

A Critical Study of the Translation of Mark 1:12 in the Dangme Translation of the Bible

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Abstract

Bible translation from the Source Languages (SL) to Receptor Languages (RL) is not a straightforward exercise. The question is whether Bible translation involves interpretation. Using the mother-tongue biblical hermeneutics approach, this study sought to examine Mark 1:12 in the Dangme Bible, comparing it with the Greek. Its objective was to find out whether the translation of the Greek in Dangme *kai euthus to pneuma auton ekballei eis tēn erēmon* as *Amlônôuuô, Mumi Klôuklôuô tse eyi se ke ho nga a nôya* ('Immediately, The Holy Spirit pushed him by head from behind into the wilderness') generates a new meaning. The study found out that the translation of *ekballein* into Dangme was a problem that confronted the translator; this was because the word implies a strong action. On the other hand, indigenous Dangme Bible readers did not understand how the Holy Spirit could "push" Jesus into the wilderness. It is being proposed that the translation of Mark 1:12 in the Dangme Bible should be *Amlôô mi nôuuô, Mumiô ha ne e ho nga a nôya* (Immediately the Spirit made him go into the wilderness). The study has thus added to the varied translations and interpretations of Mark 1:12.

Keywords:

Jesus, Spirit, Dangme, translation, Mark 1:12

Introduction

Bible translation, the scientific and interdisciplinary process of changing a text in the source language (SL) into a receptor language (RL); and or conveying a biblical message from one language to another is a complex process.¹ The complexity is seen in the fact that the process evolves a new text as a result of decoding the source text on several levels and encoding² the text to conform to the receptor language by means of the linguistic, literary, and cultural conventions of the receptor language.³

Van der Watt and Kruger opine that to be able to interpret a text well and then translate it into a target language, the translator should establish the meaning of the source text as far as it is possible. They explain that, to find the meaning of the source text, one should make effort to understand the construction of semantics of words that includes phonology and lexicography; the construction of sentences that is, syntax and some stylistic elements, such as figurative language, metaphors, idioms, symbolism, sarcasm, irony etc.; the structure of paragraphs, including the analysis of sentences and discourses; the genre of texts; including the use of micro, maso and macro genres; and the socio-cultural and historical background of the text – the element that deals with knowledge of the world, society, geography, history, etc., of the particular community to whom the source document was written. Thus, it is not only the linguistic elements that are needed to interpret a text but also *historico-socio-cultural* information about the context in which the source text was written. This means that the element of culture cannot be overlooked in any serious Bible translation enterprise.⁴

The Dangme are a West African people dwelling in modern Ghana and they are about the third largest ethnic group in southern Ghana aside the Akan and Ewe.⁵ Geographically, Dangme land stretches along the coast from Prampram on the west, to Ada on the east, and from the sea on the south across a

¹ E. A. Nida, The paradoxes of translation, *The Bible Translator*, 42(2a), (1991):5.

² Decoding means the operation by which a receptor interprets a discourse and understands its message; encoding means the operation by which a sender plans and composes a discourse and conveys it. See Nida & Taber (1982, 200).

³ Nida describes the actual process of translating as a technology that employs the insights and principles of a number of behavioral sciences in order to accomplish its goal of effective interlingual communication. (Nida (1991:10).

⁴ J. G. Van der Watt & Y. Kruger, "Some considerations on bible translation as complex process" *Acta Theologica Supplementum 2* (2002):16-17.

⁵ Hugo Huber, *The Krobo: Traditional, Social and Religious Life of a West African People* (Freiburg: St Paul's Press, 1973), 23.

very dry and sparsely-inhabited plain to the Akuapem ridge on the north.⁶

The Dangme tribes are Adaa, Nugo, Gbugblaa and Kpomi near the sea, and Osudoku, Manyaklo, Yiloklo and Sɛ in the hinterland. Manyaklo and Yiloklo extend through the hills and forest north of Koforidua, and are quite different geographically from the rest of the Dangme tribes.⁷ What meaning does the translation of *ekballō* as *tse eyi se* (pushed him by the head from behind) in the Dangme Bible generate? What are the implications of the meaning to Dangme Bible readers?

