

## An Analysis of Ellipsis as a Translation Strategy Found in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's Novel *This Earth of Mankind*

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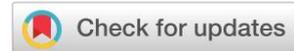
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### ABSTRACT

*This study investigates the use of ellipsis as a translation strategy in the English translation of the novel *This Earth of Mankind* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer. The research aims to identify the types of ellipsis and examine how ellipsis is realized as a translation strategy in the target text. This study employs a qualitative descriptive method by comparing the Indonesian source text with its English translation. The analysis is based on the ellipsis framework proposed by M.A.K. Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan and the translation techniques proposed by Molina and Albir, as well as translation principles by Peter Newmark. A total of 135 instances of ellipsis were identified in the analyzed data. The findings reveal that three types of ellipsis occur in the translation, namely clausal, verbal, and nominal ellipsis, with clausal ellipsis appearing as the most dominant type. In terms of translation techniques, reduction is the most frequently applied strategy, indicating that the translator tends to condense recoverable linguistic elements rather than completely deleting them. The findings also show that communicative translation is the dominant translation principle, emphasizing readability and naturalness in the target language. These results suggest that ellipsis functions as an important strategy for achieving textual cohesion, narrative efficiency, and stylistic naturalness in literary translation.*

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### KEYWORDS

Ellipsis, Translation Strategy, Literary Translation, Communicative Translation, Textual Cohesion.

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### 1. Introduction

Translation plays an important role in bridging communication between different languages and cultures. Through translation, ideas, knowledge, and literary expressions produced in one language can be accessed and understood by readers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Rahman & Rahman, 2019; Irmayani et al., 2024; Fahdi et al., 2025; Youngsun et al., 2024). In the field of literary translation, this role becomes particularly significant because literary works often contain complex linguistic structures, cultural references, and stylistic features that must be conveyed effectively in another language (Latief et al., 2020; Pratiwi et al., 2026; Kyeongjae et al., 2025; Weda et al., 2021). Therefore, translation not only facilitates cross-cultural communication but also allows literary works to circulate globally and reach a wider readership.

However, the process of translation does not merely involve replacing words from the source language with their equivalents in the target language. Translators must consider various linguistic and contextual factors, including grammar, discourse structure, cultural meaning, and stylistic nuance (Anaktototy et al., 2023; Mochammad et al., 2026; Karubaba et al., 2024; Weda et al., 2022; Rahman & Weda, 2019). In many cases, direct word-for-word translation may result in unnatural or awkward expressions in the target language. Consequently, translators often adjust the structure of the source text to produce a translation that is both accurate and natural for target readers. These adjustments may include restructuring sentences, condensing information, or omitting certain linguistic elements when their meaning remains recoverable from the context.

Sinaga et al. (2022) highlight the role of language variation and communicative practices in shaping meaning in interaction. This perspective supports the idea that translation must consider context and language use to achieve natural and effective communication in the target language.

One linguistic phenomenon that frequently occurs in translation is ellipsis. According to M.A.K. Halliday and Hasan (1976), ellipsis refers to the omission of certain linguistic elements that can still be understood from the surrounding context.

In discourse analysis, ellipsis functions as a cohesive device that helps avoid unnecessary repetition while maintaining the continuity of meaning across clauses and sentences. By omitting recoverable elements, speakers and writers can produce more efficient and natural expressions without causing ambiguity. Within the framework of systemic functional linguistics, ellipsis contributes to textual cohesion by linking sentences through contextual interpretation rather than explicit repetition.

In translation, ellipsis may also occur when translators omit certain elements that are considered redundant or unnecessary in the target language. Since different languages often have different grammatical and stylistic conventions, translators sometimes condense clauses, phrases, or repeated expressions to produce more natural discourse in the target language. In such cases, ellipsis becomes not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a translation strategy that helps achieve clarity, conciseness, and textual cohesion in the translated text.

The novel *This Earth of Mankind* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer is one of the most influential literary works in Indonesian literature and has gained international recognition through its English translation. As part of the *Buru Quartet*, the novel portrays historical, social, and cultural realities of colonial Indonesia while presenting rich narrative structures and expressive dialogue. During the translation process, the translator must adapt the linguistic structure of the source text to produce natural and readable expressions in English. Because Indonesian and English differ significantly in their grammatical structures and discourse patterns, certain elements of the source text may be condensed or omitted in the translation. One strategy that may occur in this process is the use of ellipsis, where specific words or phrases are omitted while their meaning remains inferable from the context.

