

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

A STRUCTURAL AND STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE BIRFOR LIBATION

TEXT



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TEXT

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**A thesis in the Department of Gur-Gonja Education, Faculty of Ghanaian
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fulfilment**

**of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
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in the University of Education, Winneba**

DECEMBER, 2023

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

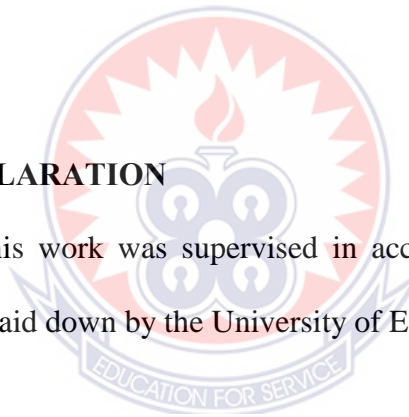
I, **TOLITEY EMMANUEL CHEDITEY** declare that this thesis is the result of my own research which I carried out at the University of Education, Winneba. I have duly cited all references. I further declare that I have not presented this work (either in part or in whole) anywhere for the award of any degree or certificate. I accept single-handedly and whole-heartedly, responsibility for any possible lapses that may be found in this work.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my lovely family especially my wife and my four children Wanaah Eric, Naa-eannah, Bob-maale and Nuobeyiri Saviour. You are dear to me. You remain an inspiration and a pillar in my life respectively.

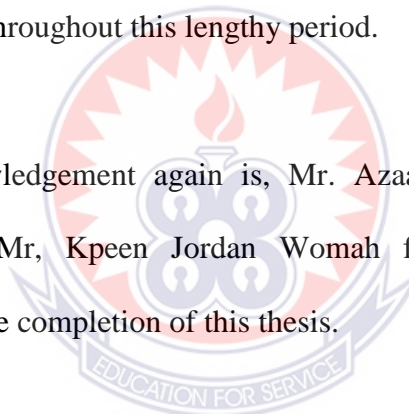


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ABBREVIATION

L.T.

Libation Text



ABSTRACT

This study looks at the structural and stylistics analysis of the Birfor libation text in the Wa West District of the Upper West Region of Ghana. The study analyzed the structure, identified the stylistic features and outlined the occasions and some significance of the libation text. The study was descriptive with no quantification of numerals. The research approach used was ethnographic. The data collection strategies were through unstructured interviews, recordings, and participant observation. Qualitative method was used in the study. Purposive sampling was adapted in selecting the participants for the study. The study made use of primary data. The major findings are that Birfor libation text has structure and style. It also found out that the libation text is performed during specific occasions and gatherings. On the structure of libation performance, the performer presents the issue, invoke the gods by making a pledge and conclude the text. The structure of libation text takes three stages; invocation, explanation of the problem and supplication to the gods. The study confirms that Birfor also believe the hereafter hence perform libation for the dead before mourning especially the elderly. The data revealed that libation text has some aesthetic and stylistic features such as style, symbolism, repetition, apostrophe, ideophones, metaphor, synecdoche, euphemism, oxymoron, hyperbole, alliteration, assonance, rhetorical question, parallelism and compounding.



CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Overview

This chapter discusses the background to the study, the problem statement, purpose, objectives, research questions and organization of the study.

1.1 Introduction

This study analyses the structure, stylistic features and the significance of libation prayer text among the Birfor. Libation forms an integral part of the life of the Birfor people. It is customary for the Birfor to perform libation before the commencement of an occasion, such as festivals, funerals among others. Libation is performed using water, ash, fowls and local alcohol based on the contextual issues on the ground. It is only males that perform libation text. It is a form of prayer to ask for blessing and prosperity. Among the Birfor, libation is poured for travelling mercies and among others to invoke the ancestors for protection. The libation text is embedded with stylistic features such as style, symbolism, repetition, apostrophe, ideophones, metaphor, synecdoche, euphemism, oxymoron, hyperbole, alliteration, assonance rhetorical, question, parallelisms, proverbs and compounding. The performers are elderly community leaders and family heads who are linguistically competent. Libation is described as “the pouring of a liquid offering as a religious ritual” (Mensah & Ekawan, 2016). Such ritual is seen as an offering to a deity or ancestor. They further assert that libation is an art that exists in many cultures though they may vary in levels and significance.

1.2 The concept of Libation

The Birfor hold the belief that libation performance is sacred and occasional. There has been a heated debate on the concept of libation among Christian and Muslim brothers. Some are of the view that libation is satan incarnate and therefore must be abolished completely in African societies. Majority of christians and muslims view libation pouring as spiritual, sinful and barbaric and spiritually corrupting hence the need to be abolished at national ceremonies (Agyarko, 2005).

Libation offering is an aspect of African culture and African spirituality. It is believed to be a mark of piety and total devotion to the gods and ancestors. The ancestors serve as representative of God. If libation then is a form of prayer, it may be seen as compatible with the Christian doctrine since the spirits themselves are not being worshipped. The researcher agrees with Sarpong (1996, P.2) that the lesser gods in theory may be regarded as representatives of the Supreme Being hence the need to pour libation. Ancestors in the Birfor religion and culture are being honoured but not worshipped. Whatever form the people take the process to be its impacts on their lives are more significant than the mere process of pouring liquid. Libation performance is ritualistic and the associated utterances are incantatory.

The Birfor call libation *Kaba/ kvɔ̃ barfo* which means ‘pour’ literally meaning ‘to pour water’. ‘Kaba’ involves the pouring of water and occasionally local alcohol. Privately, libation can be poured by a family head especially in the morning when he has had a bad dream the previous night. The performance is usually brief and secret and sometimes

invocative. It is culturally unacceptable for women and young ones to perform libation in the Birfor society. Libation is all about interacting with the gods and the super ordinates hence women and the young ones do not have the power to do that.

1.3 Background to the study

The African society is very dynamic and the Birfor society is not excluded. The rich cultural heritage of the Africa people is fading off in the hands of foreign cultures. The Birfor just as many Africans are influenced by both cultural infiltration and western education in different ways. The sad aspect is that many Birfor have been converted to Christianity and so many community elders no longer perform traditional rituals, or offer sacrifices to the gods and the ancestors. They rather resort to church prayers instead of asking their smaller gods for blessings and protection. This practice is bringing about disinterest in the traditional cultural practices including the pouring of libation.

The Birfor culture and traditions however, have a lot to offer to the current generation. Gemah (2022) says the literate world has inherited a comprehensive body of knowledge from the pre-literate world of verbal communication. People in these cultures can speak and communicate without a written version of language. Though these people do not have any written language, they still communicate perfectly in their culture. The researcher being a native speaker has observed that Birfor communities have abandoned many oral activities which are an important component of the culture. The researcher therefore wishes to investigate or find out whether or not the people hold on to the oral literature especially the stylistics and structure of the Birfor libation text.

Libation in particular transmits the rich cultural heritage of the society to the next generation during occasions such as funerals, festivals, marriage ceremonies, among others. This research has observed that modernization and Western education are changing the practice of libation. This is evident during most traditional occasions where some elders are no more interested in pouring libation to maintain the tradition. It is impossible if not difficult for the younger ones to pour libation, because some of them do not patronize important ceremonies where libation is poured for them to see and appreciate the stylistics features and understand the importance of libation pouring. The younger ones rather prefer to attend church ceremonies such as night mass services, disco dances instead of participating in traditional occasions such as Bɔɔr ‘festival’, kuor, ‘funeral’ among others.

Agyekum (2013, p.39) says “stylistics involves the ways in which the words and linguistic elements of an oral literature text are organized and the resources within the words that ensure the effectiveness of the oral performance. Stylistics deals with the style and techniques of presentation that go a long way to make oral literature an art. The stylistic features such as symbolisms, repetition and ideophones found in libation text bring an aesthetic effect to the audience. They show some functional significance for the interpretation of the text”. One can conveniently suggest that these stylistic features can also be found in Birfor libation text.

Akile (2015), also opine that stylistics is the use of language in different ways all for the purpose of achieving a common goal to negotiate the meaning. It is the study of different

styles which are present in an utterance or written text. He continues that an utterance is to make us understand the intention of the performer of the text. This study therefore seeks to look at the stylistic elements that are embedded in the Birfor libation texts and the extent to which these elements translate the meaning of the libation text to the people that perform it.

1.4 The Birfor

The Birfor homeland is a 2,000 square kilometer strip of land that borders Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast. The Birfor crossed the border from what was known as French West Africa into Ghana, which was called the Gold Coast, in about the mid-nineteenth century (https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/10869/GH).

Birfor is an ethnic group currently located in Northern Ghana, specifically in the Wa Municipality, Lawra, Wa East and Wa West districts of the Upper West Region and in the Sawla-Tuna-Kalba and Bole districts of the Savannah Region respectively (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010).

They can also be found along the neighbouring Southern Burkina Faso, and Northern Côte d'Ivoire of Ghana. Rattray (1932) considers the Birfor and the Dagaaba as belonging to the Lobi tribe. When one takes a look at the linguistic distance between Birfor and Dagara on one hand and Lobi on the other hand, Rattray's description is rather on groupings of settlement with relatively similar practices. It is true that the Birfor, Dagara and Lobi have quite a number of practices which are similar, affirming Rattray's

assertion that the Dagara and Burfor belong to the Lobi tribe. Some of the practices of these ethnic groups include the use of the xylophone mostly for their funerals and festivals. They also practise betrothal and elopement marriages and use other items like cowries and cattle as bride price.

There are also a number of Burfor in the western region of Ghana. The vast majority of educated Burfor settle in this region and do not typically return to their homeland on any permanent basis. The Burfor people Rattrary (1932), are predominately farmers. The men do a bit of hunting and the women often gather shea nuts and dawadawa pods for cooking and selling. Crafts such as pottery, baskets, mats and ropes are also produced. Burfor villages are typically less centralized than other villages. Farms are usually made around the compound as well as in the bush up to five kilometers away. Typically, each compounds houses about ten people. A compound consists of many rooms, which are rectangular with flat mud roofs and supported by wooden beams. It is common for a man to have at least two wives and for a wealthy man to have up to four wives among the Burfor. The majority of Burfor follow African Traditional Religion hence they see libation prayer as an important hallmark of their culture. Currently, there are few Muslim Burfor and little Islamic influence in the area (https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/10869/GH).

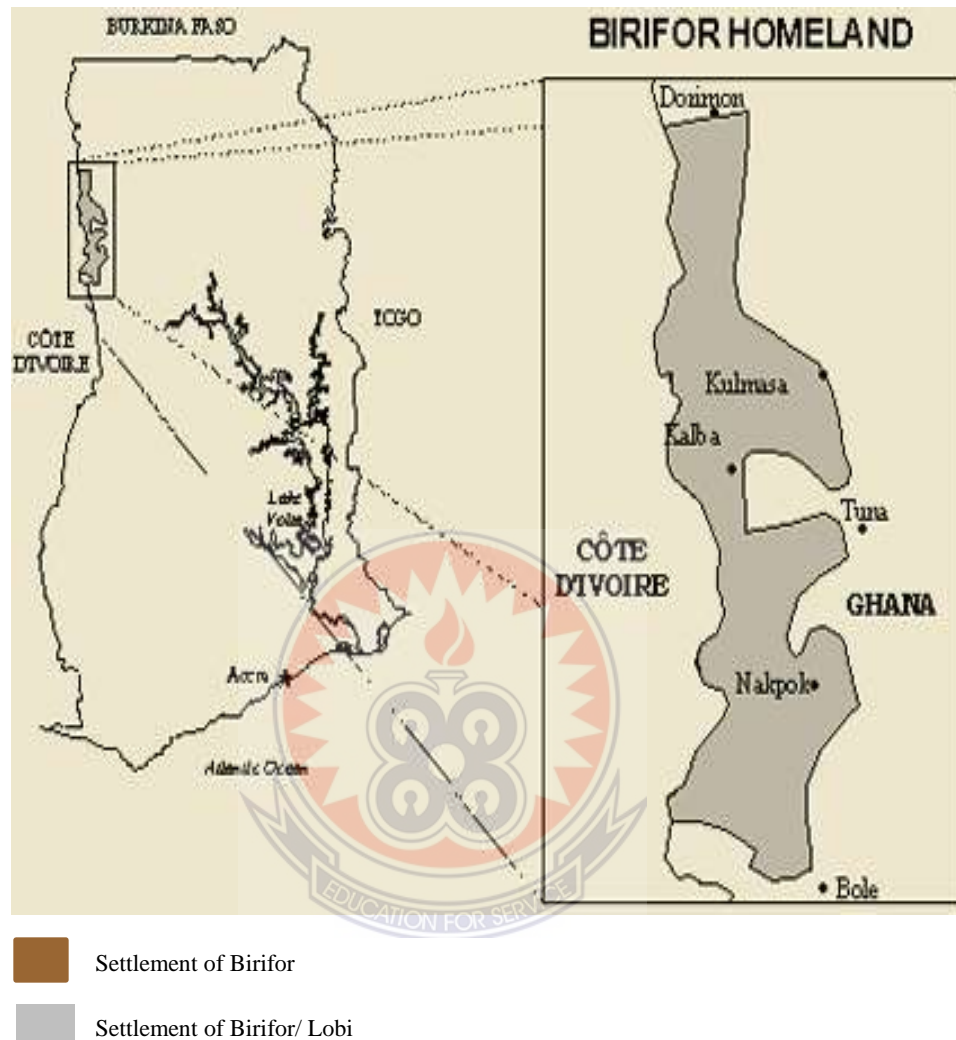
Burɔɔr¹ is one of the widely spoken dialects of Dagaare in the Upper West Region of Ghana. The language is widely spoken on local FM stations in the Wa Municipality and some Swala–Tuna-Kalba District (STK) in the Savannah Region. Public and social announcements are usually made in the language which in turn encourages the speakers to learn it. Another motivational factor that facilitates the use of the Burɔɔr is the conscious effort of the Complementary Basic Education (C.B.E), which is a United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) sponsored program that uses Burɔɔr as one of the languages to train community facilitators to teach in their respective communities. Most of the instructional materials used in teaching and learning are printed in Burɔɔr.

The first Burɔɔr Bible (New Testament launched in 2006 at the Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District in the Savannah Region) is also a motivational factor for the use of the language. This Bible is used in almost all the churches where majority of the people are Burɔɔr.

The 2010 United Nations Country population report shows that, Burɔɔr in Ghana occupy a total landscape of about 145,000km². The Burɔɔr celebrate the annual “*ɔɔr*” festival with dancing and feasting and worshipping of lesser gods. The map below shows the areas occupied by the Burɔɔr in the Wa West district.

¹ Burɔɔr is the language that the Burɔɔr speak. It is a language that is similar to that of the Dagaare and Lobi.

Fig. 2: Map of the areas occupied by the Burfor people in the Wa West district



Source: https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/10869/GH

1.4.1 Genetic classification of the Burfor

Bodomo (2020) classifies Burfor as a Mabilia language which is distantly related to sister languages such as the Sisala. Burfor is an ethnic group with a distinct dialect which is different from Lobi. The Burfor speak Burfor, a dialect of Dagaare while the language of the Lobi is Lobir (Bodomo, 1997). This research shows that Lobir is neither mutually

intelligible to Dagaare nor Birfor as some people may construe. The comparison that follows shows the differences.

Sanortey, (2011) agrees that Birfor like Akan in the Southern Ghana practises the matrilineal system of inheritance with some variations. The properties of a deceased father belong to the matri-clan of the deceased father's maternal brothers. The elder of the deceased father only inherits the deities and the bow and a quaver with arrows. Also, the land and the house belong to the children. The current study supports this assertion.

He continues that the patri-clan of the Birfor, as established in the society are grouped into seven main groups, namely, *Pɔkɔr dɔɔ*, (*Pɔkɔr* clan), *ɲmelee dɔɔ*, (*ɲmelee* clan) *Naafile dɔɔ* (*Naafile* clan), *Fermaal dɔɔ*, (*Fermaal* clan), *Selbile dɔɔ* (*Selbile* clan) *Namireme dɔɔ* (*Namireme* clan) and *Leɲkaal dɔɔ* (*Leɲkaal* clan). Members of this lineage see themselves as one family with common destiny. Each of this patri-clan has a totem which is usually an animal or a bird. These totems are believed to have saved the lineage from one danger or the other. The Birfor use the totem to trace and identify a patri-clan member. He also classified the matri-clan into four main groups; *Da*, *Sɔmɔ*, *Kambire* and *Hien*. These four groupings are playmates to one another. The idea of playmates among matri-clans has its traditional and cultural undertones among clan members.

Also, the role of the playmates is to promote peace in case of disagreement. For instance, if a *Da* (tribe) is in disagreement with someone, a *Sɔmɔ* is responsible to settle the dispute and ensure that peace is restored between the two parties. The person who is chosen to settle the dispute between the fighters, comes with ash in hand poured on the

ground in a line shape between the fighters. When this is done, none of the two parties can cross this line and that means the dispute is resolved forever.

Playmates among matri-clans play significant roles in disputes resolution among members. In times of libation prayer, it is the playmates that open the libation prayer by using ash to drive away bad spirits that may impede the libation prayer. This explains why when a person is being cursed by his /her parents, uncles, it is the playmates that can reverse the curse by pouring libation to ask for forgiveness.

Table 2: Lexical differences between Burifvɔr, Dagaare and Lobir

Burifvɔr	Dagaare	Lobir	English
<i>nɪɛ</i>	<i>nɪɛ</i>	<i>Tibil</i>	‘human being’
<i>kvɔ̃</i>	<i>kvɔ̃</i>	<i>nyvɔn</i>	‘water’
<i>nvɔ</i>	<i>nvɔ</i>	<i>yɔlvɔ</i>	‘hen’
<i>Kpi</i>	<i>Kpi</i>	<i>Duo</i>	‘die’
<i>Gber</i>	<i>Gberɛ</i>	<i>nvɔ</i>	‘leg’
<i>Ara</i>	<i>Are</i>	<i>gyɪla</i>	‘stand’
<i>gyũ</i>	<i>zẽẽ</i>	<i>Tomin</i>	‘blood’
<i>Tan</i>	<i>tɛne</i>	<i>Tii</i>	‘soil’
<i>gyɪɛ</i>	<i>zɪɛ</i>	<i>tinlee</i>	‘red’
<i>Gangaa</i>	<i>Gangaa</i>	<i>bambãã</i>	‘drum’
<i>Kuor</i>	<i>kuori</i>	<i>Bier</i>	‘funeral’
<i>bvɔ</i>	<i>boɔ</i>	<i>bv</i>	‘goat’
<i>dãã</i>	<i>dãã</i>	<i>taan</i>	‘pito’
<i>puo</i>	<i>wɛɛ</i>	<i>lvɔ</i>	‘farm’
<i>saan</i>	<i>saan</i>	<i>kpalkpal</i>	‘stranger’

Source: Field Work, 2022.

From the table above, it can be concluded that Birfor belongs to the Oti-Volta group of central Gur languages which according to Bodomo (1997, p. 2) is known as 'Mabia'. The genetic features of the central Gur language are based on Bodomo's suggestion that, 'Ma' and 'Bia' are central Gur languages where 'Ma' and 'Bia' mean mother and child respectively. Birfor and its immediate relations such as *Moore*, *Safaliba*, and *Farifari* found in the north-western part of Ghana are in the same language group. This therefore suggests that these languages together with the south-eastern languages such as *Kusaal*, *Dagbani* and *Mampruli* constitute the Oti-Volta or 'Mabia' sub group of Central-Gur languages, hence their mutual intelligibility (Schaefer, 2003, p. 2).

1.5 Statement of the problem

Scholars, especially of the African continent, are rather moving a slow pace in developing a comprehensive framework in dealing with the dynamism of rituals and for that matter libation pouring which represents a liable source of society's traditions. In recent times, the Birfor has not attached much importance to oral literature as a whole in reshaping history and traditions so practices like libation pouring which still remains basically oral are yet to be fully considered in most instances. The Birfor stance on libation seems to be misunderstood by many especially the youth and among Christians and Muslims. Libation text analysis on its own is yet to be explained. Hence, the Birfor like other Africans see libation practice as satanic and meant for the pre-literate societies. Realizing these problems, it would be good for one to find out and document this all-important oral genre that will add to the literature as well as clearing misconceptions. This study therefore intended to analyze and explained the rationale behind the Birfor

libation text, and its relation to tradition and religious beliefs, clearing doubts that it is satanic as mostly spread by Christians and other scholars, hence the basis for this study.

1.6 Purpose of the study

The main objective of this study is to look at the stylistic analysis of the Birfor libation text which will add to the existing literature in the academic field. The study is also to find out the structure, stylistic features, and the occasions and significance of the libation text and to add knowledge in the academic domain of oral literature.

1.7 Objectives of the Study

The study seeks to achieve the following specific objectives to:

- discuss the structure of the Birfor libation text
- identify and discuss the stylistic features in the Birfor libation text
- examine the occasions of the Birfor libation text

1.8 Research questions

The study strives to answer the following research questions;

1. What is the structure of the Birfor libation text?
2. What stylistic features are found in the Birfor libation text?
3. What are the occasions of the Birfor libation text?

1.9 Terminologies Associated With Bɔrfɔr libation text

One would be able to understand and appreciate a literary text when the person understands the various terms that are associated with that text. Below are some of the terminologies that are usually linked to libation text with their English glossing in table 2.

Table 2: Terminologies Associated with ‘Kaba’ (Libation text)

Bɔrfɔr	English
Tampɛl	‘ash’
Kɔ ‘maar	‘cold water’
Sulu/ɛman	‘calabash’
Kpɔn sɔr	‘path of the spirits’
Gɔr	‘white clay’
Lɔlɔr	‘playmates’
Tɛɛ/Kpɔmɛ	‘lesser gods’
Saaju Naanmɛn	‘Supreme Being’

1.10 Significance of the study

The present study will contribute to the existing literature. It will also reveal the social value of the libation text. The study will serve as a document to language teachers. Findings of the study would benefit the Bɔrfɔr culture and the folks. It would also serve as a source of reference material to future researchers and language scholars teaching language and culture in the schools.

1.11 Limitations of the study

Time and financial constraint were some of the challenges that the researcher faced in the study. The researcher needs time and finance to move around to meet participants in order to collect data. It was not easy to meet informants with empty hands especially the traditional leaders.

1.12 Delimitation of the study

The study focuses on the structural and stylistic features of the Birfor libation text. The researcher decided to choose Wechao-bao, Tuupɔ, Samɔr, Chebar and Chemɔteen as his research sites with the reason that the researcher lives within these areas. Due to the time which was in the rainy season in which the study was conducted, it was not possible to reach the inland communities hence the reason for the chosen study areas.

1.13 Organization of the study

The work is organized into five chapters. Chapter one looks at the introduction, the background of the study, the research questions and the objectives. Chapter two reviews the relevant literature. Chapter three delves into the methodology such as the design, sample size and the sampling techniques and the instruments employed in collecting the data and the data collection procedure. Chapter four dwells on the data presentation and discussion of results. Chapter five concludes the work by giving summary of findings and recommendations for further researches.

1.14 Summary

In this chapter, the research explored the historical overview of the problem in the background of the study and stated the problem that this research is conducted to address. Similarly, questions that will be raised from the topic of the study were outlined which is the basis for the designing of the objectives of this thesis. An overview of who the Burfor is and limitations as well as strategies adopted to surmount those challenges were looked at.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter takes a look at some related studies on the stylistic analysis of libation text. It discusses what libation text is, the structure of libation text, stylistics of libation text, time/ occasion of libation presentation and the significance of libation.

2.2 What libation text is

The word libation is derived from the Latin word... '*libatio*', which means, to offer drink, which is usually associated with religious beliefs that are connected with gods, deities and the ancestors. Concisely, it has been defined by (Esoh 2020) as pouring of water, making incantations or prayers for the purpose of observing images of traditions. Libation was most common in the ancient religious traditional practices among the people of Obang (Anti 1987). Such practices include cultural festivals, funeral celebrations, naming ceremonies among others.

