

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA.

A LITERARY STUDY OF FARMING-RELATED PROVERBS

AMONG THE DAGBAMBA



ABDUL RAHMAN MOHAMMED

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

2023

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA.

**A LITERARY STUDY OF FARMING-RELATED PROVERBS
AMONG THE DAGBAMBA**

ABDUL RAHMAN MOHAMMED

(220032627)



**A thesis in the Department of Gur-Gonja Education, Faculty of Ghanaian
Languages Education, submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
(Dagbani)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

NOVEMBER, 2023

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Abdul Rahman Mohammed, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works, which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:

Date:

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis/dissertation/project as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Supervisor: MR. HENRY K. AFARI-TWAKO

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

To my late Father Yarnaa Mahamadu Alhassan and my mother Mariyama

Neindoo.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is not possible for me to name every single individual who contributed to the success of this research. A few however are deserve of particular mention.

I am honestly grateful to The Almighty Allah for everything He has done for me.

I am highly indebted to my mentor and supervisor, Chief Henry K. Afari-Twako who has painstakingly guided and supervised this thesis. Indeed, you have been a caring father to me. Sincerely, I appreciate your patience and criticism that brought me this far.

Special mention must be made of the great contribution and assistance of Mr. Abdul Baaki Salifu of the University of education, Winneba. At the time I nearly lost it, you aided me to pick the pieces together, the result is this research. Your reward is with Allah.

I am indeed grateful to my wife and children for their constant support and prayers whenever I had to travel out of home for this research work. May Allah richly bless you all.

I must acknowledge the immense contribution of some individuals in this research; Mr. Issah Zakaria (Bagurnaa), Abdul Razak Wumpini (Luŋ Zaaku), Mr. Abudu Mahama Fuseini and Mr. Jabuni Fuseini of Tamale Girls SHS as well as Mr. Haruna Mburidiba Mohammed.

To all the lecturers of the University of Education, Winneba especially Prof. Issah, Dr. Regina Oforiwa Caesar, Mr. Pazzak and Mr. Fusheini, and my course mates, I am much grateful. May the Almighty Allah bless you all.

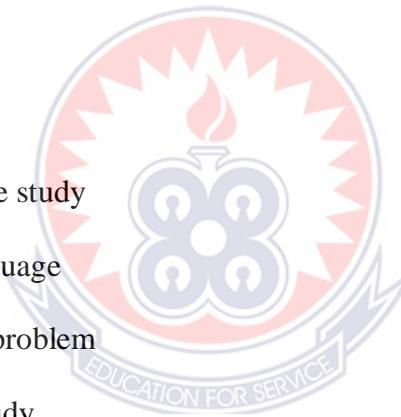


TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
TABLE	xii
FIGURE	xiii
ABSTRACT	xiv

CHAPTER ONE

1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	Background to the study	1
1.2	The Dagbani language	2
1.3	Statement of the problem	4
1.4	Purpose of the study	5
1.5	Objectives of the study	5
1.6	Research questions	6
1.7	Significance of the study	6
1.8	Limitations	6
1.9	Delimitation of the study	7
1.10	Organization of the study	7



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0	Introduction	9
2.1	The Concept, Meaning and Sources of Proverbs	17
2.2	The structure of proverbs	22
2.3	Themes in farming-related proverbs	23
2.3.1	Theme of bad input	24
2.3.2	Theme of assurance	25
2.3.3	Theme of hopelessness	26
2.3.4	Theme of acknowledgement	27
2.3.5	Theme of satisfaction	27
2.3.6	Theme of inheritance	28
2.3.7	Theme of the need for distance	29
2.3.8	Theme of sole efforts	30
2.3.9	Theme of dependence	31
2.3.9	Theme of ridicule	32
2.3.10	Theme of empty pride	32
2.3.11	Theme of security	33
2.3.12	Theme of patience	33
2.3.13	Theme of fairness	34
2.3.14	Theme of results	34
2.3.15	Theme of ownership	35
2.4	Literary devices in proverbs	35

2.4.1	Simile in proverbs	36
2.4.2	Personification in farming proverbs	37
2.4.3	Metaphor in farming-related proverbs	40
2.4.4	Lexical parallelism in farming-related proverbs	40
2.5	Theoretical framework	41
2.6	Summary of chapter	45

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0	Introduction	46
3.1	The research design	46
3.2	Population	47
3.3	Participants /Sample	48
3.4	Sampling technique	49
3.5	Sources of data	50
3.6	Data collection technique	51
3.7	Instruments for Data Collection	55
3.7	Data analysis procedure	56
3.8	Summary of chapter	57



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0	The general introduction	58
4.1	Individual farm-related proverbs	58
4.1.1	The farm crops/produce as a cosmology	59
4.1.2	The farmer/human being as a cosmology	59
4.1.3	The farmland as a cosmology	73
4.1.4	The farm animal as a cosmology	84
4.2	Themes in farming-related proverbs	89
4.2.1	Theme of ownership	97
4.2.2	Theme of endurance	97
4.2.3	Theme of balance	99
4.2.4	Theme of cautiousness	100
4.2.5	Theme of ability	101
4.2.6	Theme of season	103
4.2.7	Theme of laziness	105
4.2.8	Theme of shared responsibility	107
4.2.9	Theme of proximity	109
4.2.10	Theme of uncertainty	110
4.2.11	Theme of capacity	112
4.3	Literary devices in Dagbamba farming-related proverbs	114
4.3.1	Personification	114
4.3.2	Semantic parallelism	118



4.3.3	Alliteration	120
4.4	Summary of chapter	121

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0	Introduction	122
5.1	Summary of the study	122
5.2	Findings of the study	124
5.3	Conclusion	125
5.4	Recommendations	126
	References	127



TABLE

Sample of Participants

49



FIGURE

A linguistic map of Ghana, indicating the area of the speakers of Dagbani adopted from Hudu (2010).

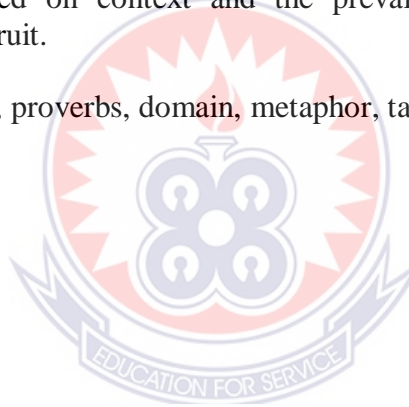
4



ABSTRACT

This thesis is on the literary study of farming-related proverbs in Dagbani, a Mabia language spoken in the Northern Region of Ghana. The study employs Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) as an analytical tool. The study analyzed the basic meaning of individual farming-related proverbs, the specific themes in these proverbs and the stylistic devices that are contained in this category of proverbs. Data was collected through semi-structured interview and self-generated data through native speaker introspection. Findings from the study revealed that the Dagbamba farming-related proverbs appear to contain short structures and long ones. It appears that proverbs that come in short forms have deeper meanings and interpretation than their longer counterparts. It is also observed that these proverbs contain themes such as, theme of endurance, theme of hard work, theme of uncertainty, theme of balance, proximity etc. Few stylistic devices such as Personification, Parallelism and Alliteration are found in this category of proverbs. More importantly, the Dagbamba farming-related proverbs are not much productive in the stylistic sense. This may be due to the fact that, unlike other oral genres like poems, songs or folktales which can be performed before audience, proverbs are cited based on context and the prevailing circumstance predicts the particular proverb to recruit.

Key words: Conceptual, proverbs, domain, metaphor, target, Dagbani.



CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

Proverbs are pervasive in almost all languages of the world. They have been seen to be important ingredients in every conversation. According to Agyekum (2005: p,9), the most acknowledged element of communicative competence of an Akan speaker is his/her ability to use *ɛbɛ* 'proverbs' in speech. This study provides a literary study of farming related proverbs in Dagbani, a Mabia language spoken in the Northern Region of Ghana. This study explores the philosophies of the Dagbamba that are rooted in their farming related proverbs, the themes in these proverbs and aesthetics of the different categories of proverbs among the Dagbamba.

Beyond this section, the rest of this chapter is organized under the following sub-sections section 1.1 presents the background to the study while section 1.2 discusses the language of the people under study. Section 1.3 presents the statement of the problem. Section 1.4 and 1.5 outline the research objectives and research questions respectively. Section 1.6 presents the significance of the study while delimitation of the study comes under section 1.7. Section 1.8 presents the organization of the study while section 1.9 summarizes and concludes the chapter.

1.1 Background to the study

Research into the concept of proverbs is extensively explored in different dimensions by linguists of distinct languages across the world. (Yanka, 1989, Kquofi et al, 2013, Villers, 2016, Agyekum 2017, Yakub, 2018, Owu-Ewie, 2019), and others.

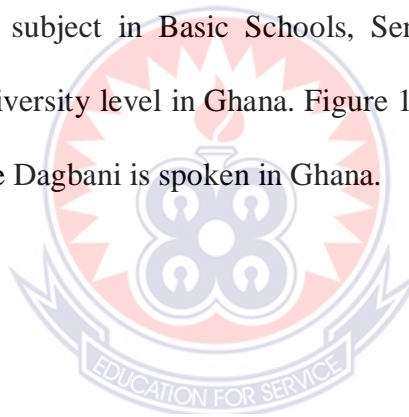
Yanka (1989), posits that the form and meaning of a proverb are not fixed; they move with usage. For Agyekum (2017), the concept of proverbs is based on the truths about peoples' past experiences, philosophy, perception, ideology, socio-cultural concepts and also, the way people view the world. This means that proverbs are not in a vacuum, they come as a result of human exposure to an adventure relative to context. Among the Dagbamba, proverbs are indelible in the culture and almost all practices of the people. They are central in communication among the elderly and the youth. As a result, they are associated with wisdom and those who use proverbs in speech are highly recognized and held in high esteem. It is therefore not strange that great men in Dagbon are remembered by their wise saying. Every aspect of the Dagbamba life such as farming, marriage, festivals, war and chieftaincy is embodied with proverbs. Proverbs such as; *Wuni bimbirili, sanzali bi kuri li*, which means "the seed God has sown, drought can't kill it", *sana ku tooi baŋ kabira sayim*, which means "a stranger cannot recognize TZ prepared from millet meant for sowing" and many others are farm related proverbs which this study seeks to explore and analyze extensively.

1.2 The Dagbani language

Dagbani belongs to the Mabia-language of the Niger-Congo Basin language group spoken in the Northern Region of Ghana (Bodomo, 2020). According to Hudu (2010), national censuses in Ghana group together four related ethnic groups who speak Mabia (Gur) languages called Mole-Dagbani. The ethnic groups are Dagomba, Nanumba, Mamprusi and Mossi (spoken mainly in Burkina Faso). The traditional state of the Dagbamba is Dagboŋ (the traditional seat of the Yaa Naa). According to Hudu (2010),

the 2000 Population Census released by the Ghana Statistical Service indicated that this language group (Mole-Dagbani) constitutes 16.5 per cent of the population of Ghana. Kwame (2018), approximates that Dagbani has about two million native speakers in Ghana. Dagbani has three major dialects which include Tomosili (the Western dialect) spoken in Tamale and its surroundings, Nayahali (the Eastern dialect), spoken in and around Yendi, and Nanuni, (the southern dialect) which is spoken around Bimbila and its surroundings (Issah 2015). There is total mutual intelligibility among the speakers of these three dialects.

Dagbani is taught as a subject in Basic Schools, Senior High Schools, Colleges of Education and at the University level in Ghana. Figure 1.1 is the language map of Ghana indicating the area where Dagbani is spoken in Ghana.



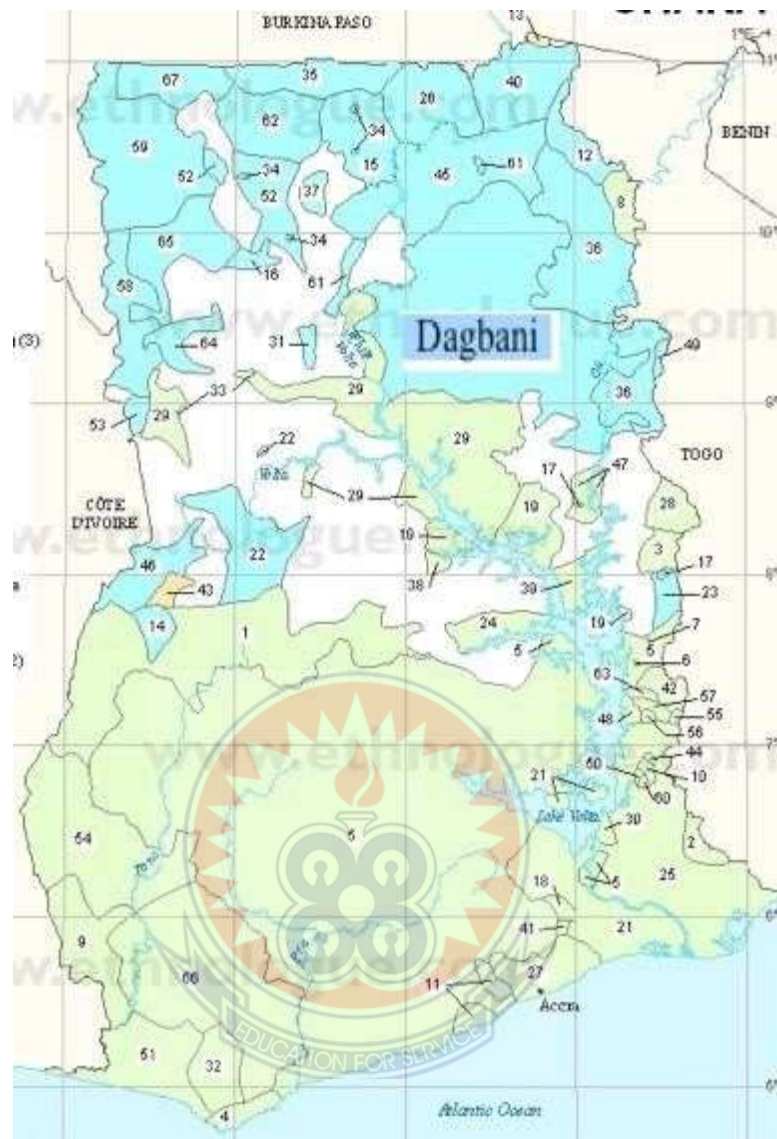


Figure 1: A linguistic map of Ghana, indicating the area of the speakers of Dagbani adopted from Hudu (2010).

1.3 Statement of the problem

Several works have been done in the oral literature of Dagbani among which are Inusa and Issahaku (2019), The role of oral proverbs in Dagbani, Musah (2014), The aesthetics of the libation prayer text among the Dagbamba, Habib (2015), Verbal taboos in Dagbani, Sibdow (2015), Analysis of greetings among the Dagbamba, Zakariya (2020),

Analysis of some Damba festival songs among the Dagbamba and others. However, less attention has been paid specifically to the study of Dagbamba proverbs related to farming and farm produce, hence the motivation to fill this gap.

Some philosophies of a particular group of people can be found in their proverbs. However, these proverbs are not understood by the meanings of the mere words employed in them. Their understanding is based on contextual and background knowledge. Speakers of a language therefore need to employ certain level of pragmatic wisdom in order to understand and interpret a proverb. This study therefore brings to light the philosophies of the Dagbamba in relation to farming as their major occupation in the Northern Region of Ghana.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to bring to knowledge the literary study of farming-related proverbs in Dagbani, by investigating the meaning of individual farming-related proverbs, the themes in this category of proverbs as well as the stylistic devices these proverbs possess.

1.5 Objectives of the study

The following objectives underpin the study:

- To investigate the specific farming related proverbs in Dagbani
- To examine the cultural philosophical themes in the Dagbamba farming related proverbs
- To analyze the literary devices in the Dagbamba farming related proverbs.

1.6 Research questions

The study answers the following research questions;

- What are the specific proverbs about farming among the Dagbamba?
- What are the themes in the Dagbamba farming related proverbs?
- Which literary devices are in the Dagbamba farming-related proverbs?

1.7 Significance of the study

This study would help discover the various proverbs related to farming and farm produce among the Dagbamba. The study will bring to light the philosophies of the Dagbamba in relation to farming as an occupation, and themes and literary devices that are embedded in farm related proverbs. The findings of this research would be beneficial to students and teachers of Dagbani who would have access to this work to be informed about proverbs related to farming and how they affect the daily lives of the Dagbamba. This study would also pave way for researchers who are interested in exploring proverbs in Dagbani. This work would help preserve some important aspects of the linguistics of Dagbani and eventually add up to the numerous existing literatures on proverbs and oral literature as a whole. The data for this work can also serve as resource for future language and linguistics analysis of the Dagbani and other domains of linguistics.

1.8 Limitations

Apart from time and financial constraints that were major setbacks in this research, there were also problems in meeting some of the respondents at the exact scheduled time.

Since it was a rainy season, some of them would abandon the meeting and go to their farms. I equally had to called off some of my trips because of a heavy downpour

1.9 Delimitation of the study

This study is delimited to specifically proverbs in relation to farming among the Dagbamba. The study was also carried out in only three Dagbani speaking communities of *Fooshayu and Gbilahibila* in Tamale, *Zohitiŋli* in the Yendi traditional area and *Makayili* in the *Bimbila* traditional area. This selection constitutes the areas where the three major dialects of Dagbani are spoken; thus tomosili, nayahili and nanuni.

1.10 Organization of the study

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter one discusses the general overview of the thesis, it discusses the background to the study, the language of the people under study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study and organization of the study. Chapter two reviews related literature on the concept of proverbs, their themes and literary devices found in farming related proverbs. It also presents the theoretical framework (Conceptual Metaphor Theory) adopted for the study.

Chapter three discusses the methodology employed in this study. The chapter discusses the source of data and data collection strategies, the research design, population size and the participants used in the data collection process. The chapter presents the instruments

used in the data collection such as interview schedules. It also looks at documents, focus groups as well as ethical issues.

Chapter four presents the data collected on specific farming related proverbs, the themes as well as the literary devices imbedded in the proverbs. Chapter five summarizes the thesis, pointing out findings and also outlining some recommendations for future research.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews related literature on the concept, meaning and sources of proverbs, the structure of proverbs, themes of farming-related proverbs and literary devices in farming-related proverbs. This chapter is organized under the following sub-sections: section 2.1 presents the concept, meaning and sources of proverbs, section 2.2 provides a review on the structure of proverbs, while section 2.3 provides themes of farming-related proverbs. In section 2.4 a review of literary devices of farming-related proverbs is presented, while section 2.5 presents the review of the theoretical framework adopted for the data presentation and analysis. The summary of the chapter comes in section 2.6.

2.1 The Concept, Meaning and Sources of Proverbs

The concept of proverbs exists in almost every language of the world, and a popular linguistic phenomenon in African societies. Several scholars including the following have made attempts to define or explain what a proverb is, Yankah (1989), Okpewho (1992), Honeck & Temple (1994), Gibbs & Beitel (1995), Awedoba (2000), Tetteh (2013), and Yakub (2018).

Okpewho (1992), for instance argues that, ‘a proverb may be defined as a piece of *folk wisdom* expressed with *terseness* and *charm*.’ Yankah (1989) opines that proverbs are short wise sayings which are pithy and terse. This is explained to mean that proverbs communicate more information in a few words. However, their understanding requires

extra knowledge and experience of the speaker of the language. Agyekum (2012), on his part, argues that a proverb is something that one can use as a microscopic lens to view and understand the social practices and day-to-day activities of a society. This means that one can predict the philosophies of a group of people by critically analyzing their proverbs. Kogri and Tangwam (2018) discuss the Dagaaba proverbs and argue that the Dagaaba proverbs have a lot of symbolic representations that bring out the aesthetics of the language. They are of the view that Dagaaba proverbs are usually used in a context that calls for their usage for different meanings in a different context to embellish the aesthetic nature of the language.

Rahim and Issah (2013) discussed agricultural-related proverbs among the Yuroba of Nigeria. They postulate that proverbs derive their meaning from a combination of their cosmologies and the context where they are deployed. A proverb's cosmology is the aspect of the universe that is focused in that proverb. Hence understanding that aspect of the universe is central to understanding the proverb as a whole.

Honeck and Temple (1994) posit that a proverb is a simple and concrete saying popularly known and repeated, which expresses the truth, based on common sense or the practical experiences of humanity. This explains that proverbs are known by the folks who use them. Any proverb in use may be unanimously known by the community members and they can interpret it according to the context of use. In the same context, Tetteh, (2013, p. 1) contends that a proverb is a piece of folk-literature which moves abreast with riddles and fables and other folk literature. He observes further that

proverbs are known to be short sentences drawn from experience to sum up or comment upon situations in metaphorical ways. This suggests that proverbs are sources of figurative language and metaphor, and the understanding of proverbs is metaphorical. Aside the linguistic representation of the proverb, the interpretation of the proverb requires the recruitment of deep philosophy and wisdom, and not in just plain language. For Durkheinn, (1933, p. 170-171), cited in Diabah and Amfo, (2018: 181) ‘a proverb is condensed statement of a collective idea or sentiment relative to a determined category of objects. Durkheinn sees proverbs as statements that are reduced in utterance to express an idea or feeling.

Whiting (1983: p. 80), as cited in Malik, (2017, p. 54), maintains that a proverb is an expression which owes its birth to the people, testifies its origin in form and phrase. This means that the proverb is associated with a particular group of people where similar (if not the same) convictions relating to a particular thing are known to everybody. This accounts for Finnegan’s (1970, p. 194) confirmation that “it is often impossible to grasp the point or attraction of a given proverb without some knowledge of the cultural what is apparently a fundamental truth in a homely language, often ornamented, however, with alliteration and rhyme. It is usually short and usually true but needs not be easily explained. Some have both literal and figurative meanings, either of which makes perfect sense; but more often they have one of the two. This is more related to meaning than the concept”. Finnegan (1970, p. 393), affirms that a proverb is “a saying in a more or less fixed form marked by shortness, sense and salt and distinguished by the popular acceptance of the truth tersely expressed in it”. These features are common in

Dagbamba farm related proverbs since some of them are short and sensible. The Dagbamba proverbs have fixed forms and cannot be changed and still convey the same meaning and effect.