1. Methodology

The study used the mother-tongue biblical hermeneutics methodology⁸ a step-by-step procedure that analyses, adopts and adapts words and phrases in biblical texts in order to appropriate the word of God for indigenous Bible reading communities. The methodology includes exegesis of the text under study; it requires that knowledgeable people in a mother-tongue should be interviewed for deeper understanding of the usage of words and phrases. Nine Dangme scholars and Dangme Bible readers were interviewed to give their interpretations and implications of *tse eyi se ke ho*. A questionnaire on five different translations of Mark 1:12 in Dangme was distributed among one thousand Dangme mother-tongue Bible readers in the eight Dangme speaking areas, to test their understanding of Mark 1:12 in the Dangme Bible.

1.1 Exegesis of Mark 1:12

The Wider Context of Mark 1:12

The prologue⁸ of the Gospel of Mark, forms the wider context of Mark 1:12. Mark's opening words, "the beginning of the good

⁶ E. O. Apronti & M. E. Kropp-Dakubu, "Towards a Dialectical Geography of Dangme" *African e-Journals* 35 pdf, accessed online at digital.lib.msu.edu/project/africanjournals, 18/12/17.

⁷ Apronti&Kropp-Dakubu (35).

⁸There is a long-standing debate on the function and extent of Mark's prologue. On one hand, it appears that the purpose of Mark's prologue (like the birth narratives in Matt and Luke and the prologue of John) is to introduce the reader to Jesus' true significance as the Messiah and Son of God before the story about him begins. However, it is not clear where the prologue ends and the gospel 'proper' starts. It is just the first verse that is introductory or verses 1-8? If the introduction includes verses 2-11 then the place of John the Baptist as recorded is

news”⁹ of Jesus Christ, the Son of God serves more or less as the title of the whole work.⁹ The entire story of Jesus’ ministry is “good news” for the whole world. Mark’s quotation of the Old Testament prophets in verses 2-3 - Malachi (3:1) and Isaiah (40:3) - “I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way”; ‘a voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight paths for him’” - introduces John the Baptizer, who prepares the way for Jesus Christ through preaching of repentance and baptism (vv.4-8).

In immediate context of Mark 1:12 in which Jesus comes to the scene and goes through baptism by John (v.9). At Jesus’ baptism the Spirit took possession of him (Mark 1:10-11). Immediately after that the Spirit took him into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil (Mark 1:12-13). Mark’s description of how Jesus went to the wilderness to be tempted is quite abrupt that it calls for investigation. Craig A. Evans says that the evangelist’s choice of words is curious, for to “drive out” *ekballein* is frequently used to describe the casting out of demons (cf. Mark 1:34, 39; 3:15, 22, 23; 6:13; 7:26; 9:18, 28, 38).¹⁰ “The Markan evangelist may have wished to emphasize the power of the Spirit...[for] when the Spirit moves, dramatic things happen”. However in the parallel accounts of the same incidence in Matt and Luke, the picture is different - *ho Iesous anēchthē eis tēn erēmōn tou pneumatōs*¹¹ “the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness” (Matt 4:1); *ēgeto en tōi pneumati en tēi erēmōi*¹² “was led by the Spirit into the wilderness” (Luke 4:1). So which is which: did the Spirit “throw”, “drag” or “push” Jesus into the wilderness or make him go into the wilderness? What might have informed Mark to report the incident the way he did? Mark used *to pneuma auton*

very important, not only as the promised forerunner of the Messiah but also as setting the pattern for his life, rejection and death. (Carson et al, *New Bible Commentary* 950). My position is that verses 1-8 constitute the introductory part of Mark’s gospel.

⁹Mark’s language of “beginning”, “good news”, and “Son of God” deliberately echoes the Roman doctrine of the divine emperor. Thus, Mark is saying to the Roman world that Caesar neither is the beginning of the good news for the world, nor is God’s son; Messiah Jesus is. As such, Mark’s opening words directly challenge the Roman emperor cult. Craig A. Evans, “Mark”, In: James D. G. Dunn & John W. Rogerson (eds.), *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, U. K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 1066.

⁹Evans, “Mark”, 1066.

¹⁰Evans, “Mark”, 1067.

