CULTURAL HERITAGE | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Imagery of Dagaare and Waala proverbs: Visual eisegesis

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Abstract: The purpose of the study was to develop visual icons from the mental imagery of Dagaare and Waala proverbs from the people in the Upper West Region of Ghana intending to fit them into the contemporary academic picture-learning pattern. It aimed at creating sensory connections between the learners and their subjects, for stronger attention, interest, acceptance, and retention. Though there are abounding studies on the Akan, Ga and Ewe proverbs, there is no study on the Dagaare and Waala proverbs and how they could be used for cultural education in Ghana. The study fills this gap in the studies of proverbs in the Ghanaian context by developing iconic visual imagery for selected Dagaare and Waala proverbs. The study was ethnographic research under the qualitative research approach that spanned from 20 February 2019 to 15th of May, 2020 within six communities in the Upper West Region of Ghana where the Waala and Dagaare people resides. Personal interviews and focus group discussions with 58 purposively sampled study participants namely chiefs, elders, and people in the Upper West Region. Essentially, the research developed iconic visual eisegesis for 50 proverbs of the Dagaare and Waala communities of Ghana. Finally, the pictorial interpretations of the proverbs were thoroughly discussed based on the researchers’ visual extemporization in

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consultation with the study participants for quick reference, education, and pos-
terity especially among the youth in the Region, many of whom have lost touch with
their rich cultural heritage.

**Subjects:** Culture; Heritage Management & Conservation; Visual Arts

**Keywords:** proverbs; visual eisegesis; cultural symbols; traditional symbols; visual
iconography; Dagaare; Waala; Ghana

1. Introduction

Proverbs are oratory instruments for teaching and learning, and knowledge transfer, as
a symbol of cultural heritage, cultural identity, and a signet of belief, politics, law, and social
norms and values (Nkansah-Obrempong, 2002). A proverb genre is a significant form of human
communication, embellishing various languages (Adama, 2015). They are the “relics of cultural
experiences” (Fayemi, 2009). Proverbs are intertwined in songs, riddles, stories, songs (Finnegan
& Oral Literature in Africa, 2012), and other traditional institutions for the cultural education of
the members of the society. They incite listeners to think through a series of mental exercises
arousing curiosity to unravel their interpretation (Costandius, 2007). Leite et al. (2019) posit that
the interpretations of proverbs must be known so that they could be used as instruments for
education. Cultural education of the society members, especially the youth is carried out using
proverbs (Hanzen, 2007). However, it is only when their meanings are well discerned that their
applications in guiding the behaviors and attitudes of members of the society can be guaran-
teed (Agyemang et al., 2015). Though they are ancient in origin, proverbs have contemporary
significance and are still relevant as mediums of instruction even in this digital age (Onofrei &
Iancu, 2015). They are sustainable in their applicability and usefulness (Diaconu, 2017) and
could be used in heightening visual culture education. The effectiveness of using proverbs as
tools for education is succinctly expressed by the Yoruba of Nigeria as a horse that can carry
one swiftly to the discovery of ideas (Gyan et al., 2020).

However, because of the oratory nature of proverbs and their mode of transmission from the
older generation to the younger generation, some scholars have expressed concern about the
possibility of their adulteration and/or extinction (Adom, 2016a; Costandius, 2007; Urbano, 2008;
Xacara & Succi, 2008). The well-documented strategy for preserving proverbs is by tactfully using
them in teaching and learning (Baharian & Rezai, 2014; Shastri & Buza, 2017). There have been
several studies that have been conducted with the core purpose of ensuring the good documenta-
tion of proverbs to enhance their use and preserve it for posterity.

Ismaili (2018) investigated the various strategies used for translating proverbs that eventually
affect their sustainability. He succinctly describes seven of these strategies by theorists. They
include borrowing, calque, literal translation, transposition, modulation, equivalence, and adapta-
tion. He illustrates the strategies for translating proverbs using English and Albanian proverbs. He
reveals in his study, the need to adopt a more appropriate strategy that consciously triangulates
the strengths of the suggested strategies by theorists to preserve the philosophical imports of the
proverbs while preventing all forms of adulteration.

Ryan (2018) adopted a design-based research methodology in developing digital story-
telling as a means of teaching and learning indigenous languages. He conducted extensive
community-based research by generating digital stories from the numerous community
stories garnered from members of the community whom he asserts are the knowledge
keepers. The development of the digital stories enhanced the documentation of the proverb-
ial stories in the study area while widening the spaces they are used, from the local
communities where they were developed to other communities beyond the local community
landscape.
Dutta (2019) conducted ethnographic research in underserved indigenous spaces of rural Eastern India with the sole objective of preserving their cultural histories and artifacts by co-developing a digital humanities application called Sangraksha. He adopted visual and sensory methodologies to co-develop community-inspired imageries and multimedia in the form of photographs, audio, and audio-visuals. The reason behind the co-creation of the digital humanities platform with the rural people in his study area was to make the application culturally meaningful, inclusive, accessible, socially embedded in the cultural fiber of the people, sustainable, and welcoming to the underserved community, many of whom were illiterates. The favorable comments after the development and use of the digital humanities application that heavily utilized visuals show that visualization is a powerful tool for preserving, educating, and promoting the acquisition of indigenous knowledge, especially in rural areas.

Adom et al. (2021) adopted the phenomenology method in investigating the potential of developing a means of scholarly classifying African proverbs under various relatable themes for easy association, learning, and remembrance. Using the ethnographic method that largely relies on the interpretation lens from the indigenous knowledge owners in the rural communities, they suggested via their study that a good strategy to interpret proverbs and lay bare their philosophical imports for cultural education. They proposed the development of a mobile application that is user-friendly and could be used on a mobile android device, which is prevalent, especially among the youth.

Kquofi et al. (2013) adopted the visual iconography approach in creating a visual representation of 20 Akan proverbs. The researchers assert that they adopted this approach to promote the use of visual communication which holds greater potential than oral or verbal communication, especially for cultural education of the youth. Their study contends that when the proverbs are visualized, it bolsters understanding of the learned concept, and sustains the interest of learners even in delayed activities. Moreover, it increases retention and the critical thinking abilities of learners. Hence, they spearheaded the idea of creating visual symbols to represent some of the Akan proverbs in Ghana. Our study agrees in its research ideation with this philosophy because we believe that the creative development of visual symbols to represent the proverbs, would bolster their preservation for posterity. More so, the youth are more fascinated when visual symbols are used in their instruction and their attention is more focused on the teaching and learning processes when they are incorporated into lesson delivery (Shastri & Buza, 2017). The proverbs of the Dagaare and Waala people in the Upper West Region of Ghana are viable cultural instruments used by the elderly people in discharging cultural education to the youth. However, no attempt has been made to creatively represent the proverbs in visual symbols to make it easier for them to be used in educational institutions. More so, the representation of the proverbs in visual symbols would enable the youth to understand their rich cultural heritage and exhibit behavioral attitudes expected of them as members of the Dagaare and Waala people. It is this research lacuna in the studies on proverbs in Ghana that this study investigated. The study pivots on two main research questions:

1. What are some of the Dagaare and Waala proverbs that could be used for visual eisegesis?
2. What visual icons could be developed from the mental imagery of Dagaare and Waala proverbs from the people in the Upper West Region of Ghana?

