

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**INFLUENCE OF INDOOR AND OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT ON
LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT OF PRE-SCHOOLERS IN THE EFFUTU
MUNICIPALITY**



SALAMATU HARUNA MOHAMMED

2019

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**INFLUENCE OF INDOOR AND OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT ON
LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT OF PRE-SCHOOLERS IN THE EFFUTU
MUNICIPALITY**

SALAMATU HARUNA MOHAMMED

8160190001



**A thesis in the Department of Early Childhood Education, Faculty of Educational
Studies, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
(Early Childhood Education)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

OCTOBER, 2019

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I, **Salamatu Haruna Mohammed**, hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research. With the exception of quotation and references contained in published works which have all been identified and acknowledged, is entirely my my own original work and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:.....

Date:

Supervisor's Declaration

I, **Dr. Samuel Frimpong Oppong**, hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis was supervised in accordance with the guideline and supervision of thesis laid down by University of Education, Winneba.

Signature:.....

Date:.....



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis was made possible by the grace of almighty Allah and a number of God sent individuals who made selfless and helpful contributions. I would therefore say thank you Dr. Samuel Opong Frimpong, my supervisor, whose relentless effort has brought me this far.

My special thanks also go to my parents and friends for their contributions in diverse ways to help me complete this work successfully.

Finally, I appreciate the effort of my dearest friend, Mr. Wilson Kofi Agbeke, who provided enough moral support for the completion of this work. May Allah richly bless you all!



DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my family.



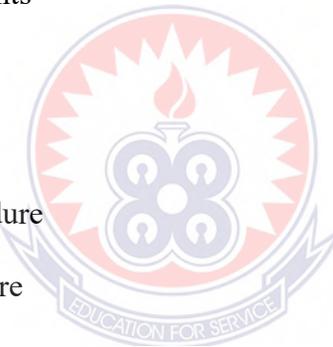
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Page
Declaration	iii
Acknowledgement	iv
Dedication	v
Table of Contents	vi
List of Tables	xi
Abstract	xii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Background to the Study	1
1.1 Statement of the Problem	7
1.2 Purpose of the Study	9
1.3 Objectives	9
1.4 Research Questions	9
1.5 Significance of the Study	10
1.6 Delimitations of the Study	11
1.7 Limitation of the Study	12
1.8 Organization of the Study	13
CHAPTER TWO: RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW	14
2.0 Introduction	14
2.1 Theoretical Framework	14
2.2 Theories of Language Development	15
2.2.1 Nativist-Linguist/Genetic Theory	16



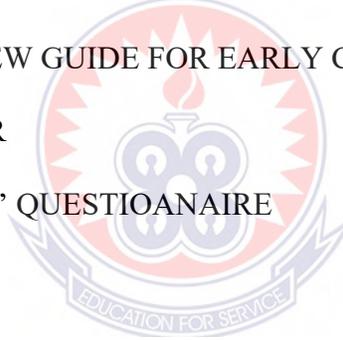
2.2.2 Social Interaction/Environmental/Nurture Theory	18
2.3 Processes through which Language Development in Preschool Children Pass	20
2.3.1 Early Vocalisations or Pre-Linguistic Communication	20
2.3.2 Development of Vocabulary	20
2.4 Kinds of Environment that Encourage and Support Language Development in Pre-School Children	23
2.4.1 Time and Space	24
2.4.2 Material Environment	25
2.5 Developmentally Appropriate Environments that Promote Language Development in Preschoolers	27
2.5.1 Indoor Environments that Promote Language Development	27
2.5.2 Unsupportive Language Environments	35
2.5.3 Creating an Environment without Challenges of Responses	35
2.5.4 Create an Environment that Emphasizes Sitting to Learn	36
2.6 Approaches used in teaching Language to Pre-Schoolers	37
2.6.1 Informal Approach	37
2.6.2 Focus on the Child's Intent	38
2.6.3 Expect Success	39
2.6.4 Celebrating Creativity	40
2.6.5 Recognize Language Achievement by Children	41
2.6.6 Environment that Encourages and Supports Language Development in Preschoolers	42

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	47
3.0 Introduction	47
3.1 Philosophical Stance	47
3.2 Research Design	50
3.3 Research Area	54
3.4 Population	54
3.5 Sample Size	55
3.6 Sampling Technique	55
3.7 Instrumentation	56
3.8 Validity of the instruments	59
3.9 Reliability	61
3.10 Data Collection	62
3.11 Data Collection Procedure	62
3.12 Data Analysis Procedure	66
3.13 Ethical Considerations	67
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA	69
4.0 Introduction	69
4.1 Background of Teachers	70
4.2 Research Question 1: What is/are the local or cultural belief of people of Effutu about how early childhood children acquire or develop language?	71
4.3 Research Question 2: Which Environments Encourage and Support Language Development in Preschoolers?	72



4.4 Research Question 3: What are some of the approaches that can be used to promote language development of preschoolers in both indoor and outdoor environments?	75
4.5 Research Question 4: What kinds of activities promote language development of preschoolers in both indoor and outdoor environments.	76
4.6 Research Question 5: What are some of teaching and learning materials that can be used to teach preschoolers develop language in both in indoor and outdoor environments?	77
4.7 Research Question 1: What is/are the local or cultural belief of people of Effutu about how early childhood children acquire or develop language?	80
4.8 Research Question 2: Which environments Support and Encourage Language Development in Preschoolers	83
4.9 Research Question 3: What are the approaches used to help preschool children develop language.	87
4.10 Research Question 4: What are some of the activities that help pre-school children develop language.	88
4.11. Research Question 5: What are the teaching and learning materials that can be used to help preschool children develop language.	90
4.12. Summary of the analysis	91
4.13 Discussion of Results	93

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF STUDY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND	
CONCLUSION	103
5.0 Introduction	103
5.1 Summary of findings	103
5.2 Key Findings	104
5.3 Conclusion	105
5.4 Recommendations	106
5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies	107
REFERENCE	108
APPENDIX A: INTRODUCTORY LETTER	114
APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION	
TEACHER	115
APPENDIX C: PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE	117



List of Tables

Table	Page
4.2: Environments that support and encourage a child to develop language in the Effutu Municipality	83
4.3: Approaches Parents think can be used to help preschool children develop Language	87
4.1: Views of Parents on activities that can help Preschool Children Develop Language	88
4.4: Teaching and learning materials that both parents and teachers think can be used to help preschool children develop Language	90



ABSTRACT

The study sought to find out the impact of indoor and outdoor environments on language development of preschool children in Ghana. The study was conducted in the Effutu Municipality. The mixed method approach was used for the study. The study sampled 215 participants. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting eight teachers teaching at the preschool level and 56 parents who enrolled their children in the four schools involved in the study. Semi-structured interview and questionnaire were used to collect data. The interview data was analysed thematically. The questionnaires were analysed using the SPSS software programme. The results of the study from both the parents and the teachers revealed that language is a system that relates sounds or gestures to meaning. The main findings of the study are: - First, environments rich with teaching and learning materials promote language development in preschool children. Again, environments in which children are given the opportunity to express their views promote language development in preschool children. Also, the analysis revealed that indoor environments that are print rich and full of picture books promote language development in preschool children. The study further revealed that story-telling and reading to preschool children both indoor and outdoor promote their language development. Furthermore, play materials, positive and quick adult response to children's requests both promote language development by preschool children. Finally, the study revealed that environments that are loving, rich in language and allows free interaction between pupil-pupil, pupil-parent, and pupil-teacher promote language development by preschool children.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the following subheadings will be discussed. They are background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study and limitations and delimitations.

1.0 Background to the Study

This section is about a brief history of language development by preschoolers and the sort of environments that support it. Development of language is a complex process, and one that is fascinating to observe firsthand, as parents of infants know well (Hardman, Drew, Winston Egan, & Wolf, 1990). Hardman et al (1990) went on to say that young children normally progress through several stages in language development, from a preverbal stage, to the use of words together in sentences. This seems to suggest that whether a child grows up in a “traditional” society or in a “technological” one, whether in a large extended family or in a small nuclear one, whether on an island, in an urban ghetto, or in a tribal farm compound; whether with or without formal schooling; whether in a hot, wet, dry, or cold climate, the child will develop or acquire the language of his/her tribe or where he/she lives. This implies that environments for early childhood children vary widely, and all of these factors may affect communication in one way or the other. In all environments children found in them develop language and can use it to satisfy their communication needs.

It is a common knowledge that parents or other caregivers teach language informally to preschoolers by focusing on the intent or meaning of the child’s utterances

rather than on the form of the sentence. Parents or other caregivers do not also expect success, rather they recognize that language learning is holistic, and therefore celebrate the child's unique and creative uses of language.

However, creating an environment both indoor and outdoor for preschoolers to promote language development has become a challenge to practice in the school setting (Gestwicki, 2014; Bee, 2000; Brewer, 1995). In the first place, almost all prekindergarten and kindergarten programmes in Ghana are all located within school systems as a result they are influenced by decisions that are made for the instruction and assessment of older children. In other words teachers turn to follow the given curriculum or their own agenda that they fail to respond to children's interests or to concentrate on the topics that are actually important to the children as far as language development is concerned. Rather they lump children at ages four and five together with older children in their planning and offerings (Copple & Bredekamp) cited in Gestwicki (2014). This implies that the needs of preschoolers that are to be taken into consideration in order to match their language development are not considered. Rather preschoolers are regarded as primary age children and are treated as such.

For the reasons given above, it is clear that in almost all the pre-kindergartens and kindergartens programmes in Ghana more emphasis is placed on narrow curriculum goals of academic skill development to the neglect of designing environments that support rich, productive play and language development. Teachers and other caregivers seem not to see the children as "preschoolers any more", this translates into imposing adult way of speaking language to the preschool children. This sort of environment does not fall within

early childhood friendly environment that will promote language learning or development because it is imposing adult decided learning experiences.

Some caregivers/teachers see preschoolers as too young for any real learning and therefore turn to create an environment that bores and stifles curiosity (Gestwicki, 2014). For example, it is a common knowledge that most of the preschool centres attached to primary public schools in Ghana are housed in dilapidated classrooms with broken tables and chairs or fixed chairs or benches which are not comfortable, thereby not whipping interest and curiosity in the children. In this respect, preschoolers are seen as too young for any real learning and the task of the teacher is seen as supervisors or child minders to step in to referee the squabbles that are frequently the result of too little interest or novelty to otherwise occupy interest. This sort of indoor environment does not have so much impact on language development as the children were not involved in organized activities.

The term “environment” as used in this study refers to what Tassoni, Beith, Eldridge and Gough (2005) explained as “an all- encompassing one”. According to Tassoni et al (2005) what they referred to as environment covers not only what we can see, hear, touch and smell, but also the atmosphere that prevails within a setting. This implies that caregivers and significant others in the life of a preschool child need to make sure that children feel welcome and wanted when they enter into any indoor or outdoor environments. In this respect an early year child’s language environments can be said to be one in which all aspects of a child’s experiences are thought about and where caregivers are constantly looking for ways to make sure that the environment is conducive or can impact positively on language development of the children. As a result, in most early childhood settings caregivers or teachers take the children outdoors or bring objects inside

for the children to observe or talk about what they are feeling. In some cases the objects indoor and outdoor are labeled with their names to aid in reading. All these activities tend to impact positively on language development of the children.

Based on the above viewpoints, it can be said that this perspective agrees with the school of thought called empiricism by McLaughlin (2006). This is because in the view of McLaughlin (2006), language experiences provided by the environment nurture it. This implies that experience is the source of knowledge and learning. Thus, McLaughlin holds the view that children are born with none of the knowledge they will eventually obtain. Genetics provide the basic tools – that is, the biological structure and neurological capacity for learning. In respect of the above facts, it can be said that children's language abilities develop primarily from experience with their environment. On the other hand it is argued that children whose parents talk to them often and read to them regularly begin to talk sooner, develop large vocabularies, use more complex sentences, and learn to read readily when they reach school age (Hart & Risley, Huttenlocher and Snow) cited in Bee (2000). This implies that the quantity or the amount of language a preschooler hears in both outdoor and indoor environments at home and school have a significant impact on their language development. Similarly, children who are exposed to less language in their earliest years do not seem to catch up later in vocabulary (Bee, 2000). Bee (2000) established that children who are exposed to less language are considerably in a high risk of developing poor language. This suggests that talking to the child and biological theories seem to impact on preschool children's development of language. However, Morgan et al, Pye and Bettes) cited in Bee (2000) share the view that in some environments talking to the child by the

parents often does seem to occur in the vast majority and in contexts, but does not occur in all cases. Despite this, children in all the cultures develop language.

Again, Bee (2000) stated that there are some environments with or without infant directed speech. Infant directed speech in the view of Bee (2000) is an adult talk to an infant/children in a special kind of very simple language originally called motherese by linguists. It is referred to scientifically as infant directed speech because it is initiated by the infant, and adults recast it into a special form of simplified, high pitched speech used with infants and children (Bee, 2000 p246). What happens is that adults make the sentences short and grammatically simple, with concrete vocabulary. For example, the child might say “Mommy sock” and the adult/mother might recast it as, “Yes, this is Mommy’s sock”. Bee (2000) however, cautioned that while infant-directed speech may be helpful, it is probably not necessary for language development.

Before attempting to explain what language is and how it is developed by preschoolers, there is the need to find an answer to this question? What comes to mind when you hear the word language? Perhaps any of the Ghanaian languages particularly the language of the area you come from. For some, English or may be any second language that they can speak fluently. If these are some of the views about language then the second issue I wish to raise is " what about sign language for deaf people?" Based on the issues raised above one will agree with Kail's (2004) definition of language which says, "It is a system that relate sounds or gestures to meaning". This implies that language involves the creative and flexible use of symbols and many kinds of non-linguistic symbols like print, numbers, pictures, models and maps to mention but only a few. In other words language can be said to be expressed in many forms - through speech, writing and gesture. It

therefore suggests that language consists of different sub-systems and patterns based on rules that allow us to communicate with others who share the same language (Kail, 2004; Jay, 2003). This therefore implies that spoken languages involve certain distinct but inter-related elements or properties that guide us in communication. Thus, for language development to take place the elements and properties should follow specific rules.

It is however, a common knowledge that language is very important in the life of human beings. As such language can be said to be the key that human beings use to manage and direct everything that they do. For this reason language is used by children and adults to make request for anything in life. This stands to reason that language provides the foundation for learning and interaction among human beings. Again it can be said that languages define us as humans and represents one of the most remarkable accomplishments of human beings. There are so many theories about how human beings develop language as will be explained in chapter two. Many of the theories attribute development of language by human beings to the home environment and biology.

Early childhood centres the world over can be seen as foster homes for pre-schoolers, Bee (2000). This is because the centres serve as second home to take care of the children for a certain period of time in the day on week days. Also, the people who work at the preschool centres are not real parents of the children, as such they play a caretaker role till parents come for their children at the end of working hours. However, in literature not much is said about how indoor and outdoor environments at the early childhood centres contribute to language development in the group of children under study. However, Goodman et al (1987) in a study articulated strongly that language is not acquired externally but rather is part of a process of personal development and emerges in the

context of social use (p.38). That is not to say that language is not present in the child's environment but learning language is a more complex process than simply adopting language that is outside oneself. Therefore in this study the term that will be used to describe the learning of language both indoor and outdoor at early childhood centers is "language development" rather than language acquisition.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

There are two theories of language development. One theoretical approach to language development is the nativist-linguist/geneticist view that language is too complex to come from experience alone (Jay, 2003). This implies that children bring in inborn tendency into language development. This pre-supposes that innate or inborn factors cause children to develop language in certain ways. As such suggests that nativist-linguist/geneticists theory alone cannot be said to provide sufficient basis for language development of preschoolers.

On the other hand social interaction/environmental/nurture theorists believe that, learning plays role in language development by preschoolers (Rathus, 2014). This implies that preschoolers brought up in a particular environment will learn the language that is spoken in that environment. This means that, should teachers of early childhood children employ social interaction/environmental/nurture theory in both indoor and outdoor environments in teaching, especially preschoolers, to develop language, will make the learning situation interesting and meaningful to them. This is because social climate is multidimensional in nature. It focuses on the teacher-child relationship, child-child relationship, and the character of teaching. The three dimensions are however, intertwined

because they influence each other in terms of interaction as far as language development or acquisition is concerned.

Undoubtedly, indoor and outdoor environments can play an important role in the development of language by preschoolers. This is because both the nativist-linguist/geneticists and interaction/environmental/nurture theorists shared the view that language is learned. This implies that language development by preschoolers involve an interaction between the environmental influences such as exposure to parental speech and reinforcement- and an inborn tendency to develop language (Clancy & Finlay) cited in (Rathus, 2014). Thus, the purpose of this study is to find out indoor and outdoor environments that impact on language development of preschoolers. However, parents and significant others in the life of preschoolers turn to restrict them from talking either by shutting them down or beat them when they talk indoor or outdoor.

The pre-research assumption is that, when attention is drawn to environments that impact on language development of preschoolers it will facilitate the teaching and development of language by preschoolers. This is because it is a common knowledge that the teaching of language at the preschool level in Ghana tends to be formal and concentrate on rote learning in the form of poem and rhyme recitals, reading, and writing relative to understanding. Consequently, many preschoolers participate in the formal language teaching classes which however, promote very little language development Nelson cited in Rathus (2014). The aim of this study was to identify indoor and outdoor environments that impact on language development of preschoolers.

Understanding the variables that impact on language development of preschoolers both in indoor and outdoor environments at the preschool centres will assist teachers of

preschoolers to know how and where to organize language lessons both in indoor and outdoor environments for preschoolers.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out indoor and outdoor environments that impact on language development of preschoolers.

1.3 Objectives

The following objectives were formulated to guide the study. Specifically the study sought to;

1. Find out the indoor environments that impact on language development of preschoolers.
2. Find out the outdoor environments that impact on language development of preschoolers
3. Find out the sort of teaching and learning materials that impact on language development of preschoolers both in indoor and outdoor environments.
4. Find out activities that impact on language development of preschoolers both in indoor and outdoor environments.
5. Find out approaches used in teaching language in both indoor and outdoor environments and their impact on language development of preschoolers.

