



## Implied Linguistic Redundancy in Arabic-English Administrative Translation: An Analytical Study of Student Strategies

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### Abstract

This study investigates the challenges of translating implied linguistic redundancy in Arabic administrative documents into English, focusing on the strategies employed by undergraduate translation students. Through a qualitative analysis of 140 student-translated samples, the study identifies recurring patterns of literal translation, ineffective handling of procedural and courtesy-based expressions, and a limited application of functional rephrasing strategies. The findings reveal that most students resort to surface-level equivalence, often neglecting genre-specific norms and the pragmatic intent underlying redundant expressions. The study emphasizes the need for pedagogical reforms in translator training, particularly the integration of discursive awareness and genre-sensitive instruction into the curriculum. These results contribute to a better understanding of the interaction between linguistic form and institutional convention in translation. They also shed light on how future translators can navigate such challenges through informed, context-sensitive strategies.

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## التكرار اللغوي الضمني في الترجمة العربية-الإنجليزية للنصوص الإدارية: دراسة تحليلية لاستراتيجيات الطلبة

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### المستخلص

تبحث هذه الدراسة في التحديات المرتبطة بترجمة التكرار اللغوي الضمني في الوثائق الإدارية العربية إلى اللغة الإنجليزية، مع التركيز على الاستراتيجيات التي يوظفها طلبة الترجمة في المرحلة الجامعية. ومن خلال تحليل نوعي لـ (140) عينة مترجمة من قبل الطلبة، تكشف الدراسة عن أنماط متكررة من الترجمة الحرفية، وسوء التعامل مع العبارات الإجرائية والمجاملات الرسمية، إضافة إلى محدودية تطبيق استراتيجيات إعادة الصياغة الوظيفية. وتبين النتائج أن معظم الطلبة يلجؤون إلى التكافؤ السطحي، مع إغفال ملحوظ للمعايير النوعية الخاصة بالنصوص وللغرض التداولي الكامن وراء العبارات المتكررة. وتؤكد الدراسة على الحاجة إلى إصلاحات تربوية في برامج إعداد المترجمين، لا سيما من خلال إدماج الوعي الخطابي والتدريب الحساس لأنواع النصية ضمن المناهج الدراسية. كما تُسهم هذه النتائج في فهم أعمق للتفاعل بين الشكل اللغوي والاتفاقيات المؤسسية في الترجمة، وتسلط الضوء على الكيفية التي يمكن للمترجمين المستقبليين من خلالها التعامل مع هذه التحديات باستراتيجيات مدروسة وحساسة للسياق.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التكرار الضمني؛ الترجمة الإدارية؛ استراتيجيات الترجمة؛ العربية-الإنجليزية

## 1. Introduction

**Background of the Study:** Administrative documents represent one of the most rigid and formulaic text types in official discourse, characterized by institutional authority, procedural clarity, and highly conventionalized language. These texts, whether in Arabic or English, frequently incorporate a degree of linguistic redundancy—either as a stylistic reinforcement of formality or as a means to ensure unambiguous communication. Redundancy in Arabic administrative texts often manifests implicitly through lexical repetition, fixed legal phrasing, or circumlocution. This poses a significant challenge when translated into English, a language that typically privileges conciseness and syntactic economy. The act of translating such redundancy is thus not merely a linguistic transfer but a cultural negotiation that must reconcile differing textual conventions and reader expectations.

**Statement of the Problem:** Many student translators struggle to handle implied redundancy in Arabic administrative documents. They often either preserve unnecessary repetitions that obscure clarity in the English output or over-edit the text and thereby erase essential pragmatic or rhetorical functions. The result is a translation that is either too literal or too reductive, neither of which aligns with the communicative purpose of English administrative discourse. The crux of the problem lies in achieving a delicate balance between fidelity to the source text and functional adequacy in the target language, especially when redundancy is not overtly marked. This issue of balancing literal fidelity with pragmatic clarity has been noted as a persistent challenge in translation pedagogy (1).

**Objectives of the Study: This study aims to:**

- **Identifying** the forms of implied linguistic redundancy commonly found in Arabic administrative documents.
- **Analyzing** how student translators render these redundancies in English.
- **Evaluating** the adequacy and effectiveness of the translation strategies used by the students.
- **Proposing** pedagogical recommendations for improving student performance in translating institutional texts from Arabic to English.

**Research Questions:** In line with the objectives, the study is guided by the following questions:

1. What are the primary forms of implied linguistic redundancy in Arabic administrative documents?
2. How do student translators approach these redundancies when translating into English?
3. What are the most common translational errors associated with handling redundancy?
4. Which strategies are most effective in rendering implied redundancy while maintaining the functional tone of administrative English?

**Significance of the Study:** This study holds both academic and practical value. Theoretically, it

contributes to translation studies by foregrounding a nuanced and under-explored issue—implied redundancy—in a specialized domain of translation. By examining redundancy as a cultural and discourse-level phenomenon, the research adds depth to our understanding of equivalence beyond the word or sentence level. Pedagogically, the findings provide insights that can inform curriculum design in translator training programs, particularly those focused on Arabic–English translation of institutional and official texts. Understanding how students handle (or mishandle) implicit redundancy can guide educators in targeting specific skills, such as pragmatic adaptation and genre awareness. Practically, the study offers guidance for translators seeking to produce more functional and stylistically appropriate administrative translations, which is crucial for clear communication in legal, governmental, and academic contexts.

