*³⁶ *'s-siḥr*. | *Bi-'smi*
'l-ḥayyi 'l-'*aḍīm* | *lā taqṣidū* 's-'*siḥar* *wa-'l-munaḡḡimīna* 'l-'*kāḍibīna* 'l-'
mutalaffa 'īna fī 'ḍ-ḍalām | *bi-'smi* 'l-'*ḥayyi* 'l-'*aḍīm* | *lā tuzāwilū* 's-'*siḥir*
 | *wa-lā taḥtimū* *'alā* 'l-'*aḡṣād*. | *'Inna man yuzāwilu-hā* | *maṣīru-hu* 'n-'
nār. |
 - *'Idan min 'ayn*[a] *ḡā'a hādā* 'l-'*i'tiqād* | *'ind*[a] *mu'ḍami* 'n-'*nās*
 | *'anna-hu ya 'nī 'aḡlabi*³⁷ 'l-'*saḡara*³⁸ *haḡīni dīn-hum* | *mina* 'ṣ-'*ṣābi'a*?
 - *Hiya tuhma*[tun] *bāṭila* | *'uḥtī* 'l-'*azīza*. *Ya'ni naḥnu 'ttuhim-nā*
*tuhami*³⁹ *'ttuhima kaṭīr* | *min ṣarā'iḥi* 'l-'*muḡtama* 'i 'l-'*irāqi* | *fī 'umūr*[in]
kaṭīra | *laysa lā-hā ṣiḡḡa*. | *Huwa maraḍ*[un] *'iḡtimā'ī* | *wa-'anā qabla*
fatra | *zurtu 'aḡad*[a] *riḡāli* 'd-'*dīn* | *min 'iḡwān*[i]-*nā* 'ṣ-'*ṣi'a* | *wa-'alabtu*
min-hu | *'an nata'āwan* | *wa-'anā 'aḍa* [u] *yadī* | *bi-yad*[i] *kull*[in] *min*
mu'minīn | *wa-kull*[i] *'iḡwān*[i] *riḡāli* 'd-'*dīn* | *bi-'an naḍa* [a] *yadan* |
min 'aḡli 'l-'*qaḍā'* | *'alā hādīhi* 'al-'*āfa* | *wa-'ḍ-ḍāhira*[ti] 'l-'
'iḡtimā'iyya[ti] 'l-'*ḡaṭīra* (...). |
 - *Kayfa tatimm*[u] *'amaliyyati*⁴⁰ *'ḍ-ḍabiḥ*[i] *'inda-kum?* |
 - *Fī 'ḍ-ḍabiḥ*[i] *yaḡib*[u] *'awwalan* | *'an 'albas*[a] *malābis-ī* 'd-'
dīniyya[ta] 'l-'*ḡāṣṣa*[ta] *hādīhi* | *li-'an-nī 'adbaḡ*[u] *bi-ṣar'a*⁴¹ 'l-'*Lāh* | *wa-*

³³ <http://www.alsharqiyatv.com/display.asp?fname=baramej200503018.txt&storytitle=>

³⁴ Colloquial pronunciation – compare the footnote 14.

³⁵ As in the footnote 12 above.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ One should expect 's-'*saḡara*. It is a common tendency in the spoken version of the literary Arabic to depart from the assimilation rules governing the definite article and the so-called *solar letters*.

³⁹ As in the footnote 12 above.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

lā 'aḍbaḥ[u] bi- šar'i 'l-'insān. | 'Iṭnayn | yağib[u] 'an yakūni⁴² 'l-ḥaywān[u]'awi 't-tayr[u] sālīm | laysa ft-hi naqṣ, | lā 'āha[ta] ḡasadiyya | wa-lā 'āha[ta] ḥuluqiyya | li-'an-nī 'aḍbaḥ[u] li-wağhi 'l-Lāh[i] subḥāna-hu wa-ta'ālā | ḥattā wa-'in kāna... | li-'anna-hu huwa 'd-ḍabiḥ | kān[a] li-wağhi 'l-Lāh[i] subḥāna-hu wa-ta'ālā | ba 'dayn⁴³ 'aṣbaḥa 'l-ḍabiḥ⁴⁴ | bi-'l 'iḍāfa 'ilā 'š-ša'ār[i] 'al-dīn⁴⁵ | wa-'d-ḍabḥ[u] 'ilā wağhi 'l-Lāh | huwa li-'l-'akīl. Yağib[u] 'an yakūn[a] hunālika šāhidan⁴⁶ | yašhad[u] 'alā šihhat[i] mā ḍabiḥat. | Bi-'n-nisba[ti] 'ilā 'l-ḍabīḥa⁴⁷, | naḍa [u] ḥaṭaban mina 's-sa'af | 'aw mina 'l-qaṣab | wa-narbuṭ[u] riğlay-hā 'l-'arba'a | wa-nuğassil[u]-hā bi-'smi 'l-ḥayyi 'l-'aḍīm | talāt[a] marrāt[in] bi-'l-mā' | tumma ya'tī šahṣ[un] | wa-yahriṭ[u] ra'sa-hā qalīlan | li-kay tabrizi⁴⁸ 'l-ḥanğara (...) | tumma 'aḍbaḥ[u] bi-'smi 'l-ḥayyi 'l-'aḍīm | talāt[a] marrāt[in] ḡihāran. | Yağib[u] 'an 'aḍkur[a] 'isma 'l-Lāh[i] ḡihāran | ḥattā yasma '[a]-nī 'š-šāhid | wa-yaqūl[u] 'anā šahadt. | Yağib[u] 'an takūni⁴⁹ 's-sikkīna[tu] ḥādda. |