1.4 Research Questions

The main research questions which guided the study were:

1. How do preschool children develop language?

2. What kinds of indoor and outdoor environments promote language development of preschoolers?
3. What approaches used in teaching language promote language development of preschoolers in both indoor and outdoor environments?
4. What kinds of activities promote language development of preschoolers?
5. What kinds of teaching learning materials promote language development of preschoolers both in indoor and outdoor environments?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Knowing the impact of indoor and outdoor environments on language development of preschoolers has several purposes. First, the results of the study can be used for in-service training for teachers who work with the group of children under discussion. Second, teachers, parents and all significant others in the life of the child will be exposed to the different techniques/environments that can help preschoolers to develop language. However, they need to take into account the culture and the economic stringencies of the county and parents.

Again, the results of the study can be used as a resource pack by teacher education institutions to prepare students pursuing early childhood education programmes. Also, the results of the study will provide policy makers with the information on organization of language development environment. This is because teaching toddlers or infants is the most daunting task.

With regard to the preschool children, the findings from the study will help them receive improved and quality attention from all those who take care of them during the time that they are developing language.

The empirical evidences that resulted from this study will encourage researchers to ascertain the factors that influence the development of language by preschoolers. By so doing researchers will evaluate, identify, and examine effective classroom and outdoor organization and management techniques that will fit into the cultural context of the people in the community in which the preschool centre is situated. Also, the results of the study will inform the education directorate about the need to evaluate current practices in organization of classroom and outdoor activities for preschoolers during language lessons.

Finally the results of this study will contribute to the body of knowledge related to Early Childhood education to teachers or ‘caregivers’ direct practice with toddlers or infants, as far as language development is concerned. This study will also give teachers theoretical foundations underpinning language development of preschoolers in both indoor and outdoor environments. This will help teachers or ‘caregivers’ to apply the strategies and principles recommended by the study. It will also serve as a guide for teachers at preschool level to find effective classroom and outdoor environments, management procedures, and use them to promote or facilitate language development in preschoolers.

1.6 Delimitations of the Study

The study was delimited to indoor and outdoor environments at early childhood centers of Effutu Municipality in the Central Region of Ghana, the impact of indoor and outdoor environments on language development of preschoolers, teaching and learning materials that help preschool children to develop language, activities that promote language development in preschool children and approaches used to teaching language to preschoolers at preschool centres both in indoor and outdoor environments.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

Some of the interviewees were initially reluctant to provide information for the study. However, the researcher developed other strategies to go about it by assuring the interviewees about anonymity and confidentiality of the information they will provide. Even though the respondents finally agreed to participate in the interview there is no guarantee that the information they provided are true representation of the situation on the ground. The same thing can be said about the respondents to the questionnaire. This is because some of the parents were illiterates and could not get people to help them complete the questionnaire on time. Even if they got people to help them the interpretation of the questionnaire items by the people helping may be wrong and this can lead to providing wrong information which in itself can be regarded as limitation.

The methodology used to collect data can also be said to place some limitations on the study. In this study the quantitative and qualitative methodologies were used to collect data. It can be said that there are multiple limitations when viewed as separate entities. This is because when using mixed method as research methodology, it is not advisable to consider them separately but rather to view them for what they add and the richness of both methods in terms of what they bring to the study. In a study of this nature which is based on two subjective phenomena-“indoor and outdoor environments” and “impact on language development” by preschoolers, the qualitative data will throw more light on the impact of the environment rather than the static quantitative data.

This study nevertheless, presents the findings and voice of a small group of respondents when compared to the total population and therefore, although statistically pertinent, cannot be looked at as the voice of the broader population. The respondents in

this study were either or both parents and teachers who in one way or the other lived in a family with an infant or infants who were developing language and therefore observed what helped the children in both indoor and outdoor environments to develop language.

Even though there are a lot of similarities in the process through which preschoolers develop language, it is the subjectivity and ambiguities which are inherent culturally in language development that makes it difficult to create a validated signs and characteristics to relate to all. Again, the ambiguities, which are inherent in human language culturally, can also influence the analysis and interpretation of the respondent's experiences which can also affect findings of the study.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The thesis is presented in five chapters. Chapter one is made up of the following sub-headings: background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations and limitations of the study. Chapter two focuses on literature review, taking into account the research objectives and the theoretical framework of the study. Chapter three is about methodology including sample and sampling techniques, research design, population, instruments used in data collection and analysis, description and distribution of instruments. Chapter four covers the presentation and analysis of data collected and discussion of results. Finally, chapter five deals with the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter explains the theoretical framework underpinning the study. Literature was reviewed on earlier studies conducted on language development of preschoolers. Literature was reviewed from research articles, journals, and books which include empirical studies. Some of the major headings the chapter presents are as follows:

- Theoretical framework work of the study
- Nativist-linguistic/genetic theory
- Social interaction/environment/nurture theory
- The role of imitation on language development

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study was supported by both nativist-linguistic and social interaction/environmental theories by Chomsky (1957, 1959, 1988) and Rathus (2014) respectively. The nativist-linguistic theory states that human beings are born with language acquisition device (LAD) which helps human beings to develop or acquire language. This implies that children are born with language and the rules for constructing sentences from ideas. In other words language is inherent in the child at and needs only to be triggered by social contact with speakers in order to emerge. Evidence in support of this theory is that humans are the only species to acquire language, which they use to communicate ideas and pass on to other generations' knowledge they have gained (Brewer, 1995).

On the other hand, social/interaction/nurture theory says that language is learnt through socialization and nurturing the child in the environment (Rathus, 2014). This group of theorists believe that children learn or develop language because human brains seek patterns and order in language, just as they constantly seek patterns and order in the environment (Piaget, Bruner, Vygotsky,) cited in Brewer (1995). This implies that learning and the environment play important roles in language development by preschoolers. This is because the above mentioned theorists pointed to examples of language that was produced by preschoolers when there has been no previous model; to the uniqueness of language and to the obvious reliance of the child on the so-called rules of language which are never taught.

From the perspectives of the two theories mentioned above it can be said that children bring both an inborn tendency and social interaction into learning of language. This implies that language development is almost universal among humans. From the reasons given based on the two theories it can be said that both theories are relevant to the study.

2.2 Theories of Language Development

There are so many beliefs about language development by children. The theories of language development documented in many psychology and language books were reviewed and discussed. The explanations of the theories on language development both in books, articles, and journals on the familiar psychological debate like nature-nurture controversy, the relationship between language and thought, and the relative importance of linguistic structure and social functions of speech. From the foregoing discussion it can be said that theories of language development by early childhood children can be

categorised into two groups, genetic/ nativist-linguist theory and social interaction/ environmental theory. In this section nativists-linguist/ genetic theory and social interaction/ environmental theory will be discussed.

2.2.1 Nativist-Linguist/Genetic Theory

The nativist/geneticist's views on language development from the time of Plato and Kant, to their intellectual descendants argue that language is too complex to come from experience alone (Jay, 2003). This suggests that there are possibly some other things pre-existing in human-beings that enable them to acquire language. The most influential modern version of this point of view was advanced by Chomsky (1957, 1959, 1988) that infants are born with language acquisition device (LAD). This makes infants biologically prepared to acquire language regardless of setting.

This implies that language is species specific and unique to humans. It therefore suggests that language has strong genetic basis that makes its development by children look very similar across different languages and cultures. The implication is that, language environment does not provide sufficient samples from which children discover the complex adult grammar using learning mechanism. Rather human beings are innately endowed with the ability to produce language.

Again, another major interpretation that can be made from the nativist/linguist and genetic or biological theory is that language environment alone cannot provide sufficient sample from which children can discover the complex adult grammar. This may be the reason why Chomsky (1982, 1988) concluded that infants are born with a language acquisition device that makes each child biologically prepared to acquire language. Morgan, Bonamo and Travies, and Pinkar, cited in Rathus (2014) argue in support of

Chomsky's conclusion that children are rarely told whether their sentences are correct yet children acquire grammar of language according to the grammatical rules of the native language. This further goes to support Chomsky's proposition regarding the existence of a language acquisition device and the universal grammar rules which makes it possible for people to learn a particular language. This pre-supposes that innate or inborn factors cause children to attend to sounds and acquire language in certain ways. From this perspective it can be said that, children bring an inborn tendency in the form of neurological "pre-wiring" to language learning (Pinkar) cited in (Rathus, 2014).

The psycholinguistic theory views language acquisition of infants as involving interaction between the environment and reinforcement (Clancy and Finlay) cited in (Rathus, 2014). This Chomsky (1988, 1990) and others labeled as language acquisition device. This may be the reason why inborn tendency for language acquisition is found in the universality of human language abilities; in the regularity of the early production of sounds even among children who are deaf; and in the invariant sequences of language development regardless of which language the child is learning Pinkar, cited in (Rathus 2014). Thus, it can be said that the inborn tendency primes the nervous system of the child to develop language. This Chomsky refers to as the surface structure of language. Despite the differences in the vocabulary and grammar in the languages the world over, Chomsky believed that the LAD helps children to acquire language because languages share "universal grammar" an underlying deep structure or set of rules for transforming ideas into sentences. This implies that children are born with language and the rules for constructing sentences from ideas.

2.2.2 Social Interaction/Environmental/Nurture Theory

Social interaction/ environmental/ nurture theorists believe that learning plays an obvious role in language development (Rathus, 2014). For this reason, it can be said that children who are brought up in a particular environment will learn the language that is used in that environment. For example, children who are brought up in English-speaking countries speak English not any other language. As such learning theorists explain language development in terms of imitation and reinforcement. In this section therefore the focus will be on how imitation and reinforcement help children both indoor and outdoor to develop language.

To justify the role imitation plays in the development of language by children, social inter-actionists argue that parents serve as models (Rathus, 2014). This suggests that children learn language from their parents through listening and imitation. By implication it can be said that many vocabulary words, especially nouns and verbs, used by parents frequently at home are learned by children through imitation. However, Tarnis- LeMonda et al. cited in (Rathus 2014) argue that imitative learning does not explain why children spontaneously utter phrases and sentences that they have not heard. Tarnis- LeMonda et al (2006) went on to ask that if children actually imitate parents when it comes to language development, why is it that "sometimes children steadfastly avoid imitating certain language forms suggested by adults even when adults insisted? It therefore implies that children do not imitate sentences that are inconsistent with their grasp of grammar or what they see the situation to be. Whatever be the case it can be said that children develop language through listening and imitation of parents at wherever they are.

On the other hand, believers in nurture share the view that children develop language as a result of reinforcement coming from the environment particularly from the parents and significant others in the life of the child. According to Rathus (2014), this is done through smiling at them, stroking them, and talking in response to their vocalisations. By so doing children and infants turn to actively attend to sounds in their linguistic environment which are reinforced by adults and are intrinsically motivated to utter them. However, Skinner cited in Rathus (2014), believed that infants acquire early vocabularies through shaping of the word. In this respect shaping can be described as the gradual utterance of words by children that are progressively closer to actual words before they are reinforced.

This idea of Skinner was supported by a research conducted by August et al (2005) and Kroeger & Nelson (2006), which found that reinforcement accelerates the growth of vocabulary in children, especially children with learning disabilities. On the other hand, research by Nelson cited in Rathus (2014), found the evidence that selective reinforcement of children's pronunciation can backfire. This is because the evidence from Nelson's study suggested that children whose parents reward proper pronunciation but correct poor pronunciation develop vocabulary more slowly than children whose parents are more tolerant about pronunciations. This implies that correcting children's pronunciations at early stages of their language development may slow their vocabulary acquisition.

Despite the above shortcomings in reinforcement there are ample evidences in literature that aspects of the child's language environment influence the development of language by early childhood children. However, what is clear from literature is that much

of the research in the area of reinforcement focused on the ways in which adults especially mothers – interact with their children which help them to develop language.

2.3 Processes through which Language Development in Preschool Children Pass

In this section one will trace the processes through which language development of preschoolers pass through and its implications for teaching and learning.

2.3.1 Early Vocalisations or Pre-Linguistic Communication

Studies conducted on language development of pre-schoolers showed that the process of language development by preschoolers begin long before words appear (Steinberg & Belsky, 1991, Rathus, 2014, Crystal, 1998). According to Steinberg and Belsky, (1991) preschoolers pass through five stages of language development. The five processes or stages Steinberg and Belsky(1991) listed are basic biological noises (0 - 8 weeks); cooing and laughing (8 - 20 weeks); vocal play (20 -30 weeks); babbling (25 - 50 weeks); and melodic utterance (9- 18 months).These processes and stages Rathus (2014) and Steinberg and Belsky (1991) referred to simply as pre-linguistic vocalisations and pre-linguistic communication respectively.

In conclusion therefore, it can be said that the pre-linguistic vocalisations prepare the vocal cord for speech.

2.3.2 Development of Vocabulary

Vocabulary development is about the child's learning the meanings of words (Rathus, 2014). What is documented by researchers on vocabulary development by preschoolers though is that "children's receptive vocabulary development outpaces their expressive vocabulary development Klee and Stokes cited in (Rathus, 2014). This implies

that preschoolers, at any given time understand more words than they can use. For example, a study conducted by Tamis-LeMonda et al (2006) found that 12 months - olds could speak an average of 13 words but could comprehend the meanings of 84 words. What this implies is that preschoolers understand much of what significant others in their life say well before they utter any words at all. It therefore stands to reason that preschoolers ability to segment speech sounds into meaningful units or words before 12 months is a good predictor of their vocabulary at 24 months (Newman et al, 2006) cited in (Rathus, 2014). Despite the above vocabulary development in preschoolers research revealed that the child's first real word which represents linguistic speech is typically spoken between 11 and 13 months (Klee & Stokes, 2011) or 10 and 14 months (Steinberg and Belsky, 1991) respectively. However, Klee and Stokes (2011) were of the view that 8 - 18 months is normal for the first real word to be spoken by a preschooler. What is worth noting with respect to development of vocabulary by preschoolers according to De Villiers and de Villiers (1999) is that it may take children 3 or 4 months to achieve a vocabulary 10 - 30 words after the first word is spoken. Similarly, Rathus (2014) stated that by about 18 months of age, children may be producing up to 50 words of which many of them are quite familiar, such as " no, bread, mama, eat, etc" . These words are used consistently by preschoolers to symbolize the same meaning.

According to Hoff, 2006 and Nelson (1973) more than half of children's first words make up "general nominal" and "specific nominal" the general nominal include nouns referring to classes of objects like (car, ball) animals (dog, cat) and people (boy, girl) to mention but only a few. The specific nominal used by children as part of their first words include proper nouns such as daddy, mama and so on. Critically analysing children's first

words that make up general and specific nominal one can say that the attention of children at the various ages mentioned above is focused more on moving objects. This is because Tamis-LeMonda et al (2006) in their study on language development by preschoolers found that "of children's first 50 words, the most common are names for people, animals and objects that move or that can be moved and action words.

This therefore suggests that there are two styles of vocabulary learning and language use by children. They are what Nelson (1973) referred to as referential and expressive language. With regard to referential language, children turn to use words that refer primarily to objects rather than people. In the case of expressive language the vocabularies used by preschoolers express something about their involvement with people.

The implications for the two styles of vocabulary learning, by preschoolers, at early childhood centre are twofold. To meet the interest or learning needs of preschoolers who fall within the referential style of vocabulary learning and language use, there is the need to provide a lot of objects and materials for pupils both indoor and outdoor at the early childhood centre and the objects need to be labeled. For the pupils that fall within the expressive style of vocabulary learning and language use group, teachers should make sure they actively get involved in activities with the pupils both indoor and outdoor. Again, teachers should make sure to actively involve such children in group activities all the time. Also, teachers need to involve the pupils in conversation or story telling activities. However, it is clear from literature that children who fall within the expressive style of vocabulary learning and language use group acquire language at a slow and steady rate, whereas children who fall within the referential style of vocabulary learning and language use start slowly and then speed up.

On the other hand, Nelson (1973), in a study found that by 2 ½ years, children who fall within the referential style of vocabulary learning and language use have larger vocabulary, but expressive style of vocabulary learning and language use children have more ability in forming 2 words sentence combination. To enhance language development in preschoolers both indoor and outdoor, studies show that teachers and significant others in the life of the child at early childhood centres do the following things:

- Use simplified form of speech known as "infant - directed speech"
- Use question that engage the child in conversation like "why and how question"
- Respond to the child's expressive language efforts in a way that is "attuned" for example, relate your speech to the child's utterance by saying, "yes, your doll is pretty" in response to the child's statement "my doll".
- Join the child in paying attention to a particular activity or toy.
- Gesture to help the child understand what they are saying
- Describe aspect of the environment occupying the infant's current focus of attention
- Read to the child
- Talk to the child a great deal (Tamis-LeMonda et al, 2006).

In conclusion therefore one can say that language development in preschoolers start from cooing, babbling, acquisition of vocabulary and language use and finally formation of complex sentences.

2.4 Kinds of Environment that Encourage and Support Language Development in Pre-School Children

This section will be concerned with a discussion of the kinds of environments that encourage and support language development in pre-school children, both indoor and

outdoor, as a basis for effective instruction during the pre-school years, bearing in mind that it is itself a product of learning and guidance.

Regarding language development in preschoolers, Sowers (2000) suggested that early childhood educators should establish an environment that will encourage, be conducive to early reading both indoor and outdoor. Sowers stated that there are four aspects of such an environment that should be provided. Sowers listed the following as the four aspects of environment that need to be taken into consideration when establishing encouraging, supportive and conducive environment for language development in preschoolers. They are time, space, materials and adult availability both indoor and outdoor. This is because preschoolers naturally develop curiosity about books and reading whenever they are provided with reading materials or someone reads to them.

Establishing the sort of environment mentioned above seem not difficult, but implies that a conscious effort should be made to provide the necessary things that will serve the purpose for which the environment has been established for (Sowers, 2000).

2.4.1 Time and Space

For language development to take place in preschoolers Sowers (2000), suggested that there should be a well-defined language area with books and other literacy materials stocked in all early childhood settings. Sowers however, cautioned that the books that will be in the classrooms should be placed at a prominent place where they will always be accessible to the children. Sowers went on to say that if possible, books should be placed in all places that children spend time indoors.

Another thing that can be done to promote language development in preschoolers according to Sowers is establishing a certain time during the day when everyone should do

reading in the classroom particularly those who can read. For toddlers, Sowers suggested that adults be asked to read to them in groups. However, Sowers cautioned that toddlers should be allowed to wander in and out of the group as their attention permits. This implies that toddlers who have short attention span should not be forced or pinned down to listen to what is being read to them.

Again, there should be a time created during the day to make children look at books alone or in small groups with adults available to provide new language, answers, questions and stimulate the thinking of the children. To help children develop language, an appropriate environment, unique spaces, a wide choice of age appropriate reading materials and time should be provided.