## 2. Literature Review

### Conceptualizing Linguistic Redundancy:

Linguistic redundancy refers to the presence of superfluous elements in speech or writing that repeat information available elsewhere in the text. Traditionally, redundancy is categorized into two types: **explicit redundancy**, which is overt and recognizable (e.g., tautologies or reiterative phrases), and **implied redundancy**, which is embedded more subtly in structural or semantic patterns. Implied redundancy is especially prevalent in formal genres such as legal or administrative texts. While English tends to avoid redundancy in pursuit of clarity and economy, Arabic often **embraces redundancy to reinforce meaning, maintain formality, or align with rhetorical tradition** (1, 2). For instance, classical Arabic discourse (as seen in Quranic style) frequently employs repetition and paraphrase as deliberate stylistic devices to ensure emphasis and politeness (2). In Arabic administrative language specifically, redundancy plays a functional role in signaling respect, formality, and legal thoroughness. Phrases such as "نأمل التفضل بالموافقة الكريمة" ("We hope for your kind approval") or "استناداً إلى ما ورد أعلاه" ("Based on what has been stated above") are not merely decorative flourishes—they are part of a culturally rooted communicative norm. These nuances often escape novice translators, who may either transfer them too literally into English or omit them entirely, thus weakening the pragmatic force of the message.

### Structural and Stylistic Features of Administrative Discourse:

Arabic administrative texts are marked by hierarchical structure, complex nominalizations, repetitive phrasing, and adherence to official formulae. Such features serve specific institutional functions: they encode protocol, politeness, and even legal safeguarding (1,3). Arabic bureaucratic language, in particular, is saturated with indirectness, honorifics, and fixed polite

expressions, many of which appear redundant from a Western pragmatic perspective but are essential for maintaining a bureaucratic tone and decorum. In contrast, English administrative and official documents prioritize precision, clarity, and brevity. Redundant or verbose language is generally discouraged in English business or governmental writing; formulations are expected to be direct, transparent, and easily processed by the reader. Therefore, translation between these two systems is not merely an exercise in linguistic substitution but an interdiscursive negotiation between two distinct sets of textual conventions. The translator must bridge differences in what might be called communicative or textual “ideologies” of the two languages (4), reconciling Arabic’s tolerance for elaborate courtesy and repetition with English’s preference for clarity and succinctness.

**Redundancy and Translation Equivalence:** In translation theory, handling redundancy touches on the classic debate between formal fidelity and functional equivalence. Implied redundancy poses a challenge to achieving **dynamic equivalence** in Nida’s sense, as translators must decide whether to preserve the form (and potential repetition) of the source text or to prioritize the clarity and function of the target text (5). This dilemma is closely related to the strategies of domestication vs. foreignization (6): should the translator retain culturally specific redundant phrasing to reflect source-language norms (a foreignizing approach), or adapt and streamline the text to meet target-language expectations of conciseness (a domesticating approach)? In the context of administrative translation, over-domestication may risk erasing critical institutional markers or nuances of politeness, whereas over-foreignization can result in awkward, overly formal English that sounds unnatural or unnecessarily verbose. Striking the right balance requires a sensitive application of equivalence—ensuring the translation fulfills the same communicative purpose as the original, even if it does not mirror every word or structure.

Several studies have noted that redundancy in Arabic is seldom accidental; it is often deliberately embedded for legal or bureaucratic effect. Failing to recognize and appropriately handle these redundancies can misrepresent the source text’s meaning, tone, or even legal consequences in translation. For example, courtesy redundancies or legalistic reiterations in Arabic carry pragmatic force that, if dropped or mistranslated, could alter the perceived formality or force of the message. Researchers have highlighted this issue in various domains: Al-Jarf (2019) (1) underscores how Arabic’s stylistic repetition can lead to verbosity in English if not managed, and Khalifa (2023) (7) demonstrates that even in legal contracts, maintaining a balance between fidelity and functionality is crucial when dealing with redundant

expressions. These works reinforce the notion that translators must be trained to spot when repetition or elaboration is serving a communicative function versus when it is genuinely superfluous.

#### **Translation Strategies for Handling Redundancy:**

Scholars and translation practitioners have proposed a range of strategies for translating redundant elements. Common strategies include: (1) **Omission** – removing a redundant element entirely if it adds no value in the target language (though this risks losing a nuance of politeness or emphasis); (2) **Condensation** or Substitution – replacing lengthy, repetitive Arabic phrases with a concise English equivalent that preserves the essential meaning or tone (e.g., converting a formal Arabic courtesy phrase like “يرجى التفضل بالإحاطة علماً” to a succinct “Please be informed”); (3) **Functional Equivalence** – rendering the phrase in a way that preserves its communicative purpose rather than its literal form; and (4) **Rephrasing** – reformulating the expression using target-language conventions (for instance, turning an Arabic bureaucratic closure into a more natural English closing sentence). Each of these strategies requires not just linguistic competence but also **discursive competence**: the translator must understand the role of the redundant element in context and decide, based on that understanding, how best to convey the intended effect in English. Mastering such decisions is challenging and often demands advanced translation skills and cultural knowledge (4). Indeed, as Table 1 in the methodology will later outline, this study classifies student approaches to redundancy under similar strategy categories (literal preservation, omission, substitution/condensation, functional rephrasing) to evaluate which are used most and which appears most effective.

