

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**SONGS THAT AID READING IN KINDERGARTEN SCHOOLS: A CASE
STUDY OF THREE SELECTED KINDERGARTEN SCHOOLS IN AGONA
KWANYARKO, GHANA**



2016

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THREE SELECTED KINDERGARTEN SCHOOLS IN AGONA KWANYARKO,
GHANA**



**A THESIS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC EDUCATION, SCHOOL OF
CREATIVE ARTS, SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES,
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY, MUSIC
EDUCATION DEGREE**

June 2016



DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

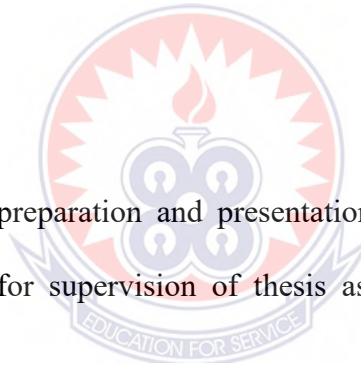
I, **ERIC BAAH MENSAH**, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree in this university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

Signature:

Date:

Supervisors' Declaration

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



Professor Eric Akrofi (Principal Supervisor)

Signature:

Date:

Rev. Michael Ohene-Okantah (Co- Supervisor)

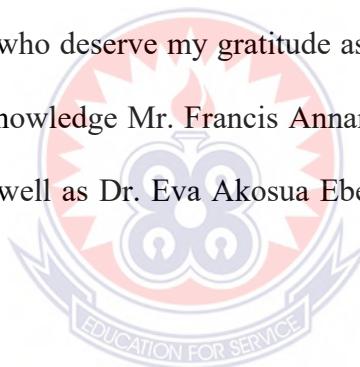
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Finally, I wish to place on record, the assistance I had from my course mates, M.Phil, Music Education of the University of Education, Winneba, 2016 group. “I say May God bless you all”.

DEDICATION

To the most high God,

Thearch Daniel Kingsley Arthur

and

Mr R. E. Amponsah of blessed memory.



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ABSTRACT

The work was a study to examine songs that aid reading among three selected kindergarten schools in Agona Kwanyarko traditional area. It highlights songs that are appropriate for teaching reading skills. Through convenience sampling and purposive sampling techniques, the study used three selected kindergarten schools and collected 46 songs for analysis and categorization for teaching specific elements of reading. The study was also rooted in the cognitive development and multiple intelligence theories which gave birth to a conceptual model for teaching reading with songs. It was found out that teachers use songs in their teaching activities but not for enhancing reading skills. It is recommended that Music Educators prepare adequate song books and run programmes for kindergarten teachers to enable them know the basics in songs selection for use with regards to reading concepts.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Learning to read and write is critical to a child's success in school as well as integral to living well in our society. Many children, who enter the formal school system today, may have little or no prior knowledge in reading. Over the years, academic expectations have been increasing at every level. For example, in the past, the time a child spent in kindergarten was focused on learning social interactions, such as sharing and playing. Today many kindergarten classrooms have become replicas of first grade with children sitting at desks completing worksheets, learning to sound out words, and memorizing sight words (Marxen, Ofstedal & Danbom, 2008).

Around the world, music is studied within the compulsory education system through the subject of music education. Thus, through the kinds of meanings and satisfactions that only musical sounds defined and structured according to cultural expectations, traditions and identity traits, can provide a form of musical education for its people. Leskova-Zelenkovska & Islam (2015) highlight on the importance of music education and state:

In this regard, numerous studies have been conducted whose results confirm the benefits of musical activities in young people's educational process. General findings are that musical education contributes to improved outcomes in all areas such as reading and literacy skills, spatial-temporal reasoning, mathematical abilities and emotional intelligence. (Zelenkovska & Islam (2015, p.354).

One of the earliest predictors of reading success in young children is their understanding of what they read and write. They learn that message comes from the print and not from the pictures (Fisher & MacDonald, 2001). Another predictor of becoming a successful reader is phonemic awareness or the ability to recognize that a spoken word consists of individual parts (Eastlund, 2005; Fisher & MacDonald, 2001). Teachers of kindergarten need to understand that words are made up of discrete sounds of which songs can be used to help pupils acquire reading skills. As a matter of fact, music and particularly songs nurture phonological awareness such as alliteration, rhyme, and rhythm which help build auditory awareness skills, a necessary component of reading. This can be developed through experiences with listening to, memorizing, and playing with sounds in songs and rhymes (Edge, n.d.). Nurturing the elementary classroom environment with meaningful music activities may help aid young children in developing skills necessary for success (Wiggins, 2007). Educators can develop the knowledge and skills needed to bring music into the classroom as an engaging and stimulating element of literacy education. When children are having fun, they have more interest in learning. Songs can provide the medium through which pupils can learn information in a fun, engaging manner.

Reading is however considered to be a receptive skill, through which we receive information. The complex process of reading also requires the skill of speaking, so that we can pronounce the words that we read. In this sense, reading is also a productive skill in that we are both receiving information and transmitting it. Gardner (1983) notes that, at a very young age, children become aware of pitch, melody, rhythm and rhyme which are all components of reading, and thus, the use of music may have the potential to meet

different learning styles. A child's reading skills are important to their success in school and work. In addition, reading can be fun and imaginative activity for children, which opens doors to all kinds of new worlds for them. Reading and writing are important ways as we use language to communicate. Very often, the use and the role of songs in the development of the reading skills of the child is overlooked.

The present study therefore plays an important role by unearthing the importance of songs and how it can play a major role in the development of the child in terms of reading. Moreso, it offers useful suggestions on the role of songs in the kindergarten classroom. Some of the general problems faced by children in reading are their inability to pronounce words, lack of fluency, and difficulty in reading simple sentences. Kindergarten schools in Agona Kwanyarko are no exception. Therefore the study unearths how songs can aid with the reading development of the three selected kindergarten schools in Agona Kwanyarko in the Central Region of Ghana.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Almost every child in one way or the other succeeds in learning how to read and write. Furthermore, there are quite a number of components that go into reading skills, these elements are: vocabulary building, phonological awareness, syntax, rhyming and identification of syllabic words. Indeed, there are songs which contain all or any of these elements and which may be appropriate to be used at the kindergarten level to improve reading skills. Kindergarten pupils love to sing and therefore it is always better to tap

what they enjoy to improve their standards. During my national service at Agona Kwanyarko basic school which the kindergarten is attached, I happened to experience pupil's deficiency in reading and that challenged me as a music educationist, to see how best it can be dealt with in my area of specialization. In addition, identification of vowels and consonant sounds was a problem likewise inability to divide words into syllabus.

Songs effectively engage children because they constitute a natural and enjoyable part of their everyday lives. It is assumed that teachers probably have no idea about the impact of certain children's songs on reading skills. Like Hill- Clarke & Robinson (2004) address, how songs enhance reading, its role and importance to literacy of the child's development is very often overlooked. This asserts to the fact that songs are very instrumental to language and reading development since reading alphabets can be introduced to children through singing. Categorization of children's songs into elements involved in reading does not also exist. It is important that these songs that aid reading among kindergarten pupils will be collected and categorized for use by teachers.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to collect songs that can be used by teachers to develop reading skills among kindergarten pupils.

1.4 Objectives

The study was guided by the following objectives: To

- i. investigate how songs are used by the kindergarten teachers
- ii. collect and document songs that are appropriate in teaching reading skills in the kindergarten classroom.
- iii. categorize children's songs according to elements of reading acquisition skills.
- iv. design a conceptual model for teaching reading with songs.

1.5 Research Questions

In order to meet the objectives of the study, the following research questions were formulated;

- i. How are songs used in the kindergarten classroom?
- ii. What songs can aid acquisition of reading skills in Kindergarten schools?
- iii. What are the categorical groupings of the children's songs according to elements of reading?
- iv. What conceptual model can be developed for teaching reading with songs?

1.6 Significance of the Study

A research in songs and reading in the kindergarten level will help kindergarten educators to know the significance or the impact of songs on their teaching. It will also offer useful suggestions on the role songs play in reading skills among children. The result of the

study will help readers to identify the importance of songs in the growth and development of the young child. Similarly, researchers can also imitate or find more information from the study which can benefit their works by way of gathering essential literature from the study and incorporating them into their work. Furthermore, the study can give curriculum planners a fair idea of what is happening in the kindergarten classroom with regards to the teaching of music and language at the pre-school level. Policy implementers can also look at the study and suggest policies that can enhance the growth and development of music in the kindergarten level. The study can serve as a guide for teaching reading skills not only at the kindergarten level but also at higher levels of formal education.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The study focuses on three selected kindergarten Schools in Agona Kwanyarko in the Central Region of Ghana, namely; Shining Star, Generation and Gloryland Schools. The study centered on finding out the extent of the above schools reading problems and how songs can aid their reading skills.

1.8 Organisation of the study

The study consists of five chapters: Chapter one deals with the introduction covering the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study and delimitation of the study. The literature relating to the study is reviewed in chapter two. Chapter three, deals with the methodology of the study. While chapter four is the presentation and analysis of the data

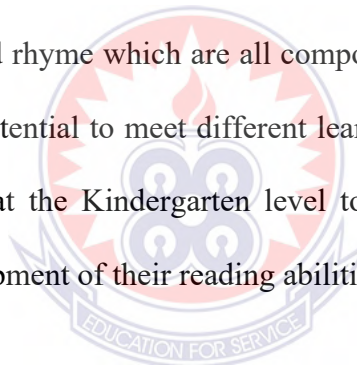
collected as well as discussion of findings. Summary, conclusions, recommendations as well as the final implications of the study constitute chapter five. Following chapter five are references and appendices.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The thrust of this chapter is to review the bibliographical sources of the problem under study. In view of that, the review was done under major headings in relation to the topic. The major headings were: theoretical framework, concept of reading, reading readiness and vocabulary building, rationale for using songs in the kindergarten classroom, music phonological and phonemic awareness, the role of music in language acquisition, the instructional use of songs, rhyme and poems, and then, music and second language acquisition. Gardner (1983) notes that, at a very tender age, children become aware of pitch, melody, rhythm and rhyme which are all components of reading, and thus, the use of music may have the potential to meet different learning styles. This attests to the fact that, songs can be used at the Kindergarten level to facilitate language skills thereby contributing to the development of their reading abilities.



2.1 Theoretical Framework

For this empirical study on the use of songs in developing reading skills, I make use of two theories: the Cognitive Development and multiple intelligences. The cognitive development deals with brain development which is closely linked with intelligence and consequently musical intelligence.

2.1.1 The theory of Cognitive Development

Jean Piaget, founder of the theory of cognitive development, sees the development of intelligence as something that evolves in different stages. According to Piaget (1936), the progress of a person's cognitive development goes from an arbitrary and spontaneous behaviour to a more logic and abstract way of thinking (p. 8). This developmental process depends on, among other things, the level of maturity, environment and social experience (Ginsburg & Opper, 1988, p. 210). Meaning, intelligence is considered as a behaviour that supports an individual's adaptation to its environment which organises and reorganizes the thoughts and actions of an individual (Piaget, 1936, p. 8). Piaget is more interested in the process of development than in the result itself. Ginsburg and Opper (1988) state, that “for Piaget, learning in a specific sense cannot explain development. Instead, development explains learning” (p. 210). This shows clearly that one needs to look at the whole to understand the pieces.

This theory sees the child as an active learner that constructs knowledge with the help of its environment, meaning that in order “to speak a language, the child must hear people talking” (Ginsburg & Opper 1988, p. 214), and it is this part of the theory that is particularly important to my study. If it is assumed that the child’s knowledge comes from and is affected by the environment, then songs could have some kind of impact on the child’s language development and consequently reading skills. For instance, Gibbons (2015) argues that if we look at a child from a Piagetian point of view, we will see the child as an active learner that constructs its own knowledge and teachers should construct or “stage-manage” appropriate learning tasks for each students level of intelligence (p.

11). The tasks in the classroom should therefore always be seen from the child's point of view in order for learning to occur. Piaget's theory further suggests that activity promotes knowledge and if a teacher works with a child on its own level, with activities that encourage further learning, the knowledge will last longer than knowledge only gathered by memorization of given facts from a teacher or textbook (Ginsburg & Opper 1988, p. 241). The use of songs is therefore appropriate for various reading activities for vocabulary building, syllabic pronunciations and identification of vowel and consonant sounds.

