


A Critical Study of the Designation of Chapter as *Ti* by Asante - Twi Bible Readers



Emmanuel Foster Asamoah¹  and Jonathan Edward Tetteh Kuwornu-Adjaottor¹ 

¹ Department of Religious Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology – Kumasi Ghana.

ABSTRACT

Bible reading is one of the purposeful activities Christians and users of the Bible engage in it to learn the word of God as well as learning new vocabularies of their native language, especially when they read in their mother-tongue. Asante-Twi Bible readers and users have designated *ti* for “chapter” in the reading of the Asante-Twi Bible. However, this does not carry the literal meaning of the text; thereby, not helping Asante-Twi Bible users to access the literal and right meaning for “chapter” in the Asante-Twi language. Using the analytical method in reading, this article argues that Asante-Twi Bible users should read chapter as *ɔfa*, for it carries the literal meaning of the text. Aside helping Asante-Twi Bible users to identify and ascertain the meaning of “chapter” in their language, which builds their vocabulary, it helps them to get the literal and right meaning of the text. The designation of *ɔfa* for “chapter” by Asante-Twi Bible users and readers keeps them from the “shock of recognition” of carrying a different meaning; it carries the literal and right meaning for “chapter” in the Asante-Twi language. This study has thus added an Akan meaning and translation of “chapter” to the knowledge of Bible reading in Akan, in general, and the Asante-Twi Bible reading communities, in particular. It is being recommended that Asante-Twi Bible users and readers should designate “chapter” as *ɔfa* in Bible reading which is done either silently or aloud at church, in their homes, or where ever, especially during church services, family devotions, or wherever, for academic and or spiritual purposes.

Correspondence

Emmanuel Foster Asamoah

Email: emafosasamoah@aol.com

Publication History

Received 28th September 2020,

Accepted 21st October 2020,

Published online 26th October

2020.

Keywords: Asante-Twi Bible reading, Analytical Method, Chapter, *Ti*, and *ɔfa*

© 2020 The Authors. Published and Maintained by Noyam Publishers.

This is an open access article under the CCBY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

INTRODUCTION

According to Bouhedjam, reading activity is one of the most significant ways of learning, as it is connected with literacy and civilizational development.¹ This assertion is affirmed by Pabellorin who believes that reading helps readers to understand the written word in the language they read [which could be their mother-tongue].² Thus, it helps the readers to grasp an enhanced knowledge of the language being read in their language. Reading also helps individuals to learn a language faster and more completely, for it is an essential skill for language learners.³ Though it can be entertaining, reading offers individuals the opportunity to open new worlds as well as enriching their lives; the continuous repetition of words in reading enables them to learn and remember vocabulary.

Macmillan Dictionary defines reading as the process of recognising written or printed words and understanding their meaning.⁴ In other words, reading involves identifying series of written symbols and ascertaining their meaning from them. Feyfant and Gausse also express reading as a construction of meaning and not as the result of a preliminary decoding process.⁵ Reading is done silently (in one’s head) or aloud so that others can hear. Bouhedjam opines that reading is an activity with a purpose.⁶ This, according to Jenkins, helps individuals [or readers] to get the literal meaning

¹ Djaber Nacer Bouhedjam, *Importance of Reading Activity in Education*, Accessed, August 8, 2020, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314094530_Importance_of_Reading_Activity_in_Education.

² Kristine Joy M. Pabellorin (ed.), *Teaching Reading*, Date Accessed August 8, 2020, https://nanopdf.com/download/title-teaching-reading_pdf

³ EnglishClub, *Reading Skills Guide*, Date Accessed August 14, 2020, <https://www.englishclub.com/reading/guide.php>.

⁴ Macmillan Dictionary, *Reading*, Date Accessed August 9, 2020, <https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/reading>

⁵ Annie Feyfant and Marie Gausse, “Reading methods and learning difficulties,” *Dossier d’actualité, VST*, n° 31 (2007): 1-15.

⁶ Bouhedjam, *Importance of Reading Activity in Education*, 1.

[of a text, book or literature] by way of interpreting what they read.⁷ To get the literal meaning of a text, readers must understand what is read by way of interpretation. Hence, reading enables individuals to receive information, crosscheck existing information or knowledge, and or critique the writing style of an author or their ideas. It helps individuals to objectively find facts in various literature they read as well as discovering new facts.

