

AMARNA LEXICOGRAPHY: THE GLOSSES IN THE BYBLOS LETTERS

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The relatively frequent appearance of glosses in the Amarna letters provides a good hunting ground for lexicographical studies. In general glosses are the scribe's brief remarks to indicate the correct understanding of an expression («translation gloss») and the correct reading of a logogram («pronunciation gloss») in the text he is writing. In frequently copied texts, various information and other hints about the choice of variants are often inserted as glosses¹. Translation glosses and pronunciation glosses are usually introduced by a wedge. Hence this wedge — called *Glossenkeil* — corresponds to an equal sign or a colon or brackets. In a number of cases the *Glossenkeil* indicates that a following word or expression or name is of foreign origin, much like the use of italics or underlined characters today².

The present essay discusses various uses of glosses which are introduced by a *Glossenkeil*³. The data are taken from the Byblos letters EA 68-95; 101-135; 362 and the Rib-Hadda letters sent from Beirut EA 136-138⁴. These letters form the largest single corpus in the Amarna letters⁵. The Akkadian of the Amarna letters written from cities in southern Syria-Palestine, including Byblos, exhibits some features of the native language of the scribes, which would be a Northwest Semitic language. The phenomenon is often discussed under the heading of Canaanism, both in grammar and lexicon⁶. My observations in this essay are concerned mainly with the scribe's usage of glosses as part of his general use of a language not his own.

- ¹ For glosses in general, see J. Krecher, *Glossen*, RIA III, 431-40; for the glosses in the Amurru letters, see Sh. Izre'el, *Amurru Akkadian: A Linguistic Study* (HSS 40), Atlanta 1991, 30-32.
- ² Such cases have been found in the Akkadian texts from Ugarit, see C. Kühne, *Mit Glossenkeil markierte fremde Wörter in akkadischen Ugarittexten*, UF 6, 1974, 157-67 and UF 7, 1975, 253-60, and J. Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit* (HSS 34), Atlanta 1989, 94-95.
- ³ The most documented study of the uses of the *Glossenkeil* is P. Artzi, *Ha-glossoth bi-te'udoth el-'amarnah*, *Bar-Ilan* 1, 1963, 24-57.
- ⁴ The basic editions are J. A. Knudtzon, *Die El-Amarna-Tafeln mit Einleitung und Erläuterungen*, 1-2 (VAB I), Leipzig 1907-1915, and A.F. Rainey, *El Amarna Tablets 359-379: Supplement to J. A. Knudtzon Die El-Amarna-Tafeln* (AOAT 8, 2nd ed. revised), Neukirchen-Vluyn 1978.
- ⁵ There are smaller *corpora* which exhibit a fair number of glosses: EA 146-155 (Abdimilki of Tyre) esp. EA 147 with its six glosses; EA 285-291 (Abdi-Heba of Jerusalem), esp. EA 287 with its eleven glosses; EA 242-245; 365 (Biridiya of Megiddo), esp. EA 245 with its eight glosses.
- ⁶ Readers are referred to the 45 titles in linguistic and philological studies listed by Sh. Izre'el, *BiOr* 47, 1990, 599-602. I have argued elsewhere that the Canaanizing Akkadian is actually a form of an institutionalized interlanguage rather than a pidginized Akkadian; see my *Word Order Variation in the Akkadian of Byblos* (StPohl 15), Roma 1990, 7-11. For a positive acceptance of this view, see A. F. Rainey, *BiOr* 49, 1992, 331.

The study of the glosses in the Amarna letters, especially the Canaanite glosses, has a long history. For all practical purposes, a gloss is labelled as Canaanite if it has a cognate in Hebrew or Phoenician. The first important observations were made by Zimmern⁷. J.A. Knudtson's masterly edition of the Amarna texts⁸, together with the glossary compiled by Ebeling, make more precise observations possible. But the first systematic treatment of the data was given by Böhl in his study of the language of the Amarna letters⁹. He collected all the glosses marked with a *Glossenkeil* and divided them into three basic types which are shown below with examples from Byblos. As will become clear, these basic types do not exhaust the cases found at Byblos.

1. Syllabic writing of an Akkadian word which corresponds to a logogram, as in (3) (4)(5)(6)(8)(11)below.
2. Syllabic writing of a non-Akkadian word which corresponds to a logogram, as in (2)(9)(12a).
3. Syllabic writing of a non-Akkadian word which corresponds to a syllabically written Akkadian word, as in (10) (13) (13a) (14) (15); or to a syllabically written non-Akkadian word, as in (7).

