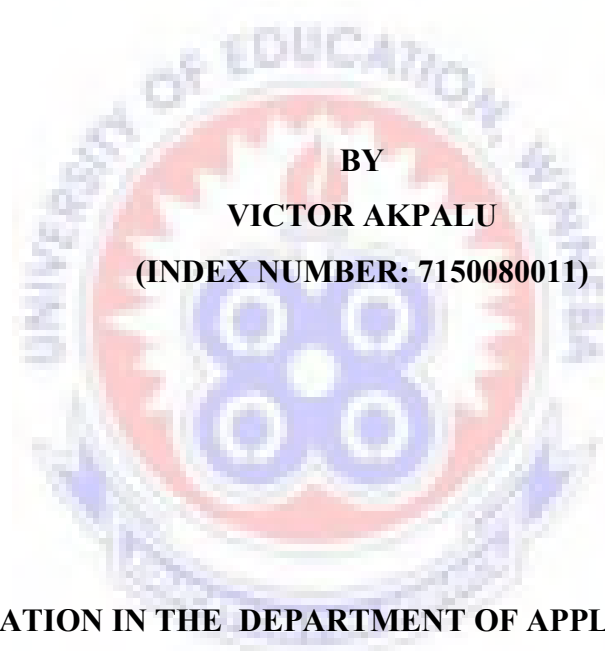


**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**TEACHING OF RHYMES AND SONGS IN KINDERGARTEN: A CASE STUDY  
OF AGORTEMAM MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY BASIC SCHOOL**



**BY  
VICTOR AKPALU  
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**A DISSERTATION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS,  
FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES EDUCATION AND  
COMMUNICATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE  
STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF  
EDUCATION DEGREE IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**

**DECEMBER, 2017**

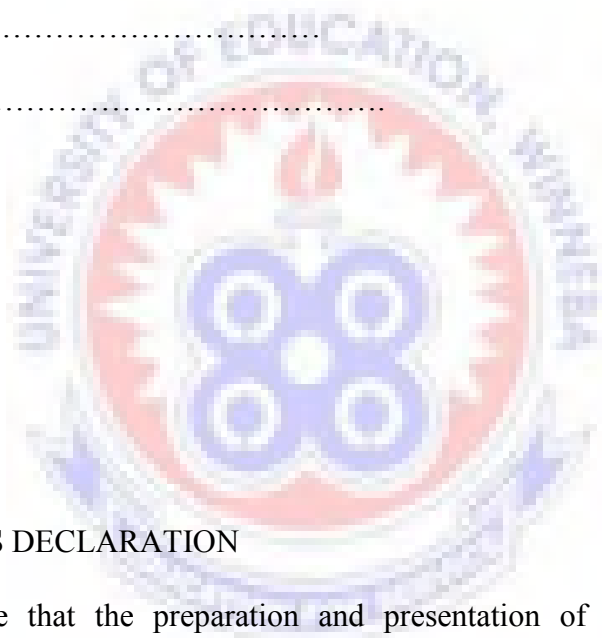
## DECLARATION

### STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Victor Akpalu, hereby declare that except for references and quotations from other people's work which have been duly cited, this dissertation is the results of my own original work and that it has not been submitted, either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE .....

DATE.....



### SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

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

Name of supervisor: Dr. Charles Owu-Ewie

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to the Almighty God who is the author and finisher of every good work for giving me the strength and the ability to be able to finish this research work on schedule. May His name be praised!



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am grateful to the Creator God, maker of Heaven and earth for His guidance and direction throughout this research period.

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## ABSTRACT

The topic for this study is the teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten and the primary objective of this study is to identify problems associated with the teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten, and how can these rhymes and songs be taught effectively. This study was conducted at Agorteman Municipal Assembly Basic School in Kwashiekuma Circuit in Ga West Municipality in Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Purposive sampling method was used to select six teachers for semi-structured interview and twenty pupils for direct observation. The findings of the study were: most of the Kindergarten teachers do not have formal training in early childhood education, hence do not teach the rhymes and the songs effectively, there was no instructional material and instructional time for teaching of rhymes and songs, audio Visual Aids which can enhance effective teaching of rhymes and songs were also not used, the teachers do not write detail lesson note on rhymes and songs and the rhymes and songs were only used to arouse the pupils' interest in literacy lessons. The following recommendations were made to enhance effective teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten; teachers at Kindergarten must have a formal training in 'early childhood education', instructional materials and a course book containing methods of teaching rhymes and songs as well as a refresher in-service-training should be provided for Kindergarten teachers for effective teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten. The teachers must write detailed lesson notes on rhymes and songs for effective teaching. Rhymes and songs should be made a full lesson on its own to be allocated enough periods for effective teaching.



## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the research work and gives a general overview on rhymes and songs. It brings to light the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, the objectives of the study, Research Questions, limitations of the study and the structure of the study.

### 1.1 Background to the study

Education holds the key to our future, and it starts right from birth. Therefore, we cannot ignore early childhood education when we are aiming at achieving universal primary education and the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger as well as achievement of the other Millennium Development Goals. Mandela (2013) believes that “education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world”. Education is the key to eliminating gender inequality, to reducing poverty, to creating a sustainable planet, to preventing needless deaths and illness and to foster peace. Ghana’s childhood education system deserves a purposeful and well-programmed framework in order to be successful.

Asselin (2015) pointed out that education is one sector in Ghana that deserves praises for its noteworthy achievements. The school enrolment has improved greatly. The gross primary enrolment rate is ninety five percent and net primary enrolment is eighty three percent. Ghana’s net primary school enrolment and completion rate of more than eighty percent are far ahead of Sub-Saharan averages. Ghana is therefore making steady progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) on Universal Primary Education and Gender Equality in education.

Early childhood education for four to five years though now formal part of school system is not performing well. Gross pre-primary school enrolment rate is ninety percent; however, the net pre-primary school enrolment rate is as low as sixty two percent. Another concern is the quality of education. Proficiency levels for core subjects such as English Language and Mathematics continue to be low. This is an indication that Ghana's literacy rate is increasing steadily; however, the quality of the education given must be of concern to all of us. Ghana must not only aim at mass education but quality education as well. Education is the key to the socio-economic and political development of every nation. It is for this reason that successive governments in Ghana have committed so many resources to educational development in the country. Unfortunately, in recent times, there is a fallen standard of education. This is particularly attributed to the inability of the basic school pupils to read fluently and comprehend what they read. Such a decline in the reading habits of students is bound to have an adverse effect on the quality of writing of the English language. This is also because students' unwillingness to read widely will result in inadequate exposure to vocabulary of English language and to the various styles of writing that writers use in their books. The problem of reading difficulties among pupils and students can be tackled right from the child's foundation level at school by the use of rhymes and songs to arouse reading.

According to Stead (2010), nursery rhymes are not just for fun. They have enormous educational value. A rhyme is a short poem with rhythmic pattern of sounds. It is a concentrated kind of writing that combines imagery, figurative language, rhythm and correspondence in sounds of two or more lines. It is arranged in patterns of lines and sound expressing some thought, feeling of human experience. Rhymes are designed to stir children senses, stimulate

their imagination and make them think. Songs are words sung to a tune; they are art of singing. In other words, they are short musical composition of words intended for singing. Music is said to be the food of the soul and the language of feeling and of passion, as words are the language of reason. In this perspective, Conesa and Juan-Rubio (2015) believe that “songs once learned, are hard to forget”. Children have innate ability to learn any foreign language and they can learn better through interesting activities such as songs, rhymes, chants and tongue-twisters. In view of this, Adotey (2012) refers to rhythm in rhyme as the movement pattern communicated by regular arrangement of sounds and stressed and unstressed syllables. It is measured by the number of syllables in every word in a line and identifying the strong stressed and weak or unstressed ones. Rhymes and songs are essential skill for Kindergarten pupils to master as they begin learning to read. This basic phonological awareness skill shows a beginning of understanding of the way sounds work within words. As pupils learn to identify and pronounce rhyming words, they are distinguishing the ending sounds of words.

There are many reasons for using rhymes in teaching English as a foreign language in basic schools. Philips (1993) states that, children really enjoy learning and singing songs and have fun doing rhythmic activities while reciting rhymes. Children grow up with rhymes and develop their first language by them. Rhymes are the first in the children’s mother tongue. They listen and react to nursery rhymes. Rhymes give children intimate feeling about their environment and it influence them in acquisition of both mother tongue and a second language. Rhymes prepare children for reading and more especially at their formative stages in life when their language acquisition device is very high.

Ross (2016) supported the fact that, nursery rhymes contribute to the fundamental skills young children need in their oral language development. There is a sense of togetherness that nursery rhymes provide. Listening comprehension comes before reading comprehension. Long before kids can read sight words or sound out unknown words, they are listening to songs, stories, poems and rhymes. As they are listening, they are developing their comprehension skills. There might be new language and vocabulary that kids run across when they are listening and reciting rhymes. This indicates that nursery rhymes and songs play an important role in preparing children for high academic performance. In order to eliminate reading difficulties among students and create avenue for early acquisition of basic vocabulary, teaching of rhymes and songs should be taken seriously at Kindergarten to create reading awareness among children.