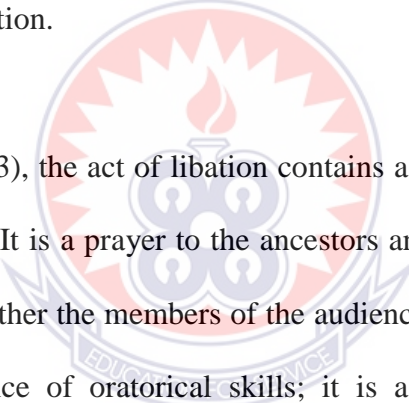
Effah (2009) notes that libation was limited to religious worship of the dead (spirits), ancestors, idols/deities. Hagel (2001), contributing to the meaning of libation agrees that libation is magic, sorcery or fetish and ancestral worship or worship of the dead. Libation is seen as a form of prayer. It is regarded as a remarkable ritual in African cultures. Africans see it as a medium of communicating with the Supreme Being through the divinities and the ancestors. This assertion has derived its inspirations from the fact that

the lesser gods and the ancestors are believed to be the intermediaries between humans and the Supreme Being.

Ayim-Aboagye (1996), sees libation as the activity of pouring water, alcohol or any beverage on the ground with the intention of invoking the spirits and requesting their assistance. Libation is a form of worship that most Africans adopt to communicate with the Supreme Being. It is the offering of liquid like water, pito/ wine and flour to the lesser gods. Libation is believed to be the channel of communication between man and his gods and ancestors that he venerates. Prayers are rendered in the form of libation. They normally pray to the Supreme Being through the divinities and the ancestors that they venerate so much. As noted by some scholars like Sarpong (1996), ancestors are not worshipped in libation but venerated as spirits and entities that have the power to punish or reward. Sarpong (1996, p.19) adds that in Jewish culture, “libation was not a separate religious rite but only an additional element of sacrificial rites” The African notion of community is that it consists of both the living and the dead. This notion is concretized by libation and other sacrifices to the dead as spiritual participant observers who bring blessings for the continuity of the African community (Antubam, 1963, Opoku, 1978).

According to Tamakloe (2016), cited in Dakubu (1963), and Adams (2010), prayers are rendered in the form of libation. Libation is seen as a powerful prayer directed to God. It is a way of praying to a Supreme Being. Some scholars argue that there is connection between libation as worship and libation as lineage ritual which are both intertwined. In the view of Mbiti (1969, p.9), libation is a ritual linked by network of mutual relationship

and responsibility and at the same time worshipping the Supreme Being. Osuanyi (2014) says that, though libation predates Pharaonic state, ancient Egypt played a great role in its rampant spread. There is a text of Ani that supports the pouring of libation (Biko, 2011, p. 60): “Pour libation for your father and mother who rest in the valley of the dead... Do not forget to do this even when you are away from home...For as you do for your parents, your children will do to you.” Examining the above text, libation is an obligatory command and spiritually rewarding should one say it for loved ones. Adding to this, it cements one loving kindness and goodwill message to the other. In other words one shows his/her loving and compassion by pouring libation for the wellbeing of another person, community or nation.



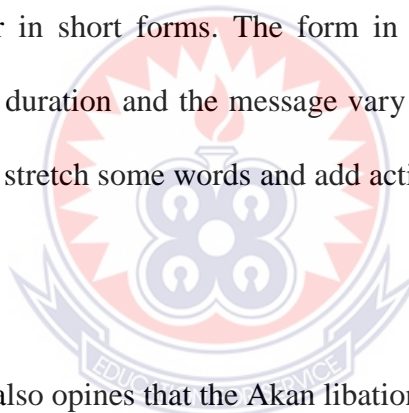
According to Sjaak (2013), the act of libation contains a rich mixture of religious, social and cultural ingredients. It is a prayer to the ancestors and gods for their blessing; it is a social ritual binding together the members of the audience by emphasizing their common roots; it is a performance of oratorical skills; it is a demonstration of cultural and historical knowledge; it is a political statement with cleverly constructed hidden messages. Pouring libation is an attractive and artistic way of uniting the living and the dead, those at home and those abroad, the past and the future. Adjaye (2001) has successfully captured the intricacies of libation in Akan society by presenting it as a form of “poetic meta-communication” in which skills of the libator and the participation of the audience play a key role. His essay is convincing, and the quoted libation text by Nana Kissi-Apadu in London beautifully illustrates his argument. He continues that, doing research among elderly people in a rural community in the Kwahu he was particularly

struck by the performativity. He therefore suggested that libation prayers should first of all be understood as communication with the living. In the same way that Akan funerals are conducted to honor the living more than the dead (cf. Van der Geest 2000). Libation is primarily performed to convey a message to those who are alive and witness the occasion.

The living is addressed via the roundabout way of ancestors, gods of rivers and mountains and the Almighty *Onyankopon*. The libation ceremony is a speech in disguise, an “indirect speech” one could say. The attendants are praised and flattered or tactfully criticized –with words that are seemingly directed to ancestors and supernatural beings. But most of all, the libator is praising and flattering him or herself by exhibiting his oratorical skills, cultural competence and historical knowledge. The indirect speech of the performer can hardly be contradicted as it takes place on religious grounds and other special occasions, and the audience has little choice than to confirm the lines with the stereotypical responses of us, *ampa* and *sio*. In other words, the libator has an open field to display his talents. He added that, during my own-earlier-research I indeed experienced the libation ceremony to be a convenient and safe opportunity to impress others. I was studying the history of one *abusua* in the town of Kwahu-Tafo and had managed to trace the names and fragments of life the *abusua*'s ancestors as far back as four generations. When drinking palm wine with members of the *abusua* it was not difficult to reap their praise by including the names of their ancestors in playfully enacted libations (Agyarko, 2005, p. 26).

2.2.1 Structure of the Birfor libation text

Structure refers to the way in which the parts of something are arranged or organized. The Structure of a literary piece is the artistic part of a work on its own. This simply refers to the way the parts of an art are organized. The structure is seen by various scholars as the way parts of a system or object are organized. According to Agyekum (2013), structure refers to the parts of any piece, be it an object or written material. Libation text, which is seen as a verbal art, is performed in a sequential order and normally each piece has three major parts; the initial, the middle and the final parts. It is possible for these parts to have sub-parts. This is as a results of the text. Some may be long while others occur in short forms. The form in which the performance takes is usually constant but the duration and the message vary with the performer. While some performers run it, others stretch some words and add actions that result in lengthening the process.



Ayim-Aboagye (1996), also opines that the Akan libation prayer has three main parts:

- Invocation (opening phase)
- Request (supplicatory phase) and
- Conclusion phase

In these three phases, three structural elements may be found in the opening phase of the prayer; invocation or incantation that give reverence to the Almighty God, deities and ancestors.. In the supplicatory phase, only two structural elements may be found; the purpose or explanation of the libation. The concluding phase of a libation prayer consists

of only one of the structural element which is the making of request and the offering of gift of sacrifice such as a cock or guinea fowl.

However, Agawu (2007), looking at the Northern Ewe libation, says that it has been organized into four parts. In the first part, the gods, the ancestors and the legendary are invoked by their names. Secondly, the immediate reason for the particular proceeding is stated. Third, a curse of self and others enable the narrator to place a set of ethical constraints on the proceedings to follow. A fourth and final session wishes for peace, blessings and prosperity. The structural arrangement of the Ewe libation seems different from those of other cultures mentioned above. The Birfor libation structure is among other libation texts which is similar to that of the Akan and different from that of the Ewe libation text.

Dakubu (1981), and Adams (2010), cited in Tamakloe (2016), also identified five (5) major interdependent structures in Ga libation text. These include:

- Introduction
- Invocation
- Narration of purpose
- Supplication and
- Conclusion

At the introduction stage, the performer draws the attention of the mortal and the immortal beings. The performer then follows with the invocation stage where the gods and deities are addressed accordingly. In this stage, all the deities are mentioned followed

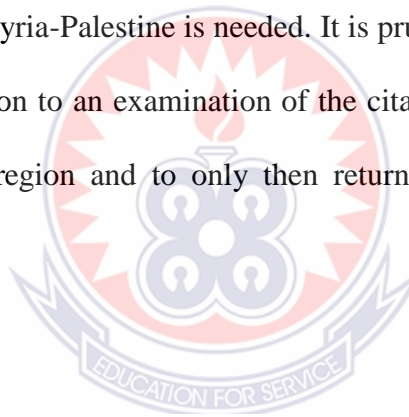
by their appropriate appellations. This is to evoke the deities to respond swiftly. The performer then narrates the purpose of the libation. At the supplication stage, the people express their needs and the requests. The deities are called upon for peace, bumper harvest, and good health. The conclusion part emphasizes unity and prosperity in their daily activities (Dakubu, 1981).

Kilson (1981) also assert that the Ga libation text is performed sequentially and where the form of the prayer is constant the length and the content vary. He continues that Ga libation texts have three successive elements which are invocation of divine beings and ancestral shade, explanation for summons and supplication of divine beings. While the form of the prayer is constant, the duration and content vary not with the ritual context, but with the ritual knowledge of the performer.

The Ga libation structure is different from that of the Brfor people as stated earlier. Fisher (2007) says that, Levant alleged “libation installations,” for the reception of liquid offerings, have been identified by excavators from various sites. There are however several problems with such designations. No typology of a “libation installation” has been formulated because each site and each “installation” itself is too individualistic. Another problem is the lack of mention in a single surviving text for such structure, in fact, rarely is the receptacle for a drink offering mentioned at all. A close reading of the existing passages discussing libation within the ancient corpus from the region reveals the importance of the offering of a libation to the completion of cultic acts. These passages depict the act as not only one aspect in a larger ritual, but also as a complete ritual in and

of itself. Even when a libation occurs as a discrete ritual unto itself, a receptacle is not necessary, and when mentioned, the required receptacle is never a built-in structure.

Finally, scholars rarely address how these installations would have functioned, and a careful analysis of most of the theories regarding the various sites reveal flaws. The existence of the category ‘libation installations’ is due to the needs of modern scholars rather than the presence of solid evidence; claim of such an installation must be carefully scrutinized before being accepted. Fisher added that, in order to determine the validity of these claims, knowledge about the offering of libations both in general and specifically with respect to ancient Syria-Palestine is needed. It is prudent therefore, to first define the ritual of libation, move on to an examination of the citations of libation in the surviving texts second from the region and to only then return to the material remains of the Levant.



2.2.2 Stylistics/Style

According to Agyekum (2013, p. 61), ‘stylistics is the ways in which the words and linguistic elements of an oral literature text are organized to ensure the effectiveness of the oral performance’. Stylistics describes the choices which language makes available to a user, above and beyond the choices necessary for the simple expression of a meaning. Choice is a very important tool of stylistics since it deals with the variation and the options available to the oral artist. It is the style that depicts the creativity of the artists. The selection of various literary devices like simile, parallelism and repetition make two writers or oral artist different from each other. Since oral literature makes

appeals to sounds, a good style makes good use of sound devices and figure of speech. These include alliteration, association and repetition.

The main aim of stylistics is to make us understand the intentions of the performer of a work of an art. Songs just like libation which is an oral art, are representation of society's values, invoke the audience's emotions allowing community to reject or accept certain behaviors. He also asserts that some features of style are foregrounded by virtue of departing in some way from the general norms of communication by means of language code. Such linguistic features are called stylistic features, including figure of speech. These stylistic features do not feature in the language as they occur in casual speech hence may affect the interpretation of a text.

Gyampo (2009), also see stylistics as the distinctive manner in which a writer, poet, dramatist, performer expresses his/ her ideas. The performing of libation is based on the contextual and linguistic competence expression of the performer. This goes to support the views of Jacob (2022) who sees stylistics as based on the notion that every performer has his/ her own unique way of doing things and that no two persons are the same in their approach to writing. Thus in literary stylistics one can differentiate between the writing of Achebe and Wole Soyinka based on their choice of language. A person's style may be shaped by his/ her social and political background, religion, culture, and education and geographical location. He continues that Achebe portrays a lot about the Igbo tradition and is seen as a promoter and preserver of the African culture particularly the Igbo culture; he employs a lot of proverbs in the native language and is easily understood by

the uneducated. In libation text, the performer employs proverbs and other stylistic features to communicate with the lesser gods and the divinities depending on the linguistic competence of the performer. The performer of the libation is seen as someone who is well versed in the culture and the tradition of the people. Libation performance is done in the native language and is embedded with stylistic elements such as proverbs, figure of speech and literary devices like metaphor, personification simile and others which are the preserve of the people's culture and their ancestral origin. Similarly, Bɔrfor libation texts also embody these elements. These stylistic features make the text richer and understood by both the literate and illiterate.

Widdowson (1975) sees stylistic as the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation. Short and Candlin (1989) also add that stylistics is an approach to organize literary texts using linguistic description.

However, there are some controversies surrounding the use of the term as there are a number of approaches and orientations that researchers adopt. These differences in approaches as observed by Wales (1989) are due to the influences of linguistics and literary criticism. While Widdowson (1989) on the other hand is of the view that stylistics is the link between literary and linguistics On the part of David Crystal (1980), stylistics is that part of linguistics that studies certain aspect of language variation such as style, figure of speech and literary devices. Stylistics analysis seeks to explore and explain the particular choices employed by the writer, in this case the performer in the selection of words and sentence structure. Literary critics' primary point of reference is the total being

of a work of literary art while linguistic critics attempt to make literary criticism as objective as possible. Literary stylistics aims to associate the critic's concern of aesthetic appreciation with the linguist's concern of linguistic description while the linguist's point of view tries to find out why the writer chooses to himself in a particular way.

Leech and Short (2007) on the other hand see style/stylistics as the manner in which a performer or writer conveys message to the audience.

Nomo (2016) and Marcelle (2004) as cited in Gemah (2022) define style/stylistics as the manner in which the work has been written so as to achieve the writer's or the speaker's purpose. They continue that style is created and developed by vocabulary and language usage. The style may be literal or figurative, formal or informal. Style differs depending on the first person or third person (narrator point of view). In conclusion, style depends on the purpose of work, the setting and the audience for which the work is intended.

The above explanations have similar characteristics features in Birfor libation text as the performance is based on the language competency and the cultural background of the performer. The same libation text may be performed by two or more people with different language competencies. The performance may vary in the language style. This therefore indicates that the Birfor libation text has unique features within different cultures within Africa and beyond.

2.2.3 Stylistic analysis

Stylistics was traditionally seen as a way of exploring the literary meaning of a text. It has now gone beyond the structuralism approach and rather centered on a more pragmatic orientation to link choices in text to social and cultural context (Thonborrow & Wareing 1998). In view of this, an author makes certain choices in relation to the particular context.

The trend of exploring the meaning in the analysis of stylistics does not change completely. With the event of discovery of meaning, stylistics focuses on the ways in which a particular text is being characterized especially the choice of words in relation to the context of which it is produced. Despite the fact that various researchers may employ different approaches in stylistics analysis, this study is geared towards similar goal by analyzing the stylistics features found in the libation text. The study seeks to find out how these stylistics features affect libation pouring. The choice of language of the performer of the libation text largely depends on the linguistic background of the performer.

2.2.4 Literary devices in libation text

Some of the most dominant literary devices used in libation texts include; parallelism, proverbs, personification, imagery, symbolism, apostrophe, repetition, alliteration and among others.

Repetition as observed by Okpewho (1992) and Saanchi (1992) is a device for verbal art forms. It is a literary tool that not only gives a touch or attractiveness to a piece of oral composition but serves as certain practical purposes in overall performance (1992,p. 71). Agyekum(2013,p.67) also assert that repetition is one of the most fundamental characteristics features of oral literature that carry both aesthetic (beauty) and utilitarian value to make work of an art looks beautiful for the people to enjoy. Gyampo (2009) says it is the recurrence of an item more than once especially in poetry which is meant to give special emphasis, contrast, or mere to give pleasure to the ear.

Agyekum (2013) says parallelism is “sameness” between two sections of a text and it can be basically categorized into two structural and semantic forms. Parallelism is seen as rhetorical device in which a formula or structural pattern is repeated. It consists basically of a type of repetition in which one element is changed, while the other usually remains constant in its syntactic frame. It is a literal style in which coordinate ideas are arranged in phrases, sentences and paragraphs that balance one element with another of equal importance and similar wording (see Kuiper’s Merriam Webster Encyclopedia 1995,p.856). Gyampo (2009, p.266) says the use of series of words phrases or sentences that have similar grammatical form. He continued that parallelism puts emphasis on the items that are arranged in similar structures. This is true in the case of B̄irfor libation text where words, phrases and sentences are used to communicate with the lesser gods and the ancestral spirits. According to Sandra (2015) alliteration is the term used to describe successive words beginning with the same sound-usually with the same letter.

Symbolism is literary images that symbolize something. The contextual meaning of the Birfor libation text stands for a specific purpose. Gyampo (2009) posits that symbolism is the use of signs and symbols, especially to express idea or emotion in literature. Agyekum (2013:108) agrees that symbols stand for both the thing it names and something else. Some symbols are universally understood along the same cultures. Light is used to symbolize a growth in knowledge, a realization or enlightenment, while universally, light is and darkness represents good evil or life and death respectively.

Apostrophe is one of the literary devices that is commonly found in libation text. In Agyekum (2013, p.188-189), he posits that “apostrophe is a way of addressing someone or something invisible or not ordinarily spoken to. In an apostrophe, a poet may address an immediate object, some dead or absent person, an abstract thing or a spirit”. More often than not, the poet uses apostrophe to announce a lofty and serious tone. It is a means of giving life to inanimate entities. It is a way of giving body in the intangible, a way of speaking to a person. In Birfor libation text, the lesser gods and the ancestral spirits are being addressed or spoken to by saying “*Ancestors! Take this water.*” This language of ideas sounds important and pleasant to the ear but does not make sense.

The performer who uses proverbs to invoke the ancestors during libation rituals is one who exhibits great oratorical skills, cultural competence, and historical knowledge. He possesses the spiritual force to open the way to spiritual communication (Olokum 2005). The performer chooses fine diction, intonations and modulations to drive home his prayer points. Mensah (2013) also maintains that proverbs are deeply rooted in the people

cultural tradition and reflect their ways of life. They are dynamic and innovative, displaying diverse degrees of semanticity and traditionality and certain ethnographic information which draws upon age and currency (ibid).

Yankah (2012) views proverbs as a verbal genre that carries the high point of rhetoric in traditional African society. Proverbs constitute the essential ingredients of the structure of libation practice among the Efik. Generally, proverbs function as social control mechanism as they are used to protect and sanction ethical upright behavior, such as truthfulness, respect, obedience and honesty.

2.2.6 Functions of literary devices

Agyekum (2013) states that repetition gives a certain amount of emphasis to a point that needs to be stressed and to enact a feeling of excitement in the sense of utmost delight. He continues that it may be used in filling a gap or for making time. The audience may not necessarily find such repetition offensive, and indeed sometimes have actively called for or encouraged it. The oral performer however, cultivates repetition both as a means of achieving auditory delight in listeners and as a convenient framework for holding the distinct elements of the composition together. The writer can avoid repetition because the reader has the printed text before him/ her and can constantly refer.

On the other hand, the oral artist and the performer rely on sound repetition to engage the audience to grasp what must not be clear in the first instance. In libation presentation, if the performer observes that the audience is interested in the performance, he continues to

invoke the gods and the ancestors with a lot of repetitions so that the audience enjoy by taking up the chorus of the text. For example, during an epidemic such as outbreak of disease, libation is poured. The libator repeatedly chants the libation text to emphasize the request. The act is done to inform the divinities the urgency of the issue because of recurrence of certain phrases.

Saanchi (1992) opines that parallelism is not an empty repetitive device that the oral performer uses because of paucity of repertoire, neither is monotonous and tautologies, nor is it merely an ornamental poetic device. He adds that poetry reduces itself to the principle of parallelism. However, he pointed out that in these recurrent compositions there is abundant scope for variety. As he concludes, parallelism not only gives unity of structure to the performance; it also makes the oral art memorable. In the presentation of libation text, the use of parallelism is to attain a more comprehensive and euphonic statement of the performer's message than it could have achieved without the use of this device.

In the view of Agyekum (2010) euphemism serves as decorative verbal art forms which the speaker uses to decorate his speech in an attempt to show his communicative competence and linguistic politeness within the sociocultural norms of the society. Euphemism is a necessary substitute for verbal taboo used in libation text. In the event libation pouring, certain topics like death, sex organs and mensuration have more euphemisms (Allan and Burridge, 1999)

2.2.6 Time/occasion of libation

Libation can be poured at any time of day when the situation demands. There is no specific time or season for pouring libation. It can be poured during occasions such as festivals, funeral performance, before and after harvesting, when a person is returning from a long journey. This study does not sight with Antubam (1963), who declares that most Ghanaian communities, libations are not poured in the night. He argues that the spirits are believed to be resting in the night. He continues that the spirits are supposed to eat whatever they collected during the day. It will be questionable to agree with this assertion because libation is a cultural practice which can be performed at any time depending on the situation. The Birfor believe that the spirits keep an eye on the living both day and night, so libation can be poured at any time if the need arises. The time of pouring libation mostly depends on the purpose of the event.

2.2.5 The significance of the libation text

Generally, libation plays a very crucial role among the society that practices it. It is an occasional ritual where people invoke the Supreme Being and their ancestors, lesser gods and other deities. The Birfor perform libation to give thanks to the Almighty through the ancestors and the lesser gods for blessing them with good health, prosperity and good harvest. Libation plays an important role in the traditional religion because; it is the medium of communication of the people to the Supreme Being, the ancestors and the lesser gods.

Chukwu (2020) says in Igbo tradition, practice of libation has significant impact on setting forth people's understanding of hospitality, tokens of fellowship, family living, death, continuity and contact. To them, libation is an occasion of spiritual communion that unites man and the other cosmic actors who play important roles in harmony living. Ayim-Aboagye (1996) also adds that libation plays a major which helps the elders to settle cases in the family by directing it to the ancestors. Libation is a tool for the management of the people's culture and controls its people socially. Libation is used to monitor the behavior of members in the society. The ultimate significant of libation is to restore and maintain abstract spiritual order among the people.

Libation is not only a host of memory, but it is one of the most reliable vehicles for memory in most traditional societies. Libation builds on a collection of a society's memory collective and cultural, bringing together a wide variety of visual and verbal actions to preserve its patterns (Assmann, 2006). For him libation serves as the platform which people recollect their past and how this can contribute to the articulation of the present and the future. This will only depend on their ability to remember the same, keep their cultural practices and can define their cultural identity through the regular performance of libation. Libation can therefore be said to serve as cultural identity which creates rooms for self-awareness in basic cultural history. Community participation during libation brings the people together their collaborative and cultural memory; instill in them their sense of a shared heritage which serves a unifying force and cultural relationship with the traditional environment in the past and present.

Anti (1987) on the other hand, views libation as a spiritual act which people use to communicate and solicit blessings from the spirits. The Akan for instance, perform libation to ask for blessings from God such as security, good health, wealth, prosperity and among others.

Agyarko (2005) also maintain that libation is meant to link human beings to God and to their fellow human beings. Libation serves as an icon of protection as the Supreme Being and the ancestors are invoked. He continues that libation brings solidarity among the people. Ancestors playfully, enacted libations.

For the elderly, the libation ritual is one of the few remaining occasions to excel and attract the attention and admiration of the younger generation. As the researcher has argued elsewhere (Van der Geest 1998), the elders of Akan society find themselves in a world where their skills and wisdom have stopped earning them the respect and esteem they hope for. The younger generation is no longer in need of the advice of the old to become successful in life. I wrote: “The history of the family, the boundary of the farm, the use of medicinal herbs, the traditional agricultural techniques, knowledge of god and prayers, the ability to solve riddles, the name of ancestors, it has all become quite useless to them”(ibid: 487). I should however, nuance my statement about the shrinking grounds of the *pinyin*. There are occasions where the names of ancestors and the ability to pray do matter, also to the young. The practice of pouring libation has survived the inroads of modern life including globalization and Christianization. Indeed, the prayer quoted by Adaye (2001) shows its resilience in the face of globalization: the Thames River is added

to the list of Ghanaian rivers whose gods are called upon. In pouring libation and praying libation the Akan elders have retained an opportunity for marking their importance and displaying their skills to the younger generation. In that sense, the libation is a performance *par excellence*. By praising their forbearers, the elders praise themselves by mentioning the names of gods and ancestors they try to save their own name from oblivion, by paying respect to the *Nananom* they hope to earn the dear of their younger relatives. According to Meredith (2018), libation practice is used as metaphor for God's wrath (e.g. "wine poured... unmixed into the cup of [God's] anger in revelation 14:10); the libations that are poured out in the vision of the Bowls of Wrath, pour out plagues. The implications of this judgmental imagery for early Christian hearers of this text in Asia Minor, and for their own meal practices, are significant.

