

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA.

RIDDLING AMONG THE DAGBAMBA



MOHAMMED ABUBAKARI RASHID

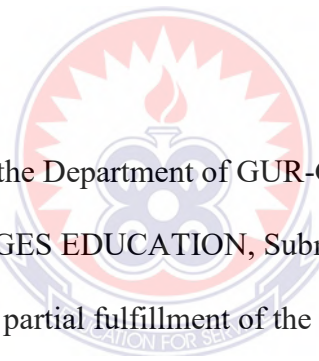
2017

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(8150260001)

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A Thesis presented to the Department of GUR-GONJA of the FACULTY OF
GHANAIAN LANGUAGES EDUCATION, Submitted to the School Of Research
and Graduate Studies, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the
degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY in Ghanaian Language Studies

AUGUST, 2017.

DECLARATION

“I MOHAMMED ABUBAKARI RASHID DECLARE THAT THIS THESIS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF QUOTATIONS AND REFERENCES CONTAINED IN PUBLISHED WORKS WHICH HAVE ALL BEEN IDENTIFIED AND ACKNOWLEDGED, IS ENTIRELY MY OWN ORIGINAL WORK, AND IT HAS NOT BEEN SUBMITTED, EITHER IN PART OR WHOLE, FOR ANOTHER DEGREE ELSEWHERE.”““

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(CANDIDATE)

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DATE

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(SUPERVISOR)



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DATE

Dr. J. A. N. SAANCHI

.....

(SECOND SUPERVISOR)

.....

DATE

Dr. SAMUEL A. ATINTONO

DEDICATION

To my late Dad, ALHAJI MAHAMADU “GOMANGO” and Mum HAJIA
AZARATU “FANTA”.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis became a success not because of my effort or perseverance but for the positive thinking of many people around me and a little gratitude is left here for their impact and contribution towards the success of the thesis. My first point of thanks goes to “Allah” through whose protection I am alive and healthy for the period of my live including the period through which I was conducting this research. It is through Him I ,never became weak, nor be sad and truly became victorious in this research. Oh! Allah I thank you for this unmerited favour and will always proclaim your name high as the owner of the Heavens and the Earth.

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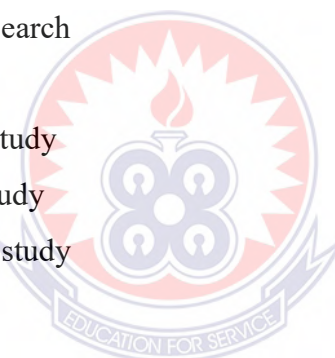
To all my friends, especially Bukari, Mr. Alhassan (Sankaara), Mr. Abdul-Rahman (Short) and Osman, to you I say thank you for your support. I cannot forget of Jomo Sadia, Marcellina and Alhassan Dahamani who were my classmates together with Osman. We had fun time arguing with issues in linguistics and literature and you will all forever be remembered.

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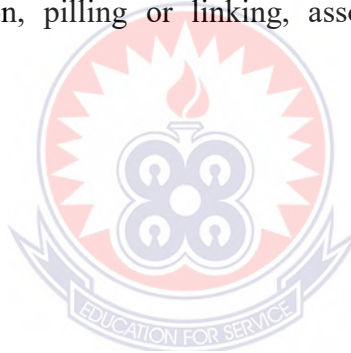


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ABSTRACT

This study discusses Riddling (*Salinlɔha*) among the Dagbamba in the Northern Region of Ghana. The study shows that the Dagbamba riddle has the antecedent and a response and an opening formula as the basic structure. It is also shown that there may be a semantic fit or mismatch with the relationship between the antecedent and the response. There are three types of Dagbamba riddles; these include the simple riddle, the tone riddle and the song riddle. The song riddle is peculiar because, apart from it being sang as a song, it is also accompanied with gestures and dance during its enactment. It is also revealed that the Dagbamba riddle has various stylistic properties which include alliteration, metaphor, parallelism, imagery, ideophones, symbolism, personification, repetition, piling or linking, assonance and also violates social norms.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the study

This study seeks to discuss riddling *Salinlɔha* among the Dagbamba in the Northern part of Ghana. The language spoken by the Dagbamba is Dagbani with three distinct varieties of the language spoken in the area. These are the western dialect (Tomosili), spoken in and around the administrative capital of Northern Region of Ghana, Tamale, the Eastern dialect (Nayahili) which is spoken in Yendi, the traditional capital of Dagbɔŋ and its environs and Nanunli, the Southern dialect spoken in and around Bimbilla. The land occupied by the Dagbamba is called Dagbɔŋ. Dagbani is classified among the Mabia Languages, a component of the Niger-Congo language family and spoken in the Northern part of Ghana (Bodomo, 1996: 36). It is widely spoken in Tamale, Yendi, Bimbilla and their environs. The native speakers know themselves as Dagbana (singular) and Dagbamba (plural). These two forms are also referred to as Dagomba (singular) and Dagombas (plural) respectively by non-native speakers. The language is mutually intelligible with Mampruli and closely related to Gurene, Dagaare, Kusaal and Waali among the other Mabia languages.

The Dagbamba riddle inculcates critical thinking into the users of the language as meanings of the riddles are hidden and need one to think deeply before providing a response. Due to its importance, many scholars have extensively written about riddles in many different languages. Kyoore (2010) observes that some Dagara riddles require thoughtful study and reflection in ascertaining the meaning though they are widely known to be a source of entertainment. Finnegan (2012) defines riddle as “The simplest form of a phrase or statement referring to some well-known object in more or less veiled language.” Noss (2006: 35) observes that the expression of an apparent

contradiction or ambiguity of the reality of the object or the event that is in focus in a riddle is the resultant of metaphor. Scheub (2002) cited in Noss (2006) noted that “Riddles are model for oral art”, he further explains his definition by saying that “The dynamics of riddles change are significant for the entire gamut of literary art.” Noss (2006) however added that, if Scheub’s claim is true, “Then the evidence of changing metaphors and their dynamics in riddles is highly significant for understanding and appreciating the entire gamut of oral literary art.”

Interestingly, *Salinlaha* have extensively attracted the attention of many scholars of literature both in Ghana and the diaspora in their various linguistic backgrounds and cultural milieu. But the opposite is true in the case of the Dagbamba riddles; one can only find works on the compilation of various riddles as in the likes of Andani (1975). Riddles such as *m ba n-l o wɔhu zɔŋ ni, ka o zuli be sambani ni?* „My father has tied his horse in the room and the tail is outside“. Response: *Nyɔhi* „smoke“. *Mani n-gbubi n nim” zeli kpe ni Naya ka zoo bi tabisi li* „I held a fresh meat from here to Yendi and a fly did not touch it“. Response: *Buyum* „fire“. These and many others are only compiled in Dagbani but no analytic work on Dagbani riddles has been done so far.

This study discusses the structure of the Dagbamba riddle, the relationship of the Dagbamba riddle parts “*antecedent and response*”, the various types of the Dagbamba riddle, the riddling setting and the relationship of the Dagbamba riddle to real life situations; The Dagbamba riddle has much more to do with real life situations than mere use for entertainment and mentioning of objects as answers. For instance, a popular riddle among the Dagbamba, *N lii?* Translated as „a little fire“ with the response *Yilibila buyum* „a small house“s fire“, relates to numbers of people in a family. The Dagbamba tradition has it that bigger numbers in a family means wealth. For that matter, families with larger numbers must necessarily be wealthier than

families with smaller numbers. These and many more are treasures hidden in the Dagbamba riddle that needs to be laid bare in the literature for public consumption. Data collected for this research is analyzed descriptively.

1.1 The Dagbamba

Dagbamba is an ethnic group of Northern Ghana, numbering about 1,160,000 (Heigham and Skui 2009). They occupy the Northern Region of Ghana. They speak Dagbani of the Mabia Language group in the Northern part of Ghana. The homeland of the Dagbamba is Dagbɔŋ which covers about 20,000km² in area. The ethnic groups that have also inhabited Dagbɔŋ include, Gonja, Farefari, Konkomba, Kusasi, Waala, Dagara, Ligbi, Bimoba, Baasari and Chekosi. The Dagbɔŋ Kingdom is a traditional kingdom in the Northern Region of Ghana founded in the 15th century by the Dagbamba. It comprises the Northern, Upper West and Upper East Regions of Ghana, with Tamale being their largest city in Ghana. Until now, the Dagbamba houses were culturally built in a way that the head of the family's courtyard where most of the family gatherings used to take place was in the center of the house. The way the Dagbamba used to build their homes depicted the sense of togetherness. The major cultural activity of the Dagbamba is farming. So it is believed among the Dagbamba that any normal person without a farm is a lazy person. Formerly, this person would not have gotten himself a lady to marry within the society. Some of the farming activities are accompanied with some oral performances such as songs, storytelling and riddles. A post-harvest processing of some farm produce such as peeling of cassava is accompanied with songs and storytelling performances. Peeling of cassava is normally done in the afternoon to prevent one from peeling the hand with the knife. Shelling of groundnuts, an activity normally done in the night was also accompanied with riddling and storytelling. It was very difficult to find a group of

people seated under a tree during the day without working. Probably, why some of the oral performances including riddles were only performed in the night after working in the farms throughout the day. But today, modernity has denied the younger generation the chance to learn more of oral performances such as storytelling, songs and riddling. Hardly will one find people these days performing songs, stories or riddles when they are peeling cassava or cracking groundnuts. They now tend to discuss films they have viewed, raps or discuss contemporary issues while performing these activities thereby losing all the moral values that were inadvertently imbibed through the oral performances. Probably the brain behind the numerous social vices such as stealing, rape, and the likes though not all the riddles are didactic.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Riddles have extensively attracted the attention of many scholars of literature both within Ghana, in the likes of Kyooore (2010) Dagara riddles, Awedoba (2000) Kasena riddles, Ayaric (1992) Balsa riddles, Atintono and Nsoh (2001) Farefari riddles, Yankah (1984) Akan riddles, Dakubu (1981) Ga riddles and in other languages such as Noss (2006) Gbaya riddles, Sharndama and Maryam (2014) Kilba Folk Riddles, Wa Gachanja (2013) Abagusii riddles. However, the opposite is true in the case of the Dagbamba riddles where one can only find works on the compilation of various riddles as in Andani (1975). The Dagbani riddle is thus yet to receive some detailed analysis.

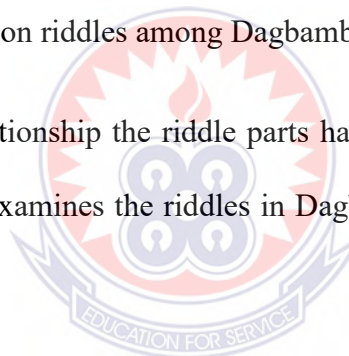
The knowledge of riddles constitutes an important aspect of communicative competence in the culture of the people of Dagbɔŋ. It is therefore crucial that this topic is investigated to help people, especially in Dagbani to point out its important literary characteristics.

Again, with modernization people are beginning to down play the importance of these riddles and so children are not found now using these riddles as often as they were used in the past. The Dagbamba riddle is at the verge of losing its importance as there are younger generations who do not have much knowledge about their performance. Documenting them would help educate both the youth and adults who have little or no knowledge of the Dagbamba riddles and their relationship to the real life of the Dagbamba.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to analyze riddles in Dagbani. The study also investigates how knowledge of riddles contributes to the communicative skills. The emphasis of this study is on riddles among Dagbamba.

It also describes the relationship the riddle parts have and the different categories of riddles. The study also examines the riddles in Dagbani in terms of their relationship with real life.



1.4 Objectives of the research

This study seeks to:

1. Analyze the structure of the Dagbani riddle.
2. Analyze the relationship between the parts of the Dagbani riddles.
3. Describe the types of riddles.
4. Investigate the importance of Dagbani riddles to real life situations of the Dagbamba.

1.5 Research questions

The research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the structure of the Dagbamba riddle?
2. What is the relationship between the parts of the Dagbamba riddles?
3. What are the types of the Dagbamba riddle?
4. How does the Dagbani riddle relate to a real life situation of the Dagbana?

1.6 Significance of the study

The findings of this study would be significant in several ways. In the first place, it would serve as a way of documenting the knowledge of literature among the Dagbamba. This would be crucial in an age where modernity is a threat to several folklores.

Also, the literature would be relevant in the teaching of Dagbani in our various institutions especially within the domain of literature which would inspire future studies. It can also be used to teach children and remind adults about their responsibilities as far as spoken language is concerned.

It would be used as a reference material by students who would be embarking on the same or similar work in the future, as well as serve as a resource material for teaching and learning. It is going to add to the little existing literature on the Dagbani riddle. It would also provide information on the Dagbamba riddles, which would reveal the importance of oral literature of the language.

1.7 Limitations of the study

Apart from time and financial constraints that were the major setbacks, there were also problems in the transcription and translation of the recorded riddles in the riddle

session into English for analysis. However, the researcher transcribed and translate the recorded riddles immediately for originality of the data gathered.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

This study would be limited only to the analysis of riddles among speakers of Dagbani and how they cope with concepts of riddles as well as the challenges they encounter in riddling. The study would also be limited to riddles without consideration of the riddling performance among which represents another category in the broader context of riddles. Analysis is also restricted to the structure relationship of the riddle componential parts and the internal structure, types, literary properties and the relationship the Dagbamba riddles have with the real life of the Dagbamba.

1.9 Organization of the study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 deals with the general introduction to the study. This chapter discusses issues such as the background to the study, the Dagbamba, the problem statement, research questions and objectives, purpose of the study as well as significance, limitations and delimitations of the study. Chapter 2 reviews related literature whilst chapter three presents the research methodology. Chapter 4 analyzes the data, presents also the results as well as discusses the findings. The final chapter, chapter 5, summarizes the major findings of the study, draws conclusions, makes recommendations and suggests areas for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2 Introduction

This chapter presents the literature review on the topic. It includes the definition, type, function, structure and style and setting.

2.1 Definition of a riddle

There are numerous definitions of the riddle genre by different scholars. Sharndama and Maryam (2014) posit that riddles are questions or statements that are intentionally framed in puzzling or misleading ways. They are difficult statements to solve in a form of descriptions posed to make a person use his/her cleverness in ascertaining the right solution. In other words, they contain descriptive elements or metaphor, whose solution the listener has to puzzle out. According to Sharndama and Maryam (Ibid) the Kilba riddles are mostly in the form of statements or direct questions requiring the provision of connotative answers and that sometimes the solutions or answers to a riddle may not be disambiguated. It thus implies that the Kilba riddles of Nigeria are statements or questions that require answers with implied or additional meanings. Simmons (1958: 2) defines a riddle as a form of folklore that poses a question and the answer to the question is culturally accepted as correct.

Miruka (1999: 135) defines riddles as puzzles with figurative referent terms to familiar objects or situations for us to decode the actual meaning. The definition points to how riddles are rich in language and meaning. In his earlier publication, Miruka (1994) observes that riddles present unique persisting features of physical or behavioral concepts that require the unravelling of the hidden literal reference. This assertion therefore implies that riddles are rich in style, language and embedded

knowledge that need to be studied in order to reveal these characteristics contained in them.

Finnegan (2012: 413) sees African riddles to be analogously expressed concisely and briefly with meaning, sound, rhythm and or tone. It means that riddles can be expressed concisely and briefly with a hidden meaning or with sounds, rhythm or tone without meaning. According to Finnegan (2012) riddles are a special domain of children for entertainment rather than serious consideration, that in simple riddles, generalization or imagery is suggested and the answer points to a particular implied object and the name of the referent objects is usually a word with a specific analogous meaning.

Awedoba (2000) observes that the riddle precedent may be syntactically a question, command, exclamation, or statement. He added that a riddle is like any sentence except that it is not contextually used and seems to be unexpectedly said without any preparation. It is the kind of sentence that is questionable when uttered outside the context of riddle performance. This observation implies that a riddle could be a question, command or statement that is suddenly said without any suitable context. He observes further that Kasena riddles also introduce new onomatopoeic words into the vocabulary of children which adequately provide means for them to express shades and nuances of meaning that conventional words like the regular nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs alone inadequately could have conveyed. According to him, adverbs in particular are not many in Kasem and that it is these onomatopoeic words that perform some of the functions of adverbs in Kasem. Awedoba (Ibid) exposes the numerous importance of the Kasena riddles which he termed “historical educative”, and points to some important historical events of which he sees to be historically educative to the children, especially in the area of slavery and other activities that

destroyed Kasena and their neighbours. These kind of riddles show that memories do not just pass like time. Geographical education is also one of the importance of the Kasena riddles that see the Nankanses to be the Easterners and the Balsa as Westerners and remind the Kasena of the existence of their neighbours and the transactions that bring together different group of people.

Ogunjimi and Na^o Allah (2005: 95-100) observe that riddles have some typical patterns. The thing alluded to in the question is often referred to in terms of some other specific nouns. The language of riddles is sometimes said to be archaic and certainly often contains apparently meaningless words. The language of riddles is also frequently marked and use of reduplication, idiophones, and diminutives in special prefixes form, as in Nyanja, or of separate adjectives conveying idea of smallness, usually applied to the main noun in the question. In content, riddles can include every sphere of natural and human life, and vary according to the preoccupations and customs of the society in which they are told. Understanding of the point of a riddle thus often depend on a knowledge of the ways of a particular society. Many riddles give vivid visual impressions, particularly those about the natural world, which often indicate close observation.

In general form, riddles seem to represent a relatively fixed type of oral literature. The first person singular pronoun or possessive pronouns also constantly appear. Most common of all is the use of kinship terms in reference.

Ishengoma (2005: 144) defines a riddle as “An enigmatic statement or description that contains a hidden meaning to be guessed by those to whom it is addressed.” Riddles are oral literature short forms, seen as constant exercises related to observation and imagination and performed as contests, and for children’s play games (Finnegan 1970; Njoroge 1994; Noss, 2006). Riddles are seen as basically for children though

adults are also known to be active participants. In some societies, riddling is an adult pursuit (Burns 1976: 47). Adults could be part of the riddling session with children where they share their riddles with them or they could also riddle among fellow adults, especially in societies where riddles are similar to proverbs. For instance, Finnegan (1970: 441) notes that the Chaga of Tanzania, use riddles to threaten, convey secret information and indirectly express suggestion, which is obviously adult's use of riddling. Amuka (1994: 13) also observes that "Riddling is a children's verbal and intellectual game, preparatory to sophistication in oral traditions and branches of knowledge." Thus this observation qualifies riddles to be considered as a serious activity, rather than just being a game for children.