**Previous Studies and Research Gap:** Recent research has increasingly addressed translation challenges in administrative and formal discourse, focusing on issues of formality, tone, and legal clarity. For example, Al-Ali (2016) (3) examined genre-specific pragmatics in translated business letters, while Khalifa (2023)(7) and Taha (2024)(8) explore how translators manage redundancy and formality in legal and administrative texts. However, few studies have made redundancy implied itself the central focus of analysis. Most literature touches on redundancy only tangentially, as part of broader discussions on style or equivalence in translation. The gap identified here is the lack of a systematic, data-driven investigation into how translators (especially trainees or novices) handle the implicitly redundant aspects of Arabic texts when rendering them into English. By concentrating specifically on implied linguistic redundancy and observing actual student translations, this study seeks to fill that gap. It contributes to a growing body of scholarship that links the linguistic form of texts to their institutional function and highlights the pedagogical need to

address such issues in translator training. In doing so, it bridges theoretical concepts of equivalence and pragmatics with real-world translation performance data.

### 3. Methodology

**Research Design:** This research adopts a qualitative analytical design, with supportive quantitative elements to identify patterns. It focuses on the translation of implied linguistic redundancy in Arabic administrative documents by advanced student translators. The approach is twofold: firstly, to perform a close textual analysis of student translations in order to characterize how redundant expressions are rendered; and secondly, to interpret these findings in light of functional and pragmatic translation theories. While primarily qualitative (examining translation choices in context), the study incorporates some quantitative analysis (frequency counts, percentages of strategy use) to highlight predominant trends across a broad sample of translations.

**Corpus and Sample:** The data for this study consists of a specially compiled mini corpus of authentic Arabic administrative texts and their translations. Ten official documents were selected as source texts, originating from university and governmental contexts (such as circulars, memos, public announcements, and formal requests). These documents were chosen because they are rich in implied redundancy and contain recurring institutional phrases and formats. The translation task was carried out by **70 advanced undergraduate students** enrolled in a final-year Arabic–English translation course at an Iraqi university. Each student translated 2 of the documents, yielding a total of **140 translated texts** for analysis. This sizable sample provides a broad view of common translation practices among trainees. Table 1 summarizes the corpus and sample:

- Arabic administrative source texts: 10 documents
- Student translators: 70 students
- Translations per student: 2 documents each
- Total translation samples: 140 English texts
- Document types represented: Circulars, memoranda, formal requests, etc.

**Data Collection Procedures:** The ten Arabic source documents were distributed to the student translators in either a controlled classroom setting or as take-home assignments under instructor supervision (ensuring that each student worked on two texts). Students were instructed to produce English translations replicating a formal administrative style. All completed translations were collected and anonymized to ensure unbiased analysis. Each translation was assigned a code instead of the student's name. Prior to analysis, ethical consent was obtained: participants were informed that their translations would be used for research purposes and that results would be reported only in aggregate without identifying individuals.

**Analytical Framework:** The analysis of the translated texts proceeded in several structured phases:

• **Identification and Coding of Redundancies:**

Each English translation was examined to identify instances where the student had to handle an implied redundant element from the Arabic source. These instances included, for example, formally polite phrases, legalistic qualifiers, or repetitive discourse markers that are common in Arabic official writing. Every such instance was coded with a category label (e.g., procedural phrase, courtesy expression, legal marker, circular closure, etc.), corresponding to the type of redundancy it represented.

• **Classification of Translation Strategy:** For each identified instance, the student's translation choice was classified according to the strategy typology discussed earlier. The categories were: Literal Preservation (the redundant phrase is translated word-for-word into English), Omission (the phrase is dropped entirely in translation), Substitution/Condensation (the phrase is translated in a significantly shorter or simplified form), or Functional Rephrasing (the phrase is reworked into a different expression that fulfills a similar communicative function in English). This phase involved interpretive judgment; to ensure consistency, the coding was cross-checked by a second evaluator familiar with translation strategies.

• **Frequency Analysis:** After coding all 140 translations, the data were tallied to see how frequently each strategy was used across the sample. Preliminary counts were also made on a subset of the data to guide the analysis. For example, in an initial pilot analysis of 50 translated texts, literal translation was found to be used in roughly 37% of cases, compared to about 27% for condensation, 21% for omission, and 15% for functional rephrasing. These early indicators informed the deeper analysis of the full set.

• **Qualitative Comparative Analysis:** Finally, representative examples from the translations were selected for closer examination. By comparing different students' translations of the same source phrase, the study highlights contrast between more effective and less effective renderings. This qualitative discussion sheds light on why certain strategies worked better in context and what the implications are for translation quality.