However, Jenkins holds that readers become “shock of recognition” when they encounter new ideas or undergo a new experience.⁸ This could be true especially when the literal meaning of the text read does not seem to carry the meaning in the language of the people. Or better still, where a translated text into a native language carries a different meaning when read. An example is the reading of *ti*⁹ as “chapter” by Asante-Twi Bible readers and users. This article seeks to unravel the lack of literal and right understanding from the reading of *ti* as “chapter” by Asante-Twi Bible readers and users; reading is an essential part of language instruction at every level which supports learning in multiple ways such as learning the Asante-Twi language, and creating the cultural knowledge and awareness of the language.¹⁰

BIBLE TRANSLATION

Bell, quoting and translating Dubois from French into English says translation “is the expression in another language (or target language [TL]) of what has been expressed in another source language [SL], preserving semantic and stylistic equivalences.”¹¹ This means that translation involves only transcoding words or sentences from SL into TL while preserving semantic and stylistic equivalence. However, Vermeer thinks otherwise. On his part, “translation is not the transcoding of words or sentences from one language to another, but a complex form of action, whereby someone provides information on a text (SL material) in a new situation and under changed functional, cultural and linguistic conditions, preserving formal aspects as closely as possible.”¹² Thus, translation goes beyond just expressing a text in another language to include the cross-cultural transfer of information with the translator being familiar with SL and the receptor language (RL), to include ensuring a changed functional, cultural and linguistic condition while preserving formal aspects as closely as possible.

For a clearer definition on the subject, Bratcher defines translation as “the resurrection of an alien thing in a native body; not the dressing of it up in native clothes, but the giving to it of native flesh and blood.”¹³ In explaining further, resurrecting the gospel in African environment, Asamoah says the Asante-Twi is “...like a good modern Asante-Twi translation being read in such a way to appear as though it had been produced in Asante-Twi language by an Asante, written at the time the original text was written, and reflecting the total context of the original work, but in language and terms intelligible in our time.”¹⁴

Bible translation is vital to the task of communicating God’s word in the mother-tongue of a particular group. The objective of the declaration of the gospel is for the message to reach people, and be understood and acted upon by the hearer. For this to be achieved, the message must either be written or spoken in a language that best communicates with the recipients. This echoes with Bediako’s view that for one to hear their own language and be expressible in it lies at the heart of all authentic religious encounters with the divine realm.¹⁵ This emphasises the importance of Bible translation in the life of people.

Bible translation can be defined as the art and practice of rendering the Judeo-Christian scriptures into languages other than those in which it was formerly written taking into consideration the culture and worldview of the new native environment. Thus, it is resurrecting the Judeo-Christian scriptures from the original languages used in writing into the new native environment they find themselves in to make it become culturally relevant and appreciable to the indigenes. The gospel can be resurrected into a native environment when the most appropriate translation model is employed. The Asante-Twi Bible is one of the translated Bibles which helps the Asante-Twi Bible users and readers to understand the gospel message in the language of the local indigenes.

“Chapter” in the Asante-Twi Bible (1964) is rendered as *Ti*. However, this is omitted in the revised version - Asante-Twi Bible (2012). The Asante-Twi Bible users have varied meanings and understanding for reading “chapter” as *ti*, for they do not carry the literal and right meaning, and every day usage of text.

⁷ William A. Jenkins, *Reading for Enjoyment and Personal Development* (February 1967), Date Accessed August 9, 2020, http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/journals/ed_lead/el_196702_jenkins.pdf

⁸ Jenkins, *Reading for Enjoyment and Personal Development*, 405.

⁹ Others also read it as “*eti*” or “*etire*”.

¹⁰ Pabellorin (ed.), *Teaching Reading*, 3.

¹¹ Jean Dubois, Mathee Giacomo and Louis Guespin, *Dictionnaire de linguistique* (Larousse, Paris, 1973), quoted in R. T. Bell, *Translation and Translating: Theory and practice* (London: Longman, 1991), 5.

¹² Hans J. Vermeer, *A Skopos Theory of Translation: Some Arguments for and Against* (Heidelberg: Textcontext, 1996), 50.

¹³ Robert G. Bratcher, “The Art of Translating,” *Bible Translator* (9) (1958): 84-9.

¹⁴ Emmanuel Foster Asamoah, “Understanding and Interpretation of Revelation 1:8 by some Asante-Twi Speaking Scholars,” *E-Journal of Religious And Theological Studies (ERATS)* 6(3) (2020): 181 – 9.

¹⁵ Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa, The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995), 60.

BIBLE READING

To begin with, it is imperative to explain the Bible. According to Dickson, the word “Bible” is an Anglicised French word from *biblos* in Greek and *biblia* in Latin meaning “book.”¹⁶ *Biblios* was initially used to describe the outer coat of the papyrus reed that grew along the Nile River in Egypt around eleventh century B.C., but was used by Christians around the fourth century A.D. to refer to the Sacred Writings.¹⁷ The Bible has two main parts—Old¹⁸ and New¹⁹ Testaments—which gives the description of the work of God in the world, and his single-mindedness with all creation. It discloses as a boundless love story between God and humankind who happens to be the object of his love.²⁰ The Bible outlines the story of a nation—Israel—and a man—Jesus Christ—into the world. The book gives an account of how the nation Israel was established, how God chose them to make known to his character and purposes to the world, and how Jesus Christ—the Messiah—from the descendants of King David came to complete Israelites expectations and bring into being the Christian church.²¹ The nation Israel was a means God used to introduce Jesus Christ into the world. The Bible outlines details of the coming of Jesus Christ, his stay and works on earth, and death as well as his ascension, abiding intercession and his second coming. It brings out truth about the creator God, the world and humankind through a series of literary genres to make readers know God individually, revere and serve him.²² In a nutshell, Jesus Christ is the central figure of the Bible, for the entire book talks about him. While the first part of the book—Old Testament—gives a prediction of the coming of Jesus and sets the stage for his coming into the world, the other part—New Testament—gives a description of his entrance into world to deal with sin and to bring salvation to humanity. The book outlines some principles or values that followers of Jesus Christ must hold as important and live by them according to God’s directions.