2.1.2 The Theory of Multiple Intelligences

The theory of Multiple Intelligence is closely linked with Piaget's Cognitive development. Gardner on multiple intelligences is of the view that intelligences are ways of knowing and understanding oneself and the world around them. Gardner defines intelligence as "the ability to solve problems or to create products that are valued within one or more cultural settings". According to Acquah, Sackey-Sam & Annan (2015), Gardner is of the view that a number of distinct intelligences such as musical, mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, intrapersonal, interpersonal, linguistic and naturalistic intelligences exist. Therefore, it indicates that different children have their unique strengths and weaknesses among these intelligence domains; however, he states that out of all the intelligences, musical intelligence develops first. He notes that, at a very young age, children become aware of pitch, melody, rhythm and rhyme which are all components of reading, and thus, the use of music may have the potential to meet different learning styles. Using songs to aid reading is said to be a learning style. Music

and reading are complimentary, for singing is celebration of language. Children's language has rhythm and melody. Children bring this natural 'music' language when they are learning to read.

Musical intelligence

Gardner indicates that "pitch (or melody) and rhythm: sounds emitted at certain auditory frequencies and grouped according to a prescribed system" are most central to the musical intelligence. He explains that pitch is more important in certain cultures. He discusses "Oriental societies that make use of tiny quarter-tone intervals". Other cultures (such as sub-Saharan Africa) emphasize rhythm where "rhythmic ratios can reach a dizzying metrical complexity". Gardner discusses the horizontal and vertical organisation of music. Horizontal refers to the "relationship of pitches as they unfold over time." Vertical refers to the "effect of two or more sounds emitted at the same time, giving rise to a harmonic or a dissonant sound." Gardner also states that timbre - the characteristic qualities of a tone, is an important element. The musical intelligence is central to human experience. It's the earliest of the intelligences to emerge--even children as young as two months old can sing and match rhythmic structures. It is closely linked to our other intelligences--we often "feel" music with our bodies and move accordingly, we often "feel" music with our emotions, and cry or laugh accordingly. Sarkar & Biswas (2015) summarize the role of music on brain development of the child in the figure below.

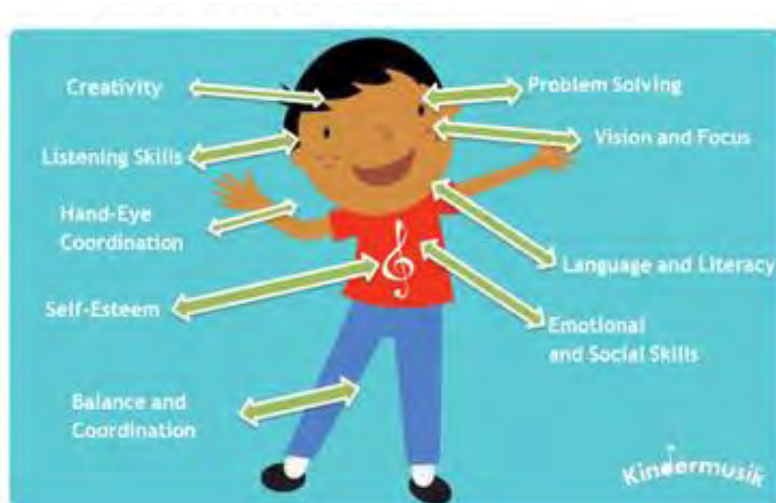


Figure 1: Music, Matters for a Child's Brain, Heart & Soul

The figure above explains the theories used in this discussion. A child's developing mind is nurtured by loving interactions, a secure and predictable environment and hands-on experiences that invite exploration and learning (Sarkar & Biswas, 2015, p. 107). It is therefore up to teachers to unlock doors and open windows that allow children to learn and grow through musical activities. It is important that teachers of Kindergarten are made to understand these concepts to enable them explore what songs can help their pupils not only in reading but other intelligences Gardener promulgates.

2.2 Concept of Reading

Ariffin (1992), William (1984) and Smith (1973) assert that reading is when someone looks into a written text and starts to absorb the information from the written linguistic message. Readers read to get information from the printed pages. They assert that as people read, they should be able to pronounce and comprehend the printed words, signs, letters, and symbols by assigning meaning to them. Through reading, knowledge has greatly contributed to the growth of mankind. As a matter of fact, though reading is the

fastest and simplest way to raise people's educational level, it is also the most guaranteed way of teaching children to read and write at the very tender age. Reading is like opening the door of understanding to human's past, where it can serve as a looking glass for our present.

Like Goodman (1976) and Smith (1973) indicate, "Reading is a language process, not merely the sum of various decoding and comprehension sub-skills". In short, reading is the process of reconstructing the author's idea and information which is a door opener to human understanding. The same concept is applied to music because as one sings a song, the person pronounces a word, comprehends the text and tries to gather meaning from the music. This gives evidence that music and reading has relationship with each other. As a matter of fact, there is a clear understanding that reading is something related to the activity of acquiring information and it is done either silently or aloud. Coincidentally, introducing reading to children early often helps them get a head start on the process of intellectual development. For children to become skilled readers (Neuman & Celano, 2006), they will also need to develop a rich conceptual knowledge base and verbal reasoning abilities to understand messages conveyed through print. In addition, children need the print awareness to develop their sense of reading in relation to alphabet identification.

Successful reading ultimately consists of knowing a relatively small tool kit of unconscious procedural skills, accompanied by a massive and slowly built-up store of

conscious content knowledge. It is the higher-order thinking skills, knowledge, and dispositional capabilities that enable young children to come to understand what they are reading. Clay (1979), in her pioneering work with Maori children in New Zealand, identified a set of conventions that could be understood without being able to read. These conventions included, among others, the directionality of print in a book (left-to-right, top-to-bottom, and front-to-back) differences between pictures and print, uses of punctuation, and definitional characteristics of a letter and a word.

With the exception of a study by Tunmer, Herriman, & Nesdale (1988) demonstrating the relationship of these skills to later reading success, however, there is little evidence to suggest the predictive power of these skills on later achievement. In an agreement, print conventions act as an immediate indicator of children's familiarity with text, and are not integrally related to the other language based skills associated with reading success. Therefore, while such conventions might be helpful to young children in navigating through books, these skills may not in the long run play a powerful role in learning to read.

Another area of focus for improving reading skills is phonics, whereas phonemics awareness is the understanding that language is made up of a sequence of sounds, phonic is the relationship between these sounds and the written letters used to represent them. Children appear to acquire alphabetic knowledge in a sequence that begins with letter names, and then letter shapes, and finally letter sounds. Atterbury & Richardson (1995)

opine that children learn letter names by singing songs such as the "Alphabet Song," and by reciting rhymes. I think that in as much as they learn letter names of the alphabet, they are also engaged in phonetics which contributes to reading skills. Phonics teaches the relationships between written lettered (graphemes) and spoken sounds they represent (phonemes). These relationships help children to read and spell words accurately and rapidly. For English language, these relationships are predictable, but not completely consistent. However, they are consistent enough to be very useful to young children in helping them learn to decode unfamiliar words. Phonics can also serve as a memory aid that helps children remember and apply rules and generalizations for matching sounds and letters accompanied by pitch and rhythm as suggested by Gardner (1983) in his theory of multiple intelligences.

2.3 Reading Readiness and Vocabulary Building

Reading readiness is defined as the time when the child transforms from being a non-reader to a reader. She explains that such a period is very tough but also very essential because it is the time where the childhood teachers need to bring together simple alphabet and letters identification to begin the vocabulary development of the child. I therefore stand to agree that because reading or learning to read begins at that level where the early child teacher needs to bring out all the elements of reading to develop the child's reading skills and vocabulary building. Nash and Snowing (2006) describe vocabulary as "the knowledge of words and their meaning" (p. 336). While Sheenhan (2002) sees vocabulary as "the ability to understand and use words to acquire and convey meaning."

Vocabulary is an essential element of reading instruction. Clearly, vocabulary and comprehension are closely connected skills. Each skill is imperative to reading achievement, yet one relies heavily on the other. This intricate relationship has been documented by many researchers. “Vocabulary development is both an outcome of comprehension and a precursor to it, with words meanings making up as much as 70-80% of comprehension” (Bromley, 2007, p. 528).

Harmon (2002) notes, “Many students continue to struggle with comprehension because of limited vocabulary knowledge and ineffective strategies” (p.606). Simply stated, Lubliner and Smetana (2005) declare, “Children with larger vocabularies find reading easier, read more widely, and do better in school” (p.163). The above statement is true because children with larger vocabularies usually articulate responses to questions and ask better questions than their peers with limited vocabularies. Reading researchers emphasize the importance for teachers to utilize an effective vocabulary instruction method to improve comprehension as easily as possible. Jenkins, Matlock, and Slocum (1989) stress how children can be negatively affected by poor reading comprehension. In an agreement, children can perform poorly in reading when they are not introduced to early elements of reading which includes vocabulary building. Lubliner and Smetana (2005) describe difficulty in their work, “The ultimate challenge of a vocabulary intervention is not merely to teach a set of words or skills, but to positively affect reading comprehension” (p.189).

Research suggests that listening to classical music may help improve reading comprehension as well as other reading skills. Lewis (2002) conducted a six-week study with first graders and found that listening to classical music seemed to have made a substantial difference in the reading comprehension levels and sound recognition of these children. When classical music was played during reading lessons, the children seemed to be more attentive to the lessons which may have played a role in better retention of the material learned. Listening to music therefore appears to enhance memory. Vocabulary in preparation of reading skills is also attained through story telling activities. Thus, vocabulary is incidentally acquired through stories because familiar vocabulary and syntax contained in the stories provide meaning to less familiar vocabulary. Picture illustrations support the reading process by clarifying the meaning of unfamiliar words (Hudson, 1982; Mueller, 1980). The child who listens to story also learns the incidental songs used in the story thereby acquiring vocabulary for actual formal reading. Undoubtedly, using music helps improve reading readiness skills in kindergarten students (Casiano, Gromko and Curtis, 1998/ 2004/2007).

2.4 Rationale for Using Song or Music in the Kindergarten Classroom

In an ideal classroom setting, every child is learning and processing information the same way. In reality, this is not the case because each child has his own style of learning, processing, and retaining information. This can be overwhelming and frustrating at times to the classroom teacher who is trying to incorporate effective and relevant learning strategies to address all the different learning styles. Many educational researchers

promote music as a way to enhance reading and comprehension, and emphasize music's ability to engage children in instruction (Smith & Wiggins, 2000). In support of the above statement, the text of a song can serve as a means for the child to acquire vocabularies to increase their word power. Songs also offer an avenue for children to learn pronunciation for the first time. The alphabetical construct of a text also serves as a means for the child to develop its phonic awareness. In addition, children find meanings to songs long before they learn vocabulary. This is made possible when the child at a tender age joins a choir to learn how to sing. During pre-school years before children can read, they rely exclusively on the oral language they listen to in order to acquire language. Even as the children attend basic school, only portions of the vocabulary they learn are the result of explicit instruction (Naggey, & Herman, 1987). In fact, there is substantial evidence that vocabulary may be acquired incidentally by reading or listening to oral stories (Elley, 1989; Eller, Pappas, & Brown, 1988). This incidental acquisition of vocabulary is explained by Krashen (1989) within the context and framework of his "Input Hypothesis." According to this hypothesis, new and unfamiliar vocabulary is acquired when its significance is made clear to the learner.

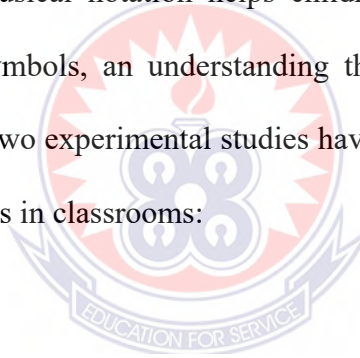
Song lyrics charts could provide a source of new vocabulary. When teachers display song's lyrics in large print on chart paper, it could provide wonderful opportunities for spontaneous discussions of background knowledge, vocabulary, and spelling patterns. For example, when singing the ever popular John Denver song "Grandma's Featherbed" (*see appendix B*), it is important to begin by activating student's background knowledge with a class discussion of what the students see and do during their own occasional visits

to their grandparents. It is important to discuss the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions from such songs because it will boost the thinking and reading ability of the child trying to find meaning to the song.

Young children's early attempts at writing help develop their emerging literacy skills. Starting around 2 years of age, children learn to master the functions and purposes of writing (making grocery lists) and begin to understand the forms and features of written language (alphabet letters). The use of appropriate songs in teaching the pupils to read will also contribute to their writing skills. According to Neuman (2007), "writing and reading are related and depend on each other." Between the ages of 4 and 7, children begin to translate the sound they hear in words into the letters that represent them. Children's early writing attempts are an important way to express their growing phonemic awareness. Related to early writing is the development of concepts of print. Concepts of print refer to children's knowledge of the functions of print and how print works (Strickland & Schickedanz, 2005). Young children's understanding of concepts of print has scientifically based research support as a predictor of early literacy success (Snow et al, 1998; National Early Literacy Panel, 2007). Educators can help children build concepts of print by providing experiences with books and written texts, and developing a print-rich classroom environment.