The Canaanite glosses constitute the greater part of the non-Akkadian glosses. In reality they reflect different local dialects in Syria-Palestine. Böhl is right when he sorts the data according to the provenance of the letters. Though somewhat dated, his observations still provide a sound basis for further studies. De Koning¹⁰ practically follows this work. His main contribution lies in the treatment of the glosses that are not a literal translation of the Akkadian words or expressions¹¹. He also deals with several other Amarna texts not available to Böhl. The use of the *Glossenkeil*, both in the Amarna letters and in the Akkadian letters found at Ugarit, has been systematically described by Artzi¹². The Canaanite glosses in EA 69-96 are discussed in Youngblood's commentary of these letters¹³. Barker treats all Canaanite glosses, mostly from the etymological point of view¹⁴. Useful information about the

⁷ H. Zimmern, *Kanaanäische Glossen*, ZA 6, 1891, 154ff. and his list of Canaanite glosses in E. Schrader, *Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*, Berlin, 1903³, 652.

⁸ See note 4.

⁹ F.M.Th. Böhl, *Die Sprache der Amarnabriefe mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Kanaanismen*, Leipzig 1909, 80-85.

¹⁰ J. de Koning, *Studiën over de El-Amarnabrieven en het Oude-Testament inzonderheid uit historisch oogpunt*, Delft 1940, 438-42.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 440, par. 940.

¹² See note 3.

¹³ R. Youngblood, *The Amarna Correspondence of Rib-Haddi, Prince of Byblos (EA 68-96)*, Ph. D. diss., Dropsie College 1961.

¹⁴ K.L. Barker, *A Comparative Lexical and Grammatical Study of the Amarna Canaanism and Canaanite Vocabulary*, Ph.D. diss., Dropsie College 1969. Though dated, this work treats all the Canaanite glosses in the Amarna letters.

morphology of the Canaanite words can be found in Sivan's glossary¹⁵. The notes in Moran's recent translation of Amarna letters include brief but up-to-date discussions about the individual cases¹⁶.

VARIOUS USES OF THE GLOSS

While building on the above-mentioned studies, I will re-study the data and classify them according to their usage. This usage, as I will presently show, falls into four different kinds of semantic relations between the gloss and the preceding logogram or word. Etymological aspects of a gloss will be discussed only when their bearing on the usage is evident. The immediate contexts are important for the understanding of the glosses and for that reason they are fully cited. I transcribe the *Glossenkeil* as a colon (:) regardless of its true shape.

PRONUNCIATION GLOSS

This is the simplest type. The gloss indicates the pronunciation of a logogram in order to secure its correct identification.

(1) EA 136,28 (I must make) DÜG.GA : TU.KA «alliance of friendship : TU.KA (with Ammunira)».

This may be a unique case. The Sumerian logogram would correspond to Akkadian *tābūtu* «goodness», a technical term for a treaty of friendship¹⁷. Perhaps the scribe wants to avoid the confusion with other possible readings of the logogram. In fact, Böhl suspected that the gloss represents the phonetic writing of this logogram¹⁸.

EQUIVALENT GLOSS

The gloss, whether in Canaanite, as in (2), or in Akkadian, as in (3)-(6), expresses a concept that is equivalent to the normal value of the logogram. In (7) the Canaanite gloss corresponds to a Canaanite word.

(2) EA 74,20 (All my villages that are in the) ḪUR.SAG: ḫa-ar-ri or «mountain region: mountains (or along the sea have been annexed to the Apiru)».

Generally speaking, there are two Akkadian words for «mountain region» that correspond to the logogram ḪUR.SAG, namely *ḫuršannu* and *šadû* (which also means «open country», like Canaanite *šadû). The latter is normally written with the logogram KUR and, almost exclusively in texts from the peripheral areas, as is the case here, with ḪUR.SAG. Yet it is doubtful whether the scribe is also familiar with the other value of ḪUR.SAG, i.e., *ḫuršannu*. He is certainly familiar with *šadû* and must also be aware of its phonetic similarity with Canaanite *šadû «open field»

15 D. Sivan, *Grammatical Analysis and Glossary of the Northwest Semitic Vocables in Akkadian Texts of the 15th-13th C. B.C. from Canaan and Syria* (AOAT 214), Neukirchen-Vluy 1984, 179-295.

16 W. L. Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, Baltimore - London 1992.

17 AHw, 1378.

18 *Die Sprache der Amarnabriefe*, 85.