Ayaric (1992) posits that riddles are propounded with a series of descriptive elements. They may take both interrogative and affirmative forms, and they presume an answer. Meant to entertain, the riddle compares an object to another that appears quite different. The entertainment derives more from the pleasant surprise of discovering the unsuspected similarity than from getting the correct answer. The occasions for asking simple riddles are almost the same all over Africa. Riddling may serve as a prelude to storytelling especially among children. It could be used between lengthy stories for a pause. Riddling is among children and is classified under analogy, symmetry, reciprocity, fixed relationship, differentiation and contradiction which conform to the Ewe riddles observed by Agblémagnon (1969: 94) as cited in Ayaric (1992).

Kyooore (2010) states that riddles are expressed briefly and concisely. Though riddles are for entertainment, some do pose very profound meaning that demands thorough reflection on the part of the listeners. Thus, riddles employ audience serious reflection of social issues. He further defuses the claim of Finnegan (1970) that African riddles

are not usually outwardly interrogative in form but rather in a form of a statement. Kyooore (2010) thus observes that some African riddles can be outwardly interrogative or merely a statement. There is ambiguity in the manner in which both the riddle and the answer are expressed. This matches Noss (2006: 35) observation about Gbaya riddles that, “The metaphor in a riddle veils the reality of the object or the event that is in focus through expression of an apparent contradiction or ambiguity.”

In riddles, the system of language employed by the folk group may be subverted in various ways through the intentional overlapping of frames of reference for purposes of temporally blocking the communication. The blocking of the direct transfer of information is the ideal in riddling (Maranda, 1971). He further states that a riddle is a structural unit, which necessarily consists of two parts, the riddle image and the riddle and further classified riddles into emotional, intellectual and informational riddles. The emotional riddle is a teasing device to tune the riddling session, the intellectual riddles are the true riddles as proposed by Taylor (1951) that discover intellects than a mere invention which qualifies riddles as academic work than creative research and informational riddle is a monk’s question requiring awareness of an answer on religion. Maranda identifies Finnish riddles to be simple; as a term that contains true logic, false logic and an answer, compound; as a multiple term or a multiple true logic or a multiple false logic or and a multiple answer and string; as an image that embodies a list of terms and the answer of another list of terms as the types of riddle structure. To (Taylor 1951; Christiansen 1958; Virtanen 1960; Georges and Dundes 1963) only the riddle image should be analyzed in isolation from the answer. They further stated alliteration, metaphor, rhyme or the selection of consonant clusters as the governing features of the riddle image.

Olaosun & Faleye (2015) see riddles to be products of creative thought and a discourse which draw on familiar experiences but render them strangely. Jolles (1930: 129) views riddles to be questions that require answers. Jolles further states that riddle images answer questions which contain answers. Especially, riddles that disguise to take puns as their answers are literally explicit in the image.

Okpewho (1992) asserts that riddles are “Verbal puzzles in which a statement is posed in challenge and another statement is offered in response either to the hidden meaning or the form of the challenge.” Riddles arise basically from an intelligent observation of aspects of human life and the environment. Perhaps that is the reason for them being referent to objects in the environment and human behavior. Riddles figuratively describing parts of the human body are human related riddles and those describing plants and animals are environmental riddles. Riddles clearly seem to arise from a skillful contraction of existing proverbs (Hamnett 1967). Example is the Sotho riddle that says “A tree on which the birds sit? – The chief” which has a transmutation of a proverb. “A chief is a tree on which all birds sits.” Finnegan (1970: 431) cited in Okpewho (1992) postulates that among the Central Bantu, a riddle that says „something I threw over to the other side of the river – Eyes“ equally is contracted from the proverb „The eye that crosses a full river desires, goes beyond the possible“. Riddles are not original and creative or intellectual quality (Kallen and Eastman 1979; Harries 1976; Haring 1974; Hamnett 1967; Blacking 1961; Bascom 1949; Schapera 1932). However, the Venda riddle that is new and unknown or has an alternative answer not frequently used when further explained to the understanding of the people is a potential candidate for originality (Blacking, 1961: 2-3).

Okpewho (1992) adopts Doke (1947) classification of riddles thereby limiting him to only the literature available though most scholars refer to this classification as

elementary, Okpewho still adopts and states only the riddle types identified by Doke (1947) which could make the work not exhaustive. These are simple, problem and song riddles. Only the simple riddle type has been discussed in the work and that the simple riddle takes a form of question and answer posed by one person to the other or two teams of which one team asking the questions and another team answering or giving the solution. This is commonly manifested in the “tone riddles” as observed by Okpewho (1992).

According to Glazier and Glazier (1976: 4) riddles and taboos are connected and that riddles clarify the connection that exists between riddles and taboos, thus the answer to a riddle refers to a pair of similar referents whose similarities represent a taboo and exposes the relationship that exists in the riddle similarities and taboo. Glazier and Glazier (1976) further stated that through the texture of these riddles concerning taboo, cultural norms are equated with the constraints of natural law, and paying with a goat when the answerer is unable to give the correct answer upon given several chances in the exchange formula, absolutely teaches the cultural rules and the consequences of their violation which clarifies the concept of disorder and order in the culture. Riddles and any other form of folklore reflect the Yoruba culture as knowledge of Yoruba culture is necessary for one to be able to guess the answer of the Yoruba riddle (Bascom, 1949).

With all the above riddle definitions Scott (1965: 15) cited in Awedoba (2000) argues that all the definitions of the riddle genre by different scholars have not been adequate and that, these definitions are little more than descriptions of some of the major characteristics of the riddle genre, and tell nothing about how the riddle is formally distinct from other folklore genres within cultures. According to Scott (1965), the features that seem to be crucial in the definition of the riddle genre in one culture may

differ in another culture for the definition of the same riddle genre though some features of the riddle genre may be common in some cultures. It is on this basis Georges and Dundes (1963) propose that folklorists need to adopt a definition based on a structural analysis of riddles to deal with the universality of a riddle genre definition. But despite the varied and overlapped features and characteristics of the riddle genre, folklorists propose definitions, especially working definitions.

From the foregoing definitions, one could conclude that riddles form a part of folk culture, especially language use. Riddles also involve language manipulation for the purpose of confusing the respondent or the answerer. They are also framed using phenomena within a given culture.

2.2 Types of riddles

Different scholars from different cultural backgrounds have identified different riddle types. Some of these types run through several cultures making these types universal among these cultures and other types being culture specific.

Finnegan (2012) classified riddles into three; simple, tone and song riddles. Tone riddles are rhythmic with tone resemblance in the antecedent and the response. Proverb riddles have both of its parts of the response of a tonal riddle being a proverb. However, proverb-riddles and praise names which occasionally occur in riddles are not widely reported. Simmons (1961) observes that proverb-riddles and tone riddles are distinct types of riddles though they are slightly related. Simmons (1958) is of the view that tone riddles will be found widely distributed in only African tonal languages where tone is phonemic. Song riddles identified among the Makua by Harries (1942), is a form said to be unrecorded elsewhere in Africa. They are in a form of action songs followed with a dance with deductive purpose closely connected with initiation rituals and are forbidden for initiators to tell or sing them to non-initiators. The

connection riddles have with puzzles, enigmas, and dilemma stories sometimes leads to the use of the same term for all in some cultures like the Mabia languages in Ghana.

Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila (2010) categorized riddles into types I, II and III where the type I is the universal riddle, type II is also the tone, proverb and poetic riddles and the type III is the song riddles. The Dagbamba riddle has all these forms discussed in Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila (2010) but the type III, the song riddles are also referred to in Dagbani as *Tuya duyibu* „beans cooking“. According to Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila (2010) the tone riddle type appears to be known in almost all the Mabia languages across the savanna belt of West Africa. This is a form of riddle that has a tonal fit or correspondence between the antecedent and the response than a semantic fit. This differentiates the tone riddles from the universal riddles where both the antecedent and the response have some semantic fit. This has been recorded from Luvale of Zambia (White 1958), the Luba of the Congo (Van Avermaet 1955), and the Ibibio-Efik group of Southern Nigeria (Simmons, 1958) cited in Finnegan (2012). Yankah (1984) and Atintono and Nsoh (2001) referred to this as the poetic riddles. Messenger (1960) termed this as proverb riddles. According to Sinkuli and Maruka (1990: 93) cited in Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila (2010: 27) it is “A riddle in which the challenge and the response have identical tonal and rhythmic patterns marked by syllables correspondence.” Simmons (1956) cited in Okpewho (1992: 244) observes that there is not always a complete tonal match between the antecedent and the response. However, Okpewho (1992) emphasized on the tonal fit between the antecedent and the response. The Dagbamba riddle may not sometimes have a complete tonal match between the antecedent and the response but the antecedent

would always not have a semantic fit with the response. They are mostly in a form of short rhythm of sounds as the antecedent with a correspondent long response.

Through the typical patterns observed by Ogunjimi and Na' Allah (2005: 95-100), they further grouped riddles according to their characteristics. Thus, domestic and science, socio-political, cultural, nature, and logic functions of riddles.

Olaosun and Faleye (2015) classified some English riddles on the basis of semantic „operation“ carried out on the language and the description of the mental spaces created. Thus, riddles are classified under the logical semantic, metaphorical, personal experiential and linguistic space. According to Olaosun and Faleye (2015) the logical semantic space category of riddle are riddles that result from logical semantic operation and that this category of riddle draws upon the philosophical domain of cognition and appeals to reasoning of the riddler because of its deep thought. Metaphorical space category of riddles have hidden meanings generated as a result of some lexical items undergoing semantic shift or appropriation. Thus, testing the riddlers' ability to relate the word to its referent. The personal experiential space category discusses factual, cultural and personal experiences and riddles in this category do not have their meaning strictly depending on the linguistic context for cues but are drawn from the riddler's experiences in the domains of agriculture, ecology, geography and customs. The knowledge of these experiences places the riddlers' at a higher position in exercising their intellectual power and dominance on the riddles. The linguistic space riddle category examines riddles that relate to knowledge of grammatical structure, phoneme-grapheme system and semantic features of language.

According to Haring (1985), a majority of the collected Malagasy riddles belong to what Georges and Dundes (1963: 115) call "Privational contradictive" type of riddles,

where "The second of a pair of descriptive elements is a denial of a logical or natural attribute of the first." Other contradictive riddles contrast with the earlier proposition, definitely stating an opposition in words and the causal contradictive riddle denies an expected consequence. On the other hand, privational riddles make important use of knowledge the speaker is assumed to have shocked the emotional response of the hearer which asserts and reinforces the sharing of knowledge between the riddler and the respondent. The performance of such riddles also establishes the connection between the traditions and the ancestral discourse of the speaker as the riddle denies the major function of a common object.

2.3 Functions

The functions of riddles cannot be tied to their primary and universal function as entertainment. Some of these functions are culture specific as different cultures have different uses of riddles. These functions are manifested in what riddles are being used for in our cultures. These variations in the functions of the riddles have been exposed by scholars of different cultural backgrounds. Some of the functions may be universal to some cultures while others are culture specific.

Harries (1976) observes that the Makuan riddle provides social education to the children as they are used to teach the youth undergoing the initiation rites aspects of social conduct and sharpening their intellect. Hamnet (1967) also observes that the Sotho riddles also traditionally sharpen the intellect and equip the mind with techniques for finding right classification relationships between varied objects. (Atintono and Nsoh 2001; Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila 2010) identify entertainment, a game of insults, contest and vulgarity as the functions of riddles.

Besides entertainment, riddles are sometimes claimed to play an indirect educational role by training children in quick thinking in intellectual skills, and in classification

provided through their sexual or comic bias, a release from tension impressed by moral and social code, or leading to a fuller participation in social life. They are used indirectly to say something without a risk involved in stating it explicitly (Finnegan 2012; Ogunjimi and Na' Allah 2005: 95-100; (Atintono and Nsoh 2001). Like proverbs, riddles represent a concise form of conventionally stereotype expression. Among the Chaga, riddles are used to influence an action of someone by ironically and indirectly suggesting to imply a threat without actually stating or conveying secret information (Messenger, 1960: 225-6). Awedoba (2000) observes linguistic skills development, creative thinking, historical and geographical education among the Kasena as functions of the Kasena riddles.

The Kilba riddles are cracked for variety of purposes which include entertainment, teaching of lessons, proof of intelligence and socializing children into the poetic society (Sharndama and Maryam, 2014).

Miruka (1999: 141) observes that though the entertainment function of riddles is most recognized historic recordings, human life commentary, scientific and environmental education, linguistic instrument as social functions of riddles are ignored. Ishengoma (2005) also opines that riddles give young people the opportunity to participate in the cultural, social, political, economic and the development of critical thinking and memorization. Farb (1973: 98) notes that riddles are used in very serious situations of life and death, for example, Oedipus solving the Sphinx riddle. Through entertainment, riddles as educational devices exercise may also pass knowledge to the young, train the mind, impart attitudinal and cultural values, teach dominance and submission roles, and also promote unity and cohesion among the participants (Burns, 1976: 139). According to Gwaravanda and Masaka (2008) riddles are described as a method of illustration that imparts knowledge, sharpens memory and reasoning ability in both

children and adults and much regard is given to the contestant who answers most riddles correctly or poses the most challenging riddles among peers.

Blacking (1961) cited in Nandwa and Bukenya 1983: 11) notes that among the Venda, knowledge of riddles is a social asset and the best riddlers are highly popular, admired, and also gain more friends. Again, Nandwa and Bukenya (Ibid) posits that among the Luhya, children riddles contain moral lessons therefore making learning about the environment, culture and wit sharpening interesting imagination. Thus riddles are not just performed for entertainment but they perform different functions in different cultures. Njoroge (1994: 53-54) cited in Kihara (2013) observes that African riddles improve language competence, observation, normative, memory and intellectual, and the entertainment skills functions. Entertainment is not the only and main function of riddles as language competence is valued in African cultures and the use of riddles improve linguistic competence/verbal skills in children (Finnegan, 1970: 431). Riddling is one of the effective ways through which the Abagusii community imparts knowledge to children especially and they also go a long way to develop in an individual, cognitive, moral and social senses thus equipping the individual with lifelong skills (Wa Gachanja, 2013). Bascom (1949) observes that riddles are used to educate young children among the Yoruba culture. Sharndama (2014) states entertainment and educative functions of the Kilba riddles as the riddle game entertain the children during shelling of groundnut and that old folks educate children on riddles.

According to Simmons (1958) tone riddles function as a form of amusement, greeting, arouse of sexual feelings, indirect curses, and briefly explains an action. A group of three to five individuals sometimes cite tone riddles to pass time. The tone riddle also replaces the normal straightforward greetings. Since greetings is habitual among

friends whenever they meet, tone riddles supplement the regular greetings and add an element of humor to everyday activity. Simmons (1958) however noted that tone riddles that arouse sexual feelings are never used as greetings unless the friends are alone and that the tone riddle erotically answers supposedly innocent questions.

Haring (1985) opines that Madagascar riddles involve one culturally determined way of learning how to manipulate verbal ambiguity as they are well suited to bringing such ambiguities to the foreground. That riddles arm the speaker against the threat of language classification system and however threatened or anxious one may be, riddle performance and other fixed-phrase folklore is one of the most powerful ways of meeting Merina cultural expectations. Again the Malagasy riddles of social commentary use metaphor to play with the inexpressible in allusion and code-switching contexts. Children learn the importance of question-and-answer first through riddling. Malagasy riddles also teach children the inevitable ambiguity of language. Malagasy riddles play against common knowledge about the roles of children and the content of privational contradictory riddle affords children the opportunity to extend their normal limits of child behavior through fantasy which naturally depend much on shared knowledge. Malagasy riddles also discourage children to know or acknowledging the existence of private feelings of others. (Sanches and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1976: 73; Hymes 1974: 50) cited in Haring (1985) postulate that riddles are the principal means of learning dialogism as riddles function as a folk model for dialogue and by learning the formula dimensions of dialogue, the child acquires verbal competence in reiteration, in asking and answering formal questions, and in different codes of behavior.

Calame-Griaule (1963: 83) cited in Haring (1985) opines that, in West Africa, riddling exercises the knowledge, memory, and quick reaction time of children. “But

seeking African analogues to Malagasy folklore has no limit, and will have no limit until folklorists map out the geographic areas within which "ambiguities of cultural reference and of expressive and moral meaning" are the rule." (Haring, 1985). The privational riddles constitute in Malagasy an artistic metalanguage that points out the importance of paralinguistic communication and unspoken understanding. They are important in Madagascar and perhaps their allusiveness corresponds to something in Malagasy philosophy. The functions of riddles at funerals, courtship, and initiation might further illuminate an attempt to determine the structures of riddling sessions at these events (Evans, 1976). He again postulates that each riddle satisfies a function of aiding to build a structural pattern for the session. Thus, the choice of riddles posed in a session is not random. He thus suggests that the symbolic meaning and function of an individual riddle can be well understood only when viewed in a riddling session context.

2.4 Style and structure

Folk riddles vary in style and structure according to the culture in which they exist. They deal with topics that reflect the beliefs in the culture in which they originated. The structure and styles identified in riddles may be culture specific. However, there are certain typical structures and stylistic patterns of riddles that seem to be universal among some cultures.

The semantic set of riddles according to Ben-Amos (1976) is the different answers to a riddle and unrelated riddles might be, that each riddle solution becomes part of the meaning speakers decode or attribute to a metaphor. Thus, a riddle's answer when even accepted by the riddler might not be the only solution to the riddle. But in a particular culture, a metaphor symbolizes all the possible solutions of which the meaning of the riddle is an abstract concept (Ben-Amos, Ibid).

Metaphorical questions are tied to literal answers in riddles. Riddles are holistically dialogic/dyadic contests (Nandwa and Bukenya 1983; Finnegan 1970; Okpewho 1999; Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila 2010) and their performances involve two or more parties, challenger (s) and a respondent (s) and audience. But in the case of Mbeere riddles as observed by Glazier and Glazier (1976) riddling involves two participants and a possible audience but not teams. It is the challenger (s) who assesses a riddle to the respondent (s) and the respondent (s) is/are required to give an answer to the riddle posed. In riddling session, there is therefore turn taking where one presents a riddle to the opponent, and vice versa. The thing indirectly mentioned in the antecedent/question is often a noun. Proper nouns are commonly used in this context. The first person singular pronoun or possessive is constantly also used in some cultures like the Shona, Yoruba, Farefari, Dagbani. The use of kinship terms in referent is not also uncommon among some cultures in Africa like the Limba, Lyele, Dagbani, Dagara and Farefari cultures.