According to Yule (2010) the first language acquisition is remarkable for the speed with which it takes place. Long before a child starts school, he or she has become an extremely sophisticated language user, operating a system for self-expression and communication that no other creature or computer comes close to matching. For all children, regardless of great difference in their circumstances, provides strong support for the idea that there is an innate predisposition in the human infant to acquire language. The process of language acquisition has some basic requirements. During the first two or three years of development, a child requires interaction with other language users in order to bring the general language capacity into contact with a particular language such as English. It is to this end that the teaching and learning of rhymes and songs must be taken serious at the Kindergarten to prepare the pupils towards effective communication and reading readiness, however, this readiness to reading is being defeated as rhymes and songs are not effectively utilize to prepare the children for reading and acquisition of

vocabulary. It is for this reason that I have chosen this topic to dive into “Teaching of rhymes and songs in Kindergarten at Agorteman Municipal Assembly Basic School”.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

In recent times, Ghanaian parents and stakeholders in educational sector and the general public have been greatly concerned about the steady decline in the standard of English Language in our educational institutions. On 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2017, the West African Examination Council released the Basic Education Certificate Examination results. The Computerized School Selection and Placement System began the process of placing Basic Education Certificate Examination candidates in the various Senior High Schools across the country. Out of the total number of 460,941 registered candidates, (92%) qualified to be placed. A total of 36,849 candidates (8% of the total) are not placed because they scored a ‘grade 9’ in either English Language or Mathematics (Daily Graphic, 2017). This means that English occupies an important place in academic progression of every child in this country and its fallen standard is of a great concern to both parents and policy makers in this country. Bannerman-Mensah (2008) argued that “the acquisition and the use of the English Language were pivotal for a meaningful headway in any academic or intellectual pursuit”. He observed that the fallen educational standard in the country was as a result of the downward trend in the English Language. He made this statement as Director-General of the Ghana Education Service on 22nd October, 2008 when he was addressing over two hundred directors of education, heads of Senior High Schools and heads of English Department in Kumasi on a national forum on ‘the falling standard of education in the country’. He revealed that the 2007 National Education Assessment report on basic schools indicated that the pupils performed poorly in both the English Language and Mathematics. He

said a report from the West African Examination Council also stated that “most of the candidates were not able to express themselves clearly and logically and that their command of the English Language was woefully poor”. He attributed some of the poor performances of the students in English Language to teachers’ attitude to the language, large number of students in the class and poor grounding in grammar particularly in basic mechanics. He however, said with support from the United States Agency for International Development, the Ghana Education Service has put in place a National Literacy Acquisition Programme, which he explained was aimed at encouraging Kindergarten to primary three pupils to acquire literacy skills in their local languages. This the Director-General said would greatly enhance the teaching and learning of the English Language in primary four to Junior High School. Sackeyfio (2008) notes that parents are morally obliged to give their children the right type of reading materials to enable them cultivate reading habits. She blamed teachers for not doing much to help their pupils and students to learn and use the language, saying, “The English Language is a foreign language that can only be learnt with deliberate effort”. She urged teachers to effect the right changes in their English Language teaching approach and methodology to arrest the falling standard of the language.

Junior High School teachers who prepare the Basic Education Certificate Examination candidates for the West African Examination Council examination tend to blame primary school teachers for not preparing their pupils well before entering the Junior High School, hence the poor performance at the Basic Education Certificate Examination level, however, the Kindergarten education which is the main foundation for formal education has been neglected. Kindergarten teachers have been teaching numeracy, literacy and Ghanaian Language, creative activities and Environmental Studies to the neglect of rhymes and songs which promote

phonemic awareness skills of the pupils, hence promote preparedness to reading at an early age. It is against this background that it becomes necessary for investigation to be held in this regard to find out the problems associated with the teaching of rhymes and songs and how they can be taught effectively at the Kindergarten to eliminate the root cause of reading difficulties among pupils.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to find out the strategies teachers use in teaching of rhymes and songs at Agorteman Municipal Assembly Basic School Kindergarten, and how the rhymes and songs can be taught effectively to prepare the pupils towards reading readiness and higher academic laureate. This purpose will be achieved through the use of direct observation and Semi - structured interview.

### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

This study will contribute to existing literature on the efforts that have been made by scholars to promote acquisition of competence in English Language by second language learners. The objectives of this research work are based on the fact that the teaching of rhymes and songs are universal strategies for preparing young children to learn how to read and acquire vocabulary at an early age. The study therefore seeks to:

- i. Find out the problems Kindergarten teachers face when teaching rhymes and songs and examine how the causes of the problems can be solved.
- ii. Find out how the teaching of rhymes and songs can be taught effectively at the Kindergarten.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

This study sought to find answers to the following research questions:

- i. What are the problems associated with the teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten?
- ii. How can the teaching of rhymes and songs be taught effectively at the Kindergarten?

### **1.6 Limitations of the study**

Best and Kahn (1995) argued that a limitation is a condition beyond the control of the researcher that places restrictions on the validity of the study. According to Murnan (2004), the limitations of the study are those characteristics of design or methodology that impact or influenced the interpretation of the findings of your research. They are the constraints on generalizability, applications to practice, and or utility of findings that are the result of the ways in which you initially chose to design the study and or the method used to establish internal and external validity. Though this thesis was carefully done, it is without limitations. The results of this research were influenced by the limitations stated below:

Some respondents felt that, answering certain questions could lead to revealing the secrets of their profession even though they were assured of the confidentiality of the information given. The time available to investigate the research problem and to suggest remedies to the research problems to meet the deadline for the submission of the thesis was not enough. The problem of the individual respondent's reluctance to give information about the teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten was solved by persistent persuasion to make them give the necessary information. I also assured them that the data being collected is purely for research work and nothing else. The information gathered is not going to Basic Education Division or Teacher



Education Division of Ghana Education Service. With these assurances, they were convinced and gave the information willingly. The time constrain to meet the deadline of the thesis was solved by devotion of more time and extra hard work.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The study when completed:

1. Would contribute to the understanding of the importance of teaching of rhymes and songs at kindergarten.
2. Make educational planners aware of how to plan effectively and formulate appropriate methods of teaching rhymes and songs at the kindergarten.
3. Encourage further research into the usefulness of rhymes and songs in Ghana especially in Kindergarten
4. It will help the classroom teachers to know how to teach rhymes and songs effectively at the Kindergarten.

### **1.8 Structure of the study**

This study is organized into five chapters, chapter 1 consists of a brief introduction, background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, limitations and how the limitations were solved, significance of the study and the structure of the study. Chapter 2 deals with the literature review. The views, finding and suggestions made by earlier researchers on related topics for the study were reviewed to support or refute the findings raised in the study. Chapter 3 deals with methodology, which is the population, sampling method and instruments of data collection. Chapter 4 is about analysis of

the data collected; that is, direct observation and semi-structured interview based on the two research questions. The final chapter presents the conclusion: overview of research problem and methodology, summary of findings, recommendations for the study and recommendations for further studies.



## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter discussed theoretical and empirical review of the secondary data of this research. It gives a brief insight into structure of education in Ghana, stages of literacy development, areas of child development, importance of rhymes and songs, ways of teaching rhymes and songs and research on rhymes and songs.

#### 2.1 Educational Structure in Ghana

Number	Institution	Years of Completion
1	Kindergarten	2 Years
2	Primary Schools	6
3	Junior High Schools	3
4	Senior High/Vocational/Technical Schools	3
5	Post-Secondary Colleges	3
6	Polytechnics	3
7	Universities/ Tertiary Institutions*	2/3/4

\*Tertiary Institutions: Diploma Programmes depending on entering requirement can either be two or three years. First degree is four years, Master of Arts, Master of Science and Master of Education is one year. Master of Philosophy is two years and the full-time for Doctor of Philosophy degree is between a minimum of two years and four to five years maximum.

Sekyere (1994) stated that, the Ghana Education Service established by Act 506 of 1995 is responsible for the coordination of the approved national policies and programmes relating to pre-tertiary education. All public and private basic and senior high schools operate under the

Ghana Education Service while all tertiary institutions operate under the National Council for Tertiary Education established by Act 454 of 1993.

According to Sekyere (1994) the Ghana Education Act; 2008, Act 778 states that, the system of education shall be organized in three progressive levels to be known as Basic Education, second Cycle Education and Tertiary Education. The basic level of education shall consist of two years of kindergarten education, six years of primary education and three years of junior high school education. The second cycle level of education shall consist of four (now three years) years of senior high school education, technical, vocational, business and agricultural education, or appropriate apprenticeship training of not less than one year. The tertiary education shall consist of education provided by a university, polytechnic or college of education established by an act of parliament or accredited by the national accreditation board. Each level of education where appropriate, must include provision of distance learning programmes. In addition to subsection (1) to (5), there shall be a system of non-formal functional and life-long educational programmes. The Ministry of Education and the District assemblies may establish open colleges at the district level. The open colleges and lifelong educational colleges shall also provide avenues for skills training and formal education as determined by legislative instrument.