(hardly «mountain»). Hence, the Canaanite gloss **harri* «mountain», which is reflected in Hebrew, Phoenician, and probably also Ugaritic, is added precisely to avoid a possible confusion with the Canaanite word **šadû* «open field».

The next four cases present no special problems. The gloss represents the normal value of the logogram.

(3) EA 79,12 (... all the Apiru turned against me at the) KA : *pí-i* «mouth : mouth (of Abdi-Ashirta)».

The *Glossenkeil* does not occur in EA 137,72 (and there was no breath from the) KA-*pí* «mouth (of the king for me)».

(4) EA 81,15 (LÚ UD.KA.BAR a man with bronze) GÍR : *patl-[r]a* «dagger : dagger (attacked me)»¹⁹.

The normal order of signs for «bronze dagger» is GÍR «dagger» then UD.KA.BAR «bronze», as in EA 82,38. Note that the gloss does not occur when the order is normal, presumably because the meaning is already clear. This order is reversed in (4) and the gloss serves to clarify the meaning of the unusual order.

(5) EA 86,19 Context broken [KU]Š : *ma-aš-ka* «leather : leather».

(6) EA 136,3 (Message of Rib-Hadda, your servant,) SAḪAR : *e-pé-ri* «dirt : dirt (of your feet)».

In the Ammunira letters from Beirut the gloss is Canaanite: EA 141,4 (Message of Ammunira ...) SAḪAR-*ra* : *a-pa-ru* (cf. also EA 143,4) and EA 143,11 (... to his servant and to) SAḪAR-*ra* : *ḥa-pa-ru*. The phonetic complement and the gloss show the wrong case endings; the context requires the genitive²⁰. The gloss reflects Canaanite **aparū*. The same lexical form is used as a gloss in EA 364,8 SAḪAR : *a-pa-ru*.

In (7) the two Canaanite words are completely equivalent to each other.

(7) EA 138,126 (... and the) [*i*]a-*pu* : *ḥa-mu-du* «beautiful thing : desirable thing (that was sent to the king, <my> lord, has not been given to me)».

INDIVIDUATING GLOSS

In the next four cases, the gloss expresses a more precise meaning than the normal Akkadian value of the logogram. The gloss is thus used to individuate a particular meaning.

(8) EA 362,47 (... he is saying before the king,) BA.UG₅ : *mu-tu-mi* «Death : death (is in the land)».

The scribe uses the logogram BA.UG₅ for a finite verb in 69,45 *imātu* «he (Abdi-Ashirta) is dying»; 136,42 *amût* «I (Rib-Hadda) will die»; 138,64 «... our lord (Rib-Hadda) *mît* 'is dead'». In all these instances the correct sense of the logogram is

¹⁹ W.F. Albright - W.L. Moran, *A Re-interpretation of an Amarna Letter from Byblos (EA 82)*, JCS 2, 1948, 247-48, note 24; see also W.L. Moran, *A Syntactical Study of the Dialect of Byblos as Reflected in the Amarna Tablets*, Ph. D. diss., John Hopkins University 1950, 155.

²⁰ Surprisingly, the Akkadian word in the correct genitive form *epiri* appears in EA 141,12.17.20.

already clear from the context. On the contrary, the context of (8) does not give any clue about the correct form of the word. Therefore the gloss is necessary. Without the gloss, «BA.UG₅ in the land» can be interpreted as «people die in the land» or some other possibilities. It is instructive to look at this following passage from the Jerusalem letter EA 288,59-61 «May the king send a commissioner to fetch me (i.e., Abdi-Heba), me along with my brothers, and then BA.UG₅ *ni-mu-tu* 'we will die near the king, our lord'». Here the gloss (without *Glossenkeil*) indicates the subject, i.e., 1 pl. Without the gloss, one would tend to think of «I», i.e., Abdi-Heba as the subject.

(9) EA 69,28 (... as for all my gates, the) UR[UDU] : *nu-ḥu-uš-tu* «copper/bronze : copper/bronze object (was taken)».

In the second millennium usage the logogram URUDU normally means copper, Akkadian *erû*, and, only occasionally, bronze²¹, for which UD.KA.BAR is the appropriate logogram, as in (4) above. In any case URUDU refers to the raw material rather than to objects made of it. The Canaanite word *nuḥuštu* means copper or bronze or objects made of these metals. Since URUDU does not usually refer to objects made of copper or bronze, the gloss must have been added to indicate some object which, as Rib-Hadda said, «was taken». The predicate in (9), f. sg. passive *tulqe*, agrees in gender and number with the gloss rather than with *erû*. However, it is unclear whether the object is made of copper or bronze since the Canaanite word can mean both. If it is copper, it may refer to bribery, i.e., pieces of money²². But the object may simply be the protective bronze plating of the doors.