Previous studies have examined ellipsis from various perspectives. Aldosari (2023) analyzes substitution and ellipsis in English–Arabic translation, showing that both professional and trainee translators face difficulties, with experience influencing accuracy. Mutal et al (2019) focuses on ellipsis in medical machine translation, emphasizing the importance of context for accurately translating incomplete utterances. In literary translation, Astuti (2021) examines idiomatic expressions in *This Earth of Mankind*, highlighting challenges in maintaining naturalness, while Yesi (2022) studies cultural term translation and shows that translation choices affect readability and meaning.

From a linguistic and stylistic perspective, Muchiri (2021) explores ellipsis as a narrative device, revealing its role in conveying deeper meaning. Similarly, Gurning and Sibarani (2023) analyze ellipsis types using Halliday and Hasan's theory, while Susanto & Sanusi (2020) investigate lexical cohesion in translation, emphasizing the preservation of textual coherence.

A related study by Sianipar et al (2025) analyzes translation techniques used by students and ChatGPT in translating sarcasm and irony in *Gadis Kretek*. The study shows differences in translation strategies and highlights how context influences translation quality. The similarity with the present study lies in the analysis of translation techniques in literary texts, while the difference is that this study focuses on ellipsis as a cohesive and grammatical strategy.

Although these studies address ellipsis and cohesion from linguistic, stylistic, and translational perspectives, research focusing specifically on ellipsis as a translation strategy in *This Earth of Mankind* remains limited. Therefore, the present study aims to fill this gap by analyzing ellipsis both in terms of its types and its function in achieving naturalness and cohesion in translation.

This research is expected to contribute to the field of translation studies by providing a deeper understanding of how ellipsis functions within literary translation practices. In addition, the findings of this study may offer insight into how translators maintain textual cohesion, readability, and stylistic naturalness while preserving the meaning of the original text. The study may also serve as a useful reference for translation students and researchers who are interested in discourse-based approaches to literary translation.

## **2. Methodology**

This study applies a qualitative descriptive method Cresswell (2013) to analyze the use of ellipsis in the English translation of *Bumi Manusia* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer, translated as *This Earth of Mankind* by Max Lane. A qualitative approach is used because the study focuses on interpreting linguistic phenomena rather than measuring them statistically. The analysis emphasizes how ellipsis appears and functions as a strategy to produce natural and coherent expressions in the target text.

The data sources follow the concept proposed by Arikunto (2010), while the data consist of sentences or clauses containing ellipsis, as defined by Pardjono et al. (2015). Ellipsis is identified based on the framework of Halliday and Hasan's (1976), which classifies it into nominal, verbal, and clausal types.

Data were collected using documentation techniques as proposed by Bungin et al. (2012) by reading both texts, identifying ellipsis, recording, and classifying the data. To ensure validity, this study applies triangulation and peer debriefing based on Moleong (2017) supported by theories from Molina & Hurtado Albir (2002) and Newmark (1988).

The data were analyzed qualitatively following Miles (2014) including identifying ellipsis, interpreting context, and examining translation strategies. The procedure adopts the interactive model of Miles & Huberman (1994), consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, to explain how ellipsis contributes to cohesion and naturalness in translation.

### 3. Results and Discussion

According to Newmark (1988), translation is the process of transferring meaning from the source language into the target language in a natural and accurate way, emphasizing both semantic and stylistic equivalence. Similarly, Nida & Taber (1974) define translation as reproducing the message of the source text so that it remains equivalent and natural for target readers. Thus, translation requires a balance between faithfulness to the original text and adaptation to the target language.

This section presents the analysis of ellipsis found in the English translation of the novel *This Earth of Mankind* written by Pramoedya Ananta Toer. The analysis focuses on identifying the types of ellipsis occurring in the translation as well as examining how these ellipses are realized through different translation principles. The identification of ellipsis in this study is based on the theoretical framework proposed by M.A.K. Halliday and Hasan (1976), who describe ellipsis as the omission of linguistic elements that can still be understood from the surrounding context.