Like language, music is represented by printed notation. Like language, music writing follows a developmental progression from the perception of individual sounds to broader

groupings within songs (Gromko, 1998). I stand in agreement with the above statement because calling children's attention to the use of symbols to represent individual music notes and events may help children build the fundamental understanding that language sounds can also be represented by written symbols. The materials included with ABC Music help teachers create a print-rich classroom environment. Each unit includes a story and song lyrics that can be used to call children's attention to concepts of print. Writing activities included with each unit engage older children in independent writing, and home-based writing activities for all children encourage them to engage further in developing their awareness of print and early writing skills. In the level for older children, the focus on musical notation helps children understand that sound can be represented by printed symbols, an understanding that may transfer to building print awareness for language. Two experimental studies have shown that music instruction can enhance early writing skills in classrooms:



Standley and Hughes (1997) engaged children aged 4–5 years in 15 lessons that used music to enhance the teaching of writing and rereading skills. Children were primarily economically disadvantaged and included migrant pre-schoolers and students with disabilities. Instruction included focus on concepts of print, participation in singing activities, and writing response activities. At post-testing, children in the experimental group showed enhanced print concepts and prewriting skills. A subsequent study by Register (2001) replicated the previous study with a larger sample size of 50 children. The results again showed that children who received the music-enhanced instruction made greater gains in writing skills and print awareness. Using music in the classroom

may be an appropriate technique since children exhibit a natural love for music. This is why Dzansi comments on music making in its natural setting as a learning process and states:

music making by children is a learning process because children are captivated by the music in their environment. They respond spontaneously to a variety of tempos, from gentle swaying to drum beating and naturally memorizing lyrics of popular songs and jingles. (Dzansi, 2004).

She further comments that the enthusiasm displayed by the children allows music to be a powerful medium through which literacy skills are taught and reinforced. With reference to earlier statement by Gardner (1983) in this chapter that children become aware of pitch, melody, rhythm and rhyme which are all components of reading, it is indeed undeniable that the use of music may have the potential to meet different learning styles at the kindergarten stage. A person may start to sing a song and the child will become increasingly excited, giggle and try to sing louder. This is just one of many signs indicating the child's love for music (Sibal, 2004). In support of this statement, children love a good tune with an energetic beat and it is remarkable what music can do. Without music, people's lives would be very different. The appearance and development of song in children has been studied over the years (Weinberger, 1996). It is noted that during the first year of life, song babbling is evident and recognizable natural singing can be observed as early as six months of age. Experiences with music start in early childhood and undeniably last a lifetime. It is interesting to note that children seem to remember words to songs better than they do the words to stories (Ridout, 1990). This means that songs sometimes contain actions that help the children to remember word associated with the actions. In and out of the classroom today, people are beginning to realize that music

may enhance the overall learning of students. Singing is a natural, joyful language. When it is combined with early literacy development and other cross-curricular activities, such as Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, the beginning process of reading and writing can be as natural and joyful as a song (Barclay & Walwer, 1992). Songs have been found to support language development by assisting children in learning to connect words and meaning with print as well as focusing attention on rhymes and other sound patterns.

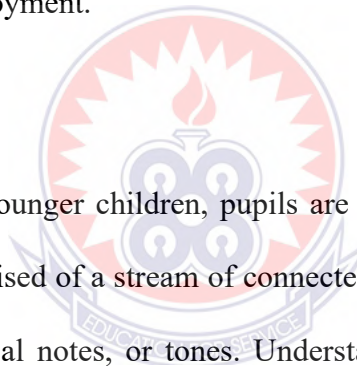
Schiller (2000) states that between the ages of two and six years, children become capable of longer periods of attention and are rapidly developing a more sophisticated vocabulary. During this time, children need multiple and repetitive opportunities, such as learning rhymes and singing songs to help with the formal process of mastering the mechanics of reading. With a lifetime of reading adventures ahead of them, young children are well on their way to becoming literate. When these young learners are guided in developmentally appropriate ways, they learn to name alphabet letters, separate sounds into spoken words, and associate sounds with letters that represent them (Reid, 2007). These skills are necessary for reading and writing. Songs, rhymes, and poems are perfect for familiarizing these young learners with alphabet letters, sounds, and words. Children may put forth a little more effort into listening and may remember more about what they are learning when rhythm and rhyme are incorporated.

Music has the ability to facilitate language acquisition, reading readiness, and intellectual development of learners and it enhances creativity (Weinberger, 1998). Songs can be used with older children as they move beyond the emergent stage of reading. The predictive characteristics of songs can be used to promote reading fluency, and they offer very useful opportunities for readers to use prior knowledge as they make predictions about story ideas and words (Algozzine & Douville, 2001). Not only does a reader need to read fluently but also needs to be able to make predictions about what will happen next in a story. When readers make predictions about what will happen next, a specific and meaningful purpose for reading is set up. Fluency and knowing the purpose for reading are important components of being a good reader and therefore the use of songs is very significant in the teaching and learning at the kindergarten level.

2.5 Music, Phonological and Phonemic Awareness

Phonological awareness, according to Snow, Burns & Griffin (1998), “refers to a general appreciation of the sounds of speech as distinct from their meaning.” Within phonological awareness but more fine-grained is phonemic awareness, which the same researchers explain as “an understanding that words can be divided into a sequence of phonemes” (individual units of speech sounds). In her research, Adams (1990) states that “children’s level of phonemic awareness on entering school may be the single most powerful determinant of the success he or she will experience in learning to read.” To become successful readers, young children need to understand that words are made up of discrete sounds, and they can then use that knowledge of sounds to read and build words.

Phonological and phonemic awareness receive so much attention because research shows that children with these skills are more successful at learning to read than those without these skills (Bradley & Bryant, 1985; Ehri et al, 2001; Stanovich, 1986; Torgesen & Mathes, 2000). To understand the impact of musical experiences on children's development of phonological awareness, it helps to understand the similarities between music and language. Within ABC Music, teachers use songs with rhyming lyrics, which help children build phonological awareness. They can also act as mnemonic devices which aid in retention of knowledge learned (Hare & Smallwood, 2002). Engaging children in reading activities that keeps their interest is key and music and songs can lure children into a web of enjoyment.



In the reading level for younger children, pupils are exposed to rhyming songs. Where spoken language is comprised of a stream of connected phonemes, music is comprised of a series of discrete musical notes, or tones. Understanding a spoken sentence requires successfully auditory processing of the individual phonemes combined with the intonation communicated by pitch, and hearing music requires listening for the individual notes combined with their rhythmic values. Undeniably, the human brain processes music and language in some similar ways. This is why educational scholars such as Adams, Foorman, Lundberg & Beeler (1998), Ericson & Juliebo (1998) and Yopp & Yopp (1997) recommend that music should be integrated into phonological awareness instruction. These researchers recommend songs, and specifically rhyming songs, as an effective mechanism for building phonemic awareness with children in early childhood

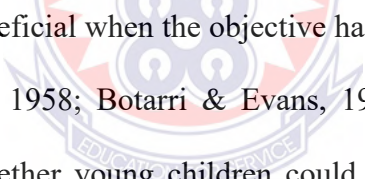
classrooms. They make a claim that providing young children with music instruction can build essential brain functioning that leads to increased growth in phonemic awareness.

The ability to perceive slight differences in phonemes appeared to depend on the ability to extract information about the frequencies of the speech sounds (Lamb & Gregory, 1993) and therefore there is a significant correlation between songs and phonological awareness. Another study by Anvari (2002) examined the relations among phonological awareness, music skills, and early reading skills and concluded that music skills correlate significantly with both phonological awareness and reading development. This corroborates a study by Peynircioglu, Durgunoglu and Uney-Kusefoglu (2002) that confirm that there is correlation between phonological awareness and musical aptitude as measured by pitch awareness. They asked Kindergarten children to complete both phoneme manipulations and deletion tasks as well as musical aptitude tests. Those children with higher levels of musical aptitude had greater ability to manipulate speech sounds thereby affecting their cognitive development and intelligence.

2.6 The Role of Music in Language Acquisition

The actual use of music to enhance language acquisition was pioneered in the 1970s by Bulgarian psychotherapist Geogi Lazanov. Lazanov developed Suggestopedia, which involves the use of background baroque music to holistically enhance language acquisition. In his doctoral dissertation, Quast (1999) set out to explore the effects of suggestopedic learning on children with technical giftedness. There were two main aims

to his study: i) to demonstrate the effect of various background conditions on group learning, and ii) to explore the effects in relation to certain student characteristics. Quast (1999) began with the hypothesis that baroque music would be most beneficial to all students' language acquisition. As a matter of fact, teachers commonly use songs in the classroom to promote second language acquisition; there is evidence that music benefits rote memorization. When various types of verbal information (e.g., multiplication tables, spelling lists) have been presented simultaneously with music, memorization has been enhanced (Gfeller, 1983; Schuster & Mouzon, 1982). The literature also indicates that a rhythmic presentation benefits memorization, especially when the verbal information is meaningful (Glazner, 1976; Shepard & Ascher, 1973; Weener, 1971).



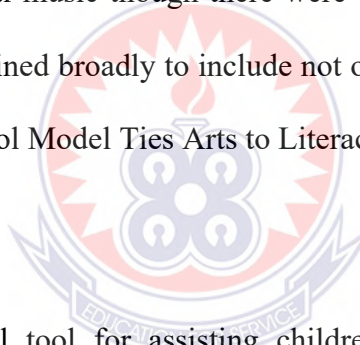
Music has also proven beneficial when the objective has been to retain the meaning of the verbal information (Isem, 1958; Botarri & Evans, 1982). Pick, Gross, Heinrichs, and Love (1994) explored whether young children could recognize the source of different sounds from instruments in different families, as well as different instruments within an instrumental family. Pick, et al. (1994) asked 3-7 year old children to watch a video of two musicians playing different instruments while a soundtrack from one of the instrument was played. Result showed children between the ages of 5-and 7-years of age were able to differentiate between different types of instruments as well as instruments within an instrument family that differentiated by size and pitch. Children between the ages of 3-and 4 years were able to differentiate different musical families, but not different instruments within the same family. In a second study group, Pick et al (1994) showed that infant between 7 and 9 months of age looked longer at the musical

instrument that corresponded with the soundtrack. These findings suggest that experiences with seeing and hearing musical performances over the first few years of life, likely influence what children know about the relationships between instrument and sounds.

However, the findings that even young infants know something about the sounds of particular instruments make suggestion that experience is not the only explanation. While instrument identification does not have any implications outside of a musical domain, it leads to question whether listening to music has an effect on other areas of development outside of music. When considering this topic 'Mozart Effect' likely comes to mind. The Mozart effect refers to claims that listening to Mozart's music improves cognitive ability in young children. This claim is based on an original study by Rauscher, Shaw, and KY (1993) which found that college student who listen to Mozart's sonata in D major prior to taking a standard test of abstract spatial reasoning scored higher on test of spatial intelligence than college students who listen to either some relaxing music or no music at all. Thus, the researcher concluded that listening to Mozart could provide a short-term spatiotemporal performance enhancement. They recognized, however, that the effect was a short-lived benefit to this completing spatial-temporal task when differences in mood and arousal were held constant.

University students were tested in three standard tests for spatial reasoning. The main standard age scores were converted into the standford-Binet intelligence scale. Their IQ

scores were 8 to 9 points higher after the participants had listened to Mozart than those who listened to some relaxation music and silence. Rauscher, Shaw, and KY (1993) did not make any statement of increased IQ in general, but their results showed that spatial intelligence scores were higher. Despite these caveats, the publication of this finding led companies to begin to develop materials that offered young children the opportunity to listen to Mozart, with promotional materials suggesting that doing so would foster intellectual growth. Claims that listening to Mozart will make young children 'smarter' should be interpreted with great scepticism. In terms of its effect on language development, it was not stated, it is therefore assumed that the claim about Mozart Effect is purely with instrumental music though there were choral compositions by Mozart. In any case 'Language is defined broadly to include not only words, but also the art' (Boyer as cited in 'Carnegie School Model Ties Arts to Literacy' 1995).



Music serves as an ideal tool for assisting children with the interwoven facets of language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Kolb, 1996). Children experience the wholeness of language through music and interact with the ideas and emotions presented in meaningful context through the melody and the lyrics. Also, the motive quality and the structure of musical composition engage children in creating personal meanings (Harp as cited in Kolb, 1996). They are experiencing opportunities to activate their senses, imaginations, emotions, and their life experiences while interacting with text (Bussis, 1982).

