



## Exploring the History of Translation and Interpreting Studies in Ancient Egypt

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines multilingual mediation in Ancient Egypt (c. 2400–196 BCE) as a pre-classical case for Translation and Interpreting Studies (TIS). Using a qualitative historical-comparative and source-critical approach, it analyzes selected materials from the Pyramid Texts, Amarna Letters, Egypt–Hatti Peace Treaty, and Rosetta Stone through Descriptive Translation Studies, Skopos-oriented analysis, and Relevance-oriented analysis. The strongest comparative evidence comes from the Egypt–Hatti Treaty and Rosetta Stone, where structural correspondence coexists with selective functional, rhetorical, and cultural variation. The Amarna Letters document multilingual diplomacy without surviving parallel Egyptian translations, while the Pyramid Texts primarily illustrate diachronic textual transmission and intralingual adaptation. The findings show that these corpora represent different forms of linguistic mediation and should not be treated as equivalent evidence of translation or interpreting. The study contributes to translation historiography by extending TIS inquiry beyond conventional Graeco-Roman narratives while emphasizing the limits of retrospective theoretical analysis. It also proposes a pedagogical application for translator education.

### KEYWORDS

Translation historiography; Translation and Interpreting Studies; Ancient Egypt; Multilingual mediation; Translator education

## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

Historically, histories of Translation and Interpreting Studies have largely focused on Graeco-Roman intellectual history, placing figures like Cicero, Horace, and St. Jerome at the base of translation theory. A growing body of research is challenging these traditional views of translation history by encouraging scholars to study multilingual communicative practices throughout the world rather than just within ancient Greece and Rome. It also encourages scholars to consider the contributions made by various forms of diplomacy, administration, and scribal activity toward the historical growth of translation and interpreting. Ancient Egyptian civilization has produced one of the earliest bodies of evidence for organized cross-cultural communication practices that can be studied retrospectively using modern translation concepts with appropriate caution regarding historical anachronism.

Ancient Egyptians communicated extensively in diplomacy, war, commerce, and administration with a variety of other civilizations, including Nubia, Libya, Asia, Greece, and the Near East, which necessitated linguistic and cultural mediation. Evidence from ancient Egyptian writing, tomb inscriptions, official titles, and monumental depictions indicates that certain individuals served as intermediaries between languages and cultures in formal and diplomatic settings.

The oldest documented instance of an Egyptian official who facilitated language use is a title from the 3rd millennium BCE, “wa,” discovered on tomb reliefs at Elephantine. The “wa” designation for these officials probably denoted their function as diplomatic communicators and mediators in border areas (Kurz, 1985).

A later official title, “jmy r(A) aw,” or “overseer of translators/interpreters,” indicates an organizational hierarchy within a multilingual communication framework. Later images of interpreters, for example, in a Horemheb relief, show them facilitating communication between Egyptian officials and foreign ambassadors; however, it remains unclear what specific roles they performed and what level of institutionalization these individuals had (Kurz, 1986).

Historical records indicate that multilingual communication occurred in various diplomatic, administrative, and intercultural situations in Ancient Egypt, though the extent, frequency, and degree of its institutionalization are still unclear. However, these corpora provide very different kinds of evidence. Multilingual textual comparisons can be made from both the Treaty and Rosetta Stone; the Amarna Letters demonstrate multilingual diplomatic communication without surviving parallel Egyptian translations, and the Pyramid Texts demonstrate mostly diachronic transmission of texts as well as intralingual adaptations.

### Research Problem

The current study addresses three major scholarly gaps. (1) Although the Graeco-Roman tradition is still heavily emphasized in the field of translation history, the multilingual systems that existed before classical times have historically been understudied and are being studied by researchers today. (2) There have been very few interactions between Egyptologists and

scholars in the field of Translation and Interpreting Studies; yet there are thousands of documented multilingual inscriptions, diplomatic communications, and administrative documents that document multilingual communication in Ancient Egypt. (3) In addition to a lack of interaction between these two disciplines, there have also been very few studies using modern approaches to translation theory to analyze selected multilingual corpora from Ancient Egypt.

This study addresses these gaps by applying selected contemporary frameworks to selected passages from four corpora representing different forms of linguistic mediation, while distinguishing ancient textual evidence from differences that may derive from modern translations.

### **Research Objectives**

This research aims to:

1. Examine selected translation and linguistic mediation practices in Ancient Egypt from the Old Kingdom to the Ptolemaic era.
2. Identify and classify observable textual patterns, including explicitation, cultural substitution, formulaic equivalence, and functional adaptation, evident within selected corpora.
3. Compare these patterns with concepts found in selected contemporary TIS frameworks, including Skopos Theory, Relevance Theory, and Descriptive Translation Studies
4. Assess the extent to which surviving evidence supports institutionally situated multilingual mediation in selected Ancient Egyptian contexts
5. Propose pedagogical applications showing how Ancient Egyptian multilingual case studies can be integrated into translator and interpreter education curricula

### **Research Questions**

This study seeks to address the following questions:

1. What observable textual patterns and forms of linguistic mediation can be identified in the selected Ancient Egyptian materials?
2. How can Ancient Egyptian multilingual practices be analytically interpreted through contemporary Translation and Interpreting Studies frameworks?
3. To what extent do the selected textual patterns functionally parallel strategies identified in modern scholarship while acknowledging differences among the corpora, the mediation of modern translations, and the risks of historical anachronism?

### **Scope of the Study**

The study of multilingual communication in Ancient Egypt from the Old Kingdom to the Ptolemaic period used a total of four large bodies of texts, including the Pyramid Texts (texts for burial), the Amarna Letters (diplomatic correspondence), the Egypt–Hatti Peace Treaty, and the Rosetta Stone. Each body of text represents a different context of language use and historical period involving Hieroglyphic Egyptian, Demotic, Akkadian, and Greek. Because this study has an exploratory design that is restricted to the explicitly defined units of analysis (Section 3.2), it

is not intended to be representative of translation and interpreting practices throughout Ancient Egyptian society.

### **Significance of the Study**

The research contributes to translation historiography by examining selected multilingual and textual-mediation phenomena from Ancient Egypt through cautiously applied contemporary TIS concepts and by considering their potential pedagogical relevance. Through the analysis of multilingual inscriptions, diplomatic correspondence, and multilingual liturgical texts, this research broadens the scope of translation history to include non-Graeco-Roman periods. In addition, it introduces the possibility that concepts like functional adaptation, explicitation, and sociocultural mediation may be used with some caution to analyze pre-classical materials.