2. Study areas
The Waala people are often referred to as the Tendaambas or landlords because they were the first people to settle in Wa in the early 1800s in the Upper West Region of Ghana (Eberhard et al., 2022). They migrated from Cote D’Ivoire. They speak the Waala language. They occupy the skins (symbol of authority as rulers) in the Upper West Region. Their overlord is called Wa-Na whose mud-constructed palace is situated in Wa. Their population is around 90,000. They engage in farming and hunting as their main occupations. There are three main groups among the people. These are the Balumai, Nabihe and Yerihe. Their religious leaders are called Tahara and they
maintain the religious sanity among the three groups. The people celebrate the Damba festival to mark the birth and naming of the Holy Prophet, Mohammed, though the festival is chiefly commemorated to show the authority of the chieftaincy system in the community. It is celebrated in the third month on the Islamic calendar called Rabia al-Awwal (Wilks, 1998). So, the Waala communities are largely dominated by Islamic Religion.

The Dagaaba people settled in Kaleo, Nadowli, Jirapa, Lawra, and Nandom, all in the Upper West Region in the early 1800s from Cote D’Ivoire and Burkins Faso. They speak the Dagaore language (Bodome, 1997). Their population is around 120, 000. The majority of them are farmers, engaging in mixed crop farming. Others also engage in hunting activities. They are dominated by Christianity because of the early embrace of Christianity through the Roman Catholic mission. They started enrolling their new converts in schooling and training them in various entrepreneurial pursuits. As such, the Dagaabas are much more educated than the Waalas. They celebrate the Kakube and Kobine festivals (Kuuder et al., 2012). The Kakube festival is celebrated especially among the Dagaabas in the NDom region in the Upper West to mark the end of the farming season and to thank their land deities and ancestors for a bumper harvest (Lentz & Wiggins, 2017). On the other hand, the Kobine festival is celebrated by the Dagaabas in the Lawra area in the Upper West region. It is commemorated to celebrate the end of their successful farm harvest between September and October annually (Lentz, 2001). The norms of the Waalas are underpinned in the principles of Islam while those of the Dagaabas are solidly laid on the principles of Christianity and African Traditional Religion.

The Upper West Region where the two traditional communities belong is one of the 16 regions of Ghana. It is located in the north-western part of Ghana and shares boundaries with Burkina Faso and Cote D’Ivoire to the north-west, Burkina Faso to the north, Upper East and North East regions to the East, and Savannah region to the south (Ghana Census Statistics, 2010). It has a latitude of 9.8°–11.0° North and a longitude of 1.6°–3.0 West. It covers a geographical area of 18,476 square kilometers, representing 12.7% of the total land area of Ghana. It is the sixth-largest region in Ghana in total area, and it is made up of 11 districts. By its location, the Upper West Region has the potential for international and inter-regional trade and other bilateral relations, making the outcome of the study an international bond which will promote and sell the culture of the people of the Upper West region to the globe. With a population of 702,110 according to Ghana Census Statistics (2010), the Upper West region is noted for its rich cultural attraction which transcends their vocation, beliefs, education, festivals, and way of life (Figure 1).

3. Methodology

3.1. Research approach/design/data collection procedure

This is an ethnographic study under the qualitative approach (Reeves et al., 2013) aimed at collecting detailed verbal data through personal interviews, focus group discussions, and personal observations on the Waala and Dagaaba proverbs and how they could be visualized in symbols. This study approach was deemed appropriate because it afforded the researchers extensive engagement with the study participants via in situ observations and immersing themselves in the social setting of the local communities (Sharma & Sarkar, 2019) to have a rich understanding of their proverbs, their philosophical interpretations and how they could be represented in visual symbols using the principles in the iconography theory. The study was conducted within the period 20th of February 2019 and 15th of May, 2020. The semi-structured interview guide that was designed was based on the survey of the Dagaaba and Waala proverbs, their interpretations, and possible visual symbols for their representations. The interview guide was pilot-tested on a small sample size of nine (9) respondents who had the characteristics of the actual sample recruited for the study. Also, the interview guide was shown to three ethnography researchers to peruse it. Finally, the interview guide was revised based on their expert suggestions. Each personal interview lasted for over an hour with each of the focus group discussions lasting for not less than two hours. A total of 12 personal interviews were conducted with the traditional chiefs and family
heads. Nine (9) focus group discussions were conducted with each group consisting of four to six members. While the personal interviews were audio-recorded, the focus group discussions were video-recorded. They were all carefully transcribed from the local languages to the English language by two of the researchers with the help of three study participants. The views expressed by the study participants were tagged with their identities since all of them wanted to be a part of this important milestone in visualizing the Dagaaba and Waala proverbs into symbols.

3.2. Sample selection procedure and sample size
The study participants were selected purposefully from the Upper West Region of Ghana. Elderly respondents above age 40 who are either Dagaare or Waala by their ethnic affiliation, as well as residents of the Upper West Region who have stayed in any of the Dagaare or Waala communities for more than ten (10) years, were purposively recruited for the study. We agree with the view of Mieder (2004) that the meanings of proverbs are largely dependent on the context within which they are found and as such must be analyzed within that context (Mieder, 2004). That informed our deliberate recruitment of persons who are located in the Dagaaba and Waala communities whose proverbs have been studied. We decided to recruit study participants above 40 years who are knowledgeable in the Dagaaba and Waala proverbs because proverbs, as products of human experiences and insights, are most evident in the speech of the elderly in the society (Agyemang et al., 2015). The study’s total sample size of 58 consisted of traditional chiefs, family heads, family elders, religious leaders, artists, teachers, and culturists from the Upper West Region (Table 1).