2.7 The Instructional Use of Songs, Rhyme and Poems

Singing songs and learning to rhyme help build phonological awareness, especially being able to recognize and generate rhyming words and move sounds around to create new words (Bennett-Armistead, Duke & Moses, 2005). As Harp (1988) notes "a most effective way to teach children to learn and to value language is to provide them with a variety of meaningful experiences that fine tune their ability to hear rhythm, sounds and melodies" (p. 454). Exposing children to experiences such as these can help them learn to focus on print in their environment which leads to successful, life-long readers. It is important for young children to build background knowledge that will be used later as they begin learning to read and write. When children hear, sing, and play with music they are building a foundation for background knowledge. Emergent readers build this knowledge when they hear, sing, discuss, play with, and write songs. They will eventually use this knowledge in reading and writing experiences. With songs, students learn concepts and word meanings they will at some time encounter in print. As an example, while singing the song "Clementine," the emergent readers learn words and concepts such as cavern, canyon, excavating, mine, and forty-niner. Children enjoy songs they can easily learn and remember (Smith, 2000).

For instance, over a ten-week period, Casiano immersed her students daily in song picture books, storybooks, thematic units, and holiday/special event activities (Casiano, 1998). There was noticeable improvement in her students' language development including vocabulary, communication, listening, and critical thinking skills, all

components of reading readiness after the ten weeks. Casiano says immersing children in fun and engaging activities leads to faster and better learning. Gromko (2004) found that teachers who use music in their classrooms, along with rhymes, chants and song lyrics, help kindergarten students develop better phonemic awareness skills. In an agreement to the above statement kindergarten pupils exposed to music make greater gains in the development of phonemic segmentation fluency than kindergarten pupils not exposed to music. For nine weeks, Curtis (2007) followed a group of kindergarten pupils who were immersed daily in a multitude of meaningful learning opportunities in which music was incorporated. Music was used at the beginning of the day during calendar and opening day activities as well as during transitions, quiet time and reading readiness activities. The music teacher incorporated many reading readiness activities into the kindergarten music curriculum. Curtis concluded these kindergarten pupils became successful readers by being innerved in a program that integrated music throughout their day. Using music to teach letter names and sounds to children is a practice that has been around for many years (Smith, 2000).

2.8 Music and Second Language Teaching from Various Perspectives

Schiffman (2008) reviews a study on how music was used in teaching English as a foreign language among Vietnamese students in English and exposure to Western culture as well. An inference drawn from the study is that the educators in Vietnamese culture prefer to have a more formal teaching and learning environment and therefore rejected the idea of using, especially, popular music in their English classrooms. The study addressed only opinions and perspectives provided by the students and educators in the form of interviews and pertaining to this use of music in the language classroom and

learning English as a second language in general. He however concluded that both teachers and students in the interviews agreed that music was helpful to learning English. The interviews produced a good list of the major reasons that music is considered useful in learning the English language, but these were solely their opinions which were actually not backed by controlled examinations of these effects. In Ghanaian context where English Language is the official language, it is necessary to assist the kindergarten pupils acquire skills in reading it. One of these ways is to investigate and document songs that can easily aid reading and speaking of the language, thus ensuring literacy among the pupils at the early stages.

For the case of the Vietnamese English classrooms, line has been drawn between language and music in that they do not wish to bring Western music into the curricula of English learners due to these perceived cultural differences. This suggests that one problem with using music in the foreign language classroom in Vietnam is not the music itself, but the refusal or inability of the traditional Vietnamese teaching methods and culture to explore possibility of the music-language connection in their lessons. This may be the case in other cultures as well. The predominance of foreign culture in our school settings definitely may permit the use of English songs in the Ghanaian kindergarten classroom.

In another study, Howards (2014) even suggests that the use of opera to teach primarily German culture to university level German students, is to bridge opera with the students' modern world. He made specific mention of the opera *Die Zauberflöte* and how its

controversial nature can teach students about gender and race, both historically and culturally. Though he suggests this also for a higher level, he recommends that the lyrics can be used for lower level vocabulary acquisition dealing with appearances and definite articles. Indeed, lyrics of opera are set to music and will therefore help in the acquisition of vocabulary building. According to him, the opera deals with an older time period, as each character represents different aspects of racism and cultural problems of the time. This helps with teaching culture and is said to be comparable to pop and hip hop in addressing racial issues. It appears that this scholar recommends ways in which music can be used to enhance language acquisition in the foreign language classroom that has worked for them, in their professional opinion and experience. Whereas this is a great suggestion to teachers in general, the availability of such art forms are questionable, however, in Ghana, songs that can aid vocabulary building which consequently develop reading skills are available and therefore need to be documented.

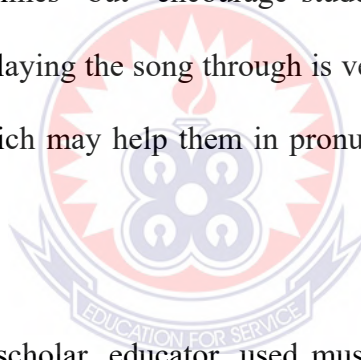
Similarly, Griffin (1977) suggests the use of music to aid in teaching culture in Spanish classes, but also notes possible negative effects of it. He proposes a two year cultural course plan, and integrates folk music into teaching Hispanic culture. He advocates highly for the use of music in teaching culture and notes that it is all too easy to capitalise on the inherent appeal of the songs to address reading problems in the classroom. He however gives the unique concern for choice of songs that can address a particular language problem. This study did not give any details about the class or level. My study focuses on the kindergarten level in Ghanaian context, though Agona Kwanyarko in the central region of Ghana was the study area.

Failoni (1993) sees music as a means to acquire foreign language and mainly phonetics in American language classrooms. She claims that "there is probably not a better nor quicker way to teach phonetics than with songs. She is of the opinion that phonetics instruction is one good use to which songs can be put even in beginning classes. Failoni contends that "Music may allow a teacher to introduce a more advanced text through music because, unlike spoken conversation, there are pitches and melodies, rhymes, and beats and measured phrases, which may help students, remember vocabulary or grammatical structures and aid in comprehending the general meaning. She also cautions the choice of music to be used.

In her conclusion, she notes that music provides teachers with a resource to accommodate students' interests. She makes many claims about how music activities help strengthen various language skills, but provides no evidence or references for these claims. She does not explain how it is used in her own classrooms or what languages. If this is in accordance with a specific language, such information should have been provided in this text. She gives a lot of advice, with little support, and warns against using songs with more advanced grammatical structure. For my purposes, It is important that songs are simple with few lines especially at the kindergarten level. As much as it is geared towards improving English language reading, Songs in English may be appropriate but for phonetics, local songs can be used alongside.

Lake (2003) writes an article out of his experience of using music to teach English pronunciation to young students for 10 years. He claims that students often come to class feeling alienated and uncomfortable in foreign language classes. He also describes the

positive effects of a comfortable, safe environment for new immigrants to adapt that can be created by music. One interesting claim he makes is that “the music carries you along into the text whether you are ready or not.” I find this claim very important to the use of songs in the reading lessons at the kindergarten classroom as well. This is because, pupils may trip over words without aural input, but with music, they can hear the words and pronunciation, and after hearing it, they can better decipher how it is written. This goes back to the idea of having both aural and visual aids in learning language. Lake recommends that teachers using songs need to refrain from interfering and let the pupils sound out and figure words out on their own. Also, “introduce song as a whole” and “play it through several times” but “encourage students to respond...in any way they might enjoy”. I feel that playing the song through is very important for the pupils to pick the sounds of the text which may help them in pronunciation and consequently address reading problems.



Jolly (1975), a Japanese scholar, educator, used music in her conversation lessons for three years. Her goal with writing this paper was to “state a case for the more extensive use of songs in foreign language teaching” (Jolly 1975). She discusses the relationship between speech and song as it is reflected in the Japanese language and culture. The paper concisely asserts that songs can be used as teaching material and also as a method of language acquisition. Jolly used songs appropriate to what was being studied in her classes, and asked them at the end of each semester to complete a survey. They were asked to rate songs according to their usefulness. The students responded that the songs created a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere and livened up the pace of the lessons. They were also viewed by most students as increasing vocabulary, studying Japanese culture

and the relationship between culture and language. Jolly is of the view that “songs are also effective in reinforcing course features, such as...pronunciation, grammatical structures, vocabulary and Idiomatic expressions, and cultural exposure” (Jolly 1975).

She provides explanations as to why she believes this, but it is based on her personal knowledge and experience. Thus, she supposes that it works. She documents suggestions about what to use music for in her classrooms and gives these personal explanations. Besides, the class evaluations/surveys given at the end of the semesters, she does not provide any empirical evidence supporting using music in the classroom. She suggests in terms of song choice that the songs should not contain unfamiliar grammatical structures, nor grammar or vocabulary not within association of previously presented material but I feel that students will not be distracted by the unfamiliar words since they will be focusing on the words or grammar structures presented in the lesson being given at the time. Moreover, unfamiliar words will increase their vocabulary and should definitely be aware of and exposed to these elements, and would benefit from it.

In addition, they “should not contain unusual pitch jumps or subjects not appearing in the main textbook” claiming this could confuse comprehension (Jolly 1975). I find this is unavoidable and therefore agree with the idea of not using ridiculous jumps in pitch, as most students could feel awkward if it is too high or low for them to sing, and could hinder participation rather than encourage it. It might actually be beneficial to have exposure to the more colloquial elements of the language, since the textbook version of a language is not always what is spoken natively. Her focus was on university students but

it is equally significant at the beginning level of education. Jolly (1975) assert that music is useful in many areas of language teaching.

In summary, the importance of songs in aiding reading at the lower level of school cannot be overemphasized. They help with pronunciation, help with understanding the vocabulary within and out of context, can foster successes after repeating the songs, improve solidarity feeling of the class, offers acoustic learning and helps in grammar.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter shows the methods and processes used in collecting the data for analysis. It contains the research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, instruments used in the study, tools, and data collection process as well as data analysis procedure.

3.1 Research Design

The study was rooted in the descriptive research design. According to Frankel and Wellan (2002), descriptive study investigates the quality of relationships, situations, activities or relationships in its natural setting. What can be discovered by descriptive research is not sweeping generalizations but contextual findings. This process of discovery is basic to the philosophical underpinning of the qualitative or descriptive approach. In an agreement, Denzel and Lincoln (2000) believe that descriptive research provides the researcher the horizon to view things in a natural setting. It is in line with this that I employed the descriptive research design because it places emphasis on understanding the words, actions and records of the respondents. It then paved the way for studying, collecting and using variety of empirical materials such as the personal experience, interview and observations.

3.2 Setting

Agona Kwanyarko is located in the central region of Ghana. It is bounded by Swedru in the south, Bawjiase in the north, Agona Nyakrom in the east and green vegetation in the

west. (*Appendix C, page 91*). Agona Kwanyarko can boast of the famous Kwanyarko brass band

and the ever popular Akwanbo Festival. The town houses a dam and Water Company or a water pumping station which serves Agona Swedru and its environs. Agona Kwanyarko has a population of over 6000 according to Ghana Census board in 2010 population Census. The town can boast of the Ayensu River which serves as a source of water supply at times for the town folks during dry seasons. It has seven basic schools and kindergartens as well as a modern secondary school. The inhabitants of the town are mostly farmers and traders. This is the place where the research took place.

3.3 Population

Population has been defined by Kumekpor (2002) as the total number of all units of the phenomenon to be investigated or all elements (individuals, objects and events) that meet the sample criteria for inclusion in a study. The population I used for the research was teachers of the seven kindergarten schools in Kwanyarko town. The following shows the statistics of the population.

Table 1: Statistics for kindergarten, teachers

Names of Kindergarten	Number of teachers
Generation	4
Shining star	4
Gloryland	4
Basel school	2
Mother and child	4
Methodist school	2
Seventh Day Adventist	2
Total	22

Source: field work 2016

The total population was 22 in seven schools.

3.4 Sampling

Mouton (1996:132) defines a “sample as an element selected with the intention of finding out something about the total population from which they are taken”. Out of the seven schools, three were selected for the study. The main purpose was to get schools that are in the center of the town for easy access to teachers for the study. In all, the teachers, totaling 12 in number from the three schools were sampled for the study. 4 teachers from each school were used. The schools selected were Shining Star, Generation and Gloryland.