Knowing what reading is and what the Bible contains from the above discussions can help to explain what Bible reading is all about. Bible reading, as an activity with a purpose, could be defined as the process of identifying series of written symbols in God’s word, and ascertaining their meaning from them. In other words, Bible reading involves recognising written or printed words of the Bible and understanding their meaning. It helps users of the Bible to read about Jesus Christ—his entrance into the world, his stay and works on earth, and death as well as his ascension, abiding intercession and his second coming; he is the central figure. This exercise is done either silently or aloud by Bible readers and users to be able to identify some principles or values that followers of Jesus Christ hold as important, and live by them.

The Bible, which is made up of books are divided into 1,189 chapters and 31,102 verses for some reasons.²³ Aside helping in reading and studying the Bible, chapters and verses give the Bible a structure that readers can grasp. They make it easy for Bible users to locate a text within the shortest possible time as well as help to break down long passages into manageable, relatively uniform parts. In other words, a biblical text has been codified with “chapter number” and “verse number” for easy location and referencing. Before the text is located and read, the “chapter number” is mentioned first, and followed by the “verse number”; making the chapter and verse numbers the key to identify the text. As is seen in the English Bibles, for example, the Gospel according to Saint John chapter three verse sixteen is assigned to: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (NKJV). In situations where chapter and verse are not read, it is implied in the reading. An example of this is John 3:16 which is read as John chapter 3 verse 16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (NKJV).

¹⁶ Roger E. Dickson, *Dickson Biblical Research Library*, (South Africa: Africa International Missions, 2013), 15.

¹⁷ Dickson, *Dickson Biblical Research Library*, 15.

¹⁸ The Old Testament, according to evangelical Protestant Christians, is made up of thirty-nine books. They include: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, I Chronicles, II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther; Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastics, and the Songs of Solomon; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachai. However, the Roman Catholic accepts other books identified as apocryphal materials as part of the Old Testament. They are; 1 Enoch, 2 Enoch, 2 Baruch or the Apocrypha of Baruch, 3 Baruch, Sibylline Oracles, Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Testament of Job, Lives of the Prophets, Assumption of Moses, Martyrdom of Isaiah, Paralipomena of Jeremiah, Jubilees, Life of Adam and Eve, Psalms of Solomon, Letter of Aristeas, 3 Maccabees, and 4 Maccabees. See; Robert H. Gundry, *A Survey of the New Testament* 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1994), 71.

¹⁹ The New Testament is made up of the following books; Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I Thessalonians, II Thessalonians, I Timothy, II Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, I Peter, II Peter, I John, II John, III John, Jude, and Revelation.

²⁰ Emmanuel Foster Asamoah, “The Bible and Akan Traditional Religious Values: A Search for Dialogue,” *Journal of Mother-Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics and Theology (MOTBIT)*, 2(2) (2020): 78-86. <https://doi.org/10.38159/motbit.2020081>

²¹ Jonathan E. T. Kuwornu-Adjaottor, “Bible Studies and Biblical Studies: An Interface,” *The Bible, Cultural Identity, and Missions*, Edited by Daniel Berchie et al., (UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), 386-406.

²² James I. Parker and Derek Williams, *The Bible Application Handbook*, (Guildford, Surrey: Eagle, 1999), 9.

²³ This is according to the Evangelical Protestant Christians Bible. Both the Old and New Testaments have 929 and 260 chapters respectively. The Old and New Testament have 23,144 and 7,958 verses respectively. It must be noted that New American Standard Bible (NASB), New English Translation (NET), New Living Translation (NLT), and other Bible have one more verse. See; NeverThirsty, *How many chapters, verses, and words are in the Bible*, Date Accessed August 12, 2020, <https://www.neverthirsty.org/bible-qa/qa-archives/question/how-many-chapters-verses-and-words-are-in-the-bible/>

BIBLE READING IN ASANTE-TWI COMMUNITIES

Ghana, a country in the sub-Saharan of West Africa has more than nine major ethnic groups.²⁴ The Asante form part of the Akan ethnic group which happens to be the largest of all the ethnic groups.²⁵ The Asante are native to the Ashanti Region. Asante-Twi is their medium of communication, and it happens to be the mostly spoken language in Ghana.²⁶ In Ghana, the Akan language is a constellation of vernaculars which include Asante-Twi, Akuapem-Twi, Mfantse, Wassa, Kwahu, Bono, Agona, Akyem, and Akwamu.²⁷