¹¹Evans, “Mark”, 1067.

¹²*Bible Works* 6.

ekballei, “the Spirit threw him” because of his reading community who were probably Roman soldiers. The urgency of the action in 1:3: *phōnē boōntos en tē erēmōi, hetoimasate tēn hodon kuriou, eutheias poieite tas tribous autou* (“Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him”, stressed by the use of the aorist imperative *hetoimasate* “Prepare [now]”, suggests this. Further to that is Mark’s use of a forceful word *ekballei* “he cast out” which his readers understood. Again, the editorial links like *euthus* “straightaway”, “immediately” (1:12, 18) in the account of Jesus’ ministry; and the impressive speed of urgency, that is, the racy nature of the narratives – the healing of the paralytic man (2:1-12), the stilling of the storm (4:35-41), and the cure of the deaf and mute man (7:31-37) and the blind man (8:22-26) – suggest that his readers have military background; they were people who had no time to waste.

1.2 Morphological and Syntactical Analysis Mark 1:12

kai euthus to pneuma auton ekballei eis tēn erēmon The text begins with *kai* is a conjunction meaning “and”, “even”, “also”.¹³ The preferred meaning in the context is “and”. It links Jesus’ baptism in verse 9-11 to his being carried away into the desert to be tempted by the Devil. It makes the two episodes a continuum, one following the other.

Euthus is an adverb meaning “straightaway”, “immediately”.¹⁴ It shows the urgency with which Jesus left the scene of his baptism. The word keeps the narrating moving at a pace throughout in the book, as it chronicles Jesus’ travels of his three-year ministry on earth. *Euthus* which is applied to a servant, agrees with the theme of the Gospel of Mark: “Jesus the Servant of God.” The word which is found eighty times in the New Testament occurs in Mark alone about forty times.¹⁵

To pneuma is a reference to the spirit that descended upon Jesus at his baptism (v.10).¹⁶ Robert Bratcher and Eugene Nida have cautioned that in this context, it is quiet important that one makes sure that the word used for “spirit” carries the proper connotation,

¹³Bible Works 6.

¹⁴Bible Works 6.

¹⁵Bible Works 6.

¹⁶Bible Works 6.

for “driving one out into an uninhabited region” is precisely what demons are usually credited with doing.¹⁷

Auton is a pronoun accusative masculine singular, referring to Jesus on whom the Spirit performs an action.¹⁸ *ekballei eis tēn erēmon*. *Ekballei* is a verb indicative active third person singular of *ekballō*. It means “he cast out”. The word is very forceful in the Greek. It shows the action of the Spirit with Jesus. He is cast out *eis* “into” *tēn erēmon* “the desert”. Jesus was literally “thrust” into the desert; he was literally compelled to go there. Barton *et al*, have noted that “This does not mean that Jesus was reluctant to go, but rather he was intensely determined to go, in agreement with the Spirit.”¹⁹ Mark used the same word to denote the expulsion of demons (1:34, 39; 3:15, 22-23; 6:13; 7:26; 9:18, 28, 38). Where people are involved, force is always indicated (1:43; 5:40; 11:15; 12:8). Mark used the word once in relation to the removal of an eye (9:47). As John Grassmick has rightly noted, Mark’s use of *ekballei* reflects his forceful style.²⁰ Matthew and Luke however use the milder words *anēchthē* “was led up” (Matt 4:1) and *ēgeto* “was led” (Luke 4:1) to describe the Spirit’s activity after Jesus’ baptism.

In the New Testament *ekballō* appears eighty-one times to illustrate a wide range of meanings. It must be noted however that *ekballō* has a theological bearing only in connection with casting out demons (cf. Matt 7:22; 8:10 par. 9:34; 12:26 f; 17:19 par. Luke 13:32). Thus, the translation of the verb *ekballei* is the contention in Mark 1:12. Bratcher and Nida opine that since Mark often uses *ekballō* for the casting out of demons and in this passage combines it with the vigorous word *euthus*, it ought to be translated by something stronger – “forced out” or “thrown out.”²¹ However, how can the Spirit throw out Jesus? “Throw out” or “cast out” is too strong a term for depicting the Spirit’s activity with Jesus. The author proposes, “The Spirit made Jesus go into the wilderness.”