In addition to the above, Awedoba (2000), observes that the meaning of a proverb is ‘the totality of its references and uses or its potential meaning’. However, one proverb may have an array of potential uses because it generalizes concepts and contains many speech acts. This assertion is affirmed by Gibbs and Beitel (1995), who view proverbs as familiar, fixed sentential expressions that express well known truths, social norms or moral concerns. Basing on this, it is not a surprise that proverbs sometimes send warning or advice to its listener(s). In Agyekum’s (2012), view, proverbs are time tested, brief and witty sayings, usually symbolic, that express a truth or recognized observation about practical things which is based on traditional experiences and have been transmitted from generation to generation and have withstood the test of time. With this observation, one could say that proverbs are one of the most preserved oral genres of a particular group of people. Gibbs and Beitel (1995), also observe that most psychologists assume that understanding figurative meanings of proverbs requires various kinds of higher order cognitive abilities and they suggest that the ability to understand proverbs reveals the presence of metaphorical schemes that are ubiquitous in everyday thought.

Discussing the source of proverbs Villers (2016, p. 369), postulates that, although there is an abundance of studies that deal with the source and creators of specific proverbs, it is extremely difficult to find any that describes the general way proverbs are born. However, Taylor (1934, p. 10), cited in Villers (2016), observes that every proverb has

been created by an individual and set in circulation by him, but a man's aphorism or witty saying does not become a proverb until it has been accepted by popular tradition. This explains that proverbs are actually created by people. However, they have to be spread to catch public or societal approval and usage. Borkor (2004) affirms this assertion by postulating that proverbs are drawn from careful observations of social events, the lives of people and animals. Some are also drawn from experiences in occupations such as farming, hunting, weaving and so on. In terms of the functions of proverb, Borkor (2004) explains that we have proverbs that talk about the family and human relations, good and evil, poverty and riches, joy and sorrow and many other things that relate to human life and behavior.

Villers (2016, p. 373), again posits that the first phase of proverb biogenesis (the birth of proverbs) is not 'creation', but what triggers it. It means that proverbs are born out of circumstances, where a context triggers its relevance and usage. Firth (1926), cited in Villers (2016), refers to this as a 'set of circumstances.' Villers explains that these circumstances are stimuli in real life: an experience from which an observation is derived. For instance, the English proverb *Garbage in, garbage out* was recorded in a 1957 article about the use of computers for traffic and highway products. It is assumed that the stimulus to such an observation was the bad results given by incorrect data input. When such observations are shared with others, they are no longer thoughts, but reach the verbal dimension of expression. This corresponds to three steps described in Gustave Guillaume's psycho mechanics theory adapted from Villers (2016);

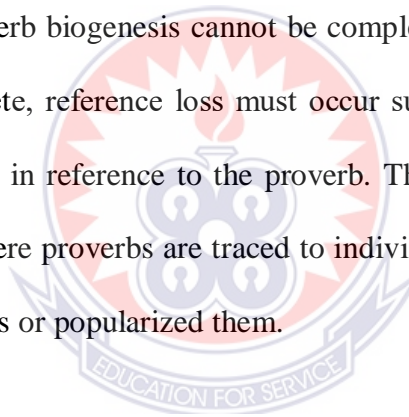
Experience (memory) ———> Representation (language) ———> Expression (speech)

The three-step psychometric theory explains this process of proverb biogenesis (the birth of proverbs) and how it becomes popular in the real language usage. The first step which is ‘experience’, represents the circumstance that triggers the use of the proverb. The circumstance could be in a gathering or a conversation among individuals in an occasion. The next stage which is ‘representation’, describes the specific language in which the proverb is represented. The final stage describes usage, where the proverb is put into expressions by individuals in real contexts.

Beyond what triggers the proverb, Villers, (2016), indicates the other phase of proverb ‘biogenesis’ which is exposure. After an experience is derived from a circumstance, its successful dissemination can only begin if a sufficient number of speakers/hearers are exposed to the formula at the same time. Villers explains that the exposure takes place by means of a *propagating agent*, such as film, an advertisement, a book, a published speech etc. This means that the *propagating agent* contributes to the wide spread of the formula for wider usage. The other phase observed by Villers is the dissemination phase, which he considered as the longest phase in *proverb biogenesis* in which he maintains that this phase normally takes years. Several ingredients account for a successful dissemination. In the first place, the formula must be a useful message that people will choose to pass on. Also, for it to survive it must be easy to use, it must not be too long or too hard to understand. Finally, prosodic features of the formula or other “fascinating agents” may be attracted to some speakers. This means the more the formula is used, the more currency it gains and builds up its ‘commonness’. In support of this assertion, Mieder, (2004, p. 9), cited in Villers, (2016), noted that when a proverb catches on, it

might be used first in a small family circle, a city, a region, a country, a continent and eventually the world.

Another phase observed by Villers is the reference loss phase. Once the formula has gained currency or ‘commonness’, proverb biogenesis is not yet complete. Obviously, reference loss must occur to complete the process. This loss may be prior, simultaneous or subsequent to the dissemination and may be the longest phase of all. The speed of the dissemination is dependent on the creator of the formula and the scope of the propagating agent(s). If the creator is too famous and the propagating agents do not erase his or her identity, proverb biogenesis cannot be complete. This means that for proverb biogenesis to be complete, reference loss must occur such that the originator’s identity can no longer be traced in reference to the proverb. This can be observed about some Dagbamba proverbs where proverbs are traced to individuals who are purported to have originated those proverbs or popularized them.



In the discussion of proverbs, Halms cited in Amate (2011), observes that proverbs are rooted in folklore and have been preserved by oral tradition. An example of such is *A rolling stone gathers no moss*. Some proverbs have literal origins, as in the case where Benjamin (1999), adopted the Aesop’s proverb, *‘the gods help those that help themselves.’* Proverbs are appealing because they are brief and sometimes rhyme, as for example, *A friend in need is a friend indeed*, they can be metaphorical like *Still waters run deep*. Halms further observes that proverbs can be formulated by anybody by the

choice of his or her words of interest that contain wisdom and carry information to warn, advice, and appraise a situation or a person.

Awedoba. (2000), explains cultural occasions that inform the creation of proverbs in our circumstances. People tell stories (folktales) for instance and at the end, when they want to summarize the central message, may coin a saying that aptly captures the message. A continuous usage or repetition of such saying as people try to retell such stories may end up making that saying a proverb.

On the origin of proverbs, Ackwa, (1988), argues that the origin of any proverb has actually been concise, brief and of figurative statement which usually forms speeches of the wise or elderly in a particular situation or context. If it impresses the speakers or audience as rich and full of wisdom, anybody may quote it in a similar situation and as time goes on, it becomes a popular expression in the language of the people. Ackwa's observation coincides with that of Villers's position that proverbs with moral significance become fashionable and popular and are adopted into the social ethics of the people. This is quite true to the origin of proverbs among many ethnic groups including the Dagbamba society. Among the Dagbamba, some proverbs can be traced to the past kings and chiefs of Dagbɔŋ as they are known to be their appellations. In some cases, the said king or chief would make a statement during a confrontation, installation of a chief, a meeting or in a war to warn, admonish or place emphases on an issue. Such a statement would be used by people from time to time and eventually become a proverb. Some Dagbani proverbs come from legends and tales the elderly narrate to the young ones in

attempt to teach them the culture and tradition of the Dagbamba. As a result, new proverbs are created from time to time among the Dagbani to enhance their communication and education.

2.2 The structure of proverbs

According to Kogri and Tangwam (2018), the term proverb structure can be explained as the arrangement of the various sounds and words that come together to form a complete proverb. Proverbs are therefore composed in a variety of ways. However, what constitutes the structure of a literary genre is viewed by many scholars in different dimensions. Among them are Coinnigh (2014), Kogri and Tangwam (2018), Kogri (2014), Finnegan (2012), Stewart (1997), Mardan (2009), cited in Kogri and Tangwam (2018). These scholars of oral literature seem to view literary structure syntactically. Finnegan (2012, p. 389), for instance, argues that proverbs are generally marked by terseness of expression and different from an ordinary speech and figurative expressions that are abound in metaphor. She is of the view that the actual wording may take the form of a simple positive or negative proposition, or of various types of simple rhythmic balanced proposition and double propositions in which the second portion is self-explanatory and also common with the first part. Finnegan (2021) gave an example of the Swahili simple positive statement as ‘the goat-eater pays a cow’ which means; it sows the wind and reaps the whirlwind. Another example is the Zulu proverb, ‘He has a chest’ which means’ he can keep secrets.

Kogri and Tangwam (2018), identified in the selected proverbs structures such as simple and complex sentences, contrast proposition statements, simple rhythmic balance propositions, rhetorical statements, negative axiom statements and simple positive statements as well as short and long sentence proverbs such as the Dagaaba proverb that says,

Noore la sō ɔ.

‘Mouth is a witch craft.’ Yabang (1999, p. 1)

This implies that whatever comes out of an elder’s mouth is more powerful than witchery, and for that matter if an elder says something, it will happen.

Coinnigh (2014, p. 114), on the other hand posits that proverbs appear in a variety of different sentence types. From a syntactic perspective, these sentences may be classified into four distinct types according to the number of clauses and sub-clauses they contain. These sentence types are: simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex. However, the most basic sentence is the *simple sentence* type, which contains one main clause (subject and predicate) and no sub-clauses. They are typically simple, declarative, non-oppositional, and stylistically unmarked. They appear in both affirmative and negative form. The following Italian and French examples of proverbs appear in both affirmative and negative forms as presented by Coinnigh (2014, p. 114).

Acqua cheta rovina i ponti. (Italian) Affirmative (+)
[Silent waters run deep.]

Comparaison n’est pas raison. (French) Negative (–)
[Comparison is no reason.]

Coinnigh (2014, p. 114)

These types of proverbs are also common among the Dagbamba and Dagaaba. They can be seen in the examples below.

Dagbamba examples

1. *Suyilo mali nyɔri.*
Patience is profitable.
2. *Nangbanyini m-miiri daam.*
Unity brews pito (local alcoholic drink).
3. *Suli ka sheli.*
Anger has no value.
4. *Paya bi ηmari way'zuyu.*
Woman does not cut snake head.
5. *Yelmeηa ba sɔgla.*
Truth cannot be hidden. Tetteh et al (2022, p. 10).

The first four examples above are examples of Dagbani proverbs in which 1 and 2 are in the affirmative while examples 3 and 4 are in the negative. Example 5, a Dagaare proverb is also in the negative.

According to Coinnigh (2014), proverbs can also come in the form of complex sentences where they contain one clause and one or more sub-clauses. They argue that the structural balance in such proverbs is asymmetrical, with the sub- clause being dependent on the main clause. The subordinate clause often features a WH-clause, which in English begins with one of the following: *what, where, why, or when*. This is exemplified in the French proverb below.

[Quand le vin est tiré], [il faut le boire]. (French)

When the wine is drawn, one must drink it.

[Sub-clause] + [Main Clause]

Coinnigh (2014, p. 114)

Examples of proverbs of such structure abound in Dagbani and Waali as can be seen below.

1. *Suyilo yi beni, chinchini ni kpe gayili ni.*
Where there is patience, a cloth will enter a bottle/ gourd.
[Sub-clause] + [Main Clause]
2. *Tia din ka vari, di liebiri dari.*
A tree without leaves becomes firewood.
[Sub-clause] + [Main Clause]
3. *Baa daana zu ka ba maŋ kaa kye bare baa.*
A dog is forgiven because of his owner.
[Sub-clause] + [Main Clause]

‘Because of his owner’ is not a main clause

Proverbs 1 and 2 are Dagbani proverbs which contain both main and subordinate clauses. Example 3 is a Waali proverb with the same structure.

Going forward, Coinnigh (2014), observes that proverbs can also come in the form of compound sentences which possess multiple independent clauses which are separated by a coordinator such as; and, nor, but, or, yet, so. Such proverbs share a grammatical equality in these sentences which balance the two clauses against each other through a central fulcrum in the shape of the coordinator. In addition, these proverbs often display a type of semantic equality or contrast, which is created through the replication of the syntactic pattern. The Arabic proverb below is an example that illustrates this.

ةعاسلا مايق بلا قحلا قلو جو ةعاس لطابلا قلو ج (Arabic)

[Falseness lasts an hour and truth lasts till the end of time.]

[Clause] + [coordinator – and] + [Clause]

Coinnigh (2014, p. 114)

Dagbani has similar proverbs that are in this form can be seen in the examples below;

1. *Ʒiri yirigi puma ka yelimaŋli dee wali.*
Lies produce flowers but it is truth which bears the fruits.

2. *Jarigu ka yem n-sheri dɔyim ka lee mali yem n-ɲmari dɔyim.*
A fool has no sense to unite a family but he has sense to destroy a family.

The final category of the structural property of proverbs is the compound-complex sentence, which Coinnigh (2014), identifies to be the most syntactically complicated type as it often features a multiplicity of clauses and sub-clauses. The minimum syntactic requirement for this category is for at least two clauses and one sub-clause. Notable in this argument is that ‘the complex, extended structure is prohibitive to proverb composition, presumably because they are more difficult to memorize and recall in speech situations.’ Observe the following English proverb:

When the oak is before the ash, then you will only get a splash; when the ash is before the oak, then you may expect an oak. [Adverbial sub-clause] + [Clause]; [Adverbial sub-clause] + [Clause]

Some examples of Dagbani, Waali and Yoruba proverbs in this category can be seen below;

1. *Nira yi sa tia, ɲun yɔyimi li kom ka di zoi.*
If you plant a tree, water it, so that it grows.
[Adverbial sub-clause] + [Clause]; [Adverbial sub-clause]
2. *Ka anaŋ wa waa soŋ a ko nenkpɔŋ o maŋ yel ka o kpureε tɔba.*
When all is well with the adult, he will announce that he has some tobacco in his mouth.
[Adverbial sub-clause] + [Clause]; [Adverbial sub-clause].
Tetteh et al (2022, p. 11)
3. *Owo omode ko to pepe, t’agbalagba o wo keregbe. Ise ti ewe be agba ki oma se ko mo; gbogbo wa ni an’ise a jon be rara.*
Just as a child’s hand does not readily reach the top of the mantelpiece, so also the elders’ fist does not enter the gourd’s neck.
[Adverbial sub-clause] + [Clause] A Yoruba proverb (Adamo, 2015).

2.3 Themes in farming-related proverbs

According to Agyekum (2007), a theme is the central or dominant idea expressed in a work of literature. In non-fictional prose, it may be thought of as the general topic of discussion of the discourse. Finnegan (2012 p. 399), sees that though proverbs can occur in very many different kinds of contexts, they seem to be particularly important in situations where there is both conflict and, at the same time, some obligations that this conflict should not take on too open and personal form. This means that the theme in proverbs is dependent on the context of use. Addo (2022), argues that theme is the main reason behind the oral composition, and oral literary genres can contain themes such as appearances, reality and sharing, transgressions, obedience and socially appropriate behavior; identity and belonging; role of family in socialization, and many others. This means that, the teller of the proverb has in mind a specific information he wants to send across. Because of the metaphoric characteristic of proverbs, the theme is usually hidden and requires a deep philosophical analysis to unravel. Taking the Bantu proverb as Finnegan (2012), translates it, *if you are patient, you will see the eyes of a snail*. This proverbial utterance is typically on the need to be patient, because the eyes of the snail are difficult to see. However, with patience and perseverance one can see them.

Just as there are proverbs relating to conflict, peace and so on, there are also themes related to occupations such as hunting, fishing, sewing, blacksmithing and farming. Since the main focus of this study is on proverbs related to farming, it will be appropriate to review literature on the themes in farming-related proverbs among some languages of the world.

2.3.1 Theme of bad input

Some experts have looked at the soil on which farming is done. Nwaichi (2019), in his discussion of soil related proverbs as an aspect in farming among the Igbo society of Nigeria, he observes that soil functions range from agricultural, nature protection, landscape architecture, urban planning, filter to protect quality of air and water, storage and supply of nutrients etc. These and many more make soil extremely powerful and so valuable. It can be observed that the nature of soil for crop production has some philosophical underpinnings to the Igbo people and are expressed in their proverbial sayings. The following Igbo soil for crop production related proverb expresses the theme of bad input.

Ala Adighi Mma Bu Uru Ndi Nze.

‘Bad soil Breeds Bad Leaders.’ Yoruba proverb. Nwaichi (2019)

Nwaichi (2019), observes that poor soils amount to poor plant nutrition. In the same way, defective persons give room for all kinds of societal ills like corruption, nepotism, ethnocentrism, religious jingoism etc. What is therefore put into a bad soil will not produce something good. On the other hand, good soil nutrition amounts to great soil quality, and its absence can be likened to a porous leadership system with attendant increase in bad practices among community leaders and actors. The Dagbamba have similar proverbs that also relate to this Igbo proverb which says;

Tam be kpe, tam be kpe, saa n-kuli gari.

There is fertile land here, there is fertility, rain is more important.

A kaɓiɛyu yi bi bi, a bi vari danyura kuli n-kuna.

‘If your millet is not is matured, you don’t take a drunkard’s funeral home.’

Dun zɔri yala buŋ kperila nayili chi ni

‘The one who fears troubles has his donkey enter into the chief’s millet farm.’

2.3.2 Theme of assurance

The proverbs in this section discuss the theme of assurance to the farmer upon sighting some signs of good harvest. These signs may be observed from the environment, weather or the behavior of some animals and plants. The following proverbs express the theme of assurance in the thematic sense:

A Hu Ala, Ehibe Afo.

When you see a fertile farmland, you start preparing the stomach.’ Nwaichi (2019)

The sight of a fertile land with crops gives so much joy to the farmer. He will then anticipate a good harvest and post-harvest activities including eating in abundance. According to Nwaichi (2019), the Igbo people believe in soil resources and the sight of a fertile soil especially one that will produce healthy crops gives hope to a hungry farmer who in turn prepares his stomach in anticipation of a good harvest. The proverb suggests thematically that hope comes when preconditions are met, thereby portraying the principle of assurance. One would suggest that it is the sight of the fertile land that preconditions the hope and assurance that something good is going to come out of it. Similarly, the Dagbamba are assured of bumper harvest upon seeing the signs. This is seen in the proverb below.

Jerigu nya kapuya n-zan sɔyi pihi buli (kazee) zaa wuliwuli.

‘A fool has seen the millet flowering and has taken a broom to sweep the temporal storage area.’

The fool has seen an immature sorghum and has used a broom to completely sweep the place it will be kept after harvesting. This suggests that the farmer upon seeing the immature sorghum quickly prepares for the harvest because of high expectations and anticipation. It can be seen that when the farmer's hopes are high, he may behave like a fool hence the choice of the diction.

2.3.3 Theme of hopelessness

The succeeding Igbo farming proverbs about the soil and wild grass thematically portray the state of hopelessness of the farmer.

A Naghi Ele Anya Owuwe Ibe Ubi N'ala Na-Adigho Uru.

'A farmer never expects a bumper harvest from a poor soil.

Yoruba proverb Nwaichi (2019)

Nwaichi's analysis of this Igbo proverb suggests that plant nutrition is proportional to soil fertility, and farmers believe that a bad soil cannot be relied on for a good harvest. Therefore, they don't expect any bumper harvest on a poor soil. Unlike the preceding proverb where we observe that there is assurance when early signs are detected about the soil being a fertile one. This proverb thematically suggests that expectations are not made out of hopeless situations. The sight of a poor soil by a farmer will preliminarily demonstrate failure and absence of good harvest and will discourage the farmer from farming on that land. The Dagbamba have a similar proverb that says:

Pukpara je suli n-zayisi pua ka pirima bili ŋa gama.

'A farmer abandons his farm and the 'gamba' grass grows at ease.'

It is the same with the Dagbamba whose proverb on the other hand raises concerns of a farmer who found it difficult to eliminate a particular grass on his farm which affects the yield on his farm. He becomes fed-up, abandons the farm which is overtaken by the grass leaving him hopeless.

2.3.4 Theme of acknowledgement

The proverb from Igbo below contains the theme of collective acknowledgement.

E Kelee Ji Run Nne, E Kelee Ala Ruru Ya.

If you praise the Yam that Yielded Good in a farm, you will praise the soil that produced it. Yoruba proverb

Nwaichi (2019)

Considering this proverb, it can be argued that soil management practices are done according to land use to enhance productivity. The yam is a popular tuber and staple food in Nigeria and other west African countries. It has many species and varieties. Most farmers praise only the yam which grows into a great tuber without making reference to the soil that provides the enabling environment for its growth. In a real social context where the efforts of more than one individual result in a great outcome, such proverb may be sited to include all the parties whose contributions resulted in that outcome. Therefore, the proverb thematically suggests that it is good to acknowledge both the seen and unseen persons that created opportunity and good outcomes.

Going forward, Junejo and Dali (2018), in a discussion on selected agricultural proverbs of Sindhi peasants' indigenous knowledge in Pakistan demonstrates that Sindhi proverbs are communicated in third person form; with the expression, 'our elders have said'. Junejo and Dali (2018), argue that the agriculture related proverbs mirror the peasants'

image that portrays them as being part of the society. Sindhi proverbs contain in them themes across all aspect of life. The following Sindhi proverb possesses the theme of satisfaction:

2.3.5 Theme of satisfaction

Ann Ahe Tia Iman Ahe

‘Faith depends on grain (in the stomach). Sindhi proverb

Junejo and Dali (2018)

Culturally, grain is likened to life, and water is considered a living saint in Sindhi. Junejo and Dali (2018), posit that Sindhi faces droughts with a certain frequency which causes crop failure. This phenomenon can result in lack of food and famine, resulting in many death occurrences. The availability of grain at home therefore gives a person the confidence to interact with society. This is an indication that a person’s liberty is associated with the assured availability of grains at home. Taking this Sindhi proverb into consideration, one can argue that one can only be comfortable when one eats to one’s fill. This means that food is central to life and human existence, without food the world will be in crisis.

2.3.6 Theme of inheritance

According to Junejo and Dali (2018), the Sindhi have proverbs that suggest the theme of inheritance. According to them individual abilities are directly related to their environment and their orientation. The following proverb brings out this theme.

JaehroBbijj, TahrioSolo

‘The seedling copies the seed.’ Sindhi proverb

Junejo and Dali (2018)

Seedlings are from seeds, and the health or solidness of a seed has a proportional relationship with the growth as well as the survival of the seedling. Junejo and Dali (2018), note that the peasant generally cares about the seed, and it starts from harvesting, cleaning and storing. Therefore, a seedling can only be strong and look healthy if only the seed is equally healthy. Diseases from the seed will potentially affect the growth of the seedling. According to Junejo and Dali (2018), this proverb is employed in a social context where an individual’s behavior is not descent, to imply that a child copies the attitude of his father, mother or elders. Just as the relation between the seed and the seedling,

2.3.7 Theme of the need for distance

Sindhi farming proverbs encourage the principle of spacing or distancing in crop planting: Junejo and Dali (2018), maintain that in crop planting, farmers employ several planting techniques which can have inverse relationship with concepts in real life situations, ranging from season of planting, the procedure in planting, hour of planting etc. The following is a proverb that illustrates this.