3.3. Data analytical procedure
The data generated from the personal interviews and focus group discussions with the study participants were analyzed by meticulously following the principles in the ethnography thematic analysis which involves three major processes, description, analysis, and interpretation. The recorded data garnered were carefully transcribed by the researchers, two of whom are natives of the study areas, with the assistance of five junior lecturers who can eloquently speak, interpret and write the Dagaaba and Waala languages. The transcribed data were vetted for accuracy via member checking (Birt et al., 2016). Seven (7) key study participants who voluntarily accepted to
Table 1. Sample size for the study

| Study Participants     | Number |
|------------------------|--------|
| Traditional chiefs     | 5      |
| Family heads           | 7      |
| Family elders          | 16     |
| Religious leaders      | 6      |
| Artists                | 5      |
| Teachers               | 15     |
| Culturists             | 4      |
| **Total Sample**       | **58** |

verify the credibility of the transcribed data were involved in this exercise. Independent manual extraction of the proverbs, their meanings, and appropriate visual symbols for their representation evident in the strands of the transcribed data was extracted by two teams (two of the researchers in each team). Significant themes in the transcribed data were illustrated in the manuscript with key quotes from the personal interviews and focus group discussions (Hycner, 1999) that were conducted. In all, fifty (50) proverbs, 33 Dagaare proverbs, and 17 Waala proverbs were interpreted. After that, visual symbols were carefully created from them based on the suggestions of the study participants who were involved in the idea generation, execution, and evaluation stages of the visual symbols for each of the proverbs. However, for purposes of discussion, ten (10) of the proverbs have been presented. Yet, in the Appendix section of the paper, all the fifty (50) proverbs, their interpretations, and visual symbols created to represent them have been presented in a table format.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Demographical data of study participants

Concerning gender, the greater majority of the study participants were males (See Table 2). This might be a result of the patriarchal nature of the traditional governance system that is dominated by males in the Upper West Region of Ghana. Traditional council meetings and forums are often represented by males who debate and share their views on matters been discussed. Mostly it is during these occasions that proverbs within the Dagaaba and Waala ethnic societies are used by the elderly in “giving a certain amount of freshness to speech” (Nketo, 1958: 21). As spokes-persons for their families at communal meetings in the society, it is understandable that the majority of the study participants were male by gender in the study of the phenomenon of proverbs in the Upper West region of Ghana. The highest age range from 50 years to 99 years (n = 41) reaffirms the position in the literature that proverbs are often the preserve of the elderly members of the society. Their willingness to partake in the study alludes to their greatest wish to impart the indigenous knowledge of the society to the younger generation through any viable means (Adom, 2016b).

The greater section of the study participants were Christians by religious denomination followed by the Islamic religion. This is probably a result of the greater number of Dagaabas (n = 35) who participated in the study. This aligns with their oral history that postulates that the Dagaabas were introduced to Christianity at an earlier time and the Waalas demonstrated great resistance to it during the 1800s. That notwithstanding, the study participants who were recruited though were Christian and Islam converts from African Traditional Religion and were exceptional community indigenous knowledge keepers. Since farming is a customary occupation among the native Dagaabas and Waalas, it is not surprising that a greater section of the study participants were farmers. Yet, there is a considerable number of literate members (n = 46) among the study participants, with the highest number receiving basic education (n = 21). These figures might be
informed by the earlier efforts by the Roman Catholic missionary in the Upper West region to sponsor the education of the people and train them in entrepreneurial pursuits.

4.2. Waala and dagaare proverbs collected and analyzed

Through extensive collaboration with the study participants through several personal interviews and focus group discussions. In all, fifty (50) Waale and Dagaare proverbs were discussed. However, ten (10) have been detailed in this section with the entire fifty (50) presented in a table (Appendix).

1) Yelkpeɛ (Difficulty/Impossibility) - Figure 2

This is the theme for the Waala proverb “Ang becha koŋ pou gbɛɛ?” which is translated as “Who retraces footprints in water?” In the personal interviews with Mr. Gabriel Sanŋ and Naa Salifu Kpangkpang, they disclosed that the act of retracting one’s footprints in water is not possible.

“You cannot see the footprint on water, there is no one who can see his or her footprint on water. That is not possible … … ” stated. “Although water they say is life, there are certain situations that confront mankind which is difficult to deal with”. (Personal Interview with Mr. Gabriel Sanŋ on 21 January 2019 at Sokparyiri, Upper West Region of Ghana).

Therefore, in life, one must understand that there are some situations, and nothing could be done about them. In such situations, such as the death of a loved one, one has to know that nothing can be done to reverse it. Therefore, the proverb symbolizes difficulty or impossibility. While deliberating on the symbols to use to visualize this proverb, the Waala elders in a focus group discussion at Kpaguri in the Upper West Region mentioned that the main imageries indicated in the proverb are the human foot and water. So, they unanimously suggested that

| Table 2. Demographic data of study participants |
|-----------------------------------------------|
| Demographic variables | Frequency | Age range | Demographic variables | Frequency |
| Sex | | | Sex | | |
| Male | 44 | 40-49 | Female | 14 | 50-59 |
| 60-69 | 17 | | 70-79 | 12 | |
| 80-89 | 6 | | 90-99 | 2 | |
| | | | | | |
| Education | | | Education | | |
| Tertiary | 12 | Occupation | | |
| Secondary | 13 | Former | 25 | |
| Basic | 21 | Hunter | 9 | |
| Illiterates | 12 | Artist | 5 | |
| Teacher | 15 | | | |
| Culturist | 4 | | | |
| Religion | Ethnic Society | | | |
| Islam | 18 | Dagaaba | 35 | |
| Christianity | 33 | Waala | 23 | |
| African Traditional Religion | 7 | | | |

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the visual symbol could depict the human foot stepping out of water. This visual icon was evident in the social setting of the people as they were conversant with this imagery since they often cross rivers to get to their farmlands and houses. Iconographically, the composition of this symbol is made up of the human foot (left and right) that cross each other in the middle; having a black hedge. The crossed foot signifies how humans cross each other's paths in this world. Around each foot is a shade of black. The black hedge represents water which indicates a world of difficulty which surrounds human life. The proverb “Ang bëchà koŋg puo gbece” means who retraces footprints in water? Feet cannot be traced in water. It is difficult and undoubtedly impossible to trace the footprint on water. In the middle of the cross foot is a circular shape which signifies how the world is a small place to live in; that what goes around comes around. We need to be careful with each other to avoid creating problems for each other that will create difficulty or an impossible situation.

2) Daj-taa (Life is not a Race)-Figure 3
This is a Waala proverb that says “Bëne a wiri nang gese be ka bong meng gese” (Wherever the horse is going, there the donkey will be). The elders of Waala interpreted this proverb as “Life is not a race” (See Figure 3). They highlighted that the journey of life will be pursued by both the rich and poor and the final destination for both journeys is the same. Therefore, it is not good to compare oneself with another. The journey of life will be pursued by all at a different pace. This is illustrated by the horse that might run faster than the donkey. Yet, with determination and hard work, each of them could reach the final destination. So, there is no need to compare yourself with others. One can be successful only through hard work and determination and not through needless comparison with others. In a focus group discussion, these were the views expressed regarding the visual symbols that could be used for representing the proverb:

“The head of the horse or the donkey can represent the symbol dan-taa because of its significance in wealth and riches”. (Focus Group discussion at Kpogur with Naa Salifu Kpongpong, Madam Kuburia Yahaya, Mr. Mohammed Kpongpong and Madam Alima M. Nagaana on February, 16th 2019 at the residence of Naa Salifu Kpongpong Chief of the Tendaamba at Upper West Region).

“We the Waalas’ and Dagaarees’ cherish the horse and donkey. It is a tool for wealth, marriage, and livelihood. Everybody is striving to be wealthy and married. Having a horse or donkey is an indication that one is aiming at a decent life and survival. But whether one has a horse or donkey one must still be in the race to survive. As to how it is only God who knows” as stated by Samoya Kupor. (Interview with Samoya Kupor on February, 18th 2019 at her residence in Lawra).