With numerous linguistic divisions in Ghana, Akan is spoken in nine out of the sixteen regions in Ghana namely, Ashanti, Eastern, Brong Ahafo, Bono East, Ahafo, Oti, Western North, Western, and Central Regions.²⁸ The Akan language include Asante-Twi, Akuapem-Twi, Agona, Akyem, Mfantse, Kwahu, Wasa, Assin, Denkyira, Buem, and Bron. These dialects are mutually comprehensible, for a considerable amount of vocabulary are found in them.²⁹ The Anyi (Aowin), Sefwi, Nzema, Ahanta, Efutu/Awutu, and Anum-Kyerepong-Larteh people also speak Akan in addition to their mother-tongue.³⁰

The 2010 population census in Ghana reveals that the Ashanti (Asante) reading community is made up of 2,823,430 literates³¹; of which 365,180 people read Ghanaian language,³² 1,968,753 for both English and Ghanaian language, and 30,575 for English, French and Ghanaian language.³³ Thus, more than two million and three hundred thousand³⁴ in Ashanti region are able to read (and write) in their mother-tongue.

The Asante-Twi Bible readers read the Bible either silently or aloud at church, in their homes, or where ever, especially during church services, family devotions, or wherever, for academic³⁵ and or spiritual purposes. However, what the reason may be, users of the Bible read by learning new ideas or words from the printed text of God's word.

In Bible reading, the Asante-Twi Bible readers and users read the "chapter number" first, and follow it with the "verse number" before the corresponding text is read. John chapter three verse sixteen (John 3:16) is read in the Asante-Twi language as *Asempa no sedee Yohane twere mae, ti*³⁶ *mmiensa nkyekyemu du nsia (Yohane 3:16): "Na sedee Onyankopɔn dɔɔ wiase nie, se ɔde ne Ba a ɔwoo no korɔ no mae, na obiara a ɔgye no die no anyera, na wanya daa nkwa"*³⁷ (The Gospel according to John, head three verse sixteen: "For God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten son, that whoever believes in him will not perish, but have everlasting life").

The reading of chapter as *ti* is quite problematic, for in the Asante-Twi language *ti* refers to "head". This defeats Pabellorin assertion that reading helps readers [Asante-Twi reading community] to understand the written word in the language they read.³⁸ This makes readers of the Asante-Twi Bible to learn and remember vocabulary with different meaning other than what it's used for. That is to say, readers of the Asante-Twi Bible are made to learn a word which does not carry its meaning in the context of Bible reading. Such reading also defeats Jenkins presupposition of getting the literal meaning by way of interpreting *ti* which is crucial in reading.³⁹ This prevent users and readers of the Asante-Twi Bible from receiving the right information and discovering of ideas. Jenkins holds that some Asante-Twi readers who know the meaning of *ti* become "shock of recognition," for the word does carries different meaning in their language.⁴⁰

²⁴ Ghana Statistical Service, *2010 Population and Housing Census: Summary Report of Final Results*, (Accra: Sakoa Press Ltd, 2012), 34.

²⁵ Ghana Statistical Service, *2010 Population and Housing Census*, 34.

²⁶ John D. K. Ekem, *Early Scriptures of the Gold Coast (Ghana): The Historical, Linguistic and Theological Settings of the Ga, Twi, Mfantse and Ewe Bibles* (Manchester: ST. Jerome Publishing, 2011), 50.

²⁷ Ekem, *Early Scriptures of the Gold Coast (Ghana)*, 50

²⁸ Asamoah, "The Bible and Akan Traditional Religious Values: A Search for Dialogue," 78-86; John D. K. Ekem, *Priesthood in Context: A Study of Priesthood in Some Christian and Primal Communities of Ghana and its Relevance for Mother-Tongue Biblical Interpretation*, (Accra, GH: SonLife Press, 2009), 27.

²⁹ Kofi Agyekum, "The Sociolinguistic of Akan Personal Names," *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 15(2) (2006): 206-235.

³⁰ Ekem, *Priesthood in Context*, 27.

³¹ It includes people from 11 years and above.

³² This is no other language than Asante-Twi, for it is the commonest language spoken in the region.

³³ Ghana Statistics Service, *2010 Population Census & Housing Census*, 41.

³⁴ Out of 3,719,793 Christians, 2,364,508 is the total number of people who can read Ghanaian language (or Asante-Twi), for that is the commonest language in the region.

³⁵ In such studies, students translate and or interpret biblical texts from their original languages and compare them with their counterpart in the Asante-Twi Bible to know how faithfully translators interpreted the texts. In situations where they seem to differ, the new translations are suggested for consideration over the other in the Asante-Twi Bible. See; J. E. T. Kuwornu-Adjaottor and Samuel Kodom, "A Study of ὄχλος (Crowd) In Matthew 5:1: Implication for Asante-Twi Bible Readers," *ERATS*, 1(2) (2019) : 121-8 <https://doi.org/10.32051/06241912> ; Asamoah, "Understanding and Interpretation of Revelation 1:8 by some Asante-Twi Speaking Scholars," 181 – 9.