ChhidiPokh, Dumba Sang.

‘Better harvest is obtained in scattered seedling.’ Sindhi proverb.

Junejo and Dali (2018)

Junejo and Dali (2018), posit that the above Sindhi farming proverb is related to the peasants’ practical learning. Farm crops give good yield when they are planted at the

required distance. This means that seedlings that are too close or crowded are more likely to produce low yield. However, they explain that this proverb frequently refers to crops like millet, sugarcane and some vegetables which have stems. One could realize that in real-life situation, this proverb suggests that strong friendship or family relations require some form of distance. Also, friends or family members who are close to each other are likely to quarrel most times which can result in unhealthy stay than those who are apart since familiarity breeds contempt.

2.3.8 Theme of sole efforts

As part of the Sindhi farming related proverbs, the following proverb portrays the principle of individual efforts in farming:

Khhti Sir Saiti.

‘Agriculture is individual’s responsibility.’ Sindhi proverb

Junejo and Dali (2018)

According to Junejo and Dali (2018), this proverb explains that agriculture is the sole responsibility of the individual. It is the individual who will have to be involved in clearing of the land, planting, controlling weeds and other responsibilities. A farmer who does not involve himself in these processes may end up not farming or not harvesting anything. However, one may argue that in recent times some farmers are less involved in these activities, they hire laborers to work for them and may play a very small part in the farming activity. So, one could also argue that this proverb was only relevant in the ancient times when farming was predominantly peasant and not for commercial purposes. Nevertheless, the proverb explains the need for one to have control over his efforts and constantly take care of his farming activities. These farming related proverbs

of the Sindhi share a couple of sameness with the Dagbamba farming related proverbs thematically.

In a similar discussion on farming-related proverbs, Omonovena, (2022), discusses the artistic understanding of peasant life of the Uzbek folk from Uzbekistan. The proverbs focus on the farmland and its relationship with the farmer. According to Omanovna, (2022), the attitude to the agricultural profession has a special place in the proverbs. This relationship is often revealed on the basis of a description of the peasants' image. He observes that the life of a farmer cannot be imagined without land and water. The Uzbek proverbs below explain the relationship between land and the peasant farmer that relates to one of the themes.

2.3.9 Theme of dependence

An Uzbek proverb translate as;

A farmer's livelihood depends on the land.



Uzbek proverb Omanovena (2022)

According to Omanovena (2022), this proverb expresses how important the land is to the farmer. Without the land a farmer's livelihood will be affected. The Uzbek peasant farmers are advised by this proverb to take land serious as their livelihood depends on it. It means that as long as they can cultivate it properly, they will get good harvest. Similar to this proverb is the proverb below:

The power of the land is the power of the farmer.

A good land will definitely yield good crops. It is clear from the context of these proverbs that a farmer should take proper care of the land in a timely manner, plow, level, irrigate and fertilize it without delay. Only then that the land will come into full use and produce a bountiful harvest.

Continuing with the themes in farming-related proverbs, Rahim and Issah (2013), discussed agricultural-related proverbs among the Yoruba of Nigeria. The Yoruba have interesting farming-related proverbs. Rahim and Issah (2013), have categorized these proverbs into three cosmologies, such as agricultural-related proverbs with human (the farmer) cosmologies, agricultural related proverbs with animals as cosmologies and agricultural-related proverbs with plants or farm produce as cosmologies.

Among the themes in the Yoruba farming-related proverbs with the farmer as cosmologies by Rahim and Issah (2013), are the following;

2.3.9 Theme of ridicule

Aifinipeni, aifeniyan periyani nii mu ara oko san bente wolu.

‘It is lack of respect that makes a farmer come into town in apron/loin cloth.’

Yoruba proverb. Rahim and Issah (2013),

Rahim and Issah (2013), explain that farmers or rural dwellers are considered socially low or uncivilized in the Yoruba community. While an apron or loin cloth may be an appropriate dress for a farmer on a farm in a rural community, it is considered out of place for it to be worn into town where civilized people live. A critical observation of the proverb suggests that farmers are supposed to always wear their farm dress on the field

or the farm and not in the mist of people. In a real-life situation, the proverb suggests that everything has its place, and things must be done according to where it is supposed to be done. It therefore leads to ridicule or a kind of mockery if a person is seen in an activity where he/she is not expected to be.

2.3.10 Theme of empty pride

Another Yoruba proverb brings out the theme of pride as portrayed in this proverb.

Ihale agbe ti o gbin kotco ti o n sodo. Ewe kii lo mogi.

‘it is empty boast that makes a farmer put yam stakes on a cocoyam farm, as its leaves do not need stakes as support (on the farm). Yoruba proverb

Rahim and Issah (2013),

Considering the proverb above, farmers usually use stakes to support their sprouting yam stems on the farm. However, stakes do not correspond to cocoyam farm as cocoyam does not produce stems that need stakes for support. This means that a farmer who does that just wants to boast over his farm, which is unnecessary because cocoyam naturally do not need stakes for support.

There are Dagbani proverbs which illustrate empty pride just as has been shown in the Yoruba proverb above.

3.2.11 Theme of security

On the other hand, the Yoruba have farming-related proverbs with plants or farm produce as cosmologies as in the example below.

Bi isu eni ba funfun aa dowo bo o je ni.

‘If one’s yam is white, one should eat it with one’s hand covering it.’ Yoruba proverb

Rahim and Issah (2013),

According to Rahim and Issah (2013), yam was and still remains a valuable farm product among the Yoruba. In the past, a farmer's success was measured against how large and productive his yam farm was. Yam comes in different colors but the white one is the most admired and anyone that has this variety of yam is usually envied in the society. One can say that thematically the proverb suggests that one must protect his own. The Dagbamba have similar farming-related proverbs that encourage one to protect his own.

2.3.12 Theme of patience

Rahim and Issah (2013), indicate that the period between the planting of yam seeds and the time new yams will be ready for harvest is very hard among the Yoruba. It is usually a period of food scarcity and an impatient farmer may be tempted to uproot his yam seeds and eat them up. Thus, the following proverb.

Amodun ko jinna ki oloko ma muu ebu sun je.

'The farmer should be patient not to eat up his yam seeds as another harvest season will come up.' Yoruba proverb

Rahim and Issah (2013),

In real life situations, people are advised to be patient in life and that, hard conditions are not permanent. In the Ghanaian perspective, Essel (2021), on farming-related proverbs of the Fantse in the Central Region of Ghana observes that their farming-related proverbs contain several themes in relation to their usage in real context. He gave the following specific examples as themes in Fantse farming-related proverbs:

2.3.13 Theme of fairness

Wɔnam dodow dua a, wɔnam dodow bu.

‘If you sow in numbers, you also harvest in numbers.’ Fantse proverb

Essel (2021)

This proverb comes with a theme of fairness. When farmers plant crops in their numbers, it means that when it comes to harvesting, they should as well harvest in numbers. This means that the Fantse believe in fairness and equal benefit. In real life situations, when there is mutual labour, there should be equal benefits, and the farmers moving together to sow crops and moving together to harvest signifies this principle of fairness in life.

2.3.14 Theme of results

Edziban no ntɔnee bu wɔ okuafo noara ne nsa mu.

‘The price of food rests in the hands of the farmer.’ Fantse proverb

Essel (2021)

According to Essel (2021), the proverb above explains the rationale behind cheap food in the market. When food stuffs become cheap in the market, it is as a result of the hard work of the farmer. This means that Fantse farmers are result oriented; they are poised to ensuring that their hard work produces benefitting results for mankind. They take joy when their hard work results in a bumper harvest. Therefore, they determine the higher or lower price for food stuffs in the market.

2.3.15 Theme of ownership

Okuanyi n'eduadzewa, ɔnoara na onyim no bo.

'A famer who cultivates crops, he knows the price.' Fantse proverb

Essel (2021)

The proverb above contains in it the need to truly own that one has. The price of the farm produce cannot be determined by a different person, but the farmer who cultivates it. This translates that it is important to exhibit full ownership and take control of one's property.

2.4 Literary devices in proverbs

This section reviews related literature on literary devices in proverbs. The section discusses the various literary devices that can be found in proverbs in some languages. Finnegan, (2017: 396), observes that more often the proverbs are figurative in one way or the other. Proverbs contain figures of speech that embellish them for their beauty or aesthetics to be seen and appreciated. The Hausa proverb for example says that *A chief is like a rubbish-dump where everyone comes with his rubbish (complaint) and deposits it.* Simile is evident in the proverb about where the chief is compared with a rubbish-dump with the use of 'like'. Also, the Ashanti proverb, *A wife is like a blanket; when you cover yourself with it, it irritates you, and yet if you cast it aside you feel cold.* Similarly, in this proverb, a wife is directly compared with a blanket with the use of the word 'like' Kogri and Tanwam (2018), in their analysis of Dagaaba proverbs, identified literary devices such as metaphor, personification, paradox, synecdoche, syntactic parallelism, symbolism, allusion and paradox.

For Tetteh (2013 p. 31), proverbs normally make orations effective because they combine with figures of speech to achieve a double effect, as figures of speech also tend to heighten literary effects and make thoughts expressed more attractive and striking. However, not all proverbs contain figures of speech; some of them are straightforward literary statements with no hidden meaning. Agyekum (2013), postulates that a literary device is basically a sort of comparison based on association, and their meanings must be inferred or derived from larger cognitive, cultural or environmental context.

Some of the literary devices that were identified in some of the proverbs included: metaphor, personification, paradox, synecdoche, syntactic parallelism, symbolism, allusion and paradox. The frequently used literary device among them was personification. The aesthetic values of the proverbs were clearly realized in the literary devices which have a symbolic representation of human, flora and fauna of the environment and stylishly displayed the beauty of the language in them.

2.4.1 Simile in proverbs

Simile involves comparing two things. Agyekum (2013), contends that a simile is a comparison of two things, indicated by some connectives usually like, as, than or a verb such as resemble. A Simile expresses similarity, and for a simile to exist, the things compared should be dissimilar in kind. This can be seen in the statements below;

1. The fall of the empire was as swift as a falling star.
2. He acts like a bull in a China shop.

Essel (2021), in his discussion of farming-related proverbs in Fantse identifies simile in some of the farming proverbs such as the proverbs below:

Ɔbaabɔn tse de ahaban mu bankye ndua se edze no gu apa do mpo a, obefifir.
'A bad woman is like a cassava stalk, if you place it on a barn, it will still germinate.'
Fantse proverb

Essel (2021)

Essel (2021), explains in the above proverb, that the behavior of a bad woman is compared to a cassava stalk which even if you place on a barn, it will germinate. The cassava stalk has a lot of nodes all over it which shows possible places of germination, making it viable to germination in every condition. This is positively related to a bad woman's attitude, where in every condition you subject her to, she will show that behavior. In reality, a person's behavior cannot be hidden, it surfaces in whichever environment he or she is. The Dagbamba have similar farming and farm produce-related proverbs which make use of simile as in the Fantse proverb above.

2.4.2 Personification in farming proverbs

Personification is a figure of speech in which a thing, animal, or an abstract term is made human, (Agyekum, 2013: 187), indicates that personification makes use of animals, ideas, abstractions and inanimate objects with human attributes, forms, characters, sensibilities and emotions. Eugene and Joseph (2018), in their discussion of literary devices in the Dagaaba proverbs consider personification as one of the devices commonly seen in their proverbs. The example below analyzed in their work is as follows.

Golanteebo yeli ka eɲ taa la veelonɔ
Chameleon says respect is beautiful. Dagaaba proverb.

Eugene and Joseph (2018)

The literary meaning of this proverb is that, respect is reciprocal. The literary device in this proverb is personification where the *golanteebo* ‘chameleon’ has been personified and talks like a human being. The aesthetic quality of this proverb is the personification of chameleon in the speech.

This literary phenomenon can be seen in some farming and farm produce-related proverbs of the Fantse as Essel (2021), explored. The examples below show Akan farming related proverbs showing personification:

Kwae a ɔannyɛ hwee amma wo no, ɔbɔɔ bankyɛ ampesi ma idzii.

‘If forest didn’t do anything at all for you, it prepares cassava meal for you to eat.’

Fantse proverb.

Essel (2021)

According to Essel (2021), in this proverb, the forest is made to act like human, as it prepares cassava meant for mankind to eat. This means that if the forest has nothing to offer, cassava can be grown on it to produce food. In doing this offer, the forest (just like a human being) is seen as preparing the cassava for mankind to eat. Observe the following Fantse farming and farm produce-related proverb as it also contains personification.

Kotɔkoraba a ɔakɛtsew aberee anto no sɛ woridzi a, wɔmma no ebun.

‘The sickle that has plucked a ripe fruit you don’t give it an unripe one.’ Fantse proverb.

Essel (2021)

In this proverb, the sickle is identified as a human being that does the plucking of the fruit and not just an instrument used in plucking. Therefore, the proverb suggests that such a sickle should not be denied the ripe fruit to eat. One can suggest that this farming-related proverb suggests fairness among humans, a person’s benefit out of his or her labor must not be denied.

Tanko (2020), identifies personification as the giving of human attributes to an inanimate object in order to give a natural color or beautify the language. Below is an example of personification in a Gonja farming related proverb.

Bu maa ɲini kɔtɔkɔɔ kijembu.

They do not show a hoe where a stone is located.

“The hoe knows that it cannot cut a stone”. Gonja proverb

Tanko (2020)

It is evident in the proverb above that in the course of farming, the farmer is careful when he is dealing with certain situations. The proverb on the other hand can be interpreted literally if a person has a tacit knowledge about something, he needs not to rehearse before doing it. In this proverb, the hoe easily detects where a stone is located by a strange sound. In this regard, the hoe weeds smoothly without such a strange sound. The hoe is personified in the proverb since the ability to identify and determine the presence of the stone under the soil is an animate quality. In Dagbani there are farm related proverbs that have personified attributes like this Gonja proverb. Another example can be seen in the Gonja proverb below.

Esa be ketere e naa buse mobe kudɔ to.

(Person’s name that weeds his farm). “Good name is better than riches”. Gonja proverb

Tanko (2020)

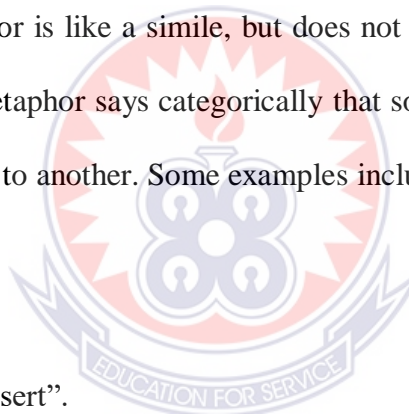
The literary meaning of this proverb is that a person who always speaks the truth, even in his absence, people speak well of him. A person on the other hand who perpetually deceives people or tells lies, will never be respected for anything. If a person who is

always truthful happens to travel for a while, people from the community can work on his farm through a communal labor because they are sure that he will come back to settle any debt they incurred and never complain of anything getting missing on his farm.

2.4.3 Metaphor in farming-related proverbs

Metaphors are common in proverbs of languages across the world. Agyekum, (2013: p.185), maintains that metaphor is a figure of speech which concisely compares two things by saying that one is the other. He explains that if a comparison is made by omitting the connective of a simile, the result is Metaphor. Tetteh (2013: 34), also postulates that a metaphor is like a simile, but does not compare two objects at the same time as the simile. A Metaphor says categorically that something is another so it changes one thing from one state to another. Some examples include;

1. “Time is a thief”
2. “Time is money”
3. “His heart is a desert”.



2.4.4 Lexical parallelism in farming-related proverbs

With lexical parallelism, two words may be paired and have various kinds of semantic relation to one another. Agyekum (2013), observes that the words may have the same reference, they may relate as part to whole, they may belong to the same semantic field or they may be interpretable as antonyms having opposed meanings. Essel (2021), noticed some lexical parallelism in some Fantse farming proverbs as can be found in an earlier quoted proverb.

Wɔnam dodow dua a, wɔnam dodow bu.

If you sow in numbers, you also harvest in numbers. Fantse proverb

Essel (2021).

In this proverb, the words that have the same reference and semantic field are *wɔnam dodow* ‘they move in numbers’, and are opposed in only two separate words *dua* ‘sow’ and *bu* ‘harvest’. The proverb suggests that when you sow seeds together, you have to harvest together. In real life situations one can suggest that equal benefits should accompany mutual labor.

2.5 Theoretical framework

This section presents an overview of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as a theoretical framework adopted for the data presentation and analysis of farming related proverbs in Dagbani. The theory shall guide the data analysis as proverbs continue to look metaphorical.

The notion of conceptual metaphor theory (CMT)

Based on the fact that proverbs are metaphorical, the study is modeled by the Conceptual Metaphor Theory. The concept of metaphor can be traced to the earlier works of Lakoff and Johnson (1980), in their earlier famous work, *the metaphor we live by*. Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 5), contend that ‘the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another’. They are of the view that metaphorical concepts are necessary for understanding most of what goes on in our world, therefore the system is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. That is, it contains

metaphorical and non-metaphorical concepts. The metaphorical structure is extremely rich and complex. Non-metaphorical concepts are those that emerge directly from our experience and are defined in their own terms. Therefore, metaphorical concepts are those which are understood and structured not merely on their own terms, but rather in terms of other concepts. In affirmation, Janda (2010, p. 16), assumes that metaphor is a mapping from a source domain to a target domain. In other words, whenever a person takes a concept that has been formed in one domain and tries to implement it in another, a metaphor has occurred. According to Geeraerts (2010, p. 204), CMT rests on three essential propositions:

Firstly, metaphor is a cognitive phenomenon. Geeraerts (2010), explains that the cognitive nature of metaphor involves that it is not a purely lexical phenomenon that is attractive at the level of language, but instead a deep conceptual phenomenon that shapes the way we think and not just the way we speak. This suggests that metaphor is beyond the use of mere words, it exists in our thoughts. To use or understand metaphor, it involves a mental process in the mind of both the language user and the hearer. Metaphor makes the individual lexical item transform into thought. Observe the examples used by Geeraerts (2010), where *theories* and *arguments* are buildings; they begin with the question:

Is that the *foundation* for your theory? The theory needs more *support*. The argument is *shaky*. We need some more facts or the argument will *fall* apart. We need to *construct* a strong argument for that. We need to *buttress* the theory with solid arguments so that the argument does not *collapse*. The theory will *stand* or *fall* on the strength of that

argument. *Theories* are conceptualized as *buildings* which require strong foundations in order for them not to fall. The understanding of these phenomena requires a level beyond just words. It is an interplay between contextual construe of theories and the nature of buildings. These two semantic webs are crucial in understanding theories as buildings.

Secondly, metaphor should be analyzed as a mapping between two domains. The second pillar of Conceptual Metaphor Theory is the analysis of the mappings inherent in metaphoric patterns. Metaphors conceptualize a target domain in terms of the source domain, and such a mapping takes the form of an alignment between aspects of the source and target domains. Richards (1936), cited in Geeraerts (2010, p. 206), introduced the terminology that the source domain corresponds to the ‘vehicle’ of the metaphor, the target domain corresponds to the ‘destination’ and the mapping corresponds to the ‘ground’. This suggests that the knowledge of both the source and target domains are crucial to the understanding of the metaphor. Evans et al. (2017, p. 16), affirms that conceptual structure is organized by *cross domain mappings* or correspondence which is naturally in a long-term memory. Taking the metaphor FOR LOVE IS A JOURNEY for instance, the following correspondences hold: (adapted from Kövecses 2002, p. 7 cited in Geeraerts, 2010, p. 206).

Source	Target
The travelers	the lovers
The means of transport	the relationship itself
The journey	the evolution of the relationship
The obstacles encountered	the difficulties experienced

Decisions about which way to go

choices about what to do

The destination of the journey

the goals of the relationship

Just like people journeying in a car or any other means of transport, people in love are seen in a journey that they have the intention to get to their destination. The travelers correspond with the lovers, what they use to travel (means) represents the relationship itself. The journey represents the evolution of the relationship, while the obstacles encountered through the journey represent the difficulties experienced by lovers. Decisions passengers take about which way to go represents choices lovers make concerning their difficulties. Eventually, the destination of the journey corresponds with the goals of the relationship, (what lovers sought to achieve in their relationship).

The last pillar of Conceptual Metaphor Theory is the idea that metaphors are grounded in experience: language is shaped by human experience. This pillar shares a similarity with the embodied thesis of Cognitive Linguistics. Geeraerts (2010), observes that we don't only understand one concept in terms of another, but we also structure less concrete and vaguer concepts in terms of more concrete ones. According to Evans et al. (2007, p. 16), we can only talk about what we can perceive and conceive, and the things that we can perceive and conceive derive from our embodied experience. This means that the nature of the human body has varied mental experience; all humans see the world differently.

The adoption of Conceptual Metaphor Theory is by relying on its second assumption to farming related proverbs in Dagbani in the Northern Region of Ghana. It is observed that understanding Dagbani farming related proverbs requires a deeper mental process, and

not just relying on the linguistics representation (words, phrases & sentences) of the proverbs, but mappings from source to target domains as CMT proposes. Hence the rationale for the adoption of the theory.

2.6 Summary of chapter

This chapter set out to review related literature on the literary analysis of farming-related proverbs among the Dagbamba. The chapter first discussed the concept, meaning and source of the proverbs. The chapter also saw the structure of proverbs, themes and literary devices in farming-related proverbs, where several themes and literal devices are explored. The chapter ended with the theoretical framework adopted for the study.

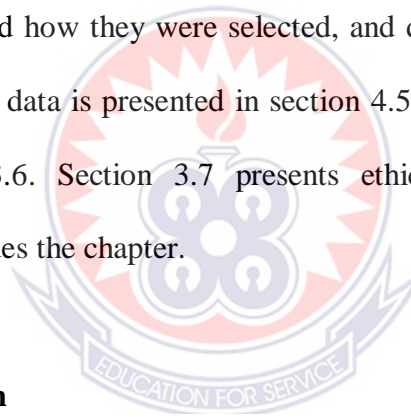


CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology employed in this study. The chapter outlines the research design, population, participants, sampling technique, data collection strategies and instruments as well as sources of data. The chapter also presents the method employed in data presentation and analysis and ethical issues. Beyond this section, the rest of the chapter is organized under the following tracts: Section 4.1 presents the research design, while section 4.2 discusses the population. Section 4.3 presents participants involved and how they were selected, and discusses the sampling technique in section 4.4 Source of data is presented in section 4.5 while data analysis procedure is discussed in section 3.6. Section 3.7 presents ethical issues, while section 3. 8 summarizes and concludes the chapter.