The composition is made of a horse and a donkey's head. The horse's head is plain white while that of the donkey is the shaded black edge around the horse's head. Philosophically, this means so far as we are on the same journey what matters is how you get to the end of your destination whether fast or slow. Life is a journey, whether rich or poor the destination is the same. Life is not a race. It is the end that justifies the means.

3) Bag-emepa (Carefulness)- Figure4
This is a Dagaare proverb “Ziena a tec nang gëng gaa be ka a tec na le gaa.” The proverb is translated as “Where the branches of a tree bend towards, it is in that direction that the tree falls eventually.” This proverb offers advice on the need to exhibit good moral values. It cautions that the life course one chooses or the decisions one makes will dictate what will eventually happen to him or her in the future. Therefore, “to reap successes, one has to eschew all morally degrading acts and live by the sound virtues in the society to finally become successful” (Focus group discussion with Madam Amamata Niyayegma, Mr. Malik Kpankpili Jebuni, and Madam Evelyn
Yelsang at Kaleo a suburb of Wa on 24 March 2019 at the residence of Madam Amamata Niyayegma.

Regarding the visual symbol to illustrate this proverb, the members of the focus group mentioned the use of trees with branches geared toward a direction, which is the significant imagery depicted in the proverb. As farmers, the rural people were familiar with this ecological knowledge related to the tree usually falling in the direction of its branches.

“In our culture, trees are roots of sustainability of life. The only thing one can do to his or her life to sustain it; is to be careful. Trees are a signet of the flourishing of life. It must be well handled and preserved. Anything that goes wrong with it is an indication that the end is near.” (Madam Amamata Niyayegma, Mr. Malik Kpankpili Jebuni, and Madam Evelyn Yelsang at Kaleo a suburb of Wa on March, 24th 2019 at the residence of Madam Amamata Niyayegma. It was a focus group discussion).

When the focus group was asked which visual symbol could be used to represent this proverb they retorted: “the tree . . . . It is important for us here. Using the tree is appropriate. This is because it is clearly stated in the proverb.” The tree is the symbolic figure in the design composition. The tree is shaded black signifying its power and importance to the indigenes and their culture. The trees are two, bent across each other to buttress the point that trees can only fall especially where it is bent toward. In the Waala and Dagaare culture, the tree is a source of life that requires much care to sustain it. It is, therefore, necessary to appreciate nature and life and keep it as a treasure; not to let it go waste.

4) Ba-esiri (Unexpected)-Figure 5
This is a Dagaare proverb stated as “A ba moɔ la ka naa ba zoro” which is translated in English as “To say that a chief [king] does not run, is to say that things have not come to the crises stage yet.” This proverb points the mental imagery that everyone, irrespective of their status or position in society, takes to the heel when there is a crisis. Irrespective of our positions, when crises occur or the unexpected happens, we try to take cover. Therefore, whatever happens in society must be the concern of all including those with wealth and position. It is a word of advice to all those in authority to give an ear to the complaints of their subjects because when the unexpected happens as a result of turning deaf ears, they will not be exempted from the soor outcomes. The visual symbols mentioned by the elders at Jirapa in the Upper West Region were the human leg in motion and a crown, a typical representation of leadership in the region.

“Well, for me the image I think you can use is a human being running (chief) with a crown on his head (title). Among our people, as you may be aware, the crown denotes the chief’s authority. The common means of escape is the leg. The chief can also run when danger is approaching, his title matters not. Things can never be the same at all times. There is no permanent condition. No one should expect the chief not to do the needful when danger is showing its head.” (Focus group discussion with Mr. Belali Dakurah, Mr. Belali Dakurah and Mr. Justus Benongle at Jirapa on 20 February 2019).

Mr. Justus Benongle on the other hand said: “Well, for me the image I think can be used for this symbol is the human being running (chief) and the crown on his head (title). The expectation in life can be challenging, leadership and subordinate cannot trust each other. The leg of the chief is there for use . . . .”

The circular headgear-like crown of the chief and the right and left legs made up the symbolic composition of the proverb: “A ba moɔ la ka naa ba zoro”. It is translated: “To say that a chief [king] does not run, is to say that things have not come to the crises stage yet.” The headgear of a chief represents the authority of the traditional ruler. In the traditional setting of the Waala and
Dagaare cultures, the chief is prohibited from doing certain things like running, eating in public, and drinking in public, among others. But when the unexpected happens, the chief has the right to protect his life, no matter the prohibitions. The design also has deepened lines just beneath the right leg indicating the area of authority of the chief. The headgear has projections indicating protection for the chief.

5) Yelmeŋa ba szgla (Truth cannot be hidden) - *Figure 6*

This is a Dagaare proverb “A dug zipuo zie la ka a buulong mang tu kyis kyir” (The porridge usually spills when the pot is broken) (See Figure 6). In a focus group discussion on the meaning of this proverb, these were some of the views generated from the study participants.

“We treasure pot since it is used for a lot of things. A pot is made up of nature (clay from the earth) and that is why we treasure it” as stated by Madam Salome Sinnia Gaayuoni. “When a pot breaks, it means the treasure is exposed but not hidden.” Mr. Kankyerezie Dakpaanaa. “Pot, for us the Dagaare speaks of wisdom and values of the people which cannot be hidden” by Mr. Alhassan Danyagre (Focus group discussion with Madam Salome Sinnia Gaayuoni, Mr. Alhassan Danyagre, and Mr. Kankyerezie Dakpaanaa at Nakore in the Upper West Region on 15 April 2019).

Mr. Mankama Toogumo stated his position as “Pots when broken becomes destroyed and loses its relevance. Anything in it at that time cannot be hidden at that particular moment. Like the way, truth is always exposed at the end of matters so the pot will expose its content”

Based on their views on the meaning of the proverb, it was agreed that since a broken pot always reveals its content, likewise truth is always not hidden. Thus, it offers the moral advice that all must not tread the path of falsehood because the truth will always be revealed.

Regarding the appropriate symbol to be used for representing this proverb, the study participants mentioned:

“We treasure pot since it is used for a lot of things. A pot is made up of nature (clay from the earth) and that is why we treasure it. When a pot breaks, it means the treasure is exposed but not hidden. Pot, for us the waala, speaks of wisdom and values of the people which cannot be hidden. Therefore, a broken pot will be a fitting symbol that will be easily remembered by us.” (Focus group discussion with Madam Salome Sinnia Gaayuoni, Mr Alhassan Danyagre, Mr. Mankama Toogumo and Mr. Kankyerezie Dakpaanaa at Nakore in the Upper West Region on 15 April 2019).