Riddles have opening formulas to signal the beginning and also to draw the attention or to invite listeners into a riddling session. The opening formulas in riddles are habitual in many cultures. The opening formula is stereotyped and fixed (Finnegan, 1970: 436). Harries (1971) asserts that because the opening formula and the binary construction are universal phenomena of African riddles, they must be included in the definition of the riddle genre. According to Glazier and Glazier (1976) the opening formula that marks the beginning of the riddling session distinguishes riddles from all other verbal activities which make riddles formal discourse. The Mbeere riddle has *gwata ndai* „catch this riddle“ with the partner replying with *nagwata* „I have caught it“ as an opening formula. *Atuka* 'you guess or guess what it is' among the Bagobo is the opening formula, *zukupai, zukupai* 'riddles, riddles' and the response is *ni lobr, ni*

lobr 'tell them, tell them' (Manuel 1962; Kyoore 2010). *Kikoiko* „it is what it is“ and the response is *kiidhe* „let it come“ (W. Harries & Glazier, 1999). Among the Mbeere people of Kenya, Glazier and Glazier (1976: 192) posit that the formula phrase as a signal to begin riddling is repeated after the answer to each riddle given and that the recurrent opening formula in Mbeere riddling underscores the formal nature of the verbal encounter. In contrast, Kyoore (2010) states that among the Dagara, certain formulae might be repeated once a while but it is not the case that after each answer given to a riddle the opening formula is repeated.

The language of riddles is sometimes archaic and marked by reduplication, idiophones, and diminutive (Finnegan 2012; Ogunjimi and Na‘ Allah 2005). Riddles include every sphere of natural and human life and culturally varied in content and give vivid impression about the natural world. Subjects with referent to staple crops, sexual and or obscene referent are universally used in Africa. There is sometimes a wider record of riddles with the same content but different forms. Among the Bantu, various versions of a riddle about an egg are recorded. “A house without any door”, I sowed my big field and reaped it, and my hand was not full” (Doke 1947: 118).

Okpewho (1992) asserts that there is a distinction between simple or direct language and the figurative or metaphorical language. That simple diction is normally associated with the interrogative structure often found in non-interrogative structure too. According to Okpewho (1992), the structure of a riddle could be simple or short, and or complex or compound where a single referent could expand its qualifications or attributes that contain varied twist of contradiction in terms.

As part of the structure, Georges and Dundes (1963) observe distinction between the “Oppositional” and “Nonoppositional.” Whereas nonoppositional are straightforward

statements and uncontentious, the oppositional statements have contradictory elements in them or a side or part contrasting the other part. According to Georges and Dundes (1963), the “Riddle structure may attain a most complex level when it is framed in the dramatic form of speech, corresponding in a sense to what has been called wellerism in proverb study.” It thus means that a riddle could be complex when the diction used tends not to be denotative and exciting and or intense.

Georges and Dundes (Ibid) assert that the “Descriptive element” in the question, the “Referent” is to be guessed. Thus, what describes the referent in the question paves way for the respondent to guess. This only concerns itself with the simple riddles which have two elements both opposing. For example, „It has a head but cannot think – Match“. What has legs and cannot walk? – Chair“. The antecedent may be literal or metaphorical in terms of its solution. Metaphorical when the subject of the descriptive element and the response are different and are analogous through metaphor.

According to Simmons (1958), the structure of the Efik tone riddle consists of the formation of the antecedent and the response, and the relationship between the antecedent and the response. Thus, the antecedent may be a simple sentence or translatable phrase, or a group of onomatopoeic sounds or meaningless syllables with a meaningful or proverbial sentence. Simmons further observes that, determining the relationship between the antecedent and response is difficult as most tone riddles lack relationship but have similarity in tone pattern. Simmons however states that, the response of certain tone riddles appears metaphorically analogous to the antecedent. That achieving tonal similarity in many Efik tone riddles, nouns and verb roots in the response bear the same basic tonal pattern as the noun and verb root in the antecedent, and morphological tone mutations which change the basic tones of the noun and verb root to regular patterns (Simmons, 1958).

According to Haring (1985) Malagasy riddles reveal the truth as the importance of dialogue and are cultural preferences. Riddling is one of the elements that develops verbal art of many groups. The poser of any riddle inherently begins with greater power than the respondent. Intellectually, the poser has the knowledge required to answer the riddle and socially, the power to determine whether the answer offered to the riddle is acceptable. The respondent, like any learner, is in an intrinsically inferior position (Haring 1985; Ben-Amos 1976).

Harries (1976) diffuses the claims of Maranda (1971) and the support by Haring (1985) by saying that logic is not the only factor that determines the understanding of the meaning of a riddle. The linguistic structure must always be accompanied with other elements that constitute recognition either in a speech or not of the meaning of the riddle. Harries (1976) clearly expresses his stand on the topic as he made this statement, “It seems to me that this question of the arbitrary nature of the semantic fit between the parts of a riddle is a straw man. And even the term "the logic of semantic fit" makes me apprehensive. So long as ambiguities, impossibilities, oppositions, can be analyzed logically, then the term can be allowed to pass, for these are some of the identifiable processes involved in making the fit of meanings applicable to both parts.” Harries (1976) further postulates that the logical structure may only help us to identify the logical model but not the semantic features shared by the antecedent and the response whether the riddle contains a false premise or not. And that the semantic fit of any riddle can be determined by comparing the riddle with the other forms of riddles in different forms occurring in one or more communities.

2.4 Riddling setting

As a way of following the conventional rules guiding riddling performance, riddles are mostly performed at night as a form of social control (Harries, 1971; Ishengoma,

2005; Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila 2010; Kyoore, 2010; Sharndama, 2014). It is believed that time is precious and thus needs not to be wasted which thus gives room for the night performance after supper, after the day's work. Riddling is thus meant to imbibe in children, time consciousness and importance, and for them also not to forget their other given chores (Ngonyani, 2005). On the other hand, Manuel (1962) observes that the Bagobo riddles differ from the cultures that require special occasion or particular social settings to be performed. Manuel further states that riddles have a place among the Bagobo due to limited folks which may normally start with young folks or children during day mostly at their leisure time joined by the older folks after they have been stimulated. Awedoba (2000) observes that there is no restrictions of the performance of riddles among the Kasena as it is in the case of the folktales which may not be told in the day. He however noted that since folktales and riddles are associated, it can be argued that any such restrictions on folktales would affect riddles indirectly. Kyoore (2010: 6) observes that according to Bangnituo the practice of riddling was that when an elder had satisfactorily eaten his supper, would call his children and grandchildren together and tell riddles to them but he is silent on the restrictions of riddling.

Sharndama and Maryam (2014) observe that the Kilba people have the belief that one will grow horns if one dare tells tales or a riddle during the day. According to Sharndama and Maryam, a common expression cautioning one among the Kilba is *əng, tələm mo tso kəra ka!* „Take note, you will grow horns!“ and that elders often reprimand those violating this convention. Riddles are rarely also being told much during the rainy season among the Kilba people because children and elders will be tired working on their farms during the raining season.

In Madagascar, riddling and storytelling traditionally form part of the same event. They are performed during funerals and marriages (Haring, 1985).

Summary

From the foregoing discussion, available literature on riddles in different cultures by different scholars of these cultures reveals that riddles are defined based on the structure or form of riddles found in a particular culture of which the scholar is working on and also categorized differently based on the type of riddles found in these cultures. However, the most universal riddle type among most cultures especially African riddles are the simple or question and answer riddle type. Riddles also have opening formula running through all the cultures with little variation of the phrases used for the opening of riddling sessions. Again, the function of riddles is culture specific but the universal among most cultures is the entertainment function of riddles. Finally, the riddling setting also differs from culture to culture. Among the Bagobo people for example, riddles are performed during the day after lunch but the opposite is true about riddles in some other cultures. Also some cultures tie a belief to the setting of the riddle as the Kilba people scared of growing horns when riddles are performed during the day and any person or group of persons found performing riddles during the day is/are therefore reprimanded, on the other hand, others like the Dagara and other cultures within Northern Ghana think that telling riddles during the day will halt work or may encourage laziness.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter discusses how the research was conducted. This includes the research design, participants, data source, and data analysis.

3.1 Research design

This research is a descriptive research and adopts fieldwork to collect data in all the three dialects of Dagbani. This includes the collection of data from male and female, young and old in some selected communities in Nanumba, Yendi and Tamale traditional areas in organized riddling session. The data was analyzed qualitatively using the native speaker intuition to explore and discover new ideas and insights. This is as a result of the flexibility of the method and also because the research is focusing on deepening the understanding and distinctions of the Dagbamba riddles.

The research also used the organized riddling sessions in the three Colleges of Education within the research communities in day times just for the research purpose. This contradicts the norm of riddles being told in the night after a hard day's work among the Dagbamba as they believe riddling during the day will encourage laziness among the people.

The process of data collection includes recording of riddles during storytelling sessions. The Dagbani storytelling session is usually preceded by riddling as part of preparation towards the storytelling itself.

The researcher also employed interviewing technique in the data collection. Interviews were also organized to find the values and importance of Dagbani riddle to the people. Cowie (2009) observes that properly done interviews provide in-depth

insights into people's experiences, beliefs, perceptions and motivations. Interviews are also the most commonly employed field method by researchers. This resulted in the exploration of unanticipated information that were not previously thought of in the planning which gave a greater depth on the information provided by the respondents. The aim was to elicit more information and clarification of certain terminologies used in the riddles and the relationship the riddles have with the societal life of the people.

For the analysis, thirty five riddles out of the lot recorded and taken from Andani (1975) are considered for analysis.

3.2 Participants

The researcher used the intuitive knowledge and purposively sampled the population out of Dagbɔŋ as the target population, believed on the provision of the data needed for the research based on the prior information to identify the participants.

Oral interview/face to face interaction was the principal method used in the collection of data in this study. Three (3) retired civil servants, one (1) from each dialect who are Dagbamba and understand the culture of Dagbɔŋ very well were interviewed on the topic. Three (3) professional Dagbani teachers, one (1) from each dialect and three (3) teachers, one (1) from each dialect who teach other subjects but are also Dagbamba were also interviewed. These teachers had in-depth knowledge of Dagbani and the culture of Dagbɔŋ. Five (5) students including two (2) females each from E. College of Education, Bimbilla, St. Vincent College of Education, Yendi and Bagabaga College of Education, Tamale, each located in one of the traditional capitals of the Dagbamba were also

interviewed. There were six (6) females who took part in the interview. The age limit of the interviewees was between 19-45 years.

One (1) opinion leader, (1) traditional ruler, one (1) religious leader, as well as one (1) traditional drummer each from a dialect were also interviewed directly about their knowledge and understanding of riddles. They were interviewed about riddles and their values in the culture of the Dagbamba. There was only (1) female interviewed under this category. All those interviewed under this category were above 50 years of age. It is believed that people within this age are conversant with the customs, tradition and values of Dagbɔŋ, because of their constant exposure to the culture. The researcher thus purposively selected this age group to avoid using adulterated data for my analysis. Amongst the interviewees was a woman of 50 years of age who has sound experience of the Dagbamba culture and also an opinion leader.

The use of native intuition was also considered seriously any time an interview was to be conducted. This is because the researcher himself is a native speaker of Dagbani and has a great deal of knowledge on the cultural underpinnings of Dagbɔŋ. The Dagbɔŋ tradition recognizes elders as those with all the wisdom which the researcher took cognizance of. The researcher built a good rapport with the research informants and went further to book appointments with the informants. The informants chose dates and times suitable for them and thereafter, the researcher reminded the informants two days to the set dates. The researcher also went to the community of the target groups where the researcher is not a resident, on the set appointed dates and stayed throughout the day with them until evening in order to familiarize himself with the community before observing, listening and recording of the riddles in the organized riddling session. Kankam and Weiler (2010) see observation as a method in data collection that involves the researcher to carefully watch the proceedings and

make notes. “Observation is the conscious noticing and detailed examination of participants’ behavior in a naturalistic setting.” (Cowie, 2009). Osuala (2007) also sees observation as the act of recognizing and noting facts or occurrences. Osuala further describes observation as a „classic method“ of scientific research. The researcher from time to time joined the riddlers in riddling session and also posed and responded to some riddles. This identifies the researcher with the riddlers which made the work of the researcher very easy. The researcher maintained an emic and etic position simultaneously identified by Heigham and Skui (2009) as important criterion for the researcher. This made the researcher not to be carried away by participating and also not being a passive observer. The focus of the research was on the traditional rulers, folklorist/drummers, retired civil servants, teachers and students to provide the researcher with relevant information on riddles.

3.3 Data source

For effective study and analysis of Dagbamba riddles, the researcher obtained some primary and secondary data from the Dagbani speaking communities. The primary data were obtained from the traditional drummers/folklorists and traditional leaders. Others included religious leaders, students, retired educationists and some opinion leaders. All these people were interviewed face to face and their responses were recorded and used for analysis.

The secondary data on the other hand were obtained through the reading of books written by other writers, both within and in the diaspora. Other sources of data include written texts from published works. The library was where books and other materials were consulted for information on the topic. The researcher also obtained series of information from the internet.

3.4 Data analysis

The data of this research was analyzed descriptively using native speaker intuition but with much emphasis on the structure, types, literary devices and the relationship the Dagbamba riddles have with the Dagbamba society of which the research questions are set to address in this study. Some of the riddles were recorded with a less expensive a tape recorder and others selected from Andani (1970: 19-21) but are all transcribed using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and translated into English Language. The riddles recorded in each organized riddling sessions were transcribed immediately to maintain memory relating to the riddles. A tape recorder is used because it was considered less expensive than a sound camera that could have been more accurate and complete with maximum understanding of reviewed riddling sessions.

Communication to any Dagbana means understanding and appreciating Dagbani and descriptive analysis is considered more appropriate since riddles are a form of communication. Fraenkel and Norman (2000: 469) explain that communication often reveals a person or group's beliefs, attitudes, values and ideas consciously or unconsciously.

Summary

Qualitative approach is seen as the most appropriate method adopted in this study by the researcher. The method concerns itself with understanding the meaning people socially or humanly attach to phenomenon holistically in their lives empirically. Riddles are one of the folklore materials that provide a systematic view of the creative activity of the Dagbamba, developed for communicating the essence of their views and concepts explicitly throughout history. Qualitative method can therefore be appropriately used in the analysis. The study covers only three communities namely

Bimbilla, Yendi and Tamale in the Northern Region. The researcher was a participant observer in all the organized riddling sessions in the research community. The aim was to enhance rapport and empathize and identify oneself with the people in order to understand how they think, act and see things from their own frames of referent and experience. A tape recorder was used in recording some of the riddles and other riddles were taken from Andani (1970). Twenty out of the riddles recorded were selected, transcribed by using the IPA and translated into English. People believed to be reservoirs of the riddle genre were interviewed and more information and understanding were elicited.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter of the study, analyses the Dagbamba riddles descriptively on the bases of their definition, context or setting, structure, types, literary devices employed in the riddling performance. It also analyses the relationship the Dagbamba riddle has with the Dagbamba society.

4.2 Definition of the Dagbani riddle

Okpewho (1992) defines riddle as a verbal puzzled statements posed and response to a hidden meaning or challenge. Both the antecedent and the response of a Dagbamba riddle may be a statement or question. Though the meaning of a Dagbamba riddle is veiled not all of them are in a form of a statement that requires a statement as its response. So the definition of Okpewho (1992) lacks some features of the Dagbamba riddle.

Sharndama and Maryam (2014) posit that riddles are questions or statements that are intentionally framed in puzzling or misleading ways. By this they mean that riddles are intentionally framed ambiguous questions or statements. The Dagbamba riddle has all these features mentioned in Sharndama and Maryam (2014) definition except that there are some riddles that meet none of the requirements of a question or statement because some of the Dagbamba riddles are phrases.

Awedoba (2000) is also of the view that the riddle precedent may syntactically be a question, command, exclamation, or statement. He added that a riddle is like any sentence except that it is not contextually used and seems to be unexpectedly said without any preparation. To some extent, sentences though not used in its natural

context should convey some degree of meaning. But some of the Dagbamba riddle antecedents do not carry meaning at all even if they are used in a natural context. They are just the choice of certain meaningless string of sounds put together. The Dagbamba riddle is not in the form of exclamation and is not also in command form though they may be syntactically question or statement.

According to Simmons (1958: 2) riddle as a form of folklore poses a question and the answer that is culturally right and acceptable. Though the response to a Dagbamba riddle should be culturally correct and accepted but it is not all riddles that are questions. There are riddles that are statements, phrases and meaningless string of sounds in Dagbani. There are also instances of riddle responses that are questions or both the antecedent and the response all in the form of a question.

Finnegan (2012: 413) sees African riddles to be analogously expressed concisely and briefly with meaning, sound, rhythm and or tone. It means that riddles can be expressed concisely and briefly with a hidden meaning or with sounds, rhythm or tone without meaning. Finnegan (2012) definition therefore suits well the features of the Dagbamba riddle. Thus, a Dagbamba riddle can be defined as an analogous statement, question, or phrase, tone or rhythm, sounds that requires a response.

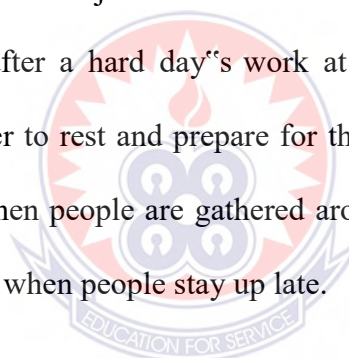
4.3 The context or setting for riddle performance among the speakers

After supper when people finish with the day's activity, they gather together at a known place for the performance of riddles. These places are known among the Dagbamba as *salingɔ̃yu ni* „riddling setting“. They gather at *salingɔ̃yu ni* „riddling setting“ to relax and prepare themselves for the next day's activity or continue with minor works usually shelling of maize and cracking of groundnut. *Salingɔ̃yu ni* is also a place where people normally have stories performed and since riddles are performed

before the real stories, they are also performed at the place where the storytelling takes place.

Apart from the Dagbamba riddle used to open or during a storytelling sessions, it is also solely used during riddling competition to come out with the one that has gotten the highest correct responses to the antecedents who would be crowned as the winner of the competition. Riddling is also used to aid work especially when gathered to remove the husk of maize or crack groundnuts in order to encourage people work tirelessly. This is mostly done among the youth of the Dagbamba but sometimes led by an elderly person or people. These elderly people train the youth in riddling.

Mostly, the Dagbamba riddles just like folktales are told in the night after supper during the dry season after a hard day's work at a place where the youth of the community always gather to rest and prepare for the next day's work. They are also told during harmattan when people are gathered around fire to warm themselves and also on moonlight nights when people stay up late.