Based on the analysis of the selected chapters, the researcher identified a total of 135 instances of ellipsis in the translated text. These findings indicate that ellipsis plays a significant role in maintaining textual cohesion and avoiding unnecessary repetition in the target language.

#### 3.1 Types of Ellipsis in the Data

Based on the analysis of the translation data, three main types of ellipsis were identified, namely nominal ellipsis, verbal ellipsis, and clausal ellipsis. Each type reflects a different linguistic element that is omitted in the target text but remains recoverable from the context.

##### 3.1.1 Nominal Ellipsis

Nominal ellipsis occurs when a noun or noun phrase is omitted because it can be identified from the preceding information. In other words, the omitted element does not need to be stated explicitly since the context already provides enough clues for the reader or listener to understand its meaning. This type of ellipsis helps avoid redundancy and makes the text more concise and stylistically elegant.

This type of ellipsis is commonly used in both spoken and written communication to avoid unnecessary repetition of the same noun. In translation, nominal ellipsis helps translators construct more natural and economical sentences without sacrificing clarity of meaning—especially crucial in *Bumi Manusia* where repeated social categories (*Eropa/pribumi*) would sound unnatural in English. Mastery of this form is important for translators to effectively adjust sentence structures from Indonesian's explicit repetition to English's context-dependent economy.

##### Data 1

Source Text : “*Saya adalah kawan sekolah Robert Suurhof.*”

Target Text : “A school friend of Robert Suurhof.”

In this data, the subject and copular verb *Saya adalah* are omitted in the English translation. The noun phrase a school friend functions as the remaining element that represents the speaker's identity. The omitted elements are recoverable from the context, which indicates that the omission functions as nominal ellipsis.

##### Data 2

Source Text : “*Gambar pemandangan, orang besar dan penting,*

*mesin baru, gedung-gedung pencakar*

*langit Amerika...*”

Target Text : "Pictures of landscapes, important people,  
new machines, American skyscrapers."

In this case, the repeated head noun pictures is omitted in the listing structure. The omission creates a more concise and cohesive description in the target language.

### 3.1.2 Verbal Ellipsis

Verbal ellipsis refers to the omission of a verb or verb phrase within a sentence, where the missing element can be easily inferred from the preceding clause or context. This type of ellipsis is commonly used to avoid unnecessary repetition and to make the sentence sound more natural and efficient. It plays an important role in maintaining textual cohesion by connecting clauses through shared verbal meaning rather than explicit repetition.

In actual language use, verbal ellipsis provides efficiency and naturalness in communication. Speakers do not need to repeat the same verb when its meaning is already understood by the listener. In the context of translation, understanding verbal ellipsis helps translators maintain a balance between conciseness and naturalness, where Indonesian's explicit repetition must be adapted to English's more elliptical style.

#### Data 3

Source Text : "*Lagi pula semua guruku kelahiran sana,  
dididik di sana pula.*"

Target Text : "All my teachers had been born and  
educated in Europe."

In this sentence, the auxiliary verb had been before the second verb educated is omitted. The verbal structure is still understandable because the auxiliary verb is already implied in the coordinated clause. The omission helps avoid repetition of the verb phrase in English.

Data 4 appears in the following dialogue:

#### Data 4

Source Text : "*Kalau memang jantan... mari aku bawa  
kau ke sana.*"

Target Text : "If you are a real man... come with me there."

In this data, the extended verbal explanation is omitted in the translated text. The response remains understandable because the context already indicates the rejection expressed by the speaker.

### 3.1.3 Clausal Ellipsis

Clausal ellipsis occurs when an entire clause is omitted, yet the meaning of the omitted part remains clear and recoverable from the surrounding context. This type of ellipsis often appears in both spoken and written discourse to avoid redundancy and to make communication more concise and natural. By omitting a whole clause that has already been mentioned or implied, speakers and writers can create smoother, more efficient expressions without compromising meaning.

This type of ellipsis is generally used in informal conversations, dialogues, or narrative texts to achieve efficiency and to avoid excessive repetition. In literary translation, such as in *Bumi Manusia*, clausal ellipsis frequently appears in tense family confrontations like the marriage negotiations between Minke, Annelies, and Nyai. Therefore, translators need to be sensitive to the cultural and emotional context to ensure the omission of a clause still preserves the dramatic tension and completeness of meaning in the target language.