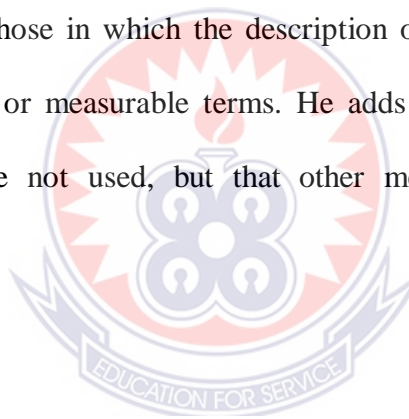


3.1 The research design

The qualitative research design was employed in the data collection and analysis. This design was chosen because of the purpose of this study, which sought to explore farming related proverbs among the Dagbamba. The qualitative design was chosen because it allows for the description and analysis of research data. This design allows for inquiry which produces narrative or textual descriptions of the phenomena under study as explained by Johnston & Vanderstoep (2009). According to Creswell (2012), in qualitative inquiry, the intent is not to generalize results to a population, but to develop an in-depth exploration of a central phenomenon which affects a group of people who

share a common heritage. For Owu-Ewie (2017), qualitative research involves detailed verbal description of characteristics, cases and settings by using interviews, observations and documents as the data collection procedures. This shows that this type of research is non-numerical in nature but describes phenomena as pertain to a particular group of people.

Tisdell and Meriam (2016), postulate that, qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences. Sidhu (2012), observes that qualitative studies are those in which the description of observations is not ordinarily expressed in quantitate or measurable terms. He adds that this does not suggest that numerical measures are not used, but that other means of descriptions are more emphasized.



3.2 Population

According to Acharya et al. (2013), a population is a group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common and of interest to the researcher (Best & Kahn, (2006) cited in Owu-Ewie, 2017), explain that a population is seen as a group of individuals with at least one common characteristic which makes them distinct from other group of individuals. This means that a population specifies a group of people who live in one area and have similar characteristics that will assist a researcher who is interested in studying a particular phenomenon among them.

According to Sidhu (2012), a population is any group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher. He further opines that population concerns that aggregate or totality of objects or individuals regarding which inferences are to be made in a sampling study. This means that, population involves all individuals, documents, and any other objects of interest that are proposed to be covered in the scheme of a particular study. The target population for this study was all native speakers of Dagbani in the Northern part of Ghana and the accessible population for the study was taken from three major towns that cover the three dialect areas of Dagbani which include Tamale, Yendi and Bimbila, all in the Northern Region of Ghana.

3.3 Participants /Sample

Twenty-one native speakers of Dagbani were sampled as participants for this study across the three dialects of Dagbani, which are made up of the people of the Western dialect of Tamale and its environs, the Eastern dialect which is made up of the people of Yendi and its environs and the Southern dialect of Bimbilla and its environs. The Western dialect (Tomosili), is spoken in and around Tamale, while the Eastern dialect (Nayahili), is spoken around Yendi and its surrounding villages. The Southern (Nanuni) dialect, is also spoken around Bimbilla and its environs.

The ages of the selected participants range from between 28 and 70 years. The sample was made up of a distribution of 15 men and 6 women. This distribution was based on the fact that more men are involved in farming activities than women, hence the

disparity in the gender distribution. The study selected five (5) men and two (2) women from two communities, *Fooshayu and Gbilahibila* in the *Bamvim* traditional area, a suburb of Tamale, five (5) men and two (2) women each from *Zohitiŋli* a community in Yendi and *Makayili* a community near Bimbila, where the other two dialects of Dagbani are spoken. Table 1 below shows the sample distribution.

Table 1: Sample of Participants

Town	Male	Female	Age range	Number
Fooshegu and Gbilahibila, Tamale	5	2	28-70	7
Zohitiŋli, Yendi	5	2	28-70	7
Makayili, Bimbilla	5	2	28-70	7
Total	15	6		21

3.4 Sampling technique

The researcher employed the purposive sampling technique in sampling the respondents. The purposive sampling technique is based on the judgment of the researcher as to who will provide the best information to succeed in obtaining information that relates to the objectives of the study. Etikan & Bala, (2017), explain that the person conducting the research needs to focus on those people with the same opinion and willing to share in it to have the required information.

According to Kothari (2004), purposive sampling is considered more appropriate when the universe happens to be small and a known characteristic of it is to be studied intensively. In addition, Marshall (1996), sees purposive or judgmental sampling as the most common sampling technique. He postulates that the researcher actively selects the most productive sample to answer the research questions. This can involve developing a framework of the variables that might influence an individual's contribution and which will be based on the researcher's practical knowledge of the research area, the available literature and evidence from the study itself. This technique was chosen because it was deemed most appropriate and convenient for this study.

3.5 Sources of data

Data collection plays a very crucial role in research. There are different sources to gather information from, all of these falls into two categories, i.e., primary and secondary data (Douglas, 2015). Researchers have indicated that gathering data can be accomplished through primary sources where the researcher is the first person to obtain the data from individuals who have the information required for the study. The primary data is one that is originated by the researcher for the first time. Its sources include surveys, observations, experiments, questionnaires, personal interviews and so on. (Mesly, 2015), and Victor, (2017), are of the view that, primary data is one which is collected for the first time by the researcher. He adds that primary data is factual and original and it is collected with an aim of getting solution to the problem at hand.

Apart from primary data the other source of data for the purpose of research is secondary sources where the researcher obtains the data that has already been collected from other areas such as data disseminated in scientific journals. This shows that secondary data is the already existing data collected by individuals, investigator agencies and organizations earlier. It is the data which relates to the past and is collected for purposes other than the problem at hand. Secondary data sources include government publications, websites, books, journal articles, internal records and so on.

The researcher relied on primary data which was personally collected from the participants while the secondary data was elicited from two literature books, *Duligu mini Nɔŋa* by Sibdoo, (2017), and *Wuni Bimbirili* by Pazzack, (2016). The researcher elicited data from these books by critically analyzing their content which relate to the farming occupation. However, other data were generated through the researcher's native speaker intuition which ideas were presented to some experts who are native speakers to cross-check for their reliability.

3.6 Data collection technique

The researcher spent about hundred days in collecting the data from these communities for this study. Primarily, interviews were employed to elicit data from participants who are mostly historians, traditional drummers and farmers who possess the knowledge of proverbs and their interpretation. The researcher also gathered some data through documents and native speaker introspection.

Since the research is an ethnography study, the researcher travelled to the speech communities to hold interview sessions with the respondents. The researcher first visited Fooshegu and Gbilahibila villages in the Bamvim traditional area which is 15 kilometers from the Tamale Township on 3rd October 2022. The researcher first met one man, introduced himself to him and then explained to him the purpose of the visit. The man then agreed to be his informant. The man led him to meet two middle-aged men and a woman at the market. After explaining to them the purpose of his visit, they all agreed to participate in the interview. The four people and the researcher agreed to meet two days later. On that faithful Thursday, the researcher decided to meet them individually so he met the first person he met on his first visit at 8:30am at his residence. He interviewed him and recorded the responses as was earlier agreed. At 10:00am the same day, the researcher met the second respondent and held an interview session with him also at his residence. An hour later, he met the woman who was the third respondent for the last interview on that day at her house. The interview was successfully done and recorded with a mobile phone recorder. The fourth respondent rescheduled his interview to the next day. The researcher met the respondent in his house where the interview was conducted and a recording of the interview was made using my mobile phone as earlier agreed on. On Sunday 9th October 2022, the researcher visited the Gbilahibila community which is also a village in the same traditional area, about 5 kilometers away from Fooshegu. In Gbilahibila, the researcher met three respondents, a woman and two men who were suggested to him by a friend in the village. The three respondents agreed to participate in the research after a thorough discussion with them. The scheduled date of the interview was the day after the Tamale market day. This was all done through a

consultation with the friend living in that village. The researcher met the respondents separately and they all agreed that the conversation be recorded.

On Wednesday 12th October, a day after the Tamale market day, the researcher held an interview session with one respondent in the morning. The rest of the two respondents on the other hand rescheduled their sessions with the researcher due to a sudden death of a prominent person in the community. The researcher subsequently met the two respondents five days later. During the interview, the researcher recorded the conversation. This took place on 17th October 2022.

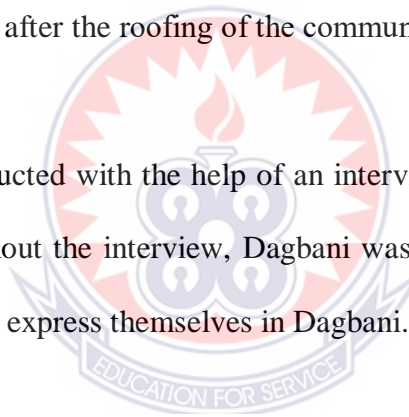
On Saturday November 5th 2022, the researcher visited Zohitinjli, a suburb of Yendi where he met a friend who after some discussions, introduced him to two men who are native farmers. The two agreed to grant the interview but in a week's time since they were busy harvesting their farm produce. Later in the day, the researcher was introduced to two other elderly men on the same issue. They agreed that the researcher should meet them separately in their houses the next day for the interviews. On the same day in the evening, the researcher was introduced to two elderly women who upon deliberation also agreed to participate in the study. On Sunday 6th November 2022, the researcher met one of the respondents in the morning at his residence. The interview was recorded with the consent of the interviewee. Later in the afternoon, the researcher held the second interview session with the other elderly man. The session was also recorded appropriately. The rest of the two interviews on that day were scheduled to take place in the evening the same day. The two elderly women agreed to be met together in the house of one of them. The interview was done at 4pm and was successfully recorded. The

following day, the researcher had the fourth interview session with a middle age man. This took place at his residence in the evening after the day's farming activities. The interview was recorded as was already agreed upon. A week later, the researcher met the other two respondents, one in the morning and the other in the evening. The morning session was done at 9:00am at the participant's house while the evening session came off at the respondent's brother's workshop. These sessions were done and appropriately recorded. It took the researcher three weeks to gather data from the Nayahili dialect speaking community.

In December 2022, the researcher travelled to Makayili in the Nanumba North municipality to look for the respondents to collect the data. My former course mate at the university who works in the Municipal Education Office assisted me to select the respondents for the work. He introduced me to the first three respondents who agreed to grant the interview together in the house of one of the respondents in the morning where they were going to gather to peel cassava. The discussion was lively as the participants took turns to give proverbs in Dagbani relating to farming. The conversation was recorded with their consent. Later in the afternoon, the researcher was hinted by one of the three respondents of some women he believed to have the requisite knowledge in proverbs. He led the researcher to the two women who agreed to take part in the exercise after a discussion with them. The two elderly women also opted to have the interview together but late afternoon the following day. The researcher arrived at the venue at 3:30pm only to meet only one of the respondents. They had to wait for about thirteen minutes before the second respondent arrive. At 3:48pm, the interview started with the

researcher introducing himself again and explaining to the women the purpose of their meeting before asking them questions. He also sought permission from them to record their conversation which they agreed to. The women took turns to state some proverbs and tried to explain those proverbs. The discussion was successfully done and recorded. Three days later, the researcher met the last two respondents for the study during a communal labor upon consultation with a community leader. The community leader suggested five people but the two were selected using the purposive sampling technique. The interviews were conducted at separate places, the first one in the respondent's house and the second one near the second respondent's shop where he sells provisions. This happened in the evening after the roofing of the community leader's house.

The interview was conducted with the help of an interview guide which guided the line of questioning. Throughout the interview, Dagbani was the language used since all the participants were able to express themselves in Dagbani.



3.7 Instruments for Data Collection

Instruments for data collection are the tools or methods that assist a researcher to carry out investigation and access information from respondents. Instruments used in this study included a mobile phone that was used as a recorder. Also, an unstructured interview guide was used by the researcher to solicit information from the respondents.

3.7 Data analysis procedure

The study employed Content Analysis Approach (CAA) to analyze the data. According to Stemler, (2001), Content Analysis Approach) is a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words for a text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding. Content Analysis Approach is a data analysis approach with a flexible method for analyzing text/ data (Cananaugh, 1997). Zobel and Gruba (2017), also observes that *variables* (or parameters) and *categories* are two concepts in every aspect of managing data and presenting results. These concepts reflect how we understand data. Assigning instances to categories lets one discuss and analyze data in a consolidated way. The researcher listened to audio recordings of interviewed participants and transcribed them on a piece of paper by relying heavily on what participants said during the interview session.

Following Zobel and Gruba's (2017), orientation on Content Analysis Approach, data were coded into broader categories and lesser themes in consonance with the research questions guiding this study. This allowed the researcher to categorize the data into broader categories such as proverbs relating to the farm, farmland, farm produce/crops and farm animals. Also, the researcher was able to categorize the data into lesser themes to pave way for easy analysis of the data in terms of the content and how it impacts on the social life of the Dagbamba.

3.8 Summary of chapter

This chapter discussed the methodology employed in the data collection, presentation and analysis of this study. The chapter presented a chronicle of the processes involved in research and the type of research design employed. The chapter saw the research design (qualitative method), population, participants, sampling technique (purposive), source of data (primary and secondary) and data collection technique, ethical issues and data analysis procedure.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 The general introduction

Proverbs are employed in almost every conversation among African societies. They continue to be an integral part of human conversations cross-linguistically. They carry in them philosophies of the language which are used in expressions in real contexts. Language users employ proverbs in conversations for several rationales; while some use them to make long stories short, others employ proverbs when they want to express an abstract idea as well as their literary benefits. This chapter presents and analyzes data on farming-related proverbs among the Dagbamba using Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as an analytical tool. Based on the fact that proverbs are metaphorical, this theory is employed to analyze Dagbamba farming-related proverbs relying on the source domain (individual farming-related proverbs) to getting the target domain (the meaning of the proverb).

The chapter analyzes individual farming-related proverbs based on cosmologies such as crops, the farmer, farmland, farm activities and farm animals. Beyond this section, the rest of the chapter is organized under the following rubrics; section 4.1 discusses individual farming-related proverbs under cosmologies such as crops, the farmer, farmland, farm activities and farm animals. Section 4.2 presents individual themes in farming-related proverbs while section 4.3 presents the literary devices in the Dagbamba farming-related proverbs. Section 4.4 summarizes and concludes the chapter.

4.1 Individual farm-related proverbs

Crops or farm produce is an integral part and the sole reason for farming. Farm produce is what sustains the world and every individual in one way or the other consumes some kind of food. The Dagbamba farming-related proverbs contain philosophical undertones through which they address specific issues in the society according to context. These philosophical undertones are buried in the metaphor of farm produce which this section seeks to explore. Going forward, I discuss this category of farming-related proverbs as follows:

4.1.1 The farm crops/produce as a cosmology

1. *Kpamba n-yeli ni kabir' suŋ ku kɔŋ saa.*
'The elders say, a lucky millet seed will not lack rain.'

Source domain

Rain falling on a millet seed

Metaphorical mapping

→

Target domain

the blessed never lacks

The proverb above explicates the philosophy of the Dagbamba on the concept of luck through the blessed millet seed. The Dagbamba farmers usually sow millet in individually created wholes or through broadcast. There are times in the farming season when there is a persistent drought where crop production becomes difficult especially sowing of seeds. It is therefore difficult for the seeds that are already planted to germinate or survive the weather. However, some of these seeds will survive despite the drought, so they are considered as blessed seeds. In real life situation, people are confronted with varied challenges that affect their chances of survival. These people in one way or the other succeed despite such challenges. These people are therefore considered as the blessed ones. Metaphorically, the lucky millet seed represents a blessed individual. In

observing such a millet seed, one would conclude that humans who are blessed usually encounter circumstances that will ensure that their success is realized. The following proverb also employs the farm crops as a cosmology:

2. *Alibarika kayolli ni paai kazee puuni.*

‘A blessed late millet grain will reach the place the grains are gathered.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain

The blessed late millet grains

→

Target domain

a blessed child will be useful

The millet grains that are gathered after harvesting are those that are stored by farmers. In the process of harvesting, the millet grains go through a lot of processes during which some grains fall off while others are eaten by birds and other animals. This means that not all grains get the opportunity to be part of the processed and stored ones. However, the grains that are finally bagged to be taken home are considered the blessed ones. This explains, the ultimate goal of every millet grain which is to reach the consumer. The proverb explains that the blessed grain will finally reach the consumer, hence will be useful in the end.

Metaphorically, the millet grains are map to children who are undergoing some form of training into useful adults, while getting to the grain sack represents a child who eventually becomes a useful adult after his or her season of training. Obviously, it is not every child undergoing training grows into a responsible adult, just like millet grains being harvested. Therefore, the proverb philosophically explains the ordeals in child

nurturing and that parents should exercise patience in this regard. Observe the following proverb about the millet and the chicken.

3. *Dagbankpamba n-yeli, ni chi m-booni n̄chi.*
Elders say ‘the millet is what is used to call the chicken.’

Source domain	Metaphorical mapping	Target domain
Inviting the chicken with millet	→	life is about exchange

The above proverb has transactional and political underpinnings in its contextual setting. The proverb explains that one has to put something forward in order to achieve what one wants. The millet farmers cultivate, is used for human consumption as well as to feed fowls at home or in the farm. In the metaphorical logic, the millet represents any item that can be used as a form of bate to attract another person in order to gain the person’s favor. A respondent explains this as in the case of a man who is trying to win the love of a woman. Just as the millet is thrown onto chicken to attract them to run towards the owner, the same way money and other material gifts can be used to appeal to a woman’s sense. Therefore, the understanding we get from the metaphor of the chicken and the millet is that, life is transactional. As the farm crops continue to express the philosophies of the Dagbamba through proverbs. Consider the following proverb as it also has the millet at its center of consideration:

4. *Kpamba n-yeli, ni kum saha chi ḡbirila l̄ḡni.*
Elders say that, ‘at the time of hunger, millet is eaten under the throat.’

Source domain	Metaphorical mapping	Target domain
Eating millet under the throat	→	Survival in difficult times

The above proverb explains the manner in which farmers eat millet in times of famine or times of scarcity of food. In the source domain, we notice a farmer eating millet under his throat, where his mouth hardly opens for one to notice the consumption. In philosophy, the proverb teaches the technique of surviving in times of difficulty. One could associate this proverb to greed, on the part of one who consumes the millet under his throat. However, according to one respondent, such a person is not greedy but just trying to respond to the needs of the current situation of scarce food. The idea is that, the millet is not enough to be shared as a normal meal. Therefore, in real life situation we observe that life is lived by techniques in times of difficulty. Farming related proverbs of the millet continue to produce philosophical undertones among the Dagbamba as can again be seen in the following proverb:

5. *Kpamba n-yeli ni kafulima so mɔri.*
 ‘Elders say, the bad millet grain is better than weeds.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain

The bad millet grain and weeds



Target domain

having a little is better than none

The above proverb compares the bad millet grain to weeds at its center of focus. Before the advent of weedicides, the Dagbamba farmers weed in their farms after the crops have germinated. This continues until the crops grow to a reasonable level. Farmers who are unable to do this will have their farms consumed by weeds. Also, there are times when due to inadequate rainfall, some of the millet will not yield well even after weeding properly. This results in the production of bad grains. A farmer in such a condition may cite such a proverb to motivate himself that at least, what he will get is better than weeds.

Philosophically, the proverb encourages the need to hope for achieving little than just nothing at all. The proverb below gives a philosophical undertone of the millet and its maturity among the Dagbamba:

6. *Kpamba n-yeli, ni chi din bi nini ni ku lahi lebi wurigu.*
 ‘Elders say, the millet that is matured in the face will not turn into chaff.’

	Metaphorical mapping	
Source domain	→	Target domain
A matured millet		achievement

Considering the above proverb, the focus is on the millet that is matured on one hand and the millet chaff on the other hand. Maturity of the millet is visible to farmers and one can confirm it by just observing it. This gives farmers the assurance that they will achieve their goal of good harvest at the end of the season. Therefore, the millet farmers observed and confirmed ripe will not turn into millet chaff. In the real-life situation, an achievement that is confirmed will not turn into a misfortune. However, this proverb does not mean that misfortunes don't come after victories.

7. *Yolitim chi niṅdila kafulima.*
 ‘A regrated farmer’s millet produces empty fruits.’

	Metaphorical mapping	
Source domain	→	Target domain
The millet of a regret farmer		The price of regret

The proverb discusses the faith of a person who fails to work hard especially during the farming season. It is important for a farmer to put in his best by using good seedling, planting at the right time and clearing weeds in the farm to ensure that he succeeds at the end of the season. Many farmers however fail in this regard and end up regretting since

their millet produce empty shells as a result of their neglect of their duties as farmers. This means that regret has no profit at the long run. The succeeding proverb compares the farmer who owns a granary to the man who buys his food from the market.

8. *Da n-di ku tooi ŋmani kambɔŋlana.*
 ‘The one who buys to eat cannot be compared to the one who owns a granary.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
The one who buys and the owner of a granary		Self-sufficiency is key

As the theory of Conceptual Metaphor proposes, target domains are obtained base on the information in the source’s domain. The above proverb compares the buyer of food in the source domain, to the farmer who owns a fool barn of farm produce. It can be deduced from the proverb that being a producer is better than having to buy from the producer. Food production is the prime goal of every farmer, and it is ridiculing for a farmer to grow crops and still buy food for household consumption. The Dagbamba farmers prefer to consume their own farm produce than buying food from outside which will not satisfy the household. With this background, we observe that personal possession is much appreciated than otherwise.

9. *Dagbampamba n-yeli ni to bi naari bɔyu.*
 ‘The elders say, ‘okay’ does not finish the yam farm.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Accepting to bring yam from the farm		Admitting does not mean action is taken

Among the Dagbamba, yam is one the adorable crops and the yam farm is called *bɔɣu*. None the less, almost every seasoned farmer has *bɔɣu*. People usually tell the farmer on his way to the farm to bring them a piece of yam on his return. In response, such a farmer may say *tɔ* ‘okay’, but in his mind he will not bring any yam. The proverb explains that the act of responding, *tɔ* ‘okay’ does not finish up the yam farm. Therefore, a farmer in such condition will use this proverb to remind himself of the fact that he is not bringing any yam to the person for that to even finish his yam farm. In the real social context agreeing to do something does not mean one will really do it.