2.4.2 Material Environment

Another environment that can be created in the classroom (indoor) to help children develop language is what Machado (1980), refers to as language arts centre. According to Machado (1980), the language arts centre should be a place that is: inviting and comfortable such that children can make it their favourite place in the classroom or in the school, stocked with language materials that are within easy reach of the children. The materials should include soft texture materials for the children to lean on or lay upon. A well-stocked, well supervised language centre or environment full of things to do in the view of Machado (1980) and Sowers (2000) promote the development of language skills such as listening, speaking, pre-reading and pre-writing activities in preschoolers. This suggests that language-centre area have three main functions, it provides look-listening activities for children, give children an area for working with material activities, and provides for storage of materials. Language centre or environment according to Machado (1980) should have

comfortable, soft furnishings together with ample space, proper lighting, and screening to block the sights and sounds of active classrooms.

With regard to listening centre, sometimes called listening post can be created in the early childhood classroom (indoor), (Machado, 1980). This is because Machado (1980) believes that the ability to listen improves with experience and exposure, but cautioned that young children vary in their ability to listen. This is because Machado (1980), Sowers (2000) share the view that human beings have different interests in listening.

To Machado (1980) and Sowers (2000), some people listen to sounds in appreciation, some on purpose, some to discriminate, create and to criticize. For these reasons, and to enable preschoolers to develop listening skills, it is advisable that teachers in early childhood classrooms create a listening centre in their classroom in order to provide opportunities for children to develop their perception skills.

However, (Machado, 1980) in a study cautioned that people cannot be forced to listen, but can be motivated to listen. It therefore implies that signals and positive reinforcement can help pupils or preschoolers to form the habit of listening. As such one can say with some level of certainty that in planning a listening centre in the classroom the preschool teacher should plan carefully so that preschoolers will consistently want to hear what is being offered.

Some equipment documented in a number of studies that can be used for indoors activities to promote listening, that may lead to language development by preschoolers include: photographs, cassette tape recorders, phonographs, and language master (Machado, 1980).

2.5 Developmentally Appropriate Environments that Promote Language Development in Preschoolers

Creating an environment, both indoor and outdoor, for preschoolers to promote language development has become a big challenge to practice for some deep-seated reasons (Gestwicki, 2014). In the first place almost all prekindergarten and kindergarten programmes are located within school systems. As a result the preschool centres are influenced by decisions that are made for instruction and assessment of older children in the school. In other words, school systems lump four and five year-olds together with older children in their planning and offerings (Copple & Bredekamp 2009) cited in Gestwicki, 2014). This implies that the real characteristics and needs of preschoolers that need to be taken into consideration for their programmes to match their developmental status are not considered. Rather they are regarded -as primary-age children and are treated as such. For the reasons given above, in almost all the kindergarten and prekindergarten programmes, more emphasis is placed on narrow curriculum goals of academic skills development to the neglect of designing environments that support rich, productive play and language development. This raises the question concerning the types of indoor and outdoor environments provided for promoting language development by preschoolers.

2.5.1 Indoor Environments that Promote Language Development

Many views have been expressed by different people on indoor environment that nurtures language development in preschoolers (Gestwicki, 2014). According to Gestwicki (2014) preschoolers require language partners for both brain development and growth in their knowledge of the communication process. This implies that preschoolers need to listen to sounds from adults to discover that speech sounds have value and meaning as a

method of communication between persons. In this respect Gestwicki (2014) stated that preschoolers need one-to-one interaction during care-giving and play times, in a room that is not too noisy from the sounds of too many babies and adults or from constant (audio) artificial sound.

This understanding has implications for parents, teachers and significant others in the life of the preschoolers who will be involved in helping them in their language development. The following are some of the ways that research findings suggest adults and significant others in the life of preschoolers can nurture their language development both indoors and outdoors (Gestwicki, 2014).

According to Brunner (1978 p248) adults need to speak directly (face-to-face) with preschoolers regularly, during every care-giving encounter. In speaking to preschoolers Brunner cautioned that their speech should be in a natural tone, clearly enunciated and "following ordinary polite rules for adult dialogue". This implies that there is no "baby talk", meaning it is adult words that are mispronounced or turned into diminutive forms by preschooler or babies. For the reason given above, to nurture preschoolers' language by adults there is the need to pay attention to correct pronunciation of words by preschoolers. Again, it is a common knowledge that language is taught through conversation, as such, parents and significant others in the life of preschoolers should demonstrate turn taking skills of communication.

Another way through which language development of preschoolers can be nurtured is by reinforcing preschoolers' words. In reinforcing the language of preschoolers teachers and other caregivers must also add nonverbal methods of communication such as gestures

and information for additional clues. Responding this way will help preschoolers to discover that language communication is valued and effective.

Also, language development in preschoolers can be nurtured through adults commenting on activities that preschoolers are performing with objects. This may be the reason why Kovach and DaRos-Voseles (2011) stated that, *"forming the habit of commenting about what preschoolers are doing will both encourage adults to talk before preschoolers can talk back and also strengthen adult awareness of respectfully involving children in the actions that concern them"*. The implication therefore is that relating words directly to concrete objects and experiences is a helpful language teaching technique. Therefore, Huttenlocher cited in Begley (1997) stated that only live language encounters, not television, produce vocabulary and complexity of speech effects in preschoolers, implying that "language has to be used in relation to ongoing events or it is just noise".

Similarly language development in preschoolers can be nurtured by parents and significant others in the life of the child through using one word labels, repeating them and linking them by physical indication to the object referred to (Gestwicki 2014). In so doing Gestwicki suggested that parents and significant others in the life of the child should try as much as possible to isolate and stress key words to make it easier for preschoolers to understand. When parents and significant others in the life of the child modify their speech this way it turns to help children to focus on the single words that preschoolers are being nurtured to acquire which in turn will make them to develop language.

Another way suggested by Barton cited in Cowley (1997), was that when nurturing language development in preschoolers one can use a high pitch to capture the attention of

the child. To do this Cowley suggested that one must speak slowly with careful exaggerated enunciation, shortening statements; and repeating and expanding the child's speech.

Brunner (1991) was of the view that language development in preschoolers can be done through singing and reciting of rhymes to the children by adults. Brunner believed that with songs and rhymes, the playful quality of the speech patterns involves the preschoolers in different kinds of listening and responding. This therefore suggests that when action and gesture are tied in with the words, preschoolers' understanding is enhanced. It therefore implies that in helping preschoolers to develop language one needs to engage preschooler's attention directly in language and physical activity to make them focus on the language either indoor or outdoor.

Another way to nurture the development of language in preschoolers is by asking them to label objects (Geswicki, 2014). This is because language is learned in contexts. As such adults and caregivers turn to respond to preschoolers' communication, particularly infants, when they pointed finger to indicate an object they want by supplying the word or the name of the object.

In conclusion therefore, one can say that parents and caregivers who try to figure out what preschoolers are interested in are more likely to provide meaningful language environments that can nurture language development in preschoolers. The implication is that effective language partners in the lives of preschoolers will not always be talking, but will frequently be silently observing the child. In addition, what caregivers should bear in mind is that they can create helpful language environments when they limit environmental noise, for example constant music or television playing.

In the case of toddlers what is documented in literature as far as language development is concerned is one word (holophrases) stage where expressive vocabulary begins to appear or used in communication. According to Gestwicki (2014), one word used by the toddlers is usually naming words that are in some way related to toddlers' actions and experiences. However, Cowley (1997) stated that most toddlers start acquiring new words at a phenomenal rate of one every two hours. According to Gestwicki toddlers begin to combine words as they get close to two years, and the combination of two or three words in a message is referred to as telegraphic stage of speech. The second year in the life of a toddler is a critical period for language development, and success depends on available adult language partners (Gestwicki, 2014). This raise the question "What indoor and outdoor environments can be provided to promote language development in toddlers?"

Research has provided some principles caregivers should adopt both in indoors and outdoors environments to promote language development in toddlers (Gestwicki, 2014). They are: responding to toddlers communication, model speech, simplify utterances, expand on toddler efforts, link words with actions and experiences, correct indirectly, sing, recite ad play games and read a lot of books to toddlers.

Regarding responding to toddler communication in relation to language development caregivers need to create an environment both indoor and outdoor for toddlers to perceive that their efforts at speech are important (Gestwicki, 2014). This implies that caregivers should pay attention to whatever toddlers are saying. By so doing toddlers will recognize that language is valued and necessary. This is because Birckmeyer, Kennedy and Stonehouse (2010), found that language teachers get down to the toddlers' level to show they are listening, and also allow time to help them get their message across. By creating

such an environment, toddlers get to know that language is important and valuable. This tends to promote language development in toddlers. In case, of modeling speech, Gestwicki (2014) suggested that caregivers need to speak frequently, clearly, and distinctly to toddlers, enunciating more distinctly than in ordinary adult speech, and emphasizing the words. This will make toddlers depend on adult speech for their example of vocabulary, as well as for formulating their own understanding of grammar usage.

This sort of environment provides positive reinforcement, instead of a negative correction thereby promoting language development in toddlers. As regards simplifying utterances, caregivers need to make their speech or utterances simple and bring the language to the level of toddlers (Gestwicki, 2014). This is supported by the findings of a study by Begley (1997), which revealed that mothers who used complex sentences (those with dependent clauses, such as "When." or because...") 40% of the time had toddlers who did so 35 percent of the time; mothers who used such sentences in only 10 percent of their utterances had children who did so only 5 percent of the time. The result of the study clearly suggests that adults or caregivers in talking to toddlers should make their utterances simple.

One other way documented by research through which toddlers can be made to develop language is expanding on toddlers' language or speech efforts (Gestwicki, 2014). What happens is that the expansion of the utterance of a child helps by filling the missing words or providing specific words that are to be used to bring about clarity (Bardige and Bardige, 2008). According to Gestwicki (2014) such expressions are important for both cognitive and language development. It therefore implies that caregivers should endeavour to create environments that can lead to expansion of toddler's utterances. On the other hand, research show that toddlers learn vocabulary in a particular context (Gestwicki, 2014). For

example, when gestures, pointing and nonverbal cues help children understand the meaning of words, their learning is assisted. This implies that caregivers need to create environments that will link words with actions and experiences, both indoor and outdoor. For example, caregivers can provide a lot of objects, pictures and experiences in toddler environments to offer interesting things to stimulate communication.

Another way by which caregivers can promote language development in toddlers is to create an environment in which correcting of toddlers' mistakes are done indirectly (Gestwicki, 2014). This is because in the view of Gestwicki (2014), there are a lot to be absorbed by toddlers in language development in terms of grammar, and word usage. For this reason, toddlers make mistakes by over-generalizing the rules of grammar, for example they used phrases like my "foots" or Daddy "good". Actually it can be said that the use of such phrases clearly show the toddlers' understanding of a number of grammar rules.

Research results suggested that it is helpful to repeat the idea back, correctly phrased, rather than directly pointing out the mistake. By so doing toddlers quickly self-correct, without feeling failure (Gestwicki, 2014). Brazelton (1974), in a study cautioned that too much direct emphasis on correct speech as one of the possible reasons for language delay.

Furthermore, caregivers should encourage speech both in indoor and outdoor environments where toddlers could link sound and word. This can be done through questions and answers with a word or two. Sometimes you can encourage speech with the materials in the environment, such as toys, books and pictures to mention but only a few.

Again, language development in toddlers can be done through singing, reciting and playing of games. In the view of Gestwicki (2014), the reason traditional nursery songs, rhymes, and games have lasted is their appropriateness for language experiences of toddlers. The repetition of rhyme and linking of action and meaning help toddlers acquire understanding and vocabulary as they join in. This implies that for caregivers to help toddlers develop language they need to create an environment that will make toddlers sing, recite and play games.

Development of language by toddlers can also be done through reading of books to them by caregivers or caregivers giving them books to read. This according to Gestwicki (2014), gives toddlers a lot of chances to put into practice words they know. Gestwicki however, cautioned that toddlers are not ready to sustain interest in actual stories until well into the second year as such picture book reading is more relevant at their age.

At preschool age, that is from age three to five according to Bowlby (1963), and Gestwicki (2014), children have accomplished amazing feats in language. For example Bowlby (1963), cited in Agbeke (2016), in a study found that infants at the age of two years have acquired vocabulary of more than two hundred words. Gestwicki, on the other hand found that by the age of three preschoolers probably have spoken (expressive) vocabulary of nine hundred to one thousand words and understood (receptive) vocabularies a month and by age six they have acquired about eight thousand to fourteen thousand words. This suggests that preschool children construct sentences that follow the grammar rules of their language and possibly mastered complexities, such as plural and past tenses but sometimes turn to over-generalize their understanding of grammar rules by saying "feets" or "wented".

Despite all the above, what became clear from Gestwicki's (2014), study is that there was a wide variation in children's language development. This, according to Gestwicki, can be attributed to linguistic, cultural, and social background; family communication patterns; and individual experiences. The implication is that at preschool level teachers should create linguistic environment that is relevant to the needs of the children in the class to enable them overcome the various individual problems as far as language development is concerned. Again, pupils should be given opportunities to speak and hear others speak; with no pressure, but a lot of time to experiment and experience language (Gestwicki, 2014).

2.5.2 Unsupportive Language Environments

In order to find the best developmental match for preschoolers learning style in language environments preschool caregivers/teachers should avoid the following:

- Creating an environment without challenges or responses.
- Creating an environment that imposes structural adult decided learning experiences
- Creating an environment that emphasizes sitting to learn (Gestwicki, 2014).

2.5.2 Creating an Environment without Challenges of Responses

When caregivers/teachers/authorities see preschoolers as too young for any real learning, there is always the tendency of offering an environment that bores and stifles curiosity (Gestwicki, 2014). For example, most of the preschool centers attached to primary schools in Ghana are housed in dilapidated classrooms with broken tables and chairs or fixed benchers which are not comfortable. Looking very much like an infant room, in some

cases offering space and toys on shelves and some not, thereby not whipping enough interest and curiosity in preschoolers.

In such situation caregivers/teachers see their task as supervising preschoolers in an uninteresting room and stepping in to referee the squabbles that are frequently the result of too little interest or novelty to otherwise occupy interest.

On the other hand when an imposed structured adult environment is created for language development in a preschool setting according to Gestwicki (2014), teachers/caregivers do not see the children as “preschoolers any more”, and this translates into imposing adult way of learning language on the preschool children and also use rote learning method of teaching. In the end caregivers/teachers have to do most of the work themselves for the children. Although, preschoolers can something recite back what they were thought, their true understanding is certainly questionable. Gestwicki, concluded that preschoolers do not learn just by being told things, but by their own active exploration. In addition, it is a common knowledge that teachers and other caregivers always meet resistance from preschoolers when they try to force preschoolers to do things the adult way. The question to ask is whether anything is gained when structured adult environment is imposed on preschoolers in the teaching and learning process.

2.5.3 Create an Environment that Emphasizes Sitting to Learn

According to Gestwicki (2014), preschoolers can be regarded as creatures on the move. This implies that preschoolers have the drive to explore and use their whole bodies to learn. This means that preschoolers learn to move and learn as they move about.

As such when preschoolers are asked to sit and do things, it is contrary to their nature because they are not used to that sort of life.

In conclusion it can be said that preschoolers' language development is supported by adults who:

- Model
- Expand
- Correct indirectly
- Simplify their speech patterns
- Read books and sing songs to them
- Emphasize all forms of communication for children to represent their experiences and concepts to others.
- Integrate the use of language and language materials with active play and interest centre based learning environment.

2.6 Approaches used in teaching Language to Pre-Schoolers

This Section reviews literature on approaches used in teaching language to preschoolers. Research on approaches to teaching language to preschoolers revealed that parents and other caregivers teach language informally, focus on the intent or meaning of the child's utterances rather than on the form, expect success, recognize that language learning is holistic and celebrate the child's unique creative uses of language (Brewer, 1995; Morrison, 2015).

2.6.1 Informal Approach

A study conducted on approaches to teaching language to preschoolers revealed that adults or older children in an infant's environment do not teach language formally to them. What they do is talk to the child about the environment and happenings in the

environment (Brewer, 1995). This implies that, language is taught through meaningful interaction, not necessarily talking with the child about it or analyzing what is happening in the environment. This again, can be said to imply that children do not develop or acquire language simply by memorizing the sentence of the language and storing them in some big mental dictionary. Rather, according to Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2007), children acquire a system of rules that enables them to construct and understand sentences, most of which they have never produced or heard before. This finding supports Brewer's findings that preschoolers are not taught language formally.

In school settings, however, teachers attempt to teach language by following the child's lead in conversations. What teachers do according to Brewer (1993), is that they talk about topics that are meaningful and interesting to the child. Brewer, however, found that it is not always easy to do because the interest of the children in the class may be varied and different. Nevertheless, teachers must think about the needs and interest of the children in their class when it comes to communication experiences.

2.6.2 Focus on the Child's Intent

This is the process of teaching children the skills they needed for success based on specific goals and standards (Morrison, 2015). What is documented in literature that teachers and parents do when it comes to teaching language to preschool children is that they focused on the child's intent rather, rather than the perfection of the utterance (Brewer, 1995). This implies that in intentional teaching, both parents and teachers correct their children's speech content rather than form. What teachers and parents should do in respect of intent teaching according to Morrison (2015), is they "intentionally and with purpose, plan lessons, teach and assess in order to ensure that their children are learning the common

core standards and achieving at high levels. Again, in their speech to preschoolers, caregivers should exhibit a distinctive pattern of language that makes their language perceptually salient, contextually redundant and linguistically simple Lund and Duchan 1993 cited in McLaughlin (2006). According to McLaughlin, what caregivers and teachers should do in the teaching and learning process is that they must reduce the length of their utterances when addressing or talking to preschoolers. This adjustment in the view of Murray et al cited in McLaughlin (2006) seems to positively influence eventual language development of preschoolers. This is because McLaughlin in a study found that language experiences provided by the environment nurture it.

2.6.3 Expect Success

In the case of expect success, regarding language development by preschoolers, both parents and teachers expect success as children begin to learn language both at home and in the classroom. What happens, according to Brewer (1995), is that in the classroom, teachers who view errors such as the use of plural (foots, mouses) and adding "-ed" to form the past tense of verbs (goed, runned), and the use of incorrect verb forms as indicators of the child's growing mastery of the rules of English will treat those errors differently than teachers who view them as mistakes to be corrected. This suggests that language is learned through active exploration of the systems, not by direct imitation of models. As such, errors in the children's language should be viewed by teachers and parents as indications of the active nature of language learning as well as growth and maturation which will lead to the expected success that both parents and teachers are looking for.