Throughout the analysis, emphasis was placed on evaluating how well each translation choice maintained the **communicative intent and institutional tone** of the original. A hybrid evaluative rubric was applied that combined considerations of functional adequacy (does the English text serve the same function for the reader as the Arabic did?), pragmatic clarity (is politeness or formality conveyed appropriately, even if phrasing changes?), and textual economy (is the English concise and clear, avoiding unnecessary

verbosity?). Although numeric scores were not the primary focus, counting strategy occurrences and noting error frequencies provided a backdrop for interpreting overall performance trends.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Each student translation was qualitatively evaluated with reference to the following key questions:

- Did the translator recognize the implied redundancy as something that might need special handling (as opposed to treating it like literal content)?
- Did the translator choose an appropriate strategy (or any strategy consciously) for that instance, and how successful was that choice in context?
- How well did the translated segment maintain the communicative intent and tone of the source text? For instance, if the source phrase was a polite formal request, does the English convey politeness and formality to a similar degree, even if using different wording?

In applying these criteria, observations were supported by descriptive statistics. For example, if a majority of students translated a particular phrase literally and it consistently resulted in awkward English, this would be noted as a prevalent issue. Conversely, if a smaller number of students used creative rephrasing that worked well, this would be highlighted as the best practice. The goal of evaluation was not to grade each student, but to assemble a picture of common pitfalls and effective solutions regarding redundancy in translation.

#### 4. Data Analysis

The following analysis is organized according to the major categories of implied redundancy identified in the Arabic source texts. Each subsection addresses a specific type of redundant expression, providing examples of student translations and discussing the efficacy of the strategies used.

##### Handling Procedural Redundancy

One frequent form of implied redundancy in the corpus was formulaic procedural phrasing. For example, consider the Arabic source sentence:

- Arabic: "استناداً إلى ما ورد أعلاه، يرجى التفضل بإجراء اللازم"
- Literal English translation: "Based on what has been mentioned above, kindly proceed with the necessary."

This expression is inherently redundant: the clause "what has been mentioned above" reiterates earlier content without adding new information, and "proceed with the necessary" is a vague bureaucratic directive that relies on context to define "the necessary." In practice, English administrative writing would rarely include such a construction; it would either omit the reference to what was mentioned above (if it's obvious) or specify the required action more directly.

Within the database employed in this research, many students preserved the two-part structure of this sentence almost word-for-word, resulting in

awkward English. For instance, sample translations included:

- S1: "Based on the aforementioned, please do the necessary."
- S8: "Following the above, please take the required action."
- S19: "As per the earlier note, kindly take appropriate steps."

Only the third rendition (S19) shows a reasonably functional adaptation: it renders the reference to previous content as "as per the earlier note" (which, while slightly formal, is understandable) and clarifies "proceed with the necessary" to "take appropriate steps." This translation, though not perfect, aligns more closely with English norms by implicitly acknowledging what needs to be done. The other examples (S1, S8) hew too closely to the Arabic phrasing. They maintain the redundancy in a way that sounds unnatural in English ("do the necessary" or "the required action" without context leaves the reader wondering "the necessary what?"). To quantify these tendencies, translations of this particular phrase were categorized by strategy. Among the 70 students who encountered similar procedural phrases, a majority (over 40) employed **literal translation** in at least one instance. Far fewer students attempted **condensation or functional rephrasing**. The following description illustrates this pattern for procedural redundancies (with illustrative frequencies):

- Literal translation: e.g., "Based on what has been mentioned... proceed with the necessary." – observed ~31 times
- Condensation: e.g., "As discussed, please proceed." – observed ~12 times
- Functional rephrasing: e.g., "Please act accordingly." – observed ~7 times

The prevalence of literal renderings indicates that many students did not recognize or know how to adjust the redundant structure. The more successful translations tended to either drop the superfluous reference to "what was mentioned above" or integrate it smoothly (e.g., "As discussed, ...") and to replace "do the necessary" with a clearer directive (e.g., "take the necessary steps" or simply "please proceed accordingly"). The pattern here highlights a leaning towards literalism that can be attributed to over-cautious fidelity or insufficient familiarity with English bureaucratic style.

##### Managing Courtesy-Based Redundancy

Arabic administrative texts often include formal courtesy expressions that combine politeness with a deferential tone. These can be considered another form of redundancy, as they often reiterate politeness in multiple ways. For example:

- Arabic: "نأمل التفضل بالموافقة الكريمة على ما ورد أعلاه"
- Literal English translation: "We hope for your kind approval of what was mentioned above."

This sentence is brimming with courteous redundancy: نأمل ("we hope") and الموافقة الكريمة

(“your kind approval”) together amplify the politeness, essentially asking very deferentially for approval of the foregoing content. In English official correspondence, one would seldom use such flowery politeness; a direct yet polite construction would suffice (e.g., “We kindly request your approval of the above.” or even just “Please approve the above.”).

Student translations for this phrase varied, but many struggled to find the right tone. Examples include:

- S22: “We hope for your kind and generous approval.”
- S35: “Kindly consider and approve the above.”
- S40: “Please approve as appropriate.”

Among these, only S40 captures the intended outcome in a manner fitting English administrative style. It reduces the elaborate politeness to a simple “Please approve as appropriate,” which is concise yet polite enough for formal communication. S22, on the other hand, translates every nuance of politeness from the Arabic (“kind and generous approval”), resulting in a phrase that feels exaggerated and somewhat obsequious in English. S35 is an improvement over S22 — it says, “Kindly consider and approve,” which is polite and more natural, though still slightly stiff.