10. *Naawuni bimbirili sanzali bi kurili.*
‘Drought does not kill God’s seed.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
A seed surviving drought		the blessed prosper even under misfortunes

The proverb above describes the seed that God has blessed in the face of drought. According to an informer, typically, drought has been the major enemy of the Dagbamba farmers as they depend solely on the rain for farming activities. Planting is usually done when there is moisture in the farm, however, there are times when a prolonged drought compels farmers to plant seeds in the dried harrowed land. In such a condition, farmers may cite such a proverb to lessen their fear of losing their crops to the drought. Metaphorically, the blessed in the society is mapped to God’s seed, while misfortunes in life maps to *sanzali* ‘drought’. Relying on the philosophy behind this proverb, the Dagbamba believe that misfortunes does not affect whom God has blessed, and humans who have God’s favor prosper even under difficult conditions.

11. *Kpamba n-yeli ni a ni biri sheli dina ka a yen che.*
Elders say, what you have planted is what you will harvest.’

	Metaphorical mapping	
Source domain	→	Target domain
A farmer harvesting what he sows		one reaping his investment

This proverb also has the seed that farmers sow as the center of focus. It describes a farmer who harvests the same crop that he has planted in the source domain, mapping it to a person reaping what he sows. This explains that one will reap exactly what he or she has invested in life. In the farming profession, what one puts in the soil is what will germinate and grow to the point of harvesting. There can't be an instance where a farmer will sow maize and harvest yam or cowpea. In real life situation, the attitude one has towards people is the same he will get in return. Evil men live to see the result of their evil deeds and those who live a clean life will also live to see the good outcome of their life. This farming related proverb therefore encourages mankind to live a good and a clean life in order to reap same.

Consider the following proverb as it describes the position of the sesame as a seed:

12. *Zimzam kuli p̄rimi ka di yuli be bimbira ni.*
‘The sesame seed remains small but it is part of seeds.’

	Metaphorical mapping	
Source domain	→	Target domain
The smallness of sesame		little things also matters

Taking our understanding from the source information of the proverb, the *zimzam* ‘sesame’ is a tiny grain that farmers plant which produce tiny grains that is usually eaten raw or can be used to prepare soup. Considering the tininess of the grain, one would

hardly consider it as an important crop but it is very useful. Metaphorically, the sesame maps to little things that are not regarded in life. The proverb encourages man not to things because of their smallish nature because some things can be small but still valuable.

13. *Nyuwayu gba bɔri nyusayu.*
 ‘The water yam also needs yam stakes.’

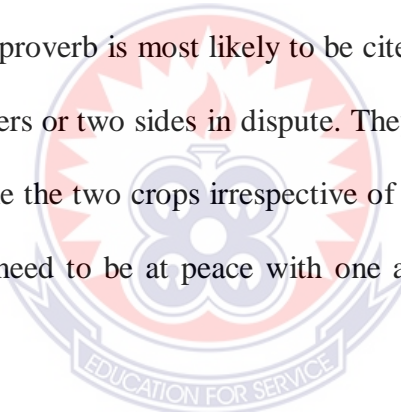
Metaphorical mapping		
Source domain	→	Target domain
Staking the water yam		Everyone deserves good treatment

The proverb is about the water yam and the yam stake. Farmers use yam stakes to support the crippling shoots in position so that it doesn't fall on the ground and get burnt by the heat by the heat. Unlike other varieties of yam, the Dagbamba famers do not place much premium to cultivating the water yam. Due to this, the water yam is not usually prioritized like other varieties. However, the water yam is very resistant to harsh weather conditions like drought which makes farmers feel reluctant in supporting it with the stakes. Meanwhile, the water yam will also look good and yield better if it is staked. This philosophy from the water yam and the yam stake portrays that individuals who are not regarded in the society because of their low social standing and status also deserve some level of recognition. This is achieved by treating them equally as others who are of higher social standing.

14. *Kpamba n-nyeli ni binsheli din nam kamli, dina n-nam kamtoo.*
The elders say, what has created the garden egg, creates the bitter tomato.’

Source domain	Metaphorical mappings	Target domain
Garden egg and the bitter tomato	→	brotherhood

The *kamli* ‘garden egg’ and the *kamtoo* ‘bitter tomato’ are some of the crops the Dagbamba famers cultivate. The metaphor of these two similar crops is what is observed in the above proverb. The proverb postulates that these two crops have the same history of creation, putting their similarities into consideration. Metaphorically, the crops are mapped into brothers from the same parents, who are advised not to have misunderstandings. This proverb is most likely to be cited in the circumstance of conflict resolution between brothers or two sides in dispute. They are therefore encouraged to see each other as one just like the two crops irrespective of their difference. Technically, the proverb encourages the need to be at peace with one another and seeing each other as one.



Consider the following proverb about pepper and salt:

15. *Bia nun diem yelim, o di diem naanzuu dina nuna.*
‘A child that plays with the salt should not play with pepper.’

Source domain	Metaphorical mapping	Target domain
A child playing with pepper	→	cautiousness

The salt and pepper are compared to advise a child who plays with salt not to try that on pepper. Unlike the salt, pepper is hot and can burn the skin or affect the eyes of an

individual who poorly handles it. A critical observation of the proverb implies that not every situation can be played with, and every situation has its own repercussions. In real life situation, this proverb is cited to advice a careless person who does not attach seriousness to anything. In the metaphorical sense, the salt is mapped onto situations that are less serious, while the pepper represents matters that require careful approach. This means that one has to be cautious in dealing with some situations of life as compared to others. Consider the following proverb about how the okra fruits is featured in a Dagbamba farm- related proverb and the real contextual philosophy of the proverb among the Dagbamba:

16. *Jerigu n-yeli ni mana chaaya, ashee di na wondimi.*
 ‘The fool says the okra has finished fruiting not knowing it is still fruiting.’



Okra is one of the perennials crops the Dagbamba farmers produce. In a fertile land, the okra can fruit several times before the end of the season. However, it fruits at a go for the first time and later produces other flowers for another round of fruiting. During this period, one may think it has finished fruiting and may not give it the desire attention. As we can observe from the source domain of the mapping, the productive nature of the okra crop metaphorically represents fortunes of life, while the ‘fool’ refers to a person who loses hope and decides to give up. Success in life is not predictable and it manifests differently depending on the individual like the okra crop, so one has to exercise patients and keep hopping for his or her triumph. Therefore, achievement in life comes in stages

or seasons and requires some level of reservations. The following proverb explains the ordeals of farmers during times of hardship.

17. *Kumbieyu yuuni, ban kɔŋ puzuri ni bam bara.*
 ‘In a year of excessive famine, those who lack farm produce will beg to survive.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Lacking farm produce		the effect of a misfortune

The ultimate goal of every farmer is to produce crops in abundance so farmers employ every effort to make this goal a reality at the end of every farming season. In times of famine, farmers face a lot of challenges because there will be insufficient food in the system. This is a situation beyond their control so they have to endure in order to survive. The proverb suggests that farmers who lack farm produce in such condition will resort to begging as a means of survival. In real life situation, man always find alternative ways in times of misfortunes. The proverb is therefore a reflection of the effect of hard times and the different ways of containing the situation.

18. *Kpamba n-yeli ni “sa’libigirili ni sayim buni.”*
 Elders say that “An unexpected rain will destroy farm produce.

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	target domain
Destruction of farm produce		an unexpected event

During the farming season, many Dagbamba farmers who practice early cultivation harvest their farm produce while it still rains intermittently. Most of them at this time dry their produce in the open to ensure that they are properly dried to be stored for long

without spoiling. The farmers therefore engage their younger children in looking after the produce being dried and to collect them into the granary when the rain is coming. Unfortunately, the rain may come unexpectedly thereby getting such farmers and their families running helter-skelter to ensure that they save their produce from the rain. Philosophically, the proverb seeks to remind us to always take precautionary measures in every live situation and to also be reminded that the unexpected can happen in our lives and get us running around.

The next proverb also discusses the proverb in the perspective of the crop.

19. *Kpamba n-yeli ni “putari pina n-yi zayisi nyebu ka nyeri gulimagulima*
 ‘Elders say the mounds at the edge of the farm refuse to produce but produces small tubers.’



The proverb discusses the disparities in the size and nature of yam produce on the same yam field. Among the Dagbamba, mounds are raised all over the yam field purposely to cultivate yam. However, all the mounds do not produce the same size of yams. While some produce big yams, other produce quit smaller yams. This may be the result of difference in the size of the mounds, the nature of the yam seedling and the fertility of the soil at the various parts of the farm land. This phenomenon reflects the human life condition where we have disparities in abilities. Given the same conditions, individuals are able to complete a specific task at different magnitude. Dagbamba farmers use this proverb to clear the air regarding the ability of a farm land to produce the same size, quantity and nature of the crop.

20. *Kpamba n-yeli ni, “Bimbira din vibi chuyu ku vibi ymani*
 ‘Elders say that, “seeds that perforate the guard will not perforate the calabash.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	target domain
Seeds can only perforate a guard		man has his limits.

The guard and the calabash play almost a similar role in the farming activities among the Dagbamba. They are both used to store seeds for the next farming season. The guard and the calabash are also used in fetching and storing water for everyday activities. Though the guard can be carried from one place to another, the calabash is mostly immobile. The proverb seeks to inform us that the seeds are capable of perforating the guard in which they are store but not capable of doing same to the calabash as a result of the difference in their strengths and make up. This implies that in real life situation, man has his limits with regards to the activities we engage our selves in. there some we can do can and others we cannot. This proverb is usually used at a time of a competition, war or a physical contest where a party warns the opponent that he could only overcome some people but not all.

The section above discussed farming-related proverbs taking into consideration farm crops as a cosmology. The section saw several philosophies from several farm crops such as equal treatment, the life of the blessed, ownership, avoidance, signs of hope, cautiousness, brotherhood, fairness etc. The next section presents farming-related proverbs taking into consideration the farmer/human being as a cosmology.

4.1.2 The farmer/human being as a cosmology

This subsection presents farming-related proverbs focusing on the farmer or human being as a cosmology. There exist several philosophies relating to the farmer that are expressed proverbially among the Dagbamba. The following proverbs illustrates the above:

1. *Saa mahili dali ka kpara kɔri nyandi o kpee.*
'A farmer challenges the colleague to a competition on a wet day.'

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Farmers in competitive work		actions are taken on favorable times

It is not uncommon among the Dagbamba to see farmers competing among themselves in terms of farm work. This is usually done during communal farming, where farmers especially the young ones compete with each other to see who is able to work more than the other. This is done by the farmers lining up to start weeding, molding yam mounds or contracting a ridge at the same point and at the same time. They do this without compromising quality. During this adventure, every farmer will do well to make leave behind a mark. Therefore, the proverb demonstrates that it is on a wet day that a farmer calls his colleague to a competitive farm work. This means that farm work is difficult under unfavorable weather condition like under the scorchy sun, but this can be overcome on a favorable condition such as on a relatively cool day. In real life situation, people venture into areas at times that are best for them. Just like the farmer inviting the colleague to a contest in a wet day, he knows that he may not be effective on an unfavorable day. The proverb therefore teaches mankind to be careful with the timing of their actions.

The following proverb describes how the sick farmer is treated:

2. *Kpara doro naarila puu ni.*
 ‘A farmer’s ailment is healed in the farm.’

Source domain	Metaphorical mapping	Target domain
A sick farmer in the farm	→	endurance

The proverb above has the farmer at its center of focus. Farming as a profession is difficult and requires individuals who can endure. We understand from the source domain that a farmer who is not in a good health condition, but will only be healed when he goes to the farm. Typically, among the Dagbamba (until recent times), farmers work manually which involves the use of maximum energy and strength. This can be considered as a form of exercise in modern day situation. A farmer during an interview was of the view that sometimes he wakes up feeling weak as if he has fever or malaria. He will still go to farm hoping that when he works on the farm and sweat even a little, the sickness will be gone. Therefore, a sick farmer sometimes has to rely on the farm work as an antidote for his sickness. This illustrates the ability of Dagbamba farmers to endure.

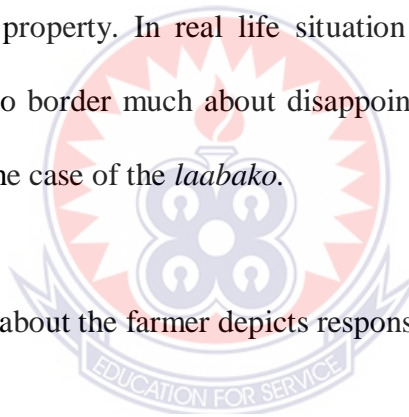
In real life situation, the proverb inspires hard work and endurance among humans.

Consider the proverb below as it portrays the need to be patient:

3. *Nira yi da a nyuwɔyɔ ka bi yo, a laabako n-tiligi.*
 If someone buys your cocoyam and does not pay, then your *laabako* is safe.’

Source domain	Metaphorical mapping	Target domain
Comparing cocoyam and <i>laabako</i>	→	when something is lost, another thing is saved.

Among farmers of the Dagbamba, the *laabako* is the king of all yam types. It is cherished and held in high esteem as it is the sweetest yam and usually the first to be harvested and eaten when new yams are coming. Unlike other yams like the water yam *kpuno*, the *laabako* is a year-round crop that is eaten continuously, so a farmer who does not cultivate *laabako* is not regarded a serious yam farmer. It is against this background that a farmer said that if you buy his water yam without paying, his *laabako* safe. This is because the *laabako* is more valuable than the water yam, and the debtor will not be able to request for the *laabako* when he has not paid for the water yam. The proverb therefore is used to encourage us to be patient in dealing with dishonest people, for that will help safeguard our valuable property. In real life situation the proverb provides a general advice to mankind not to border much about disappointments. When something is lost, the other is saved as in the case of the *laabako*.



The succeeding proverb about the farmer depicts responsibility in the society.

4. *Kpara ηun su kuli yuli ni, ηuna n-surigiri li.*
 ‘The farmer who puts the hoe in the gourd is the one who removes it.’

Metaphorical mapping

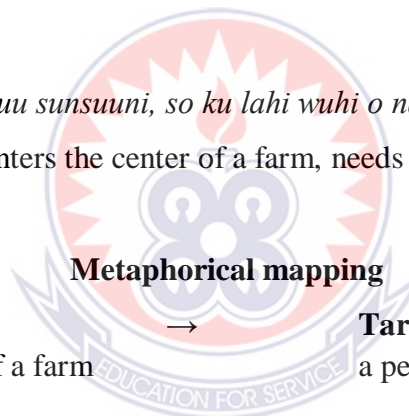
Source domain	→	Target domain
Putting a hoe in the gourd		taking responsibility of one’s actions

As Lakoff and Johnson (1980) postulates, the understanding of proverbs continues to be metaphorical, and information in the target domain is always understood by the information from the source domain mapping. Considering source information from the proverb under discussion, we see the farmer who puts a hoe in the gourd as the same

person who removes it. According to a respondent, the hoe can hardly enter into the gourd so it is not supposed to be in the gourd. Therefore when a hoe is found in the guard, it means someone have kept it in it and must be the right person to remove. Metaphorically, the action is considered a taboo so it is done secretly. Therefore, the one who is found to have committed that act is made to face the full rigors of the law. The metaphor of the farmer putting the hoe into the gourd is used by the Dagbamba to remind the society of the consequences behind involving in actions that are not accepted by the society. Hence the mapping of the farmer putting a hoe in a guard to a person taking responsibility of his action.

5. *Kpara n̄un kpe puu sunsuuni, so ku lahi wuhi o nakpatariga.*

‘A farmer who enters the center of a farm, needs not be shown its boundaries.’



Metaphorical mapping

Source domain

A famer in the middle of a farm



Target domain

a person who makes half an effort

The proverb under consideration explains the state of a person who makes an effort in accomplishing a task in its target domain. In the metaphoric sense, the farmer who enters into the center of a farm is mapped on to an individual who makes half of an effort in accomplishing a task, while seeing the ends of the farm represents the task. We understand from the proverbial saying that a farmer who enters into the middle of a farm does not need another person to show him the boundaries of the farm. People in society who are able to make efforts in a half way to accomplishing their goals have almost achieved. However, this proverb does disprove the notion that such a person still needs

help, but they can easily accomplish their task even without the help of others. The proverb is cited to advise the society that the effort that is made half way needs just a little push to get the desired goals.

The following proverb portrays ownership of the farm to the farm owner over purported thieves who quarrel over the yam:

6. *Taiyisi zabiri vuyulaa nyuya zuɣu, ka puulana ŋun yen yeli yula?*
 If thieves are fighting over yam in the guide-row of a farm, what will the farmer do?

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain

Thieves quarreling over yam



Target domain

Protecting what one owns

The proverb above describes the need to protect what one owns. Among the Dagbamba farmers, the *vuyulaa* ‘guide-row’ as mentioned in the proverb is usually the first row of yam mounds raised by the farmer during construction of yam mounds. Inversely, it is also the first group of mounds in which yams are planted in the planting season. The best yam sets are usually planted in this row so it produces the best tubers of yams in the farm. As a result of this, thieves are interested in yams from that row. The proverb therefore explicates that if thieves who do not own the farm should quarrel over such tubers, what should the owner of the farm do? Obviously, the farm owner can even kill a thief over these tubers. This proverb is cited to encourage farmers to be ready to go the extra mile in guarding and protecting their sweat. Therefore, our understanding from the source information translates that people should not fight each other over a thing that does not belong to them.

The following proverb contains the farmer who treats the monkey's sickness and its rippling effect on him:

7. *A yi tibi jaŋa nyivɔɔyɔ, a mali ŋahirila a kawana.*
 'If you treat a monkey's toothache, it uses it to destroy your maize.'

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Treating a monkey		Effect of helping an enemy

The Dagbamba farmers see the monkey as an enemy, because it destroys maize that are both matured and half matured. Farmers who have maize at that stage spend much time on the farm trying to drive them away and protect the maize. The proverb explains that the farmer who treats a monkey's toothache will have his maize destroyed by the same monkey. Just as the monkey remains an enemy to the farmer, it represents an enemy in real life situation. One is therefore not advised to support an enemy, for he will gain strength and fight him back. However, the proverb is not disputing the fact that doing good to others is beneficial. In the case of supporting a known enemy to be fit and effective, such an enemy will come back to fight you. The succeeding proverb has the philosophy of the Dagbamba regarding the rift that exists between the monkey and the dog:

8. *Janzira bi ne baa pina.*
 'A carrier of a monkey does not see properly in dog's yam mounds.'

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
A person carrying a monkey		trouble are hardly foreseen

The Dagbamba believe that the dog and the monkey are not in good terms. So, whenever the dog sees a monkey, it will chase it. This proverb contains the philosophy behind these two animals. In the source information, we notice a person carrying a monkey who does not see his way properly while walking in the dog's yam mounds. The monkey and the dog are known among the Dagbamba to be enemies. Meanwhile the monkey is said to have a very good appetite for yam. Undoubtedly, the one carrying the monkey will eventually pass through the yam farm to enable the monkey to feed on the yam. This attempt is usually not successful since the monkey is always not comfortable because of his anticipation of the sudden arrival of the dog. A respondent said that this proverb is mostly quoted to remind a person on the repercussions of the action he insists on taking. Philosophically, this proverb is used in prompting a person.

The succeeding proverb explains the concept of the benefit of hard work in its logical sense:

9. *Kpara korimi ka ŋubiri yama.*
 'A farm laborer works before eating a coarse meal.'

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
A farm laborer eating		achievement is out of hard work

The Dagbamba farmers sometimes engage the services of laborers on their farms especially when the farmland is large. *Yama* 'coarse meal' as featured in the proverb is usually prepared in the farm for the laborers to eat when they are exhausted and hungry. The proverb purports that a laborer eats because he works. This means that just as the laborer in the proverb, one has to work hard before one can reap the benefits. The proverb

discourages laziness, while encouraging hard work among people. People who do not want to do any form of hard work may end up stealing and engaging in dubious means for survival. Observe the following proverb as it contains similar observation taking the farmer into consideration: Observe the following proverb:

10. *Kpara bi kɔri ka o kuli kpalindi o kpee puu ni.*
 ‘A farmer does not work and leave his hoe in another farmer’s farm.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
A farmer leaving his hoe on a colleague’s farm		a person abandoning his own

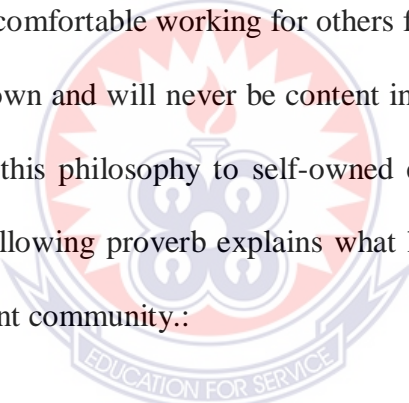
Farm related communal labor is common among the Dagbamba. This is where a farmer will invite a section of his colleagues to help on his farm. This is done in reciprocity where farmers will work on a colleague farm for free, hoping to get the same treatment one day. However, the guest farmers do not work and leave their hoes behind because they will need it to work on their own farms. A farmer who does that will have no hoe to work on his own farm. In the metaphorical sense the farmer who leaves the hoe behind represents a person who abandons his own business while concentrating on someone else’s. This proverb serves to remind people who potentially may abandon their own while concentrating on others. Consider the successive proverb below as it also contains a similar observation:

11. *Kp̄ari bi k̄ari n-kpalindi o kpee puu ni.*
 ‘A farmer does not work in another farmer’s farm forever.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
A farmer remaining on the colleague’s farm		A person who works for others

Among the Dagbamba, it is not uncommon to notice a farmer who always work on other farmers farms without making efforts to give attention to his own. This proverb reminds such a farmer to desist from such act. Metaphorically, a farmer who always work on his colleague’s farm represents an individual who feels reluctant in establishing his/her own business but rather feels comfortable working for others for just a token. Such individuals end up not having their own and will never be content in life. As a result, the Dagbamba are encouraged through this philosophy to self-owned enterprises rather than focus on what others own. The following proverb explains what happens to the farm of a farmer who marries from a distant community.:



12. *Kpara ŋun kpuyi katiŋa paya, o vuy’ŋmahi n-yeŋ zani soli.*
 ‘A farmer who marries from afar will have his ridges uncompleted.’