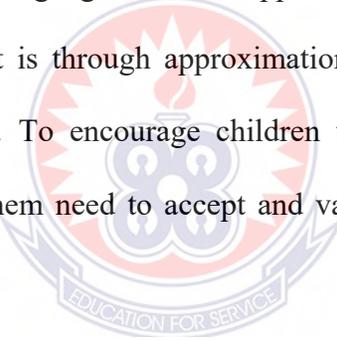
However, according to Berns (1993), not all teachers and parents translate their expectations into reality as described above. This according to Berns (1993) since some

teachers and parents do not form expectations that continue throughout the year, rather they change their expectations on the basis of students', or pupils' performances. Berns (1993) however, cautioned that teacher's expectations alone about a child or children do not by themselves have a direct impact on child behaviour. Rather, it is when the expectations are communicated to the children and reinforcement given in shaping their behavior that teacher expectations have impact. This implies that, it is when teachers become aware of possible biases in their behaviour, caused by their expectations that they can then try to interact objectively with each child. Another way documented in literature through which language can be taught to preschoolers is by emphasizing the holistic nature of language learning (Brewer, 1995; Morrison, 2015). The holistic nature of language learning advocates for not breaking language into bits and pieces for study in school. That is, words in isolation or word sounds in isolation. Such an approach to Brewer (1995), Morrison (2015), and Frankin, Rodman and Hyams (2007), have no meaning that can be constructed into sentences. According to Brewer (1995), Morrison (2015) and Fromkin et al (2007) what children need in learning language is that they must use the language in a variety of situations, talking about topics of interest to them in order to help them adjust their language to meet the requirements of the speaking situation. It therefore implies that; real talk provides young children a chance to develop language holistically.

2.6.4 Celebrating Creativity

Goodman et al (1987) describe a child learning language as always creative or inventive and at the same time pulled back into conformity. This suggests that children always create new words and phrases when learning language. However, when they find that whatever they have said did not convey the right message intended, they easily conform

more to the usual social forms. However, parents, teachers and significant others in the life of the child create language of children (Brewer, 1995). For example, many children have nicknames as a result of the word they invented. In the classroom, teachers can celebrate children's unique expression by recording them and later share or post it on a chart. Teachers can also celebrate children's language by not changing it. For example, if a child uses a dialect, the expression should be celebrated and recorded. Brewer concluded that when all these things are done, it will help preschoolers develop skills in speaking effectively in different contexts, but the focus should be on the child's unique ways of expressing him/herself meaningfully. This is because language acquisition is a process in which children try out their language and make approximations of real language (Halliday, 1975). This implies that, it is through approximations that children gradually develop perfect forms of language. To encourage children to develop language teachers and significant others around them need to accept and value their language (Brewer, 1995, Cooper & Kiger, 2006).



2.6.5 Recognize Language Achievement by Children

According to Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines (1988), all children come to school with a language base, and this base may or not match the base on which the school may try to build. Brewer (1995), explained that teachers sometimes fail to recognize how much children have accomplished in terms of language. Brewer, further explained that before children come to school they have the linguistic competencies to select meaningful parts of a message to recognize differences in linguistic contexts, and to use syntactic rules. If so, there is the need for teachers of preschool children to recognize that children at preschool level have developed a good deal of linguistic competencies.

What teachers teaching at preschool level should be aware of according to Brewer (1995) and Harley (2001), children learn language when they are in environments where language is used and when they interact with others. This may be the reason why Brewer (1995), Tassoni, Beith, Eldridge and Gough (2002), and Morrison (2015), concluded that children learn language best when meaning rather than form is stressed. For this reason, Brewer (1995); Tassoni, et al, (2002), Cooper & Kiger, (2006), and Harley (2001), stated that children learn language successfully when language is used in real-life situations, by accepting approximations that gradually become closer to adult models. From the discussion based on approaches used in teaching language to preschoolers, it can be concluded that children learn language when they are in environments where language is used and when they interact with others. Also, it came clearly from the discussion that children learn language best when meaning rather than form is stressed.

The implications for preschool teachers and parents are that they should put children in an environment where language is used and also see to it that children interact with others who can speak the language that the child is to acquire.

2.6.6 Environment that Encourages and Supports Language Development in Preschoolers

Encouraging and supportive environments can be referred to as "environments in which teachers believe each child can learn and help children understand and make meaning of their experiences (Morrison, 2015). This section examines encouraging and supportive environments that promote language development of preschoolers.

Morrison (2015), says that, supportive environment includes immediate physical surroundings, social relationships and cultural settings in which children function and

interact. To create an encouraging and supportive environment that can promote language development in preschoolers, Morrison (2015), advised that, all children of all cultures, genders, socio-economic levels and backgrounds should be valued and included in all activities. It is when this is done that the environment can be regarded as encouraging and supportive.

As a teacher and caregiver, it can be said that one's immediate physical surrounding is the Early Childhood Centre or the School. Morrison (2015), suggested the following as some of the things teachers and other caregivers can do to create an encouraging and supportive environment for language development in the school.

- **Meet children's safety needs:** In the view of Morrison (2015), and Tassoniet al (2015), children feel safe and secure socially and emotionally when they see or have teachers they know care about and help them. It therefore implies that as a teacher of preschool children one must care about and help children in their class, and by so doing one may be able to create encouraging and supportive environment for children to talk. Through talking children acquire more vocabulary which helps them to develop language.
- **Have a balance between teacher-initiated and child-initiated activities:** What you need to do as a teacher of pre-school children is that you should allow children in your class to do things they consider challenging and also things they do well (Morrison, 2015). After doing either the challenging or what they can do well let them talk about new vocabulary and have done to other members of the class. By so doing, children tend to acquire new vocabulary and develop language.

- **Provide a Classroom Arrangement and Materials for Active Learning:** As explained earlier, in a supportive and encouraging environment, children are made to listen to stories, tell stories, dictating stories, looking at and reading books independently, singing, relating events that happened outside school and talking. Children also use computers interactively with appropriate games and tasks, solving puzzles, counting and measuring things in the classroom (Morrison, 2015). This implies that the teachers, the classroom arrangements and materials provided support children's active language learning.
- **Emphasize social and emotional development as well as academic achievement:** It is a common knowledge that it is age that determines whether a child may enroll in kindergarten or not. This implies that some children come to kindergarten emotionally immature and more than a little self-centred. However, research revealed that in "any group of five year-olds, there are children who function more like four-year olds and others like six-year olds. Similarly, some children are sociable, and others are not" (Morrison, 2015). This implies that language development level of the children may not be the same. Teachers therefore must bear this in mind when developing activities for learning.

Another thing regarded by Morrison (2015) is encouraging and supportive environment that can promote language development in children is the curriculum. According to Morrison (2015), the curriculum of preschoolers should help them feel good about themselves and also become aware that other children also have needs and rights. This is because a good kindergarten environment helps children to learn to wait, to share, to take turns and to help others as they also gain confidence in their own abilities and self-

worth. All these activities involve talking, through which children learn new vocabularies from friends to add to the repertoire of their language, which aids language development. According to Berns (1993), teachers who try to work closely with each child and who understands group dynamics are more likely to provide a successful and rewarding learning environment. For example, studies by Ryan, Johnson, and Brophy cited in Berns (1993) revealed that successful or effective teachers are those who are warm, enthusiastic, generous, with praise and have high status.

Teachers who are warm and friendly in their relationship with children are likely to encourage favourable, rather than aggressive behaviour and constructive conscientious attitudes toward school work (Berns, 1993). This implies that teachers who are warm and friendly in their relationships with children tend to create encouraging environment for interaction and socialization. For example, teachers' verbal styles have been found to have an impact on the development of language skills in preschool children (Smothergill, Olson and Moore and Schickendanz et al cited in Berns (1993). Berns further explained that teachers who use expansive verbal descriptions and who encourage their children to converse with each other affect an increase in their children's verbal skills. Furthermore, Berns found that teachers who use reinforcement (verbal praise, smile, touch) are able to create supportive and encouraging environment for learning. The implications for preschool teachers is that they should try to encourage their pupils to converse with each other and then use reinforcement like verbal praise, smile and touch to encourage children in all endeavours.

Morrison (2015), stated that for preschooler to have encouraging and supportive environment that will promote language development, teachers need to relate with pupils

during routines, such as, diapering/toilet training, feeding/group eating to mention but only a few. Teachers need to use these items to support children's emotional development and other learning. This is because in the process of helping children's emotional development, teachers talk to them, which help them learn language. According to Morrison (2015), supporting developmental needs of infants help bring about encouraging and supportive environment which make infants and toddlers feel free to learn so many things including language. This is because in supporting developmental needs of preschooler, the teacher tends to talk and read to children constantly. By engaging children in conversations, commenting on what they are doing using rich language and feeling words, teachers in preschool classroom help their children to develop desirable language skills (Morrison, 2015). In other words by indulging in the activities described above, children acquire new vocabulary which enriches their language.

From the description of encouraging and supportive environments for preschoolers above it can be said that supportive and encouraging environments create a climate in which children can learn language. This implies that teachers need to provide environments in which they believe every child can learn and help all children understand and make meaning of their experiences. According to Morrison (2015), supportive environment consists of the immediate physical surroundings, social relationships and cultural settings in which children function and interact.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes and explains the methods used in investigating the impact of indoor and outdoor environments on language development of preschoolers. The first section of this chapter discusses the philosophical stance of the study. The second part deals with the procedure that was used to collect and analyse data. It includes research design, population, sample and sampling technique(s), instrumentation, validity, reliability, procedure for data collection, data analysis using t-test and ethical considerations.

3.1 Philosophical Stance

In doing research, there is the need to choose a methodology that will best help in both investigating and understanding the phenomenon under study. In other words, a research methodology defines what can be legitimately studied. In the absence of choosing an appropriate methodology that will define or guide the investigation process to lead to a closer approximation to, or representation of, factual truth based on the tradition or interaction with the environment will be difficult to determine.

This may be the reason why every research approach is based on a certain philosophical stance or paradigm. The philosophical assumptions that underpin this study was pragmatism. This is because pragmatism is based on the notion that researchers should use the philosophical and /o methodological approach that works best for the particular research problem that is being investigated (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008). As a research paradigm, pragmatism is often associated with mixed methods or multiple methods

(Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2010), where the focus is on the consequences of research and on the research questions rather than on the methods. A major underpinning of pragmatist epistemology is that knowledge is always based on experience. In other words one's perceptions of the world are influenced by our social experiences. As such, each person's knowledge is unique as it is created by her or his unique experiences. Whatever be the case, much of this knowledge is socially shared as it is created from socially shared experiences. As such, in the view of Morgan (2014a) all knowledge is social knowledge. For this reason the philosophical assumption employed for this study allowed the use of mixed method approach.

Based on the stance of the philosophy employed the mixed method was adopted for the study. This is because Creswell (2014), stated that the mixed method approach involves collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study. Mixed method approach can be explained as “research in which the investigator collects and analyses data,, integrates the findings and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study” (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2008). Creswell and Plano-Clark (2011), comment that this approach bring about greater understanding to be formulated than if a single approach was adopted to specific study. For example, supporters of both quantitative and qualitative paradigms state that researchers collect and analyse data following specific pattern and/or simultaneously and in rigorous manner which integrates the two forms of data. The way in which this data is combined depends upon the nature of the enquiry and the philosophical stance of the peson conducting the research.

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) also posited that, mixed method approach involves combining well-established quantitative and qualitative techniques in creative

ways to answer research questions posed by mixed method designs. This approach is said to be employed by the researcher to neutralize or minimize to some extent, the existing weaknesses associated with both quantitative and qualitative research approaches by capitalizing on their various strengths (Bell, 2005).

On the other hand both paradigms have something in common, particularly in terms of the strategies they use in collecting data. For example, both paradigms can use observation, questionnaire and interview as tools to collect data depending on the aim of the study, how the tools were used and what was claimed after. It therefore stands to reason that both paradigms relate to this study in terms of planning, organization of the study, validation of data collection tools, selection of participants, collection, analysis and interpretation of data to mention but only a few. In terms of usage in this study it can be found in the processes and procedures used by both paradigms in planning and collection of data. For example, both paradigms use observation, interview and questionnaire to collect data. These instruments were used for data collection in this study. It can therefore be said that both paradigms relate and are used in this study. In other words quantitative and qualitative methodologies, in the context of educational research are not mutually exclusive, because both use observation, interview and questionnaire to collect data.

From the discussion it can be said that there need not be a strict division of labour and specialization between quantitative and qualitative methods as long as the researcher is clear about the implications of using a particular research tool according to a particular paradigm.

The discussion of the stance of the two paradigms raised the question which of the approaches best suit this study. In an attempt to answer this question one needs to bear in

mind that human beings are source of knowledge rather than an object of science. This implies that thought is not a static product to be measured simply by applying the methods of the natural sciences. As such, social science research should not lay claim to a mythical pure knowledge as, like other ways of knowing, it is influenced by social transactions. For this reason the mixed method approach was used for this study so that the limitations inherent in each can be neutralized or minimized to some extent.

The choice of mixed approach was based on the fact that a combination of research methods would check the limitations inherent in the separate approaches (Bell, 2005). Further, this method satisfies the researchers' quest to obtain numerical data to ascertain validity and to explore the phenomenon in depth as a natural enquiry. Structured questionnaires and interview guides were used to obtain quantitative and qualitative data respectively. This is because both quantitative and qualitative approaches help to fully understand the problem from multiple perspectives.

3.2 Research Design

The design adopted for the study was explanatory sequential design based on mixed-methods design classifications (Creswell, Plano Clark, Guttman & Hanson, 2003). An explanatory sequential design, according to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) consists of first collecting quantitative data and then collecting qualitative data to help explain or elaborate on the quantitative results. In other words this involved gathering both numeric and qualitative data which can help in triangulation. Again, mixed method design was used for this study because collection of data follow series of steps towards a closer representation of, factual truth or worldviews constructed in the past in detail of social life phenomenon to reach a conclusion based on evidence.

Also, using mixed method for this study allowed the researcher to do some abstraction or keep distance from the data. Again, the mixed method design will help to anchor statements about the social world in an inquiry that has adequacy. (That is, it is faithful to the data). Adequacy of data refers to the amount of data collected, rather than the number of subjects as in quantitative research. The overall intent of this design is to have the qualitative data help explain in detail the initial quantitative results.

The explanatory sequential design was used in conducting the research because it is far more comprehensive and exhaustive than dealing with the research questions with a single research method (Creswell, 2012). Again the explanatory sequential design will afford the researcher the opportunity to combine methods to achieve the desired purpose. The design helped the researcher get general overview of the problem from the respondents using questionnaire and later interview to refine and explain the former. Also, the mixed method was used for this study because emphasis is laid on adequacy and originality of the data.

Another reason for choosing mixed method design was that it examines patterns of similarities and differences across cases and inferences made in line with their diversity.

All the reasons above on the use of mixed method design suggests that there are built in mechanism for triangulation of the information collected. Despite its usefulness in cross checking information, there was the need to know the type of mixed method to use. This is because there are a number of mixed methods. For example, Creswell (2013), stated that there are three types of mixed method designs. Creswell listed them as concurrent (convergent), explanatory sequential and exploratory sequential. Creswell (2013) explained the three types of mixed methods as follows:

In concurrent mixed method, the researcher combines both qualitative and quantitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem (Creswell, 2009). Plastow (2016), on the other hand, states that concurrent research involves a single data collection episode in which various qualitative and quantitative strategies are used to answer a research question. According to Creswell, Tashakkori, Jensen, and Shapley (2003), concurrent mixed method is used to confirm, cross-validate or corroborate findings within a single study.

The mixed method design was employed for this study in order to help validate one form of data with the other form, to transform the data for comparison, or to address different types of questions (Creswell & Plano, 2011). This is because mixed method allows collection and comparison of qualitative and quantitative data at the same time during the interpretation of the result to check if the two results were the same or similar (Creswell 2014). Furthermore, the mixed method design helped the researcher to collect adequate data and also laid emphasis on originality and triangulation.

Again, this design according to Johg and Van der Vordt (2002) involves describing how things really happen in their phenomena. This therefore suggests that mixed method design does not fit neatly into the definition of either qualitative or quantitative research approach, but rather it can make use of elements of both approaches which are usually within the same study (Association for Educational communications & Technology, 2001). For Creswell (2008) a mixed method design is mostly used to compare variables and therefore may be more directed toward learning about a targeted population. Danso (2009) also stated that a mixed method design provides a more accurate and meaningful picture of events or seeks to explain people's perception and behaviour on basis of what data was

gathered at a particular time. The mixed method design was adopted for the study because it is a single design that employs both the qualitative and quantitative approaches, which further allowed the research to compare responses concerning the purpose of the study.

In conclusion, it is important to note that mixed method design is used because at the general level its strength of drawing on both qualitative and quantitative research and minimizing the limitations of both method is high. Again, at the practical level it is used because it provides a statistical, complex approach to research. Also, it appeals to those on the forefront of new research procedures. At procedure level the mixed method design was found to be a useful strategy that could throw more light on the understanding of research problems or questions, such as the following:

- Comparing different perspectives drawn from qualitative and quantitative data
- Explaining quantitative results with a qualitative data analysis
- Understanding experimental results by incorporating the perspectives of individuals and
- Having a better understanding of the need for and impact of an intervention programme through collecting both qualitative and quantitative data.

At instrument level mixed method design uses the three instruments, (observation, interview, and questionnaire) to collect data. This implies that the value in the use of mixed method design lies in combining quantitative and qualitative methods in ways that complement each other. According to Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun (2015) the strengths of each approach to a large extent mitigate the weaknesses of the other. The above listed reasons informed the selection of mixed method design for this study.

3.3 Research Area

The study took place at Winneba, the capital town of the Effutu Municipality. It is a coastal town located in the central Region of Ghana. Before 1988, the district was part of the Gomoa-Awutu-Effutu Senya District Council. The Effutu Municipal Assembly was established by the Local Government Act (Act 462) and by L. I. 1860 in 2007. The Effutu Municipality with its Administration at Winneba is located in the south coast of Ghana, about sixty five kilometers west of the capital, Accra. The labour force in Winneba include public servants, small and medium scale business owners and the rest are mainly fishermen and fish mongers with a few of them being farmers. In addition, in the Effutu Municipality there are diversified population from humble to richest families who live on their salaries and business.