³⁶ Others also read *ti* as "eti" or "etire" all meaning the head of the human body.

³⁷ Asante Twi Bible, *Twere Kronkron: Apam Foforɔ Mu Nwoma*, (Accra, Ghana: The Bible Society of Ghana, 2012), 122.

³⁸ Pabellorin (ed.), *Teaching Reading*, 3.

³⁹ Jenkins, *Reading for Enjoyment and Personal Development*, 405.

⁴⁰ Jenkins, *Reading for Enjoyment and Personal Development*, 405.

METHODOLOGY

This work uses the analytical method in reading which moves from the large written units of meaning (the text, the sentence) towards their component parts (the word) and then the units without meaning.⁴¹ It sees each sentence or word as an entity which has its own identity and its associated meaning.⁴² It focuses on hypothesising about meaning and comprehension activities.⁴³ Braibant and Gérard assert that this method focuses on memorising sentences which have a meaning and then analysing these texts to progressively isolate the smallest elements.⁴⁴

A mixed method for collection of data was employed in this research. Primary data were collected from one hundred and five (154) people; one hundred and fifty (150) were through questionnaires in Amansie Communities—East, West, Central and South—in Ashanti Region, and four (4) were by interviews. Those interviewed were educationists, publishers, scholars, Bible translators, and traditional rulers. Secondary data was obtained from books, dictionaries, journal articles, and any other relevant materials that were useful in the research.

FINDINGS

Hundred and fifty⁴⁵ users of the Asante-Twi Bible were sampled to read John chapter three verse sixteen (John 3:16) from the Asante-Twi Bible to identify how the word “chapter” is designated in their reading. They were also asked to give their understanding of the word read as “chapter” in the Asante-Twi language.

The table below shows the findings:

Table 1: Reading of John 3:16

Designation of “Chapter”	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative
<i>ti</i>	47	31	31
<i>eti</i>	76	51	82
<i>etire</i>	27	18	100
Total	150	100	

Source: Field data, August 15, 2020

From the table, 47 people read “chapter” as *ti*, representing 31 percent of respondents; 76 people read “chapter” as *eti*, representing 51 percent of respondents; and 27 people read “chapter” as *etire*, representing 18 percent of respondents. This points to the fact that there are varied designation for reading “chapter” from the Asante-Twi Bible; some read it as *ti*, some as *eti*, and others as *etire*.

Table 2: Understanding of the word read as “chapter” in the Asante-Twi language

Designation of “Chapter”	Number of Respondents	Understanding of word read as “chapter” in Asante-Twi language as “head” ⁴⁶		
		Yes	No	None
<i>ti</i>	47	39	8	0
<i>eti</i>	76	69	7	0
<i>etire</i>	27	27	0	0
Total	150	135	15	0

Source: Field data, August 15, 2020

From the table above, out of the 47 people who read “chapter” as *ti*, 39 understood it to mean “head,” while 8 understood it differently; out of the 76 people who read “chapter” as *eti*, 69 understood it to mean “head,” while 7 understood it differently; and all the 27 people who read “chapter” as *etire* understood it to mean “head”. In all, 135 out of the 150 respondents who read the text as *ti*, *eti*, and *etire* from the Asante-Twi Bible understood it as “head”, and the remaining 15 understood it otherwise.

⁴¹ Feyfant and Gausse, “Reading methods and learning difficulties,” 1-15.

⁴² Feyfant and Gausse, “Reading methods and learning difficulties,” 1-15.

⁴³ Feyfant and Gausse, “Reading methods and learning difficulties,” 1-15.

⁴⁴ Jean-Marc Braibant & François-Marie Gérard, “Savoir lire: Question(s) de méthodes?” *Bulletin de psychologie scolaire et d’orientation*, n° 1 (1996): 7-45.

⁴⁵ These are Asante-Twi Bible readers in the Amansie East Municipal, and Amansie West, Amansie Central, and, Amansie South Districts in Ashanti Region.

⁴⁶ Head as the top part of the human body.

Scholarly views for reading “chapter” in Asante-Twi language

According to Akan scholars, the reading of “chapter” as *ti* connotes three meanings; as “head,”⁴⁷ “nip” or “err”.⁴⁸ While the usage of *ti* as “nip” or “err” is out of context, its usage as “head” gives a lean way for understanding purposes. On his part, Kofi Agyekum thinks that Asante-Twi Bible readers usage of *ti* in Bible reading might have been informed by the Asante chieftaincy system where the chief is the *ti* (head) with his *nkoa* (subjects or servants).⁴⁹ This, according to him, has influenced their [Asante-Twi Bible users] reading, for it was used by the early missionaries who translated the Bible into Ghanaian local languages [such as Asante-Twi Bible (1964)].⁵⁰ Besides as a form of convention, *ti* has been used till now. Alex Anum adds that such translation might have also emerged from the usage of some Asante-Twi words such as *otitenani* (chairperson).⁵¹ However, reading “chapter” as *ti* in the Asante-Twi Bible is problematic because such rendering does not bring out the true meaning of the vocabulary which shows the main division of the Bible books in the Asante-Twi language.