¹⁷Robert G. Bratcher and Eugene. A. Nida, *The Translators Handbook on Mark* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1961), 33.

¹⁸*Bible Works* 6.

¹⁹Barton et al, *Mark: Life Application Commentary*, 18.

²⁰ John D. Grassmick, “Mark” in John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (eds.) *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Colorado Springs: Victor Imprint, 2000), 106.

²¹ R. G. Bratcher and E. A. Nida, *A Translators Handbook on the Gospel of Mark* (Leiden: United Bible Societies, 1991), 32.

1.3 The Meaning of Mark 1:12

After Jesus' baptism, he went forward in the power of the Spirit and at once, the Spirit sent him farther out into the desert region. Even though the word "sent" is from a strong verb *ekballō* which reflects Mark's forceful style of writing, reflected in the way he presented how demons are cast out, the thought in Mark 1:12 is that of a strong moral compulsion by which the Spirit led Jesus to take the offensive against temptation and evil instead of avoiding them. This is the way the verse should be understood. Mark 1:12 will be translated into Dangme and discussed in the subsequent section.

3. Mark 1:12 in Dangme Bible

Amlônôuuô, MumiKlôuklôuôtse eyi se ke ho nga a nôya ("Immediately, the Holy Spirit pushed him by head from behind into the wilderness").²²This same verse has been translated in the *Somi He ô*²³ as *Amlônôuuô, Mumiôkpalâkâ ho nga a nôya*. ("Immediately, the Spirit led him into the wilderness").

Mumiô (1977) has been rendered *MumiKlôuklôuô* (1999); *kpalâ*(1977) is *tse e yi se*(1999). Spirit and Holy Spirit; any difference? Why the qualification of the Spirit with "Holy"? Does it make any difference to the Dangme Bible reading community?

3.1 Problem with the translation

Tse eyise [pushed him by the head from behind] means applying a force to someone from behind. It is an idiomatic expression to compel reluctance of a weaker person to do something against his or her wish. Among the Dangme *nône a tse eyi se* (pushed by the head from behind) is a "bad boy/girl." The phrase is also used for someone whose time to die is not yet up, but has been forced to face death. Thus, the phrase in Mark 1:12 *MumiKlôuklôuô tse eyi se ke ho* means that Jesus was a "bad boy." However, that was not the testimony given of him by the Father at his baptism. God spoke from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased" (Matt 3:17). The phrase also implies that it was not yet time for Jesus to be tempted, but the Spirit forced him to go to the wilderness to face Satan.

3.2 Understanding of Mark 1:12 by Dangme Bible translators

²²*NgmamiKlôuklôuô*(The Bible in Dangme) (BSG/UBS, 1999).

²³New Testament in Dangme, (BSU/UBS, 1977).

In an interview with Gloria Kitcher-Asare,²⁴ one of the surviving translators of the Dangme Bible on the use of the phrase, *MumiKlôuklôuôtse eyi se ke ho nga a nôya* (And immediately, the Spirit pushed him by the head into the wilderness) in Mark 1:12 she said, "Until you drew my attention to it, I never thought of it as a lexical issue that could affect the interpretation of the text." She has thus agreed that the phrase is culturally inappropriate to be used for Jesus and his relation with the Spirit.

Escober Leiku²⁵ is another member of the Dangme Bible translation team. In an interview, with him, he said, "Even though the phrase *tse eyi se* in Dangme is used for bad boys, that is not the sense in which they used it in Mark 1:12 for the Spirit's activity with Jesus. He continued, "What we mean in that verse is that Jesus did not go into the wilderness by his own volition, but he was moved by the Spirit to go. In that sense, if we want an alternate phrase then that will be, *Mumiô faaleke hongaanôya* (The Spirit moved him into the wilderness).

Like Kitcher, Leiku has also confirmed the lexical inappropriateness of the phrase *tse eyi se* (push him by the head from behind); but unlike Kitcher, he has suggested an alternative translation of the phrase. Leiku's alternative translation of the phrase literally means that, Jesus was compelled by the Spirit to go into the wilderness.