3.5 Sampling procedures

Both convenience and purposive sampling techniques were employed for the selection of the research participants which was made up of teachers. Convenience sample involves the selection of the most accessible subjects (Marshall, 1996, p.524); therefore, it was used to sample the three schools. The other four schools are situated at the outskirts of the town and I felt that the three schools in the centre of the town were quite representative for the study. Teaching resources with regard to use of songs in class were also available compared with the four schools. Purposive sampling was used to select the teachers. Purposive sampling techniques involve selecting certain units or cases “based on a specific purpose rather than randomly” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 713).

The teachers were either handling kindergarten one (KG 1) or kindergarten two (KG 2) classes and all of them were purposively selected. The reason was that, they were the teachers who had direct contact with the children in the classroom and since all of them were using songs in the classroom for the various purposes, it became imperative that all are sampled for the study. This technique emphasizes grouping of the sample according to a pre-selected criterion which was relevant for the research. The logic behind this technique was to gain an in-depth understanding of participant’s perceptions of their experiences in using songs when teaching reading skills.

3.6 Source of Data

Both primary and secondary sources of data were used. The primary source was drawn from the fieldwork. The secondary source was obtained from books, journals and the

internet. Some of the materials were obtained from Balm Library University of Ghana, Legon, Osagyefo and Faculty libraries of the University of Education, Winneba.

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

Data were collected through interviews and observations.

3.7.1 Observation

Taylor-Powell & Steele (1996) state that, "observation is a way of gathering data by watching behaviour, event, or noting physical characteristics in their natural setting". Observation therefore intended collecting evaluative information as regards the problem under study. The focus of the observation dwelt on classroom management and the use of songs in the teaching process. Similarly, it intended to examine interactions, processes, or behaviours as they occurred. In this regard, observation of teaching lesson from a written curriculum to determine the loyalty of using songs in the kindergarten classroom was very important. As stated by Drury (1992), "It is easier for an observer to record accurately what is going on". It was therefore important to use observation to collect data on how songs are used in the classroom situation and their general impact on reading skills.

3.7.2 Interview

Interviews are particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences. There are two types of interviews, formal interview and interview guide approach. In

formal conversational interview, questions emerge from the immediate context and are asked in the natural course of things (Patton, 1995:349). For interview guide approach, topics and issues to be covered are specified in advance, in an outline form (Patton, 2004:349). The interviewer can pursue in-depth information around the topic. Interviews may be useful as follow-up to certain respondents to questionnaires, e.g., to further investigate their response (McNamara, 1999). Both the formal conversational interview and the interview guide approaches were used in the research. Formal conversation according to Brawn (2000) is a conversation between two people which focuses on a particular subject while the interview guide approaches according Man (1999), dwells on a conversational technique based on a well guided questionnaire to obtain a certain kind of information on a particular subject. All these interview types were used to discover and portray the multiple views by teachers on the use of songs to aid reading skills of the kindergarten child. They also intended finding out how they have been using songs in the classroom and whether it had to do with any reading skill.

Formal conversation for instance was used by way of asking teachers questions without any guide on their method of teaching reading and how effective songs can be in the development of reading skills of children. Both individual and group interviews were conducted. The formal approach was also employed to find out their working experiences. The interview guide (*see appendix A*) approach was mostly used to find out from the teachers the usefulness of songs and their aim of using them in the classroom. The two interviewing strategies are not mutually exclusive. Both interview guides were combined by specifying certain key questions in interview guides while living room for

other topics to be explored. Notes were taken during the interviews to capture the insights of the teachers.

3.8 Data Collection Tools

The data collection tools were:

- i. Note books
- ii. Pens and pencils
- iii. Audio recorder
- iv. Video recorder
- v. Mobile phones
- vi. Laptop computer

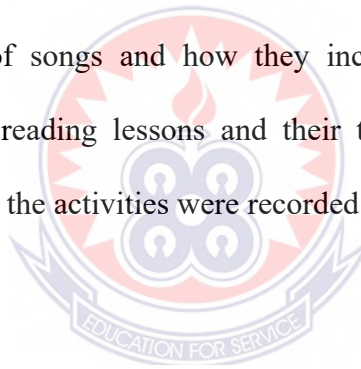


3.9 Data Collection Procedure

Preparatory work for this study started with the review of related literature. This was followed by preliminary field trips aimed at tracing the relevant materials for the study. Therefore concentration was on the three selected kindergarten schools - Shining star, Generation school and Gloryland School. The study was carried out within the period of thirteen months. Within these months, the study was devoted to observing, interviewing and examining other relevant areas that would be essential to the study. During the trips, the three schools were visited one after the other to create rapport with the respondents. In all the schools visited, there was a conversation with the heads to deliver a formal

letter of introduction from my institution; University of Education, Winneba. The reason for the letter was to warrant me as a graduate student embarking on such a study so as to gain cooperation from the study schools.

Having familiarised myself with the schools and building formidable rapport with the teachers, schedules were drawn for the observation process and the administering of interviews. Observation was done in the schools within two months. Teachers and their interactions with the pupils in the general classroom atmosphere were observed. I observed the teaching methods which included their methods and techniques of teaching reading, their selection of songs and how they incorporate songs in their teaching. Pupils' reaction towards reading lessons and their time for singing as well as other general observations of all the activities were recorded in a notebook.



As an observer, I got the liberty to video tape teaching sessions which provided a rich source of information and also enabled me to obtain a more holistic impression of teaching and learning that took place in the natural classroom setting. Both teachers' and pupils' actions were captured and viewed. Through the video recordings, observations were made of teachers' application of songs in different areas of learning, thus yielding some evidence of whether songs help in acquiring reading skills or not. Pre-listening activities in the teaching and learning process were observed. The kind of songs used and their functions were observed. The observation culminated with intermittent unstructured interview questions to clarify issues and throw more light on the activities observed.

Interviews administered aimed at not only gathering the songs they have been using in the classroom but also how the teachers understand the texts in the music as well as how they use them in their teaching. Individual teachers were asked to sing and provide the songs they are familiar with and which they use in the class. These songs were recorded, crosschecked and grouped for analysis. Kind of songs used were noted and recorded. In all the schools, observations and interviews carried out took into consideration the response of pupils in connection with vocabulary building pronunciation abilities and fluency.



CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents analyses and discusses the data collected from the field. Interviews and observation mainly touched on songs that aid reading skills among kindergarten pupils. The information gathered from observation was used to compliment that of the interview.

4.1 Results of Interviews

During the field work, forty-five songs were collected and documented. The following table shows the titles of songs collected from the respondents during the interview session.

Table 2: Titles of songs collected from the field

S/N	1	2	3	4
1	My head	Jonny & Hammer	ABCD	One we dig
2	A lion	Abofra kakraba	Hippopotamus	Mary's little lamb
3	London bridge	Traffic light	Doctor	Master
4	Peter piper	Araba no kun	See see see	Animals
5	Gentle Jesus	Ringer roses	Kofi no bɔɔm	Adɔmba
6	Oman	12 buckle	Fox fox	Anoma baako
7	Rainy day	Bambamalia	Twinkle	The first nowell
8	Jesus is the vine	Spirit divine	The day is bright	The day is over
9	Nine planets	Prayer time	Small circle	Bronyaba
10	Maama	Days of week	Garden	Kweku Ananse
11	Soldier	Arise and shine	The young patriot	Mask maker
12	Sisi mbo			

Source: Field survey 2015

Out of the forty-five songs collected from the field, twenty songs were selected at random for textual analysis. Cell numbers were used to indicate the titles of the selected songs for analysis. For example, 10.3 is Garden while 9.3 is Small circle.

Songs selected for analysis are tabulated below.

S/N	Title of Song	Cell number
1	One we dig	1.4
2	ABCD	1.3
3	Hippopotamus	2.3
4	Mary's little lamb	2.4
5	My head	1.1
6	Days of the week	10.2
7	A lion	2.1
8	Fox, fox	6.3
9	Johnny & Hammer	1.2
10	London Bridge	3.1
11	Gentle Jesus	5.1
12	The first Nowell	7.4
13	The Young Patriot	11.3
14	<i>oman</i>	6.1
15	Day is over	8.4
16	The day is bright	8.3
17	Twinkle	7.3
18	Traffic Light	3.2
19	Rainy day	7.1
20	Maama	10.1

Song one (cell number 1.4) **One we dig**

One we dig

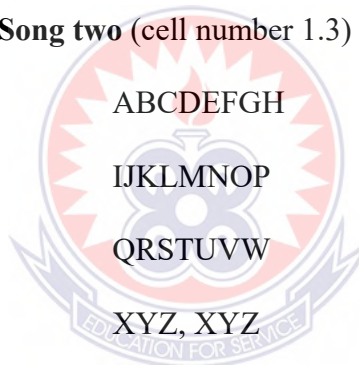
Two we sow

Three we water

Four they grow

This is an everyday rhyme for children in four lines. It is characterised by simple words mixed with number which serves as a simple vocabulary for young children. Words that can be acquired from it are, dig, grow and water. These words also indicate lexis for planting in farming.

Song two (cell number 1.3) – **ABCD**



This is an alphabet song sung in the kindergarten classroom. It is written in four lines. The letters are made up of the twenty-five alphabets with the last three alphabets repeated. It contains phonetics of both vowels and consonants. It rhymes with the metre, 8,8,6,7.

Song three (cell 2.3) – **Hipopotamus**

Hi-po-po-ta-mus, mus,

hi-po-po-ta-mus, mus,

hip, po, po, ta mus, mus,

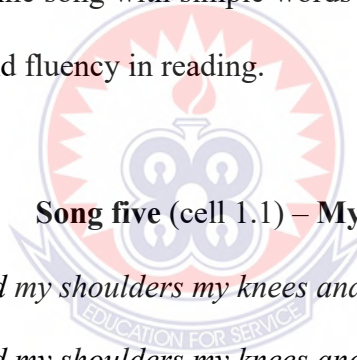
hi po-po-ta-mus-mus.

The song is in three lines characterised by single word. The long word hippopotamus is divided into syllables for pronunciation drill. It is appropriate to be used for teaching names of mammal.

Song four (cell 2.4) – Mary’s little lamb

*Mary had a little lamb his feet was white as snow,
And everywhere that Mary went the lamb was sure to go,
It follows her to school one day that was against the rule,
It made the children laugh and play to see a lamb at school.*

The song above is a five-line song with simple words that narrates a story. It can be used for vocabulary building and fluency in reading.



Song five (cell 1.1) – My head

*My head my shoulders my knees and toes,
My head my shoulders my knees and toes,
My head my shoulders my knees and toes,
They all belong to Jesus.*

The song above contains three lines but have four names of the body parts- head, shoulders, knees, toes. Although simple, can be used to teach singular and plural nouns apart from its primary function of making the pupils acquire the vocabulary associated with parts of the human body.

Song six (cell 10.2) – Days of the week

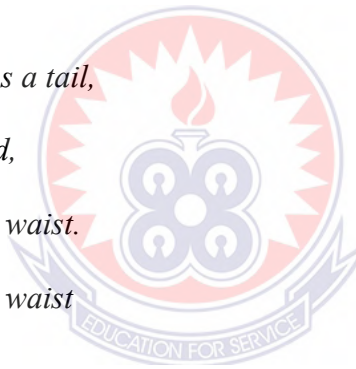
*There are seven days in a week,
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday,
Friday, Saturday, Sunday ,
There are seven days in a week.*

The song above was written in three lines. It educates children about the days of the week. It also helps the children not only for the pronunciation of the words of the days of the week; but also helps them to spell out the words as well.

Song seven (cell 2.1) – A lion

fox

*A Lion, A lion has a tail,
It has a big heard,
And a very small waist.
And a very small waist*



Song eight (cell 6.3) – Fox,

*Fox, fox, fox, going into the box
No, no, no, why? Why? Why?
Because I'm too big.
Because I'm too big.*

The rhymes above are made up of actions and movements which children find fascinating to learn. The song provides short sentences which helps with their reading skills. It also enables them to know simple prepositions. Example: no no no, why why why. The name of the animals also helps with their pronunciation.

Song nine (cell 1.2) -Johnny and Hammer

*Johnny works with one hammer
One hammer, one hammer
Johnny works with One hammer
and he goes to sleep.*

Children love to sing songs with human characteristics. The song above is in three lines. Though the words provide a good base for enhancing children’s fluency, it also provides an outlet for rhyming as they sing.

Song ten (cell 3.1)-London Bridge

London Bridge is falling down falling down

Falling down,

London Bridge is falling down my first lady.

The song above is in three lines. The text is simple for children to understand. The song contains words that can help enhance the vocabulary of the child. It will also help with the rhyming skills of the child.