4.4 Riddle structure

The Dagbamba riddles deal with a range of things drawn from the natural, animal, crops and the human worlds, and the responses to these riddles also circulate around the categories of things they are drawn from. These are the categories of riddles that call upon inferential reasoning. They make use of inferences in ascertaining the correct response. They also require one to observe, understand and distinguish various features that characterize the individual's surroundings. A Dagbamba riddle can thus fall under the natural world when the response points to an aspect of nature. The Dagbamba riddles are a source of learning and manipulation of verbal ambiguity. The riddle ought to offer either word with multiple meanings to come out with the correct

response. The performer must therefore have a command of alternative lexicons in other to come out with a correct response to a riddle. The performer who gives the right response indeed demonstrates an understanding of the ambiguity in the language. The riddle manipulates the ambiguities of the language with the repetition of the acceptable response using this understanding. The Dagbamba riddles therefore arm its speaker against the use of the language to threaten the classification system since the primary referent is a linguistic code. This conforms with the assertion of Haring (1985 :166) that says “Riddles surround the dangers of ambiguity with a spirit of play, then the arena for learning about ambiguities can be something as innocent as a word with a double meaning.”

To arrive at new conclusions, riddles also employ the skills of reasoning on the basis of known statements. One of the reasoning skills that the Dagbamba riddles employ is that of analogy or analogous comparisons, as the response to the Dagbamba riddle can be based on analogy and can also be justified on the relevant similarities of the attributes of two items in question. Horner and Westacott (2001) thus observe that the similarity between two things or situations is analogy.

The structure of the Dagbamba riddle is not different from the riddles identified in other languages. Thus the Dagbamba riddle has the opening formula of which all riddle performers observe in a riddling cohort.

4.4.1 Parts of the Dagbamba riddle

Apart from it being performed by two or more people, it also has two parts of which various scholars have proposed different names for these parts. Perhaps, according to the characteristics of the riddle parts in their cultures. Harries (1971) referred to these parts as “Precedent and sequent.” Yankah (1984) termed them as “Stimulus and response”. Atintono and Nsoh (2001) labeled them as “Query and response”.

Okpewho (1992) preferred calling them “Questions and answers”. But in this study the researcher will refer to these parts as *‘antecedent and response’* as most of the Dagbamba riddles are not questions but statements that require responses from the respondent. The antecedent is normally the first part or the part that precedes the other part or the answer which is herein referred to as the response. This fits into the definition of antecedent and thus triggers the researcher’s choice of the referent term in this research as *antecedent*. For the second part also being a follow up of the first part in a form of responding to whatever the first part brings on board, the researcher shall also refer to this part as the *response*. The Dagbamba riddle just like the Dagara riddle as postulate by (Kyoore, 2010) could either be in the form of a question or a statement. It is mostly the antecedent that contains the interrogative marker if the riddle is in the form of question and answer. In some rare circumstances, the Dagbamba riddle may contain an interrogative marker in both the antecedent and the response.

In the following riddle examples, the first part which is normally characterized by a full stop (.) or a question mark (?) is referred to in this research as the „antecedent“. The other part which is also sometimes among the Dagbamba riddle characterized by the same (.) and (?) as the first part but also the part the respondent gives as his/her response to the first part, is also referred to as the „response“.

Antecedent: *M ba m-bɔyi o nyu” bɔya ayi ka zi din gari di kpee?* „My father split his yam into two parts and doesn’t know the part that is bigger than the other?“

Response: *Tiŋa mini zuɣusaa dini n-gari di kpee?* „The ground and the sky which one is bigger than the other?“

Antecedent: *M ba n-lo o wahu zɔŋni ka o zuli be sambani ni.* „It is my father who ties his horse in the hall and the tail of the horse is outside.“ **Response:** *Nyɔhi* „smoke“.

Antecedent: *Lahizibulahizibu* „surprises“. **Response:** *Wahu ka naba ka duri tia* „a snake has no legs but climbs a tree.“

Antecedent: *M piliŋ ka luŋa* „my small knife doesn’t have a lead.“ **Response:** *Toli ŋɔ ni zeya ŋɔ di mali luŋa?* „Does this mortar standing have a lid?“

In the above riddle examples, it can be observed that unlike other languages like „Akan“ where the first and second parts of the riddle parts are always questions and answers respectively. All the Dagbamba riddle parts could be statements and/or questions. Thus the antecedent and the response can either be a statement or a question. This therefore triggers the researcher’s choice of the „antecedent (A) and response (R)“ for the first and second part respectively of the riddle parts in this study.

4.4.2 Opening formula

The Dagbamba word *salinlɔha* „riddles“ is a compound word made up of *salima* „stories“ and *lɔha* „fermented agent“. The Dagbamba therefore ferment stories as they always call for the opening of a riddle by saying *Ti lɔhimiya salima* „let us ferment stories“. Just like a causal agent of fermentation during the brewing of pito, riddles are to bring up a storytelling session. This is similar to the assertion of so many anthropologists of riddle being a prelude to storytelling. Riddle performance starts when a volunteer requests for the start of riddles as a preparation for storytelling or a riddling contest. *Ti lɔhimiya salinlɔha, ti lɔhimiya salinlɔha* „let us riddle, let us riddle“ is normally the call the volunteer makes and the rest of the people will accept the request by saying *to, to* „yes, yes“.

Volunteers also take turns to perform the following opening formula after calling for riddling performance.

A: *Nkpaanjo* „what do you know?“

R: *Bɔ balibu?* „What types?“

A: *Paya viela balibu* „types of beautiful ladies.“

R: *Man zo n-zo nti pii Samira* „I run and run to choose Samira.“

The above, as the opening formulae for two different forms of riddles that is yet to be discussed in this study (simple and tone) of the Dagbamba riddle, signifies that, only those who can give the most correct responses will be given worthwhile gifts by the opponent or the listeners. This is seen in the second antecedent and the response. Thus, Samira is probably the most beautiful among all the beautiful ladies and it is only the best runner who stands the chance to choose her. Generally, the person who gives the most responses is symbolically given a present such as a lady, a house or an animal as a motivation.

Apart from these formula, *ti duyimiya tuya* „let’s cook beans“ is specifically used to open the Dagbamba song riddle.

4.4.2.1 *Binkɔbiri kubu* ‘Killing of animals’

Though very closely related to the South African „bird riddle“ of Jordon (1958) cited in Finnegan (2012), it is used to open a riddling session. It is a kind of a competitive dialogue between two or more people. Unlike the South African „bird riddle“ which the riddlee’s assertion about a bird is analogically likened to a type of person, this involves the killing of animals. Greed is the social vice shamed in this type of riddle opening as it teaches the Dagbamba society to share the little that they have with others using the tiniest animal in it to bring to bare the intentions of the performer. A volunteer starts by calling on others to start „killing animals“ that is, the volunteer says *Ti kumiya binkɔbiri* „let’s kill animals“. The initiator then begins by mentioning that

he/she has killed a particular animal like goat and the rest of the people would say the animal is small, another person would also „kills“ a different animal and the normal response of „it is small“ and it continuous till someone „kill“the tiniest animal. In this type of opening, the performers normally start killing the smallest animal to the biggest and again end with the tiniest animal. Below is an example of „killing of animal“ used as an opening formula of a riddling session among the Dagbamba.

Excerpt 1

A: *Mani kɔrigi noo* „I have slaughtered a fowl.“

R: *O pɔra* „It is small.“

A: *Mani kɔrigi piɛyu* „I have slaughtered a sheep.“

R: *O pɔra* „it is small.“

A: *Mani kɔrigi nahu* „I have slaughtered a cow.“

R: *O pɔra* „It is small.“

A: *Mani kɔrigi wɔbigu* „I have slaughtered an elephant.“

R: *O pɔra* „It is small.“

A: *Mani kɔrigi salinsaa* „I have slaughtered an ant.“

1st R: *Mani yihi o suhu m-pahi n suhi ηɔ ni* „I have removed its heart and add it to this my heart.“

2nd R: *Mani zaŋ o zaa dii vali* „I have swallowed it all.“

As observed in the above, one of the Dagbamba riddle opening type involving „killing of animals“ has no specific animal or limitation on the number of animals to kill within this riddle opening cohort. But what matters is that, the beginning of this form of riddle opening among the Dagbamba should always be a killing of a smaller animal to a bigger animal and the end always ends with the tiniest animal. The ant is always the animal the Dagbamba always kill at the end of the „animal killing“ riddle opening. The response is always the same till the last animal when there are two responses for one antecedent, where the first respondent would always remove and swallow the

heart of the animal and the second respondent also swallows the remaining body of the killed animal usually an ant. One may ask why they rejected the rest of the animals which are relatively bigger than the ant at the beginning and only go for the tiniest among all the animals killed. All these have relationships with the society and not just mere killing and acceptance of the tiniest animal. It has a good number of relationships with the society. These relationships would be discussed in the later section of this study.

4.4.3. The relationship between the antecedent and the response of the Dagbamba riddle.

Some of the Dagbamba riddle parts (antecedent and response) have no semantic relationship. For example the antecedent *N sasarigasaa* „my sasarigasaa” semantically refer to nothing in Dagbani. Therefore it has no semantic relationship with the response *Noo ni nyuri ɲɔ o duuna?* Which literally means „Fowl drinks but does it urinate?” The string of words in the antecedent may semantically refer to nothing in the language. In other words, they may be string of meaningless sounds in the language employed by the riddle performer. However, this antecedent have a corresponding meaningful string of words as a response(s) in the language. This gives a semantic mismatch between the riddle antecedent and the response in this kind of the Dagbamba riddle. Most of these form of riddles with this structure normally have tonal fits between the parts.

Since oral literature makes its appeal through the ears of the audience and also through the meaning and logic contained in words, the appeal could be strong due to high premium placed on it, hence the performer sometimes uses certain “nonsense” words or sounds just to entertain or may be to fill the gap caused by forgetfulness

(Okpewho, 1992: 78), and since the determination of the correct response to a riddle lies solidly in the hands of the riddler, the riddler may decide to use meaningless sounds when he/she forgets the next riddle to pose and accept or reject any response given by the riddlee just to avoid any awkward break or save him/herself from embarrassment and also to please the audience. This probably accounts for the semantic mismatch in the antecedent and the response of some of these Dagbamba riddles most especially the tonal riddles. Others kinds of the Dagbamba riddle on the other hand, will have both the antecedent and the response decodable in the language. Therefore, the strings of words in the antecedent and the response would both have meaning even if they both do not refer to the same lexical item but they would both have complete meaning. Excerpt 2 below shows riddle examples with semantic fit or mismatch.

Excerpt 2.

- A:** *N sasarigasaa* „just a string of sounds.“
- R:** *Noo ni nyuri ηɔ o duuna?* „Fowl drinks but does it urinate?“
- A:** *N kaa katiri kaa katiri kaa katiri ka* „just a string of sounds.“
- R:** *Daantaliga ziri yɔyira ka ziri gurilɔ ka ziri mɔri* „center pole in the middle of a round hut carries the beams, rafters and grass of a building.“
- A:** *N tambie kɔrikɔlaakoo* „my termite (a string of sounds)“
- R:** *Kpema ηun dira ηuna m-mali luya* „the elderly who eats grows fat belly.“
- A:** *O filiɪ filoo baninto* „just a string of sounds.“
- R:** *Faralana ze la o zaa ni, bundana ka balima* „The poor has his/her stand, the rich needs no plea.“
- A:** *Mani n-chani ka di lihiri ma ka n ti lahi kunna ka di lihiri ma?* „When I was going, it was looking at me and when I was coming back it was looking at me?“
- R:** *Voli* „hole.“

- A:** *Nyubil* „zee ze sokpaŋa? „My little red pot is by the roadside?“
- R:** *Bulimbuyu* „custard apple.“
- A:** *Mani n-sɔŋ n layafu nti bi lahi nya li* „I have kept my cowries (then money) down and cannot find it again.“
- R:** *Nintɔri* „Saliva.“

In the first four riddles examples of excerpt 2, the antecedents „*sasarigasaa*“, „*kaa katiri kaa katiri kaa katiri ka*“, „*ɔrikɔlaakoo*“ and „*fiili filoo baninto*“ are meaningless strings of sounds in the language that are used to antecede the responses from the listeners. These sounds created by the performer for the riddling purpose, nonetheless have a known response with definite referent lexical items and meaning in the language. This thus create a semantic mismatch between the antecedent and the response in this riddle type parts. But the opposite is true about this phenomena in the last three riddles examples of the excerpt. In these riddles, the antecedents and their corresponding responses are meaningful constructions in the language. This makes the antecedents and the responses to be semantically fit and creating a relationship between these two parts (antecedent and response), because of the semantic correlation the antecedent and the response have.

4.4.4 Question particles referring to who and what riddles

The interrogatives *Duni* „who“ and *Bɔ* „what“ are mostly used in the question and answer riddle form of the Dagbamba riddle. Bascom (1949) opines that while the American riddle lack the interrogative “What”, only few of the West African riddles are stated without interrogators “Who and what”, and that these are neither “natural” nor obvious forms of statement and Dagbani is one of the West African riddles with this phenomenon. The interrogative *Duni* „who“ is mostly found in a simple riddle. In this riddle antecedent and the response *Duni n-lee kpaai simpayiri che gooni?* „**Who** has poured the groundnut shell against the wall?“ *Duni lee zaŋ pay*“ *vieliga ŋɔ ti zom*

ḡ? „**Who** has given this beautiful lady to this visually impaired?“ For instance, has the interrogative marker *Duni* ‘**Who**’ in both the antecedent and the response in the riddle while *Bɔ* „what“ is also mostly used in *Tuya duyibu* „song riddle“ of the Dagbamba riddle type. In *Tuya duyibu*, the interrogative *bɔ* „what“ is found in all the antecedents of this kind of riddle. For example, in the first antecedent *Bɔ m-be a nolini?* „What is in your mouth?“ The interrogative marker *bɔ* „what“ begins the antecedent and subsequently found in all the antecedents of *Tuya duyibu* as a type of the Dagbamba riddle.

4.4.5 Pronouns in riddles

Possessive pronouns are mostly used also in the antecedent of the Dagbamba riddle. The possessive pronoun *n* „my/mine“ is normally found in the antecedent of most Dagbamba riddles. This pronoun could either be represented as *n* or *m* depending on the environment but most predominantly used in the Dagbamba riddle is *m*. This is because of the predominant use of *ba* „father“ in the Dagbamba riddle normally preceded by the possessive pronoun, thus making the pronoun assimilate the place of articulation of the bilabial sound /b/. This riddle antecedent *N tikun pielli layilayi ze mɔyu sunsuuni?* „**My** dried pure white tree stands in the midst of the wilderness?“ has a response of *Galli* „egg.“ And the riddle antecedent *M ba yili niyi m-beni, be paai nay" tuhili, ka be zanɔdi gab" yini lɔri be zaa?* „**My** father“s cattle ranch has over a thousand cattle and they are all tied with a single rope?“ also with the response *Sɔyu* „Broom.“ The two examples both contain the possessive pronouns *n* and *m* respectively occurring in different environment in the beginning of both riddle antecedents. This is a phenomenon peculiar to simple and tone riddle types identified among the Dagbamba culture.

The first person singular emphatic pronoun *Mani* „I“, the second person singular pronoun *a* „your“ and the third person singular pronoun *o* „he/she or his/her“ are also used in some Dagbamba riddles. The first person singular emphatic pronoun *Mani* „I“ is used by the performer of the riddle to put emphasis on the doer of the action in the riddle antecedent. It thus means that it is no other person doing the action in the riddle than me. This is mostly used in simple, tone of the Dagbamba riddle types and *Binkɔbiri kubu* „killing of animals“ as riddle opening. It is worth noting that in simple riddle for instance, whenever the first person singular emphatic pronoun is found in any riddle antecedent, the verb immediately following the pronoun will have a verbal particle /n-/ attached to the verb. This helps the emphatic pronoun to achieve a complete grammatical representation. In the riddle antecedents *Mani n-sɔŋ n layafu ka ti bi lahi nya li?* „I have kept my cowries (then money) and cannot trace it?“ *Mani n-zani kpe ka nya Lingbuŋ buyum?* „I stood here and saw *Lingbuŋ*’s fire?“ *Nintɔri* „Saliva“ and *Vabipum* „flowers of red silk cotton tree“ respectively are the responses of these two antecedents. These antecedents contain the first person emphatic pronoun *Mani* which all have the verbal particle /n-/ attached to the verbs *sɔŋ* „to help“ and *zani* „stood“ to help the pronoun harmer on who actually is the doer of the actions in the riddles. The statement will be ungrammatical without the verbal particle attached to the verb. However, this phenomenon is mostly not the case if the sentence is negative or if the verb following the emphatic pronoun takes a perfective marker /-ya/ or /-mi/. On the other hand, in killing of animals the use of *Mani* „I“ as a pronoun does not put any emphasis on who does the action. Therefore the verbal particle will not be attached to the verb following the pronoun. For instance, the use of the emphatic pronoun in the killing of animals antecedent *Mani kɔrigi salinsaa* „I have slaughtered an ant“ does not have a verbal particle attached to the verb *kɔrigi* „to slaughter“ in it

The second person singular pronoun is another type of pronoun employed by the riddler in the Dagbamba riddling contest. The second person singular pronoun *a*, is used in some Dagbamba riddles though not quite predominantly used. But when used by the riddler especially in the antecedent, the antecedent will be in two parts made up of a dependent and independent clauses. The first part of the antecedent will mostly be a dependent clause followed by independent clause. In the dependent clause, there is mostly the use of „if“ as the first part of the antecedent of the riddle. The second part which is the independent clause, will also have the second person pronoun as the subject of the independent clause but the independent clause will also contain a negative marker *bi* „not“, this is seen in these two examples of the riddle antecedents. *A yi zeya, a bi ziina?* „If you are standing, don’t you sit?“ and *A yi zeya, a bi kperina?* „If you are standing, aren’t you coming in?“ In these riddle antecedents, the first part of all the antecedents are dependent clauses while the second part of the antecedents also being the independent clauses with the „if“ and the negative marker „not“. But the responses are *Daantaliga* „the center pole in the middle of the round hut“ and *Dundopayirili* „gate“ respectively. Therefore the antecedent of the riddle with the second person singular *a* pronoun is mostly made up of the dependent and independent clauses.

The last pronoun rarely used though by the riddler in the Dagbamba riddle is *o* „his/hers.“ The pronoun *o* „his/hers“ is not commonly used by the riddler, the researcher only had this pronoun being the subject of some tone riddle type of the Dagbani riddle. *O filiilii filiilo baninto* „just a string of sounds“ as an antecedent has its subject being the pronoun *o* „his/hers.“ This type of pronoun is not commonly seen in the Dagbamba riddles. This example of riddle has a response of *Faralana ze la o zaa*

ni, bundana ka balima „the poor has his/her stand, the rich needs no plea.“ This same pronoun *o* is also contained in the first clause of the response.

4.4.6 Reduplication in riddles

The other phenomenon in the structure of the Dagbamba riddle is reduplication. This is a phonological phenomenon employed by the riddler to explicitly express him/herself in a riddling context. This phenomenon is mostly found in the riddle antecedent. The phenomenon of reduplication is mostly associated with verbs and adjectives in the Dagbamba riddle. The following instances are to show reduplication in riddles.