Assmann (2006) cited in Felix (2020) asserts that libation is significant in that they function in connecting human beings to each other in communion, and at the same time symbolize a past memory. These symbols act as markers of connections and remembrance between individuals and cultural memories. As he continues, libation connect and unite the past (ancestors), the unborn (those yet come) and the present (the living) into a single community. The artifacts of a particular community connect them as members of that community, and equally recalled the ancestors that initiated that memory.

On the part of Dickson (1984) cited in Tamakloe (2016), also identify libation as the best known means for people to contact the spirits world. Libation he said is used to invoke

the ancestors to participate in all the activities of the living. Agyarko (2005), also contends that during libation, the people present who hear the officiant link the people to their common ancestry heritage and realize that they belong to one group and have a common heritage. He added that libation promotes mutual trust, confidence and social harmony among the people as they are together to pray one God or gods.

With the importance attaches to the traditional libation ritual, Agyarko (2005) suggests that libation should not be condemned outright.

Pobee (1979) also maintains that libation is an important ritual in Akan culture, belief and practice and that it needs to be reconfigured into Christianity. He notes that in the Akan world view, the living is surrounded by hosts of spirit-beings, some good, evil, which are able to influence the course of a present life for good will. To get their good will, offerings are regularly made to them. One such offering is libation.

He further states that libation is made at all the crises points of Akan life: at home, at the stool house, in private and public. In the olden days, an Akan would not drink water or alcohol without first pouring some of it on the ground in offering to the ancestors or the lesser divinities. This is also similar to the Bɔrfor life. The Bɔrfor man pours any food or drink on the ground to the ancestors before tasting the drink. This practice is a form of offering and reverence.

2.2.6 Theoretical framework

The theory adopted for this study is the Relevance theory. The theory, originally developed by Dan Sperber and Wilson (1995) is a framework for understanding and interpretations of utterances. It is a cognitively oriented pragmatic theory that aims at providing a realistic account of the interpretations of utterances. The main assumption of the theory is that human beings are endowed with a biologically rooted ability to maximize the relevance of incoming stimuli including linguistic utterances and other communicative behaviors. Relevance is not only a typical property of external stimuli (e.g., utterances) but also of internal representations and thoughts, all of which may become inputs for cognitive processing. There are four statements that summarize this theory (Wilson, 1994, p. 44): (a) the decoded meaning of the sentence is compatible with a number of different interpretations in the same context; (b) these interpretations are graded in terms of accessibility; (c) hearers rely on a powerful criterion when selecting the most appropriate interpretation; and (d) this criterion makes it possible to select one interpretation among the range of possible interpretations, to the extent that when a first interpretation is considered a candidate matching the intended interpretation, the hearer will stop at this point.

Sperber & Wilson (1995) propose that relevance is distinguished in two forms: Cognitive principle of relevance and the communicative principle of relevance. With the cognitive principle of relevance, “human cognition tends to be geared to the maximization of relevance”. This explains that the human mind is presented with a lot of stimuli and the mind selects what is of interest and relevant to the individual. The

communicative principle of relevance on the other hand explains that, “every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance” Sperber & Wilson (1986). The idea of communicative principle is that once you are communicated to, it should be of relevance to you because there is relevance attached to it.

The communicative principle involves a definition of optimal relevance comprising two parts: (a) The ostensive stimulus is relevant enough for it to be worth the addressee’s effort to process it; and (b) The ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one compatible with the communicator’s abilities and preferences. Sperber & Wilson, (1995).

As Wilson & Sperber (2002) correctly point out, communicators “cannot be expected to go against their own interests and preferences in producing an utterance. There may be relevant information that they are unable or unwilling to provide, and ostensive stimuli that would convey their intentions more economically, but that they are unwilling to produce, or unable to think of at the time” The theory takes its name from the principle that "every utterance conveys the information that it is relevant enough for it to be worth the addressee's effort to process it", that is, if I say something to you, you can safely assume that I believe that the conveyed information is worthwhile your effort to listen to and comprehend it; and also that it is "the most relevant one compatible with the communicator's abilities and preferences", that is, I tried to make the utterance as easy to understand as possible, given its information content and my communicative skills.

This theory best suits this study because the interpretation of utterances and text is required in libation texts, hence the need to know and show why some texts are used, elevated over the others and the meaning at large to the people involved, whether communicated to all in the society, or communicated to a particular person or family with an intention. The theory best suits this study when we take into consideration implicit and explicit meaning. For Grice, what is said involved little inference, mainly reduced to disambiguation and reference assignment, which is the implicit meaning and based on semantics. It gives grounds to others (pragmatic meaning) which considers all intentions of utterances. These distinctions will be seen in the libation texts of the Burfor. Libation texts will be explained based on different intentions, taking into considerations relevance of the texts in context.

2.3 Summary

In this section, the researcher reviewed the various works of other writers whose ideas are closely related to this study. The researcher consulted their works with regards to the following thematic areas; the concept of libation, structure of the libation text, stylistics/style of libation, literary devices found in libation, function of the literary devices, time/ occasion on which libation is poured, and the significance of libation. The section also takes a look at the adopted framework for the study which was the relevance theory of Speber & Wilson.

The above discussion reveals that the stylistic study of libation text in the Burfor setting has not seen the light of day and these stylistic elements need to be unearthed for the young generation to appreciate, hence, the need for this present study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methods or procedures that were employed in collecting data for the study and how the data was analyzed. It consists of the research design, the population, sampling and sampling technique, sample size, the research site, data collection strategies and methods of analyzing the data.

3.1 Research design

Research design involves the intersection of philosophy, strategies of inquiry, and specific methods to be used in the conduct of a study (Creswell, 2009). This study is an ethnographic approach that delves into a systematic analysis of the Birfor people and their culture in libation text. The researcher adopted the study by living with the community for about two months to experience and observe some and some of their libation performances performed under naming ceremonies, funeral rites, and purification rituals. As Creswell (2009) defined, qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribed to a social or human problem. As a result, the researcher adopted the qualitative approach. The research process he adds involved emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysed was built from particulars to general themes generated from the respondents' responses, and interpretations and meanings were made. Qualitative research relies on the meanings, concepts, contexts description, and settings, while quantitative research relies on measurement and counts (Hakim 2014).

3.2 Research site

A research site is the physical area or location where the researcher has chosen to conduct the research (Hakim 2014). The field site for this study included Tuupɔ, Chemvotee, Wechao-bao, Sanuor and Chɛbar in the Wa West District of the Upper West region. This District is selected because the natives, unlike other communities or tribes, still hold on to their ancestral culture. This connotes that the communities within the district can provide a lot of libation performance and instances of libation for the data analysis because, on almost every occasion within the community, libation is performed.

3.3 Population

A study population refers to the individuals that have one or more characteristics in common and of interest to the researcher (Owu-Ewie, 2017). The population of a study refers to the people, objects, and institutions the researcher is working with. The population for this study covered all Birfor people who have knowledge in libation text in and outside the Wa West District of the Upper West region. This population is substantial to cover and will demanded much financial support. For these reasons, the accessible population for this study covered only five communities. According to Best and Kahn (2006), an accessible population; is the constituents that are disposable to the researcher either due to time at the exposure of the researcher or the geographical description of some constituents of the target population. Based on this, the researcher decided to sample some five (5) communities. Also, apart from observation, the researcher interviewed only ten community elders instead of all the communities.

3.4 Sampling technique

Sampling is the process or the technique of selecting a suitable population size or a representative part of a population to determine the parameters or characteristics of the whole population. (Tuckman, 1999 as cited in Owu-Ewie, 2017). A sample then is a portion of the large group for the study. Sampling is necessary because the population of interest to the researcher is too large and geographically scattered. Owu-Ewie (2011), sees sampling as choosing a portion of the population for research rather than studying the entire population. He continues that a sample is a small group of the population that is chosen for observation and interpretation.

The researcher used the purposive sampling technique for the study because to him these people possessed the information needed for the study. With the purposive sampling, the researcher samples with a purpose in mind. The researcher may conduct a study on an entire population from some limited group. Unlike other non-probability sampling methods, purposive sampling does not produce a sample that is a representative of a larger population, but it can be exactly what is needed in some cases- a study of a community, or some other clearly defined group (Owu-Ewie, 2017). The participants finally selected were Nɔmberɛ (elders) and Tɔndaana (custodians of the land) who play vital roles in the process of libation in the various Brfor communities in the Wa West District. These people were selected because they are always available anytime libation is performed in the community.

3.5 Sample size

The number of participants to select for a study varies from decision to decision (Owu-Ewie, 2016). In choosing a sample in qualitative study, the ultimate decision in assessing the quality of the information and how confident the sample results accurately reflect the entire population. The decision lies in the choice of data to be analysed. In order to ensure a true reflection of the population, a maximum of eight (8) people were selected for the analysis of the sample size. For conveniences, a sample size of 8 was chosen purposively for the study. The sample of sexes, their occupations and ages is tabulated below.

Village	Number of men	Occupation/status	Ages
Chemvotee	2	Chief priests	50 -55
Tuupɔ	2	Farming	52
Wechao-bao	2	farming/herbalist	60- 75
Sanvor	1	Hunter	51
Chebar	1	Tindaana(custodian of the land)	52
Total respondents	8		

The table above indicates the total number of men interviewed in each community for the data. Two men were selected from Chemvotee, one from Tuupɔ, two from Wechao-bao, one from Sanvor and one from Chebar.

3.6 Sources of data

No research would be authentic and scholarly if one does not consider when, where and how to harness enough information for the intended research (Tolitey 2019). It therefore behoves on every researcher to define in concrete terms where and how to get these data. In doing this, it is necessary to employ varied methods of data collection in order to get this required information for the research. For this research, the researcher collected data from only primary sources. The researcher as native speaker also used his native intuition to add some data to the study.

3.6.1 Primary data

Primary data is mainly collected at first hand or from primary sources such as through interviews, surveys or by observing participants in their natural environments. They can also be in the form of questions and answers between the researcher and the researched. Primary data are direct results of events of the records of eyewitness during data collection (McNeill, 1990, p.99). Primary data was collected through unstructured interviews with respondents and using android phone to record respondent's narrations and discussions.

3.7 Data collection procedure

The data was collected from the participants who are native speakers of Birfor through informal interviews with each of them at separate venues and times. The researcher took notes and some recordings during these unstructured interviews. In all, eight (8) libation texts were collected through audio, visual and personal conversations. The researcher

discussed his objective of the study with the participants and visited them in their homes with schnapps, some amount of money for compensation and, with their permission interviewed and recorded them while they spoke. The researcher also visited some of their libation performance events and recorded their libation text with permission. The researcher also did manual recordings for further understanding, explanation and clarifications.

The participants interviewed for the data for the research are married men who had children or are into the centre of affairs regarding the libation of the Birfor. Thus, the respondents for the study are highly respected men from the villages around the Wa West district who had adequate knowledge about the Birfor libation text.

Data collection on the libation text for the study started on 10th day of September, 2022 to 30th day of November, 2022 in Wa West. The researcher in collecting the libation texts actively participated in community meetings, visiting diviners, and attending funeral celebrations to collect libation texts. The researcher attended a community meeting that was held in the chief's palace where libation was poured to ask for rain during a prolonged drought. With the permission of the chief and the Tundaana (custodian of the land), the researcher provided the drink for the performance. When the meeting was about to begin, the researcher excused the elders and took video recordings and some pictures of the performance. Before the visit, the researcher pre-informed the diviner a day ahead. The researcher visited the diviner from Chebar between 15th and 22nd day of October, 2022, respectively.

Fig. 2: A diviner performing libation in Chεmvootee



On the 18th October, 2022, there was a pacification of the earth god in Sanvor to ask for a rain due to long drought in the community and its environs. The researcher was informed by one of his research assistants a day before the ritual. The researcher got there exactly 7:23 am. The researcher went to the Tɔngansɔɔ (owner of the earth god) and informed him of the aim of the study. The researcher was asked to provide GH¢10.00 or fifty cowries before he could be allowed to collect any information. The performance started exactly 10: 00 am and the researcher was called upon to collect the information he wanted. He used his galaxy Tab 3 to record only the audio because it is not allowed to take the videos nor pictures. The researcher again collected libation text in the same community on 25th November, 2022 during a festival that was celebrated by an old lady. In order to get the real text the researcher got to the festival ground on the Bɔɔtusɔɔ (festival night) and participated in all the activities till the end of the festival so that he

could get the actual structure and the literary devices when transcribing the texts. The researcher sometimes paused to ask questions for clarifications.

The researcher visited two elders on 26th November, 2022 in Chemvooten. These particular elders were ever ready to participate in any aspect of the research; hence one of the texts used for the study was recorded. The researcher during this period also spotted another elderly woman at Maadoteen, but she did not agree to be part in the study because women are not allowed to perform libation among the Birfor. Though Birfor women own gods and deities, it is the men that perform libation for them. The researcher also attended a funeral ceremony on 28th November, at Wechao-bao, but was not allowed to record. The reason was that it was a very young lady who committed suicide and since this was not a natural death, it is not culturally accepted. The researcher was rather asked to provide eighty (80) cowries and a hen before he could be allowed to take any information. The researcher was asked to go back and come back in a week time for the date of data collection, since the final funeral performance would come off in the preceding week.

On the 30th of November, 2022, the researcher arrived at the funeral ground at exactly 8:45 am. The diviner was already seated in readiness for the consultation. The researcher was welcomed by the elders; afterwards, he presented the items for the consultations. One libation text was performed in all in a very stylistic manner. Because funeral is a sad moment, the researcher was denied the opportunity to solicit further information surrounding the performance. The researcher therefore used his native intuition to elicit

the rest of the information on the performance. The researcher participated in two separate festivals in Tuupɔ. During the interviews with the respondents the researcher sought permission from the elders and used the android phone to do audio recording of the pouring of libation and other activities.

Fig. 3: Elders pouring libation to commence a community meeting in Wechao-bao



3.8 Instruments for data collection

The main instruments used in the gathering of data in this study were participants' observation, unstructured interviews and recordings. The researcher observed and sometimes used his android phone to record text. Sometimes, the

researcher used notepads, pen and exercise book to take down short notes from the respondents.

3.8.1 Observation

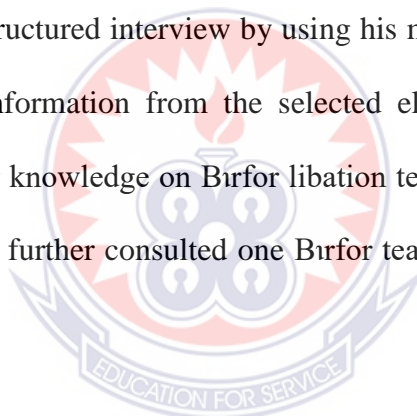
Observation is the primary technique of collecting data on nonverbal behaviour (Owu-Ewie 2017). He continues that it involves getting to the field, interacting with the participants being present at the organization to collect data based on their behaviour. Owu-Ewie (2016), citing (Best & Kahn, 2006), asserts that in qualitative research, observation consists of detailed documentation of behaviours and events. Also, Gemah (2022, p.38), citing Bayor (2016) says observation is a method in which data collection that is being used by field workers in obtaining data by looking from outside and describing the situation as it is. It goes beyond visual aspects of the situation. It includes experiences such as hearing, feeling and tasting. As an ethnographic study, the researcher went into the field, organised the participants, and interacted with them to obtain credible information as a participant-observer. Interacting with the respondents during festivals, funeral ceremonies and community meetings granted the researcher the opportunity to ask for clarifications on the significance of the libation text. It was through one of these interactions with the respondents that the researcher observed that libation performance is less patronized by the youth, hence the basis for this research.

3.8.2 Interview

Interviews are purposeful conversations with subjects to obtain information to answer a research question (Owu-Ewie, 2017). Interviews are purposeful, conversational and

answer a research question. There are three forms of interviews; structured (standard), semi-structured (semi-standard), and unstructured (unstandardized) (Fontana & Frey, 2005). Interviews can be done in focus group or individually. Focus group interview is where the researcher puts participants (between 5 and 10) in a group and interview them due to time or financial constraints.

In this study, the researcher used the unstructured interview. This type of interview schedule has no predetermined questions before the interview but questions emerge from the immediate context and are asked as the interview evolves (Owu-Ewie, 2017). The researcher used the unstructured interview by using his mind while focusing on the topic to solicit the needed information from the selected elders. The selected elders were quizzed to seek for their knowledge on Birfor libation texts. In order to confirm the data collected, the researcher further consulted one Birfor teacher though the teacher was not one of the respondents.



3.9 Data analysis procedure

This aspect of the study deals with the procedures the researcher used to analyse the data. This goes to support the view of Frankel & Norman (2000, p.409), that a person or group's conscious and unconscious beliefs, conscious attitudes, values and ideas are often revealed in their communication. Since the study is purely qualitative, the views and responses of respondents are presented in narratives and thus, the researcher disassociates himself from judging the responses presented by not analysing the data focusing on his

culture, but rather, the culture of his people whom the research concerns. This in effect, is meant to reinforce the objectivity and reliability of the study.

Every research needs data analysis for the research to be scholarly. Owu-Ewie (2016), mentions that different forms of data analysis are into research. These include unique case orientation, holistic perspective, context sensitivity, and voice, perspectives, reflexivity, inductive analysis and creative synthesis.

In the qualitative analysis, the researcher groups responses based on his judgement that the responses are similar. The researcher then describes the findings as the analysis continues. The researcher looks at the themes emerging from the data as he codes them and then put them into conceptual categories in a way that describe what is happening. On this basis, the researcher analysed the literary devices and structure of the Birfor libation text. The texts were recorded and transcribed using the Birfor orthography. The literal translation was done in the English language.

3.10 Ethical considerations and other challenges

In every research, the moral integrity of the researcher and respondents are very vital aspects of ensuring that the research process and the research findings are trustworthy and valid (Owu-Ewie, 2017). This means that research ethics focuses on the moral issues connected with conducting the research. These are the rules and regulations that govern the conduct, the methods, procedure or perspective for deciding how to collect and analyse data used to solve a research problem. Based on this, the researcher was very

mindful of certain issues which are considered critical throughout the data collection process. Some of these key issues are lies, mistrust, forcing respondents and putting respondents at risk. Others are the confidentiality and anonymity of both the respondents and the information they give. Luckily, the researcher sought the consents from all the respondents which they perfectly understood and accepted and availed themselves of the study as it would be beneficial to the Birfor people and the academic field. They were more than willing to be part of the study. They were more convinced for the fact that the researcher used only the manual recording that made them to take part in the study holistically. This is because libation itself is a sensitive ritual and especially rural folks do not accept their voices to be recorded or heard for the fear that they can be used for suspicious acts.

The researcher assured respondents that the information they offer would only appear in the study. Again, the researcher assured them that their actual names would not be used in the data; instead, letters or numerals would be ascribed to the names to avoid respondents' names appearing in the study to ensure respondents are at ease to deliver and give more detailed information.

3.11 Summary

The study covered five communities which include Wechao-bao, Chemvotee, Chεbar, Tuupɔ and Sanuor. A detailed account of the methodology used for the study is elaborated above, this includes, the research design, population, sampling techniques,

research site, procedures adopted in the data collection process, the methods used in presenting the data and some ethical issues.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Overview

This chapter presents an analysis of eight (8) libation texts that were collected for the study. The chapter touches on the structure of the Burfor libation text. It also discusses the stylistic features (literary devices) and the significance of the libation text to the people. From the data collected, it was realized that Burfor libation text can be divided into two. There are short libation texts that have between ten to fifteen lines while there are others that may have as twenty to forty lines or above. It came to light that a libation text may be long or short depending on the occasion and purpose for which it is being performed. Whichever type of length the text may have, the structure is the same as shown in the following discussions.

4.1. What is the structure of the Burfor Libation Text?

The structure of libation (Kaba) is constant though the performer may employ a variety of creativity depending on the linguistic competency of the performer. He strictly sticks to the sequence and the organization of the message. Thus, the Burfor libation text collected all show the following structure.

- i. The beginning or introduction which is the invocation stage
- ii. The second part of the Burfor libation performance is the supplication stage where the performer invites the forces of charity, mercy and kindness.
- iii. The third part is the conclusion or request stage.

4.1.1 The Beginning / Invocation

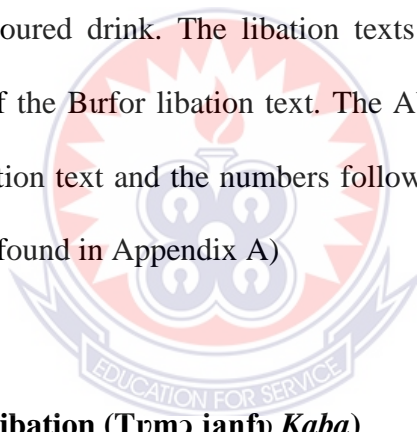
At the beginning stage or invocation stage, the performer mentions all the spirits that are significant in order of importance starting with the Supreme God; the Burfor believe that God has the ultimate power in the universe. The names of the ancestors are also mentioned because of their good deeds. Every invocation is followed by a drop of drink either cold water or liquor. The linguistic competency of the invitation to the libation performance vary from performer to performer. For example, some may start with *Pa! yi de kɔm'maar* (Pa! you take cold water). The performer sometimes makes an allusion from the ancestors to remind the audience in a situation where they may have forgotten the sequence and the essence of invocation. Libation invocation is basically meant to praise those who lived lives worthy of emulation because they served as exemplary way of living to human especially the young ones. This part sets the basis for the intimate relationship that exists between the gods and the living. This relationship is an obligatory one which is based on moral mutualism.

4.1.2 The Second part/ Supplication stage.

This part of the libation sets the underlying ideas of supplication to God the Almighty through the ancestors, gods and spirits. Here, the purpose is put forward. The gods and the spirits are called upon to come and take water or drinks to their elder ones to give an ear to the purpose for the libation prayer. The purpose could be that someone is travelling and is asking for a safe journey to arrive at the destination safely. It could also be to ask for a good harvest.

4.1.3 The Concluding stage

This is the concluding stage of the libation performance. In this stage of the text the performer asks for good health, longer life, peace and protection for those involved in the performance. This part also takes care of promises to offer a reward if the request for which the prayer is offered is granted. The performer then calls on God to reward good behaviors and punish the enemies and all evil doers in the community. He also calls on the gods to curse anyone who thwarts the effort of the community. At the end of the performance, the performer will pour the remaining liquid on the ground and serve those elders who are around during the libation performance. It is believed that the spirits invoked consume the poured drink. The libation texts collected and presented below illustrate the structure of the Burfor libation text. The Abbreviations **LT.** in the analysis refer to a particular libation text and the numbers following them refer to the lines. (All the libation texts can be found in Appendix A)



LT. 2: Trade learning libation (Tvmɔ janfɔ Kaba)

<i>Pa! fvv~ Saache</i>	Pa! You Saanche (god of children)	1
Chemvɔ nɪ pɔɔ kɔsr	Chemvɔ (ancestor) who is covered with stones	2
<i>Pa! , ti yimiene</i>	Pa! It is true	3
<i>A bie nyana</i>	This your child	4
<i>Sɪ ika wv chen ti jan tvmɔ</i>	We say he should go and learn trade	5
<i>Chemvɔ de wv niem</i>	Chemvɔ (ancestor) lead him	6

<i>Pire a wv gbɛɛ</i>	Sweep his legs	7
<i>Liere wv nuur</i>	Changing his hands	8
<i>Gu wv</i>	Protect him	9
<i>Kv ti jan a tvmɔ</i>	He will be able to learn the work	10
<i>‘Lo wa baar a tvmɔ</i>	If he finishes the work	11
<i>A wv nuu wa vɛle</i>	And his hands are good	12
<i>Sin den buɔ</i>	We will take goat	13
<i>Na si tan puor fv</i>	To greet you	14
<i>A fvv Saache</i>	You Saache (god of children)	15
<i>Le si ika si koŋ kv fv</i>	That is why we are here before you	16

During the invocation (beginning) stage, the performer invokes the powers of the Supreme God, the gods and spirits of the land, and the ancestors. The performer mentions the Supreme God; the Burfor believe that God has the ultimate power in the universe. The names of the ancestors are also mentioned based on their good deeds. This is explained in the text below;

LT. 2: 1- 4: Beginning/ Invocation stage

<i>Pa! fvv~ Saache</i>	Pa! You Saanche (god of children)	1
<i>Chemɔɔ ni pɔɔ kɔsr</i>	Ancestor (Chemɔɔ) who is covered with stones	2
<i>Pa! , ti yimiene</i>	Pa! It is true	3
<i>A bie na</i>	This you child (LT. 2, 1- 4).	4

Every invocation is followed by a drop of drink of either water or pito. The linguistic competency of the invitation to the drink vary from each individual performer. At the

presentation (middle) stage, the performer presents the issue to the ancestors and the divinities for which the libation is performed.