### **Pedagogical Rationale for Curriculum Studies**

Competence frameworks developed by Translation and Interpreting Studies programs are intended to provide students with advanced professional competence, such as the EMT (European Master's in Translation), a competence framework developed for translators (European Commission, 2022). However, while the EMT emphasizes aspects of language competence, cultural knowledge, and strategic decision-making, historical competence and cross-cultural translation history are given relatively little attention. Historically based research and case studies that include non-Western cultures will improve the diversity of perspectives represented in competence frameworks and support comparative and critical analytical thinking.

As a secondary implication of the historical-textual analysis, the study also considers how selected Ancient Egyptian materials might be used in translator education. To achieve this goal, a historically based teaching module on Ancient Egyptian multilingual communication has been developed for potential incorporation into TIS curricula at both undergraduate and graduate levels. The teaching module provides an opportunity to enhance students' understanding of ancient historical events, provide students with strategic competences for translation/interpreting tasks, and facilitate critical thinking about the role of historians and researchers in determining how past events should be interpreted. Because the teaching module was not tested or assessed through empirical means, it is presented as a theoretical model for application rather than a validated approach for executing educational interventions.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **TIS Scholarship, Egyptological Evidence, and Research Gap**

The traditional account of Translation and Interpreting Studies has usually emphasized the classical heritage of ancient Greece and Rome. Cicero, Horace, and St. Jerome are often cited as being among those who have contributed significantly to the development of theories of translation (Pym, 2023; Robinson, 2014). Nevertheless, multilingual societies existed for many years prior to and during these cultural developments. In addition, it is now widely recognized by historians of translation that diplomacy, administration, scribal activity, and cross-cultural

mediation all had an important part to play in reconstructing the history of translation (Baker & Saldanha, 2019; Delisle & Woodsworth, 2012).

Egyptological research offers considerable evidence regarding the scribal culture of Ancient Egypt, multilingual governance, diplomatic relations, and intercultural interactions. Gardiner (1957), Lichtheim (1973–1980), Loprieno (1995), Quirke (2004), and Baines (2007) record the historical evolution and application of Egyptian languages and scripts in religious, administrative, and political settings. The multilingual and multiscript character of Ptolemaic textual production is further documented in studies of the Rosetta Stone and sacerdotal decrees (Ray, 2014; Simpson, 1996). The Amarna Letters demonstrate the role of Akkadian in Late Bronze Age diplomacy (Moran, 1992; Rainey, 2015), while the Egypt–Hatti Peace Treaty preserves Egyptian and Akkadian treaty traditions (Langdon & Gardiner, 1920; Pritchard, 1969). The Rosetta Stone provides hieroglyphic, Demotic, and Greek versions of the same decree (Ray, 2014; Simpson, 1996).

In other words, there is very little research on the translation and interpreting of texts in ancient times. Cole (2015) focuses on how people mediate or translate when working with multiple languages, authority, and the social prestige associated with being able to speak/translate multiple languages. Mairs (2020) studies *hermēneis* in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt and also has difficulty identifying terms for interpreters, as well as understanding what roles they may have had within institutions. The work of these two researchers demonstrates that language mediation has been important throughout history. However, their research did not provide clear ways to categorize selected instances of Ancient Egyptian textual data using clear and operationally defined categories of current Translation and Interpreting Studies (TIS) constructs.

Therefore, this study does not assert that Ancient Egypt had an explicit theory of translation. Rather, it assesses whether selected textual features can be explained retrospectively by applying current TIS concepts. The primary contribution of this study lies in combining source-critical analysis of the historical context of selected Ancient Egyptian textual evidence with a small number of clearly operationally defined TIS constructs, rather than attempting to reconstruct all aspects of Ancient Egyptian translation practices.

### **Primary Analytical Frameworks and Operational Criteria**

To prevent overly speculative and abstract applications of translation theory, three principal frameworks are used in this study. These include Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS), Skopos-oriented functional analysis (Skopos), and Relevance-oriented analysis (Relevance). Sociocultural interpretation is used selectively as a contextual lens for culture-specific religious and institutional correspondences, particularly in the Egypt–Hatti Treaty and Rosetta Stone analyses, rather than as a separate primary analytical framework.

These three approaches are distinct with respect to their epistemological orientations. The primary purpose of DTS is to describe products, whereas the primary purpose of Skopos Theory is to provide a functional explanation of how translations achieve their intended

purposes. Similarly, the primary focus of Relevance Theory is on the process by which interpretations are pragmatically clarified. Therefore, these approaches do not constitute an integrated model of translation. DTS is utilized to establish commonalities among translations through repeated reference to regular patterns. Skopos-oriented analyses are undertaken when there is independent historical evidence supporting a functional distinction based on the source text and/or its translators. Relevance-oriented analyses can be undertaken only when there is demonstrated historical evidence of either explicitness or clarifying pragmatic content.

### ***Descriptive Translation Studies***

Descriptive Translation Studies, specifically through the work of Toury and other system-oriented scholars (Hermans, 2020), studies repeated textual patterns/regularities and translational norms. For this study, Descriptive Translation Studies will be employed to the extent that similar legal, diplomatic, ceremonial, or ritual textual structures occur in passages that have been historically related to one another. Repeated textual structures can initially be considered textual patterns and may be indicative of genre conventions, scribal practices, or formulaic textual production, rather than being solely attributable to translation.

Therefore, it is necessary to apply Descriptive Translation Studies prior to making any historical claims about the intentions of translators. Evidence of textual repetition comprises repeated textual structures; however, these structures do not demonstrate that Ancient Egyptian scribes were consciously adhering to established translation norms.

### ***Skopos-Oriented Functional Analysis***

Functional adaptation can take place only when there exists an empirical link between a demonstrable, historically validated rhetorical or informational variation in a textual variant and a discrepancy in the recorded audience, script, genre, political context, or institutional role.

Therefore, this research does not assume that differences in texts relate to different purposes simply because they exist. Instead, it proposes functional explanations for textual differences based on prior contextual information about the differences in the textual variants themselves. This study does not propose that ancient scribes were aware of Skopos Theory. Rather, Skopos-oriented analysis provides a retrospective heuristic lens through which the data are examined.

The next part of the study will apply Relevance-oriented analysis in addition to Skopos-oriented analysis. The primary use of Relevance-oriented analysis is to identify differences in how explicitly or pragmatically clarifying a particular piece of communication is between two variants. Skopos-oriented analysis has been applied to determine whether there is historical evidence documenting differences in communicative or institutional functions. In this case, the two analyses represent separate and sequentially applied conceptual frameworks (i.e., one may show whether a difference in communicative purpose existed historically, while the other would be needed to determine whether that difference was explicitly stated in the historical record of the textual variant).