Winneba was chosen for the study because majority of the children grow up speaking two languages, thus Effutu and Fante or the mother tongue of the child and Fante. However, some parents do not understand Fante and do not speak the Fante language to the children but the children acquire or develop the Fante language.

3.4 Population

Kusi (2012) defines population as a group of individuals or people with the same characteristics and in whom the researcher is interested. A population may also be defined as a group of individuals that the researcher generalizes his/her findings to. A target population is explained as a group which the researcher is interested in gaining information from, and upon which generalization and conclusions can be drawn subsequently (Creswell, 2009). The accessible population refers to the population that a researcher can realistically select his/her sample from (Amoah and Eshun, 2015).

The population for this study consisted of parents and guardians whose children were in preschools within Effutu Municipality and teachers who taught at the preschool level in the 2017/18 academic year. The target population for the study involved both the public and private kindergarten teachers and the entire parents having their wards in kindergartens in Awutu-Effutu Education District in the Central Region.-Ghana. The accessible population was all the public kindergarten school teachers and the entire parents having their wards in the public kindergarten schools in the District. These category of persons were used for the study because they work closely with kindergarten pupils and for that matter, they had meaningful ideas to contribute to the study.

The accessible population from the four preschools involved in the study was 195 made up of 187 parents and eight (8) teachers.

3.5 Sample Size

The sample size for the study was made up of 64 respondents. These comprised 56 parents and eight (8) teachers from the selected preschools within the Winneba Municipality. Parents and teachers at the preschool level of the selected schools were involved because they were in direct contact with the children in all activities and could give concrete information about how preschool children develop language. .

3.6 Sampling Technique

Sampling technique refers to a particular process of selecting a portion of the target population to represent the entire population (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000; Muijs, 2004). The reason for sampling is to obtain a group of participants who were representative of the

larger population to provide specific information needed to address the questions raised (Hayford, 2013).

Purposive and census sampling techniques were used for selecting the respondents for the study. The parents were purposively selected whilst the teachers were sampled using the census approach. The purposive sampling technique was used to select parents because it was only parents of the kindergarten pupils from the four preschools selected for the study... This is because Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) stated that in purposive sampling, the researcher handpicks the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of his or her judgment based on people who had meaningful ideas to contribute to the study.

The census approach was used to select the teachers from the selected schools. A census approach, according to Creswell (2012), permits conclusions to be drawn about the entire population. Creswell further explained that the census approach is often used for selection of the sample size when the number of subjects is small and it simply reports descriptive statistics about the entire population. Also, Krejcie and Morgan, cited in Cohen et al (2007), stated that when the population for the study is small as in less than 100, it is advisable to include the whole wider population as the sample. Furthermore, the use of this technique helped the researcher get more information from all the participants concerning the research topic.

3.7 Instrumentation

The instruments used for data collection for the study were semi-structured interview guide and close-ended questionnaire.

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

The semi-structured interview guide (interview questions that are phrased in a way to allow unique responses from participants but leaves the interviewer free to decide how best to secure information) was used to collect data for this study for a number of deep-seated reasons.

First, the semi-structured interview guide was used to collect data for this study in order to bring about understanding of the realities of the problems from the interviewees point of view as this offered them the chance to reflect on their experiences.

Second, this instrument allowed for consistency, adaptability and flexibility in the questioning. Its consistency was found in the fair amount of uniformity in questions asked, yet it allowed for probing and clarification. Its adaptability can be explained in terms of how it could be used with many different problems and types of participants, such as illiterates and children who were not able to read and write but yet their responses could be probed, followed up, clarified, and elaborated to get specific, accurate responses. It was flexible in the sense that the interviewer could reframe or rephrase the items in different ways but still conveyed the same meaning that brought understanding to the interviewee. Also, not only did this instrument allowed nonverbal and verbal behaviour to be noted but gave the interviewer the opportunity to motivate the respondents in many ways.

Instrumentally, the interviewer made the respondents felt they were part of the research phenomenon and it intrinsically made the respondents identified themselves with the interviewer on the basis of experience and status. Also, education is concerned with social process and therefore needed either retrospective or current accounts of challenges

and problems facing educational establishments. This sort of information was obtained by the researcher using interviews.

Third, this instrument also allowed the researcher for pre-testing of the interview items as a check for bias in the procedures and on the part of the interviewer. By so doing the intent and the clarity of the items were evaluated for validity. The pre-testing also provided an idea about the length of time of the interview with each respondent, and the ease with which it could be analyzed.

Despite all the above advantages, the semi-structured interview guide had its weakness too. Any form of interview by nature is subjective, expensive and time consuming as pointed out by (McMillan & Schumacher 1989). It was subjective because of both the presence of the interviewer and the way the questions were framed. However, it should be noted that there is hardly any decision ever taken without any value embedded in it. This is because the researcher might consider a lot of options before arriving at a decision. It is expensive in the sense that the interviewer had to travel to where the interviewees were in order to understand the realities of the cultural context within which the data was constructed. It is time consuming because it allowed in-depth probing and clarification of issues that arose in the course of the interview.

Again the semi-structured interview guide was chosen by the interviewer because it was in line with the mixed method design employed for this study. This is because the deeper probing allowed for an inquiry that had adequacy (Kreuger & Neuman, 2006).

Questionnaire

A close-ended questionnaire, interspersed with open ended questions yielding to descriptive statistics on parents' involvement activities was used to collect data. The

questionnaire was in two parts. Part one was about demographic information on parents' personal identification. The questionnaire was suitable because it provided for use of standardized questions to all parent participants, ensured their anonymity and simultaneously provided them the opportunity to participate without much restriction. Part two was about language development which involved language theories, language activities and environments that encourage and support language development in preschool children. Ticking of statements provided as response to the questions asked was adopted for the study. The questionnaire was admitted to 56 parents. .

3.8 Validity of the instruments

To make sure the instruments developed, measure what they were intended to measure a written format of both the interview guide and questionnaire items were given to experts who were university lecturers to rate suitability of the two instruments and evaluate its fitness in the definition of the construct. This was done because Bryman (2004 p73) states that when new instrument(s) is/are developed for collecting data 'people, possibly those with experience or expertise in the field, are asked to act as judges to determine whether on the construct, face and content of it the measure seems to reflect the concept concerned. Thus Bryman (2016) explained validity as the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of data actually represented the phenomenon under study. This implies that instrument validity spells how accurately the data obtained from a study represent the variables of the study. Based on this statement the researcher made investigation to establish the the absence or presence of systematic error by giving the two instruments to experts to rate.. This could be the reason why Bryman stated that the content of the concept in question or the focus of attention can be validated by people, possibly

those with experience or expertise in that particular field are asked to judge or determine whether on the face of it the measure seems to reflect the concept concerned. Thus, the university lecturers that rated the suitability of the two items used face, content and construct validity measure to assess the accurateness of both items developed for data collection. This is because Bryman (2004 p73) states that when new instrument(s) is/are developed for collecting data “people, possibly those with experience or expertise in the field, are asked to act as judges to determine whether on the construct, face and content of it the measure seems to reflect the concept concerned”.

Also to validate and ensure trustworthiness of the information related to construct validity the concept, idea or behaviour that is a construct was translated or transformed into functioning and operating reality by the researcher. What the researcher did was to tape record the interview responses of the participants and played it back to them to authenticate the information. Again, the transcribed interviews were again given to each participant to read through in order to confirm that what was transcribed is accurate.

After all the above activities the content validity was then adopted by the researcher. Based on the adoption of the content validity the interview guide items were carefully designed to cover the key themes raised in the research questions.

To allay the fear that when data have been obtained using one instrument it is not always possible to offer reassurance of adequate reliability and also problems of access, questionnaires were used to allow for triangulation and validation.

3.9 Reliability

To ensure reliability of both the interview guide and the questionnaire were given to colleague research students for peer review and expert opinion from my supervisor. Again, to cross check reliability the interview the questionnaire items were pre-tested for bias in the procedures on the part of the interviewer. The pre-testing of the instruments again provided an idea about the consistency of time of the interview with each participant. Cronbach's alpha was used to test for internal consistency of the instrument and reliability. This helped to reshape the instrument by correcting possible weaknesses, inadequacies that could characterize the items. All the pre-testing were done with 64 colleague teachers at Akyem Wenchi Methodist Primary where the researcher was teaching because they had the same characteristics as the actual respondents for the pretesting..

To ensure content reliability, the procedure used for collecting data was documented sequentially. The reason being that Yin, cited in Creswell (2014), recommended that for content reliability to be ensured there is the need to set up a detailed case study protocol and data base, so that others can follow the procedures.

The researcher employed three techniques to ensure reliability. First the researcher provided a detailed account of the focus of the study which included the researcher's role, the informants position and basis for selection, and the context from which data was collected as suggested by (Lecompte & Goetz, 1984), cited in Creswell (2014).

Second, the researcher used multiple methods of data collection and analysis to strengthen reliability as well as internal validity as advocated for by Merriam cited in (Creswell, 2014). Third, data collection and analysis strategies were reported in detail to provide a clear and accurate picture of the methods used in this study.

3.10 Data Collection

A period of three weeks was used for collection of data for the study. Two weeks was used for conducting interviews and authentication of data collected, this was between 19th October to 10th November 2017, and one week was used for the administration and collection of the questionnaire in the first week of March.

3.11 Data Collection Procedure

The procedure involved in the collection of data for this research took three forms. First, documentary evidence were collected, followed by pre-testing of the data collection instruments developed. Before embarking on this study however, "informal discussions" were held individually with some of the teachers teaching at kindergarten level and some parents within Effutu Municipal. The focus of the discussion was on philosophies of language development by preschoolers, pedagogy for teaching language, and ways of communicating with preschooler. Ideas and issues which came out of the discussion were recorded both on cassette and in a diary.

The reasons for doing this were first to help the researcher identify problems of teachers at preschool level in helping the pupils develop language. Second, it did not need accurate recall from the subjects neither did it need to take into account the social desirability of the place where the discussion took place. Third, teachers and parents felt at ease to air their problems and interesting experiences and ideas as the topic of discussion was a matter of common interest. Also, it was relatively easy and straight forward to record, though there were problems of subjectivity as information collected need to be interpreted. However, this method was used to generate questions for the interview guide and questionnaire for the study.

The informal discussion was followed up with the collection of documentary evidence. Documentary sources of information related to the background of a study figure centrally in every piece of research. In this study the documentary sources of information related to the topic were collected from books, and journals to mention but only a few Documentary information were collected on definition of language, theories of language development, types of environments that encouraged and supported language development. The reason for doing this was twofold. First, documents have certain research advantages. They were convenient and either free or obtainable at minimal cost. Above all, information can be collected in the shortest space of time and they gave insight into how various theories and teaching approaches in language development came about and how they were organized. For the above mentioned reasons, most of the background information were from documentary evidences from the developed countries. This however, in itself was regarded by the researcher as a limitation because of the possible biases in terms of culture. Also, as Harber (1995) pointed out, documents “only describe what is said rather than what is done.” Despite these limitations, documentary evidence throws light on the issues under discussion and also supports other research methods in terms of triangulation.

A formal investigation involving the use of semi-structured interviews and questionnaire were conducted. Before the formal investigation the researcher took an introductory letter from the Head of Department of Early Childhood Education,, University of Education, Winneba.. The introductory letter was sent to the Effutu-Municipal Education Director by the researcher to seek permission for collection of data from four schools within the Municipality.

When the permission was granted the researcher informed the Head-teachers of the four schools involved about her intention. On an agreed date with the Head-teachers the researcher went to the respective schools and met with the Head teacher and the teachers involved in the Head-teacher's office. At the Head-teacher's office the researcher explained the purpose of the study to the teachers of kindergarten children.

The researcher assured the teachers of kindergarten children of confidentiality of the data to be collected. The day and time for the interview was agreed upon with the various teachers from the four different schools in their head-teacher's offices respectively.

On the agreed dates with the various groups of teachers the researcher went to the schools and interviewed the teachers teaching at Kindergarten level. In the schools the teachers involved were interviewed individually in their classrooms at the times that the children were either out for their lunch or on break. The teachers were interviewed in their various classrooms because there was no convenient place in the school where the interview could be done. On few occasions the interview was interrupted by the pupils and parents who came to make complaints. Interviewing of the teachers at the various schools selected for the study lasted for one week.

The individual interview approach was adopted because they were all willing to share their views about indoor and outdoor conducive environments that promote language development in preschool children. The individual interview was used because Creswell (2005) was of the view that one-on-one interview is ideal for interviewing participants who are willing to speak, articulate and who can share ideas comfortably. Again, since the teachers involved were not many the researcher found it appropriate to adopt the one-on-one approach for an in-depth conversation.

The responses from the participants were tape recorded for easy transcription. Also, the tape recorded information was played back to participants to listen to and then authenticate it. All the interview questions were from the interview guide developed, however the researcher asked other related questions which were not on the interview guide for either more information or for clarification of an idea.

The interviews with all the teachers lasted between three quarters of an hour and one hour. These were questions framed around the following subheadings: definition of language, theories of language development, indoor and outdoor environments for language development and pedagogy to mention but only a few. For details of the interview questions refer to appendix B. As said earlier on, in all cases, the interviews were tape recorded and played back to all the participants to confirm its accuracy. This again gave chance to some of the participants to elaborate on some of the ideas raised.

With regard to the questionnaire, it was administered to parents selected for the study from the four preschools in the Effutu-Municipal Education Directorate. The questionnaire was administered to parents early in the mornings of the week days. In all cases a covering letter was attached directing parents on how to complete the questionnaire. A time limit of one week for the return or collection of the questionnaire was given or stated. The reason for organizing the administration of the questionnaire this way was because the parents of the children lived in different locations all over the Effutu Municipality. The only way to get them was when they brought their child to school or the child was brought by a maid.

Also, time constraints about the submission of the thesis coupled with travelling expenses made it impossible to visit and administer the questionnaire directly to parents at

home. The parents from the four selected preschools were included in the research because they represented range of preschool education provisions for preschool children in the Effutu Municipality. Also, the responses to the questionnaire from the parents of the children from the four preschools did not only helped cross checked the information from the teachers but threw more light on the topic under discussion.

3.12 Data Analysis Procedure

As regards data analysis it was divided into two parts according to the instruments used. The first part of the analysis was the interviews conducted. This was followed by analysis of the responses to the questionnaire.

With regard to analysis of data of the two instruments used, the data were edited, coded and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The qualitative data were derived from interview schedule while quantitative data were derived from closed ended questions. The quantitative data were presented using descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, percentages and tabulations. In analyzing quantitative data, copies of the filled questionnaires were serially numbered and edited. The study employed descriptive statistical tools in the analysis of the data to answer the research questions. The resultant data from the descriptive analysis were put into tables as frequency, percentage and means.

The qualitative data were presented in text using actual words of the participants. In this study the preliminary data analysis was done after every interview to check if there was any information necessary for the study that was missing. When the process of data collection is over, the raw data were transcribed. Transcription is the process of transforming interview notes and audio recording into texts (Johnson & Christensen, 2012).

The thematic analysis was used to organize the transcribed data. Thematic organization and analysis is the process that identifies analysis and reports the occurrence of themes in the data collected from the research areas. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis follows six basic steps.

1. Familiarising with the data through thoroughly reading the transcriptions. This helps the researcher to have in mind what exactly is in the data.
2. Generation of initial codes. Putting labels or description on a list of ideas developed from the transcription as already read by the researcher.
3. Searching for themes. Related codes are organized under different themes.
4. Reviewing the themes. The themes developed are reviewed for their relevance and legitimacy of being called themes.
5. Defining and naming themes developed. Defining the overall content of the themes and the message it carries in it before producing a report.
6. Producing a report. Researcher is already satisfied with the themes developed. ry.

What seemed suggested in the description above is that quantitative research produces results which can be expressed using number or statistics, exploring the extent to which something happens while qualitative research explores individual viewpoints which are not so easily measured.

3.13 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues are very important in research and therefore have become a concern to the researcher. The teachers and parents who took part in this study were personally informed about the purpose and procedure involved in gathering the data for the study by the researcher before involving them in the study. The participants were not

forced to take part in the study, but rather it was done on a voluntary bases. The participants were assured of confidentiality of any information they would give. Permission was also sought from participants to tape record the interview. Again all scholarly works cited or quoted were acknowledged Finally, participants were told they were free to withdraw from participation at any stage without any negative consequences..



CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is about analysis of data collected from the field in relation to the topic under discussion. The data analysis is divided into two parts according to the instruments used.

The first part is analyses for the responses given to questions by eight teachers teaching in kindergarten in separate interviews conducted by the researcher. The second describes analyses of the responses to the questionnaire by 56 parents. Documentary evidence was used to support the results that emerged from the interviews and the questionnaires.

The chapter is organized under the following sub-headings:

1. Background of teachers/parents
2. Definition of language/theories of language
3. Environment that encourages and supports language development of preschoolers.
4. Approaches to teaching language to preschoolers.
5. Activities that support and encourage language development of preschoolers.

Interview Results

Eight interviews were carried out with eight teachers teaching at kindergarten level in four separate schools- Ntakorfam, M.A, University Primary, South campus, Anglican Primary and North Campus Early childhood centre all in Winneba. One teacher each from kindergarten one and two were involved in each of the schools mentioned above. The

selection of the schools involved in the study was based on the background of parents. Almost all the parents of the kindergarten children at both Ntakorfam and University Primary South Campus were illiterates. At Ntakorfam M.A, University Primary South Campus most of the parents of the kindergarten children were Fulanis and fisher folks respectively.

In the case of University primary –North Campus and Anglican Primary almost all the parents were literates. The reason for the disparity in the number of people interviewed and the people who responded to questionnaire was that the interview involved teachers teaching at kindergarten one and two only. The questionnaires were administered to parents whose children were in kindergarten one and two in the schools involved in the study. In each case the interview lasted for 30 minutes and parents were given one week for the completion of the questionnaire.

4.1 Background of Teachers

Some differences were found among the teachers who were teaching at the kindergarten level in the schools involved at the time of this research both in the amount of teaching experience at KG, status in Ghana Education Service, rank and academic qualification.