For instance, in this riddle, *N ti'' kuŋ pielli layilayi ze mɔyɔ sunsuuni?* „My whitish dried tree is standing in the middle of the bush?“ *Gali* „a fruit of ebony tree.“ In this riddle antecedent, *layilayi* „whitish“ is used to put emphasis on the colour *pielli* „white“ the feature of a dried ebony tree. This is a reduplicated form of *layi* „to court/to smear“ which changes its grammatical function to an adjective in its reduplicated form *layilayi* „whitish“.

Furthermore, in the riddle, *Daboli zuyɔ tuya yɔyiyɔyɔ?* „Greenish beans on the hill?“ *A tuzopaya yi kuli viela ka bɔ, a ku tooi lahi bo o payatali* „no matter how beautiful one's sister is, one cannot take her as a wife.“ In this riddle antecedent, *yɔyiyɔyɔ* „greenish“ which changes its grammatical function to an adjective is the reduplicated form of the verb *yɔyɔ* „sprinkle“, is reduplicated in the riddle to lay emphasis on the appearance of such a lady of prohibition. This tells us the extent of the beauty of this lady of prohibition.

Again, in this riddle antecedent *Tampina zuyɔ gandimgandim?* „Proudly on the ridges in the farm?“ with *A yiŋa zuyɔ ka a mali kpiɔŋ* „it is because your home that you are is

strong“ as the response, has *gandim* „spaced out“ being reduplicated as *gandimgandim* „spaced out one by one.“ This emphasizes on the rate and manner at which this person walks because he/she is in his/her house. The Dagbamba riddle could therefore make use of reduplication in their performances to emphasize on an issue or an idea.

4.5 Classification of the riddles

By their question and response and by the nature of their economical use of words, riddles are generally distinguishable. Not all the riddles are however obviously questions that demand responses from the respondent. But a response is expected from the respondent even if it is a statement. Riddles are normally characterized by the use of an indirect referent that is similar to something else, which must then be identified by the respondent. The Dagbamba riddle normally plays off acoustics, images, visuals, or situational rather than playing on words.

Finnegan (2012) observes that the most commonly recorded African riddles are simple, tone, song riddles. According to Finnegan (2012) simple riddles are in simple phrase or statement form indirectly referring to a well-known object. In the tone riddle the analogy involved is meaningless in the language but of rhythm, sound, or tone, often with a longer response and a tone resemblance between the antecedent and the response. The song riddles are in the form of action songs and sometimes accompanying a dance. Finnegan (Ibid) however states that Simmons (1958: 125) and Jordan (1958: 102-3) recorded proverb and the bird riddles among the Anang Ibibio in Nigeria and in South Africa respectively. Notably, the Dagbamba riddle classification fits into the first three categories of the most commonly recorded forms of African riddles stated by Finnegan (2012), that is simple, tone and song riddles. This is because each type of the Dagbamba riddle have a similar characteristics associated to each type recorded stated in Finnegan (2012).

Okpewho (1992) surveys different forms of African riddles but finally adopted the classification of riddles made by Doke (1947). That is simple, problem and the song riddles as fundamental of his discussion. Okpewho (Ibid) further explains that the performance of Doke (1947) simple riddle is done by only two people where one is the proponent and the other the respondent. The simple riddle may form part of the preface of a storytelling session. Okpewho (1992) further classified tone riddles reported by Simmons (1958) of Efik and Ibibio under simple riddles in which the tones of the antecedent mostly match the tones of the response. Okpewho (1992) however failed to discuss the problem and the song riddles. Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila (2010) classified some Ghanaian riddles into types I, II and III after their survey. Where the type I is also called the „universal riddle“ due to the cross-cultural occurrence of this type of riddles. That a common feature of this type of riddle is the metaphorical correspondent in the antecedent and the response as observed by Yankah (1985: 89-90) as cited in Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila (2010). That the antecedent could either be a question or a statement requiring a response depending on the culture. The antecedent of a universal riddle is often long and sometimes with just a word as the response. They drew their data from the Akan and the Farefari languages. The riddle type II according Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila (2010) is known variously as tone and proverb riddles but they may also call it poetic riddles due to their poetic structure observed by Yankah (1983) cited in Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila (2010) and Atintono and Nsoh (2001). Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila (2010) also observe that tone riddles are recorded in most of the Mabia languages across West Africa and other parts of Africa. That there is always a tonal fit but semantic mismatch between the antecedent and the response. They draw their data from Luo of Kenya in Sunkuli and Maruka (1993) and Fante and Farifari languages of Ghana.

They however noted that there is not always a complete tonal correspondence between the antecedent and the response. The type III riddle recorded by Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila (2010) is the song riddle. They identified this type for Farifare and Dagbani but no data has been drawn from Dagbani. They are of the view that, this type of riddle said on song tone, is more fixed in form than others and are recitals. That one song riddle is made up of several antecedents and responses with related lines. The characteristics of the type III riddles can be recorded among the Dagbamba. But unlike the Farifare song riddle where one person serves as the proponent and the respondent at the same time, there is sometimes a proponent and a respondent in the performance of the Dagbamba song riddle. The opening antecedent of the song riddle is also a question contrary to a statement among the Farifare.

From the foregoing discussion on the classification of riddles of various scholars, it is worth to note that all these scholars base their classification of riddles on similar characteristics and features. Thus riddles with the same characteristics and similar features are grouped under one type. In this study, the Dagbamba riddles will also be classified base on their similarities and differences. The classification of the Dagbamba riddles will therefore follow the pattern of Finnegan (2012) though the same classification is done by Nsoh, Fushein and Ababila (2010) but the referent terms of the riddle types differ. Thus the Dagbamba riddles are classified under three that is simple riddle, tone riddle and song riddle.

4.5.1 Simple riddle

In simple riddles, some generalized image is suggested and the response involved points to the particular implied object. The response is the name of the suggested object in the antecedent. This could sometimes be a word or more with the analogy of a meaning. The respondent must identify the similarity of situation, character, or

behaviour in the antecedent and its response. The antecedents and the responses of this type of the Dagbamba riddle is characterized by questions or statements. That is, the antecedent and the response could either be a question or a statement form. If the interrogative marker is not therefore present in the antecedent, the riddler deduces it contextually and respond accordingly. Sometimes the antecedent and the response of the same riddle could all be questions depending on the type of question particle in the antecedent. Riddles antecedents with „who“ question particles mostly have „who“ question particles in their responses. The riddler therefore poses a question or statement demanding an answer or response from the riddlee.

The assertion of Finnegan (2012), that simple riddles are in simple phrase or statement form indirectly referring to a well-known object matches with the Dagbamba simple riddle. The Dagbamba have a type of riddle that fits into the characteristics of this simple riddle identified by Finnegan (Ibid), hence the emergence of simple riddle type among the Dagbamba. According to Finnegan (2012) the simple riddle type seems to be the most common African form, probably the basis of which Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila (2010) refer to this type as „universal riddle“ due to its cross cultural existence.

Yankah (1985: 89-90) cited in Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila (2010) observes a metaphorical correspondence between the antecedent and the response as a common feature of this riddle type. This type is usually performed by two people or a group of people forming riddle teams. In some cultures the response is normally in a long phrase with a relatively shorter antecedent. In the case of the Dagbamba riddle, the antecedent is not always shorter than the response, only in few occasions that one may see the antecedent shorter than the response and sometimes the antecedent will even be longer than the response. This is seen in Excerpt 2 below.

Excerpt 3.

- A:** *M ba yili kpariba m-beni, be yi kuriya be sayisila taba, be yi yiyisi zani ka gari taba?* „In my father’s house they are farmers, when they are bent down they have the same height, when they are standing they have different heights?“
- R:** *Nubihi* „fingers.“
- A:** *M piri piri ku nyaan du?* „Wearing slippers cannot climb.“
- R:** *Duni m-min piri damda n-du tia?* „Who has ever wear slippers to climb a tree?“
- A:** *Duni n-lee kpaai simpayiri n-che gooni ηɔ?* „Who has poured groundnut shells on this wall?“
- R:** *Duni n-lee zaη pay vielli ηɔ n-ti zom ηɔ?* „Who has given this beautiful lady to this blind man?“

In the examples of excerpt 2 above, one would realize that unlike the other examples, the first example has a longer antecedent and a corresponding shorter response. The first example also has an interrogative marker at the end of its antecedent with a corresponding statement as a response. The response *Nubihi* „fingers“ metaphorically refers to the farmers in my father’s house when stretched, the fingers have different heights but when the fingers are folded all the fingers have the same height. Culturally it is prohibited to climb a tree with ones slippers on. One will definitely not be able to hold firm to a tree when climbing with his/her slippers on, this could lead to the person slipping off the tree. This is depicted in the riddle response *Duni m-min piri damda n-du tia?* „Who has ever wear slippers to climb a tree?“ *Duni* „who“ as an interrogative marker is in both the riddle antecedent and the response of the last riddle example. It therefore implies that both the riddle antecedent and the response are questions. The last riddle is an insult, the performer tries to use a wall to metaphorically represent the blind. The wall will never realize the hit of something. This is likened to the blind man’s inability to appreciate the beauty in the lady given to him as a wife because beauty can be appreciated through the sense of sight and the

blind cannot see. So there is no need giving a beautiful lady to a blind because the blind do not deserve a beautiful lady. This is seen in the response *Duni n-lee zan pay* “*vielli ηɔ n-ti zom ηɔ?* „Who has given this beautiful lady to this blind man?“ The rest of the examples almost have the same length in both the antecedent and the response and the interrogative marker placed at the end of both the antecedent and the response. The interrogative marker *Duni* „who“ begins both the riddle antecedent and the response of this riddle example.

4.5.2 Tone riddles

Among the Dagbamba, there are also other riddles in which the analogy involved is not semantically fit in the language but of rhythm, sound, or tone, often with a longer response. Sometimes there is a rhythm or balance between the antecedent and the response. This rhythm is just the composition of ideophones and meaningless words suggesting some acoustic image that appear as the antecedent. Besides the rhythmic pattern, the analogy may have tone resemblance of the antecedent and response. This type of riddles mostly are identified in languages in which tonality is a significant feature as postulated by scholars like (Finnegan, 2012; Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila 2010; Okpewho 1992; Finnegan 1977; Finnegan 1970) cited everywhere in the review. Dagbani is not an exception since tone is phonemic in Dagbani. Thus, the Dagbamba tone riddles antecedents and responses are marked by identical or similar tonal patterns. There is a semantic mismatch between the antecedent and the response in this riddle type. But nonetheless they all share the same characteristics that the analogy between antecedent and response is primarily one form of tone and perhaps rhythm rather than meaning. This type of riddles are referred to as tone riddles. The antecedent often consists of just one word with a meaningless string of sounds or phrase to suggest the response through its sounds alone. Contrary to Finnegan (2012)

these sounds does not give any direct onomatopoeic impression in Dagbani. The sounds are just ideophones conventionally recognized in the culture and are used to convey the acoustic image, without any immediate obvious implicit acoustic analogy in the antecedent. The Dagbamba tone riddle unlike other tone riddles may not always have a complete tonal match between the antecedent and the response. Though Okpewho (1992: 244) emphasize on the tonal correspondence between the antecedent and response, he however admits that there are a good number of cases of tonal dissimilarities between the antecedent and the response. There is always a short rhythm of sounds as the antecedent with a correspondent long response. This is seen in excerpt 4 below;

Excerpt 4.

- A:** *N sàsàrigàsáá?* „Just a string of sounds (ideophone).“
- R:** *Nóó nì nyùrì ñɔ o dúúná?* „Fowl drinks but does it urinate?“
- A:** *N káá kàtìrì káá kàtìrì káá kàtìrì kà* „just a string of sounds (ideophone).“
- R:** *Dáántàligà zìrì yɔyìrà kà zìrì gùrilɔ kà zìrì mɔrì* „center pole in the middle of a round hut) carries the beams, rafters and grass (of a building)
- A:** *N tàmbiè kɔrikòláákóó* „my termite (a string of sounds)
- R:** *Kpèmà ñùn dírà ñùnà m-màlì lùyà* „the elderly who eats grows fat belly.“
- A:** *O fíllí fílóó bânìntò* „just a string of sounds.“
- R:** *Fàràlàrà zèlè o záá nì bündàrà kà bàlimà* „the poor has his/her stand, the rich is not to be pleaded with.“
- A:** *M bəlìgbəlìɣ pàtì* „My smooth skink.“
- R:** *Wàligù sàhà pànì nyebìrìlà dùnòlì nì* „vagina is fucked at the entrance of a door in warm season.“

In the first example in excerpt 4, the tone in the antecedent *N sàsàrigàsáá?* „Just a string of sounds (ideophone)“, has no direct correspondence with that of its response

Nóó nì nyùrì *ηο ο dúúná?* „Fowl drinks but does it urinate?“ except in the last syllables *sáá* and *ná* where we have both syllables in high tones probably due to the presence of the question mark, just to differentiate between the question and normal statements. The sound *sàsàrìgàsáá* is just ideophones conventionally recognized among riddlers and used to convey the acoustic image in the antecedent. There is no natural connection between this riddle antecedent and the response that someone who is unfamiliar with the culture can readily identify. But the response is performed with some semantic features with the use of decodable words, this thus creates a semantic mismatch between this antecedent and its response of the riddle. This is typical of the Dagbamba tone riddle. On the other hand, there is a complete low tone resemblance between the antecedent in the example 5 of excerpt 3 *M bəlìgbəlìg pàtì* „My smooth skink“ and the response *Wàligù sàhà pàni nyebirilà dùnòli nì* „vagina is fucked at the entrance of a door in warm season“ as they both are performed in low tone. The antecedent in this example is also in a short phrase and in a rhythm of sound. This example is characterized by sexual referent and allusion which thus conforms with the assertion of Simmons (1956) *Ibibio* tone riddles cited in Finnegan (2012). However, not all the Dagbamba tone riddles contain sexual referent in them. With the tone riddle, one could therefore, say that there is always not a case of a tonal correspondence of the Dagbamba tone riddle. But there is always a semantic mismatch between the antecedent and the response and also a short rhythm of sound (antecedent) and its correspondent long response in the Dagbamba tone riddle.

It therefore means that all the examples in excerpt 3 have either a complete or similar tonal correspondence between the antecedent and the response. The antecedents are also in rhythm sound or conventionalized ideophones used to convey acoustic image

except in the last example where the antecedent is a phrase. They cannot therefore be out rightly understood by somebody who is not familiar with the Dagbamba culture.

4.5.3. Song riddles (*Tuya duyibu*)

Another form of riddle recorded among the Dagbamba is the song riddle. This type of riddle is different from the other ones because it is in the form of action songs. The song riddle is sometimes accompanied with a dance.

Song riddles have also been reported of the Makua of Tanzania by Harries (1942) and Farifare riddles by Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila (2010). Unlike the other forms of riddles, the song riddle is mostly sung either by an individual who proposes the riddle and responds to it himself using the last words of the response as the antecedent which is always preceded by an interrogative. Or an individual who proposes the riddle to be responded by a group of performers. This, therefore, signifies that one song riddle is a composition of several antecedents and responses and each line of the song riddle is related. In some cases, the performance of song riddles may be more than two individuals. Apart from the song riddle been sang, it is also accompanied with gestures and dance during its enactment among the Dagbamba. Contrary to the observation made by Nsoh, Fusheini and Ababila (2010) of the Farifare song riddle where the opening line is a statement, the opening line of the Dagbamba song riddle is always a question. Some of the words in the Dagbamba song riddle are meaningless words in the language but are idiomatically used as referents to some euphemism. The final statement is mostly a proverb relevant to the riddle theme and the society at large. Dagbamba song riddles conforms with Finnegan (2012) assertion that song riddles are characterized by their erotic content and allusion, practically referring to sex. The Dagbamba song riddle was originally performed among females. Probably to

have sex groupings due to the culture frowning against opposite sex groupings at the time. A song riddle among the Dagbamba is seen in excerpt 5 below.

Excerpt 5.

- | | |
|---|---|
| A: <i>Bɔ m be a nolini?</i> „What is in your mouth?“ | R: <i>Tuya</i> „beans.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ tuya?</i> „What beans?“ | R: <i>Tuya bandi</i> „beans fetters.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ bandi?</i> „What fetters?“ | R: <i>Bandi kulo</i> „fetters <i>kulo</i> (meaningless)“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ kulo?</i> „What <i>kulo</i> ?“ | R: <i>Kulo kpam</i> „ <i>kulo</i> oil.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ kpam?</i> „What oil?“ | R: <i>Kpam diti</i> „ugly oil.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ diti?</i> „What ugly?“ | R: <i>Diti sangara</i> „ugly problem.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ sangara?</i> „What problem?“ | R: <i>Sangara suyulo</i> „patient“s problem.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ suyulo?</i> „What patient?“ | R: <i>Suyulo ku n-kpe</i> „patient can’t enter.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ ku n-kpe?</i> „What can’t enter?“ | R: <i>Ku n-kpe yemba</i> „ <i>yemba</i> (meaningless) can’t enter.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ yemba?</i> „What <i>yemba</i> ?“ | R: <i>Yemba payisara</i> „ <i>yemba</i> ladies.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ payisara?</i> „What ladies?“ | R: <i>Payisara dii</i> „really ladies.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ dii?</i> „What really?“ | R: <i>Dii dii lam</i> „really taste.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ lam?</i> „What taste?“ | R: <i>Lam tari</i> „taste plaster.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ tari?</i> „What plaster?“ | R: <i>Tari bolo</i> „slippery plaster.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ bolo?</i> „What slippery?“ | R: <i>Bolo wumsi</i> „nurses slippery.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ wumsi?</i> „What nurses?“ | R: <i>Wumsi chayila</i> „nurses jingles.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ chayila?</i> „What jingles?“ | R: <i>Chayila fiiyo</i> „jingles <i>fiiyo</i> (meaningless).“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ fiiyo?</i> „What <i>fiiyo</i> ?“ | R: <i>Fiiyo gɔŋ</i> „ <i>fiiyo</i> crooked.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ gɔŋ?</i> „What crooked?“ | R: <i>Gɔŋ piti</i> „tasteless crooked.“ |
| A: <i>Bɔ piti?</i> „What tasteless?“ | R: <i>Piti zaa m-bala ka n bi nya sheli. Daadali bincherili ka so ŋun nya m-mali gɔyira.</i> „Lit: It is |

the market day's rag that someone gets and brags with it."