(LT. 2, 5-10) Middle/presentation stage

<i>Si ika wv chen ti jan tvmɔ</i>	We say she should go and learn trade	5
<i>Chemvo de wv niem</i>	You lead him	6
<i>Pire a wv gbɛɛ</i>	Sweep his legs	7
<i>Liere wv nuur</i>	Changing his hands	8
<i>Gu wv</i>	Protect him	9
<i>Kv twɔ̃ ti jan a tvmɔ</i>	So he will be able to learn the work	10

The performer then concludes the prayer with a pledge to the ancestors and the divinities. The pledge can be in a form of white hen in the case of female and white cock in the case of males to appreciate the ancestors and the divinities when their request is met. In Burfor libation text, the items that accompany the appreciation of the ancestors and the lesser gods are in the form of animals, fowls and sometimes grains. This can be seen in the text that follows:

(LT. 2, 11- 15) Conclusion stage

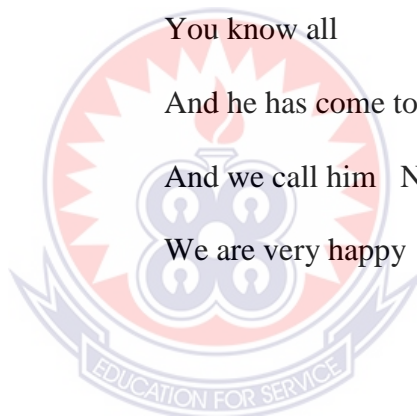
<i>Lɔ wa ti pɔɔŋ a tvmɔ</i>	If he finishes the work	11
<i>Ka wv nu wa viɛɛ</i>	And his hands are good	12
<i>Sin den nɔpɪla</i>	We will take white fowl	13
<i>Na sin tan puoro</i>	To greet	14
<i>A fvv Saache</i>	You Saache (god of children)	15

A libation can also be longer depending on the audience and the occasion, purpose and sometimes the audience. The text below is an example of a long libation performance.

LT. 1 Outdooring of reincarnated baby libation (Bi-Lɛwaa yuor ɛɔɔŋ-fɔ kaba)

Introduction

<i>Naabile ŋmin</i>	God of gods	1
<i>Maase ni Tulo</i>	God of destruction and god of confusing	2
<i>Bomo jaa na gan teen</i>	All the things on the ground	3
<i>Yi de kɔ'maar</i>	You take cold water	4
<i>Saan kpe si naa</i>	Stranger has entered in our midst	5
<i>Wɔ daa gbul le jine</i>	He is one week old today	6
<i>A Si paa~ sɔɔr yɔ</i>	And we are begging you	7
<i>Yin le bɔɔn yaa</i>	You know all	8
<i>Kɔ wa pɔɔ si</i>	And he has come to meet us	9
<i>A si bɔɔl wɔ Nibe</i>	And we call him Nibe	10
<i>Si pɔɔ pelaa yɔɔ ya</i>	We are very happy	11



Supplication /middle

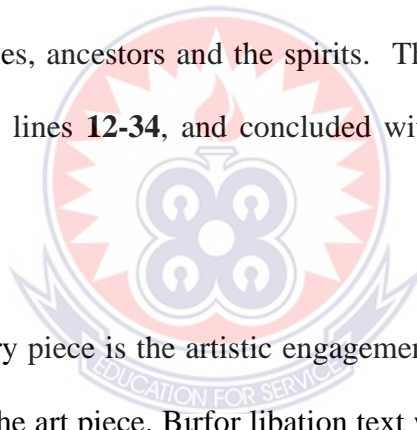
<i>A saan nya jine yuor baaraa</i>	The name stranger today has ended	12
<i>A jine mɔntɔɔn na pur</i>	Today that the sun is rising	13
<i>Fɔ i naa si insɔɔ</i>	You are one of us	14
<i>Fɔv so a yir</i>	You own the house	15
<i>Na fɔ le wa kpe</i>	And you have come back	16
<i>Fɔ kɔ le tɔɔ~ sɔɔl fɔ mɛ</i>	You cannot hide yourself	17
<i>A yelsi anyana wa sir tor</i>	If these things are actually true	18
<i>A ni le sin bolbol</i>	Just as we have also demonstrated	19

<i>A Kugyuoɔl kpime, Naakele,</i>	The gods of Kugyuoɔl,(ancestor), Naakele, (ancestors)	20
<i>Yi de a nvo nyana ni pupila</i>	You take this fowl with happiness	21
<i>Ka Nibe to~</i>	So that Nibe can	22
<i>Jine ni si igan'maar</i>	Stay with cold body	23
<i>Ti ta a fv sɔɔn</i>	Till your time	24
<i>Si wonna a nire 'lono fv~ i</i>	We have heard the person you are	25
<i>Bal wa nme a lenɛ</i>	When they beat like that	26
<i>A fv miɲ se a lenɛ</i>	You also dance like that	27
<i>A bomo a kv fv nyenvur woo~</i>	The things should give you longer life	28
<i>Fv baa ni igan</i>	You grow in size	29
<i>Taa wa mille, taa gareɛ</i>	Don't trespass, don't gossip	30
<i>Taa veɲ a fv nuur wa mareɛ</i>	Don't let your hands be sticky	31
<i>A kpunsi na yin fv puor</i>	The spirits will go behind your back	32
<i>Mimile bu gar kv pɔɔ fv ε</i>	Trespassing or gossip should not be part of you	33
Bɛɛɛɛ	Blessings	
<i>Naanmin kpeɛɛ pɔ</i>	With the strength of God	34
<i>Ɖmin na mɛ fv daba bu pɔɔ</i>	As God has created you man	35
<i>Fv daba bomo le</i>	These are your manhood items	36
<i>Kuur ni sɔɔ</i>	Hoe and cutlass	37

Conclusion (final stage)

A Kɔjɔɔl tɔbɛ nɪ yɪ kpɪmɛ	The deities of Kɔjɔɔl (type of clan) an your spirits	38
Ara na fɔ puor chinchinchin...	Stand at your back firmly...	39

Looking at the two libation texts above, **(LT.2)** is very short as compared to **(LT 1)** which is longer with 39 lines. Though the two texts may have the same order of presentation, the length in each of them differs depending on the occasion and the purpose of the libation. L.T. as seen above started with the introduction from lines 1- **11** by invoking all the deities, ancestors and the spirits. The performer continued with the supplication (middle) in lines **12-34**, and concluded with request and blessings for the new born.



The structure of a literary piece is the artistic engagement part of the work which shows how the artist arranges the art piece. Burfor libation text which is an oral art is performed in a sequential order. This libation layout was confirmed by Bɔnɪbɛ one of the participants on the field. (Personal Conversation). He contended that the length (duration) and the message of a libation text depends on the linguistic and the cultural background of the performer. He went on to say that the Burfor libation text consists of three main parts. These include the beginning or invocation stage, middle stage and the concluding or supplication stage as stated earlier. He concludes that these are considered the main stages of Burfor libation text. This goes to confirm and agrees with Agyekum (2013) who states that the structure of a libation text of the Akan has three main parts and that most

libation texts which are structured also follow this structural arrangements. Apart from the layout structure of the libation text, there are the line and stanzas that also form part of the structure of the libation text. These aspects are discussed below:

4.1.2 The line and the stanza of libation text

4. 1.3 The line

Unlike the written text where full stop indicates the end of the line, in libation text it is difficult to determine. With regards to written poetry, there is no difficulty in determining what constitutes a line (Saanchi, 1992, p.79). He defines a line having topographical identity. He further argues that topographical identity may correspond to a factitious pause. One can easily detect where one line ends and another begins. In a verbal art like libation text, it may be difficult to determine the lines. A line in libation text may consist of a word, a phrase or a sentence. Sometimes, a whole line or words are repeated in libation text. These structural arrangements can be found in the libation text below;

In the text above, *Jedɔɔ* ancestor, (LT.3, 3) is one word which forms a whole line in the text which stands as a line. There are also phrases and sentences which form libation text. For example; the following lines are phrases which form part of the libation text,

<i>A yi bie nyana</i>	This your son (LT.3, 9)	9
<i>Le yire</i>	Is going out (LT.3, 10)	10
<i>Ni nɔpɪla</i>	With white cock (LT.3, 23)	23

The extracts above do not constitute a complete sentence in ordinary structure. These lines are incomplete sentences hence described as phrases which usually abound in libation texts. On the other hand, libation texts can also have sentences as can be seen in the text below; (LT.3, 13- 19)

<i>Kv i ka wv vir bilɛm</i>	He wants to shift small	13
<i>Ala lɛ wv de wv miɛ wa kv yi</i>	That is why he has given himself to you	14
<i>Na wv paa~ ono kvɔ yi</i>	He is crying to you	15
<i>Ti lɛ de wv miɛ 'yɔɔn yi nuur pɔ</i>	And also give himself into your hands	16
<i>Yi yuo wv sɔr</i>	You open his road	17
<i>Kv taa ɲmier gbɛr yaa</i>	He should not knock any leg	18
<i>Yi gu wv chɛ kvv igan 'maar</i>	Protect him and comfort him	19

4.1.4 The stanza

In determining a stanza just like the line, similar difficulties exist in performing libation. As noted, the libation text has three main stages and each stage may have two or more lines which constitute an independent unit which may be considered as a stanza. In the view of Saanchi (1992), stanza may be short or long. The short stanzas do not have fixed order. In libation performance, each stanza functions independently but have a common theme of ancestral veneration. On printed text line breaks are used to separate stanzas from one another. Just like poems, pauses are used to mark stanzas in libation text. A stanza can have two or more lines in a text. For instance, a stanza can contain single lines of 14 lines (sonnet). The extract below shows an example of fourteen line single stanza.

LT. 2 Trade learning libation (Tɔmɔ janfɔ kaba)

<i>Pa! fɔv saache</i>	Pa! You Saanche (Lesser god)	1
<i>Chemvo ni pɔɔ kɔsir</i>	Ancestor (Chemvo) who is covered with stone	2
<i>Pa! ti yimiene</i>	Pa! It is true	3
<i>A bie nyana</i>	This child	4
<i>Si ika wv chen ti jan tvmɔ</i>	We say he should go and learn trade	5
<i>Chemvo de wv nie</i>	Ancestor (Chemvo) lead her	6
<i>Pire wv a gbɛɛ</i>	Sweep her legs	7
<i>Liere wv nuur</i>	Change her hands	8
<i>Gu wv</i>	Protect her	9
<i>Kv twɔ̃ ti jan a tvmɔ</i>	So that she will be able to learn the work	10
<i>Lɔ wa ti baar a tvmɔ</i>	If she finishes the work	11
<i>A wv nuur wa viele</i>	And her hands are good	12
<i>Sin den buɔ</i>	We will take goat	13
<i>Na sin tan puor fɔ</i>	To come greet you	14

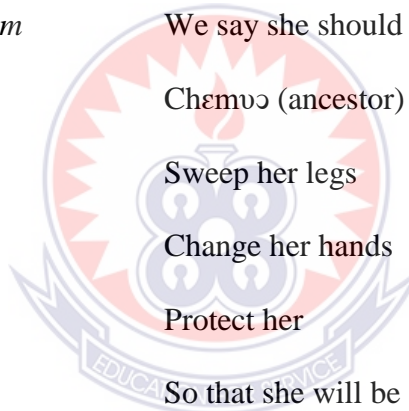
The libation text above represents one stanza text with 14 lines. There are other libation texts which have even less than ten (10) lines but still represent a whole stanza. On the other hand, there are some libation texts that have more than one stanza depending on the occasion and the purpose of which it is performed. As noted earlier, the Birfor libation text has three main stages, which is beginning stage, middle stage and the conclusion stage. In many cases each of the stages constitutes a full stanza and each stanza contains a complete message. This is confirmed in the following text below;

(LT. 2, 1-4): Beginning /invocation stage

<i>Pa! fɔv Saache</i>	Pa! you Saanche (god of children)	1
<i>Chemvɔ nɪ pɔɔ kɔsɪr</i>	Ancestor (Chemvɔ) who is covered with stone	2
<i>Ti yimiene</i>	It is true	3
<i>A bie nyana</i>	This child	4

(LT. 2, 5-10) Middle/presentation stage

<i>Si ika wv chen ti jan a tvm</i>	We say she should go and learn trade	5
<i>Chemvɔ de wv nie</i>	Chemvɔ (ancestor) lead her	6
<i>Pire a wv gbɛɛ</i>	Sweep her legs	7
<i>Liere wv nuur</i>	Change her hands	8
<i>Gu wv</i>	Protect her	9
<i>Kv tɔɔ̃ ti jan a tvmv</i>	So that she will be able to learn the work	10



(LT. 2, 11-15) Conclusion stage

<i>Lɔ wa ti pɔɔŋ a tvmv</i>	If she finishes the work	11
<i>A wv nu wa viele</i>	And her hands are good	12
<i>Sin den buɔ</i>	We will bring a goat	13
<i>Na sin tan puoro fv</i>	To greet you	14
<i>A fɔv Saache</i>	You Saache (god of children)	15

4.8.1 Literary devices in Burfor libation texts

Every literary genre especially an oral art is embedded with literary devices. This part of the work takes a critical look at some devices such as style, symbolism, repetition, apostrophe, ideophone, metaphor, synecdoche, euphemism, oxymoron, hyperbole, alliteration, assonance, rhetorical questions and parallelism among others in libation text.

4. 8.2 Style (Goba)

Style involves the selection of words (diction), sentence structure (syntax), figurative expression and literary devices, such as simile, metaphor and symbolism, which sets the tone of the individuality from each author (Agyekum 2013). The simplicity and difficulty of a text depends on the style. There are stylistic features such as imagery, symbols, proverbs, repetition idiomatic expression, apostrophe, among others which can be identified in libation text. The performer's choice of words, figurative language, and sentence structure goes a long way to establish the mood of the performer and the meaning achieved. The choice of words (diction) depends on the subject matter and the occasion for which the libation text is performed. Style is seen as the methods employed by the performer in the libation text to convey meaning. This comprises the stylistic devices and the diction found in the text.

One outstanding style that is clearly identified in libation performance is the use of poetic language in the texts and the skillful display of the literary or stylistic features such as metaphor, simile, proverbs and figures of speech. These literary devices beautify the language of libation based on their stylistic message they contain. Libation texts employ

the use of language that forms part of the grammatical structure of the Burfor. The texts exhibit the everyday use of philosophical assumptions. The structure of libation text also takes cognisance of the morphology and syntax of the text. The morphology of the words in libation ranges from simple to complex lexical items. Some words are common nouns and proper names:

<i>Kpinsi</i>	‘spirits/ghosts’	(LT.1, 33)
<i>Saanche</i>	‘good of children’	(LT.2, 1)
<i>Baada</i>	‘ancestor’	(LT. 3, 7)
<i>Saan</i>	‘stranger’	(LT. 1, 5)

These names refer to the ancestors though these names might have semantic features in them and exhibit semantic relations. Their meanings do not really mean literally in context. They convey cultural eccentricity that is perfectly understood by the elders from the cultural linguistic perspective. Burfor libation is known to be uniquely unique hence full of literary devices which are extensively discussed below.

4.8.3 Symbolism (Arko)

Symbolism is one of the stylistic devices that is prevalent in oral literature. Symbol signifies or represents something concrete or familiar object that is used to refer to, or used as an explanation of an abstract idea. It is used to convey meaning of certain truths or lessons about human life and the problems of its existence. (Agyekum 2013, p.82-83). Symbolism is frequently used in rituals and divination chants which deals with deeper

spiritual issues and concept. Symbols are extensively employed in most African oral literature to carry across moral and spiritual matters. Burfor libation which is an oral art has a lot of symbols in order to communicate to the spirits, the Supreme God and the lesser gods. The libation text below has some examples of symbolism as discussed.

LT.1 Outdooring of reincarnated baby libation (Bi-Lɛwaa yuor ‘ɔɔfɔ kaba)

Introduction

<i>Naabile ηmin</i>	God of the gods	1
<i>Maase ni Tulo</i>	Gods of destruction and confusion	2
<i>Bomo jaa na gan teen</i>	All the things lying on the ground	3
<i>Yi de kɔm ‘maar</i>	You take cold water	4
<i>Saan kpɛ si naa</i>	Stranger has entered our midst	5
<i>Wɔ daa gbɔl lɛ jɪnɛ</i>	He is one week old today	6
<i>A Si paa~ sɔɔr yi</i>	And we are begging you	7
<i>Yin lɛ bɔɔn yaa</i>	You know best	8
<i>Kɔ wa pɔɔ si</i>	And he has come to meet us	9
<i>A si bɔɔl wɔ Nɪbɛ</i>	And we call him Nɪbɛ (name of the newly born baby)	10
<i>Si pɔɔ pɛlaa yɔɔ ya</i>	We are very happy	11

Supplication /middle

<i>A saan nya jɪnɛ yuor baara</i>	The name stranger today has ended	12
<i>A jɪnɛ mɔntɔɔn na pur</i>	Today that the sun is rising	13

<i>Fv i naa si insvɔ</i>	You are one of us	14
<i>Fvɔ so a yir</i>	You own the house	15
<i>Na fv liɛ wa kpɛ</i>	And you have come back	16
<i>Fv kv lɛ tɔɔ̃ sɔɔl fv miɛ</i>	You cannot hide yourself	17
<i>A yelsi anyana wa sir tor</i>	If these things are actually in order	18
<i>A ni lɛ sin bolbol</i>	Just as we have also demonstrated	19
<i>A Kɔgyvɔl kpime, Naakele,</i>	The gods of Kɔgyvɔl, (tribe) Naakele	20
<i>Yi de a nvɔ nyana ni pupila</i>	You take this fowl with happiness	21
<i>Ka Nibe tɔɔ̃</i>	So that Nibe can	22
<i>Jinɛ ni si igan'maar</i>	Stay with cold body	23
<i>Ti ta a fv sɔɔn</i>	Till your time	24
<i>Si wonna a nire 'lonɔ fṽ i</i>	We have heard the person you are	15
<i>Bal wa ηme a lenɛ</i>	When they beat like that	16
<i>A fv miη sɛ a lenɛ</i>	You also dance like that	17
<i>A bomo ba kv fv nyevɔr woõ</i>	The things should give you longer life	18
<i>Fv baa ni igan</i>	You grow in size	19
<i>Taa wa mille, taa gareɛ</i>	Don't trespass, don't gossip	20
<i>Taa vɛη a fv nuur wa mara</i>	Don't let your hands be starchy	21
<i>A kpunsi na yin fv puor</i>	The ancestors will go behind your back	22
Buɛlɔ	Blessings	
<i>Naanmin kpɛɛη pɔ</i>	With the strength of God	23
<i>Ømin na mɛ fv daba</i>	As God has created you man	24

<i>Fv daba bomo le</i>	These are your manhood items	25
<i>Kuur ni svɔ</i>	Hoe and cutlass	26

Conclusion (final stage)

<i>A Kɔjvɔl tɪɛ ni ba kpɪmɛ</i>	The deities of Kɔjvɔl (ancestor) and the spirits	27
<i>Ara na fv puor chinchinchin.....</i>	Stand by your back firmly	28

From the above libation text, there are some symbolisms that are used in the text to communicate to the ancestors and the lesser gods. In lines 4, 5 and 39, the performer employed these symbols to speak indirectly to both the ancestors and the divinities. The following lines from the main text confirm symbolism.

Yi de kɔm 'maar

You take cold water (LT.1, 4)

Saan nɛ kpɛ si

Stranger has entered us (L T. 1, 5)

Kɔ'maar (cold water) is one of the commonest and major items used to pour libation among the Burfor. The use of cold water in libation performance has different uses from the ordinary. In its ordinary use as economic and domestic use; *kɔ'maar* (cold water) is used in libation to signify peace and unity among the people. *Kɔ'maar* (cold water) used in libation or in sacrifice, symbolizes peace and unity from the ancestors and the divinities. This explains why when two people have a quarrel, the Lɔlvɔr (playmate) settles the dispute by using *kɔ'maar* (cold water) to pour libation to settle the dispute. In the context of outdoor a new baby, *kɔ'maar* (cold water) is poured for the new baby. *Kɔ'maar* (cold water) signifies peaceful living for the new born baby.

Kɔ'maar (cold water) quenches fire, so when the people have any serious problem, water is used as a tool to cool down such a problem. Water is generally used to wash away dirt or evil things that surround the people. As a result it is believed to wash away bad omens among the people.

Before outdoorizing, the new born baby is usually referred to as *saan* (stranger) because the new baby is not officially considered as a family member until it is given a traditional name. In the text above, **line 39**, *kuur ni svɔ* (hoe and cutlass) are presented to the new baby during outdoorizing as working tools for the new baby when he grows up. In real sense, these working tools presented to the baby symbolize hardwork.

Kuur ni svɔ, Hoe and cutlass

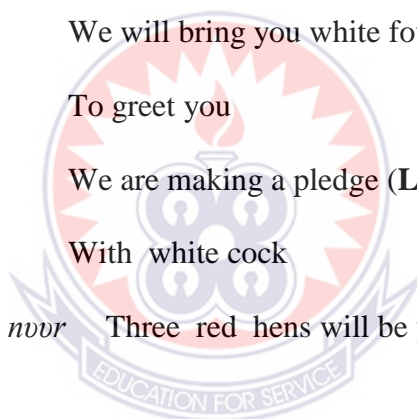
The extract informs the new born baby of the task ahead of him is farming.

In the Birfor libation performance, the colour of the fowl represents the intention of the performer. That is, *nɔpɪla* (white fowl) which represents peace, unity and happiness; the black and red fowls represent sadness and for that matter evil. So when libation is poured to invoke the wrath of the lesser gods on someone, the black and red fowls are chosen.

However, *nɔpɪla* (white fowl) is one of the commonest items used to make a pledge during libation pouring. The mentioning of *nɔpɪla* (white fowl) during libation performance is a sign of happiness. At the request stage of the libation text, the performer asks for favours, blessings, peace and prosperity among others. The performer makes a

self pledge that certain items such as *nɔpɪla* (white fowl), *nɔjɛ* (red fowl) to appreciate the ancestors and the lesser gods. These two types of fowls show how happy the person is for meeting the request made. The white fowl is usually used to make request during libation performance such as *sɔr chenfv Kaba* (libation for a traveller). When a family member travels and returns successfully, the family takes a white fowl to thank the ancestors for a successful journey and to express their happiness. Though both white and red fowls are used, the white fowl is commonly used in most libation performance to make request. *Gbɔɔma* (personal conversation). This is confirmed in (**LT.2**, 14 – 15 and **LT. 3**, 22- 23)

<i>Sin den nɔpɪla</i>	We will bring you white fowl (LT.2 , 14 – 15)	14
<i>Na sin tan puoro fv</i>	To greet you	13
<i>Si paa~ 'nyɔɔn na nɛɛ</i>	We are making a pledge (LT. 3 , 21-23)	21
<i>Ni nɔdapɪla</i>	With white cock	22
<i>Lir jur ata ɪ a fv puorfv nɔvr</i>	Three red hens will be your appreciation.	23



There is again the use of symbolism when the performer used *buu~* (fire) to describe the situation in which the woman has found herself that is infidelity/ adultery. *Buu~* (fire) in **LT.8** symbolises danger as the woman has committed adultery. It is considered as *Buu~ lɛ dire* (fire burning) because the husband and the children will die if the woman does not confess that she has had sexual affair with another man. Until the woman confesses, she cannot have sexual affair with the husband, or cook food for the husband and the children because she is considered impure. This is confirmed in the line below:

Buu~ lɛ dire Fire is burning (**LT.8**, 2)

As the adage that goes “fire is a good master but a bad servant”, Fire in most cases represents danger in the life of Burfor hence, they use it to describe situations that mean danger as seen in the main text.