A broken clay pot is the symbolic representation of the proverb “A dug zipuo zie la ka a buuloŋ maŋ tu kyis kyir” meaning “the porridge usually spills where the pot is broken”. The clay pot stands as the carrier of life of the indigenes of Waala and Dagaare. They settled with the clay pot and used it for almost everything in the Upper West region. The clay pot performed functions such as fetching and containing water which is life and keeping treasures, food, and medicine for sustainability. In the composition, the clay pot has the right bottom side broken showing the spillage of any substance it contains. It shows the easy exposure of what is hidden. Symbolically the truth cannot be hidden or the will of God cannot be hidden; man may try hiding it but it will be exposed in the end.

6) Daŋ nyaataa (Experience) - *Figure 7*

This is a Dagaare proverb “A fo bondi nana la maŋ noma a gaa bondiriŋ zaŋ” (Your favorite dish is usually the tastiest). In a personal interview with Mr. Saani Tang, he said “who will ignore what he is okay with and change that which is not sweet. The food you like best becomes part of the things that make you happy. When different dishes are put in front of you, you make your choice based on your experience of the food tasted before” (Personal Interview with Mr. Saani Tang at Lambussie in the Upper West Region on 20 February 2019). Therefore, the moral lesson in the proverb is that
the things we are familiar with are easy for us to handle. The proverb reminds us that experience is the best teacher.

According to Mr. Saani Tang “who will ignore what he is okay with and change that which is not sweet”. The food you like best becomes part of the things that make you happy. When different dishes are put in front of you, you make your choice based on your experience of the food tasted before. But you know, food gives life and we all want to live. Food is a daily request prayer for our people”.

“What you like is the most common and easier thing to welcome into your life. It is preferably your comfort zone. One wants to deal with it on all occasions creating familiarity and vast knowledge in taking care of it. Items in the proverb which can be used in the symbol include food, plate, and spoon. The use of food in a bowl, the bowl will serve as a well of provision to symbolize the proverb.” (Mr. Festus Suglo Bakobie, Mr. Uunizumah Nuobeta, and Mr. Saani Tang at Lambussie in the Upper West Region. Information was retrieved through a Focus group discussion on February 20th, 2019).

The bowl containing food symbolizes the proverb “A fo bondi ɔnnaa la maŋ noma a gaan bondiri ɔza” meaning “your favorite dish is usually the tastiest” The bowl is depicted as white and the food black. This indicates victory (white) amid the struggle (black) that comes with hard work. One prevails quickly over similar situations due to experiences of encountering them. It is easy to handle things that you are familiar with. Experience, as they say, is the best teacher.

6) Belinbu (Deceit)- Figure 8
This is a Dagaaare proverb “Ka anaŋ wa waa soŋ a ko nenkpoŋ o maŋ yel ka o kpuree tɔba” (When all is well with the adult, he will announce that he has some tobacco in his mouth). According to the elders in the focus group discussion, the proverb reminds people who have become rich not to deceive themselves into thinking that it was their singular efforts but rather acknowledge the help others offered them. The symbol illustrates the deceit of successful people in society and exposes the need for them to rid of all forms of selfishness. Indeed, good living or wealth can be deceptive. Mr. Andinua Yeng and Mr. Solomon Wonuota at Loho in the Upper West Region in a focus group discussion on 29 August 2019 suggested the visual symbol that could be used in representing this proverb. They said:

“… use a picture of a man who is deceiving people or a human being putting something in the mouth. You can just take a picture of a face with something dropping into the mouth.” We then used an abstracted face with an opened mouth.

“The mouth of the adult speaks volumes of values to the African culture. Any attempt to ignore the words of an adult or elderly is believed to be disrespectful. A lot of value is placed on the mouth of the elderly in our society. It will be disingenuous for this valuable mouth to be abused and used in unacceptable ways, to deceive. The tobacco in the culture of some sections in Ghana is not only to be smoked but sniffed and chewed. In the culture of the Waalas and the Dagaarens when tobacco is in the mouth of the elderly it means stay off with your request. When the important mouth is used to acquire a necessity and later refuses to acknowledge it, it’s a worrying situation.” (Focus group discussion with Mr. Andinua Yeng and Mr. Solomon Wonuota- at Loho where they reside near the DVLA office on August, 19th 2019) and (interview with Mr. Domanbang Kuorumua at Gbankor on August, 19th 2019).

They added: “You can create a picture of a face with something dropping into the mouth. The design should be composed using the mouth and tobacco which can be leaves as the symbol.”

The symbol of this proverb “Ka anaŋ wa waa soŋ a ko nenkpoŋ o maŋ yel ka o kpuree tɔba” which is translated as “when all is well with the adult, he will announce that he has some tobacco
in his mouth,” has a structure of a wide-opened mouth with a leaf or tobacco hanging on the mouth, with an expectation that it will drop into the mouth. On the upper end of the design are two projected oval shapes representing the ears of the elderly in society. There is a tongue with two faded lines that symbolize the taste of both good and bad when one becomes naïve. The borderlines of the design are thick lines to depict the tenacity of how the Waalas and Dagaares believe in their culture. In the cultural setting of the study area when one admits that his or her mouth is occupied it is an indication that he or she is not prepared to respond to you.

8) Naŋ boora yela (Trouble maker)- Figure 9
This is a Dagaare proverb “N dawọọ pọọ la ka fo meere fo die.” (You are building your house in my courtyard). We solicited the interpretation of this proverb, in two separate interviews with Mr. Benedict Tazienye and Mr. Dakurah Faakubo who were knowledgeable in it. They explained that the wrong placements of things or encroachment on the properties of others are often the result of troubles between people.

“Trouble emanates from two angles: one person refusing to do what is expected and the other taking advantage of it.” (Personal Interview, Mr. Benedict Tazienye at Nandom in the Upper West Region on 6 July 2019).

“Misunderstanding comes from human beings; protection can be depicted with a wall or panel but the grass can be used to represent those who are affected…” (Personal Interview, Mr. Dakurah Faakubo at Nandom in the Upper West Region on 6 July 2019).

In consultation with the elders at Nandom in the Upper West Region, they opined that we use the human eye and the fence to represent the hedge while using grass as the people’s right.

The proverb “N dawọọ pọọ la ka fo meere fo die” translated as “you are building your house in my courtyard” which symbolically means “Calling for trouble or War” is figuratively made up of a wall. Below the wall on the left-hand side is the ground symbolized with zigzag lines. On top of the wall is a symbolic hand of the oppressor or the intruder but just beside the wall on the right-hand side is the eye of the complainant. The wall shows concrete evidence of establishment meaning the obvious and undeniable of whatever is talked about. The ground indicates the bases and foundations of the argument while the eye is to divulge that someone is watching the intruder.

9) Su-di (Forgiveness)- Figure 10
This is a Waala proverb “Baa daana zu ka ba man kaa kye bare baa” (A dog is forgiven because of his owner) that educates on forgiveness. It reminds all who are victims of unjust treatment to tamper justice with mercy. The essence of forgiveness as ensuring the cohesion of peace, unity, and community living is exemplified in this proverb. It encourages the need for society members to be peacemakers and to offer themselves willingly as settlers of disputes that arise between one another in the society. This resonates with the religious belief of forgiveness in the two main religious denominations dominant in the study areas, Christianity and Islam. The views from the respondents buttressed this.