The academic year usually runs from 1st September to 31st August, while at the tertiary level it runs from August to May. The courses taught at the primary or basic school level include English Language, Ghanaian languages and culture, ICT, mathematics, environmental studies, social studies, and French as an optional subject, integrated or general science, pre-vocational skills and pre-technical skills, religious and moral education, and physical activities such as Ghanaian music and dance, and physical education. There is no certificate of completion at the

end of primary school. Certification however starts from Junior High School up to the tertiary level.

## **2.2 Stages of Literacy Development**

Literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and produce communication in a variety of forms. Neilson (2017) pointed out that, literacy is the ability to read, view, write, design, speak, and listen in a way that allows you to communicate effectively. The power of literacy lies not just in the ability to read and write but also in a person's ability and capacity to apply these skills to effectively connect, interpret and discern the intricacies of the world in which they live. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines literacy as “ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. According to Alexander (1997) the development of literacy occurs across the lifespan of the individual from ‘womb to tomb’. It is important to view literacy across such a lifespan developmental framework and in turn to consider and conceptualize a definition of literacy from a broad and comprehensive viewpoint while giving due cognizance to the crucial early years of literacy development. “Experts in literacy and child development have discovered that if children know eight Nursery rhymes by heart by the time they are four years old, they are usually among the best readers by the time they are eight.” Fox (2001).

Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (2012) outlined that, the Stages of Reading Development is a continuum that explains how pupils progress as readers. These stages are based on the students' experience and not their age or grade level. Knowing these stages is helpful

when developing materials for specific types of readers. Mooney (1998) pointed out that; the stages of child reading development are emergent readers, early readers, transitional readers and fluent readers. According to Mooney (1998), emergent readers need enriching and enjoyable experiences with books, especially picture books. Pupils can become comfortable with books even before they can read independently; recognizing letters and words and even language patterns. They are able to work with concepts of print and are at the beginning stages of developing the ability to focus attention on letter-sound relationships. Sharing books, extending stories, relating experiences to both print and pictures, and guiding students to read, helps children begin to make predictions about what they are reading.

Mooney (1998) pointed out that early readers are able to use several strategies to predict a word, often using pictures to confirm predictions. They can discuss the background of the story to better understand the actions in the story and the message the story carries. It is this time in the reader's development that the cueing systems are called upon significantly, so they must pay close attention to the visual cues and language patterns, and read for meaning. It is a time when reading habits of risk-taking and of predicting and confirming words while keeping the meaning in mind are established.

According to Mooney (1998), transitional readers often like to read books in a series as a comprehension strategy; the shared characters, settings, and events support their reading development. They read at a good pace; reading rate is one sign of a child's over-all comprehension. At this stage, children generally have strategies to figure out most words but continue to need help with understanding increasingly more difficult text.

Mooney (1998) noted that, fluent readers are confident in their understandings of text and how text works, and they are reading independently. The teacher focuses on students' competence in using strategies to integrate the cueing systems. Students are maintaining meaning through longer and more complex stretches of language. An effective reader has come to understand text as something that influences people's ideas.

Wolf (2008) argued that, literacy is not something that just happens. It requires instructional practice and this learning occurs across discrete stages. The child often needs heartfelt encouragement from teachers and parents to make an effort at more difficult reading material. Wolf (2008) proposed five stages of reading development which are: The emerging pre-reader; typically between six months to six years old. This stage arises from years of perception, increasing conceptual, social development and cumulative exposures to oral and written language. The learner, learn from a full range of multiple sounds, words, concepts images, stories, exposure to print, literary materials and plain talking.

According to Wolf (2008), the novice reader; typically between six to seven years old learns the relationship between letters and sounds and between printed and spoken words. The child starts to read simple text containing high frequency words and phonically regular words and uses emerging skills and insights to sound out new syllable words. Wolf (2008) pointed out that, the decoding readers; typically between seven to nine years old, read simple familiar stories and selections with increasing fluency. This is done by consolidating the basic decoding elements, sight vocabulary, and meaning in the reading of familiar stories and selections.

Wolf (2008) again stressed that, the fluent, comprehending reader; typically between nine and fifteen years old learn new ideas in order to gain new knowledge, to experience new attitudes and to explore issues from one or more perspectives. There is a systematic study of word meaning and learners are guided to react to texts through discussions, answering questions, writing and more. Listening comprehension is done at this stage. The reader builds up collections of knowledge and is poised to learn from every source. The expert reader; typically from sixteen years and older, begins to read with attentiveness. By this stage, the learner is reading widely from a broad range of complex materials, both expository and narrative, with a variety of viewpoints. The degree to which expert reading changes over the course of our adult lives depends largely on what we read and how we read it. According to Wolf (2008) the end of reading development does not exist, it is a life time experience.

Most children follow a similar pattern and sequence of reading behaviours as they learn how to read from print awareness to pretend reading to identifying alphabet letters, and to beginning reading. There are distinct stages of development across this continuum of learning to read and there are specific reading behaviours that can be identified at each of these stages. Researchers have used various labels and terms to identify the stages of reading development, but the literature indicates there are five stages of learning to read according to Chall (1983), Dorn and Soffos (2001); Fountas and Pinnel (1996); Snow, Burns and Griffin (1998). These development stages of learning to read give teachers an estimate, based on observation of reading behaviours, of each pupils' beginning instructional level. An understanding of the development stages of learning to read and how these stages fall allow a continuum of learning is helpful, especially at



the beginning of the school year. According to Shonkoff and Philips (2000), it is well known however, that developmental growth whether physical, emotional or cognitive, is uneven and is greatly influenced by a child's environment and experiences. Teachers of Kindergarten pupils need to be careful not to associate a child's intellectual ability with his or her developmental stage.

Krebs (2010) pointed out that, without an effective investment and commitment, our words become unintelligent words and begins to show other manners of significant beyond the realm of literal meaning and correspondence. The four or five year old needs to develop communication skills that will enable him or her express emotions, thoughts and actions in various ways. He or she needs to be engaged in play as a means to develop the listening and expressive language skills and also skills in reading and writing while exploring the environment and in books. Language development is essential for both oral and written communication. It is the major tool for organizing and interpreting information obtained from the senses. As an essential part of daily living, language plays an important role in daily communication. The development of the child, as an individual and as a member of society is dependent upon his or her ability to think clearly and express his or her thought effectively in language. The child's language development starts from birth to the child's cries, babbling sounds and body language. Literacy behaviors and skills follow a developmental progression through particular stages. These stages are neither exclusive of or isolated from one another. Even though movement through the stages is likely to be much slower for children with complex learning challenges such as deaf-blindness or multiple disabilities, the behaviors and skills described in each stage are fundamental, regardless of age.

Families, caregivers, educators and therapists share the responsibility of implementing strategies designed and adapted to move children along the continuum of Literacy Development.

Winter (2006) pointed out that Kindergarten is the time when, for most pupils, formal reading instruction begins. Learning to read, however, starts at home before children ever enter school. Through conversation with adults, word play, songs, rhymes and exposure to books, children acquire a well-developed oral vocabulary, a good understanding of sound patterns of language, some basic knowledge of print concepts, and motivation to learn, all of which help develop into successful readers. Nursery rhymes are the basic foundation to the development of language skills and it is therefore necessary to prepare pupils towards formal reading through effective teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten.

### **2.3 Areas of Child Development**

Davis, Fruehling and Oldham (1989) identified four areas of child development which are physical and motor development, cognitive and mental development, social and moral development and affective or emotional development. These areas are interrelated and development in all of them is influenced by both heredity and environment. In their studies, psychologists try to determine not only how people develop, but why they develop as they do. They seek to answer the 'how and why' not only in a general way to determine basic rules governing everyone's development but also in specific terms to explain a particular individual's development.

According to Santrock (2009) development is the pattern of biological, cognitive and socio-emotional processes that begins at conception and continues through the life span. The pattern of child development is complex because it is the product of several processes: biological, cognitive and socio-emotional. Development can also be described in terms of periods. Biological processes produce changes in the child's body and underlie brain development, height and weight gains, motor skills, and puberty's hormonal changes. Cognitive processes involve the changes in the child's thinking, intelligence, and language. Cognitive developmental process enables a growing child to memorize a poem, imagine how to solve a mathematics problem, come up with a creative strategy, or speak meaningfully connected sentences. Socio-emotional processes involve changes in the child's relationships with other people, changes in emotion, and changes in personality. Parents' nurturance toward their children, a boy's aggressive attack on a peer, a girl's development of assertiveness and an adolescent's feeling of joy after getting good grades all reflect socio-emotional processes in development.