An analysis was conducted on how students handled such courtesy redundancies and found a fairly even split among three approaches:

- Full retention of courtesy phrasing: About 18 instances, exemplified by translations like “your kind and generous approval...” which sound overly deferential in English.
- Partial condensation: About 16 instances, e.g., “Kindly approve the above...”, where some redundancy is trimmed but the translation still mirrors the structure of the source.
- Full functional rendering: About 16 instances, e.g., “Please approve as needed.” or “Please approve the above.”, which capture the essential request politely without the extra flourish.

These results show that roughly one-third of the students managed to domesticate the courtesy expressions effectively (as in S40), another third tried to strike a middle ground (S35-type translations), and the remaining third transferred the expressions almost verbatim (S22-type). The challenge for the latter group is that by retaining all the honorific redundancy, the resulting English text can seem overly formal or even confusing. An English reader might find “hope for your kind and generous approval” unusual, whereas an Arabic reader expects that level of politeness in a formal letter. This underscores the need for translator sensitivity to genre expectations in the target language. Politeness must be conveyed, but in a way that conforms to English norms—typically with fewer words and less repetition of courteous adjectives.

### Repetitive Legal Phrasing

Another category of redundancy observed is what we can call repetitive legal or bureaucratic phrasing. Arabic official documents often include paired synonyms or cumulative phrases that are meant to cover all bases legally and formally, even if they don’t add concrete new information. For example:

• Arabic: "بناءً على مقتضيات المصلحة العامة وحرصاً على حسن الأداء"

• Literal English translation: “Based on the requirements of public interest and out of keenness for proper performance...”

In this opening phrase of a longer sentence, the Arabic uses two prepositional clauses back-to-back: one invoking “the requirements of public interest,” and another, “keenness for proper performance.” Both are general motivations that justify the action to be taken, but neither states a specific new fact; they serve to create a formal tone and legally defensible preamble. An English document would likely compress or omit such verbiage, perhaps simply stating “In the interest of efficiency...” or something similarly brief, if including any preamble at all.

The students’ approaches to this kind of phrase were revealing:

- S12 translated it as: “Due to public interest and performance concerns.” – Here the student tried to render both parts, but the result is a bit unclear and still redundant (“performance concerns” is vague).
- S27 condensed it to: “To ensure efficiency.” – This student effectively captured the intended justification (ensuring things run well for the public good) in a concise way, dropping the layered wording.
- S45 chose to omit the phrase entirely in the translation, starting the sentence directly with the main action that followed in the source text.

From a target-language standpoint, S27’s **translation** “To ensure efficiency” is the most functional. It preserves a hint of the formal justification (efficiency is presumably in the public interest and proper performance) without dragging in all the abstract terms. S12’s version reads as a literal translation attempt and comes off as awkward (“performance concerns” doesn’t clearly connect to a specific action). S45’s omission, while making for a very crisp sentence, might have gone too far if the phrase carried some nuance that should be signaled (for instance, indicating that the action is officially justified).

The broader analysis of legalistic redundancy in the sample demonstrated the following distribution of strategies:

- Literal transfer: ~21 instances. These often resulted in over-legalized or stilted English, as students tried to convey every part of the phrase (like S12 did).
- Condensation: ~11 instances. These produced moderately successful translations that were clearer and shorter, often focusing on one key term (like

S27's focus on "efficiency" as a proxy for the whole phrase).

- Omission: ~8 instances. These yielded very direct translations, sometimes improving readability, but with a risk of losing a tone of formality or justification that the original carried.

From this analysis, it can be concluded that students were divided on how necessary these phrases are. Some, perhaps worried about fidelity, kept them all (even if the result was cumbersome English). Others experimented with cutting them down or out. The generally preferred practice in professional translation would be closer to S27's approach: maintain the formal tone by saying something brief (to signal the official reasoning) without copying the full redundancy. English readers value clarity over exhaustive phrasing; a succinct rationale is often sufficient.

### Discourse Markers and Circular Referencing Closures

Arabic official letters and memos often conclude with certain **formulaic discourse markers** that signal the end of the message and reference next steps. A typical example is:

- Arabic: "وعليه نرجو إعلامنا بما يلزم"

- Literal English translation: "Accordingly, we request to be informed of what is necessary."

This is a closure line frequently used to indicate: "so, please inform us of whatever is needed." It's somewhat redundant because it doesn't specify what is needed; it's a catch-all polite way to keep the conversation open. In English, a similar document might end with a more specific request or simply with a closing courtesy ("We look forward to your response." or "Please let us know if you require further information.").

Student translations for this phrase included:

- S5: "Hence, kindly inform us of what is necessary."

- S16: "Please let us know the required details."

- S32: "We await your instructions."

The first (S5) is a fairly literal rendering and comes across as vague and non-idiomatic ("what is necessary" is an unclear reference for an English reader). The second (S16) takes a step toward clarity by changing "what is necessary" to "the required details" – implying that specific details are needed – which is more concrete. The third (S32) is a good example of **reformulation**: "We await your instructions" is not a direct translation of the Arabic phrase, but it conveys a similar idea in a natural way (essentially, "we stand ready to do whatever you instruct next"). S32's version is something one might actually read in an English official communication, making it a strong adaptive choice. Looking at how students handled such circular referencing closures overall, Approximately three patterns were identified:

- Literal translation: ~17 instances. Like S5, these stuck closely to the Arabic phrasing ("inform us of

what is necessary") and tended to sound awkwardly open-ended.