The above texts taken from live spoken literary Arabic illustrate in a vivid way the practical effect of redundancy of the discussed grammatical phenomena. They also show the scale of differences existing between the spoken version of the literary Arabic language (where a free utterance is an instant transformation of thoughts) and between its formalized written or recited version, in which the utterance is a reconstruction of thoughts formulated earlier, not necessarily by the speaker himself. In the first case the speaker concentrates mainly on conveying the meaning of his thoughts. And because of that, when formulating his utterance, he almost unconsciously eliminates the linguistic rules that are functionally irrelevant. In the second case the speaker, when reconstructing a text formulated earlier in accordance with the established norms and conventions, concentrates his attention mainly (if not above all) on the realization of those norms and conventions.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Colloquialism - one should rather expect here *ba 'da ḍālika* or *tumma*.

⁴⁴ Compare the footnote 38.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ It seems that this is an example of linguistic hypercorrection, since there are absolutely no grounds for using accusative form in this case.

⁴⁷ Compare the footnote 38.

⁴⁸ As in the footnote 12 above.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

It should be stressed here that the common tendency to omit grammatically irrelevant elements in the spoken version of the literary Arabic cannot be interpreted as a direct influence of the dialect. It seems to be an inherent feature of the Arabic language system, as proved by the syntactic pause rules (Ar. *waqf*) worked out in details by the earliest Arab grammarians. In the spoken language, due to a greater segmentation of text typical to free utterances, the feature has only become more common, whereas the rules governing the syntactic pause has become relativized.

When teaching or learning literary Arabic one is always faced with a dilemma: to comply strictly with the rules of correctness laid down by the prescriptive grammar or to give priority to the spoken version of the literary language. In the first case, learning will be quite a homogeneous process and the student will find practically no difference between writing and speaking in Arabic. But this will also have some disadvantages. Speaking exactly as it is written would ultimately be regarded by native Arab interlocutors as unnatural or even artificial. Since it would be sensed as recitation or making speech rather than speaking. In the second case, students will have to study simultaneously two standards of literary Arabic; written and spoken. And this may result in complications, as more rules will have to be learned. In addition to the primary code switching difficulties due to the diglossia in Arabic in general (i.e. *f o r m a l* literary language versus *e v e r y d a y* dialect), the student of Arabic has to cope with one double-standard more.

In this context, an exact assessment of the scope of redundancy in particular elements of the literary Arabic plays a significant role. It should be remembered that the scope of redundancy depends not only on whether the text is written or spoken, but it also depends (in the spoken version) on stylistics (more or less formal) and on the character of an utterance (recitation or a free speech).

Very often, omitting a grammatical morpheme in speech does not stand in contradiction to the rules of writing, as is the case, for instance, with short vowel inflectional affixes or indefiniteness affixes which are generally ignored in script anyway⁵⁰. In this situation there is no danger one can make spelling mistakes. Sometimes, however, as in the case of the sing. fem. ending, the elision of a morpheme, although acceptable in speech, is treated as an error in the written language. Whereas, in another

⁵⁰ With the exception of stylistically marked texts, as for example some religious or poetic texts.

syntactical context the same morpheme is obligatorily preserved both in writing and in speech (see par. 3b above). It is also worth mentioning, that the freedom of syntactic-semantic segmentation so typical to a free utterance (where the redundant elements are regularly omitted, and sometimes even the most coherent entities of the sentence are broken apart) is basically not tolerated in formal recited texts like, for example, news texts presented by radio or TV speakers.

In the process of learning and teaching literary Arabic (even on elementary level) awareness of the redundancy of some elements of the language will make it possible to use the language according to the standards followed by native Arab speakers. And this, in turn, will help the students avoid grammatical and spelling mistakes.