Santrock (2009) pointed out that, periods of development in infancy extends from birth to eighteen to twenty four months. It is a time of extreme dependence on adults. Many activities are just beginning such as language development, symbolic thought, sensorimotor coordination and social learning. Early childhood extends from the end of infancy to about five years. During this period, children become self-sufficient, develop school readiness skills such as learning to follow instructions and identify letters and spend many hours with peers. First grade typically marks the end of early childhood. Middle and late childhood extends from at six to eleven years of age. Children master the fundamental skills of reading, writing and calculating; achievement becomes a more central theme, and self-control increase. In this period, children interact more with the

wider social world beyond their family. Adolescence involves the transition from childhood to adulthood. It begins around age ten to twelve and ends around eighteen to twenty one years. Adolescence starts with rapid physical changes, including height and weight gains and development of sexual functions. Adolescents intensely pursue independence and seek their own identity. Their thought becomes more abstract, logical and idealistic. The interplay of these processes produces the periods of human development.

Santrock (2009) argued that, the issue regarding whether development is influenced primarily by nature; organism's biological inheritance or by nurture; an organism's environmental experiences, depends on how different authors look at the two factors from their own perspective. The "nature" proponents claimed biological inheritance is the most influence on development and the "nurture" proponents also claimed environmental experiences are the most important. In the classroom situations, caregivers and teachers can help the child develop his or her talent, they also provide the enabling environment for learning to take place and that is why the children are in school. And this is very important especially at the formidable stages of the child development around three to eight years where learning is faster than any other stage in child's life. As the child grows, he or she imitates the sounds around him or her with his or her own baby talk. The child continues to look at pictures, play with and talk to or talk about things around him or her. As the child begins to grasp things, he or she naturally scribbles with anything anywhere. It is through language that children are able to communicate with each other and with adults. Therefore it is the duty of the early Childhood Development Educators to create situations which encourage and help the child to gain experience through a variety of listening, speaking, reading and writing activities using a variety of materials.

Stewart (2017) stated that, the early childhood years are filled with staggering growth and development. There are four main areas of development that occur all at the same time. These stages are physical development, cognitive development, social development and emotional development. According to Stewart (2017) during the physical development in the first years of growth, young children are physically developing at a rapid pace. There is both large motor (crawling, walking, running) and fine motor development (eye-hand coordination, cutting, writing, weaving) happening all at once. Physical development is therefore rapid following birth as children learn to control large and then small muscle groups. The sequence of stages is important, and providing an environment children can physically explore while they are growing is critical to all ages.

Stewart (2017) pointed out that, during cognitive development, young children are always processing information about their world. They do so through both structured and unstructured activities, play, and interaction with others. From experiences such as these, young children develop their understanding and abilities in such areas as simple calculation, science, language and art. The mind of a young child absorbs information like a sponge. Cognitive development therefore includes thinking, information processing, problem solving, remembering, decision making, understanding concepts, and overall intelligence.

Stewart (2017), again pointed out that, during social development, understanding how to communicate, share, make friends, and get along with others is just the tip of the ice berg when it comes to social development in the first five years of life. According to Stewart (2017), during

the emotional development, the building blocks for a positive self-esteem and self-confidence start in early childhood. Young children are also learning how to manage and appropriately express their own emotions such as fear, sadness, anger, and happiness. Social and emotional developments often come hand in hand since how a child fairs socially often impacts his or her emotional well-being. Social and emotional development is critical to all other areas of development, because how children perceive their world; their ability to give and accept love, be confident and secure, show empathy, be curious and persistent, and relate well to others, affects how the brain physically develops and how they learn and process information.

These four areas of child development work together into developing the language of the growing child which is most intensive during the first three years while the brain is developing rapidly and is stimulated most by exposure to sights, sounds, and being talked to. Diamond (2017) cited Chomsky (1968) a pioneering linguist who put forth an idea called language acquisition device or LAD for short. The LAD is a hypothetical tool hardwired into the brain that helps children rapidly learn and understand language. Chomsky (1968) used it to explain just how amazing children are able to acquire language abilities as well as accounting for the innate understanding of grammar and syntax all children possess. Chomsky (1968) believes that children are born with an inherited ability to learn any human language. He claims that certain linguistic structures which children use so accurately must be already imprinted on the child's mind. Chomsky (1968) believed that, every child has a language acquisition device which encodes the major principles of a language and its grammatical structures into the child's brain. Children have then only to learn new vocabulary and apply the syntactic structures from the language acquisition device to form sentences.

According to Annoh (1997) Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development suggests that children move through four different stages of mental development which is the qualitative changes which take place in a child's mental make-up between birth and maturity. This theory focuses not only on understanding how children acquire knowledge, but also on understanding the nature of intelligence. As children interact with the world around them, they continually add new knowledge, build upon existing knowledge, and adapt previously held ideas to accommodate new information. Cognitive development involves changes in cognitive process and abilities. In Piaget's view, early cognitive development involves processes based upon actions and later progresses to changes in mental operations.

According to Piaget (1977), the Sensorimotor Stage; Ages: from birth to two years; Major Characteristics and Developmental Changes: The infant knows the world through their movements and sensations. Children learn about the world through basic actions such as sucking, grasping, looking, and listening. Infants learn that things continue to exist even though they cannot be seen (object permanence). They are separate beings from the people and objects around them. They realize that their actions can cause things to happen in the world around them. During this earliest stage of cognitive development, infants and toddlers acquire knowledge through sensory experiences and manipulating objects. Children go through a period of dramatic growth and learning. As kids interact with their environment, they are continually making new discoveries about how the world works. The cognitive development that occurs during this period takes place over a relatively short period of time and involves a great deal of growth. Children not only learn how to perform physical actions such as crawling and walking, they also

learn a great deal about language from the people with whom they interact. Piaget also broke this stage down into a number of different sub-stages. It is during the final part of the sensorimotor stage that early representational thought emerges. Piaget believed that developing object permanence or object constancy, the understanding that objects continue to exist even when they cannot be seen, was an important element at this point of development. By learning that objects are separate and distinct entities and that they have an existence of their own outside of individual perception, children are then able to begin to attach names and words to objects.

According to Piaget (1977), the Preoperational Stage; Ages: two to seven years; Major Characteristics and Developmental Changes: Children begin to think symbolically and learn to use words and pictures to represent objects. Children at this stage tend to be egocentric and struggle to see things from the perspective of others. While they are getting better with language and thinking, they still tend to think about things in very concrete terms. The foundations of language development may have been laid during the previous stage, but it is the emergence of language that is one of the major hallmarks of the pre-operational stage of development. Children become much more skilled at pretend play during this stage of development, yet still think very concretely about the world around them. At this stage, kids learn through pretend play but still struggle with logic and taking the point of view of other people. They also often struggle with understanding the idea of constancy. For example, a researcher might take a lump of clay, divide it into two equal pieces, and then give a child the choice between two pieces of clay to play with. One piece of clay is rolled into a compact ball while the other is smashed into a flat pancake shape. Since the flat shape looks larger, the pre-operational child will likely choose that piece even though the two pieces are exactly the same size.



Piaget (1977) pointed out that, the Concrete Operational Stage; Ages: seven to eleven Years; Major Characteristics and Developmental Changes: During this stage, children begin to thinking logically about concrete events. They begin to understand the concept of conservation; that the amount of liquid in a short, wide cup is equal to that in a tall, skinny glass, for example. Their thinking becomes more logical and organized, but still very concrete. Children begin using inductive logic, or reasoning from specific information to a general principle. While children are still very concrete and literal in their thinking at this point in development, they become much more adept and using logic. The egocentrism of the previous stage begins to disappear as kids become better at thinking about how other people might view a situation. While thinking becomes much more logical during the concrete operational stage, it can also be very rigid. Kids at this point in development tend to struggle with abstract and hypothetical concepts. During this stage, children also become less egocentric and begin to think about how other people might think and feel. Kids in the concrete operational stage also begin to understand that their thoughts are unique to them and that not everyone else necessarily shares their thoughts, feelings, and opinions.

According to Piaget (1977), the Formal Operational Stage Ages: twelve and Up; Major Characteristics and Developmental Changes: At this stage, the adolescent or young adult begins to think abstractly and reason about hypothetical problems. Abstract thought emerges. Teens begin to think more about moral, philosophical, ethical, social, and political issues that require theoretical and abstract reasoning. Begin to use deductive logic, or reasoning from a general principle to specific information. The final stage of Piaget's theory involves an increase in logic,

the ability to use deductive reasoning, and an understanding of abstract ideas. At this point, people become capable of seeing multiple potential solutions to problems and think more scientifically about the world around them. The ability to thinking about abstract ideas and situations is the key hallmark of the formal operational stage of cognitive development. The ability to systematically plan for the future and reason about hypothetical situations are also critical abilities that emerge during this stage. It is important to note that Piaget did not view children's intellectual development as a quantitative process; that is, kids do not just add more information and knowledge to their existing knowledge as they get older. Instead, Piaget suggested that there is a qualitative change in how children think as they gradually progress through these four stages. A child at age seven do not just have more information about the world than he did at age two; there is a fundamental change in how he thinks about the world.