From the preceding example, one would observe that a response to any antecedent is always preceded by repeated word following the interrogative marker *Bɔ* „What?“ after the first response to the first antecedent. That is the first word in the first response constitutes the second antecedent. And thereafter, the second word in the response will always constitute the next antecedent. Or the second word in the subsequent antecedents after the first antecedent will always constitute the response. For example, *tuya* „beans“ in the first response can either constitute the second antecedent and or the second response. *Bandi* „fetters“ in the second response can also constitute the third antecedent or the third response. This is literarily termed as *pilling* which will be discussed later in this study. Words such as *kulo*, *yemba*, and *fiiyo* are meaningless words introduced in the riddle to keep the suspense and are used just to develop fluency skills in children when they continuously perform riddles. The performer also introduces semantic ambiguity by symbolically using words like *diti* to mean something that loses its original colour. *Bolo* also to mean something that looks slippery, in this case sperms. *Chayila* to mean testicles symbolically, *fiiyo* to mean also something that is liked by everyone. *Gɔŋ* to symbolically mean penis and *piti* to mean something that can't be orally tasted or something tasteless. The message this tone riddle literally carries is that, there is something that is hidden somewhere, when one is introduced to it one will be fettered to it. This thing looks like an oil that has lost its original colour. This oil is accompanied with problems and with patience the problems get into you. When tested, one is plastered and stitched to this oil though tasteless and slippery and from a bent thing, nursed in the testicles and liked by everyone. Rejecting it will mean losing greatly and paving a way for someone else to enjoy what you either lost or feel it is not worth enjoying and feel proud of it.

Accordingly, it is not only the things that we taste through the mouth that we feel or enjoy the taste but there are other places within human body that we also feel or enjoy the taste of something. Apparently when we critically examine this riddle, the riddler is trying to juxtapose menace and importance of sex through the figurative use of the words. To the married because premarital sex was frowned upon and sometimes a punishable offence among the Dagbamba. Thus, sex is something that is enjoyable though normally not done through the mouth that normally senses sweetness. Once one practice sex he/she becomes a slave to sex because ones instincts will drag one to it especially when the sperm turns to fertilize and every „normal“ human being likes sex. One may also not want to stop it for the fear of regret for someone else to grasp, enjoy and boast with it.

4.6 Literary devices used in the Dagbamba riddles

The most interesting and attractive aspect of most literary works and the identification and analysis of features of any art form is one of the important aspects of the study of literature. Literary devices are techniques employed by riddlers to enable them produce special effect in the riddles. This may be readily observed from the riddle structure particularly in the use of literary devices. These literary devices are appropriately and effectively combined in the riddle to create suspense. It is worth to note that, it may not be possible for a riddler to compose and perform a riddle without employing any literary device in its right dosage (Atintono and Nsoh, 2001). Thus, riddles and literary devices are intertwined. Riddlers employ language resource for the excitement and entertainment of their audience. The Dagbamba riddler is not an exception to the use of language for entertainment and excitement of his/her audience. They achieve this through the use of sounds or words and logical meaning contained in these words as oral literature is that kind of literature delivered by word of mouth to

the audience. Some of these sound related devices employed in the Dagbamba riddle include, alliteration, metaphor, parallelism, imagery, ideophones, symbolism, personification, repetition, piling or linking and assonance. These devices are discussed below.

4.6.1 Alliteration

Alliteration is a phenomenon of most of the Dagbamba riddles when a series of words in a line or words closer to each other have the same first consonant sound. The riddler as one of the styles in riddling, employs the use of the same first consonant sounds in the performance of riddles. This is to enable the performer place important ideas and messages in strategic places throughout the riddles. In this riddle antecedent *N kaa katiri kaa katiri kaa katiri ka* „just a string of sounds“ for instance, the first consonant sound /k/ is repeated in all the words except the pronoun to enhance a rhythmic effect and makes a melodic flows to the ears. This suggests to the performer that the important idea or message in this particular riddle is strategically placed in the sound /k/. The performer therefore focuses on this sound in responding to the riddle. In its response *Daantaliga ziri yoyira ka ziri gurilo ka ziri mɔri* „center pole in the middle of a round hut, carries the beams, rafters and grass of a building“. The sound /z/ as the first sound, appeared between every two words which also creates a phenomenon of the same first consonant sound repeated in the same riddle to create a riddle rhythmic sound pattern. This focuses the attention of the performers to the carrying activity described in the riddle. For riddles mostly performed by children, the introduction of rhymes in riddles will develop their language and communication skills. This help the performers notice the sounds and work with the sounds within words. Again, in the riddle *Dme n-ɲme ku lebi?* „Decorate and decorate will not turn?“ *Duni m-min ɲme dundɔŋ ka lahi lebigi li ɲme?* „Who has ever decorated a

courtyard and turned around to destroy it?” The appearance of the digraph /ɲm/ in both the riddle antecedent and the response is to enhance a rhythmic sound effect in the riddle. The performer in this riddle places the important message of decoration and destruction of a courtyard in this alliterated sound /ɲm/. In that, the riddlee will focus on this sound and respond accordingly with something that cannot be turned upside down to decorate the other side in its decoration and that is courtyard. In trying to decorate the other side of a courtyard, one will be destroying the decorated part and who will be ready to destroy what the person has wasted resources in decorating. Hence the response „Who has ever decorated a courtyard and turn to destroy it?” Again, the sound /l/ also repeatedly appeared in the response as a result of the performer employing alliteration in the riddle. In the response of this riddle, *Gaa wula kpe nee wula ni?* „The roots of the ebony tree have entered the roots of the *nee* tree.” *Kum kana/luna ka nabih kɔhi taba di* „hunger has set in and descendants of chiefs sell each other to survive.” The sound /k/ in the response appeared to be the first sound of those words which makes the sound pattern of those words the same as they all begin with the same sound. The sound /k/ also exposes the hidden idea of descendants of chiefs selling each other in times of hunger through the alliterated sound /w/ in the antecedent. All the first consonant sounds repeated in the riddles are examples of alliteration which serve as building blocks in the riddles in terms of the enhancement of the sound effect.

4.6.2 Metaphor

Metaphor is a literary term employed by the riddler to compare two things by a direct reference. In the riddle *Ɔman" kara tam kpaliga zuɣu?* „Big calabashes on a *kpaliga* (a type of a tree).“ *Nabi" kara kpaɣiri nam zuɣu* „powerful descendants of chiefs struggling for a title.“ *Ɔman" kara* „big calabashes“ are directly referring to the

„powerful descendants of chiefs“ *Nabi“ kara*, comparing the size of the two calabashes to the descendants of the chiefs in the riddle. Furthermore, *tuya yɔyiyɔyi* „fresh beans“ used in the riddle antecedent *Daboli zuɔu tuya yɔyiyɔyi?* „Fresh beans on the hill?“ is the metaphorical representation of *tuzopaya* „sister“ in the response *A tuzopaya yi kuli viela ka bɔ, a ku tooi lahi bo o payatali* „no matter how beautiful one“s sister is, one cannot take her as a wife.“ The state of beauty of one“s sister is directly compared to the state of a bean plant, in this case a fresh bean plant. The freshness of the leaves of a growing bean plant is compared to the features of beauty of a young lady in this riddle. Thus, the „powerful descendants of chiefs“ *Nabi“ kara* and *tuzopaya vielli“* „beautiful sister“ are directly compared to *Dman“ kara* „big calabashes“ and *tuya yɔyiyɔyi* „fresh beans“ respectively to reason and to understand the world.

4.6.3 Parallelism

Parallelism is the complementary use of phrases, clauses or sentences with similar structure or meaning. It also balances the relationship between independent ideas and images from one another and transposes adjacent lines of identical units of speech or identical words. Often, it is used where the thought of one line is often repeated with some degree of variations. Through this, the performer emphasizes issues, subjects and messages in the riddle both to the performers as well as to the listeners. The following examples show instances of parallel structures in riddles.

An instance of a change in assigning meanings is found in the riddle *Maanto“ yini to n-duyi tɔbu?* „Dried okra pounded and cooked a soup?“ *Buyumsal“ yini maali pali daanya* „one charcoal of fire used to lit many.“ As *Maanto“ yini* „dried okra“ is substituted with „a charcoal“ but with similar functions and meaning, hence a phenomenon of semantic and lexical parallelism in the same riddle. The riddler tries to show the connection a charcoal of fire used to lit many others have with pounding

just an okra to cook soup. This relationship draws the attention of the performer to an important notion that one too can make a difference. This parallelism is used to achieve a sense of fullness as well as to impress the audience with the in-depth and variety of the wisdom the performer has in riddles.

To balance the relationship between the idea of the antecedent and the idea of the response, the riddler employed a lexical parallelism in the riddle antecedent *Kaya pu kpe ka pu kpe?* „A bundle of stalk heaped here and heaped there.“ with a response of *A nyiriga vooi kpe ka vooi kpe* „your anus is twisted here and twisted there.“ The riddler tries to substitute *pu* „heaped“ with *vooi* „twisted“. Though these lexical items are different, they are employed by the riddler to balance the idea in the antecedent and the response of this riddle. The performer also uses *kpe* „here/there“ to transpose the identical units of words between the antecedent and the response.

Also in the riddle, *No "sabiliga nyuni gulinyaana?* „Black fowl sitting at the backyard?“ *Saa ku gbunni* „the rain has gathered clouds below.“ The colour *sabiliga* „black“ in the antecedent is substituted with the rain cloud which is also black in the response of the riddle. This relates the phenomenon in this riddle to a lexical parallelism. Thus, the concept of blackness exposed by the seating fowl outside the yard is also exposed in the cloud formed by the rain, this balances the relationship between the idea of the antecedent and the idea of the response of this particular riddle. Again, *No "sabiliga* „black fowl“ is represented in the response by *saa* „rain“, *nyuni* „sitting“ also represented by *ku* gathered/formed and *gulinyaana* „backyard“ is also represented by *gbunni* „below“. It thus makes all the lexical items in the antecedent replaced with different lexical items with similar referents in the response. This also transposes the identical units of speech between the antecedent and the response.

Dme n-ηme ku lebi? „Decorate and decorate will not turn?“ *Duni m-min ηme dundɔy ka lahi lebigi li ηme?* „Who has ever decorated a courtyard and turned to destroy it?“ „*Dme*“ repeatedly appeared in both the riddle antecedent and the response is a parallel structure the performer employed to create a rhyme which serves also as a building blocks of the riddle in terms of sound effect. It is also the word that makes the antecedent and the response identical hence it transposes the antecedent and the response as the identical units.

Furthermore, in the riddle *N kaa katiri kaa katiri kaa katiri ka* „just a string of sounds“, with a response *Daantaliga ziri yɔyira ka ziri gurilɔ ka ziri mɔri* „center pole in the middle of a round hut, carries the beams, rafters and grass of a building“. The words „*kaa*“ and „*katiri*“ in the riddle antecedent and „*ziri*“ in its response are parallel structures employed by the performer to create an internal rhyme within the phrase.

4.6.4 Imagery

This is the type of literary device that employs the use of words to create mental pictures. The riddler employs some words to create some pictures in the minds of the audience. The riddle genre mostly accounts for semiotic study.

The riddle antecedent *M bandɔyu fi wurugu ni?* „My lizard is inside the husk?“ with the response *Kum saha chi ηubirila lɔηni* „in times of hunger, guinea corn is chewed in the throat“ creates a mental picture of how people behave in times of hunger. Due to hardship and high rate of accessibility of food, the riddle creates a mental picture of how people hide food from colleagues/friends when eating during hunger.

Again, the riddle antecedent *Tampina zuyu gandimgandim?* „Proudly on ridges?“ Presumes the way ridges are spaced from one another which suggests that for someone to walk on them, he/she must walk with gaps between the legs and

sometimes jumping from one ridge to the other. The way and manner the person carries him/herself walking on the ridges gives a resemblance of a posture of a proud person when walking and visualizing this image created in one's mind. Also, the visualization of the picture created mentally in the way someone who feels pompous in his house, depicted in the riddle response *A yiŋa zuyu ka a mali kpioŋ* „it is because of your house that you are strong.“ Creates a connection between the image created by the riddle antecedent and the response in the mind. This link created is the posture of both the one walking on ridges and the one who feels pompous in his/her house. Visualizing this posture of these two persons gives rise to imagery.

In the riddle antecedent *M ba m-mali o kpariba ka be zaa pili zupil* „zehi? „My father has his farm workers and they are all wearing red hats?“ the mental picture that is created by the performer is seen in its response *Kpaliwɔla* „*kpaliga* (a type of a tree) fruits.“ Anybody who knows the features of this particular fruit *Kpaliwɔla* „*kpaliga* (a type of a tree) fruits“, as the response to the riddle antecedent that has used the same features *zupil* „zehi „red hats“ identified in the fruit in the farm workers. He/she visualizes the connections the „red hats“ have with the features of the „*kpaliga* (a type of a tree) fruits“ and draws a picture with these connections mentally as the fruits also „wear“ red hats. The imaginations and visualization of the thought found in the riddle antecedent and the response create a particular picture in the mind of the performer, hence a riddle imagery.

In addition, the riddle *Dman* „*kara tam kpaliga zuyu?* „Big calabashes on a *kpaliga* (a type of a tree).“ *Nabi* „*kara kpayiri nam zuyu* „big/powerful descendants of chiefs struggling for a title.“ Someone listening to this riddle will be imagining how delicate calabashes are to be on top of a tree and how they got to the top of the tree without being broken. What is holding them to the tree and what actually will happen to these

ɲman''kara „big calabashes“ when they fall from the tree or hit each other on the tree? These mental pictures drew by the calabashes out of the antecedent of the riddle are linked to *Nabi''kara* „big/powerful descendants of chiefs“ in the response of the riddle. If powerful descendants of chiefs struggle for a particular title in a chiefdom, the most powerful will ascend to the throne. The less powerful one(s) who also have interest in the same title will coil back and allow the powerful ones to compete among themselves to come out with the most powerful who will be crowned. In the cause of this struggle, a lot of things would have happened. They could resort to any kind of spiritual acts that will enable them to either neutralize the powers of each other or get crowned. They could even resort to eliminating each other in order to get crowned. Visualizing and imagining the consequences of the struggle is the mental picture created in peoples“ minds when this riddle is performed.

In addition, the riddle antecedent *Daboli zuɣu tuya ɣɔɣiyɔɣi?* „Fresh beans on the hill?“ draws a mental picture of beans on a hill which actually looks very fresh because nobody can have access of harvesting them due to where it is. The struggles one will even go through if he/she wants to have access to them is not going to be easy. The difficulty in having one“s sister as a wife no matter how beautiful one“s sister is, creates the imagery in the riddle antecedent and the response.

It is therefore the imaginations and visualization of the connections or relationships that are found in a riddle antecedent and its response that the performers use in riddling. Thus the riddlee visualizes the image created in the antecedent and look around the environment to determine the image that is connected or has a relationship with the antecedent. The image or object that has these connections or relationship is therefore use to respond to the antecedent.

4.6.5 Ideophones

Ideophones are another means the riddler employs to exploit the effects of sound. Ideophones rely on sounds to convey ideas. These sounds are not normal words that convey meanings but they give vivid phonological representation of the personality of something used to achieve stronger sensual impact than words in the language could have done. Ideophones also vivify speeches with a complete thought by creating fresh picture of an event and convey contrasting images (Okpewho, 1992). This is a device that is employed most in the tone riddles among the Dagbamba. Most of these tone riddles have their antecedents containing words that evoke ideas in sounds often giving vivid impression of certain sensations or sensory perception. For instance, in this tone riddle antecedent *N kaa katiri kaa katiri kaa katiri ka*, the riddler made use of the sounds to convey an idea on how a round hut or any room is roofed in the response that says, *Daantaliga ziri yɔyira ka ziri gurilo ka ziri mɔri* „center pole in the middle of a round hut, carries the beams, rafters and grass of a building.“ This thus gives an idea of the order of which a round hut or any other room is roofed. In roofing a round hut, the center pole is erected first to carry the beam, the rafters and the grasses and without these order, there would not be roofing especially a round hut. *Kaa* which appear three times in the antecedent, each appearance represents an object. The first appearance represents the center pole, the second appearance also represents the beams and the last appearance represents the rafters. The last sound *ka* also represents the grasses. According to Ben-Amos (1976), “success in untangling the true meaning of the riddle from the knots of verbal deceit depends upon the confirmation of the solution by the riddle poser.” This is probably why there are ideophonic words in riddles as the riddler can settle on any response to the ideophones used in riddling. Thus, the riddler in an attempt to immerse the winner in a riddle

contest, could create an ideophone and settle on his/her own response as he/she rejects all responses given to the riddle by the riddlee. This perhaps could trigger the introduction of ideophones in riddle performance. Ben-Amos (1976) however observes that the riddler can reject certain responses to riddles on one occasion and accept those same responses the next time, as long as he is able to advantageously maintain his social position. Ben-Amos further observes that the social manipulations of truth is an important attribute of riddles which results to its capacity for multiple responses. The bolded parts in the antecedents of the following Dagbamba riddles, *N sasarigasaa*, *N tambie k̄rik̄laakoo*, *O filīi filīoo baninto*, are ideophones that give vivid phonological representation employed by the performer to convey their respective ideas as *Noo ni nyuri ŋɔ o duuna* „fowl drinks but does it urinates?“, *Kpema ŋun dira ŋuni m-mali luya* „the elderly who eats grows fat“ and *Faralan zela o zani, bundana ka balima* „the poor has his/her stands, the rich is not to be pleaded with“ respectively as their responses. The riddler employing the use of ideophones resulting to the use of unrelated objects may be aimed at affording no clues to the riddlee and utmost confusing the riddlee.

4.6.6 Symbolism

Symbolism is the use of concrete or familiar objects as a reference to or as an explanation of an abstract idea or less familiar object or event (Okpewho, 1992: 101). This is a device employed by the Dagbamba riddler in most of the riddles as the riddler tries to convey certain important truth or lessons about the Dagbamba and existence problems employing familiar objects within their environment to explain the abstract ideas. In the riddle antecedent *Gaa wula kpe nee wula ni?* „The roots of the ebony tree have entered the roots of the *nee* tree“ for instance, the roots of the ebony tree and the *nee* tree are familiar objects used to explain the abstract ideas. The

explanation to this abstract idea(s) is/are found in the riddle response *Kum kana/luna ka nabihi kɔhi taba di* „hunger has set in and descendants of chiefs sell each other to survive.“ Therefore, the use of the familiar objects in the antecedent are used to give more explanation of the behavior descendants of chiefs put out in times of hunger. Descendants of chiefs resort to any means even if it demands selling their colleagues for survival in times of hunger. And if descendants of chiefs can go extra mile in selling their colleague descendants for survival, then the commoners will have no place in the community.

In this riddle antecedent *Wɔyirili pu zɔŋ ni?* „A great person stacked in the stable?“ with a corresponding response *Dabɔbili* „a bundle of firewood“, *Dabɔbili* „a bundle of firewood“ as a familiar object is used to express idea of how it will be when a great person is stacked in the stable. *Dabɔbili* „a bundle of firewood“ is also easily noticed when it is lying in the stable and so will the great person be noticed stacked in the stable. All these abstract ideas in the riddle response are expressed through the use of the known object *Dabɔbili* „a bundle of firewood“.