### **Relevance-Oriented Analysis**

The emphasis on communication was established in earlier translation studies, including the work of Nida (1964) and Newmark (1988). The importance of communication, culture, and communicative effect was recognized. Gutt (1991), who developed Relevance Theory for application to translation, examined both access to context and contextualization. This study utilizes Relevance-oriented analysis only as a secondary analytical framework when comparing historical translations that are documented to include clearer or additional explicit semantic information or pragmatic clarification than another version.

The relationship between textual evidence and theoretical interpretation is therefore sequential: textual observation → historical contextualization → TIS interpretation. This sequence reduces the risk of circularity by ensuring that a theoretical category does not generate the textual phenomenon that it is subsequently invoked to explain.

**Table 1.**

#### *Operational Framework for Translation Strategy Classification*

| <b>Category</b>              | <b>Operational Criterion</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Primary TIS Lens</b>                                |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Explicitation</b>         | Semantically relevant information is more explicit in one historically related version, and the difference is supported by the historical text, transcription, transliteration, or philological commentary rather than only by a modern translation. | Relevance-oriented analysis ( <b>Gutt, 1991</b> )      |
| <b>Cultural substitution</b> | A culturally specific religious, political, or institutional reference is represented through a historically supported local counterpart, including correspondences involving divine terminology (Hart, 2005).                                       | Sociocultural / functional interpretation (Hart, 2005) |
| <b>Formulaic equivalence</b> | Comparable legal, diplomatic, ceremonial, or ritual structures recur across historically related passages.                                                                                                                                           | Descriptive Translation Studies (Hermans, 2020)        |
| <b>Functional adaptation</b> | A verified textual difference corresponds plausibly to documented differences in audience, genre, script, or political context, or institutional function.                                                                                           | Skopos-oriented analysis (Reiss & Vermeer, 1984)       |

Note. The operational criteria were developed for the present study with reference to Gutt (1991) for Relevance-oriented interpretation, Hermans (2020) for descriptive textual regularities, Reiss and Vermeer (1984) for functional analysis, and Hart (2005) for culture-specific religious correspondences. The categories are used as retrospective heuristic classifications and are not attributed to Ancient Egyptian actors themselves.

The earlier fixed threshold of three occurrences for formulaic equivalence is not retained because no theoretical basis justified that numerical cut-off. Recurrence is instead assessed

qualitatively through repeated structural correspondence together with relevant historical or philological evidence.

### **Historiographical Limits and Corpus Differences**

Applying contemporary Translation and Interpreting Studies (TIS) frameworks to ancient materials creates a risk of methodological anachronism. There is no surviving text in which Ancient Egyptians articulated a systematic translation theory analogous to the models used today. In addition to serving as heuristic analytical lenses, these models provide additional frameworks that can be used to identify why texts differ, after considering other possible explanations (i.e., political, religious, scribal, etc.) prior to applying a contemporary Translation and Interpreting Studies (TIS) interpretation.

Because some differences may be visible only in modern English or Arabic translations, it would be incorrect to assume that such differences were produced by the ancient translators themselves. Only those differences that are supported either by the textual tradition itself or by well-established scholarly research should be regarded as analytically significant.

Although the four corpora represent very different kinds of evidence, they can also be compared and contrasted in several ways. For example, while the Egypt–Hatti Peace Treaty provides a way of comparing parallel diplomatic traditions in Egyptian and Akkadian, the Rosetta Stone allows examination of multilingual and multiscript decree production; the Amarna Letters provide an example of multilingual diplomacy where no written Egyptian versions survive; and the Pyramid Texts represent primarily diachronic textual transmission and intralingual adaptation. Accordingly, each corpus is treated according to its form of linguistic mediation rather than as if all represented the same type of evidence of direct interlingual translation. Similarly, written translation and oral interpreting should not be viewed as the same category. Claims about interpreting require independent documentary, administrative, or iconographic evidence.

### **Positioning and Originality of the Present Study**

Current Egyptological research offers significant proof of multilingual governance, diplomacy, scribal communication, and cultural mediation; however, aside from a few linguistic or administrative analyses, most investigations tackle these matters mainly through philology, archaeology, politics, or administration and infrequently, if ever, applies translation theory in a systematic manner.

This research does not assert the presence of a translation theory in Ancient Egypt or a unified translation system from that era. Rather, it utilizes a narrow and clearly defined TIS framework on a select few pre-classical texts. The research distinctly separates textual evidence, historical interpretation, and theoretical analysis from a retrospective viewpoint. This approach aids in advancing translation historiography by showcasing the usefulness and constraints of utilizing modern TIS frameworks on historically remote multilingual texts.

## Pedagogical Perspective

Translator-training scholarship emphasizes linguistic, intercultural, thematic, and strategic competence (Galán-Mañas & Hurtado Albir, 2015; Hurtado Albir, 2017; Kelly, 2005; PACTE Group, 2005). The updated EMT competence framework provides a contemporary competence-oriented structure for translator education (European Commission, 2022). More recent competence and curriculum research has also emphasized the evolving informational and intercultural requirements of translator education (Baishymyrova & Sadykova, 2024; Eltaiba et al., 2025; Rudik et al., 2025; Yao, 2024).

From a broader curriculum perspective, historical and contextual knowledge can support professionally relevant learning objectives and reflective judgment (Schwab, 1973; Tyler, 1949).

Historical and non-Western case studies may therefore contribute to critical awareness of how translation practices, institutions, and concepts differ across historical and cultural settings.

These competence and curriculum models are not used to infer the abilities, cognition, or training of Ancient Egyptian mediators. Instead, they provide a rationale for proposing selected Ancient Egyptian materials as historical teaching resources. The classroom activity developed in this study is therefore presented as a proposed pedagogical application rather than an empirically validated curriculum intervention, since no student implementation, learning-outcome assessment, expert validation, or curriculum evaluation was conducted.

## METHODOLOGY

The current research uses a qualitative historical-comparative methodological approach that examines multilingual mediation practices during ancient times through selected frameworks from Translation and Interpreting Studies (TIS). The study is exploratory and source-critical: contemporary TIS concepts are applied only after the relevant textual pattern has been identified and historically contextualized. Modern translations are treated as secondary representations rather than direct evidence of ancient translational decisions.

### Research Design

The research methodology uses a qualitative interpretive framework based on historical-comparative research design. The methodology encompasses historical contextualization of multilingual mediation practices within political, diplomatic, religious, and administrative contexts; comparative analysis of historically related texts; and translational interpretation with an emphasis on explication, cultural substitution, formulaic equivalence, and functional adaptation.