Kendra (2017) pointed out that, to better understand some of the things that happen during cognitive development, it is important first to examine a few of the important ideas and concepts introduced by Piaget. The following are some of the factors that influence how children learn and grow: Schemas; A schema describes both the mental and physical actions involved in understanding and knowing. Schemas are categories of knowledge that help us to interpret and understand the world. In Piaget's view, a schema includes both a category of knowledge and the process of obtaining that knowledge. As experiences happen, this new information is used to modify, add to, or change previously existing schemas. For example, a child may have a schema about a type of animal, such as a dog. If the child's sole experience has been with small dogs, a child might believe that all dogs are small, furry, and have four legs. Suppose then that the child encounters an enormous dog. The child will take in this new information, modifying the

previously existing schema to include these new observations. Assimilation; the process of taking in new information into our already existing schemas is known as assimilation. The process is somewhat subjective because we tend to modify experiences and information slightly to fit in with our pre-existing beliefs. In the example above, seeing a dog and labeling it "dog" is a case of assimilating the animal into the child's dog schema. Accommodation; another part of adaptation involves changing or altering our existing schemas in light of new information, a process known as accommodation. Accommodation involves modifying existing schemas, or ideas, as a result of new information or new experiences. New schemas may also be developed during this process. Equilibration; Piaget believed that all children try to strike a balance between assimilation and accommodation, which is achieved through a mechanism Piaget called equilibration. As children progress through the stages of cognitive development, it is important to maintain a balance between applying previous knowledge (assimilation) and changing behaviour to account for new knowledge (accommodation). Equilibration helps explain how children can move from one stage of thought into the next.

According to Kendra (2017), one of the most important elements to remember of Piaget's theory is that it takes the view that creating knowledge and intelligence is an inherently active process. "I find myself opposed to the view of knowledge as a passive copy of reality," Piaget explained. "I believe that knowing an object means acting upon it, constructing systems of transformations that can be carried out on or with this object. Knowing reality means constructing systems of transformations that correspond, more or less adequately, to reality." Piaget's theory of cognitive development helped add to our understanding of children's intellectual growth. It also stressed

that children were not merely passive recipients of knowledge. Instead, kids are constantly investigating and experimenting as they build their understanding of how the world works.

## **2.4 Importance of Rhymes and Songs to Young Children**

Adotey (2012) defined a rhyme as a repetition of similar sounds in two or more words, most often in the final syllables of lines in poems and songs. It is also referred to as short poem, such as a rhyming couplet or other brief rhyming poem such as nursery rhymes. Rhyming is partly seems to be enjoyed simply as repetitive pattern that is pleasant to hear. It also serves as powerful mnemonics device, facilitating memorization. Two words rhyme if their final stressed vowel and all following sounds are identical. Poets use rhyme in set patterns, a structural element for specific poetic forms such as ballads, sonnets and rhyming couplets. Using rhymes and songs is a great way to help young children develop their language and communication skills.

Jason (2012) stressed that, the word ‘rhyme’ can be used in specific and general sense. In the specific sense, two words rhyme if their final stressed vowel and all the following sounds are identical; two lines of poetry rhyme if their final strong positions are filled with rhyming words. A rhyme in the strict sense is also called perfect rhyme. Examples are sight and flight, design and gain, madness and sadness. A perfect rhyme, also called a full rhyme, exact rhyme or true rhyme is when the later part of the word or phrase is identical sounding to that of another. The following conditions are required for a rhyme to be perfect. i. The vowel sound in both words must be identical such as ‘sky’ and ‘high’. ii. The articulation that precedes the vowel sound must differ. ‘Leave’ and ‘believe’ is an imperfect rhyme, whereas ‘green’ and ‘spleen’ is perfect

rhyme. General rhyme refers to various kinds of phonetic similarity between words, and to the use of such similar-sounding words in an organized verse.

According to Schon (2008), consistent mapping of linguistic and musical information would enhance facilitation of learning with a longer-lasting effect in memory. Nursery rhymes constitute an amazing source for language learning and speech therapy, because, they represent some of the fundamental aspects of each language and their universal presence. All languages have nursery rhymes and many languages; have the same indicators the huge impact on language learning for the young child.

King (2012) noted that, children learn more in their first eight years than at any other stage in their lives. Songs and nursery rhymes give children the chance to develop language and learning foundations needed for good reading, writing and literacy later on. Rhyme is important in developing phonemic or hearing awareness in children. Nursery rhymes are part of children's literacy skills and their value to children's cognitive development cannot be under-estimated. Nursery rhymes therefore help children paint pictures in their minds. They help children how to articulate words, modulate their voices and enunciate clearly. The words used in nursery rhymes and songs help children develop language comprehension skills because, they teach kids to associate words with people, objects, and events in their lives.

Ross (2012) claimed that, nursery rhymes are fun and engaging for young children and provide a bonding expenditure when they are read together. There is a sense of togetherness that nursery

rhymes provide. It is used to get attention of nursery pupils. Rhymes and songs therefore prepare children at Kindergarten for formal education.

Sayakhan (2014) proved beyond doubt that, nursery rhymes in particular, form one of the foundations of children's as well as adults' literacy heritage. The simple rhythm and rhyme of the language, the often predictable structure of the narrative and the appealing characters combine to produce memorable language models for young children. Rhymes therefore help us to learn to play with words. They tune our ears to all the sounds in the word. By hearing different sounds, we learn how sounds combine and blend together to form a word. When saying nursery rhymes, we tend to speak more slowly and clearly. This is great, because it means that children have a chance to identify the words and the way they are formed.

Yakota (2010) pointed out that, children delight in the opportunities to chant the catchy phrases, mimic the nonsense words, and recite the lines endlessly. This pleasure in nursery rhymes translate into developing many reading, writing and oral language skills such as naturally segmenting songs in spoken words and playing with real and nonsense words. Songs and rhymes therefore have a hugely positive impact on a child's language and literacy development.

Clarkson (1911) argued that, nursery rhymes have been a part of childhood for centuries. Spanning the generations, children and adults continue to delight in their poetry and melodies. Educators consider these rhymes as traditional literature for music and language instruction. Nursery rhymes have a long tradition in many countries. Adults still remember the short verses their parents have told them when they were children. So these rhymes are part of the universal

culture. In English lessons, Ghanaian pupils in pre-school also have to learn about the universal culture so that they get an impression of children's life in foreign countries. Cultural awareness is part of the curriculum. Nursery Rhymes are important in Ghanaian children's life. So, Ghanaian children have to learn about it. Rhyme, rhythm and chunks are useful for language learning. The rhymes help the children to get to know the English sentence structure.

According to Opie (2002), lullabies come under the heading of nursery rhymes, that comprehensive collection of songs and verses which assist grown-ups in pacifying and entertaining children from birth to the age about five years. Nursery rhymes and counting rhymes have a special place in this learning process. Nursery rhymes constitute an amazing source for language learning and speech therapy, because they represent some of the fundamental aspects of each language, and their universal presence –all languages have nursery rhymes and many languages have the same –indicates the huge universal impact on language learning for the young child. The fundamental aspects of nursery rhymes and counting rhymes are the rhythm and the typical phrase melody of a specific language, the repetition of rhymes, of sounds and consonants, the alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables. The “non serious” context of nursery rhymes and counting rhymes with nonsense words included is another important aspect of their specific role in learning and in therapy. They are learned for fun and help teach language skills to children.

Volker-Geyer (2001) admitted that, rhyme is distinguished from prose primarily because of its distinct patterns or forms. The variety of patterns in turn, distinguishes one form of rhyme from another. He pointed out some few forms of rhymes teachers commonly use in kindergarten class:

**Narrative Rhymes**- Narrative rhymes tell stories. For example

‘lion, a lion, it has a big head and a very small waist’.

**Counting rhymes** – They help pupils to count such as ‘one, two, three, four, five  
pounding fufu near the door, six seven eight nine ten, lunch is ready don’t be late’.

**Clapping rhymes** - They are action rhymes. The children engage in vigorous activities  
such as stamping of feet, clapping hands, knocking and cocking their heads.

**Lyric rhymes** – They are melodic or songlike, generally it is descriptive, focusing on  
feelings, or image such as “Rain Rain go away” and “Fox Fox Fox”.

**Limericks**- They were humorous rhymes that were popularized in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Lear,  
(1846).

**Concrete rhymes**- They are written or printed on the page in a shape representing the  
rhymes subject. It is a form of rhyme that is meant to be seen even more than heard and  
often does not have a rhyming scheme or a particular rhythm.

**Free verse**- It does not rhyme and lacks consistent rhythm.

**Haiku rhymes**- Haiku has a total of seventeen syllables, a line of five syllables, a line of  
seven syllables and another line of five syllables. It is a difficult type of rhyme for  
children.

**Finger-play rhymes**- It is a type of rhyme that requires manipulation of fingers to follow  
the pattern of a rhyme that is being recited.