The teaching experience of the teachers teaching at the kindergarten level in the schools involved in the research in general ranges from six to 17 years. However, their teaching experiences at kindergarten level ranges from four to 12 years. The qualification of the teachers teaching at the kindergarten level ranges from Diploma certificate to Master of Philosophy Degree. The breakdown is as follows, one teacher is a holder of diploma certificate, five were first degree holders all in early childhood education respectively and

two were holders of Master of Philosophy in human rights and special education respectively. However, the teacher who was a holder of Master of Philosophy degree in Human rights did her first degree in early childhood education.

In the case of rank in Ghana education service one teacher and five teachers were senior superintendent and principal superintendent respectively and the rest two teachers were Assistant Director II and Director II respectively.

What seemed emerging is that the teachers had varied and diverse knowledge and skills in education of children. What again came out clearly from the analysis of the background of the teachers teaching at the kindergarten levels was that their qualifications differ. Similarly their ranks in Ghana education service also differ.

4.2 Research Question 1: What is/are the local or cultural belief of people of Effutu about how early childhood children acquire or develop language?

Many authors attempted to define language but what seemed to be the consensus was that language is a system that relates sounds and gestures to meaning. In an attempt to find out the definition of language from teachers, I posed the question “what is language”? The answers to this question from the teachers can be categorized into two. The first group of teachers defined language as “*speech or words spoken*”. This group of teachers, saw language as “*speech or words only*”. The second group of teachers shared the view that language is “*a medium of communication*”.

This second definition could be said to be any means by which any information can be passed on to another person to understand. It therefore implies that language may not necessarily be the words spoken by a tribe, but rather include all other ways or means that one can pass information to another person to understand. Whatever may be the case

it is clear that linguistically people refer to the many languages all over the world by the name of the predominant tribe in the tribal area where a particular language is spoken.

Theories in general are about the belief that people have about how things happen. In this case theory is about the ways and means that Effutu people in general think children acquire or develop language.

The question asked was “what are/is the local or cultural belief of people of Effutu about how early childhood children acquire or develop language?” Four teachers each from the schools mentioned earlier shared the view that in the Effutu locality people believe that children acquire or develop language as a result of “*parents and teachers talking to the child*” and “*through interaction with people around them*” respectively. This finding agrees with that of Rathus (2014) that children learn or develop language through listening to significant others in their life and imitating them.

From the description of what the two groups of teachers in the Effutu Municipality said about what people culturally believe help early childhood children to develop or acquire language is talking or interacting with the child. This implies that culturally, it is believed that early childhood children in Effutu-Municipality acquire or develop language as a result of significant people in their life talking to them or interacting with the people around them.

4.3 Research Question 2: Which Environments Encourage and Support Language Development in Preschoolers?

To find out the environments that encourage and support language development in preschool settings the following question was posed “in your own view which environment, both inside and outside encourage and support language development in preschoolers” The first teacher interviewed on the topic under discussion said that indoors

language acquisition and development by preschoolers is encouraged and supported in an *“environment in which there are pictures”*. As regards outdoors, this teacher said that preschoolers acquire language through *“playing with peers and significant others in the life of the child”* the second teacher in school one where the interview took place share the same view with the first teacher.

In the second school, two teachers teaching at the kindergarten level again shared the view that preschoolers acquire and develop language in *“one language environment”* both in indoor and outdoor environments.

In the third school, the first teacher interviewed said indoors preschoolers acquire and develop language through *“listening to teachers, parents and friends and rhymes, poems, imitation, songs and all other activities involving word cards, sound matching games, storytelling and puzzles”*

As regards what help preschoolers acquire and develop language outdoor this teacher said *“play and interaction with significant others in the life of the child”*

The second teacher in this school’s responses were that indoor preschoolers acquire language through” listening to teachers and their peers, imitation and songs” in the case of outdoors, they acquire and develop language through *“games involving, counting, singing and interaction with significant others in the life of the child”* both in school and at home.

In the fourth school the two teachers mentioned or listed the same items and activities already said by the six teachers above.

From the responses of the eight teachers involved in this interview, it became evident that preschoolers acquire and develop language indoor through listening to teachers, classmates, imitation, songs, rhymes and stories to mention but only a few. The

same thing said by the eight teachers about indoor environment was said by all the teachers about outdoor environment too. This therefore suggests that teachers teaching at the kindergarten level need to know that preschoolers acquire or develop language through the activities mentioned.

The implications for teaching and learning as far as language acquisition is concerned for preschoolers are, first teachers teaching at the preschool level need to prepare word cards and picture books with familiar domestic objects, animals and birds that are found in the environment in which the children are.

Secondly, the stories that teachers and significant others will tell the children should be local stories that will make the learning situation interesting and meaningful to the children. Also, games involving songs and counting should be local games.

With regard to activities that encourage and support language development of preschoolers, all the eight interviewees shared the view that picture reading, role play, games, rhymes, storytelling, speaking the language to the children, and children's television programmes are some of the activities that can help children to develop language.

As regards the environments both indoor and outdoor that can help preschoolers acquire or develop language the eight interviewees mentioned "one language environment, picture rich environment , providing environments in which games involving songs and counting take place, encourage children to interact with each other and significant others in their life.

4.4 Research Question 3: What are some of the approaches that can be used to promote language development of preschoolers in both indoor and outdoor environments?

In response to the item “How do you help preschoolers in your class to develop or acquire language all the eight teachers interviewed mentioned the following as some of the approaches used in teaching language to preschoolers. They are picture reading, role play, games, rhymes, storytelling, imitation, songs, word cards, sound matching games, and television as some of the approaches.

To know the view of the teachers about how early childhood children acquire and develop language in both indoor and outdoor environments a follow up question which says “In your own view what do you think help preschool children to acquire or develop language was asked.”

There were diverse views in response to this question. Two out of the eight teachers said that *preschool children acquire or develop language through interaction and socialization with parents, siblings, and friends and also through what teachers tell them both in indoor and outdoor environments*. The third teacher said preschool children develop or acquire language *through story telling*. The fourth and fifth teachers said the same thing that preschool children either acquire or develop language *innately or through both the environment and imitation both in indoor and outdoor environments*. The rest three teachers said preschool children acquire or develop language through *teachers communicating with the child, music, interaction with age mates, parents talking to them, rhymes, poems and action songs* to mention but only a few both in indoor and outdoor environments

What seemed suggested from the description above is that to help preschool children acquire or develop language you need to talk to them, tell them stories, and teach them action songs, rhymes and poems both in indoor and outdoor environments.

4.5 Research Question 4: What kinds of activities promote language development of preschoolers in both indoor and outdoor environments.

To know the activities that teachers used to help early childhood children acquire and develop language in both indoor and outdoor environments a question which says “In your own view what are some of the activities you think help preschool children to acquire or develop language both in indoor and outdoor environments was asked.”

There were diverse views in response to this question. Two out of the eight teachers said that *preschool children acquire or develop language through interaction and socialization with parents, siblings, and friends and also through what teachers tell them both in indoor and outdoor environments.* The third teacher said preschool children develop or acquire language *through telling the children story, reading or reading to the children.* The fourth and fifth teachers said the same thing that preschool children either acquire or develop language *innately or through both the environment and imitation both in indoor and outdoor environments.* The rest three teachers said preschool children acquire or develop language through *teachers communicating with the child, music, interaction with age mates, parents talking to them, rhymes, poems and action songs* to mention but only a few both in indoor and outdoor environments

What seemed suggested from the description above is that to help preschool children acquire or develop language you need to talk to them, tell them stories, and teach them action songs, rhymes and poems both in indoor and outdoor environments.

To know the view of the teachers about how early childhood children acquire and develop language in both indoor and outdoor environments a follow up question which says “In your own view what do you think help preschool children to acquire or develop language was asked.”

There were diverse views in response to this question. Two out of the eight teachers said that *preschool children acquire or develop language through interaction and socialization with parents, siblings, and friends and also through what teachers tell them both in indoor and outdoor environments*. The third teacher said preschool children develop or acquire language *through story telling*. The fourth and fifth teachers said the same thing that preschool children either acquire or develop language *innately or through both the environment and imitation both in indoor and outdoor environments*. The rest three teachers said preschool children acquire or develop language through *teachers communicating with the child, music, interaction with age mates, parents talking to them, rhymes, poems and action songs* to mention but only a few both in indoor and outdoor environments

What seemed suggested from the description above is that to help preschool children acquire or develop language you need to talk to them, tell children stories, and teach them action songs, rhymes and poems both in indoor and outdoor environments.

4.6 Research Question 5: What are some of teaching and learning materials that can be used to teach preschoolers develop language in both in indoor and outdoor environments?

From the list of activities used in teaching preschoolers to acquire or develop language by their teachers in the Effutu Metropolis seem to suggest that songs, imitation,

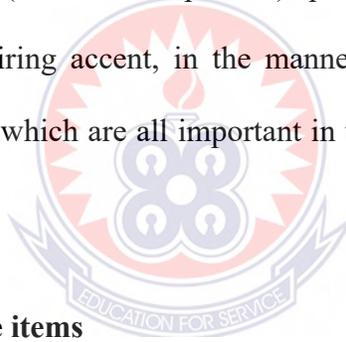
picture reading, storytelling and television are the main activities used by the teachers in the Effutu Metropolis to help preschoolers to acquire or develop language both in indoor and outdoor environments.

In response to how socialization help children to acquire or develop language the eight teachers shared the view that *“they talk to children about objects that they see and also about events that happened or took place using the “here and now” approach.* By so doing the child or the children turn to associate names with objects. Through association of objects and events with words the children turn to acquire new vocabulary to add to the score of words they know. This therefore suggests that in helping children to acquire or develop language it must be done through interaction with other people in the context of meaningful social interaction environment and activities.

Again, in response to how socialization help in acquisition or development of language by preschoolers the eight teachers said the same thing that in a *“social setting of a mother-child or teacher children in the classroom for example, mothers help children to work out the meaning of utterances to which the child is exposed by either pointing to or gazing at an object, and the teacher in the teaching and learning process expose children to new words and vocabulary which they are helped to work out the meaning”.*

As regards games based on turn taking with parents, 1`teachers and peers the teachers said that *“it turns to help children to draw the distinction between agents who are performing action and objects who are having actions carried on them”.* These sorts of activities enable the child to discover the referents of words thereby helping children to acquire or develop language.

In the case of imitation as a means of acquiring or developing language by preschoolers, the teachers said that *“in so many respects both in school and at home preschoolers imitate speech and are reinforced for their correct utterances”*. This goes a long way to help children to acquire or develop language. However, it is a common knowledge from careful observation and analyses of interaction between a preschool child and the parents or teachers reveal in so many cases that children do not necessarily mimic the sentences they hear, nor do parents and teachers selectively reinforce the children’s grammatical statements. Rather, both parents and teachers reinforce what the child says in total because of the intent which is important to language acquisition. However, it can be said that imitation of adult (teachers and parents) speech and that of other children plays an important role in acquiring accent, in the manner of speech, and in the choice of particular vocabulary item which are all important in the acquisition and development of language.



Analysis of Questionnaire items

This section is about analyses of responses given to the questionnaire by 56 parents from four different kindergarten schools in the Effutu Municipality. In all, 60 questionnaires were administered to parents of kindergarten children in four schools in Effutu Municipal. The schools involved in the research were Ntakorfem Primary, University Primary – South Campus, Anglican Primary and University Primary – North Campus, all in Winneba.

The breakdown of the parents from the various schools mentioned above were as follows: 14 each. The reason for doing so was based on the number of children in the first

school where the researcher administered the questionnaire. In that school, there were 14 Kindergarten children. Nevertheless, the questions were the same (see appendix).

This section is organized under the following subheadings:

- Definition of Language
- Theories of Language Development
- Early Vocalisations or Pre-linguistic Communication
- The Role of Imitation on Language Development
- Language Development of Preschoolers (0-2 years)
- Activities that support and encourage language development in preschoolers
- Approaches to teaching language to preschoolers
- Environments that Encourage and Support Language Development in Preschoolers
and
- Materials that are used in helping preschool children to develop language

4.7 Research Question 1: What is/are the local or cultural belief of people of Effutu about how early childhood children acquire or develop language?

Generally, the 56 parents who responded to this item gave various definitions of language. Some described the attributes of language rather than giving it a definition. The 56 parents involved defined language as follows; three parents each defined language as “what comes out of us”, and “a means of communication between human beings” respectively. Two parents each also defined language as “a system of communication”, and communicating with words with meaning”, respectively. Thirty parents defined language as “a system of communication in terms of speech and writing used by some group of people in the same community or country”. On the other hand, one parent each

defined language as “acceptable way of communication within a particular group of people”, “words used in connection with a particular subject”, the ability to communicate using words” and “communication or oral skills that are acquired through interaction with others” respectively. One parent, however, did not respond to this question. Another five parents defined language as “a means of communication between two or more people using sounds, words, signs as well as gestures”.

The majority of the definitions are saying the same thing, that language is a system of communication either spoken, written or sign which is used by a group of people in a community or country. All the definitions agree with that of (Kail, 2004 and Jay, 2003).

In this respect, what seemed suggested is that language consists of different sub-systems and patterns based on rules that allow human beings to communicate with others who share the same language. This implies that language, for that matter spoken language involves certain distinct but interrelated elements or properties that guide us in communication, e.g. tenses, grammar and pronunciation to mention but only a few. This implies that for language development to take place in children, the elements and properties should follow the laid down rules. The implication for teacher education and training then is that, the course content must cover competency areas of techniques on how to help preschoolers develop language. In other words, teachers training to teach at preschool level need to acquire skills in the techniques as to how to help kindergarten children develop language in collaboration with parents.

With regard to cultural or local belief about how children develop language in the Effutu Municipal Area, only six parents responded to this item out of the 56 respondents. Out of the six who responded to this item, four of them shared the view that culturally or

locally people believe that children develop language as a result of exposure to the environment. The rest two parents who also answered this question stated that locally or culturally, people believe that children develop language as a result of the parents or significant others in the life of the child talking to them.

From the responses to the item on cultural/local belief of the people of Effutu Municipal, the parents believed that social interaction/environment/nurture help children to develop language.

This raised the question “why is it that some young children develop two languages simultaneously”? As regards what help preschoolers to develop language, there were various views shared on it by parents.

The breakdown of what the parents of the children at the four kindergarten schools where the study took place said help children develop language are as follows: twenty one of them said the children were born with it, 26 said parents teach the children language, 31 thought children develop language as a result of reinforcement coming from significant others in the life of the child from the environment, 35 thought through parental speech and reinforcements children develop language.

In other words, these parents thought children develop language through imitation and reinforcement. Thirty eight thought it is the environment that helps children to develop language. However, 10 of the parents did not respond to this item. What seems emerging from the data analysed on this item was that majority of the parents of the children from the four schools where this study took place in the Effutu Municipality saw the environment, parental speech and reinforcement and from the environment as conditions or factors that help children to develop language. On the other hand, they believed parents

“teach them and children are born with language” as condition or factors that do not help children much to develop language.

4.8 Research Question 2: Which environments Support and Encourage

Language Development in Preschoolers

There were diverse views from the 56 parents who responded to this item.

Table 4.2: Environments that support and encourage a child to develop language in the Effutu Municipality

Environments that support and encourage a child to develop language	Frequency
Places that are not too noisy	15
Print rich environment	38
An environment in which adults respond positively to preschooler's request	44
A loving environment	38

Source: Field Data, 2018

The data in table 4.2 is about the overview of the views of the 56 parents of preschool children from the four schools where the study took place. The figures under the heading frequency in line with the subheadings under environments that support and encourage a child to develop language are not nominal. For example, the figure 15 in line with places that are not too noisy under frequency is representing, the number of times parents ticked that option as one of the environments that support and encourage language development in preschoolers. This is because parents were asked to tick as many options

that they think can be used in language development for preschool children. The rest of the figures show the different responses to the options by the parents.

What came out clearly from the data in table 4.2 is that the number of responses given to each option by the parents suggested that the parents view all the options as important in helping preschool children develop language. From the responses to the environments that support and encourage a preschool child's development of language by parents, it has become clear from the data that it happens in environment in which children's conversation and requests are positively responded to by significant others in their life.

This is because as many as 44 parents out of the 56 who responded to this item considered it important. However, 38 parents each and 15 parents considered print rich. Loving and places that are not too noisy as important for preschoolers to develop language.

The implication for this is that teachers of preschool children need to respond positively to children's conversation and requests. Also, teachers need to provide print rich, loving and less noisy environments both indoors and outdoors to enable children to develop language.

As a follow up question, parents were asked to list environments that encourage and support language development in preschoolers. The following were what they listed:

Environment

- rich with teaching and learning materials
- in which children are given the opportunity to express their views
- that is print rich
- in which children are read to loudly

- full of picture books
- in which story telling goes on
- in which there are a lot of children
- with play materials
- in which adults respond positively to children's communication
- that is loving
- that allows interaction
- rich with language

Five Parents did not respond to this item

Again, parents were asked to list activities that they think can be used to help preschoolers to develop language.

The following are the activities listed by parents.

- Play activities
- Role play
- Demonstration
- Observation and practicing
- Singing
- Dancing
- Story telling
- Picture reading
- Labeling of objects
- Use of real objects in the teaching and learning process
- Buying and selling activities both in the classroom and outside

- Repeating what the child has said
- Imitating what a child has said
- Play with word cards
- Give children space to talk
- Provide toys for children to play with
- Teach children songs
- Reinforcement
- Interaction with others (group work)
- Model
- Read aloud to children
- Recitation of rhymes and poems
- Dramatization
- Use of audio-visual gadgets
- Painting and pasting procures
- Group activities
- Showing of movies
- Indoor games

In this case too, five parents did not respond to this item.

4.9 Research Question 3: What are the approaches used to help preschool children develop language.

The aim of this item is to find out from parents' ways by which they think preschoolers can be helped by teachers to develop language. To achieve this, a range of approaches were listed for parents to tick as many as they apply to their children. Table 4.7 below explains the analysis.

Table 4.3: Approaches Parents think can be used to help preschool children develop Language

Approaches used by parents in helping preschool children develop language	Frequency
Story telling	48
Reinforcement	39
Use of words in variety of ways	39
Celebrating the child's creativity	39
Recognition of the child's language achievement	38
Focus on the child's intent	30
Repeat what the child has said	24
Informally	20
No response	5

Source: Field Data, 2018

The assumption involved here is that parents are to come out with the approaches that can be used to teach language to preschool children. On the other hand, parents do not

consider the approaches listed important. From the figures in Table 4.7, parents feel that all the approaches are necessary for teaching language to preschoolers.