Agyekum⁵² et al, give the Akan (with Asante-Twi inclusive) rendition of “chapter” as *ɔfa* (“section,” “half,” or “part” of a whole)⁵³; meaning, a “chapter” is either a section, half, or part of each of the whole Bible books. In affirming Agyekum, et al, assertion, Akrofi, et al also translate or read “chapter” as *ɔfa* (“section,” “half,” or “part” of a whole).⁵⁴ Nonetheless, while Agyekum, et al, ended with that, Akrofi, et al go on to say: *wɔ nwoma mu* (in a book), clearly explaining how and where *ɔfa* is used—in book reading. This explanation is affirmed by Dede who gives two usage of *ɔfa*—as a noun and in plural form. As a noun, *ɔfa* means *adee a wɔakyɛ mu mmienu mu baako* (“section,” “half,” or “part” of a whole), and *afaafa* (halves of a whole) is the plural form meaning *wɔakyɛkyɛ nwoma no mu afa nnan* (you have broken or divided the book into four chapters or sections).⁵⁵

In a different view, Anane translates “chapter” as *etire* (head), which affirms its usage in the Asante-Twi Bible.⁵⁶ However, this translation does not bring out the true meaning of “chapter” which is one of the main sections or parts of a book. Also, in the common language of the Asante-Twi people, *etire* (head) is not used for “chapter”, but *ɔfa* (“section,” “half,” or “part” of a whole). This is affirmed by Prince Acheampong who believes that *ɔfa* is the right rendering of “chapter” in the Asante-Twi language, not *ti*.⁵⁷ This is realised in all other Asante-Twi literatures or books.⁵⁸ *ɔfa* is also used in Asante-Twi (or Akan) exams for Junior High Schools, Senior High Schools, Colleges of Education, and among others, and not *ti*. Hence, the designation of *ti* for reading the Asante-Twi Bible does not reflect its consistency in reading. This does not allow the Asante-Twi readers to grasp an enhanced knowledge of their language, for there are generations of varied meanings.

Wonder Adjei Arthur,⁵⁹ who shares similar view with Agyekum on the challenge of designating or translating *ti* as “chapter” in the reading of the Asante-Twi Bible by its users believes that it could be changed so far as it does not alter the biblical text.⁶⁰

Summary of views

With the exception of Anane⁶¹, all the scholars gave the interpretation (or designation) for “chapter” as *ɔfa* (“section,” “half,” or “part” of a whole). They went further to explain where *ɔfa* should be used, which is in books or literatures with the Asante-Twi Bible not an exempt. This affirms Akrofi, et al, and Dede explanation of where the word *ɔfa* is used as a book chapter. In effect, the designation of *ti* for “chapter” by Asante-Twi Bible readers must be reconsidered,

⁴⁷ As the head is at the top part of the body, it is allegorically used to mean something at the top. It must be noted that head is also referred to as *eti* or *etire* in the Asante-Twi language which is part of the Akan language. See; Kofi Agyekum, Emmanuel K. Osam, & Sackey Apenteng, *Akan terminology: English- Akan Linguistic and Media Glossary* (Accra: Adwinsa Publications Ltd, 2011), 59; J. O. Anane, *Advanced Akan Dictionary: Akuapim, Asante and Fanti with Human's Names and Meanings*, (Anwomaso, Kumasi: Prisebs Publishers, 2000), 46.

⁴⁸ C. A. Akrofi, G. L. Botchway, & B. K. Takyi, *An English, Akan, Ewe, Ga Dictionary* (Accra, GH: Waterville Publishing House, 2013), 170; Martin Dede, *Asante Nsemfua Nkyereseɛ Nwoma: Twi Dictionary*, (Tema, GH: Aburuburo Nkosua Series), 188.

⁴⁹ In a telephone conversation with Kofi Agyekum on May 4, 2020.

⁵⁰ According to John D. K. Ekem, translations of the early scriptures of Gold Coast such as the Twi Bibles were by the collaboration efforts of foreign missionaries and local indigenes. However, he opines that the missionaries were the leading team players. Johannes Zimmermann, Johann Gottlieb Christaller, and Eugene L. Rapp were some of the leading players. Read; Ekem, *Early Scriptures of the Gold Coast (Ghana)*, 1-149.

⁵¹ Meaning *obi a ɔte nyiamu pono ti* (someone in charge of a meeting). Alex Anum is a Pastor with The Church of Pentecost and an Asante-Twi translator. In a telephone conversation with him on May 3, 2020.

⁵² Kofi Agyekum is a professor in linguistic studies with University of Ghana, Legon.

⁵³ Agyekum, Osam, & Apenteng, *Akan terminology*, 26.

⁵⁴ C. A. Akrofi, et. al., *An English, Akan, Ewe, Ga Dictionary*, 55.