4.8.4 Repetition (*Puulfo*)

Repetition is the recurrent use of words, phrases, sentences, or sound patterns for emphasis in a text. Repetition can occur within words in the same or part of a sentence. Repetition places emphasis on the message of the text (Agyekum, 2013). This explains why some elders joined the performer as he repeated a line in libation text that touches them during a community meeting at Wechao-bao. Libation texts are no exception as can be seen in the following libation texts.

In LT. 4, there is a repetition of water (*Kvɔ̃*) in line 3, 29 and 37. This can be seen below in the following lines;

<i>Pa! Manne yi de a kvɔ̃</i>	Pa! Manne (ancestor) take water
<i>Yi de a kvɔ̃ a nyana</i>	You take this water
<i>Yi de a kvɔ̃ a nyana</i>	You take this water

The repetition of *kvɔ̃* (water) in the above lines is to draw participants’ attention on the importance of water both on earth here and in the spiritual world. The value of water in the libation text cannot be over emphasized since “water is life” in the ordinary life of people who practice libation. Traditionally, water was the only common liquid used for

libation pouring. The repeatedly mention of water in LT.3 is generally to negotiate peace between the living and the ancestors or the gods hence, the repetition of water in the text. The ancestors who are considered as *Saama* (strangers) that is, plural, are being given water so that they can quench their thirst before they are welcomed.

Repetition is a common style most oral performers employ to create interest and pleasure in listeners. The performer therefore seeks to achieve this in the following lines above:

1. Repetition of words in different lines

Bal wa ηme a lenε When they beat like that (LT.1, 27)

A fv miη se a lenε You also dance like that (LT.1, 28)

N sɔɔ n buɔlfv And accept my call (LT.8, 6)

N na yɪ sɔɔ de n buɔlfv And accept my call (LT.8, 24)

It is realized that libation text (LT.1), *Lenε* (like that) in line 27 is repeated in line 28. In the same vain, *buɔlfv* (call) in (LT.8, 6) is repeated in lines 16 and 24 respectively. This repetition is to emphasize the request from the performer to send his message to the gods and the ancestors.

A similar repetition of words also occurred in libation text (LT.4, 5 and 7). The repetition of the word *jεε* ‘eggs’ in the text is to create the gap between the living and the ancestors, the divinities as well as the lesser gods. The subordinates (living) see themselves to be inferior to the superordinates (ancestors) hence constantly repeat themselves as weak as eggs and also for emphasis. As the text was performed to appeal to

the ancestors for protection and guidance throughout the meetings the performer constantly repeated some of the words to plead them for spiritual guidance.

2. Partial repetition of lines in a stanza (LT.4, 32, 34)

Ka kee taa beribee There should be no disagreement

Ka kee taa beribee There should be no disagreement

From the above extract of libation text (L.T.4) most of the lines are repeated. It can be noticed that line 32 is repeated twice in lines 34 and 36 to emphasize the need for unity among members of the community when they call for a meeting. When the community is united development will be enhanced in the community. The repetition of the stanzas in the text is to emphasize the need for the members of the community to be united.

4.8.5 Apostrophe (Danfo baraa)

An apostrophe is a figure of speech in which some abstract entity or a non-existence entity is addressed as if it is present. In apostrophe, a poet may address an inanimate object or a dead body or something that is absent. In libation performance, the performer uses apostrophe where the entity is addressed in a serious tone. An “O”, “Pa” and Ai! are used to begin or conclude a libation prayer as seen in the text below (LT. 5 line 1-2). These apostrophes are used to speak and address the ancestors and the lesser gods through the Supreme God.

<i>Pa! fvv~ Bɔɔ</i>	Pa! you Hole (lesser god)	1
<i>Ai! a sajibe lo naa</i>	Ai! the first rain has fallen	2

<i>Sɪ wob a kue yin</i>	We pick the hoes out	3
<i>A sɪ paa~ ɪka sɪ koŋ kv fʊ</i>	And we want to cry to you	4
<i>Tvɔ~ gu sɪ, a sɪ tvɔ~ turtur</i>	Protect us so that we can farm	5
<i>Kv sɪ sa vila</i>	Give us good rains	6
<i>A sɪ tvɔ~ kɔ nyɛ bondiir sɛɛ yir</i>	We can farm for food to fill the house	7
<i>Al yeh lɛ sɪ waan sɪ wa kono kv fʊ</i>	That is why we are here to cry to you	8
<i>Tɪ sin wa tvɔ nyɛ a bondiir</i>	If we are able to get enough food	9
<i>Guro sɪ ni nɔpɪla yaa pɪlpɪlpɪl</i>	Wait us with white fowl too-whitish, too-	
	whitish	10
<i>Sɪ taa wa char yelbier yaa.</i>	If we don't encounter any problem/trouble	11
<i>Sɪ denaa nɔpɪla na sɪ</i>	We will take white fowl	12
<i>Wa puor a fʊv~Saache</i>	To thank you Saache (god of prosperity)	13
<i>A la yele lɛ sɪ jin a ka.</i>	That is why we are here.	14

The extract above is a way of speaking to the ancestors as if they are human beings. Just like Burfor dirges which address the dead like a human being by saying *Pa! fʊv~ Bɔɔ* (Hole) *Pa! you Bɔɔ* (Hole) *A sɪ paa~ ɪka sɪ koŋ kv fʊ* And we want to cry to you, the performer also uses such addresses to invoke the gods and the ancestors as seen in the following lines 1-5 and 1-7 in **L.T.3** respectively.

LT. 3 Libation for a traveller (Sɔr chenfv Kaba)

<i>Pa! Bɔɔ, Maase</i>	Pa! Bɔɔ, Maaseɛ (Hole, god of destruction)	1
<i>Fʊv~ Sɔɔn~kpi,</i>	You sɔɔnkpɪ (god of death)	2

<i>Saakpamine yi de kvõ</i>	Ancestors, you take water	3
<i>Jedõõ,</i>	Jedõõ (ancestor)	4
<i>Manteen nimbere ni kpe teen</i>	Manteen elders who have entered the ground	5
<i>Yin na põõ kvõsr</i>	Who are covered with stone	6
<i>Janaa ni Balaa</i>	Janaa and Balaa (ancestors)	7
<i>Baada ni Wiitey</i>	Baada and Wiitey (ancestors)	8
<i>Ni yin bala yaa ni che</i>	And all those who are left	9
<i>A Yi bie nyana Kpunso</i>	This your child Kpunso(name of the newly-born baby)	10
<i>Le yire sõr</i>	Wants to travel	11
<i>Waa le i wõ tier</i>	He has not made his mind	12
<i>Ka wõ le kpe wõ yir e</i>	To come back to his house	13
<i>Kv i ka wõ vir bilem</i>	He wants to move out small	14
<i>Ala le wõ de wõ mie wa kv yi</i>	That is why he has given himself to you	15
<i>Na wõ paa~ kono kvõõ yi</i>	He is crying to you	16
<i>Ti le de wõ mie 'yõõõ yi nuur põ</i>	And also give himself in your hands	17
<i>Yi yuo wõ sõr</i>	You open his road	18
<i>Kv taa ñmier gber yaa</i>	He should not knock any bad leg	19
<i>Yi gu wõ che kvõ igan 'maar</i>	Protect him and give him cold body	20
<i>Kv tvõ~ nyẽ wõ bumbõõraa</i>	He will be able to get his dream thing	21
<i>Na wõ liẽ wa ni igan 'maaar</i>	And he return with peace	22
<i>Si paa~ 'nyõõõõ na nẽẽ</i>	We are making a pledge	23
<i>Ni nõdapila</i>	With white cock	24

<i>Lir jur ata na ɪ a fɔ puorfɔ</i>	We will bring three red fowls to thank you	25
<i>Fvɔ̃ wa vɛŋ ka vi wa kpɛ si</i>	If you let us be disgraced	26
<i>Fvɔ̃ nɛ a vi kpɛ</i>	It is you that has been disgraced	27

From the text above, gods and the ancestors who are dead, but are being addressed as if they are still living beings. Some names such as Yibour, Wiitey and Yaane are the ancestors of the community in Wechao- bao. The performer addresses them as if they were present. This can be found in the following extracts:

<i>Pa! Saaju Naanmin.</i>	Pa!, Supreme God	1
<i>Si saakpamine yi de kɔṽ</i>	Our Ancestors you take water	2
<i>Gawul</i>	Gawul (lesser god)	3
<i>Manteen numbɛɛ ni kpɛ teen</i>	Manteen elders who are on the ground	4
<i>Yin na pɔɔ kɔsɪr</i>	Who are covered with stone	5
<i>Janaa ni Balaa</i>	Janaa and Balaa (ancestors)	6
<i>Baada ni Wiitey</i>	Baada and Wiitey (ancestors)	7
<i>Ni yin bala yaa ni chɛ</i>	And all those still left	8

Also, in libation text 4, there is the use of apostrophe in the following lines and stanzas;

(LT. 4, lines 3 and 4)

<i>Yi gaafira saakpamine</i>	Excuse me ancestors	1
<i>Errm</i>	Clearing of the throat	2
<i>Pa! Manne, de kɔṽ</i>	Pa! Manne (ancestor) take water	3

Yibuor, Yaan, Baada yi mi de koo~ Yibuor, Yaane, Baada (ancestors) also take
water 4

From the libation text , the apostrophes do not only address the ancestors but also a reverence given to the lesser gods such as *Maase* (god of destruction), *Tulo* (god of confusion) and *Saanche* (god of children) by mentioning their names during libation ritual as seen in the following texts above in **LT.3**,lines 1-8.

There is again the use of apostrophe in **LT.8** when the performer addressed the lesser god Naamanne (god of the sea) in the following lines. (**LT. 8**, 5-13)

<i>Naamanne</i>	God of the sea	5
<i>Ir de tampiel</i>	Get up and take ash	6
<i>Saaju nymie</i>	Heavenly God	7
<i>Ir de koo~ nyu</i>	Get up take and water and drink	8
<i>N na fu 'yer yelmie kv si</i>	And tell us the truth	9
<i>Ko 'maar le</i>	Here is cold water	10
<i>De</i>	Take	11
<i>Nye ko 'maar</i>	Here is cold water	12

From the above extract, the clan god which the people consider to be the ultimate is being addressed like a living entity. Apostrophe is used in Birfor libation performance to give reverence to the ancestors by addressing them since libation is linked to the ancestors by addressing them during libation performance.

4.8.6 Ideophones (*Gɔmbulo*)

An ideophone is a vivid representation of an idea in sound. There are words that employ sounds that express aspects of events that can be imagined by the senses. They are linguistic expressions whose linguistic forms and sounds correlate with their semantic meanings.

Agyekum (2013) sees ideophones as words that employ sound symbolism to express aspects of events that can be experienced by the senses such as smell, sound, shape, action or movement. It is the use of words whose sound suggest the sense and meaning.

Though ideophones are not commonly used by Burfor in their everyday interactions, they are more common in their libation texts. The ideophones can be found in the following libation texts.

<i>Pa! fʋv Bɔɔ</i>	Pa! You Bɔɔ (Hole)	1
<i>Ai! a sajiɓe lo naa</i>	Ai! The first rain has fallen	2
<i>Sɪ wob a kue yin</i>	For us to pick the hoes	3
<i>A sɪ paan ta ika sɪ koŋ kv fʋ</i>	And we want to inform you	4
<i>Tʋɔ gu sɪ, a sɪ tʋɔ turtur</i>	Protect us so that we can farm	5
<i>Kv sɪ sa vila</i>	Give us good rains	6
<i>A sɪ tʋɔ̃ka ka bondiir wa a yir</i>	We can farm to get enough food for the house	7
<i>A lɛ waan sɪ a fʋ jie</i>	This is what brought us here	8
<i>Tɪ sin wa tʋɔ nyɛ a bondiir</i>	If we are able to get enough food	9

Guro si ni nɔpɪla yaa pɪlpɪlpɪl Wait us with white fowl too-whitish,
too-whitish 10

(LT. 5 lines 1, 2, 5 and 10) and in (L.T.4). This can be confirmed in the following lines below:

(LT. 5 lines 1, 2,)

Pa! fvv Bɔɔ Pa! you Hole

Ai! a sajiɛ lo naa Ai! The first rain has fallen

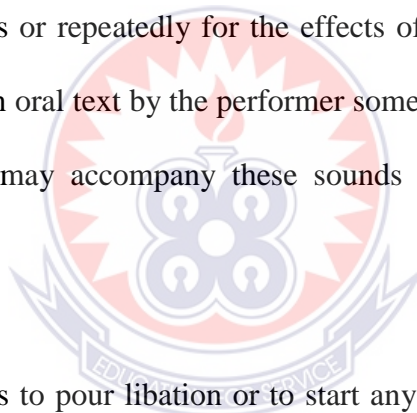
From the above, the ideophones occur at the end of every line of the text but sometimes they can also occur at the beginning or even in the middle. Words that such as *Pa!*, depicts the sound of plea made at the introduction stage of the libation performance. This sound is usually marked with with an exclamation mark. In almost all the libation texts, the *Pa!*, sound is punctuated with these exclamation marks at the end of the sound. The sound is meant to awaken and invoke both the ancestors and the lesser gods from their sleep to witness the occasion. This can be found in the extract below; (LT. 3, 1)

LT. 3 Libation for a traveller (Sɔr chenfo Kaba)

1 *Pa! Bɔɔ, Maase* Pa! Hole, god of destruction,

Though most ideophones do not have assigned meanings except what they refer to, a few of them have meaning. For instance, the ideophones *Pa!* and *chinchichin* (firmly) in LT 2 and L.T. 3 mean ‘Oh’ and ‘hold firmly’ respectively. Whenever libation is performed, a request is made to the ancestors with words which echo on their sounds for emphasis. This usually happens when the performance involves the killing of fowls where the performer invokes the ancestors to hold the slaughtered fowl *chinchichin* (firmly). The

word *chinchinchin* connotes how fortified the request being asked for should be attended to by the ancestors and must not be seen with loose response but rather it must be firmly protected. In most Burfor ritual performances, especially libation performance and other sacrifices the use of these ideophones *chinchinchin* (hold firmly, *Pa!* and *pilpilpilpil* (very very white) are associated with request making in libation. These sounds suggest their meanings as the performer pledges and reemphasize the request which he concludes with assurance to the ancestors. Ideophones are used to express feeling, emotion, perception and intensity of events as seen in the words; *chinchinchin*, *Pa!* and *pilpilpilpil*. Most ideophones are frequently reduplicated in the form in which a sound is multiplied several times or repeatedly for the effects of emotion and vivid description. The use of ideophones in oral text by the performer sometimes makes the audience happy because the performer may accompany these sounds with some dramatic actions or movements.



When a performer starts to pour libation or to start any spiritual rite, the sound *Ermm* ‘clearing of throat’ is to initiate a libation performance and other similar cultural performances such as sacrifices. This sound is made to draw the attention of the ancestors, the lesser gods and the divinities to pave way for the performance. The sound introduces the ceremony or the occasion to both the audience present and the ancestors so that the performer will be granted the spiritual permission to begin the performance.

Some ideophones in libation text give clue to their meanings. *ɔɔtɔtɔ* in (LT.8, 14) means very cold describing how the performer wants the house to be peaceful after the “spoiled wife” has been pacified and brought to the house. *Buu~ le dire* Fire is burning

(LT.8, 2), suggests that there is a serious problem that needs to be solved by the ancestors, hence the performer uses the term *ɔɔtɔtɔ* (cold) to appeal to the ancestors.

4.8.6 Metaphor (So-‘nyɔɔ)

Metaphor is a figure of speech in which one thing is described as another. It is an implied comparison between two dissimilar objects. These objects serve as substitutes for literal language as a reference. Metaphors are used unconsciously in our daily life. They are used to pass on messages to the audience without directly embarrassing anybody who may be a victim of circumstances. Metaphor beautifies a language. It is one of the principal devices by which the poetic nature of a work is achieved (Sanortey, 2011). We live by metaphors and most of the abstractions of language used now have passed through metaphors.

Libation which is considered as a sacred act and not usually performed by the young ones contains philosophical language in the performance so that only the experienced adults can understand the message. Hence, the use of metaphor in libation performance is very common and productive. From the text that follows, one can identify one or more metaphors which make the performance more cultural in context.

LT.6 Libation during drought (Wara ŋmaafɔ/ Saa nyɔɔfɔ)

Kɔmpɪla ni baaraa a pɔbɔ ni a bibiir White hunger will finish the women and the children (LT.6, 10)

Ti vɛŋ a saa pɔ ba And let the rain beat them (LT. 6, 15)

In line 10 of **LT.6**, white hunger (*kɔmpila*) is a metaphor where hunger is given a human attribute believed to kill both women and the children in the family. *Kɔmpila* (White hunger) is being compared to a human being who has the strength to kill. In everyday speech, metaphor occurs frequently especially during libation performance.

Also, *Ti vɛŋ a saa pɔ ba* And let the rain beat them (**LT. 6**, 15) that does not mean in literal sense what it is. *Saa* 'rain' has been used metaphorically by attributing human qualities.

LT.4 Tee~ ɔɔnfɔ kaba 'libation to commence a community meeting'

<i>Yi gaafira saakpamine</i>	You excuse me ancestors	1
<i>Errm</i>	Clearing of throat	2
<i>Pa! Manne , de kɔɔ~</i>	Pa! Manne, take water	3
<i>Yibuor, Yaan, Baada</i>	Ancestors (Yibuor, Yaane, Baada)	4
<i>Yi fan lo n che ti ɪ gyɛɛ</i>	You have all fallen down and we are eggs	5
<i>Si ɔɔɔɔ ika a teen wv baa</i>	We want the community to grow	6
<i>Tu ɪ gyɛɛ</i>	Now that we are eggs	7
<i>Yi fan lo n che ti ɪ jɛɛ</i>	You have all fallen down and we are eggs (LT.4 line)	8

The line 7 *Tu ɪ gyɛɛ* 'Now that we are eggs,' means they have all died leaving only the young ones. Once the mother hen has died leaving the eggs, it will be difficult for them to hatch as they are not matured. The eggs here refer to the young ones that are left

behind. The performer is using the 'eggs' as a metaphor to represent the young ones in the community.

The performer compares the living to *Jɛɛ* (eggs). He simply refers to those living as eggs because of their limited powers. The use of *jɛɛ* (eggs) as metaphor clearly portrays the dependency of the living on the ancestors for their spiritual needs. The performer is not just referring to the ordinary eggs but those living beings who are considered to be still young and weak. The performer is therefore appealing to the ancestors and the spirits that they should continue to take care of them as they have not yet fully grown spiritually and physically.

4.8.7 Synecdoche. (*Lɛr gbul*)

This is a figurative speech where an important part of an object is used to represent the whole (Cuddon, 1991). The part selected to represent the whole must be the part closely directly associated used for the subject under discussion.

This can be seen in the following lines;

<i>Saaju Naaymine</i> Supreme	God (<i>Saaju Naaymin</i>) refers to the Almighty God in heaven.
<i>Saakpamine</i>	Grandfathers (<i>Saakpamine</i>) grandfathers refer to the oldest souls in the family as seen in LT. 3 in line 2.

4.8.8 Euphemism (*Ɔmepɔɔ*)

Euphemism is a mild way or inoffensive word substituted for one that is considered gross indecent or taboo. It is an expression that tones down the unpleasantness of taboo language. These are also seen in Burfor libation text. For instance, in the invoking stage the performer uses euphemism in

Tɔmɔ janfɔ (learning a trade libation) text when he advises the apprentices in this line;

Taa vɛŋ a fɔ nuur wa maraɛɛ Don't let your hands be sticky (**LT. 1** line 31).

Instead of the performer telling the apprentices that they should not steal, he chooses to use an inoffensive word to advise them to be of good behaviour as they are about to start a new work. The use of euphemism in libation performance helps avoid the mentioning of verbal taboo words in the public and even among children. Euphemisms in libation performance polishes the language in a way of expressing verbal taboos e.g death, unemployment and criminality as seen in the lines

Ti ta a fɔ sɔɔn Till your time (**LT.1**, line 24)

A kpɔnsɔ na yin fɔ puor The ancestors will go behind your back (**LT.1** line 32)

The performer used the above lines to inform the new-born the task ahead of him which is death. Instead of him using direct expression to advise the child, he decided to choose mild words in advising the child. Again, the child has been advised in a form of warning in line 32 **LT.1** that the ancestors will not support him if he does not live by the norms and standards of the society. For example, if the child does not respect elders he will not be blessed by them and for that matter the ancestors whom the living venerate so much.

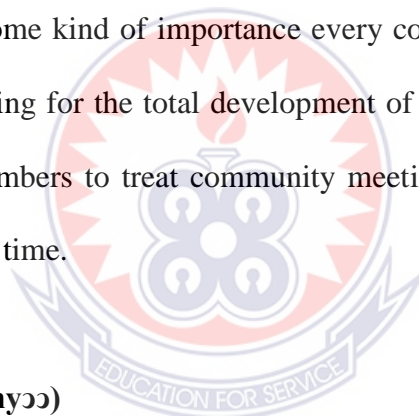
4.8.9 Oxymoron (‘Yɛr dendeme)

This is a word or group of words that contradict in meaning as in painful laughter or living death. In oral performance, like libation the performer makes use of statements that defy the ordinary.

In **LT.4**, **libation to commence a community meeting (Teen¹ɔɔnfɔ)**, one can realize the use of oxymoron in line **15** in the text.

Fɔ gaŋ ti tɛri, You will be sleeping while thinking

In reality one cannot be sleeping and at the same time thinking. The statement though contradictory, creates some kind of importance every community member should attach to any community meeting for the total development of the community. The text is also meant to encourage members to treat community meetings with all the zeal and attend community meetings on time.



4.8.10 Hyperbole (Ɔŋ’nyɔɔ)

Skillful performers are considered to be imaginative exaggerative because of their frequent use of excess exaggeration for emphasis. Among the Burfor, hyperbole is common in most of their utterances. In **LT. 6** line 10 and 14, there are some hyperbole utterances to explain situations to the ancestors and gods.

Kɔmpila ni baaraa a pɔbɔ ni a bibiir White hunger will finish the women and the
children (**LT.6.10** and 4)

Yi vɔl suur You swallow anger

The word hunger (*kɔŋ*) in the text is being exaggerated by modifying it with an adjective white hunger (*kɔmpila*) to inform the ancestors the extent of the hunger and how the people especially the children are suffering. The ancestors and the gods should swallow hunger (*vɔl suur*) and allow the rain to come. The two lines should not be taken literally to mean white hunger (*kɔmpila*) and swallow anger (*vɔl suur*) respectively, but rather severe hunger has befallen on the people. The performer is therefore calling on the ancestors to forgive them and give them rainfall. The line *Kɔmpila ni baaraa a pɔbɔ ni a bibiir* White hunger will finish the women and the children, is to place emphasis on how the people are suffering from the hunger.

4.8.11 Alliteration (Sɛbidaa puulfɔ)

The repetition of initial consonant sounds recurring in words is termed as alliteration. The words usually begin with the same letter of sound especially consonants. The lines below display a lot of alliteration sounds 't' in **LT.1** and 'j' in **LT.7** as seen in the following lines.

Taa wa mille, taa garɛɛ

Don't trespass, don't gossip

Dɔba lɛ Jɛn a jie ti wɔ ɔɔ naa

A hero that ever settled there and flew

(**LT.7**, line 37)

Bo sɔɔnaa lɛ sɔɔ~?

What crime has been committed? (**LT.7**,
line 12)

From the extract above there is the repetition of initial consonants of 't' in *taa* (do not) and 'j' in *jɛn* (settled) and *jie* (there). The repetition of the 't' like other sounds create some

emphasis on the need for the new baby to desist from bad habits such as *mulle* (trespassing) and *garεε* (gossip). The use of this in literary text like libation create some kind of mood of the performer and how he expresses himself.

The performer could have said *Bo si sɔɔ~?* (What have we committed?), or *Bo si i?* (What have we done?), to also mean *Bo sɔɔnaa le sɔɔ~?* This expression is not familiar hence does not collocate. The artistic value of alliteration would have lost if *Bo sɔɔnaa le sɔɔ~?* were replaced.