What seemed emerging from the analysis is that parents of preschoolers in the four schools where this study took place agree that all the approaches listed are necessary.

However, majority of the parents found storytelling to be relevant approach that can help preschoolers develop language. This is because as many as 48 out of the 56 parents ticked it.

4.10 Research Question 4: What are some of the activities that help preschool children develop language.

Diverse views were shared by parents on this item. Details of what can be done to help preschool children develop language in the view of parents are as shown in table 4.9 below.

Table 4.1: Views of Parents on activities that can help Preschool Children Develop Language

Activities that can help children develop language	Frequency
Engage the child in conversation	47
Talk to the child	42
Respond to the child's expressive language effort	41
Use simplified form of speech	34
Describe things that attract the attention of the child	34
Gesture to help the child to understand	34
Join the child in paying attention to a particular object	31

Source: Field Data, 2018

Table 4.1 gives an overview of the views of the 56 parents of preschool children from the four schools involved in the study. The numbers under the heading frequency are not nominal. For example, the number 47 under frequency is representing the number of times parents ticked that option as one of the things that can be done to help preschoolers develop language. This is because parents were asked to tick as many options that they think can be used in language development for preschool children. The rest of the numbers show the different responses to the rest of the options by the parents.

From the 56 parents who responded to the various options, it is clear that 47 of them use “engage the child in conversation” to help their preschool children to develop language. The rest of the numbers in the table show the number of responses from the parents to each option. Nevertheless, taking into account the number of responses given to each option by the parents it is obvious that more than half of the parents view all the options as important in helping preschool children develop language.

What came out clearly from the response to the environments that support and encourage a preschool child’s development of language by the parents was an environment in which children’s conversation and requests are positively responded to by significant others in their life. This is because as many as 44 parents out of the 56 who responded to this item considered it important. However, 38 parents each and 15 parents considered print rich, loving and places that are not too noisy as important for preschoolers to develop language respectively.

4.11. Research Question 5: What are the teaching and learning materials that can be used to help preschool children develop language.

The aim of this item is to find out from parents' the sort of teaching and learning materials that they think can help preschool children to develop language. To achieve this, a range of materials were listed for both parents and teachers to tick as many as they apply to their children. Table 4.8 below shows the analysis.

Table 4.4: Teaching and learning materials that both parents and teachers think can be used to help preschool children develop Language

Teaching and learning materials that parents and teachers think can be used help preschool children develop language	Number
Toys	48
Real objects	39
Picture books	39
Word cards	39
Audio-visual gadgets	38
Indoor and outdoor games	30

Source: Field Data, 2018

The assumption involved here is that both parents and teachers were to list and mention materials that they use to help their preschool children develop language. The figures in Table 4.8, show the number of both parents and teachers of the different materials they use in helping their preschool children to develop language.

What seemed emerging from the analysis is that both parents and teachers of preschoolers in the four schools where this study took place agree that all the materials listed in table 4.8 can help preschool children to develop language.

However, majority of the parents and teachers found toys to be relevant material that can help preschoolers develop language. This is because as many as 48 out of the 64 parents and teachers mentioned it.

4. 12. Summary of the analysis

The results of the study revealed important evidences from which to infer that there are certain theories, environments, approaches, activities and materials to use to help preschoolers develop language.

Although some differences were found among the sample population involved in this research in relation to experience, qualification and roles they played, parents and teachers of the preschoolers in the four schools where this study took place share the same view about theories of language as spelt out by Chomsky (1957, 1959, 1982 and 1988) to mention but only a few.

With regard to theories, parents in the Effutu Municipality stated that locally or culturally the people of Effutu believe that children develop language as a result of “exposure to the language spoken in the environment”, or as a result of “parents or significant others in the life of the child talk to them”. As regards what helps preschoolers to develop language, the general consensus was that “exposure to the language in the environment and children were born with it”.

In the case of ways through which parents helped their children to develop language, between 60.7% and 80.35 stated that they used modeling, imitation,

reinforcement, shaping and correction of pronunciation to help children develop language. On the other hand, it is difficult to say which of the way was mostly used. What came out clearly was that parents considered all the ways listed for them to tick as important elements that helped children to develop language. This is an indication that there are overlapping theories and practices that help children to develop language. These elements again provide a common ground for teachers and parents when it comes to helping preschool children to develop language.

In the case of the aspect of vocabulary, that take place first in preschoolers, majority of the parents shared the view that it is the receptive vocabulary and assigned six reasons to support it. For details of the reasons refer to page 22.

In the case of age at which children made sounds that represent a real word, what came out clearly from the analysis was that majority of the parents stated that it happened when the child was between 8 – 18 months. As regards the first word that came mostly from preschoolers, the parents stated nouns. In the case of activities that can be organized to help children develop language, what was revealed by the analysis was that children should be engaged in conversation. As regards activities that support and encourage language development in preschoolers, majority of the parents shared the view that it happens in an environment in which children's conversation and requests are positively responded to by significant others in their life.

What came out strongly from the analysis was that 48 out of 56 parents shared the view that story telling is the approach they used in teaching language to their preschoolers.

As regards the kinds of activities to use in teaching language to preschoolers, parents listed 28 activities. Again, storytelling was one. For details of the list refer to page 31.

4.13 Discussion of Results

This part of the analysis discusses the findings of other researchers and authors that are relevant to the problem under investigation and the responses of the respondents in this study.

Taking into account teaching experiences, ranks and qualifications of the teachers, it can be said that they had good knowledge of the impact that both indoors and outdoors environments have on language development of children in kindergarten.

Also, parents of the children in the various kindergarten schools where the questionnaire were administered had different levels of experience and knowledge in child rearing. In all 64 participants responded to the questionnaire and the interview. The breakdown is as follows: 56 parents and eight teachers.

Cultural or local beliefs of the people of Effutu Municipality on how children born in the area develop language.

In this section of the study information was solicited from the 64 respondents based on the theme above. The result of the responses revealed that the respondents believe that social interaction/environment/nurture help children develop language. All the 64 respondents assigned the following reasons to support their claim. That children brought up in a particular environment learn the language that is spoken in that environment, That learning theories explain language development in terms of imitation and reinforcement,

as children imitate parents, teachers and significant others in their life in most of the things they do. However, Tarnis-LeMonda et al cited in Rathus (2014) share the view that imitative learning alone does not necessarily account for language development by preschoolers. The reason being that “sometimes children steadfastly avoid imitating certain language forms suggested by adults even when adults insisted” Tarnis-LeMonda (2006) cited in Rathus (2014). This in the view of Rathus (2014) suggests that children do not imitate sentences that are inconsistent with their grasp of grammar. Again, it can be said that it may be the reason why believers in nurture see language development by preschoolers as a result of reinforcement from the environment (August et al, 2005; Kroeger & Nelson, 2006). Thus, reinforcement from parents and significant others in the life of the child will help preschoolers develop language

Kinds of indoor and outdoor environments help preschoolers to develop language.

This research question was intended to find out the kinds of indoor and outdoor environments that impact on language development of preschoolers from the respondents. After analyzing the responses to this research question from both teachers and parents, there were diverse views in the responses. The views can be grouped into two, Nativist-Linguist/Genetic theory and Social Interaction/Environmental/nurture theory. Again, the analysis of the responses of both teachers and parents on research question 2 revealed that learning plays a role in language development by preschoolers. This view supports social interaction/environmental/nurture theory as stated by Rathus (2014). This suggests that children brought up in a particular environment will learn the language that is spoken in that environment. This may be the reason why learning theorists explain language development in terms of imitation and reinforcement. Again, this may be the reason why

Ghana Education Service's policy on teaching language at the preschool level emphasizes the use of the local language of the area in which the school is.

However, Tarnis-LeMonda et al cited in Rathus (2014) share the view that imitative learning alone does not necessarily account for language development by preschoolers. This is why "sometimes children steadfastly avoid imitating certain language forms suggested by adults even when adults insisted" Tarnis-LeMonda cited in Rathus (2014). This suggests that children find it difficult to imitate sentences that are inconsistent with their grasp of grammar. Again, it can be said that it may be the reason why believers in nurture see language development by preschoolers as a result of reinforcement from the environment. Thus, reinforcement from parents and significant others in the life of the child will help preschoolers develop language

On the other hand, research by Nelson cited in Rathus (2014) found the evidence that selective reinforcement of children's pronunciation can backfire. This is because the evidence from Nelson's study revealed that children whose parents reward proper pronunciation but correct poor pronunciation develop vocabulary more slowly than children whose parents are more tolerant about pronunciations. This suggests that correcting children's pronunciations at early stages of their language development may slow their vocabulary acquisition. Despite the above shortcomings in reinforcement there is ample evidence in literature that aspects of the child's language environment influence the development of language by early childhood children. However, what is clear from literature is that much of the research in the area of reinforcement focuses on the ways in which adults-especially mothers – interact with their children.

Also, the responses from 50% of both teachers and parents in the current study revealed that children are born with language which agreed with Chomsky (1988, 1990) that children are born with language acquisition device. In this sense, what is being suggested is that indoor and outdoor environments do not have any impact on language development by preschoolers. Rather, children bring an inborn tendency into language acquisition or development.

Methods to use to teach preschoolers both in indoor and outdoor environments to develop language

The responses to this research question by both teachers and parents were analyzed. Both parents and teachers mentioned picture reading, role play, games, rhymes, storytelling, imitation, songs, word cards, sound matching games, television as some of the methods used in helping preschoolers to develop language.

Teachers and parents again, shared the view that they used songs, picture reading, storytelling and television as the main approaches both at home and school to help preschoolers to acquire or develop language. This result suggests that there are other approaches that can be used to help preschoolers develop language. This implies that teachers and parents taught language to kindergarten children informally. What they did was talking to the children about the environment and happenings in the environment as stated by (Brewer, 1995). This implies that, language was taught through meaningful interaction, not necessarily talking with the child about it or analyzing what happened in the environment. This again, can be said to imply that children do not develop or acquire language simply by memorizing the sentence of the language and storing them in some big mental dictionary. Rather, according to Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2007), children

acquire a system of rules that enables them to construct and understand sentences, most of which they have never produced or heard before. This finding supports Brewer's study that preschoolers are not taught language formally.

In school settings, however, it can be said that teachers attempt to teach language by following the child's lead in conversations. What the researcher observed teachers did in this respect was that they talked about topics that were meaningful and interesting to the children. This finding agrees with that of (Brewer, 1993, Machado 1980, and Sowers, 2000). Brewer, however, found that it is not always easy to do because the interest of the children in the class may be varied and different. Nevertheless, teachers must think about the needs and interest of the children in their class when it comes to communication experiences.

Again, what teachers teaching at preschool level and parents did informally to help kindergarten children develop language was termed focusing on the child's intent. In this respect what teachers and parents did when it came to teaching language to preschool children was that they focused on the child's intent rather than the perfection of the utterance. This implies that in intentional teaching, both parents and teachers correct their children's speech content rather than form.

Furthermore, parents and teachers in their talking to children at preschool exhibited a distinctive pattern of language that made their language perceptually salient, contextually redundant and linguistically simple. This might be the reason McLaughlin (2006) suggested that what caregivers and teachers should do in the teaching and learning process is that they must reduce the length of their sentences when addressing or talking to preschoolers. This adjustment in the view of Murray et al cited in McLaughlin (2006)

seems to positively influence eventual language development of preschoolers. This implies that language is learned through active exploration of the systems, not by direct imitation of models. As such, errors in children's language should be viewed by teachers and parents as indications of the active nature of language learning as well as growth and maturation which will lead to the expected success that both parents and teachers are looking for. This finding agrees with that of Morrison (2015), McLaughlin (2006).

Kinds of activities, teaching and learning materials that can be used to teach preschoolers to develop language in both indoor and outdoor environments.

To know this from teachers teaching at the kindergarten level in the Effutu Municipality at the four schools mentioned above eight teachers and 56 parents responded to interview and questionnaire items respectively. From the responses of the eight teachers involved in the interview, it became evident after the analysis of the responses that preschoolers acquire and develop language indoor through activities like songs, rhymes and stories to mention but only a few. The same activities mentioned by the eight teachers about indoor environment were again mentioned by all the teachers for outdoor environment. This therefore suggests that teachers teaching at the kindergarten level need to know that preschoolers acquire or develop language both indoor and outdoor through the activities mentioned above.

The implications for teaching and learning as far as language development is concerned for preschoolers are, first teachers teaching at the preschool level need to prepare word cards and picture books with familiar domestic objects, animals and birds that are found in the environment in which the children are.

Secondly, the stories that teachers and significant others will tell the children should be based on domestic animals or local objects in order to make the learning situation interesting and meaningful to the children. Also, games involving songs and counting should be local games.

With regard to activities that encourage and support language development of preschoolers, all the eight teachers interviewed shared the view that picture reading, role play, games, rhymes, storytelling, speaking the language to the children, and children's television programmes are some of the activities that help children to develop language.

With regard to how socialization as an activity help children to acquire or develop language what came out clearly was that teachers said “they talk to children about objects that they see and also about events that happened or took place using the “here and now” activity. By so doing the child or the children turn to associate names with objects. Through association of objects and events with words the children turn to acquire new vocabulary to add to the score of words they know. This suggests that in helping children to acquire or develop language it must be done through interaction with other people in the context of meaningful social interaction environment and activities.

Again, in a “social setting of a mother-child at home or teacher children in the classroom for example, mothers help children to work out the meaning of utterances to which the child is exposed by either pointing to or gazing at an object, and the teacher on the other hand in the teaching and learning process expose children to new words and vocabulary which they are helped to work out the meaning”.

As regards games based on turn taking “it turns to help children to draw the distinction between agents who are performing action and objects who are having actions

carried on them”. These sorts of activities enable the child to discover the referents of words thereby helping children to acquire or develop language.

In the case of imitation as an activity for language development by preschoolers, it is a common knowledge that in so many respects both in school and at home preschoolers imitate speech and are reinforced for their correct utterances”. This goes a long way to help children to acquire or develop language. However, it is a common knowledge from careful observation and analyses of interaction between a preschool child and the parents or teachers reveal in so many cases that children do not necessarily mimic the sentences they hear, nor do parents and teachers selectively reinforce the children’s grammatical statements. Rather, both parents and teachers reinforce what the child says in total because of the intent which is important to language acquisition. However, it can be said that imitation of adult (teachers and parents) speech and that of other children plays an important role in acquiring accent, in the manner of speech, and in the choice of particular vocabulary item which are all important in the acquisition and development of language both indoor and outdoor. The findings based on activities that promote language acquisition or development in preschool children support that of (Kovach and DaRos-Vosles, 2011; Begley, 1997; Gestwicki, 2014; Cowley, 1997; Brunner, 1991)

Teaching learning materials that promote language development of preschoolers in both indoor and outdoor environments

From the responses of the eight teachers and the 56 parents involved in this study, it became evident that preschoolers acquire and develop language both indoor and outdoor through the use of teaching learning materials like picture cards, word cards, puzzles, games, audio visual gadgets and use of real objects. This suggests that for both parents and

teachers to help preschoolers develop language they need to use the above mentioned teaching learning materials both in indoor and outdoor environments when and where possible.

The implications for the use of teaching and learning materials as far as language acquisition is concerned for preschoolers are, first teachers and parents helping preschoolers to develop language need to prepare word cards, puzzles, games, audio visual aids and picture books with familiar domestic objects, animals and birds that are found in the environment in which the children are. This will make the learning situation interesting and meaningful to them.

Secondly, games involving songs and counting should be local games. This is because providing games involving songs and counting will encourage children to interact with each other and the teacher in the classroom and at home with the parents.

By so doing the child or the children turn to associate names with objects. Through association of objects and events with words the children turn to acquire new vocabulary to add to the store of words they know. This implies that in using teaching and learning materials to help children to acquire or develop language it must be done through interaction with other people in the context of meaningful social interaction and activities will make the children to acquire new vocabularies that are associated with the materials being used.

Again, it can be said that teaching learning materials help in acquisition or development of language by preschoolers because in a social setting of a mother-child or teacher children in the classroom or home for example, mothers help children to work out the meaning of utterances to which the child is exposed by either pointing to or gazing at

an object, and the teacher in the teaching and learning process expose children to new words and vocabulary which they are helped to work out the meaning using teaching learning materials.

As regards games based on turn taking with parents, teachers and peers it turns to help children to draw the distinction between agents who are performing action and objects who are having actions carried on them. These sorts of activities enable the child to discover the referents of words thereby helping children to acquire or develop language. The findings from the responses based on teaching and learning materials agrees with that of Morrison, 2015 and Berns, 1993.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF STUDY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This study sort to find out environments, method of teaching that can be used, activities that can be used, and teaching learning materials that can be used both in outdoor and indoor environments to promote language development in preschoolers .in four selected preschools in the Effutu Municipality in the Central Region of Ghana.

5.1 Summary of findings

With regard to theories of language development the key theories that emerged from the study which the people of Effutu locally or culturally belief help children to develop language were “exposure to the language spoken in the environment”, or “parents or significant others in the life of the child talking to them”. This implies that any language a preschool child is exposed to in an environment, that child develops that language all things being equal. It also came out strongly from the respondents that “children were born with language” as a theory that support language development of preschool children in the Effutu Municipality.

In the case of indoor and outdoor environments that support and encourage language development in preschoolers, the result from the data based on this item revealed “one language environment, picture rich environment , providing environments in which games involving songs and counting take place, encourage children to interact with each other and significant others in the life of preschoolers.

With regard to activities that encourage and support language development of preschoolers, what came out clearly were picture reading, role play, games, rhymes, storytelling, speaking the language to the children, and children's television programmes on language are some of the activities that help children to develop language.

As regards teaching and learning materials to use in teaching preschoolers to develop language, it became evident from the analysis that parents and teachers used teaching learning materials like picture cards, word cards, puzzles, games, audio visual gadgets like television and real objects to help preschoolers acquire and develop language both indoor and outdoor. This suggests that for both parents and teachers to help preschoolers develop language they need to use the above mentioned teaching learning materials both in indoor and outdoor environments when and where possible.

5.2 Key Findings

The study revealed some important evidences from which to infer that there are certain activities, environments and approaches that can help preschoolers develop language. Although some differences were found among the sample population involved in this research in terms of experience, qualification and roles they play, both teachers and parents of the preschoolers in the four schools where this study took place shared similar views on language development of preschool children.