Rhyme and songs therefore prepare children for reading readiness when use effectively. For  
children to have interest in rhymes and songs, the rhymes and the songs must be interesting and  
easy to comprehend. There should be very little new vocabulary at a time. Rhyme or song has a



lot of benefits. It enhances the learners' general language competence and plays a lot of roles of motivating learners to read and also help the child to build his or her confidence level.

Phillips (1993) pointed out that music and poetry are an essential part of foreign language learning for young learners. Poetry and music are elements of human society. They show many aspects of its culture, the relationship to the past and the ancestors, the faith, the fun and the anxieties of its people, the hopes and the view of the future. Music and poetry can change people's mood. They occur in all phases of one's life from birth to death. So they play an important role in the process of learning and using the mother tongue.

According to Phillips (1993), it is undisputable fact that, children really enjoy learning and singing songs naturally and have fun doing rhythmic activities while reciting rhymes. There are many reasons for using songs and rhymes in teaching English as a foreign language in primary schools. Children grow up with songs and rhymes and develop their first language. Apart from being the most important spoken language, songs and rhymes are the first experienced parts of communication in the children's mother tongue. They listen and react to nursery rhymes and finger games spoken and often acted by their parents. They go to sleep with lullabies sung by their closest care-givers or try to imitate little songs by babbling. So songs and rhymes give them an intimate feeling, a special connection with their human environment and influence the acquisition of their first language in an important way. Analogous to the development of the mother tongue, the following points also support foreign language acquisition: music, rhythm and rhymes produce a positive live feeling, they motivate to learn and to be active, children do not understand all words but do not feel inhibited, and rhythm supports vocabulary and structure

learning. Songs and rhymes are both means and content of foreign language acquisition. There is no gap between the language used in lessons and that used in real-life situations. Each understanding and each reacting are progresses in language learning. Songs and rhymes stimulate the hemispherical interaction. Busy with songs and rhymes the left hemisphere (vocabulary, structure of the language) and the right hemisphere (rhythm, feelings, mimic, gesture, senso-motoric etc.) work together and make learning more effective. So it is not a small wonder how quick pupils are at learning songs and rhymes. The holistic approach also means that rhymes and songs are connected with other learning and living areas like sport, literature, music and art.

Fianu (2005) pointed out that oral language skill involves the ability of the child to develop a fundamental level of fluency in the use of the English Language that would help him or her later when he or she begins to read. The activities that are used to develop these skills are basically centred on listening and speaking. Any listening and speaking activity that the child can be involved in will certainly lead to acquisition of oral language skills such as the use of rhymes and songs in the classroom. These are useful activities that the teacher can use with pupils to enable them talk both voluntarily and involuntarily.

## **2.5 Ways of teaching Rhymes and Songs**

Language is an acceptable medium through which human beings expresses their ideas and conveys information to one another. It takes the form of speech, written texts, signs, gestures and symbols which have meaning. It therefore constitutes the most critical factor in school curriculum and classroom teaching. Murphey (1992) argued that, songs and rhymes present a lot

of linguistic material in a natural linguistic context. So they support the monolingual and contextual approach in teaching a foreign language. Words in songs and rhymes are meaningful to the learner, which influences the acquisition in a positive way. In general, they use simple conversational language with a lot of repetition. Songs and rhymes are relaxing, they vary the lesson's progress, and they provide fun and action and encourage harmony within oneself and within a group. Therefore songs and rhymes stick in the learner's mind and the words and expressions used are memorized more easily. Besides, songs and rhymes provide many possibilities for constant repetition and revising as important mechanisms of the language acquisition. Pupils' motivation to learn depends on the teaching methods of the teacher and if the teacher skillfully uses songs and rhymes, the pupils usually are highly motivated. So the pupils are learning with fun and more effectively than without these forms. Even shy or slow learning children are given encouragement by singing or speaking in chorus and so they feel able to speak in a foreign language.

According to Phillips (1993), it is obvious that, rhymes are taught to practise the sounds, rhythms and stress patterns of English and in some cases to practise a structure. They connect random selection with rhythmic speaking and train the vocabulary. Example: 'Apples, peaches Action' rhymes Example: 'Jumping Jack Jump' rope rhymes. The children like rope skipping. This rhythmic activity is often connected with these simple poems. Jump rope rhymes support the acquisition of numbers or simple sentence structures. Example: Bread and butter Rhymes for special occasions Example: 'Hey-ho' for Halloween Clapping rhymes. The reciting of these very rhythmic rhymes is supported by hand clapping. Each clapping rhyme has its own pattern how to clap hands with a partner standing opposite. These rhymes support the development of a feeling

for rhythm for the language and, moreover, they train the right pronunciation of vocabulary. Example: 'A sailor went to sea, sea, sea'. Ball bouncing rhymes train the feeling for rhythm and the concentration both on reciting and ball bouncing. Example: Number one, touch your tongue. Topic rhymes Example: Take a snowball (about the topic "Winter")

Phillips (1993) claimed that, a chant is a like a song without music or a poem with a very marked rhythm. All types of short rhythmic texts or even word groups are suitable to transfer into a chant. The speaking can be supported by finger snapping, feet stamping or the use of rhythmic instruments. Words or texts spoken as chants are more memorable and motivating than normal speaking. For instance, minimal pairs can be spoken as chants to train the differences between the pronunciations of word pairs. Short dialogues in the form of a chant support the memorization of common expressions and structures.

The echo principle according to Schmid-Schönbein (2001) means that the Pupils as a group imagine they are an echo in a cave or an empty room. The teacher shouts a sequence and the students repeat the teachers' sequence. It is convenient to build up a longer structure from its end. For example (from the 'Rain, Rain Go Away') Teacher: 'Rain, rain go away'... Pupils: 'Rain, rain go away' ... Teacher: come again another day ... Pupils: come again another day ... Teacher: 'Rain, rain go away' come again another day... Pupils: 'Rain, rain go away' come again another day ... etc. It can be supported by visual aids. If there are any actions they should be done by the Pupils while learning the text because it is easier to learn them together. Longer texts can be learned verse by verse. With this strategies the children say the whole rhyme in chorus, in groups or alone and do the actions.

There are many ways of teaching rhymes and songs and one of the ways according to Phillips (1993) is that, the teacher shows the children pictures that illustrate the content of a song or a rhyme, some with gaps or mistakes. After listening, singing or reciting the children should find the mistakes or complete the pictures. If a song or a rhyme tells a story, the illustrating pictures could be cut out and mixed. The children listen to the song or rhyme and put the pictures in the right order. It can be done on the blackboard or on a handout. Before playing or singing a song or reciting a rhyme the teacher asks the children to listen for a certain word. Then they write down the number of times those words occur. To train the listening skills another possibility is to sing or recite wrong words in the texts. The children compare with their own knowledge and write down the number of mistakes. To promote reading skills and knowledge about sentence structure the teacher can copy the text from textbooks or other sources, cut it out and mix the order of words or lines. The children listen and put the lines or words in the correct order again.

## **2.6 Research on Rhymes and songs**

Anyidoho (1999) observed that learners must be given systematic instruction based on an accurate diagnosis of their individual needs throughout their lives. In the teaching of reading, there may be a heavy focus on the teaching of decoding that is associating letters with sounds for beginners. After they have grasped the skill of decoding, they still need to be guided in the processing of text at every level of their lives to acquire comprehensive skills. It is therefore necessary for children to be taken through rhymes and songs to acquire the basic listening skills to be to develop their comprehension skills.

Schön, Boyet, Moreno, Besson, Peretz and Kolinsky (2008) argued that, consistent mapping of linguistic and musical information would enhance facilitation of learning, with a longer-lasting effect in memory. There is therefore positive result of music on language and learning in general. Rhymes and songs have a special place in this learning process. Nursery rhymes constitute an amazing source for language learning and speech therapy, because they are universal and cut across every language. Every language has nursery rhymes which indicate the huge universal impact on language learning for the young child.

Bryant, Maclean, Bradley and Crossland (1990) suggested that, the roots of phonemic awareness are found in traditional rhyming and word games. Speaking, singing, and reading aloud simulate a child's understanding and use of spoken and written language. The use of nursery rhymes with young children promotes positive attitudes toward language learning and helps children to build awareness of sound patterns of language. Language and literacy development therefore is enhanced when children have the chance to interact with adults, listen and recite rhymes and songs.

Bradley and Bryant (1985) pointed out that, as children develop sensitivity to individual phonemes, build their awareness of sound patterns of language, and combine phonemes leading them to recognize new words in written texts, their reading ability improves which may lead to improved writing and spelling as stated by Strickland and Schickedanz (2004).