Song Eleven (cell 5.1) – Gentle Jesus Song Twelve (cell 7.4) – The first Nowell

Jesus is the vine and	The first nowell the angel did sing,
We are the branches	To a certain poor shepherd in the field
Jesus is the vine and we	As they lay,
We are branches	nowell, nowell, nowell,
We must abide in him	Born is the king of Israel.

The songs above are made up of short sentences which can develop the reading skills of the child. The new words; king, Israel, branches, shepherd and vine can enhance the vocabulary acquisition of the child.

Song thirteen (cell 11.3) – The young patriot

*Arise Ghana youth for your
Country, your nation demands you
Devotion, Arise to defend and uphold
Him and building our mother land
We all involved, we all involved
In building or motherland*

This song is a patriotic song composed by J.M.T. Dooso. The words are simple and morally themed. It can be used for vocabulary building and fluency.

Song fourteen (cell 6.1) – ɔman

Text in Akan

Ma ɔman yi mu nsem nye wo ahiasem

Na dwen ho anɔpa, ewia, 'wimbir nyina

Sɛ wobɔ mpae a, kai Ghana

Srɛ wo Nyankopɔn, fa Ghana hye ne nsa

English Translation

Let the problems of this country be yours

Think about it in the morning, afternoon and evening

If you pray, remember Ghana

Besech your God, put Ghana before Him

This is a patriotic song in Ghana composed by J.M.T. Dooso. It teaches pupils about patriotism and helps them acquire vocabulary in the local dialect. Sounds of the texts are also important for teaching reading in the local language. It is simple and melodious. (See the **music in appendix B**)

Song fifteen (cell 8.4) – Day is over

*Now the day is over,
night is drawing near,
shadows of the evening,
Still across the sky. Amen.*

Song sixteen (8.3) – The day is bright

*The day is bright is bright and
fair o happy day the day all bright,
The day is bright, is bright and
Fair o what a happy day*

Song numbers fifteen and sixteen talk about the times of the day and their brightness. They can be used to teach vocabulary acquisition about the day and what happens at the stages of the day. Singing the songs over and over again ensures fluency. Teaching to read poems and prose which connect the times of the day can easily be done with these songs.

Song seventeen (cell 7.3)- Twinkle

*Twinkle twinkle little stars,
How I wonder where you are,
Up above the sky so high,
Like a diamond in the sky,
Twinkle twinkle little star,
How I wonder what you are.*

Song eighteen (cell 3.2) – Traffic Light

When you see the traffic light

There something you must know

Red, means stop, yellow means get ready

Green means go go go and go

The first song is in three lines. Its structure can assist rhyming. The second song is made up of word that assists vocabulary building and fluency among children.

Song nineteen (cell 7.1) – Rainy day

The rain is falling very fast

We can't get out to play, school

May be a happy place

Upon a rainy day, clap together

Clap again; school may be a happy place

Upon a rainy day.

The above song talks about a season within the year; a rainy season which usually cools the weather for pupils to play. Pupils introduced to this song acquire the skill of fl

Song twenty (cell 10.1) -Maama

Maama maama am so sick

call the doctor quick, quick,

doctor, doctor, doctor, shall

I die, o my baby

You won't die.

Apart from the songs collected, experience of the teachers in terms of number of years spent in the teaching field and in the kindergarten classroom was also noted. The following results were obtained.

Table 3: Working experiences of the teachers in the three selected

Name of school	1-2 years	3-5 years	6 years and above	Total
Shining star school	0	1	3	4
Glory Land school	0	1	3	4
Generation school	0	2	2	4
Total				12

Source: field survey 2015

The table indicates the teaching experiences of the teachers interviewed from the three selected schools. Eight of the teachers had more than 6 years experience. 4 of them fell between 3 to 5 years' experience while none of them fell within 0-2 years. During the interview sessions, it became clear that the pupils were interested in singing in class. This was confirmed during the group interview. It also became clear that teachers use songs in the course of their teaching and as way of invigorating the pupils. Songs used sought to make them happy and release tension especially when pupils were tired. They were also used to precede actual learning goals in the classroom. For instance, respondents agreed that they allow the children to sing when they are bored or feeling lazy to learn anything. It became evident that the role of songs was just peripheral and not to be used to teach any concept or skill.

The interview also sought to find out the educational background of the teachers and the following results were also obtained.

Table 4: Educational background of teachers

Qualification	Frequency
JHS	1
SHS	5
DIPLOMA	4
DEGREE	2
TOTAL	12

Source: Field survey

Table 4 indicates that out of the twelve respondents 1 of them was a Junior secondary school certificate holder, 4 respondents had diploma, 5 had secondary school certificate and 2 had first degrees.

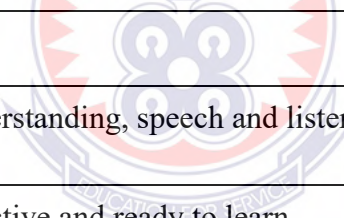
Also, pupil's attitudes towards singing in class were found out from the teachers. The results obtained are shown in table 4 below:

Table 5: Attitudes of pupils towards singing

Category	Frequency
Very Active	7
Active	5
Not active	0
Total	12

The table shows that most of the pupils become very active during singing as 7 of the respondents confirmed. 5 of the respondents were of the view that their pupils were also active in singing. This is to say that pupils are very active when songs are incorporated in teaching them. Information gathered from the interview also indicated that all the respondents were in agreement that songs really aid reading skills in terms of pronunciation, fluency and vocabulary building. They noted that they had not been conscious about how the use of songs could help pupils to read. In which other way do singing activities contribute to the learning process of the child apart from vocabulary building, fluency, pronunciation, and syllabic words?

Table 6 showing the response given by respondents concerning the above question during the interview



Category	Frequency
Enhances understanding, speech and listening	4
Makes them active and ready to learn	7
Makes teaching easy	1
Total	12

Source: field survey 2015

4 respondents were of the view that songs enhance understanding, speech development and listening skills of the pupils. 7 respondents commented that singing activities make pupils active and ready to learn. Above all, one respondent also recognised the fact that regular singing activities make teaching easy.

During the interview, respondents answered questions on how useful songs are. They agreed that songs are very useful especially during lessons though they find it difficult to ascertain its importance with regard to language acquisition and reading skill development. Teachers were asked whether they incorporate teaching activities with songs.

Table 6: Responses on whether teaching activities incorporate the use of songs

Category	Frequency
Very often	8
Often	3
Not often	1
Total	12

The details above reveal that eight respondents stated that they incorporate reading activities with songs very often. In similar manner, three of the respondents mentioned that they often incorporate reading lessons with songs. On the other hand one respondent stated that he does not constantly incorporate songs with teaching activities.

During the interviews the respondent presented data on some of the key songs that they think can help pronunciation, vocabulary and fluency. It became clear that all the teachers in the three selected schools in one way or the other use songs in their classrooms. According to them, they use songs very often in their teaching but for the purpose of engaging them but not to aid reading. They were of the view that since pupils loves songs it was appropriate to include songs in their teaching to make them concentrate on what they learn.

Table 7: views on how songs are used in reading activities

Category	Frequency
When pupils are tired	6
When reading texts reflect the words of the song	1
difficult or no idea on how to apply songs	5
Total	12

As displayed in the table respondents numbering seven stated that they use song to introduce the lesson and also when learners show signs of boredom as teaching unfolds. Furthermore, four respondents indicated that they use songs when words in the reading lesson go with a song. Only one noted that he finds it difficult to incorporate songs in his lessons. Interview questions were designed to find out if the teachers were interested in singing since they incorporate songs in their teaching activities. Some respondents vehemently are interested in using songs in class while few of them think that using songs normally creates noisy environment disturbing other classes adjacent to them.

4.2 Results of Observation

Respondents had difficulty in classroom management especially with regards to the choice of songs for aiding reading. It was observed that though respondents were able to handle their children through reading lessons, they had a tough time interacting with their

pupils to find out if the teaching process had really been successful. This was because they found it difficult to analyse the songs to find out how they help reading skills. It was also observed that respondents used quite a number of repertoires with regards to singing, yet they found it difficult to categorise the songs according to how it should be used. Children were interested in the singing activities more than reading lesson. They loved to read, they reacted positively when the lessons were incorporated with singing.

Teachers employed the use of flash cards to help children get understanding for what they were teaching with regards to reading lessons. The teacher was teaching the days of the week. She employed a song concerning the days of the week. In the beginning, the teacher asked the children about that day, and the following day and so on to see if the children were familiar with the names of the days of the week. After that, the teacher recited a rhyme about the days of the week to learn and asked them to participate by repeating after her. Reciting together created an entertaining atmosphere that made the lesson more memorable. The teacher then listed the names of the week on the board for the children to pronounce them one after the other.

Pre-listening activities were also observed. Though the teachers were not having the required skills for teaching, they had their own way of helping the children as I observed. It was observed that respondents had no time to get the understanding of the song texts before incorporating them into lessons. Reading lessons observed indicated a low level standard of the pupils' reading abilities. Most of the pupils found it difficult to read well,

probably as a result of lack of vocabulary building, phonetics and fluency development that would aid correct pronunciation of words when put in contexts.

4.3 Discussion of findings

Discussion was done in line with the objectives and the research questions with the help of the theoretical framework and the literature.

Q1. How are songs used in the kindergarten classroom?

The research revealed how songs are used in the kindergarten classroom by the teachers. All the teachers could recognise certain benefits that could come from using music or songs in the classroom. Their thoughts were not on the use of songs in dealing with reading problems of their pupils. One common thought amongst some of the teachers is that music can have a positive impact in terms of making them happy and doing away with stressful activities in the class.

A respondent in Generation school for instance sees songs as elevating the spirit of her pupils. She stated that “their biggest interest is attended to” and that music make everybody participate in pre learning activities” respondent normally uses music at the beginning of every lesson including when going out from break time and when they have come back from break. On her knowledge on impact of using music in teaching reading, she was positive that songs aid in their pronunciation since the fear of pronouncing a

word wrongly “goes away when you sing.” She was asked why she do not use songs specifically to improve reading skills, she answered:

I think that how to do it is a problem. Now that I am conscious of using songs in teaching reading and especially vocabulary building, I will do my best to act as such since my pupils love to sing. This is even a greater advantage to learn really well music.

A respondent from Shining star shared her thoughts on whether songs aid reading and says:

I know that to children, singing is fun because it makes them happy and cheers them up. During English lessons, I make my pupils sing but it is not done purposely to have anything to do with improving their reading skills. I know that children who have some difficulties with learning languages can be helped, though, with songs and I believe that it will be a great way for most pupils to learn specific words and pronunciation that can enhance their reading skills.

Multiple reasons were given for using music in the classroom by most of the teachers as they expressed how they use songs in the class. An opportunity was also given them to express their opinions on how songs are used to improve reading skills. It became clear that most of them had a common opinion that songs could be used to improve reading except that they had not been conscious of it. In line with the thoughts of the respondents and the cognitive development theory of Piaget, I think that it is important to bring in the learner’s knowledge of the world and their own interests when teaching English language in order to make learning more effective and enjoyable for the learners. This could be done by making music part of English teaching.

It was revealed that teachers use songs for the various reasons in their classrooms but not to teach reading either at the pre-reading stage or the actual reading activities. They were however positive in their opinions about how songs can aid reading acquisition skills in terms of fluency, vocabulary building and pronunciation of the texts. To them, it could be an easy way to learn new words, promote good pronunciation and lower anxiety. In accordance with these thoughts, Paquette and Reig (2008) suggest that songs are one method for achieving a weak affective filter and promoting language learning” (p. 228) as they continue to argue that singing songs can help develop automaticity in the language process and that “songs can prepare students for the genuine language they will encounter”. Music can really be a tool for language teaching and learning if it is carefully planned and structured (Cameron (2012, p. 31). This corroborates the theory of multiple intelligence used in this essay which states that “musical intelligence develops first (Gardener, 1983) as children grow to be aware of pitch, melody, rhythm and rhyme in their formative years, and these elements are all components of reading thereby having the potential to meet various learning styles.

Q2. What songs can aid acquisition of reading skills in kindergarten schools?

In answering the question on the kind of songs which are appropriate to be used at the kindergarten level, I noticed that the teachers had several common views and thoughts concerning the songs used in the general classroom. The songs collected were made-up just about three lines or maximum of five lines. The texts were simple while the melodies were also simple and repetitive. The word order and the understanding to the learners are

very important. Abbot (2002) for instance comments on the characteristics of the song choice at that level and states:

Some factors to consider when selecting a song are tempo, clarity of vocalization and enunciation, stress, amount of repetition, language level, word order, vocabulary, and the extent of metaphorical usage. All these factors determine whether or not the song will provide meaningful, understandable input for learners” (Abbot, 2002).