Metaphorical mapping

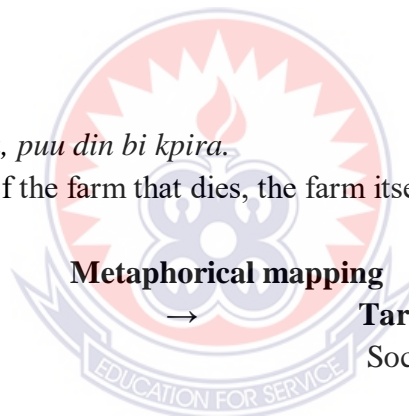
Source domain	→	Target domain
A farmer marrying from afar		a person who is always destructed

Farmers in the Dagbamba society usually weed their farms manually. In doing this, they take the lines of the ridges just like the crops were planted. In the source domain of the proverb, we see a farmer who marries a woman from a distant community, and his uncompleted ridges come to a standstill. The Dagbamba have lots of performances to

accomplish in the wife’s family, in terms of funerals and other cultural and traditional occasions. As a result, the Dagbamba men feature in every occasion that concerns the wife’s family. Therefore, a farmer who marries from a distant community will always travel miles to execute such customary duties leaving behind the uncompleted ridges on his farm. This always distracts such a farmer and affects his farm work negatively. In the real social context, this proverb explains the fate of an individual who is always destructed by activities he could have avoided. We are therefore advised through this proverb not to unnecessarily carry burdens that could have been avoided, for they can cause our shortcomings, just as in the case of the farmer in the above proverb. Consider the proverb below:

13. *Puu lana n-kpira, puu din bi kpira.*
 ‘It is the owner of the farm that dies, the farm itself doesn’t die.’

Source domain
 An existing farmer



Target domain
 Society remains after the individual

Farms are owned by the farmers in the societies. However, as mortals, we are bound to die when our time is due. The proverb describes the farmer and that of the farm itself, by suggesting that it is only the farmer who dies but the farm lives after him. Considering the metaphor of the proverb, the owner of the farm represents the individual who is still alive, while the farm represents the society.

Indeed, human’s come and go but the society still exists, which means that every human being has a grace period. According to a respondent, Dagbamba farmers’ farms exist after them in the sense that a family brother or the children of a deceased farmer takes the

responsibility of taking care of the farm after the demise of the farmer. Inversely, society is not made by one person, many individuals make up society, so if an individual passes on, the living will continue the affairs of society. This proverb proves that man dies, but society remains. Consider the proverb below as it encourages the need for hard work:

14. *Kpara nun yeli ni o ku ko asiba, o lee ni ko yuŋ.*
 ‘A farmer who says he will not weed in the morning, he will weed at night.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
A farmer not weeding in the morning		The reward for laziness

From our understanding of proverbs, they express a hidden philosophy in few words. The proverb under consideration explains the ordeals of a lazy person through the farmer who refuse to work in the morning. In most cultures of the world, farm work is mostly done in the morning where farmers have enough energy after the night rest to work effectively. Among the Dagbamba, working in the farm in the evening is a supplement to the day time, otherwise it is not the tradition of Dagbamba to engage in farm work at night. The proverb metaphorically describes the consequence that can befall a person who does not use his youthful days to work. Such individuals end up engaging in hard labor to survive in their old age. However, at that time, the farmer will not have enough energy to work effectively. Just like the farmer who does not work in the morning but ending up working at night. Through the farming philosophy, this proverb encourages hard work among the Dagbamba.

The subsection above discussed the philosophies in farming-related proverbs taking into consideration the farmer/human being as a cosmology. The section observed several

philosophies from individual proverbs such as the principle of endurance, taking responsibility, effort making, protection etc. These philosophies are pervasive among the Dagbamba society, which are used as a caution or encouragement to individuals in real life situations. The next section presents individual farming-related proverbs taking the farmland into consideration.

4.1.3 The farmland as a cosmology

This section discusses individual farming-related proverbs taking into consideration the farmland on which crops are cultivated. The section provides the specific philosophies that can be found in the farmland proverbially among the Dagbamba. Consider the proverb below:

1. *Tam be kpe, tam be kpe saa n-gari.*
'A fertile land is proven by rainfall.'



Metaphorical mapping

Source domain

A supposed fertile land

Target domain

Abilities are what manifest dreams

It is a known fact that farming activities among the Dagbamba depend solely on rainfall. Crops cannot grow and yield better produce without rainfall. No matter how fertile a particular land may be, it still depends on rainfall in order to actualize its purpose of growing crops. Therefore, the proverb under discussion suggests that a farmer should not only be interested in a fertile land, but has to be considerate of rainfall. Metaphorically *saa* 'rainfall' represents the ability or means to execute a dream, while the fertile land is mapped onto the dream or plan. Context cannot be left out in establishing the target domain of a proverb, therefore in the real context of this proverb, it is used to explain the

nature of having many dreams without the ability to execute them. This forms a strong philosophy from the farmland as a cosmology to the Dagbamba not to continue dreaming without action or the ability to realize the dreams. The succeeding proverb also has the farmland at its center of focus:

2. *Polo bi namdi yoli, bilibili n-namdi polo.*
 ‘A land is not made for nothing; activities make a land.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
A prepared farmland		success is achieved through hard work

This proverb is common in discourses of the Dagbamba. It focuses on farm land crop cultivation. Land preparation is the first step in crop production, where farmers are engaged in a lot of activities such as weeding, hooking, cutting, clearing etc. The proverb suggests that land cannot be created without the activities of man. Metaphorically, the activities of men represent the struggles and hard work of an individual while the land that is finally created is mapped onto achievement of the individual. In the real context of usage, success is not achieved easily. For one to be successful, he/she has to go through a lot of circumstances and struggles. The following proverb describes the newly prepared farmland which contains a particular philosophy of concern:

3. *Vuyu yi kuli be tooni, vuyu m-be nyaana.*
 ‘If there is a ridge in front, there is a ridge behind.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Ridges on a farmland		Siblings from a family

Most Dagbamba farmers farm manually even after the influx tractors and chemicals. Ridges and mounds constructed to cultivate crops such as root tubers and some cereals. The ridges are arranged in a line such that they follow each other in the form that if there is a ridge in the lead position, there will be several others that precede it. The proverb under discussion describes the nature of a prepared land which is ready for crop plantation. In the metaphorical sense, this phenomenon describes siblings in a family, where there is a first born, there are always other siblings who follow and vice versa. The Dagbamba believe in team work and unity where they use this proverb to describe their ring relationship and the support for each other. In the real context of use, this proverb can be used to strengthen the bonds of families and to foster unity in relationships.

Consider the following proverb:

4. *Kpamba n-yeli ni batandali yi ti kɔŋ jilima, be bi yeri sinsahi/kɔyiri yela.*
 ‘Elders say, if an old yam farm *batandali* loses its glory, an older yam farm *kɔyu* is not talked about.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain

Batandali losing its glory

Target domain

the weak are not talked about if the strong are troubled

The Dagbamba have explicit terminologies for specific farmlands such as *batandali* ‘a year-old yam farm’, *sinsahi/kɔyu* ‘a two or more years old land for yam’ as can be observed in the proverb above. *Batandali* is a term used to describe a farmland that was used to cultivate yam in the previous year where the old yam mounds are dismantled and used to cultivate other crops. *sinsahi/kɔyu* is an old *bantandali* on which yam was cultivated two years before. However, it is believed that crops cultivated on *batandali* are healthier and more cherished than those planted on *sinsahi/kɔyu*. Therefore, farmers

prefer cultivating crops on *batandali* to that of *sinsahi/kɔ̃yɔ*. Therefore, suggesting that if *batandali* loses its glory then the *sinsahi/kɔ̃yɔ* is not talked about is fare. In real life situation, if great men are unable to accomplish a task, then the weaker ones are not talked about. Just as *batandali* is not able to produce better and healthier crops, the least talked about *sinsahi/kɔ̃yɔ* the better. However, according to a respondent, this proverb does not rubbish the occurrence of a miracle, where the weak rather become famous in times of troubles. The following proverb also puts the farmland at its center for analysis:

5. *Kpamba n-yeli ni kɔ̃yɔ jilima yirila di ni yihi bindir' sheli na.*
'Elders say, an old farmland's respect depends on the food it has produced.'

	Metaphorical mapping	
Source domain	→	Target domain
A farmland under cultivation		the praise of a man

It is obvious that farmers' primary resource is the land, which makes land an integral part of crop production. The Dagbamba will praise a land based on its ability to make high yield. The above proverb suggests that a land's magnificence is dependent on its ability to produce good yield. Basing our understanding on the domain mappings of the proverb, *kɔ̃yɔ* 'an old farmland' is mapped onto an individual while the glory of the farmland represents his image or respect in the society. Just as the farmland, an individual respect in the society is based on his influence and how he has been able to impact lives. When an individual is able to influence society and bring a change through his or her achievement, then he or she will be held in high esteem and praised by the community. The proverb is therefore an encouragement to man to always work hard and be result

oriented in order to command societal recognition. In the proverb below, the position of a fertile land towards drought is the focal point for argument:

6. *Bavulo tam bi zɔri sanzali.*
‘A farmland along the lake does not fear drought.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	target domain
A farmland along the lake		the blessed are resistible

The fertility of the soil is another important component of crop production. Farmers usually consider the fertility of a land before engaging it in crop production. However, the occurrence of drought hinders the land’s efforts of producing good yield. The proverb under discussion proposes that drought does not affect crops that are on a land along the lake. The proverb metaphorically describes individuals who are blessed by God. *Sanzali* ‘drought’ as can be seen in the proverb represents the antagonists of man, while *kɔyu* ‘farmland’ represents man. Just like the drought can affect the ability of land, the progress of man is usually undermined by his enemies. However, enemies can do their worse but cannot defeat the blessed. This proverb pragmatically encourages man to always work hard and do not pay attention to what oppressors do. Proverbs about the farmland as a cosmology continue to surface in the Dagbamba philosophies as it can be observed in the proverb below:

7. *Kɔy’yoli baɲdila kɔbu saha.*
‘A bad farmland is noticed at the time of farming.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Identifying a bad land		a bad person is noticed by engaging him

The bad farmland is only noticed when crops are grown on it. In the Dagbamba farming community and in many others, farming is done first by clearing the land. However, before this is done, the land is bushy and one cannot tell its worth or ability to produce a particular crop. This is only realized until crops are grown on such a land. If the crops are healthy and attractive, then the land can be praised, and vice versa. In the metaphorical sense, *kɔ̃yu* ‘farmland’ represents an unknown person. It is only when one stays with the person that he will be seen as a good person or otherwise. Just as the English will say ‘seeing is believing’, this particular proverb uses the farmland as a cosmology to define an ordinary human being who is a complete stranger. Just like the farmland, such a person’s attitude is only noticed by having an acquaintance with him or her. Therefore, the proverb is used to discourage prejudgment among individuals.

The sub-section above discussed farming-related proverbs taking into consideration the farmland as a cosmology. The section saw some several philosophies of the Dagbamba with regard to the farmland, such as success, brotherhood, the weak in the society, man’s achievement, the blessed, identifying a bad person in the society etc. These philosophies are pervasive in many proverbial sayings among the Dagbamba discourse. The succeeding sub-section is a discussion of farm-related proverbs taking into consideration farm animals.

4.1.4 The farm animal as a cosmology

Farmers among the Dagbamba always interact with farm animals in their farming activities which to an extent produces some integral relationship between them and these

animals. In view of this, some philosophies emerge from the behavior of these animals towards the farmers, such as destruction of crops, how farmers hunt for them, and their daily communication and interaction with the animals on the field. This general interaction with the animals results in proverbs about the animals which performs some advisory roles in the real context. Below is a discussion on this category of farming-related proverbs:

1. *Kukɔyɔ yuyɔ ɲun tabili baa ku kɔŋ kɔam.*
‘The alligator that lives between an old farm land and a lake will not lack fat.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain

An alligator living between an old farm land and a lake



Target domain

a person who is fortunate

The alligator is one of the farm animals in the Dagbamba society. They are usually common during the dry season. At this time, the holes of the alligators become hot which forces them out to rest under shrubs and trees. It is also common to find them around river banks and lakes. As portrayed in the proverb, an alligator that lives between an old farm land and a lake will always be plump. Unlike other alligators, such an alligator will always have access to left-over food from the old farm land including insects, ants and flies as well as regular water from the lake. This opportunity is responsible for the wellbeing of the alligator. Metaphorically, the alligator represents an individual who is fortunate to have had everything at his disposal because of his or her background. In real life situation, some individuals are born with a silver-spoon in their mouths and will ever

be good looking. The Dagbamba therefore reflect on such an alligator to explain the life of such individuals. The antelope is also the center of focus in the following proverb:

2. *Nyuwayu ku tooi ηmelim nyaη jaηa ηubbu.*
 ‘The water yam cannot grow beyond the consumption of the monkey.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Monkey eating water yam		No problem is beyond solution

The water yam is one of the tuber-crops the Dagbamba farmers cultivate. The monkey cherishes this crop and takes delight in eating it. Farmer used to go to the farm early in the morning to chase the monkeys out of their yam farms. The proverb explains that no matter the size the water yam, the monkey can still eat it. In the metaphorical sense, the monkey is mapped to God Almighty, while the water yam represents problems of man. It is God Almighty who has powers over everything and no problem is bigger than him. Sometimes, farmers are hit by natural phenomenon such as drought, flood, army worm invasion etc. which affects their crop yield. This proverb is used to console the affected farmers. This metaphor of the monkey and water yam is used by the Dagbamba to express the need for the society to have faith in God as the only one who has the solution to every problem.

Observe the philosophy of the squirrel as a destroyer in the following proverb:

3. *Shishiriga n-yeli ni saha kalinsi zuyu sima pieri saha bu la?*
 ‘The squirrel says that for lack of time, how long does it take one to harvest groundnuts?’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Squirrel destroying groundnuts		A destructor in the society

The squirrel is noted among the Dagbamba as one that destroys farm crops. It is mostly found in groundnut farms digging and eating groundnuts. It is this animal that remark that for lack of time, it will not take him much time to harvest (destroy) groundnuts. This philosophy of the squirrel explains the behavior of the individuals who distract affairs in the society. There are individuals in the society who think of nothing but distraction. Just like the squirrel, such individuals employ less effort to destroy others. The society is therefore warned to stay away from such individuals through this proverb because they care less if it comes to distraction.

The partridge as a farm animal is not left out in the Dagbamba philosophy on farming. Observe the succeeding proverb:

4. *Kpamba n-yeli ni be biri chi koriŋga nini ni, koriŋga ŋun yubu.*
‘The elders say, they have sowed millet in front of a partridge and that is it’s desire.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Sowing grains before the partridge’s eyes		Cautiousness

The partridge is another farm animal that usually destroys both planted seeds and young plants. The proverb suggests that when grain is sowed in the partridge’s presence, that is his wish. The Dagbamba farmers usually don’t do planting and expect to see farm birds around. This is to avoid them being noticed. In the metaphorical sense, the partridge

represents a thief who witnesses where something is hidden. The proverb therefore encourages the principle of cautiousness among humans through the partridge and the sowed grain metaphor.

Observe the metaphor of the farmer and the rabbit in the following farming proverb:

5. *Soon'kɔyɔ bi kariti ka lara.*
 'While chasing a malnourished rabbit you don't rejoice.'

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Chasing a malnourished rabbit		underrating an adventure

Among the Dagbamba, farmers sometimes hunt rabbits after the day's farming activities. This is mostly done during the dry season when the sun is scorchy and the rabbits are found under the shade of shrubs and bushes. However, it is known among the Dagbamba that the rabbit is not an easy animal to just chase and catch. No matter the structure and age of the rabbit, it is strong and can run fast to escape danger. Considering the meaning of the proverb, we understand that one should not be excited while chasing (hunting) a weak rabbit. One has to put in all seriousness because there is practically no weak rabbit. Such a rabbit can easily escape to the surprise of the hunter. In real context, one should not underrate any adventure that seems cheap and can easily be achieved. We should rather employ all level of efforts in order to succeed.

The monkey is again featured as a cosmology to express the principle of watchfulness in the following proverb:

6. *Jaŋa n-yeli ni a yi da kaŋiyuli kɔbiga, a bi labi a liyiri.*
 ‘The monkey says that if you buy ‘turning to look’ for hundred, you have not thrown your money away.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
A monkey watching around		taking precautions

The monkey’s usual behavior of intermittently turning to look at his back is what is featured in the Dagbamba philosophy. The monkey always looks around mostly when he is ‘destroying’ a farmer’s crops. This act is to confirm whether the owner of the farm is approaching. This act of looking around by the monkey is what will save him, because he can easily notice the farmer and escape. Therefore, for one to buy the act of looking around, the individual has not wasted his money. In the metaphorical sense, the proverb describes the importance of being alert and taking precaution. When an individual invests much money and time into taking precaution, it is not a bad idea because that is what will save him/her. It is therefore prudent for one to be extra vigilant in all our endeavors to avoid unexpected losses.

In the following proverb, the snake forms the center of focus in the following proverb:

7. *Din be gariŋga zuyu ni, dina m-be lekakuli kpali ni.*
 ‘What is in a snake’s head is what is on the head of an axe, *lekakuli*.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Killing the snake with the <i>lekakuli</i>		the price for stubbornness

The *lekakuli* is a farm tool made of wood the Dagbamba farmers usually carry on their way to the farm. It is a wood to which a metal plate of a hoe is fastened which is used as a weapon to hunt animals like the snake, rabbit, antelope etc. The Dagbamba believe that if a snake is found in the open, it is out for a reason and must be killed. Such a snake is going to be killed by using the head of the *lekakuli* to hit it in the head. Therefore, the proverb suggests that what brought the snake out is the same thing on the head of the *lekakuli*. It means that the snake will eventually meet the *lekakuli* to death. In real context, the proverb is used to admonish persons who do not take precautions when they are making wrong moves. Such persons are cautioned that whatever is wrong with them, they will meet it when they eventually face the troubles and consequences of their actions.

Observe the resulting proverb about *gbuluyu* ‘a kind of frog’ at its center of analysis:

8. *Kpamba n-yeli ni gbuluyu noli n-kuri o baa ni.*

‘The elders say, it is the mouth of the frog that kills him in the swamp.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain

the frog making noise

→

Target domain

the disadvantage of being a talkative

The *gbuluyu* ‘a kind of frog’ is usually found in rivers and lakes that usually sings while in the water. They sometimes live in swamp where Dagbamba grow rice in the farming season. Just as ordinary frogs, it is a kind of frog that is bigger and makes a lot of noise. Farmers who encounter the *gbuluyu* among the Dagbamba are those who cultivate rice in the swamp and along the lakes. After a successive farming expedition, (mostly in the mid-afternoon) the farmer(s) while resting under the trees often hear these creatures

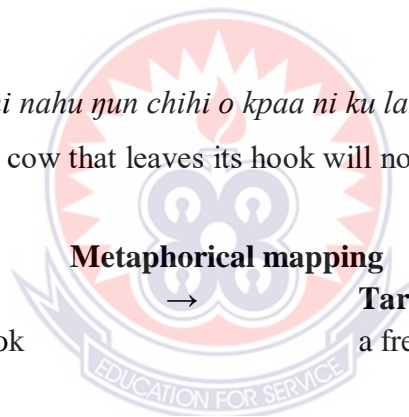
making their usual noise. According to an informant, this is the time the *gbuluyu* makes the most noise. As the proverb advocates, this mouth of the *gbuluyu* will announce its presence presenting a great opportunity to the farmer(s) to eventually notice it and hunt it. In the metaphorical sense, the *gbuluyu* represents an individual who talks a lot. The possibility of such a person to utter some information that will expose him or her is high. Therefore, a man's mouth is what brings him troubles, hence the proverb above. The Dagbamba is advised through this proverb to talk less to avoid such tendencies.

The cow as a cosmology is not left out in the Dagbamba viewpoint through the proverb below:

9. *Kpamba n-yeli, ni nahu ŋun chihi o kpa ni ku lahi ŋubi chi din dalim.*
 'The elders say a cow that leaves its hook will not eat millet that is tilted.'

Source domain

A cow that leaves its hook



Target domain

a freed individual

The proverb under consideration has the tilted millet and the freed cow at its center of argument. The millet grows tall into the sky before maturing. The cattle that make their way into such a farm are compelled to eat only the leaves since they are unable to reach the upper part which contains the seeds. However, after the plant is matured, the upper part (the head) bends because of its weight. Some of them too like all other plants are tilted down due to wind damage. This presents a great opportunity to the cattle to graze the upper part of the plant. On the other hand, the cow that gets off its hook becomes free and can move about freely. Instead of waiting to be fed by its care taker, such a cow now

selects the kind of grain or grass to feed on. It will even push the millet plant down in order to have access to the upper part of it since no one is there to stop it from doing so. The proverb suggests that such a cow does not eat tilted millet again which considered easy to eat. In the metaphorical sense, the cow represents an individual who is not under any control; he or she is free to choose a lifestyle to live. In philosophy, the proverb describes independent individuals and how they make choices in life. Because they are independent, the possibility of them taking decisions on their own is high. The proverb is therefore used to encourage the need for freedom among individuals. Just like the cow that gets off its hook, an independent individual is capable of confronting fortunes in life.

4.2 Themes in farming-related proverbs

This section presents a discussion on individual themes in farming-related proverbs. The section discusses eleven themes that are embedded in the individual farming related proverbs that perform some advisory role to mankind. We begin with the theme of ownership as can be observed in the following proverb:

4.2.1 Theme of ownership

1. *Kpara nini m-biiri o chi.*
'A farmer's presence is what ripens his millet.'

Source domain	Metaphorical mapping	Target domain
A farmer observing his farm	→	A person looking over his property

The proverb under consideration describes the farmer whose presence on his farm is what matures his millet. In the source information of the proverb, we see a farmer monitoring

his millet farm, which informs us about the principle of ownership in the target information. A farmer who has the time to monitor and observe his farm can prevent thieves from stealing from his farm. He will also have the opportunity to clear weeds and chase away animals and birds that are a potential danger to the farm. This allows the millet to grow well as expected. This supervisory role the farmer executes over his farm explains that he owns his farm and has control over it. It is not proper for another farmer to inform the colleague farmer that his millet is matured. The millet can only be matured through the farmer's strict supervision. This means that the farmer is displaying ownership over his farm. Therefore, the proverb under analysis contains the theme of ownership. Consider the following proverb as it also contains the theme of ownership:

2. *Puulana m-mi o puu tariga.*
 'Only the owner of the farm knows the end to his farm.'

Source domain

A farmer identifying his farm boundary

Metaphorical mapping



Target domain

A person knowing his own

Observing the proverb under consideration, we see a farmer alone being the one able to identify the boundaries to his farm in the source domain of the proverb, which explains the principle of ownership in the target information. In real life situation, one cannot understand the problems of others more than the people themselves. Every individual is unique and can only be understood by him or herself. This means that everyone is a custodian of his own. As we can observe from the proverb, unlike the farm owner, a different person cannot tell the ends to the farm. The proverb below describes the principle of endurance.