#### Data 5

Source Text : "*Suka kau di sini?*" — "*Aku suka sekali di sini.*"

Target Text : "You like it here?" — "Very much."

Target Text : "If you are a real man... come with me there."

In this data, the clause I like it here very much is reduced to Very much in the response. The omitted elements are recoverable from the previous sentence, which makes the dialogue more natural and concise.

Data 6 is presented below:

#### **Data 6**

Source Text : "*Ini adalah suatu kehormatan bagi saya.*"

Target Text : "An honor."

In this case, the subject and predicate clause are omitted in the English translation. The simplified structure expresses the same meaning while maintaining natural conversational style.

### **3.2 Realization of Ellipsis in Translation**

In the process of translation, translators often employ various strategies to adjust the structure of the source language to the target language so that the translated text remains natural, effective, and easily understood by readers. One of the most relevant strategies associated with the phenomenon of ellipsis is the strategy that involves the omission or simplification of linguistic elements without changing the main meaning of the text. These strategies are explained as follows:

#### **3.2.1 Reduction**

Reduction is a translation strategy that involves simplifying long or complex sentences into more concise forms without eliminating essential information. This method enables the translator to retain the core message of the source text while improving the fluency, coherence, and readability of the target text. By applying reduction, the translator restructures the sentence in a way that aligns more naturally with the grammatical and stylistic conventions of the target language. Reduction occurs when certain linguistic elements are condensed in the target text while the essential meaning is maintained.

#### **Data 7**

Source Text : "*Saya adalah pelajar H.B.S, Mama.*"

Target Text : "An H.B.S. student, Mama."

In this data, the subject and copular verb *Saya adalah* are reduced in the translation. The remaining noun phrase conveys the same meaning while producing a more concise expression.

#### **3.2.2 Omission**

Omission is a translation strategy applied by deliberately deleting certain linguistic elements from the source text when these elements are deemed unnecessary, redundant, or already inferable from the context in the target language. This strategy aims to reduce structural rigidity and enhance the natural flow of sentences in the translated text. By omitting words or phrases that are contextually understood, translators can produce translations that sound smoother and more idiomatic to native readers. Omission occurs when a linguistic element in the source text is completely removed in the translation because the meaning remains inferable from the context.

#### **Data 8**

Source Text : "*Ini adalah suatu kehormatan bagi saya.*"

Target Text : "An honor."

The translator omits the subject and predicate while retaining the evaluative meaning of the original sentence.

#### **3.2.3 Modulation**

Modulation is a translation strategy used to alter the expression of a message by changing its perspective or point of view, so that it better corresponds to the natural patterns of thought and linguistic conventions of the target language. This strategy allows the translator to convey the same idea in a way that sounds more natural and acceptable to target

readers, even though the grammatical or structural form differs from the source text. Modulation occurs when the translator changes the perspective or expression to produce a more natural formulation in the target language.

#### Data 9

Source Text : “*Suka kau di sini?*” — “*Aku suka sekali di sini.*”

Target Text : “You like it here?” — “Very much.”

The translator reformulates the interrogative structure to align with natural English syntax while preserving the original meaning.

### 3.3 Translation Principles

The analysis also reveals that ellipsis in the translation is realized through several translation principles. These principles reflect the translator’s strategy in adapting the linguistic structure of the source text to produce a natural and coherent expression in the target language.

#### 3.3.1 Communicative Translation

Communicative translation focuses on producing a target text that is easily understood by the target readers while preserving the essential meaning of the source text. According to Peter Newmark, communicative translation emphasizes readability, clarity, and natural expression in the target language rather than strict adherence to the original linguistic structure. In literary translation, this principle allows the translator to adjust sentence structure, reduce redundancy, and simplify expressions when the contextual meaning remains recoverable.

#### Data 10

Source Text : “*Suka kau di sini?*” — “*Aku suka sekali di sini.*”

Target Text : “You like it here?” — “Very much.”