4. 8. 12 Assonance (Sεbipɔbɔ puulfɔ)

Assonance is the similarities of sound in words. The repetition of similar vowel sounds in words. It is the relative close of similar vowel sounds. The vowels usually rhyme at their final accent. In poetry and other oral arts assonance is the common device used to determine the rhyming scheme. Assonance is used in the following as in / ε/ repeated in *garεε* ‘gossip’ and *marεε* ‘sticky’ for rhythmic effect. (LT.1 Line 31-32)

LT. 6 Libation during drought (Wara ηmaafɔ /Saa nyɔɔfɔ kaba)

<i>Yi pεll pɔɔ de a nɔɔ nyana</i>	You be happy and accept this fowl	14
<i>Yi vɔl suur</i>	You swallow anger	15
<i>Ti vεη a saa pɔ ba</i>	And let the rain beat them	16
<i>Lε kul a ba yie</i>	Back to their houses	17
<i>Na yi wiil a sɔɔnfɔ</i>	To show them the crime	18
<i>A Si ir a bomo chɔɔr</i>	We can provide the items for sanctification	19

Assonance also occurred in libation **LT. 6** in lines 13, 14 and 15 respectively. The repetition of /t/ in *Yt* ‘You’ (plural) *Yt* ‘You’ *St* ‘we’ and *Tt* ‘And’ creates vowels rhyme which brings some comic and rhythmic effects in the text. This can be found in the main text below; (**LT.6**, 13, 15 and 18). It must be noted that *St* ‘we’ and *Tt* ‘and’ are used interchangeably to both mean personal pronouns. They are in free variation.

4.8.13 Rhetorical question (Sɔɔr baraa)

Most of the utterances made during libation performance are questions directed to no one and therefore do not require any reply. These questions are being asked to make a point. The questions are usually obvious for audience to deduce the answer. In libation performance, the performer usually ask the ancestors and the divinities questions but does not need any response from them. This is evidence in the lines below:

Bo sɔɔnaa lɛ sɪ sɔɔ~? What crime have we committed? (**LT.6** line 12)

Tɪ lɪɛ tɪɛ anɛɛ? And turn onto whom? (**LT.7**, line 41)

Mur pampaanya nyɪnɛ sɪ wa bɔɔ And vanished now how do we know

jɪɛ wɔ lɪɛ tu? Where he has passed? (**LT.7**, line 42)

Nyɪnɛ sɪ bɔɔ~ a ba tu? Where do they pass? (**LT.7**, line 48)

Tɪ fɔ ɪka n baa~? Then you say I should do what? (**LT.7**, line 97)

The lines above are questions asked by the officiant to pass on philosophical emerging issues to the ancestors. The officiant sometimes ridicules the ancestors for not responding to his request. As it is a libation text for the dead, the officiant is lamenting on the exit of

the person, by asking the ancestors and the gods a lot of questions that do not need any response, but just to register their pains and sadness.

4. 8. 14 Parallelism (‘Yeryεrtaa/ ’Yersεetaa)

Agyekum (2013), sees parallelism as a literary device whereby the oral artist brings together in a balanced relationship of ideas and images that may seem independence of another.

Sanortey (2011, p.77) explains parallelism as “The repetition of words, phrases or sentences that have the same grammatical structure, or a restate of a similar idea.”(P. 77). He further goes on to state that parallelism is frequently used in literary art like poetry to be spoken aloud to make the lines emotional, rhythmic and memorable.

Parallelism in libation just like repetition is not the limited number of words or ideas by the performer but the importance people attach to community development. Development is key to every community hence, the performer in a repeated verse emphasizes this in a form of repetition in parallel form. For instance, *ka teen baa; ka teen paal* (so that the community will grow; so that the community will expand) in lines 9 and 11 of libation text (L.T.4) have positive connotations. The repetition of such words in a parallel structure would inform members of the community the need for community development.

Parallelism, as observed in libation text serves as a form of pleasantries. The performer exhibits a lot of skills in the set of words against another with constant structure of the statements in them. Parallelism does not only makes the text or performance uniform in structure; it also makes the text memorable. For the purpose of this study, the discussions are limited to synonymous and synthetic parallelism.

Synonymous Parallelism

<i>Ka teen baa</i>	So that the community will grow
<i>Ka teen paal</i>	So that the community will expand (LT.4: 9 and 11)

<i>Nyewol daa</i>	Male god
<i>Nyewol pɔɔ</i>	Female god (LT. 7: 129-130)
<i>Manteen Tingama ni a Kɔlsɪ</i>	Manteen Mother earth and the water bodies
<i>Manteen Kpimɛ</i>	Manneteen divinities (LT.6: 2-3)

There is synonymous to parallelism in the above lines. The verb *baa* means to grow; to increase in size or quality and the verb *paal* means to expand; to increase in numbers or quantity. Thus, there is a synonymous parallelism between size and quantity/ number. When a community grows in size, it will invariably expand and increase in number. There is parallelism because, in the context of *teen lɔɔnɔv* (development) means *paal* (increment) and *baa* also means *paal*. *Daba* (man) and *pɔɔ* (woman) that are preceded by the main noun *Nyewul* (god) is also preceded by the same main noun *Nyewul* (god).

From the above excerpts, it can be observed that the two lines are syntactically and morphologically parallel. For instance, *Nyɛwɔl daa Nyɛwɔl pɔɔ* (Male god and female god) in lines 129 and 130 of **LT 7** are syntactically parallel. The morphemes are in the same sense but parallel.

4. 8.15 Proverbs (sɔkpat)

Proverb is a simple traditional wise saying that tells the truth based on logical reasoning and experience. A proverb is a short sentence or phrase that has a special message. It forms an integral part of the lives of the speakers of the language. (Ababila, 2010).

Proverbs are metaphorical in nature hence, use language formular. They are usually transmitted by oral tradition. The performer who invokes the ancestors and the gods during libation is one who exhibits oratorical skills, cultural competence and historical knowledge (Mensah, 2013). He chooses the appropriate diction, intonation to get his prayer to the target group. The data collected shows that proverbs are part of the people cultural traditions and reflect their way of living. They contain ethnographic information which draws upon age and currency (ibid).

Proverbs serve as symbols of cultural memories of the Burfor people which advise, warn and communicate back to the ancestors. They function as social mechanisms that control and safeguard marriage institution, straighten ethical behaviour and inculcate social values such as tolerance, obedience among others. From the data collected, there are proverbs and their cultural interpretations. This can be seen in the following lines below (.LT.7, 123-124)

<i>Mɔnaa ni wɔ pũ</i>	Bush cow and its arrow	123
<i>Nimpila ni gbajaree</i>	White man and his hat	124
<i>Manteen nimbere ni kpe teen</i>	Manteen (community) elders who have entered the ground (LT.3, 4)	
<i>Yin na pɔɔ kusir</i>	You who are covered with stone (LT.3, 5)	

4.8.16 Compounding (‘Yɛrbie kpartaar)

Another stylistic device that abounds in libation text is compounding. In the ordinary utterances, compounding occurs and some of these ordinary compounds are common in libation text. However, in libation text, the performer employs compounding that would not normally be found in everyday conversations. In the ordinary use of the language, new words may be formed by combining two words. For example;

kuɔ̃ (water) + ‘*maar* (cold) = *ko’maar* (cold water)- **LT.8, 12,18, and 27**
nuɔ̃ (fowl) + *pɔraa* (pledge) = *nɔpɔraa* (pledged fowl) - **LT.8, 39**

Ko’maar is quite different from *kuɔ̃ ‘maar* *kuɔ̃ ‘maar* means the ‘shade of water’ where as *ko’maar* means ‘cold water’. Similarly the compound form of *nɔpɔraa* is different from *nuɔ̃ pɔraa*. *Nuɔ̃ pɔraa* means ‘fowl’s pledge’ where as *nɔpɔraa* means pledged- fowl. The performer employs such ordinary compounds during libation performance to economise words and makes the performance more linguistic. Compounding in libation performance shows both the cultural and linguistic competence of the performer. For example, *ko’maar* occurs in **LT.8, 12, 18, and 27**.

4.9 Occasion and Significance of libation Among the Burfor

Libation is considered a sacred rite and can be poured at any time of the day when the need arises. It has not been established that libation can be poured on a specific time or occasion. It is offered on occasions such as festivals, funerals, naming/outdooring ceremonies, when a person is travelling, beginning of a farming season, a person returning from a journey and many others. Among the Burfor, libation performance is always for a particular occasion and also has some significance. The text below is a libation text

4.9.1 LT. 5 Beginning of farming season libation (Kɔb piilfv kaba)

<i>Pa! fvv~ Bɔɔ</i>	Pa! you Hole (lesser god)	1
<i>Ai! a sajibe lo naa</i>	Ai! the first rain has fallen	2
<i>Sɪ wob a kue yin</i>	We pick the hoes out	3
<i>A sɪ paa~ ɪka sɪ koŋ kv fv</i>	And we want to cry to you	4
<i>Tvɔ~ gu sɪ, a sɪ tvɔ~ turtur</i>	Protect us so that we can farm	5
<i>Kv sɪ sa vila</i>	Give us good rains	6
<i>A sɪ tvɔ~ kɔ nye bondiir sɛɛ yir</i>	We can farm for food to fill the house	7
<i>Al yeli le sɪ waan sɪ wa kono kv fv</i>	That is why we are here to cry to you	8
<i>Ti sin wa t̃ɔ nye a bondiir</i>	If we are able to get enough food	9
<i>Guro sɪ ni nɔpɪla yaa pilpɪlpɪl</i>	Wait us with white fowl too-whitish, too-whitish	10
<i>Sɪ taa wa char yelbier yaa.</i>	If we don't encounter any problem/trouble	
	yaa	11

<i>Si denaa nɔpɪla na si</i>	We will take white fowl	12
<i>Wa puor a fɔṽSaache</i>	To thank you Saache (god of children)	13
<i>A la yeɛ lɛ si jin a ka.</i>	That is why we are here.	14

The Burfor people are well noted for their farming business. A wealthy Burfor man is measured by the number of wives and the number of bans of guinea corn he has to feed his family. Hence, the beginning of every farming season is a very serious moment for every Burfor man. It determines what the farmer will be able to do in order to have a successful harvest. A good beginning of a farming season such as clearing of the land, sowing, good rains and good health of the farmer all depend on the spiritual protection from the ancestors and the spirits. That explains why libation pouring before starting the farming season is considered very crucial.

Due to these reasons and underlying philosophies, every farmer tries to ask for trouble-free season through the ancestors and the spirits by pouring libation to inform the ancestors and also seek for permission to start the farming season. A farmer will only start to clear his land for farming when he performs libation to his *Saakpamine* (ancestors), *Yir Tibe* (lesser gods in the house hold) and the *Tingan* (Earth god). This kind of libation is done in private usually early in the morning by the family head. One may be punished by his ancestors if he has not informed the ancestors in the form of pouring libation before starting a new farming season. The punishment can be in the form of sickness, poor yields and even sometimes death because the ancestors are annoyed. This can only be averted by pouring libation to appease spirits.

As Burfor are appreciative by nature, after harvesting and to mark the end of the harvesting period, libation is poured again to thank the ancestors and the gods for bumper harvest.

4.9. 2 Libation for a traveller (Sɔr chenfo Kaba)

One of the informants alluded to the fact that in our African belief system, everything that happens on this earth is guided by spiritual forces. Hence, the Africans believe that one needs blessings from the Supreme Being, ancestors and gods to embark on every journey to reach successfully. Libation performance is said to prompt a successful agenda. For this reason when someone decides to undertake a journey it may include moving out the community to seek greener pastures down south especially the youth, to seek higher education, business and sometimes resettlement. Libation is most important ritual that is considered a powerful weapon poured to be used to enable the traveler get to his/her destination successfully. This is a libation that was performed in Sanuor for a young boy who wanted to travel to Debiso, in the Western North region for greener pastures.

LT. 3 Libation for a traveler (Sɔr chenfo Kaba)

<i>Pa! Bɔɔ, Maase.</i>	Pa! Hole, god of destruction	1
<i>Fuʋ˩sɔɔnkpi</i>	You sɔɔnkpi (god of death)	2
<i>N saakpamine, yi de kɔv˩</i>	My grandfathers, you take water	3
<i>Jɛdɔɔ</i>	Jɛdɔɔ (ancestor)	4
<i>Manteen numbeɛ ni kpɛ teen</i>	Manteen(name ofcommunity) elders who are on the ground	5

<i>Yin na pɔɔ kɔsir</i>	Who are covered with stone	6
<i>Janaa ni Balaa</i>	Janaa and Balaa (ancestors)	7
<i>Baada ni Wiitey</i>	Baada and Wiitey (ancestors)	8
<i>Ni yin bala yaa ni che</i>	And all those who are left	9
<i>Yi bie nyana Kpunso</i>	Your son (Kpunso)	10
<i>Lɛ yire sɔr</i>	Wants to travel	11
<i>Waa lɛ ɪ wɔ tɛr</i>	He has not made his mind	12
<i>Ka wɔ lɛ kpɛ wɔ yir ɛ</i>	To come back to his house	13
<i>Kɔ ɪ ka wɔ vir bilɛm</i>	He wants to move out small	14
<i>Ala lɛ wɔ de wɔ miɛ wa kɔ yi</i>	And he wants to give himself /herself to you	15
<i>Na wɔ paa~ kono kɔrɔ yi</i>	He is crying to you	16
<i>Che lɛ de wɔ miɛ 'yɔɔn yi nuur pɔ</i>	And also give himself/herself in your hands	17
<i>Na yi yuo wɔ sɔr</i>	That you should lead him/her	18
<i>Kɔ taa ŋmier gber yaa</i>	He /she should not knock any bad leg	19
<i>Yi gu wɔ che kɔv igan 'maar</i>	Protect him/her and give him/her peace	20
<i>Kɔ twɔ~ nyɛ wɔ bumbɔɔraa</i>	To get his /her dream thing	21
<i>Na wɔ liɛ wa ni igan 'maaar</i>	And return with peace	22
<i>Si paa~ 'nyɔɔn na nɛɛ</i>	We are making a pledge	23
<i>Ni nɔdapɪla</i>	With white cock	24
<i>Lir ata ɪ a fɔ puorfɔ nɔɔ</i>	Three white chickens will be yours	25
<i>Fvɔ~ wa vɛŋ ka vi wa kpɛ si</i>	If you let us be disgraced	26
<i>Fvɔ~ nɛ vi kpɛ</i>	It is you that has been disgraced	27

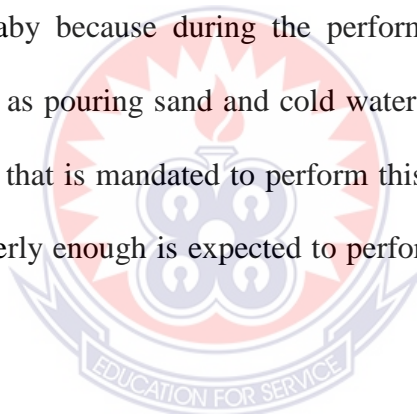
In this libation text, lines 1-8 acknowledge the presence of the Almighty God and the ancestors. The purpose of the libation is outlined in the form of request for protection and safe journey for the youngman in lines 9 to 13 and then concludes with much emphasis in the form of promises challenge to the divinities as seen in 25 and 26 (**LT. 3**).

4.9.3 Outdooring of reincarnated baby libation (Bi-lawaa yuor Eɔɔfo kaba)

Among the Burfor, the practice of naming a child begins when the child is born. This practice applies to all African cultures as Agyekum (2006) states, while western names are predictable, African names are generally not predictable, for until a child is born and under what circumstances it is born, the name cannot be determined with accuracy. In Burfor culture, it takes one week after a child has been born before it is given a name. The one-week period is chosen in order to give the family enough time to find out whether the child in question will stay or not. The Burfor therefore believe that a child is not considered a human until it has a name. As a result of this belief, the child is called “*saan*” ‘stranger’ for both sexes until its name is provided. A child can only be seen by the public when it has a name. The reason is that, people are likely to ask for the name. The Burfor do not have any laid down procedures when it comes to naming. It can be stated that the naming ceremony in Burfor culture does not have any significant underscores. Naming in Burfor can be done by any other person provided the name-giver seeks approval from the child’s family. There is no structured or official ceremony for naming in Burfor. The ceremony is usually an informal one with just a few family members present.

Among the Burfor, the family head has the ultimate right to get an ancestral name for a newly born child. The family head gives the ancestral name because, it is only the family head that can determine and identify which ancestral cults the child belongs to. Also, there are other names that can be given to the child apart from the one that is sought from divination. Such names show the place of birth of the child, the circumstances under which the child was born.

Characteristics of the Burfor, both parents of the baby do not witness the performance but asked to stay away from the ceremony. This is to avoid the parents being tempted to empathize with their baby because during the performance the baby is subjected to inhuman treatment such as pouring sand and cold water on the baby. It must be noted that, it is not everybody that is mandated to perform this ritual. A person of good moral standing and who is elderly enough is expected to perform the naming rite and bless the child.



The performer first invites the Almighty God, the ancestors, the lesser gods and the spirits to guard the child against any evil. The name-giver then starts the libation performance by bringing the baby outside from the room and place it at the entrance of the house. He then uses ash to draw a circular shape and places the baby inside the circle on the bare ground and then start the performance. The ash is to drive away all bad spirits that may destroy the new baby. The performer then uses the water to invite the ancestors, the spirits, deities and the Supreme God to witness the occasion. The baby is left on the

ground for some time before it is picked up by the performer and then pronounces the name.

The next stage is the explanation of the issue. As this is an outdoor libation text, the performer explains that a new member has joined the family and that this new member is part of the family and should be accepted and welcomed to the family and the society as a whole. The child is then introduced to the ancestors and the lesser gods and ask them to protect him/her. The child is then entrusted into the hands of the supreme God, the ancestors and the lesser gods for guidance throughout his /her entire life on earth.

This is confirmed in the following lines (**LT.1 lines, 5-7**)

<i>Saan kpe si naa</i>	Stranger has entered our midst	5
<i>Wɔ daa gbul le jine</i>	He is one week old today	6
<i>A Si paa~ sɔr yi</i>	And we are begging you	7

In the above text, in line 5, the child is considered as a stranger in the family hence family members should accept him as such. In L.T.1, line 6-8, the performer narrates the purpose and concludes with a pledge and plea to the ancestors and the lesser gods. The child is also entreated to be of good character, hardworking and grow in size and to be responsible fellow in the community. This is found in the following lines; (**LT.1, 26-28**)

<i>Bal wa ηme a lenε,</i>	When they beat like that	26
<i>A fɔ miη se a lenε</i>	You also dance like that	27
<i>A bomo a kv fɔ nyεvɔr woo~</i>	The things will give you longer life	28

The performer uses these lines to ask for blessings for the child (**31-35**)

These lines are prayers for the new baby to be healthy, truthful, trustworthy, and longer life.

<i>A fɔ̃ baa ni ɪgan</i>	You grow with size	29
<i>Taa wa mullɛ, taa garɛɛ</i>	Don't trespass, don't gossip	30
<i>Mimilɛ bu gar kɔ̃ pɔ̃ fɔ̃ɛ</i>	Trespassing or gossip should not be part of you	31
<i>Taa vɛŋ a fɔ̃ nuur wa mara</i>	Don't let your hands be sticky	32
<i>A kpunsi na yin fɔ̃ puor</i>	The spirits will not be at your back	33

Invocation (calling stage)

<i>Naabile ŋmin</i>	God of gods	34
<i>Maase, Tulo</i>	Maase, Tulo (gods of destruction, god of confusion)	35
<i>Bomo jaa na gan teen</i>	All the things on the ground	36
<i>Yi de kɔ̃m 'maar</i>	Take cold water	37
<i>Che lier si tier</i>	And change our thoughts	38
<i>Saan kpɛ si naa</i>	There is stranger in our midst	39
<i>Wɔ̃ daa gbul lɛ dĩɛ</i>	He is one week old today	40
<i>A Si paã svɔ̃r yi</i>	And we are begging you	41
<i>Yin lɛ bɔ̃ɔ̃n yaa</i>	You know best	42
<i>Kɔ̃ wa pɔ̃ɔ̃ si</i>	And he came to join us	43

In lines 1 and 4 of the text, the performer addresses God and the lesser gods with the text, *Yi de kɔ̃m 'maar* You take cold water, before he proceeds to the next line of the performance.

4.9.4 Funeral performance libation (*Kuor kaba*)

The funeral of the Burfor involves a number of stages and rituals that are performed when a person dies till the burial. This requires a number of practices to be performed and one of these is libation performance. The Burfor people do not declare a person dead until libation is performed for the ancestors and the divinities for guidance and confirmation. Usually, man or woman depending on the sex of the dead, holds the dying person to breathe for the last but as soon as the person breathes the last breath, libation has to be performed to inform the ancestors and the divinities. The purpose of this that it is a time of asking the ancestors and the divinities' view about the person and if they should perform his/her funeral as tradition demands.

After the ancestors and the divinities have granted the permission through the libation, the next stage is the announcement of the funeral. Funeral celebration is one of the most serious and sober occasions in which libation is poured to send off the departed soul to the ancestral home (*Kpunteen*). Among the Burfor, the death of an individual means a journey to join the ancestors. So because of this, libation is usually poured on funeral ceremonies.

The various stages of the funeral rites also call for a particular libation performance. At which ever stage, libation is performed to usher the dead into the eternal world called the ancestral home and also to advert any further deaths in the family. The following was a libation text performed at the second funeral performance before the final funeral rite. At this funeral stage, a spiritualist is usually invited to perform this libation text. It is the

breaved family that usually invite the spiritualist to perform this particular libation. As stated earlier, it is performed to usher the dead into the second world and to seek spiritual deliverance on behalf of the living.

Fig. 4: An elder performing libation to commence a funeral performance in Tuupɔ.