3.3 Researcher's comments on the Dangme renditions of the Greek ekballei ("cast out") as

tse eyi se (push by the head)

Tse eyi se is an idiomatic expression meaning "to compel", "to hurry", "to rush" somebody to something reluctantly. Thus, the expression is forceful in nature. It agrees with the *ekballei* in the Greek text which semantically means "to make to depart forcefully and unaccompanied." Perhaps the forceful nature of *ekballei* may have necessitated its translation into Dangme as *tse eyi se* (push by the head), a phrase used to compel unwilling persons against their will to perform a task. Even though the Dangme rendition does not mean that Jesus was an unwilling person, in the thought of the indigenous Dangme it is implied. The issue here is; how can such an unwilling person be divine?

²⁴Gloria Kitcher-Asare is a graduate of the then School of Ghanaian Languages, Adjumako and the University of Cape Coast. Telephone interview.

²⁵Rev. EskoberLeiku is an Ordained Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana; a graduate of the then School of Ghanaian Languages, Adjumako, Trinity Theological Seminary, Legon and the University of Education, Winneba. He is one of the surviving members of the Dangme Bible Translation team.

That the translation of the phrase *tse eyi se* in the Dangme Bible is a problem is supported by the fact that some Greek-English translations²⁶ of the text render “cast” as “sent” - “At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness.”

3.4 Understanding and interpretations of Mark 1:12 by Dangme Bible readers

After the interview with the translators, the researcher administered questionnaire to one thousand²⁷ Dangme Bible readers in the eight Dangme speaking areas to test their understanding of the text:

Amlôôhôuu, MumiKlôuklôuôtse e yi se ke ho nga a nôya (Mk.1:12).

- A. *MumiKlôuklôuônyee Yesuhemike ho nga a nôya* (“The Holy Spirit in front of Jesus led him to the desert”).
- B. *MumiKlôuklôuô nenge Yesu se ôtsitseleke ho nga a nôya* (“The Holy Spirit behind Jesus pushed him into the desert”).
- C. *MumiKlôuklôuô nu Yesune e gblaleke ho nga a nôya* (“The Holy Spirit got hold of Jesus and dragged him into the desert”).
- D. *MumiKlôuklôuô ha ne Yesu ho nga a nôya* (“The Holy Spirit made Jesus go into the desert”).
- E. *Hetoneômetsuoo* (All the above)

The results are as follows:

4. Table 2: Interpretation and Understanding of Mark 1:12

Dangme-speaking Area	Mk. 1:12				
	A	B	C	D	E
Ada	10(0.9%)	7(1.2%)	2(0.4%)	95(16.8%)	1(0.2%)
					115
Ningo	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	12(2.1%)	0(0%)
					12
Kpone	0(0%)	1(0.2%)	0 (0%)	11(1.9%)	0(0%)
					12
Prampram	2(0.4%)	4(0.7%)	0(0%)	10(1.8%)	2(0.4%)
					18
Shai	2(0.4%)	1(0.2%)	1(0.2%)	40(7.1%)	0(0%)
					44

²⁶John R. Kohlenberger III (Gen ed.) *NIV Greek and English New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2012); William D. Mounce, *Interlinear for the Rest of Us: The Reverse Interlinear for New Testament Word Studies* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2006).

²⁷565 Dangme Bible readers from the eight Dangme traditional areas responded to the questionnaire.

Osudoku	5(0.8%)	4(0.7%)	2(0.4%)	78(13.8%)	0(0%)
					89
Ma-Krobo	15(2.7%)	3(0.5%)	1(0.2%)	91(16.1%)	0(0%)
					110
Yilo-Krobo	8(1.4)	3(0.5%)	7(1.2%)	145(25.6)	2(0.4%)
					165
Total	42(7.4%)	23(4.1%)	13(2.3%)	482(85.3%)	5(0.9%)
					565(100)