⁵⁵ Martin Dede, *Asante Nsemfua Nkyereseɛ Nwoma*, 159.

⁵⁶ Anane, *Advanced Akan Dictionary*, 46. According to him, translating chapter as *etire* (head) was influenced by its usage in the Asante-Twi Bible.

⁵⁷ Prince Acheampong is the leading editor for Prisebs Publishers. His firm published *Advanced Akan Dictionary: Akuapim, Asante and Fanti with Human's Names and Meanings* by J. O. Anane. In an interview with him, he accepted that *ɔfa* is the right meaning for chapter in the Asante-Twi language, and not *ti*. He promised revising the book to make the correction. Telephone conversation on May 1, 2020.

⁵⁸ See the usage of *ɔfa* in Kofi Agyekum, *Akan Kasadwini*, (Madina, Accra: Dwumfuor Publications, 2011); E. Perbi-Asare, *De Mente?* (Koforidua: Kiiitess Books, 2018).

⁵⁹ Wonder Adjei Arthur is a Bible translator and works with Bible Society of Ghana, Kumasi.

⁶⁰ In a telephone interview with Wonder Adjei Arthur on May 4, 2020.

⁶¹ In a telephone conversation, the leading publisher of J. O. Anane's book, Prince Acheampong affirmed the usage of *ɔfa* instead of *ti*.

to help Asante-Twi Bible users and readers to get the literal and right meaning of the text, by way of interpreting what they read.⁶² As the most popular and the single most common book in the possession of many Ghanaians,⁶³ designating chapter as *ɔfa* will help Ghanaians, in general and Akans or Asante-Twi people, in particular to learn their language. This affirms Pabellorin, and Feyfant and Gausse's purpose for reading which is to express a construction of meaning.⁶⁴ Hence, John chapter three verse sixteen (John 3:16) must be read in the Asante-Twi language as *Asempa no sedee Yohane twere maeɛ, ɔfa mmiensa nkyekyemu du nsia (Yohane 3:16): "Na sedee Onyankopɔn dɔɔ wiase nie, se ɔde ne Ba a ɔwoo no korɔ no maeɛ, na obiara a ɔgye no die no anyera, na wanya daa nkwa"*⁶⁵ (The Gospel according to John, chapter three verse sixteen (John 3:16): "For God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten son, that whoever believes in him will not perish, but have everlasting life").

CONCLUSION

Reading is a purposeful activity, for it helps the readers to grasp an enhanced knowledge of the language being read in their language. It also helps individuals to learn a language faster and more completely, for it is an essential skills for language learners.⁶⁶ However, readers become "shock of recognition" when they encounter new ideas or undergo a new experience, especially when the literal meaning of the text read does not seem to carry the meaning in the language of the people. Or better still, where the text read in the native language carries a different meaning.⁶⁷ The designation of *ti* as "chapter" by Asante-Twi Bible users does not carry the literal and right meaning of the text; thereby, not helping them [Asante-Twi Bible users] to get the literal and right meaning of the text in their native language. *ɔfa* must be designated as "chapter" by users of the Asante-Twi Bible in Bible reading, which is done either silently or aloud at church, in their homes, or where ever, especially during church services, family devotions, or wherever, for academic and or spiritual purposes.

ABOUT AUTHORS

Emmanuel Foster Asamoah, BTh, MPhil, Research Associate, Department of Religious Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi. He is an Ordained Minister of The Church of Pentecost, pastoring at Antoakrom, Ashanti Region, Ghana. His areas of interest are Biblical Studies, Bible Translations, Mother-tongue Biblical Hermeneutics, and Biblical Apocalyptic Literature.

Jonathan Edward Tetteh Kuwornu-Adjaottor, PhD is an Associate Professor of New Testament and Mother Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics in the Department of Religious Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology – Kumasi Ghana.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Agyekum, Kofi, "The Sociolinguistic of Akan Personal Names," *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 15(2) (2006): 206–235.
- _____. *Akan Kasadwini*. Madina, Accra: Dwumfuor Publications, 2011.
- _____. Emmanuel K. Osam, & Sackey Apenteng, *Akan terminology: English- Akan Linguistic and Media Glossary*. Accra: Adwinsa Publications Ltd, 2011.
- Akrofi, C. A., G. L. Botchway, & B. K. Takyi, *An English, Akan, Ewe, Ga Dictionary*. Accra, GH: Waterville Publishing House, 2013.
- Anane, J. O. *Advanced Akan Dictionary: Akuapim, Asante and Fanti with Human's Names and Meanings*. Anwomaso, Kumasi: Prisebs Publishers, 2000.
- Asamoah, Emmanuel Foster, "The Bible and Akan Traditional Religious Values: A Search for Dialogue," *Journal of Mother-Tongue Biblical Hermeneutics and Theology (MOTBIT)*, 2(2) (August 2020): 78-86. <https://doi.org/10.38159/motbit.2020081>
- _____. "Understanding and Interpretation of Revelation 1:8 by some Asante-Twi Speaking Scholars," *E-Journal of Religious And Theological Studies (ERATS)* 6(3) (2020): 181 – 9. <https://doi.org/10.38159/erats.2020064>
- Asante Twi Bible, *Twerj Kronkron: Apam Foforɔ Mu Nwoma*. Accra, Ghana: The Bible Society of Ghana, 2012.