Source: Field data – 30th September, 2022

This can be seen in the extract below. (LT. 7)

<i>Nε bo 'yen</i>	Unity	1
<i>Ti puor n saakpamine</i>	And greet my grandfathers	2
<i>Kpiin bo 'yen</i>	It is only one ghost	3
<i>Ti gɔɔn manu</i>	And cross the sea	4
<i>Bombara a wɔ die ni a wɔ bɔɔsi</i>	Bombara his room/shrine and his /divination	5
<i>Ti liε tiε n saa ni kulibo</i>	And turn to my father Kulibo	6
<i>Ti tiεyɔɔ jaam wɔ ɔɔ</i>	Tiεyɔɔ (ancestor) flew yesterday	7

<i>Ti lie tie Basi burɔ kɔɔŋ ni yoo</i>	And turn to Basi, of one the diviners yoo	8
<i>Nele, burɔ ni yoo</i>	Nele, (name of a diviner) is diviner yoo	9
<i>Balaa de sɔr-beyeni</i>	Balaa(name of person) has taken the same road	10
<i>Ɔmur a jaam wɔ ɔ naa</i>	Ɔmur(name of a diviner) flew yesterday	11
<i>Naa bar, ti wa a dɔɔ pɔ</i>	I finished, and turn to the clan	12
<i>Niberɛberɛberɛ</i>	Great, great, great, great elders	13
<i>N yaare nuur ti gɔɔŋ a mani</i>	I open my hands and cross the sea	14
<i>Ti tie dɔɔ nibere ni kpe tee~</i>	And got to the great elders that entered the soil	15
<i>A Yuobaar boɔle Aŋ-bɔɔŋfɔ</i>	Yuobaar (name of an elder) who know you	16
<i>Ai! ti puor kpei Ti chene joro fɔɔ naa lo gɔɔn baa. Ai!</i>	I greet Kpei (name of an elder) and then run and cross the valley	17
<i>Dabile, ɔ naa ti puoro a fɔ bile</i>	Dabile (name of an elder) fly and greet your junior brother Damba	18
<i>Damba</i>		
<i>Ti lie puor Jɔfɔɔ ni Gbul</i>	And turn again to greet Jɔfɔɔ and Gbul,(elders)	19
<i>Tɔɔn silaa Jejerɛ</i>	Mountain hawks fighter	20
<i>Kpɔ̃ bo'yen</i>	One ghost	21
<i>Ti puori Aŋ-ase, puor sansa</i>	And greet Aŋ-se (elder) greet Sansa (elder)	22
<i>Puori Dar Ti wa baar a fɔ</i>	Greet Dar (elder) and when I finished you	
<i>N lie anɛɛ ?</i>	said I should turn to who?	23

<i>Kpun bo 'yen</i>	One ghost	24
<i>Vor bo 'yen</i>	One life	25
<i>Ka puor Mvoro, Naa-ara,</i>	Then greet Mvoro, Naa-ara, Earth god	
<i>Tengan dɔɔ</i>	tribe	26
<i>Dagu, Kɔɔfie, Dɔkuu Sei N puoroo</i>	Dagu, Kɔɔfie, Dɔkuu, Sei (elders) I greet	
	you all!!	27
<i>Ti puor a dɔɔ</i>	And greet the clan	28
<i>Dagolee!!</i>	Dagolee!! (an elder)	29
<i>Ti puor Kuuchile</i>	And greet Kuuchile (elder)	30
<i>N yaara nuur puor dɔɔ nɔmberɛ</i>	I open my hands and greet the elders of the	
	clan	31
<i>Ti a fu ika</i>	And you say	32
<i>N gɔɔ wa a bɔɔ pɔ</i>	I should return to the divination	33
<i>Ti puor Erebiere ni wɔ a mɔɔ</i>	And greet Erebiere (an ancestor) who pulled	
	the grass of the land	34
<i>Dɔba kɔɔn nɔ</i>	He is a man	35
<i>Kɔɔ kɔɔ lɛ wɔ nyuro</i>	He drinks river water	36
<i>Dɔba lɛ Jɛn a jie ti wɔ ɔ naa</i>	A hero that ever settled there and flew	37
<i>Ti puor tee~ nɔmberɛ</i>	And greet the elders of the land	38
<i>Kɔmpɛnaa ni wɔ Jɔɔ ti lɛ tɛ ana nɛɛ?</i>	Kɔmpɛnaa (an ancestor) and his family,	
	and turn onto whom?	39
<i>Ti lɛ tɛ anɛɛ? Dɔba lɛ ηmaraa</i>	And turn onto whom? Man has turned into	
	moon	40

<i>Mur pampaanya nyine si wa bo</i>	And vanished now where do we know	
<i>ɔ jie wɔ lie tu?</i>	where he has passed?	41
<i>Anɲtuma boɔ le</i>	An-tuma (elder) is a spiritualist	43
<i>A Puor a Sun-baar</i>	And greet Sun- baar (an elder)	44
<i>Lie ti puor Waliere</i>	And turn and greet Waliere (an elder)	45
<i>Chipaa ka le yi gbam wa a</i>	Chipaa,(elder) is to start the gambling but	
<i>fɔ ika N bar.</i>	you say I should leave	46
<i>A lo ni wɔ gelfɔ ni a wɔ nyaan</i>	Ah he and his madness and his wisest	47
<i>Fayaa; Ka N boɔnaa ti puor Nyaa,</i>	Ok then did I know i greet Nyaa (an	
	ancestor)	48
<i>Bala le boɔ~ nu</i>	They know hand	49
<i>50 Veekpe ni wɔ Miesan</i>	Viekpe (an ancestor) and his Miesan	
	(an elder)	50
<i>Ti Wɔɔ Ni Vɔɔ a mɔɔr</i>	And Wɔɔ who pulled the grass of the land	51
<i>Ka Jien chen ti bar</i>	Jien has gone and left us	52
<i>Ka tibe chen ti bar</i>	Tibe has also gone and left us	53
<i>Ka Nagbaal chen ti bar</i>	Nagbaal (ancestor) has gone	54
<i>Ti N puor a doɔɔ ni chenne burɔ.</i>	And I greet his men that still divine	55
<i>Ka puor a Tasele, dabile</i>	Then greet the Tasele boy	56
<i>Buurrba waa yɔɔ ya</i>	Diviners are many	57
<i>Nyaare nuur 'yɔɔn yi</i>	I open my hands to you	58
<i>Ti kpe a ηmaliba pɔ</i>	And I get to the ηmaliba (name of a tribe)	59
<i>N puor ba naa lie vɔɔɔ</i>	I greet those who are still alive	60

<i>Dɔɔgo ni Tiekore ba dii taa chen</i>	Dɔɔgo and Tiekore (ancestors) have followed each other and went	61
<i>Ka puor Baakinie ni chene vɔɔ</i>	Then greet I Baakunie (elder) who is still alive	62
<i>Ka gandaa vɔɔ</i>	That was a hero/ strong man that lived	63
<i>Ka Tɔɔ ni wɔ Jien N yaare nuur. 'yɔɔn yi</i>	Then Tɔɔ (name of an elder) and his Jien (ancestor) I open hands	64
<i>Buluutey ne wɔ Wɛkɔbɔ</i>	Buluutey and his Wɛkɔbɔ (names ancestors)	65
<i>Kpɔn nɛɛ!</i>	Ghost mouth!	66
<i>Ka puor Tan ni wɔ Kɔgolema</i>	Then greet Tan (ancestor) and his Kɔgolema (water curve)	67
<i>Saabara ni wɔ kaba .</i>	Saabar (ancestor) and his libation text	68
<i>Nyɛ si bɔɔ~ a ba tu? .</i>	Where do we know they pass?	69
<i>Ti N joro ni bɔɔ fɔɔya ka puor Pulwe</i>	And I run with divination fast them greet Pulwe (elder)	70
<i>N yaare nuur ko ba bɔɔ le sɛɛ yaa</i>	I open hands for them, soothsayers (divination) are plenty	71
<i>Ti gɔɔ a bɔɔ naa tiɛ Veekpɛ ma.</i>	And turn to Vɛkɛpɛ (name of an ancestor) mother	72 73
<i>Ni wɔ gbanɔbaal</i>	And his slave	74
<i>Ka puor Nyuchol</i>	And greet Nyuchol (lesser god)	75
<i>Wɔ kvɛ jɛn ti chɛ a ba nyɔɔ ma.</i>	He will not sit and allow them to catch me	76

<i>Kiriwaa wo chen naa ni wu bɔɔsi.</i>	Kiriwaa (ancestor) has gone away with his divination	77
<i>Ti puor Jiefie ni a wo bɔɔsi</i>	And greet Jiefie (ancestor) and his divination	78
<i>Ti Datɔɔre ba sɛɛ ya!</i>	And Datɔɔre (diviners) they are full!	79
<i>N yaare nuur kv ba.</i>	And I open hands for them	80
<i>Ti fv la ika N wob a bɔɔsi</i>	And you said I pick the divination	81
<i>La joro yaa ka nye Maanyɛ</i>	Again, i run to see Maanyɛ (ancestor)	82
<i>Ka puor wa baar ka fv ika</i>	I greeted and you say	83
<i>Jɔɔlaa ni wo Dabuo</i>	Jɔɔlaa and his Dabuo (ancestors)	84
<i>Ebaa ni wo gan</i>	Ebaa (name of an elder) and and his skin	85
<i>Yaakure lo le le kpien a fv ika n</i>	Yaakure he that turn ghost and you say	
<i>liɛ kaa wo</i>	turn see him	86
<i>Ka wo puor Wɔyɔɔre ni jɛ</i>	Then he greet Wɔyɔɔ (ancestor) who sits	87
<i>Ka N tɛri a wo yɔɔ tɛɛ lo</i>	Then I have his many	88
<i>Wa baare a bala a fv ika</i>	When finished with them you say	89
<i>N baare ka N Joro yaa</i>	I finish then I ran	90
<i>Ka tiɛ loɔyaa ni loɔ ni wo bomo</i>	Then face Loɔyaa (diviner) and his things	91
<i>Ka tv fv . Fa yaa. Ka Piitey.</i>	Then Piitey (ancestor) and his divnities	92
<i>A Bɔɔburba waa yɔɔ ya.</i>	The soecers are many	93
<i>N yaare nuur kv ba</i>	I open hands for them	94
<i>A Bɔɔburba</i>	The soecers	95
<i>Ai kpun, bo yi chaan tara?</i>	Ai ghost what did you still have?	96

<i>Ti n chaan joro ka n wa ɔŋ pɔri</i>	And I still ran to fetch Pɔri	97
<i>Ti liɛ tiɛ Kuupil ni Kaajo</i>	And turn face Kuupil and Kaajo (ancestors)	98
<i>Ti fɔ ika n baa~?</i>	Then you say I do what?	99
<i>Wa baar, a fɔ ika</i>	When finished then you say....	100
<i>Kaajo ni ŋmaa gɔpɪlaa</i>	Kaajo (ancestor) who has marked with white clay	101
<i>Wa baare a fɔ ika N ɪ baan?</i>	When finished then you say n should do what?	102
<i>Ka puori a kujɔɔl ba nyana</i>	Then greet these Kujɔɔl (tribe)	103
<i>Buɔɔr ba le sɛɛ Na ŋmaa bara</i>	Soothsayers are plenty there I cut them off	104
<i>Ti joro. Taŋ ni kuvɔlema N kaara ba naa</i>	And run, Taŋ and Kuvɔlema (ancestors) I am looking at them	105
<i>N yaare nuuri kɔ ba</i>	I open hands for them	106
<i>Naa puori a Nasɔl, Maadu</i>	I greet Nasɔl, Maadu (names of ancestors)	107
<i>Liɛ wa puori Maako ti gɔɔ</i>	Turn greet and Maako(ancestor) and return	108
<i>Wa tiɛ anɛɛ? Missitey ti puori Chemɔɔ</i>	And come to who? Missitey (ancestor), then greet Chemɔɔn(ancestor)	109
<i>Ti liɛ joro yaa a Gadi a bene</i>	And turn run to Gadi (earth god)	110
<i>Ka N yaare nuuri kɔ ba Ti liɛ tiɛ Gaa Naa,</i>	Then I open hands for them and turn face Gaa Naa(Ga chief)	111
<i>Nyɔɔle naa ni wɔ Daa</i>	Nyɔɔle naa (Nyɔɔle chief) and his Market	112
<i>Poyentɔɔn naa ni wɔ Daa</i>	Poyentɔɔn(name of a community) chief and his market	113

<i>Ka Naasaala ni ba Tigambebe</i>	Then Naasaala (name of a community) and their dangerous divinities	114
<i>Tannuna naa, Wa naa ni wɔ jɛn kɔreba</i>	Taninaa (name of a community) chief, Wa chief and his elders	115
<i>Ni sɛpiɛl deme</i>	And the white papers people	116
<i>A nuur deme kpunn wei</i>	Those who have hands, ghost wei	117
<i>Ti puori bɔɔrebɔrɔbɔ tee ti tie man .</i>	And greet soothsayers/ divination communities up to the river	118
<i>Nyaar a nuur kɔɔ pare</i>	I open hands water down the water	119
<i>Da-nyidare ni wɔ pɔɔ Nyewel ni wɔ pɔɔ</i>	Da-nyidare (lesser god) and his prophecies	120
<i>Nyedaare jɛɛra , kpun wei!</i>	Nyedaare (lesser god) is fighting, ghost we!	121
<i>Ti N lɔb kaa do.</i>	And I throw them high	122
<i>Dapɔɔlɔ ɛ pɔ gɔɔba</i>	Young men have sworn	123
<i>Dajumɛne otaa ti pɔ</i>	Dajumɛne (ancestor) separated themselves and took an oath	124
<i>Baa ni wɔ tuu , gbendaa ni wɔ pu ~</i>	Dog and his forest, male lion and his arrow	125
<i>Mɔnaa ni wɔ pu ~</i>	Bush cow and his arrow	126
<i>Nɪpɪla ni gbajarɛɛ</i>	White man and his hat	127
<i>Nyewul daa</i>	Male god	128
<i>126 Nyewul pɔɔ</i>	Female god	129

Apart from these occasions, regular meetings of chiefs and their elders in palaces are situations when libation can be poured to the ancestors, the lesser gods and the Supreme God. For example, when there is an emergency problem that needs urgent solutions, the Kpambie (linguist) summons the gods and the ancestors by pouring libation. These situations can be sickness, a missing person or someone drowning in the river.

4.9.5 Significance of libation text

During the field work, the following were identified as significance of libation texts:

1. The ancestors who are venerated in every ritual act serve as the link between the Supreme Being and the people which connect a spiritual flow that restores balance not only to the people but to their community as well. Libation as a rite marks socially significant occasions defining beginnings and endings and helping social transitions which serve as a way of repairing the African spirituality.
2. Libation is a medium of assembling the people, those at home and out of home, as a continuous and peaceful community with their ancestors in an artistic way.
3. Libation is significant in that it functions in connecting human beings to each other in communion which serves as a symbol of past memory. These symbols act as identifiers of link and reminder between individuals and communities by preserving their shared and cultural identities.
4. Libation is a medium of communicating to the ancestors and the gods. In addition, libation is the best means for the human beings to interact with the spiritual world.
5. It also brings about solidarity which cement relationships.

The following libation texts confirm the various significances as identified in the texts.

LT.4. Libation to commence a community meeting (Teen lɔ̃nfɔ kaba).

In **LT.4**, line 1-4, the ancestors are being venerated with the following lines;

<i>Yi gaafira saakpamine</i>	You excuse me ancestors	1
<i>Errm</i>	Clearing of throat	2
<i>Pa! Manne, de kɔ̃</i>	Pa! Manne, take water	3
<i>Yibuor, Yaan, Baada</i>	Ancestors (Yibuor, Yaane, Baada)	4

From the texts above, the ancestors who are seen as mediators between the living and divinities and the Supreme God, are communicated to through them to the Supreme God as seen in the text. The ancestors link the living and the Supreme God.

In lines 1 and 4 of **LT.2**, the performer addresses God and the lesser gods with the text, *Yi de kɔ̃ 'maar* You take cold water. This serves as connection between God and the lesser gods who the people commue with in the past and the present.

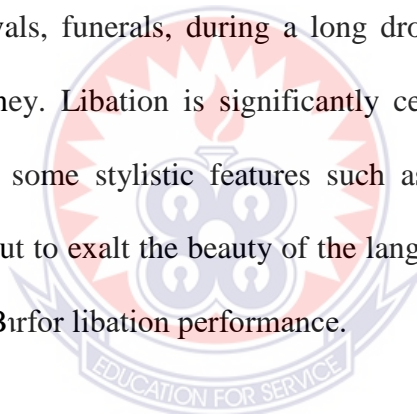
4.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, the research questions are answered by identifying the structure, the stylistic devices, the occasions in which libation is performed and the significance of the texts. It is evident that the libation texts have structure and stylistic features in the texts collected on the field. It is significant to observe that all the forms contain metaphor, parallelism, alliteration, symbolism, oxymoron, repetition and other artistic devices. The

form and structure contain the beginning, middle and ending. The linguistic content of these forms distinguish their compositions.

4.11 Summary

This section has attempted looking at the structure, stylistic features of Birfor libation performance such as repetition, symbolism, proverbs and hyperbole and the occasions and significance of the Birfor libation performance. Structurally, Birfor libation has three main stages; introduction, supplication and conclusion. It is also realised that from the analysis that a stanza can constitute libation text. Birfor libation is performed in all occasions such as festivals, funerals, during a long drought and when some one is to embark on a long journey. Libation is significantly centred on the society values and aspirations. The use of some stylistic features such as repetition does not mean the performer lacks words but to exalt the beauty of the language. Proverbs make the language rich and contextual in Birfor libation performance.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY/ FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The study sets out with the aim of collecting and analyzing the structure and the stylistic features of the Burfor libation texts that are performed on various occasions such as at naming ceremony, community meetings, beginning of farming season and festivals among others. The analysis is limited to the structure, literary devices and the significance of the libation text. The study collected samples of libation texts and found out the structure and the stylistics features embodied in Burfor libation text.

5.1 Summary

Purposive sampling technique was adapted to select the communities in the Wa West District. A sample size of five respondents comprising three elders two Tundaana in the Wa West District were interviewed. Data was collected from primary source. The primary data was collected through participant observation where the researcher was a participant observer throughout the data collection process and later transcribed literally using the current orthography of Burfor. Unstructured interviews were also used to elicit vital information from respondents.

The study which sets out to analyze the stylistic features of the Burfor settlement cuts across Ghana, Burkina Faso and La Cote, Ivoire. Due to the vast nature of these settlements, the researcher sampled some five communities in the Wa West District. These communities are found in the Wa West District of the Upper West Region of

Ghana. They include; Tuupɔ, Chemvotee, Wechao-bao, Sanvor, Chebar. In all, eight (8) libation texts were collected and analyzed.

5.2 Findings

1. The study revealed that the Burfor perform libation on all occasions including community gatherings. Libation is performed at naming ceremonies, the beginning of farming season, when someone is embarking on a long journey and when a person is starting a trade among others.
2. Again the study revealed that water, pito and akpeteshie are the common items used to pour libation among the Burfor. It was further revealed that it is only elders, landlords, family heads and spiritual leaders in the community that are mandated to perform libation. Women on the contrary are only allowed to observe libation performance but not to perform. In some parts of Africa, among the Akan in Ghana, wine, milk, oil, alcohol and sometimes blood are used for libation. In the case of the Burfor, water, pito and akpeteshie are mainly used in all occasions. It was also revealed that calabash and glass are used in performing libation.
3. The study subsequently revealed that libation is performed at all social gatherings to invite the Supreme God and the ancestors. It is also performed on farms that have lesser gods and at the entrance of houses. It was clearly found out that Burfor perform libation at dawn, in the afternoon, evening and in the middle of the night. This depends on the purpose and the occasion.

4. It was also confirmed by the data that the performer has to adhere to certain rituals like squatting, removing the hat and sandals, standing to perform libation. The performer removes his hat if he is wearing one. Another major finding was that an individual (the family head) can perform libation if he had a bad dream the previous night. This particular libation is performed secretly in the morning. No member in the family is made aware of the performance.
5. One other finding emanating from the study was that, for the Burfor the ancestors though dead are believed to be with the living constantly, hence the need to perform libation to remember them.
6. It was confirmed that the Burfor perform libation to thank the ancestors, to ask for blessings, ask for forgiveness of wrong doings and also to invoke curses on persons with evil intentions.
7. It was again brought out that during libation performance, two or more of the following spirits are invoked; the Supreme God, (Naanmune), the lesser gods, the deities and the ancestors.
8. Another finding was that the Burfor believe in the Supreme God who created the universe. This is manifested in the attributes ascribed to the Supreme God such as eternity, Omnipresent- God is everywhere, Omnipotent- Gods power life and death.
9. The study also reveals that Burfor believe in the deities (Tibe). These include; Saanche (god of children), Maase (god of destruction), Tulo (god of confusing), Tungan (Earth god), Saa (the rain god). These gods are venerated and are addressed according to their specific roles during social gatherings/ libation.

10. The texts are imbued with many literary devices such as hyperbole, symbolism, parallelism, apostrophe and repetition. Such literary devices enrich Burfor as well as their cultural heritage.
11. The Burfor believe in the hereafter and that death is not the end of one's life but a transition to the ancestral world. The Burfor do not forget to invite the spirits during libation. This therefore explains why the family is compelled to always give a befitting burial to a deceased relative.
12. The researcher has observed that currently the performers do not follow the formal sequence of the libation performance as noted. Sometimes they are added or omitted. The use of the requested marker Pa!,(Oh!), indicates the impression that a subordinate is addressing a higher rank as an invocation used to introduce and draw the attention of the lesser gods and the ancestors to hear their request.

5.3 Conclusion

When one considers the discussions above, there is no doubt that the Burfor like any other ethnic groups around Africa have a rich culture which they exhibit through libation text and which needs more sustainability in order for it not to be disregarded as a result of emergence of foreign cultures. The essence of sustainability of this aspect of the culture can only be achieved if the elders continue to uphold it and pass on the skill of the performance of libation to the younger generation. The youth should discard the idea that libation offering is part of fetish worship and be made to know that it is our way of praying to the Almighty God. It has clearly been shown from the study that in the life of the Burfor, there is the need for a prayer to be said during every cultural performance.

The stylistics of texts are clearly realized in the literary devices.

5.4 Recommendations

Language development largely depends on the study of linguistics and the literature of the particular language and the number of people who document it. It is however sad that many Ghanaian languages have not been exposed to the world as compared to other languages like English and French. This is evident for instance, from the periods allocated to them on the pre-tertiary school teaching time table. When one takes a look at the periods on the time table, Ghanaian Languages have the least periods. Culture is not encouraged in the schools except when there is an occasion and pupils are hurriedly prepared for dancing and drumming but culture is not only dancing and drumming.

Based on these inequalities, the researcher recommends that subsequent researchers in the study of languages should put write ups of the cultural and linguistic materials in Burfor to enhance the development of the rich literature of the language.

Libation is an important component of oral tradition among the Burfor but, a good number of people especially the young generation do not value it. They rather prefer to attend religious functions which leads to lack of understanding and interest in oral traditions. The younger generation is therefore, denied. Scholars can further research into libation in Burfor from a cultural perspective. It is also recommended that every Burfor community should encourage the youth to attach importance to their cultural practices and the need to value their cultural practices in addition to other modern practices. This

will inform the youth to value the indigenous practices to that of the foreign practices such as the Christian and Islamic practices currently infiltrating our societies.

Curriculum developers are also recommended to include a topic on oral literature especially, libation in the Ghanaian Language syllabi. This will motivate learners to value their own culture.