Source: Field data 2015

4.1 Finding from the interpretations of field data on Mark 1:12

Mark 1:12 also recorded varied preferences from the respondents. Majority of the respondents, that is, four hundred and eighty-two (482) representing 85.3% interpret it as alternative D *MumiKlôuklôuô ô ha neYesu ho nga a nôya* (The Holy Spirit made Jesus go into the desert); forty-two (42) constituting 7.4% of the respondents also choose alternative A *MumiKlôuklôuô ô nyeeYesuhemike ho nga a nôya* (The Holy Spirit in front of Jesus led him to the desert); twenty-four (23) representing 4.1% indicated their understanding of the text for alternative B *MumiKlôuklôuô ô nengeYesu se ô tsitseleke ho nga a nôya* (The Holy Spirit behind Jesus pushed him into the desert); and fourteen (13) representing 2.3% also interpret the verse as alternative C *MumiKlôuklôuô ô nu Yesune e gblaleke ho nga a nôya* (The Holy Spirit got hold of Jesus and dragged him into the desert). However, five (5) of the respondents representing 0.9% indicated the understanding of the verse can be interpreted as all the alternatives. This means that, there was a varied understanding of the text by respondents irrespective of their tribes hence, their challenge of interpreting it.

5. A Comparative Analysis of Mark 1:12 in other southern Ghana Translations²⁸

The Ga and Ewe translations - *Nmale Kronkron Le* (Old Ga Bible)²⁹, *Åmale KrôâkrôâLe* (New Ga Bible),³⁰ *Biblia* (Old Ewe Bible),³¹ *Biblia* (New Ewe Bible)³² - use *kpla* and *kplô*, meaning “led” or “guided” and *do du* “rushed” to describe the Spirit’s activity with Jesus.

²⁸See J. E. T. Kuwornu-Adjaottor, A Comparative Study of Mark 1:12 in Some Ghanaian Mother-tongue Translations of the Bible, *Journal of Arts and Culture* Volume 6, (November 2011): 67-73.

²⁹*NmaleKronkron Le* (Accra: Bible Society of Ghana/United Bible Societies, 1908).

³⁰*DmaleKronkronLe* (Accra: Bible Society of Ghana, 2006).

³¹*Biblia*(Accra: Bible Society of Ghana/United Bible Societies, 1931).

³²*Biblia*(Accra: Bible Society of Ghana, 2010).

Compare the above renderings with the following translations which also use milder expressions than what Mark used to translate *ekballei*: *Somi He ô* (Dangme New Testament),³³ *Wami Munyuô: Somi He ô Ke La ame*, (Dangme New Testament and Psalms)³⁴ render *ekballei* as *kpaka* “accompanied;” *wo leke ho* “sent him”; and three Akan newer translations – *Nkwa Asem* (Asante-Twi New Testament and Psalms),³⁵ *NkwaAsem* (Akuapem-Twi New Testament and Psalms)³⁶ and *Twere Kronkron* (New Testament, English-Twi Version)³⁷ render the word as *de Yesukôô* “sent Jesus.”

The *Kyerew Kronkron* (Old Akuapem-Twi Bible),³⁸ *Twere Kronkron* (Old Asante-Twi Bible),³⁹ *Nwoma Krônkrôn* (Old Mfante Bible),⁴⁰ and *Ahyemu Fofor No Mu Nwoma* (Mfante New Testament; Interconfessional Revised edition)⁴¹ translate *ekballei* as *twee*, meaning “dragged,” and the *Ngmami Klôuklôuô* (Dangme Bible),⁴² *tsee yi se* “push by the head.” These expressions imply that perhaps Jesus was reluctant to go into the wilderness after his baptism.

There is no doubt about the fact that the Greek word *ekballō* implies a strong action. Nevertheless, rendering it with milder expressions could also mean that perhaps the latter translators were aware of the difficulty the earlier translators may have gone through and the challenge the translation of *ekballei* may cause in the religio-cultural context of Ghanaian mother-tongue Bible readers. Perhaps we can harmonize the rendering of *ekballō* in the various translations to give its theological interpretation.

6. A proposed translation of Mark 1:12 that fits into the religio-cultural context of the Dangme

Amlôô mi nôuuô, Mumiô ha ne e ho nga a nôya

(Immediately the Spirit made

him go into the wilderness] or [...the Spirit permitted him to go into the wilderness).

³³*Somi He ô* (Accra: Bible Society of Ghana/United Bible Societies, 1977).