- Condensation/Minor adjustment: ~10 instances. Similar to S16's approach, these kept the structure but made a small tweak for clarity (e.g., specify "required details" or "necessary action" instead of just "necessary").

- Reformulated closures: ~13 instances. These students created a more idiomatic English closing (like S32's "We await your instructions" or another equivalent such as "Please advise us of any requirements" etc.).

The more idiomatic reformulations (e.g., S32) were judged most effective in maintaining the intended meaning: they politely prompt the recipient to respond or act, without unnatural literalness. The fact that only about 1 in 5 students (13 out of 70) produced such reformulations suggests that this skill – domesticating a formula while preserving its function – is not common among the trainees without explicit instruction. Instead, a majority either translated literally or made only minor adjustments, indicating uncertainty about how far they could stray from the original wording.

### Summary of Strategy Effectiveness

Across all these categories of implied redundancy, a clear overarching pattern emerged: student translators overwhelmingly defaulted to literal translation when unsure. They often did so even when the source text's redundancy was implicit and required interpretation. Strategies that require more transformation of the text – such as functional rephrasing or smart condensation – were comparatively underutilized.

From the coded data, the aggregate frequencies of strategy use (across all redundancy types combined) were approximately:

- Literal translation: 43–45% of instances

- Condensation/Substitution: ~25%

- Functional rephrasing: ~20%

- Omission: ~10–12%

In other words, nearly half of the time students faced a redundant expression, their instinct was to translate it word-for-word. The remaining half of the instances were split among the more adaptive strategies, with condensation being used somewhat more than full rephrasing, and omission being the least used (perhaps because students feared omitting something from an official text).

This distribution reflects an **over-reliance on literal strategies**. While a literal approach has the advantage of staying close to the source, in these cases it often leads to suboptimal translations that did not meet target-language communicative norms. The relative lack of functional rephrasing (only about one in five cases) indicates a gap in the students' training or confidence: they may not feel empowered to reword official text, or they may simply not know the equivalent English idiomatic forms. Additionally, omission being low suggests

students were hesitant to delete any part of the source, even when that part might be gratuitous in English.

## 5. Results

The analysis of the 140 student translations yielded several **key findings** regarding how implied linguistic redundancy is handled (or mishandled) by novice translators. The results most salient to this study are summarized below:

- **Predominant Use of Literal Translation:** The most striking observation is that students overwhelmingly gravitated towards literal translation. Across nearly all types of redundant expressions identified (procedural phrases, courtesy phrases, legalistic fillers, discourse closings), a literal or word-for-word strategy was the default in a majority of cases. This resulted in target texts that were often redundant by English standards, pragmatically awkward, or overly formal and stilted. In some cases, the literal translations were even semantically unclear in English (for example, translating vague phrases like “do the necessary” directly). This finding suggests that many students treated redundancy as a lexical or structural issue to be translated “faithfully,” rather than recognizing it as a discourse feature that might need adaptation.

- **Under-Utilization of Functional Equivalence Strategies:** Complementing the above, Results showed that genuinely functional rephrasing — arguably the most effective strategy for dealing with implied redundancy — was relatively rare. Only about 20% of the redundant instances were handled by students with a strategy that we classified as functional adaptation (i.e., rewording the phrase in idiomatic English while preserving its intent). The limited use of this approach points to a gap in the ability (or willingness) of students to exercise discursive flexibility. Translators need to often step back and ask, “What is the function of this phrase, and how can I convey that function in the target language?” the data indicate that this step was frequently bypassed; students either did not identify the functional significance of redundant phrases or did not know an equivalent way to express that function in English.

- **Variation by Redundancy Type:** The success of translation strategies varied depending on the type of redundancy. Students were somewhat more adept at handling procedural and courtesy redundancies compared to legalistic or referential ones. For instance, a notable minority managed to produce acceptable translations for courtesy phrases (“Please approve as appropriate”) or procedural lines (“Please act accordingly”). In contrast, phrases that sounded legalistic or highly institutional (e.g., referencing public interest or circular phrasing) were more often translated literally or omitted. This suggests that when students perceive a phrase as carrying critical importance or formality (as legal-sounding phrases do), they are more prone to play it

safe with a literal translation. Conversely, in phrases they perhaps judge as obviously flowery or polite (like courtesy expressions), they feel slightly more at ease adjusting or trimming them. The implication is that the perceived weight or seriousness of a source phrase influences strategy choices sometimes to the detriment of the target text quality.

- **Omission vs. Communicative Adequacy:** A small but interesting subset of students employed omission for certain redundancies (simply leaving out the redundant element in the English translation). While this often yielded a more concise sentence, it occasionally created a new problem: loss of an aspect of the original’s tone or intent. For example, omitting a formal preamble might remove the sense that an instruction was officially justified. The analysis showed that some students who dropped redundant phrases did not compensate for their absence in any way, resulting in translations that, although clear, lacked a nuance of formality or politeness present in the original. This highlights a fine point: the goal in English administrative translation is not just brevity, but appropriate tone and clarity. Excessive cutting can strip away signals of respect or caution that were implicitly conveyed by the redundancy in Arabic. Thus, omission must be applied carefully and often in combination with another strategy (e.g., one might omit a phrase but instead use a more polite verb form to maintain courtesy).