4.2.2 Theme of endurance

1. *Kpara doro naarila puu ni.*
'A farmer's ailment is cured in the farm.'

Metaphorical mapping		
Source domain	→	Target domain
A sick farmer in the farm		endurance

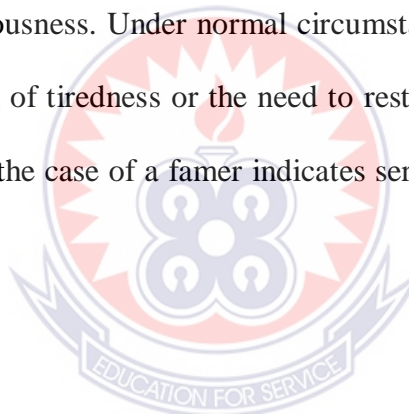
Farming is a profession that involves the exhibition of maximum energy, which sometimes results in stress and severe ailments. The Dagbamba believe that farming requires a lot of energy because of its vigorous nature. It is a form of exercise which is capable of healing minor sicknesses. naturally, the Dagbamba are not lazy and do not want to admit being sick especially if he is capable of walking about. Mostly, the sick person's family would say "go out there and shake out your sickness". Therefore, the sick farmer goes to the farm hopping to shake out his sickness. Looking at the source information of the proverb, we see a sick farmer with the expectation that he will be healed in the farm visits his farm even when he is sick. This means that farmers have the enduring heart to visit his farm and even work under unhealthy condition. Thematically, this proverb contains the theme of endurance because the farmer hopes to be strong to work in the farm even in pain. Unlike other situations that will compel a person to relax at home, farmers have the conviction that they will be healed while working in the farm, hence the theme of endurance. Consider the following proverb as it also portrays the theme of endurance:

2. *Kpara woligu nyela o nimɔhi.*
 ‘A farmer’s sweat is his seriousness.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
A sweating farmer in the farm		endurance

As CMT suggests, the understanding of a proverb is based on two domains (Source and target). We see a farmer who is sweating in the source domain of the proverb which means endurance in the target domain. The proverb suggests that a farmer’s sweat means he is serious, which means that farmers don’t see sweat as a sign of tiredness or distress but rather a sign of seriousness. Under normal circumstance, a farmer who sweats while working is an indication of tiredness or the need to rest. However, the proverb proposes that such a condition in the case of a farmer indicates seriousness, hence the exhibition of the theme of endurance.



4.2.3 Theme of balance

1. *Kpamba n-yeli ni a yi tiehi saa nyin tiehimi sanzali.*
 ‘Elders say, if you think of rainfall you should think of drought too.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Thinking of rainfall and drought		Preparedness

The proverb under discussion suggests that if one thinks of rainfall, he should as well think of drought. This is because there is not only the possibility of rainfall, but drought as well. Metaphorically, thinking about rain is mapped onto expecting fortunes, while

thinking about drought also represents a consideration of misfortunes. In real life situation, if one thinks about good, he should equally think of bad so that none would come as a surprise. Thematically, the proverb preaches the principle of balance in expectations. Consider the proverb below about the water yam:

2. *Nyuwayu gba bɔri nyusayu.*
'The water yam also deserves stalking.'

Source domain	Metaphorical mapping	Target domain
Stalking the water yam	→	Fairness

This proverb is focused on the water yam maintaining that it also requires stalking. Unlike other yam varieties, the water yam is not usually stalked when it is planted. However, not because it cannot be stalked or stalking it doesn't improve its growth, it is usually not the norm among farmers. However, the water yam will equally do well when it is stalked. The proverb therefore encourages that it is equally important that farmers stalk the water yam as well. Thematically the proverb encourages the principle of balance and fairness among humans.

4.2.4 Theme of cautiousness

1. *Kpamba n-yeli ni sanzali kuli zaya maa ka saha kpierimi.*
'Elders say, while the drought persists, time is going.

Source domain	Metaphorical mapping	Target domain
Persistent drought	→	taking precaution

Farm crops produce good yield when there is regular rainfall, but produces poorly when there is severe drought. Farmers therefore take precaution in undertaking farm activities like planting crops, weeding, fertilizer application etc. even under drought conditions. According to an informer, even though farmers need moisture to execute specific activities, however, drought should not prevent a farmer from engaging in activities such as weeding, planting, staking etc. This is because the time may exceed which may eventually affect crop yield. Farmers are by this proverb reminded not to halt other farming activities because of drought. The proverb contains the theme of cautiousness and taking pragmatic decisions. Observe the following proverbs as they contain the theme of ability.

The following proverb also illustrates the theme of cautiousness.

2. *Kpamba n-yeli ni “zɔri yala buɲa kperila nayili chi ni”*
 Elders say “A calmer has his donkey entering the chief’s farm”

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
A calmer		a person being cautious

In a Dagbamba society, there are varied groups of people including firebrands and a calmer. While the firebrand can agitate without ever thinking of the consequences, the calmer is very cautious and doesn’t want to get into any trouble. The later upon all his cautiousness has his donkey entering the chief’s millet farm making him prone to being summon to the chief’s palace. It is important for one in a society to be calm in order to

stay out of trouble. Cautiousness is therefore encouraged in the society as it enables the individual to live a trouble-free life.

4.2.5 Theme of ability

1. *ka pini karili n-nyeri nyu' titali.*

'It is not the big yam mound that produces a big yam.'

	Metaphorical mapping	
Source domain	→	Target domain
A big yam mound		Ability is not by size

There is the theme of ability in this proverb. The proverb suggests that the ability of man is not by size, but rather the inner potentials. Indeed, yam mounds that farmers raise are in sizes which do not presuppose that it is the big mound that will produce the big yam tuber. In the metaphorical sense, the big yam mound is mapped to a person with maximum height and body. This stature does not tell the ability of such a person when it comes to executing a particular task, but his inner ability to doing that. As can be observed in the target domain of the proverb, this means that ability is not by size.

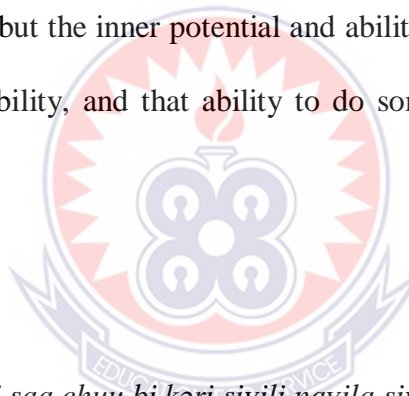
See the following proverb with the same argument:

2. *ka nyu'karili n-tɔri sakɔr'vielli.*

'It is not the big yam that can be used for good fufu.'

	Metaphorical mapping	
Source domain	→	Target domain
A big yam		Ability is not by size

Just as the previous proverb puts forward, the content of this proverb explains that the size of an entity is not the prerequisite of strength or ability. In this proverb, the big yam is not necessarily the only one that can produce good fufu, the small yam is equally capable of producing good fufu. In the real situation, this proverb cited as an advice to those who think they more capable because of their physical stature. The ability to do a particular task involves a special ability but not just an individual's size or stature. According to one farmer, if you have a farm that is almost consumed by weeds, an individual may be deceived by his stature into thinking that he can clear all the weeds. Such a person can be reminded by this proverb that it is not just the physical structure that will do the clearing but the inner potential and ability. Thematically, the proverb also portrays the theme of ability, and that ability to do something is not by the size of an individual.



4.2.6 Theme of season

1. *Kpamba n-yeli ni saa chuu bi kɔri siyili nayila siyili saa m-mi.*
‘The elders say that regular rainfall does not mean farming should start but the season’s rains do.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Not farming because of regular rainfall		everything has its own time

Siyili saa is the first rain which marks the beginning of the farming season. It usually comes after March by which time every farmer had prepared his land waiting for it. The proverb suggests that regular rainfall does not mean that farmers should start farming, only the *siyili saa* does. This means that there can be heavy rainfall at any time within the

year, but that does not mean farming can start. Farmers have to still wait for the farming season to start by the coming of the *siyili saa*. In the thematic sense, the proverb suggests that everything has its own time and that one should not be deceived by unusual signs.

Consider the following proverb as it portrays the theme of season:

2. *Kpamba n-yeli ni vunyayililana kɔrila wuuni.*
‘Elders say, a lazy person farms in the dry season.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
A farmer farming in the dry season		laziness

It is obvious that farming activities are effective when the rains are in. Farming activities (apart from irrigation) may not be effective in the dry season. Therefore, a farmer who farms in the dry season except through irrigation is a lazy man. Observing the source domain of the proverb, we see a farmer who farms in the dry season which suggests laziness in the target domain. It is out of laziness that a farmer will farm in such a season. This proverb reminds farmers that everything has its own time and season. It is obvious that every activity especially farming has its time so it is only a lazy man who pretends performing a task at the wrong time. Observe the following proverb as it portrays the theme of laziness:

4.2.7 Theme of laziness

1. *Kpamba n-yeli ni vunyayililala kɔrila naa puu ni.*
‘Elders say, a lazy man works in the chief’s farm.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Weeding in the chief’s farm		a person who expects cheap sides

The proverb above expresses the principle of laziness. In the source domain, we see a farmer working in the chief's farm, which depicts someone who desires to get things cheap in the target domain. Among the Dagbamba community, one way of serving the chief is working on his farm. Periodically, the chief calls for a communal labor which attracts scores of his subjects from far and near. Among the large number of attendants are the lazy ones who mingle with those really doing the work. They pretend working making it difficult for people to notice them. Sometimes, they will assume the role of fetching water for the workers, and engage in other menial activities just to catch the eyes of the chief. Such people will only have this opportunity in the chief's farm so that they will not be exposed unlike in an ordinary man's farm where the numbers are very few.

Observe the proverb below:

2. *Kpamba n-yeli ni kpariyum pua n-diri mɔyɔ.*
Elders say, it is a lazy farmer's farm that weeds consume.'

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain

A lazy farmer's farm



Target domain

the effect of laziness

Kpariyum as observed in the source domain of the proverb is a lazy farmer who is just doing anything to claim he is also a farmer. The proverb suggests that it is only such a farmer whose farm can be consumed by weeds. Thematically, the proverb expresses the effect of being a lazy farmer in the target domain. A serious farmer does not allow weeds to take over his farm.

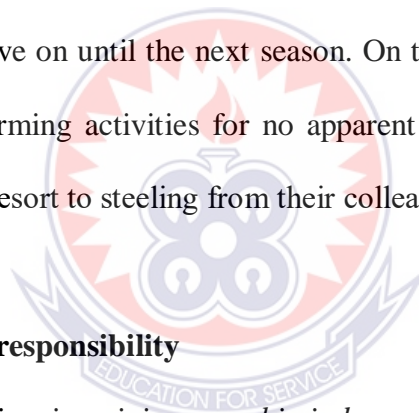
The next proverb discusses a lazy farmer who engages in stealing from his colleague's farm.

3. *Kpamba n-yali ni “Ka’ymayira ku pa leeŋa”.*
 ‘Elders say that stolen millet cannot be dried on the shade porch.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
A stolen millet		The punishment for stealing

The proverb discusses the lazy farmer who instead of working hard to earn his own loiters about and ends up stealing from his colleagues. Typically, among the Dagbamba, every grown up engages in one farming activity or the other during the farming season. Those who even travel to the cities to engage in menial jobs, return during this period to till the land. This is mostly done to ensure that the individual as well as the family will have something to survive on until the next season. On the contrary, some individuals in the village avoid the farming activities for no apparent reason. In the end, they find it difficult to survive and resort to stealing from their colleagues’ farms.



4.2.8 Theme of shared responsibility

1. *Kpamba n-yeli ni a yi warigi vuyu, a bi pinda.*
 ‘Elders say, if you start a ridge, you don’t complete it.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
A farmer starting a ridge		shared responsibility

The proverb under discussion displays the theme of shared responsibility. Typically, the Dagbamba farmers construct ridges to cultivate crops such as maize, beans, okra, millet etc. which is usually done in groups. Due to the collaborative nature of their work, the

labor is divided; one farmer will first start the ridge and another farmer completes it. Indeed, farming by nature, is not prone to a single individual's exertion, but a joint effort. In real life context, this proverb employed to express the principle of shared responsibility and unity.

The following also illustrates the theme of shared responsibility.

2. *Sima yi bi tabili taba, di ku niŋ sin' jaba.*

'If groundnuts are not attached with each other, they will not become conjoined groundnuts.'

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Groundnuts attaching to each other		the need for unity

The proverb above explains the Dagbamba philosophy of the phenomenon of groundnuts that become conjoint at the stage of their maturity. The groundnuts that become conjoint with each other are those that are attached to each other. However, if the attachment is not done, the groundnuts cannot become conjoined. In the real contextual analysis of the proverb, it can be explained that humans only become friends when they are closed to each other in terms of communication or physical visibility. Therefore, metaphorically, the groundnut represents humans that are closed to each other and always working together. This proverb is usually cited to encourage farmers to work together since their relationship is for a reason but not for nothing. Dagbamba believe that this proverb helps in cementing the relationship between brothers and encourage them to work together hence the theme of shared responsibility. Observe the following proverb as it encourages the concept of proximity.

4.2.9 Theme of proximity

1. *Puu din waya di mana n-karigira.*
'A farm that is far away will have its okra spoiled.'

	Metaphorical mapping	
Source domain	→	Target domain
Okra spoiling in the farm		Effects of proximity

Farmers have farms that are both close and far from their dwelling places, which mostly impact on the output of the farms. The proverb in the literal sense suggests that if a farmer lives far away from his farm, it is possible for the okra from that farm to go bad. This is because the rate at which the farmer can visit the farm to harvest the crop will be hindered by the distance, hence, the possibility of the crop spoiling. In the metaphorical sense, the okra in the proverb represents the income of an individual while the farm represents work place of the person. People who live far from their work place in one way or the miss some important activities at the work place. Such people risk losing some income or completely losing their job as in the case of the okra. Thematically, the proverb expresses the need for proximity over distance. The following proverb also contains the theme of proximity as can be seen below.

2. *Kpamba n-yeli ni kanako puu dirila mɔyɔ*
'Elders say that "A visiting farmer's farm is usually consumed by weeds'

	Metaphorical mapping	
Source domain	→	Target domain
A farm consumed by weeds		effects of proximity

In the past, Dagbamba farmers had their farms close to their houses especially when the population small. However, some of them had to travel to far places in search for fertile land for cultivation. In some cases, Dagbamba farmers stayed in towns and cities but travel to their villages during the farming season to farm. Some of these city dwellers will visit the village daily or periodically to check and work on their farms. This group of farmers is described as *Kanako* (a visiting farmer). For one or two reasons, the visiting farmer may be unable to visit the farm at the right time. This results in weeds overgrowing on the farm. Things would have been different if the farmer was a permanent resident in the that village hence proximity to the farm. This is what a respondent described as effects of proximity. The succeeding proverb expresses the theme of uncertainty.

4.2.10 Theme of uncertainty

1. *Chi din na dɔyiri ku tooi baŋ ni nini.*
‘The millet that is still sprouting cannot be determined just a glance.’

Source domain	Metaphorical mapping	Target domain
Millet sprouting fruit	→	No need to prejudge

The proverb under consideration has the millet at its center of focus. The millet fruits by first sprouting the flowers and eventually developing the grain. At this stage, one cannot conclude on its status. A farmer whose millet is at this stage is optimistic of a good yield but however, cannot be sure. According to a famer respondent, the proverb explains the life of a person in his early stage of life; one cannot certainly predict his or her destiny.

This is usually among children who are still growing up. The proverbs describe the uncertainty of life and explain the unpredictability of the world.

2. *Dagbampamba n-yeli ni Sana ku tooi baŋ kabira sayim.*

‘The elders say, a stranger cannot recognize food prepared with millet seeds.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Food from millet seeds		inability of the stranger to judge

This proverb in its literal sense explains the inability of the stranger to recognize the TZ prepared with the millet seeds. However, in its real situation of context, it explains that, the secretes of the household is only known by the landlord. According to an informer, the Dagbamba preserve some millet for cultivation in the next farming season. However, in the occurrence of hunger, when all farm produce is finished in the barns, family heads rely on such preserved millet seeds for household consumption. This is usually an alternative in the absence of real millet for consumption. A stranger who has just visited a particular household. During such a situation would not be able to notice this incident. Therefore, the family head has relied on the millet seeds as an alternative to save the day of the stranger’s visit and also avoid been ridiculed for lack of food. In the real sense, the proverb is used to ascertain the fact that uncertainty exist in some activities among the Dagbamba. Consider the following farm-related proverb reflecting the theme of uncertainty:

3. *Kpamba n-yeli ni gunguma tiyisi yiliya ku baŋ kpema.*

Our elders say, ‘one cannot tell which of the hanging cotton bolls is older than the other’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain

Hanging cotton bolls

→

Target domain

inability to judge

The proverb under consideration discusses the cotton plant and its process of growth and maturity. By nature, the maturity of the cotton plant is determined by the busting of its boll to expose the cotton fiber. Before this stage, it is difficult for one to look at the cotton fruits and determine which one is older than the other. It is a common knowledge that the plants on the field which are cultivated at the same do not all bare fruits and mature at the same time. Some of them must definitely ripe before others. This explains the philosophy of uncertainty of life where it is difficult to tell who among a group of children will succeed early in life.

The proverb below unearths the principle of human capacity:

4.2.11 Theme of capacity

1. *Kpamba n-yeli ni pa pin'karili n-nyeri nyu' titali.*

‘Elders say it is not the big yam mound that produces big yam tubers.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain

A big yam mound

→

Target domain

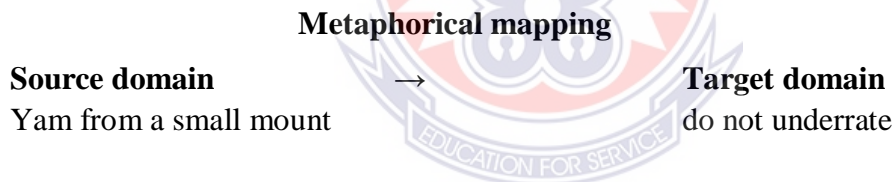
man's capacity

The yam mounts in which farmers sow yams are in sizes, big, small and medium depending on the choice of the farmer. This proverb suggests that, it is not the big yam mount that produces big yam tubers. It is possible for one to see a big yam mount produce a small tuber while the small mount produces a big tuber. The ability to produce a big yam tuber lies in the yam set that was planted in the mount. If the yam set is good and healthy, all things being equal, we can expect good yield no matter the size of the mount. The thematic expression of this proverb implies that ability to execute a particular task is not by the size of the individual but the viability of the other necessary factors.

The following proverb also expresses a similar thematic sense:

2. *Pimbila nyuli, ban ziem ni kpi kum.*

‘Yam from a small mound, those who underrate it will die of hunger.’

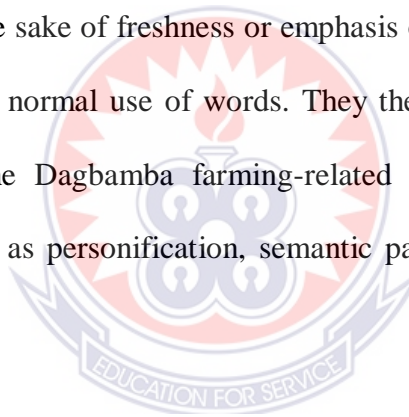


This proverb has the yam from a small mound at its center of focus. In most cases, when farmers are harvesting yam, they sometimes ignore mounds that are small with the notion that there will not be any reasonable yam in it. The proverb states that such farmers who underrate such mounds will die of hunger. Another farmer respondent explained this in the context of a man who underrates a woman and ignores her because of her size. Such a man will die in bachelorhood. In the thematic logic, we see in the proverb that ability is not determined by size. The section above discussed individual themes in Dagbamba farming-related proverbs. Indeed, there are themes that contain many of the Dagbamba

philosophies and worldview in these farming related proverbs. The section saw many themes such as theme of hope, theme of responsibility, theme of ability, balance, distance, uncertainty etc. The next section is a discussion of the literary devices in the farming-related proverbs.

4.3 Literary devices in Dagbamba farming-related proverbs

According to Agyekum (2013), literal device is basically a sort of comparison based on association, and their meanings must be inferred or derived from larger cognitive, cultural or environmental context. He explains further that a figure of speech occurs whenever a speaker or writer, for the sake of freshness or emphasis of some point of interest, departs from the denotations or normal use of words. They therefore relate to words and their extended meanings. The Dagbamba farming-related proverbs are productive in the stylistic properties such as personification, semantic parallelism and alliteration as this section discusses.



4.3.1 Personification

Personification is a literary device in which an animal, a thing or an abstract term is made human (Agyekum, 2013). This means that personification gives human attributes to animals, ideas, and inanimate objects. Consider the following proverbs:

1. *Kpamba n-yeli ni ziri yi kuli kɔri vuyisi, yelimaŋli m-bɔri kabira shee.*
‘Elders say, if a lie is constructing ridges, truth is looking for millet seeds.’

Metaphorical mapping		
Source domain	→	Target domain
A lie constructing ridges		truth leads

The proverb above explains the principle of truth in the real-life situation. The proverb proposes that at the end of every manipulation of falsehood, the truth will be the final decider. Just as we can see in the source domain as a lie constructing ridges for crop plantation, the truth finally does the planting. This in metaphorical sense means that truth leads at all times. However, the proverb gives the attributes of man to a lie. Just as Agyekum (2013) explains, a lie which is an abstract entity is given human attribute, form and character. It is human that can physically construct ridges for crop plantation however; we have seen a lie that does this activity in the proverb, hence the exhibition of personification in the proverb. Consider the following proverb:

2. *Kpamba n-yeli ni kɔyu jilima yirila di ni yihi bindir’ sheli.*
Elders say, a farmland’s respect depends on the crop it has produced.’

Metaphorical mapping		
Source domain	→	Target domain
Praising a farmland,		A person’s ability

This proverb has the farmland at its center of analysis. The proverb seeks to suggest what should necessitate the glory or respect of a farmland. When a farmland is able to produce enough yield, then it can be praised or respected. This explains man’s respect in the target domain. Again, this proverb has also endowed human attribute (respect) to the farmland. It is human that has the characteristics of being respected by other humans.

However, the farmland is respected due to the crops it has produced, hence the occurrence of personification in the proverb. The succeeding proverb also makes use of personification.