The translator omits the full clause in the response and replaces it with a shorter expression. Instead of translating the complete sentence “I like it very much here,” the translator uses the concise expression “Very much.” This reduction produces a more natural conversational structure in English dialogue while maintaining the intended meaning. Therefore, communicative translation supports ellipsis as a strategy for achieving fluency and naturalness in the target text.

#### 3.3.2 Semantic Translation

Semantic translation attempts to preserve the contextual and stylistic meaning of the source text as closely as possible. According to Peter Newmark, semantic translation gives priority to the meaning and nuance of the original text, even if the structure requires minor adjustment in the target language. This approach is often used in literary translation when the translator aims to maintain the original tone and informational content of the source text.

#### Data 11

Source Text : “*Lagi pula semua guruku kelahiran sana,  
dididik di sana pula.*”

Target Text : “All my teachers had been born and educated  
in Europe.”

In this data, the translator maintains the semantic meaning of the original sentence while omitting repeated structural elements. The phrase “di sana” appears twice in the source text but is expressed only once in the translation through the phrase “in Europe.” Although the structure is slightly condensed, the meaning and informational content remain equivalent. This demonstrates how semantic translation allows minor structural reduction while preserving the original meaning.

#### 3.3.3 Faithful Translation

Faithful translation attempts to reproduce the contextual meaning of the source text while maintaining the grammatical structure and lexical choices of the original expression as closely as possible. According to Peter Newmark, this approach prioritizes accuracy and loyalty to the source text even if the resulting expression may sound slightly less

natural in the target language. Faithful translation is typically used when the translator aims to preserve the original tone or specific linguistic features of the source text.

**Data 12**

Source Text : “*Saya adalah pelajar H.B.S, Mama.*”

Target Text : “An H.B.S. student, Mama.”

The translator omits the subject and copular verb while retaining the core meaning of the sentence. The noun phrase “An H.B.S. student” represents the original identity statement expressed in the source text. Although the sentence becomes structurally condensed, the essential meaning and contextual intention remain intact. This data shows how faithful translation can maintain the semantic content of the original expression even when certain grammatical elements are omitted.

**3.3.4 Textual Economy**

Textual economy refers to the reduction or omission of redundant linguistic elements in order to produce concise and efficient expressions in the target language. In translation, this principle is often applied when certain elements of the source text can be inferred from the context and therefore do not need to be repeated explicitly. The aim of textual economy is to enhance clarity and avoid unnecessary repetition while preserving the intended meaning.

**Data 13**

Source Text : “*Ini adalah suatu kehormatan bagi saya.*”

Target Text : “An honor.”

The translator simplifies the sentence by omitting the subject and the verb phrase “ini adalah.” The translation retains only the key evaluative element “an honor,” which already conveys the intended meaning of the original statement. The omitted elements remain contextually recoverable from the surrounding discourse. This demonstrates how textual economy contributes to concise expression and stylistic naturalness in the target text.

**3.4 Distribution of Ellipsis and Translation Strategies**

The analysis identified several instances of ellipsis in the analyzed data. Based on the classification proposed by M.A.K. Halliday and Hasan (1976), ellipsis occurs in three forms: clausal, verbal, and nominal.

**Table 1. Types of Ellipsis**

Type	Frequency
Clausal Ellipsis	76
Verbal Ellipsis	36
Nominal Ellipsis	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>135</b>

Source: Research Data (2026)

As shown in Table 1, clausal ellipsis is more frequently observed compared to other types. This finding indicates that the translator frequently omits elements at the clause level, such as subjects or auxiliary verbs, when their meanings can be inferred from the surrounding context. This reflects the translator’s tendency to rely on contextual coherence rather than explicit grammatical repetition.

Verbal ellipsis is also identified in the data, particularly in cases where repeated verbal processes are reduced to avoid redundancy. Its use contributes to a more natural flow in the target text, making the translation less repetitive.

In contrast, nominal ellipsis occurs less frequently. This suggests that the omission of noun phrases is handled more cautiously, as it may affect clarity and reference if not properly maintained. Therefore, nominal elements are often retained to ensure that the meaning remains explicit and unambiguous.

**Table 2. Translation Techniques**

<b>Technique</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Reduction	111
Omission	18
Modulation	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>135</b>

Source: Research Data (2026)

Table 2 indicates that reduction is the most frequently applied technique in realizing ellipsis. This suggests that the translator tends to simplify linguistic elements without completely removing them, allowing the meaning to remain accessible through context. This approach supports efficiency while preserving coherence in the translation.