Bradley and Bryant (1991) found out that, nursery rhymes are a socially engaging, playful, and developmentally appropriate way for young children to hear, identify, manipulate, and

experiment with the sounds of language. Integrating nursery rhymes, jingles and chants, and other traditional literature into the early childhood curriculum contributes to a linguistically rich environment in which young children are exposed to the rich vocabulary, syntactic complexity, and decontextualized language contained within the English language. Combining tactile-kinesthetic activities in which language is intentionally explored, manipulated, and experimented within the context of nursery rhymes and literature enhances children's phonological awareness, sensitivity to rhyme and phonemes, and may stimulate phonemic skill development. This skill development contributes to the ability to read and has positive effects on reading and spelling.

Alderman and Alderman (2010) found out that children learn more in their first eight years than they do in the rest of their lives. This is a powerful time to teach them to be readers and writers. Rhyme is important in developing phonemic awareness in children. It's harder in elementary school to teach kids to read when they do not have oral support. Kids are unable to paint pictures in their heads unless they read. Rhymes and songs are repetitious and allowed children to memorize basic structures and patterns in the English language and it is therefore important that young children learn to memorize through verse.

Mudawi (2015) revealed that, using rhymes and songs for teaching students is an educational tool through which core vocabulary can be taught and understood. He had chosen girls at grade sixth as experimental group while the boys in the same group represented the control group. The study exposes the experimental group to selected rhymes and songs in teaching core vocabulary and compares their outcomes with the control group to investigate the effectiveness of using rhymes and songs as a viable strategy for teaching core vocabulary to students at the elementary

level. He argued that rhymes and songs increase learner's motivation and self-confidence while lowering their apprehension and also rhymes and songs are useful technique for imparting lexical knowledge and teaching good pronunciation to support vocabulary learning.

According to Adams (1990); Stanovich (1994) research has shown that phonemic awareness is crucial determinant of success in reading and spelling attainment of an alphabetic language. There is however a difference between phonological awareness and phonemic awareness. In this perspective, Winter (2006) pointed out that, phonological awareness is the general term for the awareness of any of the phonological characteristics of language, including syllables, initial sounds, rimes and phonemes. Phonemic awareness is a term for the awareness of small units of sound in words. Phonemes are the building blocks of words for instance; the word 'fat' comprises the phonemes /f/a/t/. It is the understanding that spoken words consists of series of individual sounds.

Yopp (1992) argued that, children who have control over the smallest units of speech are considered phonemically aware. Adams (1990) identifies five levels of phonemic awareness: i. The ability to hear rhymes and alliterations; ii. The ability to do oddity tasks; iii. The ability to blend separate sounds into words and split syllabus orally; iv. The ability to segment words orally into the component phonemes and v. The ability to manipulate phonemes by deleting or substituting the initial consonants of words. Blevins (1998) summarized the five levels of phonemic awareness as i. rhyme and alliteration; ii. oddity tasks; iii. oral blending; iv. oral segmentation and v. phonemic manipulation.



According to Schiller (2008) rhymes and songs are ready made for developing phonological sensitivity. They are used to strengthen phonological sensitivity as they are a springboard to literacy. Music is an integral part of acquiring early childhood curriculum. It plays a role in setting the tone of the children classroom, developing skills and concepts, helping children make transitions and building a sense of togetherness.

Winter (2006) Kindergarten is the time when, for most pupils, formal reading instruction begins and according to Torgesen and Mathes (1998), nursery rhymes help children build phonological awareness, including rhyme awareness and phonemic awareness. Children's knowledge of rhyme awareness emerges at a relatively early age, upon beginning Kindergarten. Pre-school children develop an awareness of rhyme through chants, songs, word games and predominantly through nursery rhymes. Rhyming words are a common feature of nursery rhymes. Through instructions, pupils can learn to identify written words with similar endings by hearing and reciting nursery rhymes.

Lombardo (2005) pointed out that, when children listen to and recite nursery rhymes, they learn about rhyming words. Rhymes and songs therefore according to Danielson (2000) provide children the opportunity to explore language, to accurately read effortlessly words they have heard and seen repeatedly, and most important of all, to discover and to be able manipulate the smallest units of sounds comprising speech. Exploring rhymes in an enjoyable and engaging way provide knowledge and skills that can later help successful readers and writers.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

Kothari (2004) pointed out that, research methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the study. It involves procedures of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena so as to solve a problem. This chapter explains the methods used to collect the data deemed necessary for the study. It comprises the research area, the research design and the population, sampling procedures and sample size. It specifically indicates the data collection strategies and instruments used in this study which are direct observation and guided interview.

#### 3.1 The research area

This research study was targeted to cover Kindergarten schools in the Kwashiekuma Circuit in the Ga West Municipality in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. This is because my focus was on the native speakers of Ewe language who are learning English as a second language in basic schools. The Kindergarten school that was selected for this study was Agorteman Municipal Assembly Kindergarten School in the Ga West Municipality in Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Agorteman, popularly called Agortikope, is an Ewe satellite farming community located in Adjen Kotoku catchment area in the Ga West Municipality. Agorteman M/A Basic School was established in the year 2000 by World Vision Ghana, Ga West ADP (Accra Development Project), as an Early Childhood Development Centre, this was to help promote the early childhood educational needs of the children living in the locality. The school was established through a joint community and stakeholder help. The school over the years has evolved into a

basic school to provide basic education to the children in the community to prevent them from walking long distances to access the same education in other communities.

### **3.2 The Research design**

This study employed qualitative research methods to gather relevant data. Qualitative research according to Hair, Bush and Ortinau (2003) refers to selected research methods used in exploratory research designs to gain preliminary insights into decision problems and opportunities. It focuses on collection of detailed amounts of primary data from relatively small samples of respondents by asking questions or observing behavior. With good interpersonal communication, researcher can either use open-ended questions that allow for in-depth probing of the respondents' initial responses or specific observational techniques that allow for analysis of behavior. Qualitative data can be collected within relatively short periods of time. This technique enables me to gather relevant data to vividly describe each finding for ease interpretation. The data collection instruments used in this study are direct observation and semi-structured interview.

### **3.3 Research population**

Kish (1967) stated that, the first step in the selection of a sample is to consider sampling design. It denotes all the stages and procedures involved in reaching the respondents. If the population is heterogeneous in terms of its social characteristics, there is the need to include more elements in the sample in order to lower the variance. In a classroom situation, the units under consideration is most often homogenous hence, the use of case study to conduct an in-depth study to find out the answers to the research questions. According to Tellis (1997), a case study approach is

considered a specific research strategy for triangulation, which allows for detailed examination of a specific event or phenomenon from a multiple data collection instruments such as observation and interview. According to Babbie (2007), a case study is an in-depth examination of a single instance of some social phenomenon. This type of research is performed on a relatively few individuals rather than a sample of a whole population. Research population according to Babbie (2007), is the theoretically specified aggregation of the elements in a study. It is defined as all members of any well-defined class of people, events, objects or observations of interest in a study. It is therefore, that aggregation of elements from which the sample is actually selected. In view of this, Castillo (2008) defined research population as a large well-defined group of people having similar features. There are two main types of population which are the accessible population and the target population. Aray (2002) pointed out that, accessible population is the group of respondents that are within the reach of the researcher and to which findings can be generalized. The accessible population for this study was kindergarten pupils at Agorteman M/A Basic School in Kwashiekuma Circuit in Ga West Municipality in Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The targeted population for this study comprises all the native speakers of Ewe Language who are learning English as a second language at Agorteman M/A Basic School.

### **3.4 Sampling technique**

Alhassan (2006) outlined sampling as the process of selecting of a portion of the population to represent the entire population to obtain data of the target population. Purposive sampling technique was employed to select the sample size for this study. Six teachers were selected for semi structured interview and twenty Kindergarten pupils were observed. I have chosen

purposive sampling because; it provided the needed data that could make the research work successful. It was also easy to work with. The choice of this sampling was based on time factor, cost, and manageable size, destructiveness of the observation and also to ensure accuracy. (Owu-Ewie 2000).

### **3.5 Sample size**

According to Hair et al (2003), a sample is a randomly selected group of people or objects from the overall membership pool of a target population and a sample size is the determined total number of sampling units needed to be representative of the defined target population; that is the number of elements that have to be included in a drawn sample to ensure appropriate representation of the defined target population. A research sample is therefore a careful selected subset of a unit that comprises the population of the study. The target population of this study is Kindergarten of Agorteman Municipal Assembly Basic School. Due to inadequate resources, and time constraint, I selected six teachers for semi structured interview and twenty pupils for direct observation. This gave a total of twenty six participants. Agorteman Municipal Assembly Kindergarten was selected for the research because it is a school that is located in a high populated area with a very low school population. I used purposive sampling technique in this study. This is a type of non-probability sampling that involves the sample drawn from a selection based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study. I relied on my own judgment when choosing members of the population to participate in the study. I selected this sample because, it was readily available and easy to use as I can draw on relationship to which I have easy access.

### **3.6 Data collection protocol**

According to Brown (2012), a data collection protocol describes the procedures for collecting and recording data, its management and administrative details. It outlines systematic procedures to ensure that high quality data is collected. A typical data collection protocol addresses these issues such as the purpose of the field observation, how the sample that is, participants, observation sites, will be selected, data collection schedule, what to bring such as clipboard, incentives, pens, consent forms, impartiality, privacy and safety, when and how to submit data once its collected.