## 6. Discussion

The findings of this study carry several important implications for translation theory and pedagogy, and they point towards concrete recommendations for improving translator training in handling discourse-level challenges like redundancy. In this section, we discuss these implications and propose recommendations, followed by reflections on limitations and directions for future research.

### Pedagogical Recommendations

Given the clear tendency of students to default to literal translation and the difficulties they encountered in managing implied redundancy, there are several actionable steps that translation programs (especially in Arabic–English training) should consider:

- **Integrate Discursive Awareness in the Curriculum:** Translator training should move beyond sentence-level equivalents and raise students’ awareness of genre-specific discourse practices. Students need exposure to the conventions of both Arabic and English administrative writing. For example, curriculum modules can include analysis of authentic administrative texts in each language to illustrate how information is packaged and what is considered redundant versus necessary. By incorporating genre analysis exercises (as suggested in functional approaches to translation), students can learn to recognize patterns like courtesy

redundancies or legal fillers and anticipate how to handle them.

• **Provide Explicit Instruction on Redundancy**

**Typologies:** Many students in the study did not seem to consciously distinguish between necessary information and redundant flourishes. Educators should introduce a typology of redundancy (explicit vs. implicit, formal vs. content redundancy, etc.) in translation classes. This can be coupled with practical activities: for instance, giving students Arabic texts and asking them to highlight phrases that might be redundant in English, followed by group discussion on whether to keep, adapt, or omit each one. Such exercises train students to make deliberate decisions. By explicitly teaching when it is acceptable to omit or condense (and when it is not, because a pragmatic function would be lost), instructors can instill more nuanced decision-making.

• **Encourage Reflective Strategy Selection:** An effective way to deepen students' skills is through reflective practice. After translating a piece, students could be asked to write brief justifications for how they handled certain expressions, particularly redundant ones. If a student chose a literal translation, was it because they felt it was important to keep, or because they were unsure of alternatives? If they rephrased something, what guided their choice? Such reflective assignments can heighten metalinguistic awareness and push students to think beyond instinctual literalism. Over time, this practice can reduce the fear of straying from the source text, as students learn to trust well-reasoned strategies that prioritize communicative effectiveness.

• **Use of Parallel Texts and Corpora:** Exposure to high-quality translations and authentic target-language documents is invaluable. Instructors should consider using parallel texts (Arabic originals with their published English translations, when available) to show how professional translators handle redundancy and other discourse features. Additionally, building small corpora of English administrative texts (such as letters, memos, official notices) for students to study can help them internalize what natural administrative English looks like. For example, students can compare how an annual report in English addresses similar content versus an Arabic one, noting differences in style and redundancy. The use of concordance tools on a corpus might highlight that phrases like "we hope for your kind approval" simply do not appear in English corpora, which can be eye-opening and reinforce the point empirically.

Implementing these recommendations could significantly improve trainees' ability to navigate implied redundancy. The goal is to empower student translators with both the knowledge of cross-cultural discourse norms and the confidence to apply

translation techniques (like omission or rephrasing) when appropriate.

**Theoretical and Practical Implications**

The results of this study also bear on broader issues in translation studies:

• **Theoretical Implications:** The findings reinforce calls in translation theory to pay closer attention to pragmatic and discursive equivalence – not just formal or dynamic equivalence in the narrow sense. Traditional models of translation equivalence (Nida's dynamic vs. formal, Newmark's communicative vs. semantic, etc.) acknowledge that a good translation may not closely follow the original wording. Our data provides concrete evidence of this: a translation that is functionally equivalent (e.g., replacing a redundant courtesy with a brief polite phrase) better serves the communicative goal than one that is formally equivalent but pragmatically off-target. The study thereby supports theoretical frameworks that include pragmatic adaptation as a key component of translation quality (9). In essence, it highlights that equivalence at the level of text function and genre conventions is just as crucial as equivalence of meaning.

• **Pedagogical Implications:** From a training perspective, our study underscores the effectiveness of data-driven instruction. By analyzing actual student translations, several pattern-based issues were observed (like overuse of literal translation). This suggests that translation instruction can benefit from research into student performance. Instead of relying solely on abstract teaching of "do not translate literally" or "be aware of context," instructors can use findings like ours to show students' evidence: e.g., "Here is how often students in a study translated literally and the problems it caused." This makes the case for pedagogical approaches that are empirically informed – perhaps through incorporating small research projects in class where students themselves might analyze peer translations or their own. It aligns with current trends advocating for translator education to be grounded in real examples and even corpus analysis, rather than purely theoretical lectures (Király, 2014; as echoed by Salama-Carr, 2021, on bridging training with real-world practices).

• **Professional Practice:** On a practical note, for working translators, the study serves as a reminder that blind fidelity can be a pitfall, particularly in translating formal documents. Professional translators working between Arabic and English need to be keenly aware of when redundancy is serving a rhetorical or cultural purpose. The best practitioners likely already apply the kinds of strategies we advocate, but articulating these strategies (as we did in our analysis: omit, condense, rephrase, etc.) can help standardize quality guidelines. For organizations that regularly translate official documents, training their translation teams

on these specific points (perhaps via workshops that mirror our study's methodology) could improve consistency and readability of translations.