I agree with Abbot since irregular tempo, unclear vocalisation and diction of the songs may scare the pupils. There should be less stress in it in terms of the arrangements, where for instance, it does not make any room for resting the voice and consequently making the pupils tired. The song becomes appropriate when there are repetitive phrases in it. All the 45 songs collected were appropriate to be used to teach at the kindergarten considering the developmental level of the pupils. Songs collected contain rhymes, hymns, danceable and patriotic ones. Using familiar melodies with simpler lyrics, and creating original songs and lyrics is a big advocate for teachers to help their pupils learn to sing which can be tapped for teaching reading in the class.

Also, songs with difficult pronunciation and incomprehensible grammar will not be appropriate to be used at that level. It will be appropriate at a higher level where students can be made to analyse the grammar and texts involved in it. Like Domoney and Harris (1993) state “the question of songs that had ‘bad’ grammar or unnatural stress should be avoided”. I feel it is appropriate at that level as they are developing their language so that they may not carry any wrong language which may consequently spoil their reading abilities. Indeed, the theory of cognitive development sees the child as an active learner

that constructs knowledge with the help of its environment, meaning that in order “to speak a language, the child must hear people talking” (Ginsburg & Opper 1988, p. 214).

Q3. What are the categorical groupings of the children’s songs according to elements of reading?

All the forty-five songs collected were categorized under three broad components of reading: Vocabulary building, Pronunciation and Fluency.

Table 8: categorisations of the songs according to elements of reading skills.

Vocabulary	Pronunciation	Fluency
Master, speak	Arise Ghana youth	A lion
Raining fast	Maama	One we dig
The day is past	Little lamb	Johnny and hammer
London Bridge	First Nowell	Spirit divine
Gentle Jesus	ABCD	The day is past
Fox fox fox	Twinkle twinkle	Hippopotamus
Traffic light	Buckle my shoe	Rainy day
Abofra kakraba	Jesus is the vine	Anoma baako
Spirit divine	Days of week	Master, Speak
Prayer time	The day is bright	Mary had
Nine planets	See, see, see	Peter pippet
My head	Mask, maker	Araba no kun
Bambam bambalia	Wash hands	Sisi mbo

Adomba	Kofi no bodom
Ringer roses	Kweku Ananse
	Small circle
	Oman
	Bronya aba

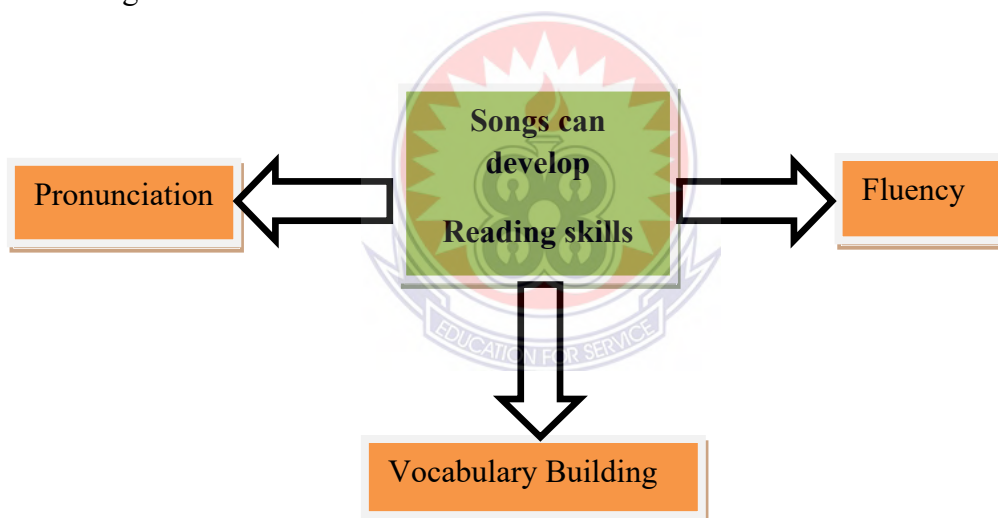
It is worth stating that even though categorization has been done according to an aspect of English reading skill each of the songs can best be used to achieve, most of the songs can belong to any other category. There is therefore some kind of multipurpose categorisation of most of the songs in terms of its usage in teaching reading. The aspects of English reading reflecting the categories can be approached in an integrated manner. Songs put under the vocabulary have words which are a bit difficult to increase the word power of the pupils. Each of these words can be broken down into syllabic words to aid pronunciation and consequently, fluency in reading. Some of the songs rhyme and since rhyme forms part of reading development; it is possible to be used to ensure fluency.

To sum up, these songs can be used to teach reading because one of the core intelligence of Gardner's multiple intelligence is the musical intelligence which he assert it is in every student's brain (Gardner, 1983; Williams, Blythe, White, Li, Sternberg, and Gardner, 1996), and this according to him, involves recognising and appreciating music, keeping time, performing, composing, singing and recognising rhythm. When the pupils are made to sing the songs, listen to some on tape, encouraged to do other musical activities such as playing instrument, the multiple intelligences will develop naturally, and their reading abilities will be enhanced. Apart from even affecting positively on reading skills, use of

songs induces emotional reactions of disliking or liking and arousal or excitement (North and Hargreaves 1995; Robazza, Macaluso, and D’Urso 1994). Undoubtedly, songs can be to communicate with learners at a deeper level of understanding by simply touching their emotions. I then develop the following concept for my study.

Q4. What conceptual model can be developed for teaching reading with songs?

The inferences made out of the review of the related literature in relation to the data collected on the field made me develop the following model for the teaching of reading with songs.



Conceptual model of using songs to teach reading

The model explains that when a child sings the songs appropriate at his/her level, he/she acquires enough vocabulary. He learns to pronounce these words as he sings and through the flow of the rhythmic patterns and the rhyming nature of the songs, he acquires fluency. Vocabulary building, pronunciation and fluency are necessary ingredients in reading skills. Therefore, the use of songs in teaching reading is appropriate because it

also has a connection with the cognitive development and the multiple intelligence theories.

Furthermore, the working experience of the teachers discovered became clear that they have been teaching for more than two years. This made them gather quite a lot of songs which they use in the class. The problem they had was their naivety in the use of the songs to improve reading although their pupils had problem with reading.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This chapter consists of the summary, conclusion and recommendations as well as suggestions for possible further research. The study centred on songs that can be used to improve reading abilities amongst kindergarten pupils taking Agona Kwanyarko as the study area. It was a descriptive study that made use of interviews and observation to gather the data. The convenience and purposive sampling techniques were adapted to select the schools and the participants for the study. Theoretical frameworks used for the study were the cognitive development and multiple intelligence propounded by Piaget (2008) and Gardener (1983) respectively. These theories make it clear that children's language has rhythm and melody and so children bring this natural 'music' language when they are learning to read and since the musical intelligence is central to human experience and other intelligences, predominant use of musical activities in class at that level is important. Studies on the use of music and songs reviewed tacitly assumed that using music and song is helpful in teaching second languages, there is in fact little objective evidence that the practice actually works.

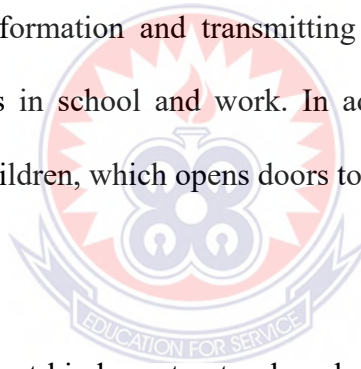
It was also revealed from the literature that before materials were readily available, educators of all languages and levels have been attempting to integrate music into their curricular for various purposes. Its effectiveness appears to be generally positive in creating good classroom morale. Songs are most widely used for culture, grammar rules,

pronunciation and vocabulary acquisition, and results in exposure to a combination in any case. Their claims stem only from experience, and not from gathering empirical evidence. This is useful between teachers, but we want to know if it really helps students learn.

Indeed, the use of songs in the teaching and learning process of the child is important. This is because music has been produced and enjoyed throughout human history and across all cultures. Music can also be linked to various curriculum and instruction models to increase learning, for example songs to teach phonic, provide opportunity for learning phonological skills contribute to the reading development of the early child. Music in the pre-school level not only enables the child to experience and enjoy music, and to relax, but also helps develop the child's musical intelligence which consequently unearths other intelligences. A preliminary study especially at the early childhood schools and centres, revealed an underutilisation of songs as a tool for aiding the reading skills of the pupils on the part of the teachers who exhibited gross inability to appropriately adopt songs in the teaching and learning process. Notwithstanding, the objective of the study was to collect songs used in the kindergarten, to find out how songs are used in the kindergarten schools in Ghana, to analyse the songs to find out the various aspects of reading it can be used to address and to categorise the songs into the various aspects of English reading including vocabulary building .

5.2 Conclusion

The study has shown that greater attention to songs by caregivers and kindergarten teachers in early reading development enhances the learning ability of the child. The element of music such as rhythm, pitch, timbre is the very element that constitutes the development of the reading skills. The evidence of my study, suggested that, music plays major role in the development of the early child with regards to reading and literacy. Reading is considered to be a receptive skill through which we receive information but the complex process of reading also requires the skill of speaking, so that we can pronounce the words that we read. In this sense, reading is also a productive skill in that we are both receiving information and transmitting it. Children's reading skills are important to their success in school and work. In addition, reading can be a fun and imaginative activity for children, which opens doors to all kinds of new worlds for them.



The study revealed that most kindergarten teachers have in stock songs they use in their day-to-day activities in the class but have no idea how they could be used to develop pronunciation, vocabulary building and fluency in reading. Reading and writing are important ways of using language to communicate. For example songs develop physical coordination, teach phonic, provide opportunity for creative dramatics and also contribute to a great understanding and appreciation of people, places, and cultures, and bring new meaning to the study of history. I have personally experienced the joy and success music brings in the classroom through this study and will continue to evolve my musical ideas for the better result in the future. It is also concluded that the music itself regarding

rhythm and pitch and the song regarding the lyrics are more effective in reading skills. They provide aspects of drills that make them as effective as they are in reading.

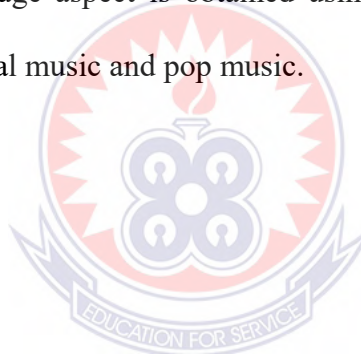
5.3 Recommendations

Since teachers were found to be ignorant on the use of songs in teaching reading, it is recommended that Music Educators should prepare adequate song books and run programmes for kindergarten teachers to enable them know the basics in songs selection for use in the classroom, basic compositional skills to help them create their own songs with regard to reading concepts. In addition, heads have to organise school based in-service training (INSET) for their kindergarten teachers and explain how they learn with reference to Piaget's cognitive development theory and Gardener's multiple intelligence theory as regards reading. Teachers can then improve on reading skills understanding these concepts.

Language teachers will know whether using music and/or song is, in any objective sense, beneficial to second language learning. With such knowledge, they will have a principled reason for either using music and/or song in their teaching more frequently, or for making it a more occasional practice. The conceptual model of using songs to teach reading can be adapted and used by not only music educators but all teachers and scholars who may find it worthwhile. Indeed, the model is not exhaustive; it can receive criticisms which will lead to modification in due course.

5.4 Avenues of Future Research

An obvious line of future inquiry would be to investigate whether songs might lead to better learning of other aspects of language. Also, further studies could investigate different levels of language learners. For instance, would the same pedagogical intervention help students learn aspects of Ghanaian languages in the same manner? Also, examining findings across different levels of pupils would help with accuracy of the treatment. For instance, will it work better with lower primary, upper primary or Junior High School? There is much debate among the reviewed articles on music and second language acquisition, but there were no empirical studies I found that compared how well a certain language aspect is obtained using any of type of music including classical, hymns, traditional music and pop music.