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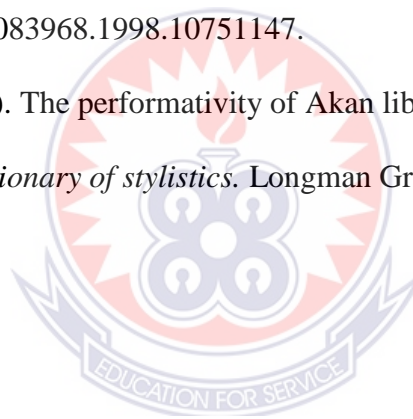
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APPENDIX

LT. 2 Trade learning libation (Tɔmɔ janfu kaba)

<i>Pa! fɔv saache</i>	Pa! You Saanche (Lesser god)	1
<i>Chemvɔ ni pɔɔ kɔsɪr</i>	Ancestor (Chemvɔ) who is covered with stone	2
<i>Pa! ti yimiene</i>	Pa! It is true	3
<i>A bie nyana</i>	This child	4
<i>Si ika wv chen ti jan tɔmɔ</i>	We say he should go and learn trade	5
<i>Chemvo de wv nie</i>	Ancestor (Chemvɔ) lead her	6
<i>Pɪrɛ wv a gbɛɛ</i>	Sweep her legs	7
<i>Lɪɛrɛ wv nuur</i>	Change her hands	8
<i>Gu wv</i>	Protect her	9
<i>Kv tɔɔ~ ti jan a tɔmɔ</i>	So that she will be able to learn the work	10
<i>Lɔ wa ti baar a tɔmɔ</i>	If she finishes the work	11
<i>A wv nuur wa viɛlɛ</i>	And her hands are good	12
<i>Sin den buɔ</i>	We will take goat	13
<i>Na sin tan puor fɔ</i>	To come greet you	14

LT. 3 Libation for a traveller (Sɔr chenfu Kaba)

<i>Pa! Saaju Naanmun.</i>	Pa! Supreme God	1
<i>Saakpamine yi de kɔv~</i>	Ancestors you take water	2
<i>Jɛdɔɔ,</i>	Jɛdɔɔ (ancestor)	3
<i>Manteen numbɛrɛ ni kpɛ teen</i>	Manteen elders who have entered the ground	4
<i>Yin na pɔɔ kɔsɪr</i>	You who are covered with stones	5

<i>Janaa ni Balaa</i>	Janaa and Balaa (ancestors)	6
<i>Baada ni Wiitey</i>	Baada and Wiitey (ancestors)	7
<i>Ni yin bala yaa ni che</i>	And all those who are left	8
<i>Yi bie nyana Kpunso</i>	Your son Kpunso(name of the new-born baby)	9
<i>Le yire sɔr</i>	Wants to travel	10
<i>Waa le ɪ wɔ tɪɛr</i>	He has not made his mind	11
<i>Ka wɔ le kpɛ wɔ yir ɛ</i>	To come back to his house	12
<i>Kv ɪ ka wɔ vir bilɛm</i>	He wants to move out small	13
<i>A le wɔ de wɔ miɛ wa kv yi</i>	That is why he has given himself to you	14
<i>Na wɔ paa~ kono kvɔ yi</i>	And he is now crying you	15
<i>Ti le de wɔ miɛ 'yɔɔn yi nuur pɔ</i>	And also give himself in your hands	16
<i>Yuo wɔ sɔr</i>	Open his way	17
<i>Kv taa ɲmier gber yaa</i>	He should not knock any bad leg	18
<i>Yi gu wɔ che k'v igan 'maar</i>	You protect him and comfort him	19
<i>Kv twɔ~ nyɛ wɔ bumbɔraa</i>	To get what he wants	20
<i>Na wɔ liɛ wa ni igan 'maaar</i>	And return safely	21
<i>Si paa~ 'nyɔɔn na nɛɛ</i>	We are making a pledge	22
<i>Ni nɔdapɪla</i>	With white cock	23
<i>Lir ata ɪ a fɔ puorfɔ nvɔ</i>	Three chickens to thank you	24
<i>Fvɔ~ wa vɛŋ ka vi wa kpɛ si</i>	If you let us be disgraced	25
<i>Fvɔ~ nɛ a vi kpɛ</i>	It is you that has been disgraced	26

LT.4 Teeñ ɔɔnɔ kaba (libation to commence a community meeting)

<i>Yi gaafira saakpamine</i>	You excuse me ancestors	1
<i>Errm</i>	Clearing of throat	2
<i>Pa! Man, de kw̃</i>	Pa! Manne, take water	3
<i>Yibuor, Yaan, Baada</i>	Calling the names of the ancestors	
	(<i>Yibuor, Yaane, Baada</i>)	4
<i>Yi fan lo n che ti i gyɛɛ</i>	You have all fallen down and we are eggs	5
<i>Si boɔɔ ika a teen wɔ baa</i>	We want the community to grow	6
<i>Tu i a gyɛɛ</i>	Now that we are eggs	7
<i>Si boɔɔ ka ti nɛɛ i bo'yen</i>	We want to be one	8
<i>ka teen baa</i>	So that the community will grow	9
<i>Ka bibile be be</i>	So that there will be child	10
<i>Ka teen paal</i>	So that the community will expand	11
<i>Ka ti nu a bibiiri</i>	So that we and our children	12
<i>Taa wa goɔ taa nɛɛ</i>	Will not disagree with each other	13
<i>Bala ma wa boɔɔ ka ti loɔɔ taa</i>	When they call us together	14
<i>Fɔ gaɔ ti tɛɛɛ,</i>	You will be sleeping while thinking	15
<i>Fɔ na ŋmaa ɪr chen</i>	You will get up early to go to	16
<i>A loɔɔɔ 'loɔɔ</i>	That meeting	17
<i>Si poɔ wa i bon-yen</i>	When we become one	18
<i>Ka teen vɔɔ ti gar a si saamine</i>	The community will expand more than our	
	fathers	19
<i>Ka kp̃̃si jen ti ika</i>	So that the spirits will sit and say	20

<i>Nye Manteen ni pãã viɛɛ lɛɛ</i>	See how beautiful Mantee is	21
<i>N saa Manne !</i>	My father Manne !	22
<i>Nyɔɔ a teen</i>	Hold the community	23
<i>Ka ti ma mvvri taa nɛɛ</i>	So that we kiss each others mouth	24
<i>ka teen ɔb</i>	So that the community will	25
<i>Bɔɔda yi fan lo yi jaa ya</i>	Bɔɔda, you have all fallen down	26
<i>Ti kana ni ta</i>	But now	27
<i>Si meɲ baa nibɛ baar</i>	We are also grown	28
<i>Yi de a kɔɔ anyana</i>	You take this water	29
<i>Ti nyɔɔ a teen yaa chinchinchin....</i>	And hold the community chinchinchin... (firmly)	30
<i>Ka sin ni a bibiiri</i>	So that we and the children	31
<i>Ka kee taa beribee</i>	There will be no disagreement	32
<i>Ka ti pɔɔnyɔn</i>	Our old mothers	33
<i>Ka kee taa wa beribee</i>	There will be no disagreement	34
<i>Ka ti pɔɔnyɔn</i>	Our old mothers	35
<i>Ka kee taa wa beribe</i>	There will be no disagreement	36
<i>Yi de a kɔɔ nyana</i>	You take this water	37
<i>Ti maal a yeɛ kv ti.</i>	And solve the problem for us	38

LT. 5 Beginning of a new farming season libation (kɔb piilfo kaba)

<i>Pa! fɔv Bɔɔ</i>	Pa! you Hole	1
<i>Ai! a sajibe lo naa</i>	Ai! The first rain has fallen	2

<i>Sɪ wob a kue yin</i>	For us to pick the hoes	3
<i>A sɪ paan̄ ta ika sɪ koŋ kv̄ f̄v̄</i>	And we want to inform you	4
<i>Tv̄ɔ gu sɪ, a sɪ tv̄ɔ turtur</i>	Protect us so that we can turtur	5
<i>kv̄ sɪ sa v̄ila</i>	Give us good rains	6
<i>A sɪ tv̄ɔ̄ k̄ɔ ka bondiir wa a yir</i>	We can farm to get enough food for the family	7
<i>A la yil̄i l̄e sɪ waan a sɪ wa koŋ kv̄ f̄v̄</i>	That is why we are here before you	8
<i>Ti sin wa t̄v̄ɔ̄ nȳe a bondiir</i>	If we are able to get enough food	9
<i>Guro sɪ ni n̄ɔp̄ila yaa p̄ilp̄ilp̄ilp̄il</i>	wait us with white fowl too-whitish, too- whitish	10
<i>A sɪ taa wa cher yilbiere yaa.</i>	If we don't encounter any problem/trouble	11
<i>Sɪ denaa a n̄ɔp̄ila na sɪ</i>	we will take a white fowl	12
<i>Wa puor fv̄v̄ Saache</i>	To thank you Saache (god of children)	13
<i>A la ye le sɪ jin a ka.</i>	That is why we are here	14

L.T. 6 libation during drought (Wara ŋmaafv̄ /Saa nȳɔv̄v̄ kaba)

<i>Saaju ŋmim</i>	Heavenly God	1
<i>Mateen Tingama ni a K̄v̄lsɪ</i>	Manteen and the water bodies	2
<i>Manteen Kp̄ime</i>	Manneteen divinities	3
<i>J̄ɛd̄ɔ̄ ni Maas̄e</i>	J̄ɛd̄ɔ̄ and Maas̄e	4
<i>B̄ɔ̄ɔ ni a T̄ɔnn</i>	Hole and the Mountains	5
<i>Naakele ni Kv̄jan</i>	Naakel (Ancestor) and Kunjan	6
<i>War l̄e ŋmaa</i>	There is drought	7

<i>A buu~dire</i>	And there is fire burning	8
<i>A bibiir tumo kpire ni konyuur</i>	And youg children are dying with thirst	9
<i>Kompila ni baaraa a pɔɔ ni a bibiir</i>	White hunger will finish the women and the children	10
<i>Yin waa chel a si kon</i>	If you do not listen to our cry	11
<i>Bo sɔɔnaa le sɔɔ~?</i>	What crime has been committed?	12
<i>Yi pell pɔɔ de a nɔɔ nyana</i>	You be happy and accept this fowl	13
<i>Yi vɔl suur</i>	You swallow anger	14
<i>Ti vey a saa pɔ ba</i>	And let the rain beat them	15
<i>Lɛ kul a ba yie</i>	Back to their houses	16
<i>Na yi wiil a sɔɔnfɔ</i>	To show them the crime	17
<i>A Si ir a bomo chɔɔr</i>	We can provide the items for sanctification	18

LT. 7 Funeral performance libation (Kuur kaba)

<i>Nɛɛ bo'yen</i>	Unity	1
<i>Ti puor n saakpamine</i>	And greet my grandfathers	2
<i>Kpiin bo'yen</i>	It is only one ghost	3
<i>Ti gɔɔn manɔ</i>	And cross the sea	4
<i>Bombara a wɔ die ni a wɔ bɔɔsi</i>	Bombara his room/shrine and his divination	5
<i>Ti liɛ tiɛ n saa ni kulibo</i>	And turn to my father Kulibo	6
<i>Ti tiɛyɔɔ jaam wɔ ɔɔ</i>	Tiɛyɔɔ (ancestor) flew yesterday	7

<i>Ti lie tie Basɩ bɔrɔ kɔɔŋ ni yoo</i>	And turn to Basɩ, of one the diviners yoo	8
<i>Nele, bɔrɔ ni yoo</i>	Nele,(name of a diviner) is diviner yoo	9
<i>Balaa de sɔr-beyeni jaam</i>	Balaa(name of person) has take the same road yesterday	10
<i>Ɔmɔr a jaam wɔ ɔ naa</i>	Ɔmɔr(name of a diviner) flew yesterday	11
<i>Naa bar, ti wa a dɔɔ pɔ</i>	I finished, and turn to the clan	12
<i>Nibereberebere</i>	Great, great, great, great elders	13
<i>N yaare nuur ti gɔɔŋ a mani</i>	I open my hands and cross the sea	14
<i>Ti tie dɔɔ nibere ni kpe tee</i>	And got to the great elders that entered the ground/soil	15
<i>A Yuobaar boɔle Aŋ-bɔɔŋfo</i>	Yuobaar (name of an elder) who know you	16
<i>Ai! ti puor kpei Ti chene joro fɔɔ. Ai!</i> <i>naa lo gɔɔn baa</i>	I greet Kpei (name of an elder) and then move fast and cross valley	17
<i>Dabile, ɔɔ naa ti puoro a fɔ bile Damba</i>	Dabile (name of an elder) fly and greet your junior brother <i>Damba</i> (ancestor)	18
<i>Ti lie puor Jifɔɔ ni Gbul</i>	And turn again to greet <i>Jifɔɔ</i> and Gbul,(elders)	19
<i>Tɔɔn silaa Jεjεre</i>	Mountain hawks fighter	20

<i>Kpũ bo'yen</i>	One ghost	21
<i>Ti puori Aŋ-ase, puor sansa</i>	And greet Aŋ-se (elder) greet Sansa (elder)	22
<i>Puori Dar Ti wa baar a fu N liε anεε ?</i>	Greet Dar (elder) and when I finished you said I should turn to who?	23
<i>Kpun bo'yen</i>	One ghost	24
<i>Vor bo'yen</i>	One life	25
<i>Ka puor Mvoro, Naa-ara, Tengan dɔɔ</i>	Then greet Mvoro, Naa-ara, Earth god tribe	26
<i>Dagu, Kɔɔfie, Dɔkuu Sei N puoroo</i>	Dagu, Kɔɔfie, Dɔkuu, Sei (elders) I greet you all!!	27
<i>Ti puor a dɔɔ</i>	And greet the clan	28
<i>Dagolee!!</i>	Dagolee!! (an elder)	29
<i>Ti puor Kuuchile</i>	And greet Kuuchile (elder)	30
<i>N yaara nuur puor dɔɔ nimbere</i>	I open my hands and greet the elders of the clan	31
<i>Ti a fu ika</i>	And you say	32
<i>N gɔɔ wa a bɔɔ pɔ</i>	I should return to the divination	33
<i>Ti puor Erebiere nu vɔɔ a mɔɔ</i>	And greet Erebiere (an ancestor) who pulled the grass of the land	34
<i>Dɔba kɔɔn nu</i>	He is a man	35
<i>Kɔɔ kɔ̃ɔ le wɔ nyuro</i>	He drinks river water	36
<i>Dɔba le Jεn a jie ti wɔ ɔɔ naa</i>	A hero that ever settled there and flew	37

<i>Ti puor tee~ numberε</i>	And greet the elders of the land	38
<i>Kɔmpɛnaa ni wɔ Jɔɔ ti liε tiε ana nεε?</i>	Kɔmpɛnaa (an ancestor) and his family, and turn onto whom?	39
<i>Ti liε tiε anεε? Dɔba liε ηmaraa</i>	And turn onto whom? Man has turned into moon	40
<i>Mur pampaanya nyine si wa bɔɔ jie wɔ liε tu?</i>	And vanished now where do we know where he has passed?	41
<i>Anɛtuma bɔɔ le</i>	An-tuma (elder) is a spiritualist	42
<i>A Puor a Sun-baar</i>	And greet Sun- baar (an elder)	43
<i>Liε ti puor Waliεre</i>	And turn and greet Waliεre (an elder)	44
<i>Chipaa ka le yi gbam wa a fu ika N bar.</i>	Chipaa,(elder) is to start the gambling but you say I should leave	45
<i>A lo ni wɔ gelfo ni a wɔ nyaan</i>	Ah he and his madness and his wisest	46
<i>Fayaa; Ka N bɔɔnaa ti puor Nyaa,</i>	Ok then did I know i greet Nyaa (an ancestor)	47
<i>Bala le bɔɔ~ nu</i>	They know hand	48
<i>Veekpe ni wɔ Miesan</i>	Viekpe (an ancestor) and his Miesan (an elder)	49
<i>Ti Wɔɔ Ni Vɔɔ a mɔɔr</i>	And Wɔɔ who pulled the grass of the land	50
<i>Ka Jien chen ti bar</i>	Jien has gone and left us	51
<i>Ka tibε chen ti bar</i>	Tibε has also gone and left us	52
<i>Ka Nagbaal chen ti bar</i>	Nagbaal (ancestor) has gone	53
<i>Ti N puor a dɔbɔ ni chenne bɔɔɔ</i>	And I greet his men that still divine	54

<i>Ka puor a Tasele, dabile</i>	Then greet the Tasele boy	55
<i>Buorrba waa ya</i>	Diviners are many	56
<i>N yaare nuur 'yaan yi</i>	I open my hands to you	57
<i>Ti kpe a ηmaliba pɔ</i>	And I get to the ηmaliba (name of a tribe)	58
<i>N puor ba naa lie vɔbɔ</i>	I greet those who are still alive	59
<i>Dɔɔgo ni Tiekore ba dii taa chen</i>	Dɔɔgo and Tiekore (ancestors) have followed each other and went	60
<i>Ka puor Baakinie ni chene vɔɔ</i>	Then greet I Baakinie (elder) who is still alive	61
<i>. Ka gandaa vɔɔ</i>	That was a hero/ strong man that lived	62
<i>Ka Tɔɔ ni wɔ Jien N yaare nuur. 'yaan yi</i>	Then Tɔɔ (name of an elder) and his Jien (ancestor) I open hands	63
<i>Buluutey ne wɔ Wɛkɔbɔ</i>	Buluutey and his Wɛkɔbɔ (names ancestors)	64
<i>Kpɔn nɛɛ!</i>	Ghost mouth!	65
<i>Ka puor Tan ni wɔ Kɔgolema</i>	Then greet Tan (ancestor) and his Kɔgolema (water curve)	66
<i>Saabara ni wɔ kaba .</i>	Saabar (ancestor) and his libation text	67
<i>Nyɛ si bɔɔ~ a ba tu? .</i>	Where do we know they pass?	68
<i>Ti N joro ni bɔbɔ fɔɔya ka puor Pulwe</i>	And I run with divination fast them greet Pulwe (an elder)	69
<i>N yaare nuur ko ba bɔbɔ le sɛɛ yaa</i>	I open hands for them, soothsayers (divination) are plenty	70

<i>Ti gɔɔ a bɔbɔ naa tiε Veekpε ma.</i>	And turn to Viεkpε (name of an acestor)	
	mother	71
<i>Ni wɔ gbangbaal</i>	And his slave	72
<i>Ka puor Nyuchol</i>	And greet Nyuchol (lesser god)	73
<i>Wɔ kɔŋ jɛn ti chε a ba nyɔɔ ma.</i>	He will not sit and allow them to catch me	74
<i>Kiriwaa wɔ chen naa ni wu bɔɔsi.</i>	Kurwaa (ancestor) has gone away with his	
	divination	75
<i>Ti puor Jiefie ni a wɔ bɔɔsi</i>	And greet Jiefie (ancestor) and his	
	divination	76
<i>Ti Datɔɔre ba sεε ya!</i>	And Datɔɔre (diviners) they are full !	77
<i>N yaare nuur kv ba.</i>	And I open hands for them	78
<i>Ti fɔ la ika N wob a bɔbɔ</i>	And you said I pick the divination	79
<i>La joro yaa ka nyε Maanyε</i>	Again, i run to see Maanyε (ancestor)	80
<i>Ka puor wa baar ka fɔ ika</i>	I greeted and you say	81
<i>Jɔɔlaa ni wɔ Dabuo</i>	Jɔɔlaa and his Dabuo (ancestors)	82
<i>Ebaa ni wɔ gan</i>	Ebaa (name of an elder) and and his skin	83
<i>Yaakure lɔ lε lε kpien a fɔ ika n liε kaa wɔ</i>	Yaakure he that turn ghost and you say	
	turn see him	84
<i>Ka wɔ puor Wɔyɔɔre ni jε</i>	Then he greet Wɔyɔɔ (ancestor) who sits	85
<i>Ka N tεri a wɔ yɔɔ tεε lɔ</i>	Then I have his many	86
<i>Wa baare a bala a fɔ ika</i>	When finished with them you say	87
<i>N baare ka N Joro yaa</i>	I finish then I ran	88
<i>Ka tiε lɔɔyaa ni lɔɔ ni wɔ bomo</i>	Then face Lɔɔyaa (diviner) and his things	89

<i>Ka tv fvu . Fa yaa. Ka Piitey ni wv laare.</i>	Then Piitey (ancestor) and his divnities	90
<i>A Bɔɔrburba waa yɔɔ ya.</i>	The soecers are many	91
<i>N yaare nuur kv ba</i>	I open hands for them	92
<i>A Bɔɔburɔba</i>	The soecers	93
<i>Ai kpun, bo yi chaan tara?</i>	Ai ghost what did you still have?	94
<i>Ti n chaan joro ka n wa ɔɣ pɔɔɔ</i>	And I still ran to fetch Pɔɔɔ	95
<i>Ti lie tie Kuupil ni Kaajo</i>	And turn face Kuupil and Kaajo (ancestors)	96
<i>Ti fv ika n baa~?</i>	Then you say I do what?	97
<i>Wa baar, a fv ika</i>	When finished then you say....	98
<i>Kaajo ni ηmaa gɔpɔlaa</i>	Kaajo (ancestor) who has marked with white clay	99
<i>Wa baare a fv ika N i baan?</i>	When finished then you say n should do what?	100
<i>Ka puori a kvjuɔl ba nyana</i>	Then greet these Kvjɔl (tribe)	101
<i>Bvuɔɔ ba le sɛɛ Na ηmaa bara</i>	Soothsayers are plenty there I cut them off	102
<i>Ti joro. Tan ni kvɔlema N kaara ba naa</i>	And run, Tan and Kvɔlema (ancestors)	
	I am looking at them	103
<i>N yaare nuuri kv ba</i>	I open hands for them	104
<i>Naa puori a Nasɔl , Maadu</i>	I greet Nasɔl, Maadu (names of ancestors)	105
<i>Lie wa puori Maako ti gɔɔɔ</i>	Turn greet and Maako(ancestor) and return	106
<i>Wa tie anɛɛ? Missitey ti puori Chemvɔ</i>	And come to who? Missitey (ancestor), then greet Chemvɔn(ancestor)	107
<i>Ti lie joro yaa a Gadi a bene</i>	And turn run to Gadi (earth god)	108

<i>Ka Nyaaare nuuri kɔ ba Ti liɛ tiɛ Gaa Naa,</i>	Then I open hands for them and turn face Gaa Naa (Ga chief)	109
<i>Nyɔɔɛ naa ni wɔ Daa</i>	Nyɔɔɛ naa (Nyɔɔɛ chief) and his Market	110
<i>Poyentɔɔn naa ni wɔ Daa</i>	Poyentɔɔn(name of a community) chief and his market	111
<i>Ka Naasaala ni ba Tigambebe</i>	Then Naasaala (name of a community) and their dangerous divinities	112
<i>Tannuna naa, Wa naa ni wɔ jɛn kɔɔreba</i>	Taninaa(name of a community) chief, Wa chief and his elders	113
<i>Ni sɛpiɛl deme</i>	And the white papers people	114
<i>A nuur deme kpunn wei</i>	Those who have hands, ghost wei	115
<i>Ti puori bɔɔreborɔɔ tee ne yaa tiɛ man .</i>	And greet soothsayers/ divination	116
<i>N yaar a nuur kɔɔ pare</i>	I open hands water down the water	117
<i>Da-nyidare ni wɔ pɔɔ Nyewel ni wɔ pɔɔ</i>	Da-nyidare (lesser god) and his prophecies	118
<i>Nyedaare jɛɛra , kpun wei!</i>	Nyedaare (lesser god) is fighting, ghost wei!	119
<i>Ti N lɔb kaa do.</i>	And I throw them high	120
<i>Dapɔɔ lɛ pɔ gɔɔba</i>	Young men have sworn	121
<i>Dajumɛne otaa ti pɔ gɔɔba</i>	Dajumɛne (ancestor) separated themselves and took an oath	122
<i>Baa ni wɔ tuu , gbendaa ni wɔ pu~</i>	Dog and his forest, male lion and his arrow	123

<i>Mɔnaa ni wɔ pu ~</i>	Bush cow and his arrow	124
<i>Nɪpɪla ni gbajareɛ</i>	White man and his hat	125
<i>Nyɛwul daa</i>	Male god	126
<i>Nyɛwul pɔɔ</i>	Female god	127

LT. 8 Infidelity (Pɔɔ sɔɔnfɔ)

<i>Saaju Naahmine</i>	Heavenly God	1
<i>Buu~ le dire</i>	Fire is burning	2
<i>Che a 'maa~ naa</i>	But it is cold	3
<i>Ka de n nuu tun</i>	And I dipped my hand inside	4
<i>Naamanne</i>	God of the sea	5
<i>Ir de tampiel</i>	Get up and take ash	6
<i>Saaju hmime</i>	Heavenly gods	7
<i>Ir de kwɔ~ nyu</i>	Get up take water and drink	8
<i>N na fɔ 'yer yelmie kv si</i>	And tell the truth for us	9
<i>Kɔ 'maar le</i>	It is cold water	10
<i>De</i>	Take	11
<i>Nye kɔ 'maar</i>	Here is cold water	12
<i>De che 'maa suur</i>	Take and cool down anger	13
<i>A yir lie 'maa ɔɔtɔtɔ</i>	For the house to be very cool	14
<i>Gbaamba daba</i>	Gbaamba (name of a clan) man	15
<i>Nye kɔ 'maar</i>	Here is cold water	16
<i>Si saa Kɔnjan</i>	Our father Kɔnjan (ancestor)	17
<i>Nye kɔ 'maar</i>	See cold water	18
<i>De 'maa~ kɔnyuur</i>	Take to cool your thirst	19

<i>Gbaamba kpɔnsɪ</i>	Gbaamba (name of a clan) spirits	20
<i>Bala yaa na che</i>	All those that are left	21
<i>Yɪ ta nyɛ suur</i>	You, don't get annoyed	22
<i>Bu 'nyɔɔ pɔɔ pɔ</i>	Or have us in your stomach	23
<i>Na yi jɛ sɪ bar ɛ</i>	And forsake us	24
<i>Kɔ 'maara ɛ</i>	Cold water is here	25
<i>Yi jaa yi de</i>	You all take	26
<i>Che kaa i kɔm 'maara</i>	And make it cold water	27
<i>Si pɔɔ lɛ</i>	That is our wife	28
<i>Sɔɔnaa</i>	Infidelity	29
<i>Sitaana lɛ kpɛ</i>	Satan has entered	30
<i>Kv bar wv miɛ</i>	And she left herself	31
<i>A daba sɔɔ~ wv</i>	And a man has spoiled her	32
<i>A sɔɔnaa bomo lɛ anya</i>	The infidelity things are here	33
<i>Yi de</i>	You take	34
<i>Na yi kpɪin a buu~ kv sɪ</i>	And quench the fire for us	35
<i>Ka amine taa lɛ tu ɛ</i>	So that some will not follow again	36
<i>Gbaamba bomo</i>	Gbaama (name of a clan) things	37
<i>Ni a Gbaamba kpɪmɛ</i>	And the Gbaamba (name of a clan) spirits	38
<i>Yi nyɛ a nɔpɔraa</i>	You see the fowl pledged	39
<i>Yi de</i>	You take	40
<i>N wiil a lɛ muɲ</i>	And show like that	41

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

FACULTY OF GHANAIAN LANGUAGES, AJUMAKO

This interview guide is designed to seek information from libation performers in the Wa West District and teachers of the language on the structure and style of the Birfor libation text.

1. What is libation?
2. What is the structure of the libation prayer?
3. When is libation performed?
4. What stylistic features have the libation prayer?
5. How significant is the libation prayer text?