The analytical process has been: textual examination → historical contextualization → TIS interpretation. To avoid circular reasoning between the theoretical framework and the findings, two distinct analytical stages are maintained. The analysis focuses on textual output rather than mediator cognition or training systems; therefore, it is qualitative and exploratory rather than statistical. In addition, the methodology reflects what Munday (2014) refers to as

“microhistory” in the study of translation history. In the present study, microhistory refers to a focused historical analysis of a delimited set of textual cases rather than an attempt to reconstruct an entire translation system. This orientation is applied through close, source-critical examination of the selected units within their specific linguistic, diplomatic, religious, and institutional contexts.

### **Data and Passage Selection**

Four major corpora were chosen based on their historical range, relevance to linguistic mediation, availability of scholarly editions, and suitability for comparative analysis: the Pyramid Texts, the Amarna Letters, the Egypt–Hatti Peace Treaty, and the Rosetta Stone.

To ensure proper reporting and reproducibility, the analysis focused on 31 analytically distinct items that had been clearly specified. These elements included five Amarna Letters (EA 1–5), 20 lines from the Rosetta Decree (lines 1–20), and five categorized groups derived from particular clauses of the Egypt–Hatti Treaty. The five treaty groups covered the peace formula/preamble, non-aggression, mutual aid, extradition, and divine witness/oath.

The final item is one case from the Pyramid Texts (Spell 273 and subsequent formulations). Because these analytically discrete items vary significantly in form and scope, they are not considered statistical equivalents.

The heterogeneity of these units is therefore treated as a design constraint rather than as a basis for direct cross-corpus comparison. A treaty clause group, an individual decree line, a complete diplomatic letter, and a diachronic textual-transmission case do not constitute equivalent observational units. Direct cross-language classification is restricted to the Egypt–Hatti Treaty and Rosetta Stone, where historically related multilingual textual evidence is available. The Amarna Letters and Pyramid Texts function as contextual contrast cases and are not included in calculations of translation-strategy frequency. Consequently, no pooled percentages, cross-corpus prevalence estimates, or statistical comparisons are made.

Passages were purposively included when (a) their historical context could be established from recognized scholarship, (b) they contained comparable or analytically relevant linguistic material, and (c) the proposed textual phenomenon could be verified through an ancient-language edition, transcription, transliteration, or established philological commentary. Cases depending only on differences between modern English and Arabic translations were excluded from the principal strategy classifications.

The classifications reported in Table 2 are descriptive within-corpus summaries and should not be interpreted as quantitative expressions of frequency that can be compared across the four corpora. The five treaty clause groups, 20 Rosetta lines, five complete Amarna Letters, and one diachronic Pyramid Text case differ in textual scale, genre, chronology, linguistic relationship, and evidential status.

Accordingly, only the Treaty and Rosetta materials were eligible for direct cross-language classification.

Category assignments may also not be mutually exclusive. A single source-verified text may include both a consistent structural similarity and a distinct cultural or functional variation. The reported figures thus represent preserved analytical categories instead of separate statistical observations.

**Table 2.**

*Corpus Composition, Evidential Status, and Within-Corpus Classification*

| Corpus                          | Unit of Analysis          | Number | Evidential Role                                                      | Direct Cross-Language Coding | Retained Within-Corpus Classifications                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Egypt–Hatti Peace Treaty</b> | Clause groups             | 5      | Parallel Egyptian–Akkadian diplomatic textual traditions             | Yes                          | Formulaic equivalence: 5; functional adaptation: 2; cultural substitution: 1; explicitation: 0                                    |
| <b>Rosetta Stone</b>            | Selected decree lines     | 20     | Historically related multilingual and multiscrypt decree             | Yes, with source control     | Cultural substitution: 4 correspondences; functional differentiation: 1 institutional cluster; securely verified explicitation: 0 |
| <b>Amarna Letters</b>           | Complete letters (EA 1–5) | 5      | Multilingual diplomatic context without surviving Egyptian parallels | No                           | Contextual evidence only                                                                                                          |
| <b>Pyramid Texts</b>            | Focused diachronic case   | 1      | Intralingual textual transmission                                    | No                           | Intralingual adaptation only                                                                                                      |

### Translation Sources and Comparative Philological Analysis

The comparative analysis was based on published original-language editions, transcriptions, transliterations, and philological commentaries rather than on differences between modern English and Arabic translations. For the Egypt–Hatti Treaty, the Egyptian and Akkadian textual traditions were compared through Langdon and Gardiner (1920) and Pritchard (1969). For the Rosetta Stone, the Demotic, hieroglyphic, and Greek textual evidence was examined through Quirke and Andrews (1988), Simpson (1996), and Ray (2014). Modern English and Arabic renderings, including Hassan (2018), were used only as interpretive aids.

The first stage of the philological process involved aligning corresponding ancient-language texts according to the published editions. The second stage involved identifying lexical,

structural, rhetorical, and culturally specific similarities or dissimilarities present within the historical-language texts. Finally, only those dissimilarities demonstrated through the identification of these elements were included for further categorization into the TIS categories presented in Table 1. If a difference could have occurred in a modern translation, it was excluded from the data set used to support the analysis.

Representative comparisons illustrate this procedure. In the treaty material, the Egyptian expression *nt-ꜥ mty*, interpreted as an agreed or regular treaty arrangement, corresponds functionally to Akkadian treaty terminology such as *rikiltu*. The non-hostility formula represented in Egyptian as *r tm dit hpr hrwy r iwd-sn* is directly compared by Langdon and Gardiner (1920) with the Akkadian *a-na la-a na-da-a-ni nakrata i-na be-ri-gu-nu*. The divine-witness material likewise provides historically documented correspondences between the Hittite storm god Tešub and the Egyptian Setekh. These examples establish that the identified patterns derive from the historical textual traditions rather than from modern translator wording.

For the Rosetta Stone, the comparison similarly proceeded from the historical texts. For example, the Demotic opening formula *n pr-ꜥ pꜥ hl i.ꜥr ꜥꜥ (n) pr-ꜥ (n) tꜥ s.t (n) pꜥj=f it.ꜥ* corresponds to the Greek *βασιλεύοντος τοῦ νέου καὶ παραλαβόντος τὴν βασιλείαν παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς*. Both formulations refer to the young ruler's succession to his father's kingship (Quirke & Andrews, 1988). Culture-specific correspondences in the selected material also include Ptah/Hephaistos, Pre/the Sun, Amun/Zeus, and Thoth/Hermes.

The study therefore conducts comparative philological analysis through established editions of the original-language evidence while not claiming to produce a new critical edition, new decipherment, or independent epigraphic reconstruction of the surviving inscriptions.

### Historical and Corpus-Specific Context

Each of the four corpora was studied within its respective historical context. The Egypt–Hatti Treaty was analyzed in terms of New Kingdom diplomacy, royal ideology, reciprocal obligations, and divine legitimation. The Rosetta Stone was examined in terms of bilingualism in Ptolemaic administration and religious and royal relationships from the perspective of the priests.