(10) EA 74,46 (... like a bird which lies in) *ḥu-ḥa-ri* : *ki-lu-bi* «trap : cage» (said of Rib-Hadda 79,36; of the peasantry 81:35; of Sumur 105,9; 116,18).

The Akkadian word *ḥuḥaru* means «bird-trap», while the Canaanite gloss refers to a basket-like cage rather than a trap as such²³. The context makes it clear that Rib-Hadda is referring to the siege of the city rather than to his being captured. This proverb occurs in 78,14 and 90,40 (said of Rib-Hadda) without the use of any Canaanite gloss.

(11) EA 131,21 (They fell upon the) LÚ.MEŠMAŠKIM : *ma-lik* MEŠ «commissioners : counsellors (of the king)».

The Akkadian gloss in (11) states unambiguously the particular function of the commissioners, namely, as counsellors. Yet other officials with the rank of commissioners may have a different function, as is evident from (12). Here the gloss

²¹ For words denoting copper and bronze, see C. Zaccagnini, *La terminologia accadica del rame e del bronzo nel I millennio*, OA 10, 1971, 123-44, esp. 124-25 and note 8 (on the second millennium usage).

²² Weber *apud* Knudtzon, *Die El-Amarna-Tafeln*, 1590, followed by Youngblood, *The Amarna Correspondence of Rib-Haddi*, 59 and Barker, *A Comparative Lexical and Grammatical Study*, 77.

²³ The basket-like form seems to be the most important semantic component in Hebrew. Therefore it can refer to a basket for fruit as in Am 8:1 or to a basket-like cage as in Jer 5:27.

mentions his function as overseer²⁴. Since the scribe knows no Akkadian word for «overseer», he uses a Canaanite word *sōkinu* to express this idea.

(12) EA 362,69 (... and they have killed the) LÚMAŠKIM : *sú-ki-na* «commissioner : overseer (Pawure)».

The Canaanite gloss also occurs in (12a), in a letter written by Mut-Balu. But instead of the usual logogram, the syllabic spelling of the Akkadian word *rābišī* appears.

(12a) EA 256,9 (How can the king of Pihilu flee from) LÚ.MEŠ*ra-bi-šī* : *sú-ki-ni* «the commissioner : overseer (of the king, his lord?)».

The normal designation of LÚMAŠKIM as *rābišu* «commissioner» is explicitly given in a letter sent by Yidiya from Ashkelon EA 321,15 LÚMAŠKIM : LÚ*ra-bi-iš* (*ša šarri*).

INTENSIFYING GLOSS

In (13)-(15) the gloss serves to add intensity to the expression. All the cases of intensifying glosses are in Canaanite. Naturally, one can express intense emotions more easily in one's own native language. These cases are to be distinguished from the individuating glosses discussed above.

(13) EA 93,5 [... *a-]ta-ša-aš a-na-ku* : [*na*]-*aq-ša-ap-ti* «]... I was distressed : I was angry (at your words)».

It seems that the Akkadian expression «to be distressed» is not strong enough to convey Rib-Hadda's bitterness and for that reason the Canaanite expression «to be angry» is added. In the following example there is agreement between the predicate (in Akkadian) and the grammatical subject, *māt Amurri* «the land of Amurru» (f.sg.), but the Canaanite gloss agrees in number (pl.) with the intended sense, i.e., the people dwelling in the land.

(13a) EA 82,51 (Do not you yourself know that the land of Amurru longs day and night) *ta-ša-aš* : *na-aq-ša-pu* «has it not been distressed? : have they not been angry?».

There are two other cases of an intensifying gloss. The Canaanite expression «I am besieged» in (14), from root *šwr, strengthens Rib-Hadda's desperate appeal to the king.

(14) EA 127,34 (... I declare, my lord: formerly, when Abdi-Ashirta came up against me, I was strong, but now there has been a controversy among my men, ...) *is-[s]à-qú* : *šī-ir-ti*. «I am being hard-pressed²⁵ : I am besieged».

²⁴ On commissioners in general, see D.O. Edzard and F.A.M. Wiggermann, *Maškim*, RIA VII, 499-55, esp. 452-54. For the word *sōkinu*, see Sivan, *Grammatical Analysis and Glossary*, 181; Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, xxvi, note 70.