“Forgetfulness is religious; we the Muslims and Christians believe that for God to accept our prayers, one must forgive the other when they wrong them” (Personal interview with Mr. Festus Suglo Bakobie at Lambussie on 20 November 2019).

“A common animal that we can find in the home that guides and serves as security is the dog. Most dogs serve as security in many homes yet they can be troublesome at the same time” (Personal interview with Mr. Kanyakerezie Dakpaanaa at Lambussie on 30 November 2019).
“To live in peace, one needs to forgive the other who owns the animal that has caused damage to their property” (Personal interview with Madam Salome Sinnia Gaayuoni at Lambussie on 5 December 2019).

Because the proverb mentions the dog and its owner (human being), the study participants suggested the use of the head of a dog and the head of a human figure as the visual symbol for representing it.

The symbolic design of this proverb is two heads; one of which is a human head (right) and the other is a dog's head (left). The dog represents the life of love as it is believed by the respondents that dogs are one of the most assisted and loyal animals to mankind. The human head represents man as a master and owner of the dog. The two heads are put together to indicate the inseparable nature of dogs and their masters. It is the culture of the respondents that the master's love influences the reactions and behavior towards anything related to him. The goodness or badness of the master determines how justice and mercy are delivered to people close to the master. The proverb is “Baa daana zu ka ba man kaa kye bare baa” meaning “A dog is forgiven because of his owner”. Your deeds can intervene for you; tamper justice with mercy.

The proverbs of the waalas and dagaabas are mostly centered on their culture, norms, and beliefs. The proverbs underscored the need to give attention to the way of living by the indigenes, their environment, and their relationship with their neighbors (Nyame & Tomekyin, 2018). The proverbs identified by the study were mostly anchored especially on human attitude, land, utensil, human parts, water, tree, food, animals, health, and leadership among others (See Figures 2-10 and Table A1) which by and large aligns with many ethnic groups’ proverbs across Ghana (Agbo, 2009). It is important to note that the way of communicating and livelihood is linked to the proverbs that exist in the study area. The people are mostly petty traders, farmers, weavers, blacksmiths, hunters, and partly government workers which is reflected in the proverbs identified and used by the waalas and dagaabas. The community is elderly-led and male-centered. The females are into trading farm crops and cooking food while the males are into farming, hunting, and blacksmithing (Figure 7). These proverbs identified are mostly used by the chiefs, and elders who are also among the family heads in the community. As argued by Agyekum (2005, 2012) it must be noted that these proverbs are used to express statements that are pure to imbibe wisdom and knowledge to the people devoid of insults and the use of raw statements that children and the youth must not hear. The culture of the people of the Upper West Region has a special place for water and the foot. The Waalas and Dagaabas value water as a source of good living. The use of water forms a resource for farming, food product, and health. Water is a living thing for the people of the Upper West region. The Upper West region experiences a long period of the dry season and

Figure 2. Yelkeŋŋaa (difficulty).  
Source: Designed by authors
a short period of the wet season so they cherish water. It is rare for water to be used to punish. A proverb that water is used to describe an abominable act that is not welcomed by the culture among the Waalas and Dagaabas shows how repulsive such an act is. The foot is a working tool for the people of the Upper West region. The foot is a preserve of those who want to live a good life. The study shows that foot represents decent living in the Waala and Dagaaba communities. See Figure 2 “Ang becha koŋg puɔ gbɛɛ”.

“Benee a wiri nang ɡɛɛrɛ be ka bong meng ɡɛɛrɛ” is a proverb that deals with the journey of life and how to get to the end of it successfully. It emphasizes how the indigenes must be content with what they have and appreciate each other in society irrespective of their status (A. H. Agbo, 1999, p. 60). The people of the Upper West region believe in wealth and possession hence the use of
Figure 5. Ba-esiri (unexpected). 
Source: Designed by the authors

Figure 6. Yelmeŋa ba sɔglɔ (truth cannot be hidden).
Source: Designed by the authors

Figure 7. Daŋ nyaaataa (experience).
Source: Designed by the authors
a tree in this proverb (Figure 4 “Ziena a tec nang gong gaa be ka a tec na le gaa”). They believe tree
possesses wealth and grants life. This belief gives room for conservation and protection of natural resources like the tree in the daily life of the Waalas and Dagaarees in the Upper West region. Superior in the society of Waalas and Dagaarees are the Overlords (paramount chief) and chiefs. They are highly respected because they are the custodians of peace, justice, and mercy in the community. Notwithstanding this high office of the overlords and chiefs in the community, the proverb recognizes these roles they play and seeks to express it as well as protect them (chiefs) when trouble looms as stated in Figure 5 “A ba moɔ la ka naa ba zo”. The identified proverbs also touch on the mouth as a weapon for good or bad living (Figure 8 “Ka anŋ wɔ wɔɔ sɔŋ a ko nɛŋkpoŋ o maa yel ka ɔ kprɛ ɔbɔ”). This proverb envisages how one can use his mouth to get what he wants and later deny it. It advises one to stay away from such attitudes.

Notable among the proverbs is an issue related to land disputes. Many times family land sharing and selling become a problem among the communities under study. In Figure 9 the proverb “Ndawɔro pɔɔ la ka fo mɛɛbi fo diɛ” admonishes the issue of land disputes and alerts every individual to stay out of trouble or war among others for a better community. The study through proverbs has given the way of living of the Waalas and Dagaarees. It has to a large extent provided the actual sense of proverbs and their significance in our socio-cultural environment (Agyekum, 2021). By way of living has brought to fore how the people relate among themselves, others, and their immediate environment.

5. Conclusion
One of the major means of communicating logical customs, norms, values, and rules of social lifestyle is through the visual symbols from proverbs. It is worth noting that the study has demonstrated how the proverbs in Ghana could be visualized into symbols to make them easy to be used for cultural education in communities and schools using the Dagaare and Waala proverbs as an example. It has shown that the interpretations of proverbs are found within the social-cultural and situational contexts of the region where they are popularly used. Visual symbols have been creatively developed based on the interpretations of the proverbs by the knowledge bearers in the Dagaaba and Waala ethnic societies. This would assist greatly in the preservation of the oratory instruments in the cultural heritage of the two ethnic societies through visualization. To assist in the easy assimilation of the visualized Dagaaba and Waala proverbs within the educational context, and in specific areas of life, future studies can consider organizing the various proverbs into manageable themes or disciplines.