⁶² Jenkins, *Reading for Enjoyment and Personal Development*, 405.

⁶³ David Nii Anum Kpobi, *Entrusted with the Word: A History of the Bible Society of Ghana 1965-2015*, (Osu, GH: Heritage Publication, 2015), 21.

⁶⁴ Pabellorin (ed.), *Teaching Reading*, 3; Feyfant and Gausse, "Reading methods and learning difficulties," 1-15.

⁶⁵ Asante Twi Bible, *Twerj Kronkron: Apam Foforɔ Mu Nwoma*, (Accra, Ghana: The Bible Society of Ghana, 2012), 122.

⁶⁶ English Club, *Reading Skills Guide*, accessed online on August 14, 2020, from <https://www.englishclub.com/reading/guide.php>.

⁶⁷ Jenkins, *Reading for Enjoyment and Personal Development*, 405.

- Bediako, Kwame, *Christianity in Africa, The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995.
- Bouhedjam, Djaber Nacer, *Importance of Reading Activity in Education*. Accessed online on August 8, 2020, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314094530_Importance_of_Reading_Activity_in_Education.
- Braibant, Jean-Marc & François-Marie Gérard, "Savoir lire: Question(s) de méthodes?" *Bulletin de psychologie scolaire et d'orientation*, n° 1 (1996): 7-45.
- Bratcher, Robert G. "The Art of Translating," *Bible Translator* (9) (1958): 84-9.
- Dede, Martin, *Asante Nsemfua Nkyereasee Nwoma: Twi Dictionary*. Tema, GH: Aburuburo Nkosua Series.
- Dickson, Roger E. *Dickson Biblical Research Library*. South Africa: Africa International Missions, 2013.
- Dubois, Jean, Mathee Giacomo and Louis Guespin, *Dictionnaire de linguistique*, (Larousse, Paris, 1973), R. T. Bell, *Translation and Translating: Theory and practice*. London: Longman, 1991.
- Ekem, John D. K. *Early Scriptures of the Gold Coast (Ghana): The Historical, Linguistic and Theological Settings of the Ga, Twi, Mfantse and Ewe Bibles*. Manchester: ST. Jerome Publishing, 2011.
- _____. *Priesthood in Context: A Study of Priesthood in Some Christian and Primal Communities of Ghana and its Relevance for Mother-Tongue Biblical Interpretation*. Accra, GH: SonLife Press, 2009.
- EnglishClub, *Reading Skills Guide*. Accessed online on August 14, 2020, from <https://www.englishclub.com/reading/guide.php>.
- Feyfant, Annie and Marie Gaussel, "Reading methods and learning difficulties," *Dossier d'actualité, VST*, n° 31 (Nov. 2007): 1-15.
- Ghana Statistical Service, *2010 Population and Housing Census: Summary Report of Final Results*. Accra: Sakoa Press Ltd, 2012.
- Gundry, R. H. *A Survey of the New Testament* 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1994.
- Jenkins, William A. *Reading for Enjoyment and Personal Development* (February 1967). Accessed online on August 9, 2020, from http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/journals/ed_lead/el_196702_jenkins.pdf.
- Kpobi, David Nii Anum, *Entrusted with the Word: A History of the Bible Society of Ghana 1965-2015*. Osu, GH: Heritage Publication, 2015.
- Kuwornu-Adjaottor, J. E. T. and Samuel Kodom, "A Study of ὄχλος (Crowd) In Matthew 5:1: Implication for Asante-Twi Bible Readers," *E-Journal of Religious And Theological Studies (ERATS)*, 1(2) (2019): 121-8. <https://doi.org/10.32051/06241912>
- _____. "Bible Studies and Biblical Studies: An Interface," *The Bible, Cultural Identity, and Missions*, Edited by Daniel Berchie et. al., (UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), 386-406.
- Macmillan Dictionary, *Reading*. Accessed online on August 9, 2020 from <https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/reading>.
- NeverThirsty, *How many chapters, verses, and words are in the Bible*. Accessed on August 12, 2020, from <https://www.neverthirsty.org/bible-qa/qa-archives/question/how-many-chapters-verses-and-words-are-in-the-bible/>.
- Pabellorin, Kristine Joy M. (ed.), *Teaching Reading*. Accessed on August 8, 2020, from https://nanopdf.com/download/title-teaching-reading_pdf.
- Parker, James I. and Derek Williams, *The Bible Application Handbook*. Guildford, Surrey: Eagle, 1999.
- Perbi-Asare, E. *De Mente? Koforidua*: Kiiitess Books, 2018.
- Vermeer, Hans J. *A Skopos Theory of Translation: Some Arguments for and Against*. Heidelberg: Textcontext, 1996.