In the riddle antecedent, *M ba yili kpariba m-beni, be zaa pilila zupil" piela?* „In my father's house, they live farm workers who are all wearing white hats?“ with the response *Kpini* „guinea fowls“ all express an abstract idea of similarities between what are in the heads of both the *kpariba* „farm workers“ and the *Kpini* „guinea fowls.“ The *kpariba* „farm workers“ have white hats on their heads which serve as what they can be identified with as farm workers and the guinea fowls too have the headcap skin and the helmet as their unique features. The abstract idea of characteristics features of things is expressed in this riddle by likening the features of the farm workers to that of the guinea fowls.

4.6.7 Personification

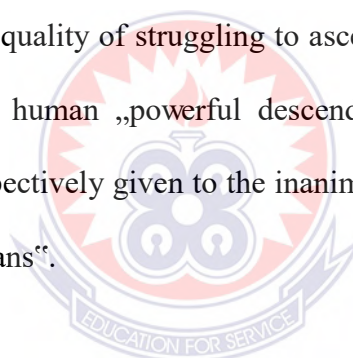
Personification is attributing human qualities to an imaginary creature. This literary term is employed in the Dagbamba riddle by the performers to give life to the descriptions in the riddles for easy understanding of the meaning of the action and nature of the inanimate in the riddle and also give accurate response to the antecedent. This helps the performer to relate ideas and objects to people to effectively convey meanings. The performer employs personification to also connect the performer and audience to the personified object in the riddle.

In the riddle antecedent *M ba m-mali o kpariba ka be zaa pili zupil* "zēhi? „My father has his farm workers and they are all wearing red hats?“ *kpariba* „farm workers“ are represented by the inanimate response *kpaliwɔla* „*kpaliga* (a type of a tree) fruits.“ Thus, *Kpaliwɔla* „*kpaliga* (a type of a tree) fruits“, is the doer of the action *pili* „wear“ in the antecedent. Therefore, the riddler has employed personification in this riddle by making *kpaliwɔla* „*kpaliga* (a type of a tree) fruits“ to perform the action in the riddle antecedent. Though these „fruits“ by their features are in black and red thereby making a resemblances of the „farm workers“ who in the riddle are also wearing red hats but they are not human beings for them to be wearing hats. But nonetheless, the riddler uses the resemblance in these referent items to relate the idea of wearing hats to the fruits to effectively convey the idea he/she intended to put across to the audience in the riddle.

Again, personification as a literary term is employed in the riddle antecedent *N yi dira nti yen wum nyayisim shee n timi?* „To enjoy the taste of the food I am eating, I have to vomit“, by personifying *Yoli* „penis“ as the response. Penis as a response to the riddle antecedent in this riddle has been represented by the abstract quality of human. Thus, penis is taken for a human in the riddle been attributed with the human qualities

of *dira* „eating“, *wum nyayisim* „enjoy the taste“ and *timi* „vomiting“. This accounts for a comprehensive description and easy understanding of the meaning of the referent object in the riddle. The personal pronoun *n* at the beginning of the riddle antecedent connects the performer to the referent object *yoli* „penis“ personified in the riddle.

Furthermore, *tuya* „beans“ used in the riddle antecedent *Daboli zuɣu tuya ɔɣiyɔɣi?* „Fresh beans on the hill?“ is the personified representation of *tuzopaya* „sister“ in the response *A tuzopaya yi kuli viela ka bɔ, a ku tooi lahi bɔ o payatali* „no matter how beautiful one’s sister is, one cannot take her as a wife.“ In addition, the riddle *Dman’ kara tam kpaliga zuɣu?* „Big calabashes on a *kpaliga* (a type of a tree)“ with a response *Nabi’ kara kpayiri nam zuɣu* „big/powerful descendants of chiefs struggling for a title“, gives human quality of struggling to ascend to a throne to big calabashes. Thus the qualities of a human „powerful descendants of chiefs“ *Nabi’ kara* and *tuzopaya* „sister“ are respectively given to the inanimate, in this case *Dman’ kara* „big calabashes“ and *tuya* „beans“.



4.6.8 Repetition

Repetition, a literary term employed by the performer of the Dagbani riddle deals with recurrent use of the same sentence, words, phrases or sound patterns a few times for emphasis. It make the idea in the riddles clearer or emphasize the significance of the recurrent word or phrase in the entire riddles. It is also sometimes used ironically to lure the listener or performer into a state of expectation and then shocked by some unexpected twist. The riddler employs „*panalepsis*“ repetitive type in the song riddle among the Dagbamba riddle type, where the riddler repeats the same words at the end and start of each antecedent and response in the entire riddle to make his/her idea clearer and also show the significance of these repeated words in the riddle.

For instance, in this riddle antecedent, *Kaya pu kpe ka pu kpe?* „A bundle of stalk heaped here and heaped there“ with the response *A nyiriga vooi kpe ka vooi kpe* „your anus is twisted here and twisted there.“ *Kpe* „here/there“ is restated in the riddle antecedent and the response as well and *pu* „heaped“ and *vooi* „twisted“ are respectively restated in the antecedent and response to emphasize on the significance of these words in the entire riddle. The restatement of these words in the riddle thus helps the performers to know which words to pay special attention to in the riddle. The characteristics of the referent idea the riddle is meant to expose is highlighted by the use of the restatement. Also, restatement of *kpe* „here/there“ in both the antecedent and the response is to link the idea in the antecedent to the response.

Also, a restatement of *ηme* „to decorate“ employed by the riddler in this riddle antecedent, *ηme n-ηme ku lebi?* „Decorate and decorate will not turn?“ with the response *ηuni m-min ηme dundɔη ka lahi lebigi li ηme?* „Who has ever decorated a courtyard and turn to destroy it?“ is to create also a rhythmic effect in the riddle and also to put more emphasis on the significance of the action „decorate“ or the idea of one unable to turn a courtyard in the riddle. Restating the verb *ηme* „to decorate“ also creates a link of the action or idea in the riddle antecedent in the response.

The song riddle of the Dagbamba riddle further employs repetition of some of its words several times in the riddle so as to create a melodic and enhance rhythmic effects in the riddle and also for emphasis.

Excerpt 6.

A: *Bɔ m be a nolini?* „What is in your mouth?“

R: *Tuya* „beans.“

A: *Bɔ tuya?* „What beans?“

R: *Tuya bandi* „beans fetters.“

A: *Bɔ bandi?* „What fetters?“

R: *Bandi kulo* „*kulo* fetters“

A: *Bɔ kulo?* „What *kulo*?“

R: *Kulo kpam* „*kulo* oil“

A: <i>Bɔ kpam?</i> „What oil?“	R: <i>Kpam dirigili</i> „faded oil“
A: <i>Bɔ dirigili?</i> „What faded?“	R: <i>Dirigili sangali</i> ‘faded problem’
A: <i>Bɔ sangali?</i> „What problem?“	R: <i>Sangali suyulo</i> „patience problem.“
A: <i>Bɔ suyulo?</i> „What patient?“	R: <i>Suyulo ku n-kpe</i> „patience can’t enter.“
A: <i>Bɔ ku n-kpe?</i> „What can’t enter?“	R: <i>Ku n-kpe yemba</i> „yemba can’t enter.“
A: <i>Bɔ yemba?</i> „What yemba?“	R: <i>Yemba tari</i> „yemba wall plaster.“
A: <i>Bɔ tari?</i> „What wall plaster?“	R: <i>Tari bolo</i> „slippery wall plaster.“
A: <i>Bɔ bolo?</i> „What bolo?“	R: <i>Bolo wumsi</i> „nurtured slippery“
A: <i>Bɔ wumsi?</i> „What wumsi?“	R: <i>Wumsi chayila</i> „jingles nurtured.“
A: <i>Bɔ chayila?</i> „What jingles?“	R: <i>Chayila fiyo</i> „fiyo jingles“
A: <i>Bɔ fiyo?</i> „What fiyo?“	R: <i>Fiyo gɔɔ</i> „crooked fiyo“
A: <i>Bɔ gɔɔ?</i> „What crooked?“	R: <i>Gɔɔ piti</i> „tasteless crooked.“
A: <i>Bɔ piti?</i> „What piti?“	R: <i>Piti zaa m-bala ka m bi nya sheli. So yi je so bɔra.</i> Lit: „It is all about tasteless that I have not had anything. What someone rejects is what another person accepts.“

In the data above, the bolded words such as **tuya**, **bandi**, **kulo**, **sangali**, **suyulo**, **ku - nkpe** and the others are repeatedly employed by the riddler in both the antecedent and the response. Repetitive device accounts for more than one time appearance of these bolded words in the riddle by the performer. At least with the exception of the interrogative *Bɔ* „What“, each word in the response is repeated thrice in both the antecedent and the response. Restating these words in the riddle is to emphasize on the significance of these words and for a rhythm. These words are also served as the link between the idea in the antecedent and the ideas in the response. The performer

only introduces an interrogative *Bɔ* „What“ in the words of the response to be the antecedent of the riddle and this would have not been successful if the performer had not employed the repetitive device maintained in the riddling cohort. *Bɔ* „what“ is repeated in all the first word of all the antecedents of the song riddle to make it anaphoric. The anaphoric interrogative is therefore employed to lay emphasis on the significance of the interrogative and the need to respond to the antecedent in the riddle by the riddlee.

4.6.9 Pilling or linking

This is a type of device that makes use of repetition as the basic ingredient to the use of a form of the last detail in one line of the piece becoming the first detail in the next line. This device is commonly seen in the song riddle of the Dagbamba riddles, where the response contains a borrowed element from the antecedent making the borrowed element becoming the first detail in the response. The interest of the riddler is in the additional detail which moves the riddle forward towards the riddling climax where the respondent will end the riddle with a proverb. This is seen in the song riddle below;

Excerpt 7.

A: <i>Bɔ m be a nolini?</i> „What is in your mouth?“	R: <i>Tuya</i> „beans.“
A: <i>Bɔ tuya?</i> „What beans?“	R: <i>Tuya bandi</i> „beans fetters.“
A: <i>Bɔ bandi?</i> „What fetters?“	R: <i>Bandi kulo</i> „ <i>kulo</i> fetters“
A: <i>Bɔ kulo?</i> „What <i>kulo</i> ?“	R: <i>Kulo kpam</i> „ <i>kulo</i> oil“
A: <i>Bɔ kpam?</i> „What oil?“	R: <i>Kpam dirigili</i> „faded oil“
A: <i>Bɔ dirigili?</i> „What <i>dirigili</i> ?“	R: <i>Dirigili sangali</i> ‘faded problem’
A: <i>Bɔ sangali?</i> „What problem?“	R: <i>Sangali suyulɔ</i> „patience problem.“

A: <i>Bɔ suyulɔ?</i> „What patient?“	R: <i>Suyulɔ ku n-kpe</i> „patience can’t enter.“
A: <i>Bɔ ku n-kpe?</i> „What can’t enter?“	R: <i>Ku n-kpe yemba</i> „yemba can’t enter.“
A: <i>Bɔ yemba?</i> „What yemba?“	R: <i>Yemba tari</i> „yemba wall plaster.“
A: <i>Bɔ tari?</i> „What wall plaster?“	R: <i>Tari bolo</i> „slippery wall plaster.“
A: <i>Bɔ bolo?</i> „What bolo?“	R: <i>Bolo wumsi</i> „nurtured slippery“
A: <i>Bɔ wumsi?</i> „What wumsi?“	R: <i>Wumsi chayila</i> „jingles nurtured.“
A: <i>Bɔ chayila?</i> „What jingles?“	R: <i>Chayila fiiyo</i> „fiiyo jingles“
A: <i>Bɔ fiiyo?</i> „What fiiyo?“	R: <i>Fiiyo gɔŋ</i> „crooked fiiyo“
A: <i>Bɔ gɔŋ?</i> „What crooked?“	R: <i>Gɔŋ piti</i> „tasteless crooked.“
A: <i>Bɔ piti?</i> „What piti?“	R: <i>Piti zaa m-bala ka m bi nya sheli. Daadali bincherili ka so ŋun nya m-mali gɔyira.</i> Lit: „it all about tasteless that I have not had anything. It is the market day’s rag that someone gets and brags with it.“



The bolded words in the responses which appear to be the last details of the successive line in this case, the antecedents are the borrowed elements which also becomes the first details of the responses. Thus the last detail of the antecedent determines the first detail of the response. One can therefore predict what element begins the response. This is an account of the piling device employed by the riddler to move forward the riddle towards its climax.

It is worth to note that devices used in riddles and other forms of oral literature are designed to achieve the sense of fullness and also impress the audience with depth and variety of wisdom of the performer.

4.6.10 Assonance

The resemblance of sounds between syllables of nearby words, arising particularly from the rhyming of two or more stressed vowels, but not consonants, but also from the use of identical consonants with different vowels. It is also a repetition of vowel sounds in nearby words. It is used to reinforce the meaning of words or to set the mood. Repetition of the same vowel sound close to one another but with different consonant sounds assonance.

The riddler, in the antecedent *Dman''kara tam kpaliga zuɣu?* „Big calabashes seating on a *kpaliga* tree“ with its response *Nabi'' kara kpayiri nam zuɣu* „powerful descendants of chiefs struggling for a title“, employs the literary the repetition of the sound /a/ in almost all the syllables in both the riddle antecedent and the response to create rhyming within and also serve as a building block within the riddle.

The repeated sound /ɔ/ in both the riddle antecedent *Wɔyirili pu zɔŋ ni?* „A great person stacked in the stable?“ and a corresponding response *Dabɔbili* „a bundle of firewood“ is employed literary to create a rhyme within the riddle antecedent. Whereas the /i/ sound repeated in the riddle is also employed to serve as a building block within the riddle.

In other for a riddle to have a building block and also create a rhyme within riddles, the repetition of the sound /a/ is employed by the riddler in both the riddle antecedent *Gaa wula kpe nee wula ni?* „The roots of the ebony tree have entered the roots of the *nee* tree“ and its response *Kum kana/luna ka nabihɪ kɔhi taba di* „hunger has set in and descendants of chiefs sell each other to survive.“

Another instance of assonance in the Dagbamba riddle is the repetition of the sound /i/ in both the riddle antecedent *N kaa katiri kaa katiri kaa katiri ka* „just a string of

sounds“ and its response *Daantaliga ziri yɔyira ka ziri gurilɔ ka ziri mɔri* „center pole in the middle of a round hut, carries the beams, rafters and grass of a building“ to create a rhyme and also serve as a building block within this riddle.

It is therefore observed that the Dagbamba riddle literary makes use of assonance to create a rhyme and also to serve as a building block within the riddle.

4.7 Violating social norms

To discourage and to prevent deviant behaviors in the community, the riddler employ abusive language. The riddler in an attempt to confuse or embarrass the riddlee proposes riddles that contain abusive language to test the patience of the riddlee. The riddler resort to indecent language and insults especially in a keenly contested riddle session. With this a highly temperamental riddlee will feel intimidated and sometimes becomes confused in the session and gives wrong responses to the antecedents. The riddler eventually will have his/her way through as the winner of the contest since the number of correct responses given by the riddlee makes him/her the winner or loser of a riddle contest. Depending on the level of patience of the riddlee in the contest, the contest could sometimes abruptly end with the use of abusive language by the riddler. It is also sometimes only in a riddling session that, the performer can seize public opportunity to say the unspeakable or loose speeches and go unpunished. This gives way to the violation of what is considered socially accepted in a speech community. The literary classification of these unspeakable or lose and sanctionable speeches fallen within the categorization of *Farefare* riddles by Atintono and Nsoh (2001). The Dagbamba riddle can also be literary classified under vulgar and profanity, insults and despising riddles.

4.7.1 Vulgarity and profanity

Riddles which are considered to be unspeakable due to their features of indecency and disrespect of God or any deity within the community are performed freely without any restrictions. Some of these riddle messages for shyness or fear would not have been publicly said by anybody but for the context of riddling, anybody can say any riddle that talks about sex and also disrespects God or any deity found within the community. The following riddles give account to the above discussion.

In the riddle, *M bolinbolin pati?* „My smooth skink?“ *Waligu saha pani nyebirila dunoli ni* „vagina is fucked at the entrance of a door in a warm season.“ The phrase, *pani nyebirila* „fucking of vagina“ which should have been euphemized in its natural context as *paya bobu/golibu* is freely pronounced in the response of the riddle without any feel of shyness.

Furthermore, the response *Pan" kabiri zomi ka n nyebi m pani* „the hairs around the vagina should go away for me to fuck my vagina“ of the riddle antecedent, *Tutuyu zomi ka n labi n korinnga?* „Shrub should go away for me to stone at my partridge?“ has *pan" kabiri* „vagina hairs“, *nyebi* „to have sex“ and *pani* „vagina“ which would have been respectively euphemized as *nyiri" kabiri*, *bo* and *nyiriga/tooni* in their natural context due to the shyness attached to their pronouncement. But for a riddling context, they are pronounced freely without any shy.

In addition, one could not have just mentioned *yoli* „penis“ which is a response to the riddle antecedent *N yi dira nti yen wum nyayisim shee n timi?* „To enjoy the taste of the food I am eating, I have to vomit“, in a normal conversation due to the weight placed on its indecency among the Dagbamba. This lexical item would have been euphemized as *tooni/dabilim* „front/male organ“ in a normal speech. But for a riddling

context, mentioning *yoli* „penis“ is as simple as mentioning any other decent lexical item. *Yoli* „penis“ again mentioned in the response *Dagɔrili chani o maam yiŋa nti tuui lu kabi yoli* „a womanizer fell and breaks the penis when he was going to his lover“s house“ of the riddle *Tuŋatuŋa tukaa yɔyɔ? „Tuŋatuŋa tukaa bush?“* would not have been mentioned if it were a normal conversation. A person was considered spoilt if he/she mentions the names of these lexical items freely and publicly without the feel of shyness and euphemizing these lexical items.

But it is worth to note that modernity has changed this trend, with the exception of few individuals, people can now mention freely the lexical items, *nyebi* „to have sex“, *pan* „kɔbiri“ „vagina hairs“, *pani* „vagina“ and *yoli* „penis“ publicly or in a normal conversation without the feeling of any shyness.

4.7.2 Insults

Some of the riddles were composed to directly offend the performers especially the riddlee, when he/she realizes that the response to the riddle antecedent in contention is offensive. This is possible because, it is only the riddler who determines the correct response to a riddle. And to offend the riddlee the riddler resorts to the use offensive words as the response when he/she rejects all the responses given by the riddlee. This the riddler meant to test the patience of the riddlee in other to emerge the winner of the contest. Sometimes the contest ends abruptly due to provocation of the riddles. In this type of riddle, there is always a referent item that is similar or have a relationship with another referent item in the response as seen below.

