

English Grammar: Pleonasm and Tautologies

The concepts of **pleonasm** and **tautology** are similar. They both mean that “more words are used than is necessary”.

Pleonasm. To use more words than is necessary, usually for effect or style.

- Can you repeat that again? (= Can you repeat that? / Can you say that again?)
- They both got one each. (= They both got one. / They got one each.)
- That's a more superior product. (= That's a superior product.)
- It's a new innovation. (= It's an innovation. / It's new.)
- A free gift (gifts are always free, by definition)
- Plans for the future (plans are always for the future)
- A pair of pants (the word “pants” is sufficient)

Tautology. Unnecessary repetition.

- She was alone by herself.
- Me myself personally,
- They also visited us last week too.
- All well and good.
- To all intents and purposes.
- Cool, calm, and collected.
- Free, gratis, and for nothing.
- There are different ways and means to do it.
- I know this with absolute certainty.
- It's a free choice.
- It's a temporary loan.
- It's an unexpected surprise.
- He appeared in person.
- He shouted loudly.

Here are some tautologies in Portuguese:

subir para cima	conviver junto
descer para baixo	fato real
elo de ligação	encarar de frente
acabamento final	multidão de pessoas
certeza absoluta	amanhecer o dia
nos dias 8, 9 e 10, inclusive	criação nova
em duas metades iguais	retornar de novo
sintomas indicativos	empréstimo temporário
há anos atrás	surpresa inesperada
vereador da cidade	escolha opcional
outra -alternativa	planejar antecipadamente
detalhes minuciosos	abertura inaugural
a razão é porque	continua a permanecer
anexo junto -à carta	a última versão definitiva
de sua livre escolha	possivelmente poderá ocorrer
superavit positivo	comparecer em pessoa
todos foram unânimes	gritar bem alto
a seu critério pessoal	propriedade característica
exceder em muito	demasiadamente excessivo

Some pleonastic quotes:

- "And that's a self-portrait, of himself, by himself." *Richard Madeley*
- "Now we go into lap 53, the penultimate last lap but one." *Murray Walker*
- "It looks like being a busy weekend on the ferries, particularly Saturday and Sunday." *Peter Powell*
- "It was a sudden and unexpected surprise." *Old Bailey Correspondent for the BBC*
- "I never make predictions, especially about the future." *Samuel Goldwyn*
- "It's deja vu all over again." *Yogi Berra*
- "Sometimes you can observe a lot just by watching." *Yogi Berra*
- "If we do not succeed, we run the risk of failure." *Former Vice-President Dan Quayle*
- "They've written their own song – it's an original song and it's written by themselves." *Jenny Lee-Wright*
- "So the tax increase on a car is just another added addition." *Adrian Love*
- "In only two minutes he scored two goals in a two-minute period." *Alan Perry*
- "The answer is an affirmative 'yes'." *Nigel Mansell*
- "I am speaking from a deserted and empty Crucible Theatre." *David Vine*
- "With half the race finished, there is still half the race to go." *Murray Walker*
- "I don't normally do requests, unless I'm asked to." *Richard Whiteley*
- "And there is the Victoria Memorial, built as a memorial to Victoria." *David Dimbleby*
- "The robbery was committed by a pair of twins." *Paul Hollingsworth*
- "Smoking can kill you, and if you've been killed, you've lost a very important part of your life." *Brooke Shields*
- "Football is an incredible game. Sometimes it's so incredible, it's unbelievable." *Tom Landry*

Here is one in Portuguese:

- "Só termina quando acaba." *Galvão Bueno*