²⁵ The interpretation of the Akkadian verbal form here follows Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 208, note 9.

(15) EA 138,130 (Grain for my city) *i-ka-al* : *ḥa-šî-ri* «is held back : is withheld!»²⁶.

The Akkadian verb in (15) should have been *ikkalla* (N of *kalû* «to withhold»). Perhaps the scribe has doubts about the correct Akkadian form for the meaning he has in mind. The gloss expresses more emphatically Rib-Hadda's resentment and at the same time clarifies the sense of the Akkadian word. The word *ḥa-šî-ri* occurs in line 80 «Why is he detained 'aširi (written *ḥa-šî-ri*) – my man whom I sent to the king's palace?»

INDETERMINATE CASES

Due to the uncertainties in the interpretation of the signs, some cases are difficult to classify. Here they are listed and discussed briefly.

(16) EA 136,18 (*uššira* 'send') BIL : *ma-ša-ar-ta* «immediately : a garrison (to your servant ...!)».

According to Moran, the logogram BIL, which usually corresponds to *ḥamātu* «to burn», has been confused with *ḥamātu* «to hasten»; in this case the logogram would stand for the imperative form of *ḥamātu* «to hasten» forming a hendiadys with *uššira*²⁷. This usage occurs in 129,78 *yu-ḥa-mi-ṭa uš-šar* «... may (the king) hasten to send (archers)» and 137,79 *yu-šî-ra-šu ḥa-mi-[iṭ]-ṭ[ù]* «... may (the king) send (him) quickly ...». The m. sg. imperative is attested in EA 102,29 *ḥu-mi-ṭám* «hasten (your arrival with all speed ...!)». But in view of 129,78 and 137,79 it is hard to imagine why the scribe would prefer an unfamiliar logogram to the syllabic writing of the verb. This practice would be contrary to the tendency to use clearer expressions seen in other cases.

(17) EA 129,37 (... as to the king, my lord's having written, 'Troops have indeed come out', You spoke) *k[a]-az-bu-tu* : *ka-ma-m[ī]*²⁸ «lies : only lies».

If the interpretation of *kāmma-mi* as Akkadian *kīam* + *ma* + enclitic *mi* «like this», «thus» is acceptable, then the gloss will refer to the words of the kings which Rib-Hadda has boldly labelled as *kazbūtu* «lies». Adding this gloss is therefore like repeating the word *kazbūtu*; hence the rendering «only lies» suggested above. Hence (17) would be an example of an intensifying gloss in Akkadian; the other cases of such gloss are in Canaanite, as in (13)-(15).

(18) EA 133,17 (Send me 10 [men from] KUR *me-lu-ḥa* : *ka-[-šî]* «the land of Meluhha : i.e., Kashi».

²⁶ Barker, *A Comparative Lexical and Grammatical Study*, 106, analyzes this form as an active participle, also Sivan, *Grammatical Analysis and Glossary*, 161; 207. The writing *ri* of the gloss should not be interpreted as genitive or *yod compaginis*; it may be a way of indicating a released pronunciation of a consonant at the end of the word, thus [ʿašîr+]; cf. EA 131,23 *dī-ki* [dīk+] «was killed», said of Pawure, the commissioner of the King.

²⁷ Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 217, note 3.

²⁸ De Koning, *Studiën*, 440, par. 941, was the first to propose this sense; see also Artzi, *Bar-Ilan* 1, 1963, 38-39.

If the identification of Meluhha as Kashi is correct²⁹, then the gloss in (18) is an equivalent gloss.

(19) EA 68,25 (Pahamnata, the commissioner who is in Sumur, knows the) *pu-uš-qám : ma-na-rù/aš* «straits : ? (which is upon Byblos)».

The gloss has been read as *mānaš* «trouble», a maqtal noun derived from the Canaanite root **nš* «to be weak, sick», cf. Akkadian *enēšū*³⁰. Though this reading makes sense, it cannot explain the construct form before a qualifying relative clause *ša ēli Gubla*. The alternative reading *manāru* avoids this syntactic difficulty, but its sense is not entirely clear. The following solution is provisional. The word can be a derivation of *nēru/nāru* «to conquer, destroy a city, a country»³¹, hence «destructive force». The verb corresponds to Medieval Hebrew and Aramaic *nhr₁* «to pierce», not *nhr₂* «to snort» which corresponds to Akkadian *naḥāru*. This will be an additional example of an individuating gloss.