The Amarna Letters were analyzed in the context of Late Bronze Age diplomacy and the widespread use of Akkadian as a diplomatic language. Finally, the Pyramid Texts were examined within the context of Old Kingdom burial traditions and later textual transmission of those traditions.

These historical contexts were evaluated before applying the TIS framework, as certain forms of textual variation may be attributable to political ideology, literary convention, ritual practice, or established scribal traditions rather than solely to translation.

### Analytical Framework and Coding Decision Protocol

The translation-related phenomena identified in the corpus were organized into the four categories defined in Table 1: explicitation, cultural substitution, formulaic equivalence, and functional adaptation.

Explicitation refers to semantic information expressed more explicitly in one historically related version. Cultural substitution refers to the use of a culturally localized religious, political, or institutional counterpart. Formulaic equivalence refers to recurrent structural correspondence in legal, ceremonial, or diplomatic passages. Functional adaptation refers to changes in rhetoric, emphasis, formality, or information distribution associated with documented communicative or institutional differences.

Each proposed classification was evaluated through four sequential decision gates. First, the underlying textual feature had to be independently identifiable in a published ancient-language edition, transcription, transliteration, or established philological commentary; otherwise, the case was excluded. Second, the feature had to satisfy the operational definition of the proposed category in Table 1. Third, plausible non-translational explanations—including genre convention, scribal practice, political ideology, ritual formulaicity, administrative convention, and modern translator intervention—were considered. Fourth, a classification was retained only when the historical evidence supported the analytical label without requiring an inference about an individual ancient translator's intention. Cases remaining ambiguous after these steps were excluded from the principal category counts.

The resulting categories are therefore source-controlled qualitative classifications rather than measurements of latent variables or statistically independent observations. Because more than one independently supported feature may occur in the same analytical unit, category assignments are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

Table 3 makes the inferential basis of the retained classifications explicit. It also demonstrates that exclusion was a substantive analytical outcome: when a proposed category could not be established securely from the historical-language evidence, it was not retained merely because it appeared persuasive in a modern translation.

### **Written Translation and Interpreting**

Written translation, multilingual textual production, intralingual adaptation, and oral interpreting were treated as separate categories for analysis. The Egypt–Hatti Treaty allows for an interlingual comparative study, while the Rosetta Stone illustrates multilingual and multiscript textual production. The Pyramid Texts were primarily analyzed in terms of diachronic textual transmission and intralingual adaptation.

The Amarna Letters provide evidence of multilingual diplomacy, but the selected letters were written in Akkadian and do not preserve parallel Egyptian written versions. Since no Egyptian written versions survive for the specific Amarna Letters analyzed in this study, they cannot be classified as evidence of either written translation or oral interpreting.

### **Researcher Positionality and Reliability**

A researcher with experience in Translation Studies and who was also a native speaker of Egyptian Arabic performed this research. This was both an advantage (as the researcher had a better understanding of contemporary Modern Arabic) and a disadvantage (as the researcher's views may have been influenced by personal interpretation).

The researcher made the initial classifications. An outside reviewer checked these classifications through the systematic use of an annotated coding table that included references to supporting source documents. The reviewer was an independent Egyptologist and ancient Near Eastern philologist who had no involvement with this project. The reviewer examined each retained classification from Table 1 to determine whether each classification met its specified operational requirements and whether the referenced ancient-language edition(s), along with the relevant philological commentary, supported the classification. Any classifications that appeared to be ambiguous were evaluated against the source document(s) again and either corrected, modified, or eliminated as needed.

The independent reviewer's evaluation of the data provided an external check on the researcher's coding process; however, it did not represent a complete secondary independent recoding of the dataset. Therefore, no inter-coder reliability statistic was computed. Similarly, internal consistency statistics would have been inappropriate since the researcher's categorizations are qualitative classifications rather than multiple quantitative indicators measuring a single underlying concept.

### **Analytical Procedure**

Within the analytical framework, three separate but complementary processes occurred. First, all of the texts analyzed in this study were examined within their diplomatic, administrative, ceremonial, and religious contexts, using Egyptological scholarship as the basis of reference (Lichtheim, 1973–1980; Baines, 2007; Gardiner, 1957). Then, the historically verifiable comparative textual data were compared and contrasted to identify additional or omitted content, reformulated expressions, formulaic equivalents, and audience-related variations. Finally, those confirmed patterns were explained through selected TIS frameworks, and alternative explanations were considered [genre conventions, scribal traditions, ideological perspectives, ritualized formulas, textual transmission, and/or translator interventions] before the TIS explanation was deemed acceptable. The remaining classifications were then reviewed independently by an expert to verify compliance with the established operational criteria and supporting historical and philological data.

The primary concentration of identified phenomena appeared in the two corpora that permitted historical comparative analysis across languages. Formulaic correspondence was observed among all five selected treaty clause groups; functional adaptation was observed in two; and culture-specific divine correspondences were identified in one group. Within the selected Rosetta materials, four different culture-specific divine correspondences and one institutionally/functionally differentiated element were identified.

No secure examples of explication remained after controlling for source philology. As such, no coding of translation strategies was conducted for the Amarna Letters since there are no surviving written Egyptian equivalents for the letters. Similarly, the Pyramid Texts were classified as an example of intralingual textual transmission rather than interlingual translation because of the lack of cross-language comparisons.

Because the four corpora contain different types and units of evidence, pooled frequency counts would imply a comparability that the dataset does not support. The table therefore reports the distribution of the identified phenomena by corpus rather than treating them as statistically equivalent occurrences.

**Table 4.**  
*Comparative Patterns Across the Selected Corpora*

| Corpus                    | Main Evidence                    |                  | Observed Pattern                        |                                | Analytical Interpretation                                    |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Egypt–Hatti Treaty</b> | Parallel Akkadian traditions     | Egyptian– treaty | Formulaic selective cultural variation  | correspondence; rhetorical and | DTS; functional adaptation                                   |
| <b>Rosetta Stone</b>      | Hieroglyphic, and Greek versions | Demotic, decree  | Multilingual functional differentiation | variation; diplomatic          | Functional and sociocultural interpretation                  |
| <b>Amarna Letters</b>     | Akkadian correspondence          | diplomatic       | Multilingual communication              | diplomatic                     | Contextual evidence; no direct translation comparison        |
| <b>Pyramid Texts</b>      | Diachronic textual traditions    | religious        | Textual intralingual reformulation      | continuity and                 | Intralingual adaptation rather than interlingual translation |

**ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

This section uses comparative textual analysis to examine multilingual mediation practices in the selected Ancient Egyptian corpora. The findings are presented according to the type of evidence each corpus actually provides and distinguish textual observation from historical and TIS interpretation.