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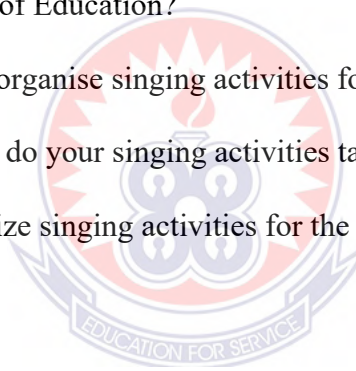
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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE TEACHER

1. How often do you have reading lessons with the children?
2. What kind of teaching method do you apply in your reading lessons?
3. Do your children face challenges in reading?
4. Are all the children able to grasp reading?
5. What do you do to help children with reading challenges?
6. Do they have difficulty pronouncing letter names of alphabet?
7. Do you have specific lessons involving singing and reading?
8. Are songs useful to their reading?
9. Does singing affect the children's vocabulary?
10. Do Songs and reading sometimes relate to each other?
11. Mention some of the songs you incorporate in your reading lessons?
12. How do they aid in reading?
13. In which way do singing activities contribute to the learning process of the child apart from vocabulary building, fluency, pronunciation, and rhyming?
14. Do you think incorporating songs in reading lessons will help children?
15. Songs are very important to the reading development of the child?
16. How many years have been the teaching kindergarten children?
17. How will you put the songs into categories according to elements of reading?

18. What available songs do you use for teaching?
19. What is the impact of songs on children?
20. What are the types of language acquisition provided by songs?
21. How often do you sing songs with reading?
22. Are the children interested in singing in class?
23. Do you incorporate songs in teaching activities?
24. What is the attitude of pupils towards singing activities in class?
25. Are you interested in songs?
26. What is your level of Education?
27. How often do you organise singing activities for your children?
28. What form or style do your singing activities take?
29. Why do you organize singing activities for the pupils?



APPENDIX B

MUSICAL SCORES

1. One We Dig

Musical score for 'One We Dig' in 2/4 time. The melody consists of quarter notes and eighth notes. The lyrics are: 1 we dig, 2 we sow, 3 we wa ter, 4 they grow.

2. ABCD

Musical score for 'ABCD' in 4/4 time. The melody consists of quarter notes. The lyrics are: A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z. A large watermark of the University of Education, Winneba logo is overlaid on the score.

3. Hippopotamus

Musical score for 'Hippopotamus' in 2/4 time. The melody consists of quarter notes and eighth notes. The lyrics are: hi po po ta mus mus hi po po ta mus mus hi po po ta mus mus. A large watermark of the University of Education, Winneba logo is overlaid on the score.

4. Mary's Little Lamb

Mary had a little lamb his feet was white as snow and ev ry where that ma ry went
4 the lamb was sure to go It fo llow her to school one day that was again st the rule
7 it made the chil dren laugh and play to see a lamb at school.

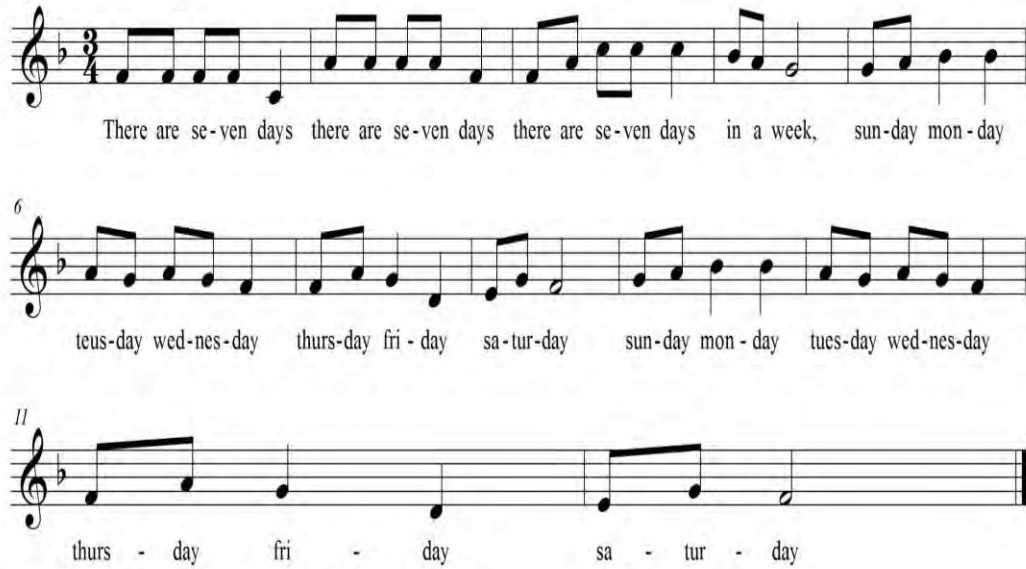
The musical score for 'Mary's Little Lamb' is written in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of three staves of music. The first staff contains the first line of the song, the second staff contains the second line, and the third staff contains the third line. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

5. My Head

My head, my shoul-ders, my knees and toes. My head, my shoul-ders, my knees and
9 toes. My head, my shoul-ders, my knees and toes. They all be - long to Je - sus. They
18 all be - long to Je - sus

The musical score for 'My Head' is written in G major and 3/4 time. It consists of three staves of music. The first staff contains the first line of the song, the second staff contains the second line, and the third staff contains the third line. The lyrics are printed below the notes. A watermark for the University of Education, Winneba is visible in the background.

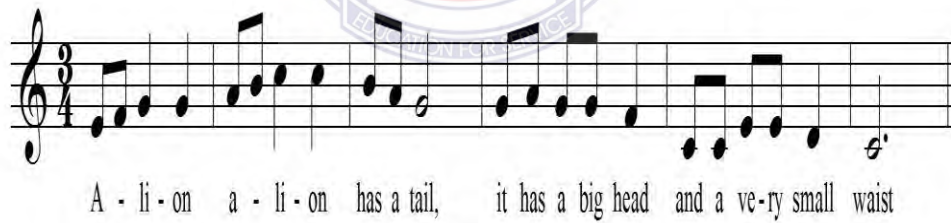
6. Days of the week



There are se-ven days there are se-ven days there are se-ven days in a week, sun-day mon-day

6
teus-day wed-nes-day thurs-day fri-day sa-tur-day sun-day mon-day tues-day wed-nes-day

11
thurs - day fri - day sa - tur - day



A - li - on a - li - on has a tail, it has a big head and a ve-ry small waist

8. Fox, fox

Fox fox fox fox fox fox go-ing into the box go-ing into the box no no no no

6

why why why why be cause i am too big be cause i am too big

9. Johny and Hammer

joh nny works with one ham mer one ham mer one ha mer joh nny works with one ham mer

4

and he goes to sleep

10. London Bridge

Lon don bridge is fa lling down fa lling down fa lling down Lon don bridge is fa lling down

4

my fair lady

11. Gentle Jesus

Gen tle Je - sus meek and mild, look up - on the lit-tle child, pi-ty my sim - pli-ci-
ty, su ffer me to come to thee.

The musical score for 'Gentle Jesus' is written in treble clef, key of D major (one sharp), and 3/4 time. It consists of two staves. The first staff contains the first six measures of the melody, and the second staff contains the remaining five measures. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

12. The First Nowell

The-re fir - st no-el well, the-e an gel did came, un-to cer tain poor she pared in
feild as they lay i-n fei ld as they lay a-nd while keeping their sheep in the cold win ter
sn-ow that wa - s soo deep, no - e l no-o el no-o el no - el born is the
ki - ng of i - s - ra - el.

The musical score for 'The First Nowell' is written in treble clef, key of D major (one sharp), and 3/4 time. It consists of four staves. The first staff contains the first six measures, the second staff contains measures 7-14, the third staff contains measures 15-22, and the fourth staff contains the final two measures. The lyrics are printed below the notes. A watermark for the University of Education, Winneba is visible in the background.

13. The Young Patriot



a rise gha na youth for your coun - try your na-tion de-mands your de-vo - tion

6



a rise to de fend and up-hold it an-d make and make it strong we are all in volved

12



we are all i n volved we are all ii-n volved in bui-lding our mo - ther land.



14. Oman

ma oman no mu-n sem ye woahia sem na dwn ho - a anapa ayie na - bre ye naa,

9
sewo bo ampaia yea kai Ghana fa wo nyanko pon, fa Gha - na hye nen sa o no na o ye

17
o man ba pa o no na oy odo fa odo ma wo man onura na ye hye hye fa do ma wo man o noa ara

25
na o hyia o noara na o hy - ia



15. The Day is Over

the day is past and over all thanks o Lord to thee — we pray thee now that sin lee

7
the hour of dark may be o jesus keep us in thy sight and guide us through the com ing nig ht

16. The day is Bright



The day is bright is bright and fair o ha - ppy day the day all bright the



day is bright is bright and fair o what a ha - ppy day

17. Twinkle



Twin-kle twin-kle li - ttle star how i won der what you are up a - bove the sky so high



like a dai-mond in the sky twin-kle twin-kle li - ttle star how i won-der what you are.

18. Traffic Light

When you see the tra - fic light there is something you must know red means stop

4
yel low means get rea dy green means go go go and go

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics. The second staff, starting with a measure rest '4', contains the melody for the second line of lyrics. The notes are simple quarter and eighth notes.

19. Rainy Day

The rain is fa lling ve ry fast we can't get out to play school may be a ha ppy place up

4
on a rai ny day clap clap clap and to ge ther clap a wa y school may be a ha ppy place up

8
on a rai ny day

The image shows three staves of musical notation in 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics. The second staff, starting with a measure rest '4', contains the melody for the second line of lyrics. The third staff, starting with a measure rest '8', contains the melody for the third line of lyrics. The notes are simple quarter and eighth notes. A large watermark is visible in the background.

20. Master Speake



Mas - ter, speake thy ser-vant hea - reth wai-ting for thy gra - cious word, i am

8



lis - tening, Lord for thee, what has thou to say, to me.



APPENDIX C

LOCATION OF STUDY AREA

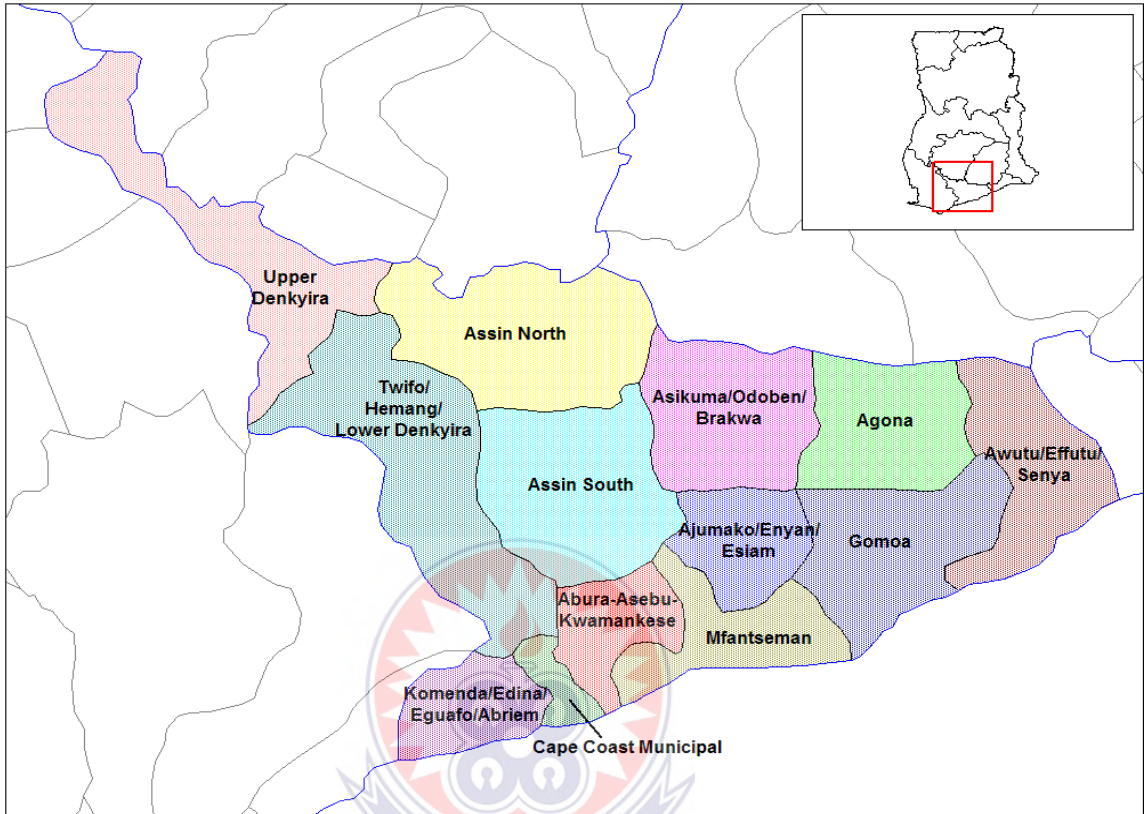


Figure 2 A map showing Central Region of Ghana



Figure 4 A map showing the location of Agona Kwanyako

APPENDIX D
FIELD PICTURES



Figure 4: Shinning Star School



Figure 5: Generation Kindergarten



Figure 6: Gloryland School