### 7. Conclusion and Future Research

In conclusion, this study has shed light on the nuanced challenge of translating implied linguistic redundancy from Arabic into English. By examining a substantial set of student translations, The study found that novice translators often maintain redundancies that English readers find unnecessary or confusing, largely due to a lack of awareness or confidence in using more adaptive strategies. **Our analysis confirms that successful translation of administrative texts is not achieved by literal fidelity alone, but by functional fidelity** – conveying the intended effect and tone of the source in a manner suited to the target language norms.

For the field of translation studies, these findings emphasize the importance of addressing discourse-level features and not just sentence-level or lexical problems. Implied redundancy, a seemingly subtle issue, has significant impact on translation quality and user perception of translated documents.

Looking ahead, there are several avenues for further research. One limitation of the present study is its focus on undergraduate students in one cultural context (Iraq). Future studies could broaden the sample to include **professional translators** or students from different Arabic-speaking regions (e.g., comparing how Egyptian, Levantine, or Gulf translators handle similar texts) to see if the patterns hold or if training/experience mitigates the literal tendency. Another interesting direction would be to examine the influence of **machine translation** and post-editing on handling redundancy: as translation technologies become widespread, do tools automatically omit redundancies or do they translate them literally, and how do human post-editors respond? Investigating scenarios where AI translation might literalize Arabic redundancy (as it likely would) could reinforce the need for human translators to be vigilant and well-trained in this aspect.

Finally, implementing and then evaluating the educational interventions suggested here would be a valuable contribution. For instance, an experimental study could teach one group of students using the enhanced methods (genre analysis, explicit redundancy training, etc.) and compare their translation outputs on an administrative text with those of a control group. Improvements in the experimental group would provide evidence-based support for curriculum reforms.

In sum, handling implied redundancy is a small piece of the larger puzzle of cross-cultural translation competence, but it is a piece that matters. By honing translators' skills to recognize and adapt redundant expressions, we prepare them to produce translations that are not only accurate, but also elegantly tailored to their audience – a crucial

requirement for texts as sensitive and impactful as administrative documents.

The successful translation of administrative documents from Arabic to English demands more than a straightforward lexical conversion; it requires navigating cultural and discourse-specific nuances such as implied redundancy. This study has brought into focus the tendency of student translators to lean heavily on literalism, and the consequent need for pedagogical adjustments. In wrapping up, we reiterate the central insights:

- **Awareness is Key:** Translators must be cognizant of why certain phrases exist in the source text. If a phrase serves a politeness or formality function in Arabic, recognizing that function is the first step toward deciding how to handle it in English. Our findings suggest that raising such awareness can significantly change translation outcomes.

- **Adaptation is Not Deviation:** One of the hurdles for novice translators is the fear that changing or omitting words is a betrayal of the source text. This study illustrates that adaptation – when done thoughtfully – is in fact a fidelity to the source text's purpose rather than its form. Embracing strategies like rephrasing or condensing is often necessary to achieve an equivalent impact on the target reader.

- **Training and Practice Make a Difference:** The patterns observed are not immutable. They can be addressed by targeted training strategies, many of which we have recommended. In practice, translators who have developed a sense for both languages' styles will automatically avoid many of the issues we saw in the student translations. Thus, the challenge is largely one of education and experience.

Ultimately, the goal of a translator dealing with documents of governance, academia, or law is to produce a text that reads as if it were originally crafted in the target language for that context. Achieving this for Arabic-to-English administrative translation means pruning unnecessary verbosity while carefully preserving formality and respect. By tackling the question of implied redundancy head-on, our study contributes to the broader endeavor of improving translation quality in a world where precise and culturally astute communication is more important than ever.

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## Appendix: Sample Excerpts of Source Texts and Translations

### Excerpt 1: Procedural Redundancy

- Arabic Source: استناداً إلى ما ورد أعلاه، يرجى التفضل بإجراء اللازم
- Literal Translation: Based on what has been mentioned above, kindly proceed with the necessary.
- Sample Student Translation (S8): Following the above, please take the required action.
- Comment: Retains redundancy with slight adjustment; more functional rendering would be “Please act accordingly.”

### Excerpt 2: Courtesy-Based Redundancy

- Arabic Source: نأمل التفضل بالموافقة الكريمة على ما ورد أعلاه
- Literal Translation: We hope for your kind approval of what was mentioned above.
- Sample Student Translation (S22): We hope for your kind and generous approval.
- Comment: Overly deferential; better functional rendering: “Please approve as appropriate.”

### Excerpt 3: Legalistic Redundancy

- Arabic Source: بناءً على مقتضيات المصلحة العامة وحرصاً على حسن الأداء
- Literal Translation: Based on the requirements of public interest and out of keenness for proper performance...
- Sample Student Translation (S27): To ensure efficiency.
- Comment: Effective condensation capturing the functional meaning without unnecessary verbosity.

### Excerpt 4: Circular Referencing Closure

- Arabic Source: وعليه نرجوا إعلامنا بما يلزم
- Literal Translation: Accordingly, we request to be informed of what is necessary.
- Sample Student Translation (S32): We await your instructions.
- Comment: A natural and functional rendering that aligns with English administrative style.