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### Appendix

#### Table A1. Meanings and visualization of Dagaare and Waala Proverbs

| No | Proverbial expression | Literal meaning | Symbolic meaning | Symbols |
|----|------------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------|
| 1  | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
   Ang be ko ng puo gbɛɛ
   **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
   Who retraces footprints in water? | Unconditional good deeds have no accounts. | Impossibility or Impracticality | ![Yelkpeɛa](https://www.example.com/yelkpea.png) |
| 2  | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
   Ang ba nye badare ang gyang wɔɔ
   **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
   Who can’t see a spider on an elephant? | Those who think they are wise always claim to be right. | Knowledge does not reside in one head | ![Bammo deme](https://www.example.com/bammodeme.png) |
| 3  | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
   Benee a wi ri nang gɛɛ be ka bong meng gɛɛ.
   **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
   Wherever the horse is going to, there the donkey will be. | Life is a journey, whether rich or poor the destination is the same. | Life is not a race | ![Dang-taa](https://www.example.com/dangtaa.png) |
| 4  | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
   Ziena a tec nang gaa be ka a tec na le gaa.
   **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
   Where the branches of a tree bend towards, it is in that direction that the tree falls eventually | Where your treasure is, there lies your heart | Be careful with what you associate yourself with | ![Banŋ-emerja](https://www.example.com/banngemerja.png) |
| 5  | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
   A ba maa la ka naa ba zoro
   **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
   To say that a chief [king] does not run, is to say that things have not come to the crises stage yet. | Unusual things happen during crisis | Unexpected or Undesirable or The odds of society | ![Ba-esiri](https://www.example.com/baesiri.png) |
| 6  | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
   A dug zipu zie la ka a buulang mang tu kyɛ kyɛ
   **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
   The porridge usually spills where the pot is broken | Where the truth there lies in lays God’s will. | The truth cannot be hidden or The will of God cannot be hidden | ![Yelmenga ba saaqa](https://www.example.com/yelmenga_ba_saaqa.png) |
| 7  | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
   A fo bondi nooa la maŋ nana a gaa bondiri zaa
   **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
   Your favourite dish is usually the tastiest | It is easy to handle things that you are familiar with | Experience is the best teacher | ![Daŋ nyaaataa](https://www.example.com/dangnyaataa.png) |

(Continued)
| No | Proverbial expression | Literal meaning | Symbolic meaning | Symbols |
|----|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------|
| 8  | LOCAL LANGUAGE Ka anaŋ wa waa san a ko nenkuŋ a man yel ka o kpure taba | The naive always thinks his success is by his own effort | Good living can be deceptive | Belinbu |
|    | ENGLISH LANGUAGE When all is well with the adult, he will announce that he has some tobacco in his mouth. |  | Wealth can deceive |  |
| 9  | LOCAL LANGUAGE N daworo pó la ka fo meere fo di | Wrong placement of things. | Calling for trouble | Naŋ baara yatla |
|    | ENGLISH LANGUAGE You are building your house in my courtyard |  | War mongering |  |
| 10 | LOCAL LANGUAGE A tengan zore zung la ka kuri manaŋ gu o meŋ | One must learn from the past | Experience is the best teacher | Dannyetaa manaŋ wuli yenyeilbagu |
|    | ENGLISH LANGUAGE For fear of land disputes, the tortoise is usually armed. |  |  |  |
| 11 | LOCAL LANGUAGE A vuu paat a dinari | The die is cast | Uncontrollable | Yebo guure |
|    | ENGLISH LANGUAGE The fire has now reached the node of the straw |  | or unmanageable |  |
| 12 | LOCAL LANGUAGE A baal guuro la mang bang baala voorung. | He who wears the shoe knows where it pinches most | Closeness enhances appreciation | Perie baŋ yeilmec |
|    | ENGLISH LANGUAGE It is the attendant of the patient who hears the breathing of the patient. |  |  |  |
| 13 | LOCAL LANGUAGE Nee naŋ ba taa laafun fia manaŋ baŋ teex teex. | When in difficulty, lots of solutions emerge | Necessity is the mother of invention. | Yel fenih naŋ verniŋ kii ninti yoo |
|    | ENGLISH LANGUAGE The one who is chronically ill usually knows a great variety of medicines. |  |  |  |
| 14 | LOCAL LANGUAGE Baaloŋ sere yi kee kaŋ penne. | Do not be a thorn in my flesh | Sickness or Illness | Baaloŋ |
|    | ENGLISH LANGUAGE Illness, please leave me alone |  | Ill-health |  |
| 15 | LOCAL LANGUAGE Baar ayi səŋəa ba bora. | Two heads are better than one | Unity is success/ strength | Suntaa la zuloŋ |
| No | Proverbial expression | Literal meaning | Symbolic meaning | Symbols |
|----|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------|
| 16 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
   Baa taa la o lao ka mwaanga  
   men taa o lao  
   **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
   The dog has his eating  
   bowl; the monkey has his  
   too.  | Everybody belongs | **Identity, Root, Culture or**  
   **Tradition** | ![Symbols](Balaa/ Leseri/ tensere/) |
| 17 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
   Baa daana zu ka ba maŋ  
   kaa kye bare baa  
   **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
   A dog is forgiven because of  
   his owner | Your deeds can intervene  
   for you. | **Tamper justice with mercy** | ![Symbols](Su-di) |
| 18 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
   Ba ba kyire bi-kyenaa poɔ/  
   noore  
   **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
   Let the grown-up child  
   speak for themselves.  | One is old enough to make  
   decision for oneself | **A good decision leads to**  
   **better future** | ![Symbols](Begrituobu/ sungbawe)Yelwantaa  
   saŋ maŋ waani yel saŋ  
   beohi) |
| 19 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
   Nenkpoŋ noare nyuuroŋ kye  
   o yele ba nyuuro  
   **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
   The mouth of the elderly  
   may smell bad but their  
   words may not | The aged is the repository  
   of wisdom and knowledge | **Wisdom and knowledge** | ![Symbols](Yeŋ aneŋ hakila) |
| 20 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
   Nibi yenii ba sugro saaloŋ  
   seere  
   **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
   It is impossible to fetch  
   akro soup with a single  
   finger.  | Together we can make it  
   better | **In unity we achieved** | ![Symbols](Suntoo/ lantaa) |
| 21 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
   Ba ba wullo bible woɔ  
   **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
   No one needs to point to an  
   elephant to a child.  | Maturity resides in every  
   one | **Maturity** | ![Symbols](Nembree) |
| 22 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
   Zuri ayi sec ia zu yenii  
   **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
   Two heads are better than  
   one.  | Knowledge is not the  
   preserve of an individual  
   Two or more good heads  
   give better counsel | ![Symbols](Lamboore) |
| 23 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
   Nye roogyie naŋ nyaa gaaŋ  
   noolee  
   **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
   How can the egg be wiser  
   than the chick?  | No matter how wise a child  
   is he cannot match the  
   experience of his parent  
   There is a difference  
   between experience and  
   being wise. | ![Symbols](Nimiyuo) | (Continued)
| No | Proverbial expression | Literal meaning | Symbolic meaning | Symbols |
|----|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------|
| 24 | LOCAL LANGUAGE Bibile tonzagra ba dire baŋ kää. ENGLISH LANGUAGE A child who refuses to run errands will never share in the booty | Any one that does wrong can never escape punishment | The end result of wrong doing is punishment | ![Symbol](image) |
| 25 | LOCAL LANGUAGE Nenkaŋ naŋbaŋa ba kanna kää ENGLISH LANGUAGE The bone of the elderly never lacks marrow | The aged never lacks ideas | The wisdom of the elderly is un-measurable | ![Symbol](image) |
| 26 | LOCAL LANGUAGE Wɔɔ ba wuwo simie paa ENGLISH LANGUAGE An elephant is too big to hide among Bambara bean plants | You can run, but you cannot hide | Your deeds shall find you out | ![Symbol](image) |
| 27 | LOCAL LANGUAGE Ba-piire ba e ba-daara ENGLISH LANGUAGE Being the first to select the puppy, does not make you the eventual owner. | Choosing is one thing; owning is another. | Achievement is different from decision making | ![Symbol](image) |
| 28 | LOCAL LANGUAGE Yelesai grrimi ba tezre se. ENGLISH LANGUAGE Your challenge cannot be tied around your waist | No matter how numerous your challenges are, you cannot tie them around your waist | Challenges are untouchable | ![Symbol](image) |
| 29 | LOCAL LANGUAGE Nye kye zagré ba wle: ENGLISH LANGUAGE Refusing to eat means one is not really hungry | Failing to participate is failing to be counted | Inclusiveness makes you an accomplisher | ![Symbol](image) |
| 30 | LOCAL LANGUAGE Nimiri ba kana ka noare taŋ na. ENGLISH LANGUAGE The nose cannot laugh while the eye cries. | What affects one affects all | Show concern | ![Symbol](image) |
| 31 | LOCAL LANGUAGE Neŋyeni ba tuolo ṣɔɔ ka no. ENGLISH LANGUAGE One person cannot force an elephant to drink water | Need for all-hands-on-deck | Need for a concerted effect | ![Symbol](image) |
| No | Proverbial expression | Literal meaning | Symbolic meaning | Symbols |
|----|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------|
| 32 | LOCAL LANGUAGE  
Nyiraa yeli ka sonzle la kpeco  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
The ant says, lifting a burden together is a mark of strength. | There is strength in unity  
Unity is strength | Sonzle la kpeco |
| 33 | LOCAL LANGUAGE  
Fo na baŋ gaŋ la nenkpon danjaŋ kal kye fo kon baŋ gaŋ o noare  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
You may walk over an elderly man’s walking stick but you cannot ignore the worth of his advice. | The words of the elderly cannot be ignored  
Never ignore the counsel of the elderly | Nember-kawani e ye kparaama |
| 34 | LOCAL LANGUAGE  
Sankora ba yezra dazuni /  
sane ba naara te  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
An old debt is not payable with a tree. | Children may suffer from the misdeeds of their parents  
Respect everybody or give respect to everybody | Buuro nee zoa |
| 35 | LOCAL LANGUAGE  
Suuri soba ba nyetra bini sobiri zu  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
A bad-tempered person must not defecate by the road | If you live in a glass house, do not throw stones.  
Bad temper can create disaster | Su-beu |
| 36 | LOCAL LANGUAGE  
Aŋ baŋ na soglaa gyeli  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
Who can tell which egg will hatch a black chick | One cannot tell a bad person from his looks  
Appearance is deceptive | Ta di Serce |
| 37 | LOCAL LANGUAGE  
Koa la kpeŋ ebαa nyia  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
A crocodile’s nose is not older than the water in the pond | An infant cannot claim to be wiser than the aged  
The wisdom of the elderly cannot be swept under the carpet | Nenjpon noarε ba ganna |
| 38 | LOCAL LANGUAGE  
Ta soba ba baŋ ka benne tegε  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
The greedy person does not know that a selfish person is satisfied | Do not repay evil with evil  
Wickedness does not pay | Beu ba yezra |