The following two cases are too obscure for any meaningful comment:

(20) EA 101,8 (... he had no garments of lapis lazuli or) ^{NA₄}MAR : *bu-bu-mar!* «mar stone : *bu-bu-mar!* (to give as tribute)».

(21) EA 108,15 (They give) LÚ.MEŠ ...³² : *ši-ni/ir-ba/ma* «men of ... : ?».

GENERAL INTERPRETATION

The classification of glosses suggested above will be useful for studies of other glosses in the Amarna corpus. A great deal about the Syrian-Palestinian usage and handling of words in a foreign language will be unveiled by closer examinations of the use of the gloss. Such an enterprise is of course beyond the scope of the present essay.

At this point I would attempt to explain why the scribe uses a gloss to indicate the pronunciation, to give an equivalent word, to individuate a concept, and to intensify an expression. The explanation has something to do with the assumption that the scribe considers the normal expressions somewhat inadequate for his purposes. This inadequacy is actually inherent in his use of Akkadian as a second language. This situation is not merely due to the influence of the native language, i.e., a process in which Canaanite grammatical rules and semantic concepts are transferred into Akkadian. There are other processes as well. First of all, regional usage may differentiate the type of Akkadian used by the scribe. Then, in learning to use Akkadian, the scribe undoubtedly first picks what would serve his purpose. Another

²⁹ For the evidence, see F. Pintore, *Transiti di truppe e schemi epistolari nella Siria egiziana dell'età di El-Amarna*, OA 11, 1973, 105, note 24.

³⁰ Youngblood, *The Amarna Correspondence of Rib-Haddi*, 37; Barker, *A Comparative Lexical and Grammatical Study*, 24.

³¹ CAD N/I, 181-82.

³² The sign is not clear, the reading as KEŠDA has been rejected by Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 182, note 2, abandoning an earlier position in *A Syntactical Study*, 166, i.e., that the gloss in EA 180,15 can be interpreted as *ši-ir* + enclitic *-ma*, a phonetic spelling of KEŠDA.

important process is the simplification of grammatical rules and restrictions in vocabulary for the sake of clarity. This is typical of communications among non-native speakers. In addition, one has to consider the process in which Akkadian (not Canaanite) grammatical rules are applied indiscriminately and hence over-generalized. Research in second language acquisition has confirmed that these five processes are central to language learning³³.

In second language learning, the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired is usually strong³⁴. In this case Akkadian is the target language and the other previously acquired language is basically the scribe's native language. Such influence, usually called transfer, appears in the various forms of grammatical Canaanism apart from the use of the glosses. There is little transfer in the use of gloss, precisely because in using the gloss the scribe is sufficiently aware of the difference between the two linguistic systems he is using. In (2) the scribe consciously avoids a possible transfer from Canaanite to Akkadian by using a Canaanite gloss.

The scribal traditions in Syria-Palestine have a special influence on the use of signs and syllabary. This area of research is beyond the scope of the present study. Nevertheless, a good part of the cases discussed above reveal something about the training of the Byblos scribe. In (1) there is an indication that the scribe has been trained to pronounce the logogram rather than to supply a syllabic gloss of an Akkadian word, which is the normal practice as seen in (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (8). Example (2) reveals that the scribe must have been trained to use HUR.SAG instead of KUR. From (4) one can deduce that the scribe at Byblos has received a more consistent training than his Beirut colleague employed by Ammunira.

In learning a foreign language, one tends to give more importance to nouns rather than to verbs or particles. This fits in with the fact that the gloss is added to nouns more frequently than to verbs. Of the above cases, glosses to verbs appear only in (13) (14) (15) and probably also in (16). Except in (15) the gloss is also a verb. The gloss in (15), being a participle, is a nominal form. All cases of an intensifying gloss are glosses to verbs.

Communications involving non-native speakers require that clarity of expression be given special importance. Examples (7) through (14) illustrate this strategy in varying degree. Note especially (8) where the scribe supplies the form he has in mind to avoid a possible misunderstanding of the logogram. This practice is also evident in (2). In (11) and (12), more than to avert a possible misunderstanding, the gloss is added for terminological precision.

There is some overgeneralization of target language linguistic material. Here the use of certain fossilized determinatives, for example, the use of plural sign MEŠ in (12a) even when the word refers to one person.

³³ L. Selinker, *Interlanguage*, *International Review of Applied Linguistics* 10, 1972, 209-31 and for a fuller discussion, id., *Rediscovering Interlanguage*, London 1992.

³⁴ T. Odlin, *Language Transfer: Cross-linguistic Influence in Language Learning*, Cambridge 1989, 27.