³⁴*WamiMunyuô: Somi He ôKâ La amâ* (Accra: International Bible Society, 1997).

³⁵*NkwaAsâm*(Accra: International Bible Society, 1996).

³⁶*NkwaAsâm*(Accra: International Bible Society, 2000).

³⁷*TwereKronkron*(Kumasi: New Word Publishing (Gh) Limited, 2013).

³⁸*KyerewKronkron*(Accra: Bible Society of Ghana/United Bible Societies, 1964)

³⁹*TwereKronkron*(Accra: Bible Society of Ghana/United Bible Societies, 1964).

⁴⁰*NwomaKrônkrôn*(Accra: Bible Society of Ghana, 1948).

⁴¹*AhyemuFofor No Mu Nwoma* (Bungay, Suffolk: United Bible Societies, 1982).

⁴²*NgmamiKlôuklôuô* (Accra: Bible Society of Ghana/United Bible Societies, 1999).

The research report indicates that 482 (85.3%) of the respondents in the eight Dangme Bible reading communities are in favour of the translation of Mark 1:12 as, *Mumi Klôuklôuô ha ne Yesu ho nga a nôya* (The Holy Spirit made Jesus go into the wilderness). This translation would clear the confusion in the minds of Dangme bible readers who do not understand how the Holy Spirit could “push” Jesus into the wilderness. It will also help them to understand that when one is under the influence of the Holy Spirit, one is under His control; the Holy Spirit permits one to do what pleases God. The Holy Spirit’s activity understood in this would help determine when the Spirit or otherwise is working in the lives of people. This would be a check on the numerous charismatic experiences of people, whose activities sometimes create doubt in the minds of people.

7. Discussion

The proposed translation of Mark 1:12 in the Dangme Bible has confirmed Derrida’s philosophy of Deconstruction⁴³ cited by Tyson that, “A text does not have a fixed meaning. It can be translated or remolded in the religio-cultural thought of a reading community.”⁴⁴ It also affirms the position of Mugambi and Smith that in the contextual approach to Biblical Hermeneutics (the bigger umbrella under which Mother-tongue Biblical Hermeneutics falls), “there is a movement away from the ‘context of the text’ and the text itself to the context of the readers.”⁴⁵ This is done to factor some concerns of the readers into the translated text, so that readers see the Bible as God’s message for their communities. The findings of this research is also in line with Manus,⁴⁶ Yorke and Renju⁴⁷ Wendland and Loba-Mkole⁴⁸ that Contextual Hermeneutics

⁴³Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1976).

⁴⁴Lois Tyson, *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide* (New York/London: Routledge, 2006), 258-259.

⁴⁵J. N. K. Mugambi & Johnson Smit (eds.), *Text and Context in New Testament Hermeneutics* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2004), 23-24.

⁴⁶U. C. Manus, *Intercultural Hermeneutics* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2004).

⁴⁷G. L. Yorke & P. M. Renju (eds.) *Bible Translation & African Languages* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2004).

⁴⁸E. R. Wendland & J-C Loba-Mkole, *Biblical Texts & African Audiences* (Nairobi: Acton, 2004). _____, *Interacting with Scriptures in Africa* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2005).

enable readers bring their own points of view and concerns to a text and so may end up with different meanings.

8. Conclusion

No two languages are the same and so there are bound to be interpretations, additions and omissions when a written document is being translated from one language to another. This assertion applies to Bible translation. The critical study of the translation of Mark 1:12 in the Dangme Bible has proved this assertion; it has evolved a new translation of the text in Dangme, which is acceptable to indigenous Dangme Bible readers. The study has thus, added to the varied translations and interpretations of Mark 1:12.

Whilst interpretation in Bible translation may be seen as a problem, its advantages outweigh the disadvantages in the sense that mother-tongue Bible readers want to hear God speak to them in their own mother-tongues. It is therefore important that Bible translators translate meaning instead of exact words and idioms from the Source Languages (SL) into Receptor Languages (RL). Nevertheless, this must be done with caution, using appropriate lexical but culturally appropriate terms that evolve from the history, worldview, language and literature of mother-tongue speakers, to enable them accept God's message to them.