3. *Kpamba n-yeli ni “Kpara nun yeli ni wantana di nya o yaana, goli gba ku nya o puli”.*

Elders say “A farmer who says the sun will not see his back, the moon too will not see his stomach”

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
A farmer working under the sun		Hard work pays

The individual farmer among the Dagbamba continues to provide logical interpretation through the proverbs. The Dagbamba farmers usually leave for the farm early in the morning and return at sunset. This implies that they work throughout the day even when the sun scorches. They only retire for home in the evening as they come home to rest and prepare for the next day’s work. Typically, in the evenings, they rest on their lazy chairs under the moon while facing the sky. This automatically exposes their bellies to the moon hence the moon seeing the belly. This idea is what is metaphorically mirrored in this proverb.

The sun seeing the farmers back represents a person who works all day, while the moon will not see one’s stomach represents a person who does not have rest and always suffer. If you work hard, you will benefit from your hard work and rest afterwards. In the contrary, if one fails to work hard, he will eventually be restless at night while his colleagues enjoy their rest. According to an informant, this proverb is usually used as a

form of encouragement to farmers who (because of the tedious nature of farming) may lose hope and quit. The proverb illustrates personification where the sun and the moon which are both inanimate are seen to perform the role of man as in seeing the back or the stomach of a person.

Consider the following proverbs:

4. *Siyili yi bi zo yiliyidana vi, yiliyidana gba ku zo kabira vi.*

If ‘hardship’ does not respect a landlord, a landlord will not also respect (sell) millet cereals

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain

A farmer selling millet cereals, *kabira*



Target domain

Surviving hardship

This proverb explains the tit-for-tat relationship between *siyili* ‘hardship’ and a landlord. *Kabira* is the millet grain that is left to be sowed in the next farming season. Farmers always keep the seedlings at a safe place and do not temper with it, let alone sell it. This is because, such millet cereals are important, for it secures the future farming ability of the household. However, the proverb suggests that the landlord will not spare the *kabira* if ‘hardship’ does not spare him. This means that he will go ahead to sell the *kabira* as the hardship persist. The proverb has endowed the attribute of human into ‘hardship’, making it possessing the characteristics of showing respect, hence the exhibition of personification in the proverb. The next sub-section discusses the occurrence of semantic parallelism in Dagbamba farming-related proverbs.

4.3.2 Semantic parallelism

According to Okpewho (1992: 82), parallelism is a formulaic device which allows the oral performer to bring a diversity of ideas within a convenient structural identity. He describes semantic parallelism as the substitution of words or details between statements though the central idea remains the same. Aside the exhibition of personification in Dagbamba farming-related proverbs, there are instances of semantic parallelism occurring in these proverbs. Observe the following proverb:

1. *Bua ni niŋ tabili shem, tabili ni niŋ bua lala.*
‘What the goat did to tobacco, tobacco will do same to the goat.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain

A goat eating tobacco

→

Target domain

the principle of revenge

Tobacco is usually cultivated at home in gardens and compounds though some farmers cultivate it in their farms. It is not a crop that goats eat since it is not healthy for animal consumption. As a result, farmers do not fence the tobacco farm even if the stubborn goats are reared in that village. However, some goats seldom graze the tobacco and the consequence is that such a goat will suffer stomach ache to death. The proverb suggests that what the goat does to the tobacco, the tobacco will do same to the goat. We can observe a semantic parallelism in the construction where *bua ni niŋ tabili shem* ‘what goat does to tobacco’ forms a semantic domain while *tabili ni niŋ bua lala* ‘tobacco will do same to goat’ forms another semantic domain, however with one central idea. Observe the following proverb:

2. *A yi bi labi, a ku pihi.*
‘If you don’t lose, you will not gain.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Putting a seed into the soil		Benefiting from one’s labor

This proverb describes the notion of scattering seeds as a method of sowing or planting. This is common among Dagbamba farmers especially in the cultivation of rice. The proverb suggests that this act is a form of losing a valuable asset to the soil which eventually will produce more gains. This situation is what is described in the proverb. Farmers are never worried when they lose their valuable seeds to the soil because they will in the end gain. Literarily, we can observe the occurrence of semantic parallelism where the first part of the proverb *A yi bi labi*, ‘if you don’t lose’ contains a distinct semantic construe from the final part, *a ku pihi* ‘you will not gain’. However, the idea remains the same. The following proverb also contains a similar literary device:

3. *A yi warigi vuyu, a bi pinda.*
‘If you start a ridge, you don’t complete it.’

Metaphorical mapping

Source domain	→	Target domain
Constructing a ridge		sharing responsibility

Farmers usually work in groups during the construction of ridges. The making of the ridges involves opening it from one angle and then closing it from the other angle. In the process, farmers will divide the labor among themselves, some will be opening (*warigibu*) while the rest are closing (*pilibu*). Base on this background, the Dagbamba say that, *A yi*

warigi vuyu, a bi pinda. ‘If you open (start) a ridge, you don’t close (complete) it’. This is done to portray the concept of division of labor. Once again, we can observe the occurrence of semantic parallelism as one part of the proverb constitutes a different information from the other, but expressing one concept.

4.3.3 Alliteration

Agyekum (2013), opines that alliteration is the repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words or syllables. In poetry and rhyme, it is the repetition of certain sounds thereby emphasizing them and helping to unify them. The Dagbamba farming-related proverbs exhibit alliteration as a stylistic property in the following proverb:

1. *Zaawuni nakpaa, jia jia.*
‘Evening columns, short, short.’

Source domain

Making columns in short forms

Metaphorical mapping



Target domain

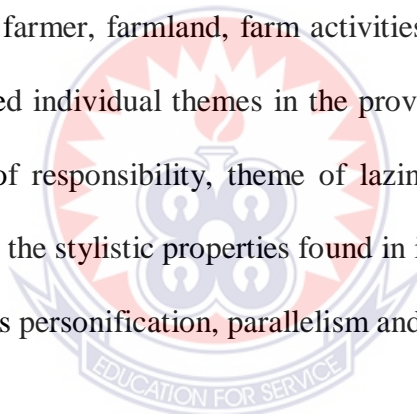
Summarizing issues for lack of time

This proverb expresses the principle of shortening things due to inadequate time. Among the Dagbamba, it is not uncommon for farmers to work on their farms in the evening. This is referred to as *zaawuni kpariba* (evening communal labor. In the process, they shorten the columns because they are all aware that time is not enough for them. Therefore, the Dagbamba will site this proverb in situations of inadequate time. We can observe an alliteration pattern in the proverb where the [dʒ] sound is repeated in the final two syllables.

The sub-section above discussed the stylistic properties exhibited by individual farming-related proverbs of the Dagbamba. The section saw stylistic properties such as personification, parallelism and alliteration. It is observed that these farming proverbs are not quite production in literary devices, and there exist just a few of them.

4.4 Summary of chapter

This chapter sets out to explore farming-related proverbs among the Dagbamba, basing the analysis on the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). The chapter saw many philosophies from individual proverbs under cosmologies such as, crops/farm produce, the farmer, farmland, farm activities and farm animals respectively. The chapter also explored individual themes in the proverbs such as, theme of capacity, theme of hope, theme of responsibility, theme of laziness, themes of season etc. The chapter finally discussed the stylistic properties found in individual farming proverbs, and identified devices such as personification, parallelism and alliteration.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This study was out to explore a literary analysis of Dagbamba farming-related proverbs. This chapter presents the general conclusions of the study. It deals with the summary and findings of the study, and some recommendation for future studies. Beyond this section the rest of the chapter is organized under the following subsections. Section 5.1 presents the summary of the study while 5.2 accounts for the findings of the study. Section 5.3 presents the conclusion of the study while section 5.4 presents recommendation for future studies.

5.1 Summary of the study

This study explored a literary analysis of Dagbamba farming-related proverbs, employing the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in the data presentation and analysis as a model. Conceptual Metaphor Theory is guided by the assumption that metaphor is understood by mappings of both source and target domains.

The study answered the following questions:

- What are the specific farming-related proverbs among the Dagbamba?
- What are some of the themes embedded in farming –related proverbs?
- What stylistic devices can be found in farming –related proverbs?

This study comprises of five chapters. The first chapter served as an introduction to the study. The chapter discussed the background to the study and statement of the problem. It also presented the objectives of the study as guided by the research questions. The

significance of the study, limitation and delimitation were also discussed. Eventually the chapter discussed the organization of the study.

Chapter two is a review of relevant literature to the study of farming-related proverbs. The chapter reviewed literature on the meaning and source of proverbs, including a cross linguistic study of farming-related proverbs. The chapter also reviewed literature on themes in farming-related proverbs, and finally presented the notion of Conceptual Metaphor Theory as a model adopted for the data presentation and analysis.

The third chapter focused on the methodology employed in the study. The chapter discussed the research design, population, the participants and sampling techniques. The source of data and the techniques used in data collection were also discussed. The last section of the chapter presented the data analysis procedure.

Chapter four discussed the individual farming-related proverbs based on cosmologies such as the farm crops, the farmer, farm animals and farmland. Beyond this, the chapter discussed the specific themes in these proverbs and finally presented the stylistic devices in the farming-related proverbs.

Chapter five is the summary, conclusion, findings and recommendations of the study. The chapter first presents the summary of the study, followed by the findings, conclusion and recommendation of the study.

5.2 Findings of the study

This study aimed at exploring a literary study of individual Dagbamba farming-related proverbs, the themes these proverbs carry and their stylistic devices. Indeed, target domains of the proverbs are understood by the information in the source domain. The proverbs are also metaphoric and require the context of use for their actual meaning and interpretation. Findings from the study reveal the following:

1. The Dagbamba farming-related proverbs exhibit proverbs such as, proverbs concerning the farmer, proverbs about farm crops, proverbs about the farmland and proverbs regarding farm animals as cosmologies.
2. The Dagbamba farming-related proverbs appear to contain both short structures and long ones, explaining both simple and complex ideas.
3. It is observed that proverbs that come in short forms appear to have deeper meaning and interpretation than their longer counterparts. An example of such short proverbs is

Kabir' suŋ ku kɔŋ saa.
'A lucky millet seed will not lack rain.'

Kafulima so mɔri.
'A bad millet grain is better than weeds.'

4. It is also observed that the Dagbamba farming-related proverbs contain themes such as, theme of uncertainty, theme of endurance, theme of balance, theme of hard work, theme of proximity, etc. as discussed in section 4.2 of this thesis.
5. Finally, findings from the data reveal that the Dagbamba farming-related proverbs possess some stylistic devices such as Personification, Parallelism and Alliteration. However, it is important to mention that this category of proverbs is not much productive in the stylistic sense. This may be due to the fact that, unlike other oral genres such as

songs, oral poetry, oral appellations, drum language, which can be performed on stage, proverbs are cited based on the context and the prevailing circumstance. In addition, proverbs are said to convey a specific message and not to be performed on stage like songs and other performing oral genres.

5.3 Conclusion

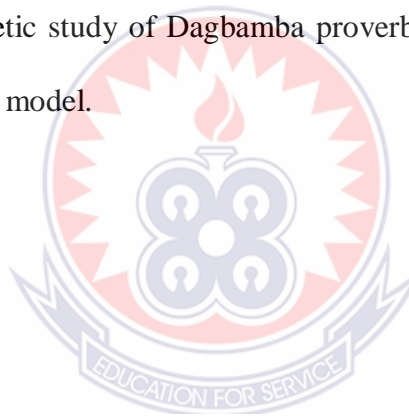
This thesis has explored the literary analysis of the Dagbamba farming-related proverbs. The study has discussed about 83 farming-related proverbs according cosmologies such as, the farmer, the farmland, farm crops and farm animals. The study also explored the specific themes that are found in these proverbs, and identified themes such as, theme of uncertainty, theme of endurance, theme of balance in anticipation, theme of season, hard work etc. Eventually the study explored the few stylistic devices that can be found in the Dagbamba farming-related proverbs, such as Personification, Alliteration and Lexical parallelism. Indeed, the understanding a proverb is metaphorical, where one thing is said to mean another based on situation. Therefore, one could conclude that Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) is what best explains this metaphorical phenomenon.

More significantly, this literary analysis of farming-related proverbs explains more of the Dagbamba view point and philosophies regarding farming as an indigenous profession of the Dagbamba. It brings to bear how the Dagbamba use farming-related proverbs to warn, advice and outdoor their understanding of certain contexts in their communication.

5.4 Recommendations

The current study is on the literary study of farming-related proverbs among the Dagbamba, under the orientation of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT).

1. The study recommends that, other researchers can use the same theory to analyze proverbs about animals in general.
2. The theory can also be used to discuss proverbs about marriage and child care among the Dagbamba.
3. Other researchers can also analyze human body part proverbs using the same theory
4. Also, the aesthetic study of Dagbamba proverbs in general can also be worked on with the same model.



REFERENCES

- Adam, P. P. (2016). *Wuni bimbirili*. Koforidua.
- Adamo, D.T. (2015). *Ancient Israelite and African proverbs as advice, reproach, warning, encouragement and explanation*. HTS Theologies Studies/Theological Studies 71(3).
- Addo, E. N. (2022). *Pimpinaa: An analysis of Ghanaian children's play-songs as a genre of African oral literature*. University of South Africa. PhD dissertation.
- Agyekum, K. (2005). *The pragmatics of request in Akan communication*.
- Agyekum, K. (2012). *Akan proverbs and aphorisms about marriage*. Research Review 27.2:1 24.
- Agyekum, K. (2013). *Introduction to literature*. (3rd ed) Legon – Accra.
- Agyekum, K. (2013). *Introduction to Literature*. Accra.
- Agyekum, K. (2017). *The Ethnosemantics and Proverbs of Ohia 'Poverty' in Akan*.
- Amate, P. (2011). *Visual representation of selected Akan proverbs in Ghana: their philosophical and socio-cultural values*. MPhil Thesis. Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi.
- Anang, C. O. (2013). *The Ga riddle, its style and structure*. University of Education, Winneba, M.Phil. Thesis.
- Awedoba A.K (2000), *An Introduction to Kasena Society and culture through their proverbs*.
- Benjamin, W. (1999). *Proverbs*. In *Selected Writings*. Volume 2: 1927-34. Ed. by Michael W. Jennings et. al. Trans. by Rodney Livingstone. Cambridge, MA.
- Best, J.W and Khan, J.V (2006) *research in Education*, 10th Edition.
- Bodomo, A. (2020). *Identity packaging in Africa-China cross-cultural communication*.
- Borkor, M. J. K. (2004). *African Proverbs and Oral Literature*. Illinois State University.
- Cavanaugh, S. (1997). *Content analysis: concepts, methods and application*. *Nurse Research*, 4(3), 5-16.

- Chenenje, S. L. (2017). *Stylistics analysis of Kabras folk songs*. M. A. Thesis, University of Nairobi. Cogent/Arts & Humanities (2022).
- Coinnigh, M. M. (2014). *Structural Aspect of proverbs*.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approach (3rd edition)*.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed method of approaches*. London.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: choosing among five approaches (4th ed)*.
- David T. Adamo (2015), Ancient Israelite and African proverbs as advice, reproach, warning, encouragement and explanation. *Herv. teol. stud. vol.71 n.3 Pretoria 2015*
<http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/HTS.V71I3.2972>
- Diabah. G. and Amfo, A. A. (2018). *To dance or not to dance: masculinities in Akan proverbs and their implications for contemporary societies*.
- Douglas, B. (2015). *The theory and practice of development education: A pedagogy for global social justice*.
- Durkheim, E. (1933). *Division of labour in society*.
- Essel, S. (2021). *Farming related proverbs in Fantse*. MPhil thesis, University of education, Winneba.
- Etikan, I. and Bala, K. (2017). *Sampling and sampling methods. Biometrics & Biostatistics International Journal*. Volume 5, Issue 6. Retrieved on 2nd December 2017.
- Eugene N. K. and Joseph K. T. (2018), *Examining The Structures And Literary Devices And The Aesthetic Qualities Embedded In Dagaaba Proverbs*.
- Evans, V., Bergen, B. & Zinken, J. (2007). *The cognitive linguistics enterprise: an overview*.
- Finnegan, R. (1970). *Oral literature in Africa*. London. Oxford University Press.
- Finnegan, R. (2012). *Oral literature in Africa (2nd ed.)*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers.
- Finnegan, R. (2012). *Oral Literature in Africa*. Cambridge. Open Books Publishers CIC Ltd.

- Firth, R. (1926). *Proverb in native life with special reference to those of the Maori, II*. In *Transactions of Folk Lore Society*, V (37-3), 245-270.
- Geeraerts, D. (2010). *Theories of lexical semantics*. New York.
- Gibbs, R. W., & Beitel, D. (1995). What proverbs understanding reveals about how people think. *Psychological Bulletin*.
- Gruba, P. and Zobel, J. (2017). *How to write your first thesis*. Switzerland.
- Habib, S. M. (2015). *Verbal taboos in Dagbani*. M.Phil thesis, University of Education, Winneba.
- Honeck, R. P. and Temple, J. G. (1994). Proverbs: The Extended Conceptual Base and Great Chain Metaphor Theories. *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity*, 9:85-112.
- Hudu, F. (2010). *Dagbani Tongue-root Harmony: A formal account with ultrasound investigation*. Ph.D. University of British Columbia.
- Ibrahim, I. H. and Usman, J. (2021). Cultural values in Acehnese farming-related proverbs.
- Inusah, A. & Issahaku, J. S. (2019). The role proverbs in Dagbani. *International Journal of Language, Literature and Culture*: 2019; 6(1): 1-10.
- Issah, S. A. (2015). Conjoint and disjoint verb alternations in Dagbani. *Ghana Journal of Linguistics*. 4(2), 29-63.
- Janda, L. A. (2010). Cognitive linguistics in the year 2010. *International Journal of Cognitive Linguistics*, Vol. 1(1), 1-30.
- Janda, L. A. (2010). Cognitive linguistics in the year 2010. *International Journal of Cognitive Linguistics*, Vol. 1(1), 1-30.
- Johnston, D. D. and Vanderstoep, S. W. (2009). *Research methods for everyday life: Blending qualitative and quantitative approaches*. United States of America.
- Junejo, Z. I. and Dali, A. M. (2018). Selected Agricultural proverbs and Sindhi Peasants' indigenous Knowledge-a Source of oral history. *Journal of the Department of History*. V. 27, No. 2.
- Kogri, E. N. and Tangwam, J. K. (2018). *Examining The Structures and Literary Devices And The Aesthetic Qualities Embedded In Dagaaba Proverbs*. *Journal of Literature, Languages and Linguistics*. V (44), 2018.

- Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research methodology: Methods and techniques*. New Delhi, New Age International (P) Ltd. Retrieved on 2nd December 2020.
- Kövecses, Z. (2002). *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kquofi, et al. (2013). Symbolic Representation And Socio-Cultural Significance Of Selected Akan Proverbs In Ghana. *Research on humanities and social sciences*. Vol.3.
- Kwame, A. (2018). Segment deletion as a morpho-phonological process in Dagbani compound word formation. *Journal of West African Languages*. Volume 45.1.
- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Malik, M. (2017). A theoretical analysis of the communicative significance of proverbs in English Language. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* 22(3).
- Marshall, M. N. (1996). *Sampling for qualitative research*. Great Britain: Oxford University Press. Vol. 13, No. 6. Retrieved on 2nd December, 2020.
- Mesly, O. (2015). *Creating Models in Psychological Research*.
- Meider, W. (2004). *Proverbs: A Handbook*. London.
- Musah, A. (2014). *The aesthetics of the libation prayer texts among the Dagbamba*. M.Phil thesis, University of Education, Winneba.
- Nwaichi, E. O. (2019). Igbo Proverbs in Praise of Soil. *Advances in Literary Study*, 7, 21-31. <https://doi.org/10.4236/als.2019.72003>.
- Okpewho, I. (1992). *African Oral Literature: Backgrounds, Character, and Community*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Omanova, T. L. (2022). Artistic understanding of peasant life in proverbs. *Eurasian Journal of Humanities and social sciences*. V. 9. 2795-7683. *overview. The Cognitive Linguistics Reader*, London Oakville: Equinox
- Owu-Ewie, C. (2017). *Introduction to traditional and action research*. Koforidua, Database multimedia.
- Owu-Ewie, C. (2019). Proverbs in Marriage: Counseling role and Implication. *Long Journal of the Humanities*, 30(1), 24-53. School for International

- Training College Semester Abroad. proverbs. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*. V (11), pp. 364-371. Publishing Ltd.
- Rahim, K. L., and Issah, O. S. (2013). Agriculture-related proverbs in Yoruba: a sociolinguistic appraisal. *Journal of Language, Literature & Communication Studies*. V. 1, No. 3.
- Sanortey, T. D. (2012). *The aesthetics of Kɔntɔmbɔɔr (Birifor festival song)*. M.Phil. thesis, University of Education, Winneba.
- Sibdow, I. A. (2015). *An analysis of greetings among the Dagbamba*. M.Phil thesis, University of Education, Winneba.
- Sidhu, K. S. (2012). *Methodology of research in Education*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Limited.
- Stemler, S. (2001). An overview of content analysis. *Practical Assessment, Research and Evaluation*, 7(17).
- Tanko, S. (2020). *Aesthetic Analysis of Gonja Proverbs*, M.Phil thesis, University of Education, Winneba.
- Tetteh N., Dansieh S. & Adom D., *Imagery of Dagaare and Waala pro-verbs: Visual eisegesis*.
- Tetteh, E. K. (2013). *Literal features of Akan proverbs*. Accra: Doku St.
- Tisdell, E. J. and Merriam, S. B. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to research design and implementation (forth ed.)*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Villers, D. (2016). Proverbiogenesis: The phases of proverbial birth. *In proceedings of 9th Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Proverbs. Tavira: International Association of Paremiology*, 369-380.
- Villers, D. (2016). Proverbiogenesis: The phases of proverbial birth. *In proceedings of 9th Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Proverbs. Tavira: International Association of Paremiology*, 369-380.
- Whiting, B. J. (1983). *Proverbs in Earlier English Drama with Illustration from Contemporary French Plays*. Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press: New York; Octagon Books.
- Yakub, M. (2018). An Ethno-pragmatic Perspective of the 'Concept of Patience' as Conveyed in Nzema proverbs. *International Journal of Language and Literature*, 6(2), 112-117.

Yankah, K. (1989). *The proverb in the context of Akan rhetoric*. New York: Peter Lang.

Yankah, K. (1989). *The proverb in the context of Akan rhetoric*. New York: Peter Lang.

Zakaria O. A. (2020). *An analysis of some festival praise songs among the Dagbamba*.
M.Phil. thesis, University of Education, Winneba.