Omission is applied in certain cases where elements are considered unnecessary in the target language. However, its limited occurrence implies that the translator avoids excessive deletion in order to maintain the integrity of meaning. Modulation is rarely used, indicating that shifts in perspective or expression are not the primary strategy in handling ellipsis. Instead, the translator focuses more on structural simplification and contextual clarity. Modulation appears only in a few instances, indicating that changes in perspective or expression are not the primary strategy in handling ellipsis. Instead, the translator prioritizes structural simplification.

The analysis also identifies several translation principles following the framework proposed by Newmark (1988).

**Table 3. Distribution of Translation Principles**

<b>Translation Principle</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Communicative Translation	112
Semantic Translation	17
Faithful Translation	4
Textual Economy	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>135</b>

Source: Research Data (2026)

As presented in Table 3, communicative translation is predominantly applied. This indicates that the translator prioritizes readability and naturalness, ensuring that the translated text is easily understood by the target readers.

Semantic translation is used in some instances where stylistic or expressive elements are preserved from the source text. This reflects an effort to maintain certain nuances while still adapting to the target language.

Meanwhile, faithful translation and textual economy are only minimally applied. This suggests that strict adherence to the source text structure is not the main concern, and that flexibility is preferred to achieve a more natural and coherent translation.

### **3.5 Discussion of Findings**

The findings reveal that clausal ellipsis is the most dominant type identified in the analyzed data, accounting for more than half of the total occurrences. This pattern suggests that clause-level elements such as subjects, predicates, and auxiliary verbs are frequently omitted when their meanings remain recoverable from the surrounding discourse. According to the framework proposed by Halliday and Hasan's (1976), clausal ellipsis commonly occurs in narrative and dialogic texts where contextual recoverability is high. In the present study, the dominance of clausal ellipsis indicates that clause-level condensation becomes a primary structural strategy in adapting Indonesian narrative structures into natural English expressions.

The findings also show that reduction is the most frequently used translation technique in realizing ellipsis. Following the framework proposed by Molina & Hurtado Albir (2002), reduction refers to the condensation of linguistic elements in

the target text. In this study, reduction is applied without causing semantic loss because the omitted elements remain contextually inferable. This demonstrates that ellipsis in the translation functions as a controlled strategy of structural simplification rather than arbitrary deletion. Omission and modulation appear less frequently, indicating that the translator primarily relies on condensation rather than perspective shifts in restructuring the source text.

In terms of translation principles, the dominance of communicative translation proposed by Newmark (1988) indicates that the translator prioritizes readability and naturalness in the target language. The strong correlation between clausal ellipsis and reduction suggests that ellipsis functions as a pragmatic strategy to enhance narrative fluency while maintaining semantic coherence. These findings demonstrate that ellipsis operates not only as a grammatical phenomenon but also as a discourse-level device that contributes to narrative efficiency, cohesion, and stylistic naturalness in the English translation of the novel *This Earth of Mankind* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer.

#### 4. Conclusion

This study aimed to identify the types of ellipsis and examine how ellipsis is realized as a translation strategy in the English version of the novel *This Earth of Mankind* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer. The analysis demonstrates that ellipsis functions as an important linguistic and translational device in shaping narrative coherence in the target text. Among the three types of ellipsis proposed by Halliday and Hasan's (1976) clausal ellipsis appears as the most prominent form, indicating that clause-level condensation plays a key role in adapting Indonesian narrative structures into natural English expressions.

In terms of translation strategy, ellipsis is primarily realized through reduction, following the framework proposed by Molina & Hurtado Albir (2002). This pattern reflects the translator's tendency to condense recoverable linguistic elements rather than deleting them entirely. The findings further suggest that the translation as proposed by Newmark (1988) emphasizing readability, fluency, and contextual clarity for the target readers.

These findings indicate that ellipsis in literary translation functions not merely as a grammatical omission but as a strategic device for achieving structural economy and narrative naturalness. The study therefore highlights the importance of contextual interpretation in translating elliptical constructions and suggests that translators should carefully consider discourse coherence when applying ellipsis in literary texts.

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