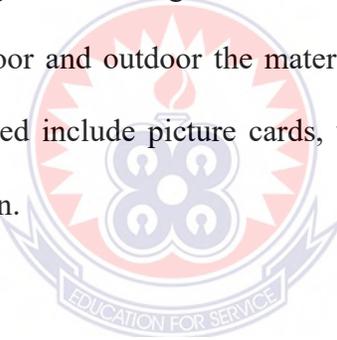
With regard to theories of language development the key theories that emerged from the study which the people of Effutu locally or culturally belief help children to develop language were “exposure to the language spoken in the environment”, or “parents or significant others in the life of the child talking to them”. It also came out strongly from

the study that “children were born with language” as a theory that support language development of preschool children in the Effutu Municipality.

As regards indoor and outdoor environments the analysis of the data revealed speaking of “one language to the child, picture rich, games and a place where singing goes on as environments that encourage children to develop language

In the case of activities that encourage and support language development of preschoolers, the result of the analysis of the data gathered revealed picture reading, role play, games, rhymes, storytelling, speaking the language to the children, and audio-visual aids..

As regards teaching and learning materials to use in teaching preschoolers to develop language both indoor and outdoor the materials that came out clearly after the analysis of the data collected include picture cards, word cards, puzzles, games, audio visual gadgets like television.



5.3 Conclusion

The study revealed some important evidences from which to infer that there are certain theories, activities, environments and approaches that help preschoolers develop language. Although some differences were found among the sample population in terms of experience, qualification and roles they play, both teachers and parents of the preschoolers in the four schools where this study took place share similar views on language development of preschool children.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the key findings of the study and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- Preschool children should be exposed to the language in the environment and also teachers, parents and significant others in the life of the child should talk to them and also respond positively to children's requests. In this respect, heads of Basic Schools where Early Childhood Centre is attached should make sure a teacher who can speak the local language of the area is put in preschool class.
- Allow preschool children to make basic biological noises particularly those in nursery class. It prepares the vocal cord for language development.
- Teachers, parents and significant others in the life of the child should provide print rich environment, children with teaching and learning materials, an environment that give children the opportunity to express their views, an environment full of picture book, Also, teachers, parents and significant others in the life of the child should read aloud to the children, tell children stories, allow children to interact with other children and play materials, respond positively to children's communication, an environment that is loving, that allows interaction, and rich with language.
- It is also recommended that significant others in the life of the child can use modeling, imitation, reinforcement, shaping and correction of pronunciation of words as a way to help preschool children develop language.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

The study suggests wider future studies into the impact of indoor and outdoor environments on language development of preschoolers. It is also suggested that studies into capacity building of parents and significant others in the life of the child on how to prepare the immediate environment within which the child is to promote language development.



REFERENCE

- Agbeke, W. K. (2016). *Theories of child growth and development*. Winneba: Joemens Printing Press.
- August, D., Carlo, M., Dressler, C. & Snow, C. (2005). The critical role of vocabulary development for English language learners. *Learning Disability Research and Practice*, 20(1), 50-57.
- Bardige, B & Bardi, M. K. (2008). *Talk to me baby: Supporting language development in the first three years*. *Zero to three*, 29(1), 4-10
- Bee, H. (2000). *The developing child*. Ninth edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Begley, S. (1997). How to build a baby's brain. *Newsweek. Special Edition*. pp28-32
- Berns, R. M. (1993). *Child, family, community: Socialization and support* (3rd Ed.). New York: Holt Rinchart and Winston, Inc.
- Birchmayer, J. Kennedy, A & Stonehouse, and A. (2010) .Sharing spoken language: Sounds, conversations and told stories. *Young Children*, 65(1), 34-39
- Brazelton, T.B. (1974). *Toddlers and parents: A declaration of independence*. New York: Delcorte Press.
- Brewer, J. A. (1995). *Introduction to early childhood education: Preschool through primary education*. 2nd Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Brunner, J. (1978). Learning the mother tongue. *Human nature magazine*, 283-288.
- Brunner, J. (1991). Play thought and language. In N Lauter-Klatell (Ed), *Reading in child development* (pp.76-81). CA: Mayfield: Mountain view.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods* (2nd Ed.). Great Britain; Oxford: Ashford Colour Press.
- Cohen, L. & Marion, L. (1995). *Research methods in education*. New York: McGraw Hill Publishing Company.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th Ed.). London: Routledge.

- Cook, T. & Reichart, C. S. (1979). *Qualitative and quantitative methods in evaluation research*. Beverly Hill: Sage.
- Cooper, J. D. & Kiger, N. D. (2006). *Literacy: Helping children construct meaning*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Cowley, G. (1997). The language explosion. *Newsweek Special Edition*, pp 16-22
- Creswell, J. W. (2005). *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc.
- Creswell, J. W. & Plano, C.V.L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design, qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publication Inc.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: qualitative and mixed method approaches* (3rd Ed.). California: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. New Jew Jersey: Jeffery W. Johnson Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (4th Ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W.; Tashakkori, A., Jensen, K.D.; & Shapley, K.L. (2003). *Teaching mixed methods research: Practices, dilemmas and challenges*, in Taskakkori, A. & Teddlie, C. (Eds.). *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioural Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Crystal, D. (1998). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of language* (2nd Ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Danso, K. (2009). Evaluation of inclusive education practice in Ghana: Survey of Inclusive pilot schools. Master's thesis: University of Cape Coast, Ghana. Unpublished. Retrieved on November 15, 2018 from <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/features/What-is-writing-with-our-public-school-rural-Ghana-200710>

- DeVilliers, J. G. & DeVilliers, P. A. (1991). Language development. In M. A. Bornstein & M. E. Lamb (Eds.). *Developmental Psychology: An advanced textbook (4th Ed.)*, pp. 313-373. Nahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Fraenkel, J. R. & Wallen, N. E. (2000). *How to design and evaluate research in education (5th Ed.)*. New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Co.
- Fraenkel, J. R., Wallen, N. E. & Hyun, H. H. (2015). *How to design and evaluate research in education*. Ninth edition. US: McGraw Hill Education.
- Fromkin, V., Rodman, R. & Hyams, N. (2007). *An introduction to language*. 8th Edition. Australia: Wadsworth.
- Gestwicki, C. (2014). *Developmentally appropriate practice: curriculum and development in early education*. USA: Wadsworth.
- Goodman, K. E., Brooks, S., Robert, M. & Yetta, G. (1987). *Language and thinking in school*. 3rd Ed. New York: Richard C. Owen.
- Graff, J.C. (2016). Mixed methods research. In Hall, H.R. & Roseel, L.A. (Eds.). *Evidence based practice: An integrative approach to research administration*. Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1975). *Learning how to mean: Explorations in the development of language*. New York: Amold.
- Harber, C. (1995). *Using documents in qualitative educational research in Africa*. In Crossley, M. and Vulliamy, G. (Eds.). *Qualitative research in developing countries: Educational perspectives*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Hardman, M. L., Drew, C. J., Winston Egan, M. & Wolf, B. (1990). *Human exceptionality*. Third edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Harley, T. (2001). *The psychology of language: From data to theory*. 2nd Edition. Great Britain: Biddles Limited.
- Hayford, S. K. (2013). *Special educational needs and quality education for all*. Winneba: Department of special education.
- Hoff, E. (2006). *Language experience and language milestones during early childhood*. In McCartney, K. & Philips, D. (Eds.). *Blackwell handbooks of developmental psychology*, (pp 233-251). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

- Jackson, S. L. (2009). *Research methods and statistics: A critical thinking approach (3rd Ed.)* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Jay, T. B. (2003). *The psychology of language*. New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- Johg, T. M & Vander Vordt, D. J. M. (2002). *Ways to study architectural, urban and technical design*. Delft: DUP Science.
- Kail, R. V. (2004). *Children and their development. (3rd Ed.)* Sydney, Australia: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Kerlinger .F.N. (1973). *Foundations of behavioural research*. New York: Rinehart
- Kirk, J. & Miller, M. L. (1986). *Reliability and validity in qualitative research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Klee, T. & Stokes, S. F. (2011). *Language development*. In D. Skuse et al (Eds.). *Child psychology and psychiatry: Frameworks for practice. (2nd Ed.)*, pp. 45-50. Chichester, UK: John Wiley.
- Kovach, B. & Da Ros- Voseles, D. (2011). *Communicating with babies*. *Young Children*, 66(2), 48-50
- Kreuger, L.W. & Neuman, W.L. (2006). *Social work research methods: Qualitative and quantitative applications*. Boston: Pearson
- Kroeger, K. A. & Nelson, W. M. (2006). A language programme to increase the verbal production of a child dually diagnosed with Down syndrome and autism. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 50(2), 101-108.
- Kuhn, T. S. (1970). *The structure of scientific revolutions. 2nd ed.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Machado, J. M. (1980). *Early childhood experiences in language arts (2nd Ed.)*. New York: Delmar Publishers Inc.
- McLaughlin, S. (2006). *Introduction to language development. (2nd Ed.)*. Australia: Thomson Delmar Learning.
- McMillan, J. H. & Schumacher, S. (1989). *Research in education. A conceptual introduction*. USA: Harper Collins Publishers

- McMillan, J. J. & Schumacher, S. (1989). *Research in education: A conceptual introduction*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Morrison, G. S. (2015). *Early childhood education today*. Boston: Pearson.
- Morse, J. M. (1994). *Designing Funded qualitative research*. In Handbook of qualitative research, edited by N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, pp 220-235. Thousand oaks, CA: Sage.
- Muijs, K. (2004). *Doing quantitative research in education with SPSS*. London: Sage
- Nelson, K. (1973). Structure and strategy in learning to talk. *Monographs for the Society for Research in Child Development*, 38 (1-2, ser. 149).
- Parlette, M. & Harrilton, D. (1976). Evaluation as illumination. In D. Tawney (Ed.). *Curriculum evaluation today: Trends and implications*. London: McMillan.
- Patton, M. (1975). *Alternative evaluation research paradigm*. Grand Forks: University of North Dakota Press.
- Plastow, N. A. (2016). Mixing-up research methods: A recipe for success or disaster? *South African Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 46(1), 89-90.
- Posse, R. & Melgosa, J. (2011). *New lifestyle for raising your child*. China: Editorial Safeliz.
- Rathus, S. A. (2014). *Childhood voyages in development* (5th Ed.). New Jersey: Wadsworth.
- Rist, R. C. (1977). On the relations among educational research paradigms: From disdain to detente. *Anthropology and education Quarterly*, 8, 42-49.
- Robson, C. (2003). *Real world research* (2nd Ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Santrock, J. W. (2011). *Educational psychology*. (5th Ed). USA: McGraw-Hill.
- Siegler, R., Deloache, J. & Eiseberg, N. (2003). *How children develop*. New York: Worth Publishers.
- Sjoberg, G. & Nett, R. (1966). *A method for social research*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Sowers, J. (2000). *Language arts in early education*. Africa: Delmar Thomson Learning.

Steinberg, L. &Belsky, J. (1991).*Infancy, childhood and adolescence: Development in context*.New York: McGraw-Hill Inc.

Tassoni, P., Beith, K., Eldridge, H. & Gough, A. (2005).*Diploma: Child Care and Education*.Great Britain: Heinemann Child Card.

Wilson, S. (1977).The use of ethnographic techniques in educational research *Review of educational research* 47:245-265.



APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTORY LETTER



APPENDIX A
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
 P.O. Box 25 Winneba
 ☎ + 233 (020) 2041077

FES/DCE/S.6

Dear Sir/Madam,

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

The bearer of this letter, Ms/Mr./Mrs./Rev./Sis./*Sister* *Abba H. Mohammed* with index number *8160190071* is a Second Year M.Phil student in the Department of Early Childhood Education, University of Education, Winneba.

He/she is to collect data for his/her research in your noble institution as part of the requirement in the University. I shall be grateful if he/she is offered the necessary assistance needed in that direction.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,
 DEPT. OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
 UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION
 WINNEBA
SAMUEL OPPONG FRIMPONG (PH.D)
AG. HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TEACHER

Please this exercise is solely for academic purpose. For that matter, I wish you could be sincere as you can to express your views because your responses are highly confidential. We may spend less than 20 minutes for this interview, and I wish you would permit me to record your voice for effective transcription which you will get access to before any publication. You may also equally ask for clarification or any sort. Thank you.

Interview Item

Teachers of Early Childhood Children

Background of Teacher

1. Role in school:
2. Which group of preschoolers are you teaching?
3. What is the average age of the children?
4. What is your qualification?
5. What is the number of years that you have spent in the school?
6. How long have you been teaching?
7. What is your rank in Ghana education service?

Definition of language

8. What is language?

Theories of language development

9. What are/is the local or cultural belief of people about how children acquire or develop language?

10. In your own view what do you think help preschool children to acquire or develop language?

Environment that encourages and supports language development in preschoolers.

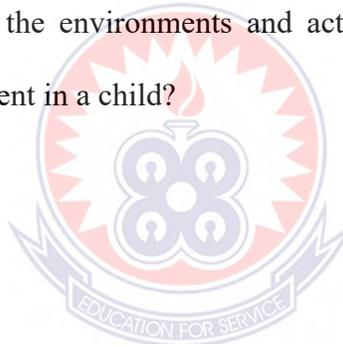
11. In your view which environment encourage and support language development in preschoolers. Please list them.

Approaches to teaching language to preschoolers

12. How do you help your children to develop language?

Activities that support and encourage language development of preschoolers

13. What are some of the environments and activities that support and encourage language development in a child?



APPENDIX C

PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Dear participant, I am very grateful to you for your acceptance to participate in this study. This questionnaire seeks information on the impact of language development in early childhood education. You are entreated to provide candid answers to the questionnaire items. The information provided will be treated as confidential and used exclusively for academic purposes. It is expected that the results of this study will contribute to future organization of professional development courses and in-service training programmes for Early Childhood teachers. There are no right answers to the items and therefore, your frank opinion is kindly required. Thank you.

Section A - Personal Information of Parents: Demographics

Please supply the response as required by the question.

PART ONE (1)

1. Occupation:
2. Class of Your Child: Creche { } Nursery { } KG 1 { } KG 2 { }
3. Marital Status: Divorce { } Married { } Separated { } Widow/Widower { } Single { }

4. Sex: Male { } Female { }
5. Educational level: JHS { } SHS { } Degree { } Other { }
6. Number of Children:
7. Age group? 15-19 { } 20-29 { } 30-39 { } 40-49 { } 50-59 { }
8. Language Spoken:
9. Number of years your has been in school: 1 { } 2 { } 3 { } 4 { } 5 and above { }
10. Age of your Child: 2 { } 3 { } 4 { } 5 and above { }

PART TWO (2)

Definition of Language

1. What is language? Please write

Theories of Language Development

2. What are/is the cultural or local belief of language development by preschool children or people?
3. What do you think will help preschoolers to acquire language? Tick as many
Children are born with it { }
The environment { }
Parental speech and reinforcement they learn it (imitation/reinforcement) { }
Parents teach them { }
Through reinforcement coming from the environment from significant others in the life of the child. { }

Early Vocalisations or Pre-Linguistic Communications

4. At what age does your child began to make basic biological noises (please specify)
e.g. (0 – 4 weeks)
Cooing and laughing (please specify)
Vocal play
Babbling
Melodic utterance
5. At what age does the child began to learn the meaning of words?
6 month[] 8 months[] 12 months[]
6. At what age does the child's first real word which represents linguistic speech spoken. Tick one
8 – 18 months [] 10 – 14 months[] 11 – 13 months []
7. What was the specific proper noun normally used by your child at 12 months (please specify)

The Role of Imitation on Language Development

8. In what ways do parents help children to develop language through? Tick as many as you think
- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| Model | [<input type="checkbox"/>] |
| Imitation | [<input type="checkbox"/>] |
| Reinforcement | [<input type="checkbox"/>] |
| Shaping | [<input type="checkbox"/>] |
| Correction of pronunciation | [<input type="checkbox"/>] |
| The way parents interact with children | [<input type="checkbox"/>] |

Language Development of Preschoolers (0 - 2)

9. Which of the following vocalisations does your child use as a means of communication (pre-linguistic). Tick as many from your child.

Vocal play []

Babbling []

Biological noises []

Melodic utterance []

10. Which aspect of vocabulary development do you think take place first in preschoolers. Tick one only.

Receptive vocabulary []

Expressive vocabulary []

11. Give one reason

12. At what age did your child first make a sound that represent a real word in your language?

8 – 18 months []

10 – 14 months []

11 – 13 months []

12 months and above []

13. From your observation the first words that come from preschoolers are mostly

Noun []

Verbs []

Adjectives []

Others specify []

14. The commonest first word of preschoolers refer to.
- Names of people, animal and objects
- Verbs []
- Adjectives []
- Others specify []
15. What are some of the things that you can do to help your child develop language.
(Tick as many)
- Use simplified form of speech []
- Engage the child in conversation []
- Respond to the child's expressive language effort []
- Join the child in paying attention to a particular object []
- Gesture to help the child to understand []
- Describe things that attract the attention of the child []
- Talk to the child []

Activities that Support and Encourage Language Development in Preschoolers

16. What are some of the environments that support and encourage a child to develop language? Tick as many as you think
- Places that are not too noisy []
- Print rich environment []
- An environment in which adults respond positively to preschoolers. []
- A loving environment []
- Others specify []

Approaches to Teaching Language to Preschoolers

17. What are some of the approaches that you use in helping children to acquire language?

What informed the use of the approaches that you mentioned?

Environment that encourages and supports language development in preschoolers

In your view which environments encourages and support language development in preschoolers

Approaches to Teaching Language to Preschoolers

18. How do you help your children to develop language? (Please tick as many)

Through story telling []

Through reinforcement []

Repeat what the child has said []

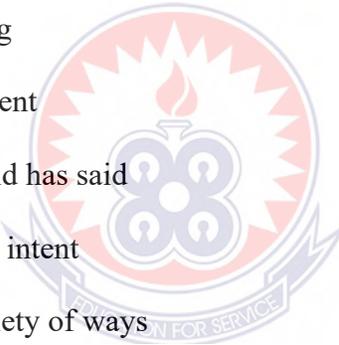
Focus on the child's intent []

Use of words in variety of ways []

Through celebrating the child's creativity []

Through recognition of the child's language achievement []

Informally []



Environment that encourages and Supports Language Development in Preschoolers

19. In your view which environment encourage and support language development in preschoolers. Please list them

.....

20. In your view which activities support and encourage language development in preschoolers. Please list them

.....