(Continued)
| No | Proverbial expression | Literal meaning | Symbolic meaning | Symbols |
|----|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------|
| 39 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**<br>Arŋ ba nye bando ne pii naŋ kpɛɛɛ bog<br>**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**<br>Who cannot see a lizard caught by an arrow, trying to enter its burrow | The struggle of the troubled is obvious | The predicament of the troubled is obvious. | Yel suba ba ságia |
| 40 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**<br>Arŋ dąŋ de kuurii za ne tanga?<br>**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**<br>Who throws a stone at a mountain? | What goes around comes around | Whatever you do comes with reward | Yel za a ni o san yɔɔ la |
| 41 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**<br>Arŋ dąŋ ku Fula naab a ky la wulu o a biri pe<br>**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**<br>Who gives a cow to a Fulani and gives him advice as to where and how to milk the cow | The knowledge of the one who knows cannot be underrated. | A word to a wise is enough. | Hakildaana ba baara yelgyamaa |
| 42 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**<br>Arŋ dąŋ ka nyaaŋa a kari laare?<br>**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**<br>Killing the monkey will not end the laughter | You cannot hurt someone and expect them not to complain. | The oppressor still has a right. | Awono naŋ taree na iɾe |
| 43 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**<br>Ang dąŋ ku pąŋyaawng a kyi a kyyąla wulu o a yelko?<br>**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**<br>He who gives millet to the old woman does not need to teach her how to winnow it | He who knows it does not need teaching to do it. | Experience is the best teacher. | Bagnla/Gooląŋ |
| 44 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**<br>Arŋ dąŋ muhin ka mɛŋ a yiba faare o níŋe?<br>**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**<br>He who dives must wipe the water off his face | He who offends must face the consequence | There is punishment for wrong doing | To-tage |
| 45 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**<br>Ar laara kyẹ kon koŋ<br>**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**<br>Who laughs and never cries? | There is a time to rejoice and a time to wail. | Life is dynamic. | Leeroo |
| 46 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**<br>Arŋ ire kuun nyiwar<br>**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**<br>Who takes life away from a dead person? | When death knocks, one cannot refuse to open. | Death is a necessity | Arkyirikuu |
| No | Proverbial expression | Literal meaning | Symbolic meaning | Symbols |
|----|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------|
| 47 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
Gberñi gbere la ko fo nyøge  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
You are holding the lion by the leg. | A wrong approach can result in disaster | Danger is looming | Saanbu |
| 48 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
Baa ba woho tengsagzaglaa  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
The dog does not bark at night without a reason | Everything that happens has a cause. | There is no smoke without fire | Yel zaa maŋ taree yizic |
| 49 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
Ka baa zɛmɛm naone bongka nao ero ne koore  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
It’s the lack of patience that makes a dog chase the fowl with the bone | Impatience leads to contention with unequal caliber of people | Impatience | Kanyiri kye be |
| 50 | **LOCAL LANGUAGE**  
Bibile naŋ yel ka a ma koŋ gɔiri, o men koŋ gɔiri.  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE**  
The baby who says it will not allow its mother to sleep, will not sleep too. | If you think you are punishing someone, you are punishing yourself. | You hurt yourself by punishing someone | E erna, e e mĩnã |