**Egypt–Hatti Peace Treaty (1259 BCE)**

The peace treaty between Egypt and Hatti is one of the earliest surviving examples of multilingual diplomatic textual production. The present study examines the Egyptian and Akkadian treaty traditions based on Langdon and Gardiner (1920) and related scholarship. The five treaty units were examined against the published Egyptian and Akkadian textual traditions rather than inferred from differences between modern English and Arabic renderings.

A representative philological control is provided by the treaty terminology itself. Langdon and Gardiner (1920) compare the Egyptian expression *nt-ꜥ mty*, rendered as a “regular treaty” or agreed arrangement, with corresponding Akkadian treaty terminology, including *rikiltu*. This correspondence confirms that the comparison is grounded in the historical-language traditions rather than in differences introduced solely by modern translators. It is used here to establish textual correspondence, not to infer an ancient theory of translation.

### ***Formulaic Equivalence***

Formulaic equivalence was identified in all five selected treaty clause groups, although the type and strength of the parallel evidence differed among them. The preamble and peace formula, non-aggression clauses, mutual-assistance clauses, reciprocal extradition arrangements, and oath/divine-witness materials exhibit similar organizational patterns in diplomacy and law. There is considerable correspondence in content between the non-aggression clauses of the Egyptian and Hittite-Babylonian treaties. Langdon and Gardiner (1920), therefore, provide substantial evidence supporting the conclusion that these treaty versions correspond closely. These recurrent structures provide the clearest data-driven evidence for formulaic equivalence in the treaty corpus. From a DTS perspective, they may represent regularities in diplomatic textual production, although broader Ancient Near Eastern treaty conventions and scribal practices remain possible alternative explanations.

### ***Functional and Cultural Adaptation***

Two of the five treaty clause groups examined demonstrated functional variance supported by the source evidence. The Egyptian preambles and other relevant peace-treaty content provided royal and historical framing for their respective contents that was not replicated identically in the Hittite-Babylonian tradition. Langdon and Gardiner (1920), in fact, identified specific Egyptian historical additions while discussing the substantially identical substantive content of both versions. Second, the Egyptian version of the defense-alliance clause expanded the corresponding formulation by including an additional possible scenario involving the dispatch of troops and chariots rather than the allied ruler appearing personally.

In addition to these patterns of functional variance, a separate culture-specific pattern was found in the oath and divine-witness provisions. Philological studies comparing the published Hittite Tešub with the Egyptian Setekh and other adaptations of divine terminology have documented direct correspondences between the two cultures. This represents perhaps the clearest example of cultural substitution among the treaty texts analyzed.

The source-supported differences are interpreted within the New Kingdom context of interstate diplomacy, royal legitimacy, reciprocal military obligation, divine sanction, and scribal convention. The purpose for the present study is to limit our analysis to these three types of modifications that are identified as adaptations or substitutions based on the characteristics provided in Table 1. The terms "adaptation" and "substitution" represent an interpretation of a function of translation strategy (TIS) applied retrospectively; there is no evidence to indicate that the original authors intended to apply TIS in their writing. Additionally, all of the above mentioned categories can also be interpreted from at least one other perspective such as ideological beliefs regarding kingship, treaty conventions, religious equivalents or scribe practices.

### ***Rosetta Stone (196 BCE)***

The Rosetta Stone contains hieroglyphic, Demotic, and Greek renditions of the identical Ptolemaic edict (Ray, 2014; Simpson, 1996). For the selected decree lines, textual differences

were retained as analytical evidence only when supported by the published hieroglyphic, Demotic, or Greek material or associated philological commentary (Quirke & Andrews, 1988; Simpson, 1996).

A representative original-language comparison can be observed in the opening dynastic formula. The Demotic *n pr-ꜣ pꜣ hl jꜣjr hꜣ n pr-ꜣ n tꜣ sꜣt n pꜣy=f jꜣ* corresponds to the Greek *βασιλεύοντος τοῦ νέου καὶ παραλαβόντος τὴν βασιλείαν παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς*. The two formulations express the corresponding idea of the young ruler succeeding his father while differing in their linguistic realization (Quirke & Andrews, 1988). This example demonstrates historical textual correspondence without assuming a simple word-for-word source–target relationship.

The three versions are therefore treated as historically related multilingual textual realizations rather than assumed to be direct translations of one another in a simple source–target relationship. The versions communicate substantially corresponding political, administrative, and religious content while displaying differences in wording and formulation. Philological source control resulted in a more conservative classification of the Rosetta material. Four distinct culture-specific divine correspondences were identified in the selected passages: Ptah/Hephaistos, Pre/the Sun, Amun/Zeus, and Thoth/Hermes. A broader pattern of functional differentiation is also visible in the representation of priestly and institutional terminology across the Egyptian and Greek textual traditions. By contrast, no example was retained as explication merely because one modern translation appeared more detailed than another.

Explication was therefore recorded as zero securely verified instances in the selected material. The use of hieroglyphic, Demotic, and Greek also reflects the multilingual institutional context of Ptolemaic Egypt. Rather than assigning each script mechanically to a single audience, the study interprets their coexistence as evidence of differentiated political, religious, and administrative functions. These patterns are consistent with functionalist analysis, but they may also reflect Ptolemaic administrative practice, priestly–royal relations, and script conventions.

### **Amarna Letters**

The Amarna Letters (EA 1–5) are an example of another type of linguistic mediation. They were composed largely in diplomatic Akkadian and were part of the Late Bronze Age system of international diplomacy (Moran, 1992; Rainey, 2015). No known Egyptian translations survive for the selected letters; therefore, these letters cannot provide comparisons for direct Akkadian-to-Egyptian translation, nor can they be coded using the same textual strategies as the Treaty and Rosetta Stone.

However, this collection does demonstrate that Egypt's royal court engaged in multilingual forms of diplomatic communication. The absence of surviving Egyptian translations does not establish that oral interpreting occurred or that it constituted a regular mode of diplomatic mediation. Oral mediation remains historically plausible in the broader context of multilingual diplomacy, but it is treated here only as a possibility and not as a finding demonstrated by the selected Amarna Letters.

### **Pyramid Texts**

The Pyramid Texts represent another form of textual development. Although the Pyramid Texts were originally found in funerary contexts from the Old Kingdom, their religious content was incorporated into subsequent Egyptian traditions (Wilkinson, 2016) and recast in new forms (Lichtheim, 1973–1980).

Although there is no textual evidence to show that the Pyramid Texts were translated directly between two or more languages, this does not mean that the Pyramid Texts cannot be examined for evidence of how texts evolve over time through processes of transmission and intralingual adaptation. Therefore, because the Pyramid Texts do not contain direct equivalent translations into one or more additional languages, they cannot be used as evidence of specific multilingual translation techniques.