The riddle response *A shee kpaŋ ka tiŋkpaŋ* „shebili“ „your hard waist like a village dibber“ to the antecedent *Daboli zuyu tan* „kpeeni?“ „Hard soil on the rock?“ is an example of the use of the offensive words in a riddling contest. This, the riddler

employs to provoke and confuse the riddlee in an attempt to become the winner of the contest. In the riddle antecedent, „hard soil“ is similar and related to „hard waist“ hence „hard soil“ in the antecedent is likened to „hard waist“ in the response. The riddler therefore deliberately uses these phrases as an offensive tool in the riddle to disarm his/her opponent in the quest to be the winner in the contest.

Again, *do "jilli* „man’s sinew“ in *M pulimpun do "jilli?* „My *pulimpun* (type of tree) of man’s sinew?“ as the antecedent of the response *Kami tuzuɔ ka n zili a kɔɔ bin* „*kpayili* „make a head-pad for me to put a leper’s hard feces on your head“ is related to the „leper’s hard feces“ in the response which is derogatory.

Furthermore, *A nyiriga vooi kpe ka vooi kpe* „your anus is twisted here and twisted there“ as a response to the riddle antecedent *Kaya pu kpe ka pu kpe?* „A bundle of stock heaped here and heaped there“, is an insult intentionally aimed at provoking and confusing the riddlee in a performance so as to pave a way for the riddler to be crowned as the winner of the contest.

The riddle antecedent *Duni n-lee kpaai simpayiri ɔɔ n-che gooni ɔɔ?* „Who has poured groundnut husk on this wall?“ with its response *Duni n-lee zaɔ pay "vielli ɔɔ n-ti zoma ɔɔ?* „Who has given this beautiful lady to this blind man?“ is an indirect insult to the blind in the society. For the fact that the blind cannot see and appreciate the beauty in his wife due to his disability, does not take away his right to have a beautiful wife for he is also a human being just like any other person. Therefore asking to know who actually gave the blind a beautiful lady is an insult since the riddle response is meant to question the appropriateness or fitness and the match of the blind and the beautiful lady.

As discussed above, some of these riddles that are directly performed to insult are employed by riddlers in a riddle contest as a way of provoking and confusing the opponent to pave a way for a win in the contest, others indirectly insult people with disabilities.

4.7.3 Despising persons

Among the Dagbamba, it is not just a taboo to speak ill about persons with disabilities but also a respect for the Supreme Being who has a special concern of fighting for such persons. Sometimes for the fear of being visited by the same spirits behind the deformities of persons with disabilities, as persons with disabilities are believed to possess some kind of spiritual powers to cast on people who despise them, people refrain from speaking ill of persons with disabilities. This conforms with the observation made by Atintono and Nsoh (2001) among the Farefari. But it is worth to note that, not all Dagbamba riddles are performed to despise people. In a riddling context, riddles aimed at despising persons with disabilities are performed freely, unpunished and without any fear of being visited with the same deformity.

The riddle *Duni n-lee kpaai simpayiri ηϯ n-che gooni ηϯ?* „Who has poured groundnut husk on this wall?“ *Duni n-lee zaη pay“ vielli ηϯ n-ti zoma ηϯ?* „Who has given this beautiful lady to this blind?“ shows some degree of disrespect to the blind. Blind as a disability among the Dagbamba in the days passed was believed to be a curse rained on the affected individual and the family by a Spiritual Being through disrespect. The affected people were also believed to be possessing some spiritual powers. As a result, nobody could call the affected person by the type of disability that is associated with the person. So for the blind not to feel insulted he was euphemized as *ninitarim* because of the fear of being visited by the same disability, and also to respect the Supreme Being for He is the giver of all fortunes and misfortunes. In the riddle above,

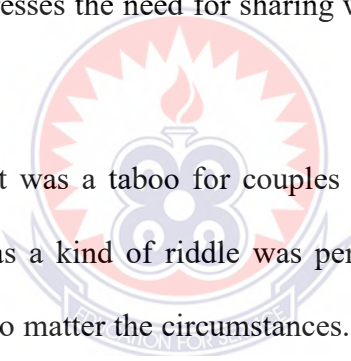
the blind is highly demeaned by blaming whoever gave the beautiful lady to the blind who cannot appreciate the beauty in the lady due to his blindness. This is represented in the riddle by the husk of the groundnut being poured against the wall. Thus, the wall will not even notice the hit of the groundnut husk because it does not feel anything. So it is useless to have a beautiful wife as a blind person because the blind cannot appreciate beauty.

4.8 The relationship the Dagbamba riddle has with the Dagbamba society

Just like other forms of oral literature, riddles reflect the Dagbamba culture which thus require knowledge of the Dagbamba culture for one to guess the answer of any riddle. Apart from riddles serving as a source of entertainment, showing how fast or intelligent an individual is, bringing unity among the people, influencing someone's action and teaching rules as social conduct. The Dagbamba riddle also has a number of relationships with the Dagbana as a people. Some of these relationships are from the interpretations of these riddles. The Dagbamba riddle has much more to do with real life situations than mere mentioning of objects as referents and responses.

The Dagbamba „killing of animals“ is not a mere „killing of animals“ but have a number of relationships with the Dagbamba society. These relationships include; No matter how big one makes it in life, he/she should not forget of his/her beginning as everyone will always begin with nothing and will go with nothing to the creator. Because of this, one needs to share the little that he/she has with others who in one way or the other might not be able to have what the person has at that particular moment. This is manifested in the last part of the „killing of animals“ where someone slaughters an ant and everyone wants to get a part of the ant, taking into consideration the size of an ant and the number of persons who want to have their own share of the ant.

Content is another relationship that has been drawn from the „killing of animals“. With what one has no matter how small or big it is one should always be okay with it. An ant is the smallest living thing in the „killing of animals“ context but all the participants of the „killing of animals“ want to have a part of the ant. In reality one cannot actually see the heart of an ant but they have something good in the heart that is worth emulating. An ant will send whatever it gets outside its hole into its hole for all of the ants in the hole to eat no matter how small it may be and even lead the other ants to a bigger source of food for all to grab a share out of that. This again symbolizes unity and the sense of togetherness and that is what has informed the riddler to share and swallow an ant together just to ensure that they behave exactly like the ant. It again buttresses the need for sharing with colleagues the little we have as sharing is caring.



Among the Dagbamba, it was a taboo for couples to divorce in the olden day, the Dagbamba song riddle, as a kind of riddle was performed to highlight the need of couples to stay together no matter the circumstances. In the song riddle, the performer tries to use certain words to depict how couples should live together. The use of *bandi and tari* „fettors and wall plaster“ in the riddle implies when two individuals agree to become couples, they are fettered to one another. They are supposed to do everything in common and also see each other as one as they have agreed to live together under one roof. With this no matter the circumstance, even when situations become *diti* „faded/hard“ an individual needs not try to break the fettors that binds them together as this could lead to destruction. When these fettors are removed, the two families that agreed to marry their children to each other will definitely also break ties thereby creating problems between these families which affects their generation and unborn generations. It is worth noting that, no family member from either family would be

allowed to marry or have any dealings with the other. This sometimes leads to pouring curses on the family members depending on the degree of the damages caused by the divorce. To avoid this, the performer tries to introduce *suyulo* „patience“ in the riddle to tell couples to always have patience in dealing with each other and that with patience everything is possible. On the other hand, the performer also tries to say in the riddle that, no matter how bad something is, there is always something good about it too. So if one let go the marriage, someone else will go for what you could not keep and live with it for there is always something he/she will like about the person you have left and you will lose. This is depicted in the final response of the riddle which is a proverb that says that, *Daadali bincherili ka so nun pihi mali gɔhira* „It is the market day“s rag that someone gets and brags with it.“ Or *so yi je so bora* „if you don“t like something someone else likes it.“

Another popular riddle among the Dagbamba, *N lii?* „A little fire“ has its response as *Yilibila buyum* „a small house“s fire.“ This relates to numbers of people in a family. The Dagbamba tradition has it that bigger numbers in a family means wealth. For that matter, families with larger numbers must necessarily be wealthier than families with smaller numbers. This is depicted in their marriages and the way they procreate. In the olden day Dagbɔŋ, the number of acres cultivated by someone was increased as soon as the person starts giving birth to male children as the main source of income was through farming and it was male children who use to go to farm. Families with large numbers of male children were the families with larger farmlands and thereafter harvest large quantities of the produce. Therefore, having large number of children among the Dagbamba was tantamount to being wealthy.

Furthermore, the riddle, *M ba yili kpariba m-beni, be yi kuriya be sayisi la taba, be yi yiyisi n-zani ka gari taba?* „In my father“s house there are farmers, when they are bent

they are of the same height but when they are standing they are taller than each other?" Has its response as *Nubihi* „fingers.“ This is also related to the real life of the Dagbana, thus in this world whether white or black, tall or short, fat or slim rich or poor, we are all human beings. Again all human beings are made from the same process and shall go through the same processes. But we all have different behaviors, levels of wealth, levels of intelligent, and all kinds of differences found in humans within a society. Again, even in the eyes of God human beings are ranked based on the levels of their faith. Therefore, the Dagbana sees his fellow Dagbana or any other person to be the same and treat everyone equally despite the differences within a particular society.

N kufiri ku n-tu „just a string of sounds“. *Duni m-min ηooi mɔpilli ka lahi labisili tu?* „Who has ever removed a single grass from a roof made of grasses and again put it back?“ This riddle relates the grass to human tongue, where one cannot out rightly withdraw completely whatever has been said through the tongue. The riddle therefore creates the awareness of the Dagbamba to examine critically any word that is said through one's mouth or whatever one says before bringing it out to the public domain. Publicly saying any abusive word could lead to a misunderstanding within the society. It could also be used as evidence against the person in the future. In other words, it warns the Dagbamba against impoliteness and to be conscious of whatever is delivered by word of mouth as they do not know what it could lead to.

Mani n chana ka di be n tooni ka be n nyaanya „there is something in front of me and at my back when I am walking“. *Soli* „Path“. No matter where one finds him/herself, he/she should know that there are people he/she would always be above the individual or under the person and these are the same people he/she would be meeting when

climbing or declining. So he should accord equal respect to all the people he meets on this earth.

The Dagbamba riddle is related to real life in diverse ways depending on the main theme of the riddle as seen above. The Dagbamba riddles are meant to educate the people on what to expect in life and sometimes how to deal with issues emerging in life and not to merely entertain. These are not said in plain language to the understanding of a layman but they are figuratively constructed and need critical thinking just like the response of the riddle that also needs a critical thinking before getting the correct response for a riddle.

Summary

From the foregoing, it is clear that Dagbamba riddle can be defined as an analogous statement, question, or phrase, tone or rhythm, sounds that requires a response.

„Let’s riddle“, „let’s cook beans“, „let’s kill animals“, and „what do you know?“ „What types?“ „Types of beautiful ladies“, I run and run to choose ... are all opening formula for general and specific types of riddles performed at a known place called *salingoyu ni* after supper as a prelude to a storytelling session or solely in a contest.

It can also be noted from the discussion that not all the riddles are obviously questions that demand responses from the respondent. But a response is expected from the respondent even if it is a statement. Riddles are normally characterized by the use of an indirect referent that is similar to something else, which must then be identified by the respondent. The Dagbamba riddle normally plays off acoustics, images, visual, or situational rather than playing on words. These riddle parts could have meaning relationship or otherwise, in other words the Dagbamba riddle antecedent and the response could fit or mismatch semantically. Most of the Dagbamba riddle

antecedents start with a pronoun and riddles with „who“ question marker in the antecedent often have „who“ question marker in the response too.

Basically, the Dagbamba riddles are classified into simple, tone and song riddles. Simple riddles are in simple phrase or statement form indirectly referring to a well-known object or thing. Tone riddle analogy involves meaningless language of rhythm, sound, or tone, often with a longer response and a tone resemblance between the antecedent and the response. Song riddles are also in the form of action songs and sometimes accompanying a dance or gestures.

Literary devices such as alliteration, metaphor, parallelism, imagery, ideophones, symbolism, personification, repetition, piling or linking and assonance are seen being effectively employed to provide deeper understanding, enable the fullest use of one’s imaginative skills to visualize situations and also serve as building blocks in riddles in terms of the sound effect in an attempt to create the internal rhythm and rhyme within the riddle.

Riddles again, violate societal norms as some of them employ the use of profane language, insulting individuals and despise persons as they are used to speak ill about persons with different forms of disabilities.

Riddling performance is a means of learning among the Dagbamba. Thus riddling performance equips an individual with lifelong skills through the development of the individual’s cognitive, moral and social senses as it dwells much more on real life situations than mere mentioning of objects. This enables the performers of riddles embrace the skills of co-operation, teamwork and develop a sense of togetherness that make them useful and sociable in the community. Riddle performers also gain more experiences about life and their social surroundings which enable them develop sense

of intellectual satisfaction. Knowledge acquired from the riddles gives rise to didacticism in riddles. These heavily rely on analogical and inferential skills of both the riddler and riddlee as argued above.

Finally, this study has argued against the position of some anthropologists who assert that, African riddles represent merely a form of entertainment for children. Riddles are much more than this as riddles are expressions of what people see in their social environment and are part of the culture, economic and politics of a given society. They also educate their speakers on their culture since they are on life experiences and observations.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This is the final chapter of the study. In this chapter I provide the summary, findings and recommendations.

5.1 Summary

Chapter One introduces the study, it elaborates on the background to the study; that is a brief history of the Dagbamba. The chapter also presents the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, objective of the study, research questions, methodology of the study, significance of the study, limitations, delimitations and as well as the organization of the study.

Chapter Two presents a review of related literature in other languages. This includes the discussions on the definition, types, functions, style and structure and setting of riddles. Oral literature vis-a-vis the need to document oral literature is treated in this chapter. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Chapter Three gives a detailed account of the methodology used for the study. This includes the methods used in presenting and analyzing the data, research design, participants and sources of the data. The chapter also concludes with a summary.

In Chapter Four the researcher gives a detailed analysis of riddles, and the structure of the riddles. The selected riddles in this chapter indicate how the performers of riddles use alliteration, metaphor, parallelism, imagery, ideophones, symbolisms, personification, repetitions, piling or linking and varying degrees of assonance and other literary terms to effect artistry in the various riddles.

Chapter Five presents the summary, findings and recommendations of the study.

5.2 Findings

The key findings of this study are stated as follows:

The Dagbamba riddles have opening formulas that open the entire riddling session and specific opening formulas of „killing of animals“ and song riddles. „Killing of animals“ as an opening formula is closely related to the „bird riddle“ reported by Jordon (1958) cited in Finnegan (2012).

The Dagbamba riddle like other riddles in other languages discussed in the literature has a structure which usually has an antecedent and a response. The antecedent is very simple but the response may vary from one word to a sentence.

The Dagbamba riddles are performed at *salingɔ̃yu ni* after supper as a prelude to a storytelling session or solely in a contest and normally play off acoustics, images, visuals, or situational rather than playing on words.

It is also established that, the Dagbamba riddles are classified into simple riddle, tone riddle and song riddles. Simple riddles are in simple phrase or statement form indirectly referring to a well-known object. Tone riddle analogy involves meaningless language of rhythm, sound, or tone, often with a longer response and a tone resemblance between the antecedent and the response. There is a semantic mismatch between the antecedent and the response of a tone riddle. Song riddles are also in the form of action songs and sometimes accompanying a dance or gestures.

Literary devices such as alliteration, metaphor, parallelism, imagery, ideophones, symbolism, personification, repetition, piling or linking and assonance are effectively employed to enable the riddler produce special effect in the riddle. These literary devices are appropriately and effectively combined in the riddle to create suspense,

provide deeper understanding, enables the fullest use of one's imaginative skills to visualize situations and also serve as building blocks in riddles in terms of the sound effect in an attempt to create the internal rhythm and rhyme within the riddle.

It is also argued that Dagbamba riddles violate societal norms as some of them employ the use of profane language, insulting individuals and despise persons as they are used to speak ill about persons with different forms of disabilities freely in public.

The relationships that exist between the Dagbamba riddles and the Dagbana are expressed with the use of concrete objects in the riddles and therefore need a critical examination. These usually express lamentation, appreciation, critiquing an individual or the whole community and also sound caution to people as well as stressing on team work.

This study has also confirmed that these riddles are part of the Dagbamba oral literature. This is because they are performed and transmitted by word of mouth and passed down from generation to generation.

Riddles belong to the field of Dagbamba oral literature. It has been proven that they are inextricably integrated into the Dagbamba oral literature. It was also discovered that all the riddles that have been selected are traditional riddles.

The main participants of the Dagbamba riddle game are children with varied functions of entertainment, educational, intellectual and emotional. Also the various circumstances riddles intended to touch on, to a greater degree of relevance and usefulness, may impress generations to come and is a broad outline of a people's point of view with respect to the culture and language.

It is also quite clear that there is a conscious effort by composers of such oral forms to serve the purpose of preserving the oral art of the Dagbamba culture through the use of exalted language.

5.3 Conclusions

The study shows that Dagbamba riddles are stylistically composed, even though the performers are merely performing social activities, they do use literary terms in their compositions. A study of these riddles reveals that these performers have a mastery of many artistic literary terms native to the Dagbamba. Therefore, riddles thus play an important role in the oral literary performance among the Dagbamba.

The Dagbamba riddles are invariably artistic and make the audience determine whether these performances as a form of entertainment are well performed or not. It is very interesting to note that a performer who fails to satisfy the artistry considerations of the audience may lose the respect accorded him by the audience and may not be allowed to take part in future performances.

5.4 Recommendations

1. The study did not capture other genres among the Dagbamba as they are all performed by word of mouth. Future researchers should therefore record, transcribe, translate and give a more detailed analysis of Dagbamba songs, proverbs, dirges, and other oral forms to help preserve these Dagbamba oral literary forms.
2. Riddles are an important aspect of oral tradition among the Dagbamba, but many people especially the younger generation do not put any value on them. They are disregarded because our culture has been influenced by the introduction of foreign cultures leading to modernization and lack of understanding, enjoyment, appreciation and interest in our oral traditions. The younger generation is, therefore, denied the opportunity to appreciate these oral forms due to cultural alienation. The younger

generation should be encourage to go into oral literature as culture revolves much around oral literature.

3. Ghanaian language teachers need to appreciate that studying oral literary forms goes beyond mere narration and documentation but a much deeper literary analysis of this forms will give a better understanding of these literary forms which will arouse the interest of people in them especially the younger generation.

4. Educational institutions in Dagbɔŋ should also be encouraged to help organize and contribute to the collection and preservation of these oral forms of the Dagbamba, especially given that many of the elderly performers are virtually dying out.



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