### **Cross-Textual Patterns**

Patterns of varying types arise from the selected evidence. The greatest variability regarding audience and purpose is seen in the Egypt–Hatti Treaty and the Rosetta Stone. Variability is most apparent with regard to formulaic correspondence within diplomatic/legal documents, while culturally/ideologically based differences occur sporadically throughout the data.

Not all four sets of texts exhibit equal amounts of the same types of patterns, nor do they provide equal amounts of direct evidence for these patterns. The Amarna Letters can be considered to represent the context of multilingual diplomatic interaction, whereas the Pyramid Texts primarily show evidence of intralingual textual transmission and adaptation. Within the selected corpora, the evidence is consistent with several distinct forms of linguistic and textual mediation. The dataset does not establish their prevalence, typicality, or standardization across Ancient Egypt.

### **Comparison with Contemporary TIS Frameworks**

There are similarities between certain observed patterns and current TIS concepts. The formulaic similarities can be studied by means of Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS), since they refer to repeated textual regularities. Functional distinctions may be viewed from the perspective of Skopos Theory when supported by the historical record as being related to differences in institutional role, genre, or addressee. Explication or pragmatic clarification may be viewed from a Relevance-oriented perspective if the textual distinction is confirmed by the historical context.

Therefore, these theoretical perspectives are used to interpret the observed texts within their historical contexts and thus as a basis for heuristic interpretation rather than as evidence that Ancient Egyptian mediators deliberately employed modern translation theories.

### **Evidence for Multilingual Mediation in Selected Institutional Contexts**

The documentary, textual, and iconographic evidence for multilingual mediation described above appears to be relevant to diplomatic, courtly, and administrative contexts.

However, this evidence does not provide data on the frequency of mediation, its institutional organization, or whether there existed an official translation profession or professional training programs for interpreters in Ancient Egyptian society.

Therefore, while the evidence supports the existence of multilingual communication in some documented environments (diplomatic, courtly, and administrative), it supports the more limited conclusion that such communication was needed and provided in those specific settings.

### **Negative Evidence and Alternative Explanations**

Negative evidence also limits how these data can be interpreted. There is no evidence that would allow a comparison between the selected Amarna Letters and parallel written Egyptian versions. Although the Pyramid Texts provide evidence of diachronic textual transmission and intralingual adaptation, they do not provide interlingual parallel texts. In addition, no securely source-verified instance of explication was identified in the selected Rosetta material. These absences are analytically significant because they restrict which TIS categories can validly be applied to each body of evidence.

In addition to differences in the terms of the agreements themselves, other influences on those differences include New Kingdom royal ideology, state-to-state diplomacy, political reciprocity, divine endorsement, and scribal traditions. Similarly, variations among the Rosetta Stone versions could be attributed to religious-political processes taking place within the Ptolemaic kingdom, as well as priestly authority, royal legitimation, administrative needs, and traditional script systems used for writing, rather than exclusively to the process of translating into Greek. As such, the results of this research represent historical examples of multilingual or textual mediation rather than examples of formal Ancient Egyptian translation theory.

### **Summary of Findings**

The greatest amount of directly comparable data is found in the Egypt–Hatti Treaty and the Rosetta Stone; both examples show a high degree of structural similarity and also illustrate clear textual differences. Although the Amarna Letters contain evidence of multilingual diplomatic communication without parallel Egyptian translations, they do not provide comparable information about the extent to which translation and/or interpreting occurred within Ancient Egyptian society. Thus, the research shows patterns evident in the texts selected for this study rather than an overall picture of how translation and/or interpreting functioned throughout Ancient Egyptian society.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research sought to establish whether the methods used to produce multilingual texts in Ancient Egypt could be assessed through models from Translation and Interpreting Studies (TIS) developed in recent times without projecting modern concepts onto the past. There was no known theory of translation from one language into another in Ancient Egypt, and the available data did not show how professionals were trained in this area. Nevertheless, the collections

examined here demonstrate several kinds of multilingual textual production and mediation that may be tentatively compared with current TIS models.

Structural correspondence, selective variation, and functional differentiation provide the most compelling evidence in both the Egypt–Hatti Peace Treaty and the Rosetta Stone of historically related multilingual textual production. In contrast, the Amarna Letters provide the strongest evidence of multilingual communication in Ancient Egyptian diplomacy without surviving parallel Egyptian translations, while the Pyramid Texts represent primarily diachronic textual transmission and intralingual adaptation.

In addition, the study contributes to the expansion of translation historiography by positioning Ancient Egyptian resources within a broader framework of discussions regarding translation and intercultural mediation while simultaneously avoiding overly anachronistic assessments of their use. The study uses Skopos-oriented analysis, Descriptive Translation Studies, and Relevance-oriented analysis as retrospective heuristic tools and does not consider them to have been consciously applied by ancient-language mediators as modern translation theories.

The revised study's findings are based on an analysis of thirty-one analytical units that represent a range of types and sources across four different corpora. Consequently, while the findings provide insight into some of the commonalities and differences within the selected corpus data, they do not offer a full-scale representation of all possible ways in which translation and interpreting operated throughout Ancient Egypt.

The initial categorization of each unit was performed independently by a single researcher; however, subsequent to the categorizations being completed, they were also reviewed by an independent expert. No further independent recoding and/or intercoder reliability assessments using quantitative measures of agreement were performed. Only those differences identified through comparison with modern English or Arabic translations were considered evidence of translation strategies employed during the period in question if they were also supported by philological and historical records relating to the texts. As such, the classifications developed from this research should be viewed as interpretive representations based on information provided within the source texts, as opposed to quantifiable measures of Ancient Egyptian translation practice.

This area of research will benefit from future studies that expand upon this work using greater numbers of analytically comparable units within multiple corpora, as well as broader comparative analyses of the philological characteristics of materials written in their original languages. Further contributions would include completion of a second round of independent recoding by one or more additional researchers, as well as closer integration between the analytical categories utilized in this research and the socio-political, religious, and scribal environments present during the historical periods under study.

## Limitations

Several factors limit the interpretation of these results. In addition to comprising four different types of corpora, the data analyzed consist of 31 items that differ in genre, size, chronology, language, and evidential status (i.e., treaty clauses, Rosetta decree lines, complete diplomatic letters, and one diachronic textual-transmission case). Therefore, the numerical classifications reported for the Egypt–Hatti Treaty and the Rosetta Stone provide descriptive within-corpus summaries only and do not permit comparison of how frequently a particular translation strategy was employed across historical periods or regions.

Second, the analysis depends on published editions, transcriptions, transliterations, translations, and established philological scholarship rather than on a newly produced independent epigraphic or critical edition of the Egyptian, Akkadian, Demotic, and Greek materials.

Although differences visible only in modern translations were excluded from the principal classifications, interpretation still depends on the accuracy and scholarly judgments of the published textual traditions consulted.

Third, although the initial classifications were made by a single researcher, the retained coding decisions and their evidential basis were subsequently subjected to independent expert review. This procedure provided an external check on the application of the operational criteria and strengthened the credibility of the qualitative analysis. However, the expert review did not constitute a complete second independent coding of the entire dataset, and no statistical inter-coder reliability coefficient was calculated. Some degree of interpretive judgment therefore remains inherent in the analysis.

Fourth, the four corpora do not provide equivalent evidence of translation or interpreting. The Amarna Letters document multilingual diplomatic communication but do not preserve parallel Egyptian translations of the selected letters, while the Pyramid Texts primarily provide evidence of diachronic textual transmission and intralingual adaptation. Accordingly, neither corpus was used for direct translation-strategy coding. Likewise, the study provides no direct evidence concerning the frequency, typicality, professionalization, training, or institutional prevalence of oral interpreting across Ancient Egypt.

Accordingly, the findings should be understood as cautious, source-controlled interpretations of patterns encountered in the selected materials. They do not constitute a comprehensive reconstruction of Ancient Egyptian translation and interpreting practices and should not be generalized beyond the evidential scope of the corpora examined.

## Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage

No artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used to generate, draft, or produce the content of this manuscript.

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## APPENDIX

### Visual Materials Used in Classroom Activities

#### Figure A1.

*Interpreting relief from the tomb of Horemheb showing mediation between Egyptian officials and foreign envoys. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden.*



#### Figure A2.

*Pyramid Text inscriptions from the pyramid complex at Saqqara. Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology.*



**Figure A3.**

*Amarna diplomatic letter displayed at the British Museum, London.*

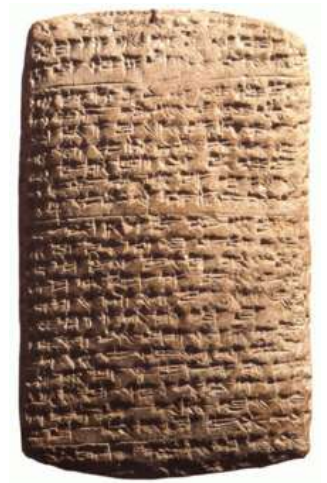


**Figure A4.**

*Egypt–Hatti Peace Treaty between Ramesses II and Ḫattušili III (mid-13th century BCE). Neues Museum, Berlin.*



**Figure A5.**

*The Rosetta Stone (196 BCE). British Museum, London.*

*Note. Earlier multilingual treaties, including the Egypt–Hatti Treaty, predate the Rosetta Stone.*



**Table 3.**

*Audit Trail for Representative Coding Decisions*

| Corpus/Unit                                        | Source-Verified Observation                                                 |                           | Retained Classification                      | Principal Source Basis                      | Alternative Explanation Considered  |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Treaty: preamble/peace material</b>             | Recurring structure with specific historical/royal framing                  | treaty together Egyptian- | Formulaic equivalence; functional adaptation | Langdon & Gardiner (1920); Pritchard (1969) | Diplomatic genre and royal ideology |
| <b>Treaty: non-aggression clause</b>               | Close correspondence between Egyptian and Akkadian formulations             | structural Egyptian       | Formulaic equivalence                        | Langdon & Gardiner (1920)                   | Conventional treaty formula         |
| <b>Treaty: mutual-assistance/defense provision</b> | Parallel obligation with additional formulation concerning troops/chariotry | reciprocal with Egyptian  | Formulaic equivalence; functional adaptation | Langdon & Gardiner (1920)                   | Diplomatic drafting convention      |
| <b>Treaty: extradition provision</b>               | Recurring legal structure                                                   | reciprocal                | Formulaic equivalence                        | Langdon & Gardiner (1920);                  | Ancient Eastern treaty convention   |

|                                                 |                                                                         |          |                                              |                                         |                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                                                 |                                                                         |          |                                              | Pritchard<br>(1969)                     |                                      |
| <b>Treaty: oath/divine-witness material</b>     | Parallel structure correspondence between Tešub and Setekh              | oath and | Formulaic equivalence; cultural substitution | Langdon & Gardiner (1920); Hart (2005)  | Conventional divine equivalence      |
| <b>Rosetta Stone: divine terminology</b>        | Ptah/Hephaistos, Pre/Sun, Amun/Zeus, Thoth/Hermes correspondences       | and      | Cultural substitution                        | Quirke & Andrews (1988); Simpson (1996) | Ptolemaic religious syncretism       |
| <b>Rosetta Stone: institutional terminology</b> | Differentiated representation of priestly and institutional terminology | of and   | Functional differentiation                   | Simpson (1996); Ray (2014)              | Administrative and script convention |
| <b>Rosetta Stone: candidate explicitation</b>   | No sufficiently secure source-level example identified                  | Excluded |                                              | Quirke & Andrews (1988); Simpson (1996) | Modern translation wording           |

## Appendix B

### Sample Classroom Exercise for Translator Education

#### *Instructor Instructions*

This activity is based on the Egypt–Hatti Peace Treaty analysis in Section 4.1 and is designed as a proposed classroom exercise for translation and interpreting courses. The translated extracts are used as an entry point for comparison; students should distinguish differences visible in modern renderings from differences supported by the historical textual and philological evidence before assigning a TIS category.

#### *Student Worksheet: Comparing Treaty Versions*

| Published Akkadian Rendering                                                                         | Published Egyptian Rendering                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>“Treaty of alliance between Hattusili, king of the Hittites, and Ramesses II, king of Egypt.”</b> | “The good peace and fraternal alliance made by Ramesses II, beloved of Amun-Re, Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, with the Great King Hattusili of Hatti.” |

**Questions**

1. What textual differences are observable between the two published renderings?
2. Which of these differences can be confirmed from the published Egyptian and Akkadian textual evidence or philological commentary?
3. What historical explanations—such as royal ideology, diplomatic convention, divine sanction, or scribal practice—should be considered before interpreting the difference as a translation strategy?
4. If the historical evidence supports the difference, which analytical category in Table 1 provides the most appropriate cautious interpretation?

**Instructor Notes**

Students should first separate textual observation from historical and theoretical interpretation. Differences in royal titulary or diplomatic wording should not automatically be attributed to an individual ancient translator. Where the underlying difference is supported by the historical textual evidence, it may be discussed cautiously in relation to formulaic equivalence, functional adaptation, or cultural substitution, while alternative explanations such as New Kingdom royal ideology and diplomatic convention should also be considered.