In conducting this research, I obtained a written permission from the Ga West Municipal Director of Education to permit me to conduct a research at Agorteman Municipal Assembly Basic School. I attached a memorandum to the permission letter which was signed by the Circuit Supervisor of Kwashiekuma Circuit of the municipality. The letter was sent on 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2017 and I was called for discussion on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2017 and the permission was granted on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2017.

### **3.7 Ethical issues**

Walton (2017) pointed out that, research that involves human participants raises unique and complex ethical, legal, social and political issues that are raised when people are involved as participants in research. There are three objectives in research ethics. The objective to protect human participants, the objective to ensure that research is conducted in a way that serves interests of individuals, groups and society as a whole and the objective to examine specific research activities and projects for their ethical soundness, looking at issues such as the

management of risk, protection of confidentiality and the process of informed consent. Research involving vulnerable persons, which may include children, person with developmental or cognitive disabilities, persons who are institutionalized, the homeless or those without legal status, also raises unique issues in any research context. Research ethicist everywhere today are challenged by issues that reflect global concerns in other domains, such as the conduct of research in developing countries, the limits of research involving genetic material and protection of privacy in light of advances in technology and internet capabilities.

For these reasons I introduced myself to the staff of Agorteman Municipal Assembly Basic School and informed them about my intention to conduct a study at the school and I assured them of the confidentiality of the information given. I also showed them the permission obtained from the education office to conduct a research in the school. I then established a good rapport with them and assured them of voluntary participation, and convinced them that the information obtain is solely for research only and it will not bring any harm to any respondent. We then fixed a date that was convenient to all of us to conduct the semi-structured interview and the direct observation to solicit information to answer my research questions. All the six teachers I contacted for the research willingly agreed to be my respondents. The direct observation was conducted from 18<sup>th</sup> September, 2017 to 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2017; that is eight days and the interview was conducted on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2017. The two qualitative methods I used for the data collection were direct observation and semi-structured interview.

### **3.8 Data collection strategies**

I employed direct observation and semi-structured interview in this study. Using more than one data collection instrument for the same research is referred to as triangulation in qualitative research. Cohen and Manion (1986), defined triangulation as an attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one stand point. It involves using multiple data sources in an investigation to produce understanding. This denotes that a single data collection method cannot adequately study a phenomena and using multiple methods can help facilitate deeper understanding. According to Denzin (1978) and Patton (1999), triangulation is checking out the consistency of findings generated by different data collection methods. It involves cross-checking multiple data sources and collection to study vividly a problem at hand so as to generate new knowledge, build on exiting knowledge, or verify exiting body of knowledge to better understand a phenomena. The purpose of this multi method approach to data collection and analysis is to increase credibility and validity of the results. It is worth noting that each of the two research techniques used in this research has its own merits and demerits. Using the two data collection techniques together therefore serves as reinforcement to each other and yielded a more reliable result than it would have been the case if only one of the techniques were used.

The target population of the study was the pupils of Agorteman Municipal Assembly Basic School and I selected six teachers and twenty pupils of the school as my sample size. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling technique to select the sample size for the study. This technique enables me to select reliable data to address the purpose of the research.



The data collection instruments that were employed were direct observation and semi-structured interview.

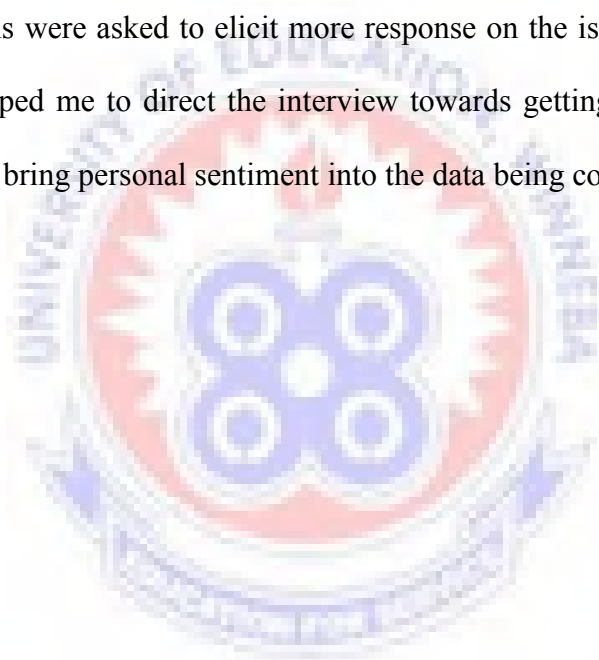
### **3.9 Direct Observation**

I used direct observation to obtain data on teaching rhymes and songs at Kindergarten. This data collecting technique involves the direct observation of phenomena in their natural settings. I examined the participants in naturally occurring situations during the study. The purpose was to observe both teachers' and pupils' participation in rhyme lessons in order to identify problems encounter during teaching and reciting of rhymes and songs and how the teaching of rhymes and songs can be taught effectively at the Kindergarten. The observation took place at the kindergarten classroom in its natural setting. This enables me to take lengthy and descriptive notes of what was happening during the teaching of rhymes and songs in the classroom. I had the opportunity to observe lessons on the language and literacy as well as the other subjects taught at the kindergarten. The direct observation also involved interactions with the pupils to assess their interest in rhymes and songs, their fluency and communicative competence. This instrument was chosen because it gave me the opportunity to interact with the participants in their natural setting. The direct observation helped me watch carefully how rhymes and songs are taught at the kindergarten class and the problems kindergarten teachers face when teaching the rhymes and songs. The direct observation then helped me to come out with the real problems in teaching and learning of rhymes and songs and how rhymes and songs can be taught effectively at the kindergarten.

### **3.10 Semi-structured Interview**

The semi-structured interview used for this study enables me to obtain the needed data in a face to face interaction with the teachers interviewed. According to Babbie (2007), an interview is a data collection encounter in which a researcher asks questions of a respondent. The interview may be conducted by face to face interaction or by telephone. According to Hair et al (2003), in-depth interview is a formalized process in which a well-trained interviewer asks a respondent a set of semi-structured questions in a face to face setting. Owu-Ewie (2012) argued that interviews are purposeful conversations with respondents in order to obtain information to answer a research questions. According to Alhassan (2012), an interview is a two way approach that permits exchange of ideas and information. It is a face to face interaction between the interviewer and interviewee. It is a method of investigation where by the researcher meets his respondents and through interaction, he asks specific questions to find answers to his research problems. It is based on fact finding and getting the information from the right source. Semi-structured interview is therefore a meeting between an interviewer and an interviewee in which the interviewer does not strictly follow a formalized list of questions. He asks more open ended questions, allowing for a discussion with the interviewee and also probe for clarifications. The interviewer prepares an interview guide which is a list of general topics concerning the research questions to be addressed, and this is to guide the conversation. An interview guide of semi-structured research questions were prepared for the teachers. Six teachers were interviewed to explore their views and to engage them in finding a comprehensive way of teaching rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten.

I interviewed six teachers on problems kindergarten teachers face when teaching rhymes and songs at the kindergarten and how teaching of rhymes and songs can be made effective. An interview guide was prepared for the interview. The interview was conducted on various themes and these were: the competence of the teacher as far as pre-education background is concerned, availability of instructional materials, instructional time and teaching strategies among others. The interview was conducted in accordance with the interview guide. The teachers were probed to give detail information concerning the questions asked and when they mention an issue of interest, further questions were asked to elicit more response on the issues. The semi-structured interview conducted helped me to direct the interview towards getting answers to the research questions in order not to bring personal sentiment into the data being collected.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with data analysis and presentation. It is the analysis of the data collected on the main findings of the study. After a researcher returns from the field to collect data, he must settle down to analyze the data. Twumasi (2001) pointed out that; the principal concepts in the study's objectives must be used to examine the data. It is a continuous process and it involves many stages which are editing, tabulation, coding, and computer processing among others. Osuala (2001) admitted that, data analysis is the ordering and breakdown of data into constituent parts and the performing of statistical calculations with the raw data to provide answers to the questions that initiated the research. Qualitative research methods were used in this study. According to Babbie (2007), qualitative analysis is the non-numerical examination and interpretation of observations, for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationship. The data collected for this study was through direct observation of twenty Kindergarten pupils and interviewing of six teachers in the school. The analysis of this study was based on two research questions which are; 'what are the problems associated with the teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten and how the teaching of rhymes and songs can be taught effectively at the Kindergarten?'

#### **4.1 Research Question One: What are the problems associated with the teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten?**

The first research question was 'what are the problems associated with the teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten?' I observed a number of problems associated with the teaching of

rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten. The following were the problems: Lack of formal training in early childhood education, lack of instructional materials, inadequate instructional time, inadequate assessment of Kindergarten pupils on rhymes and songs, physical nature of the Kindergarten classrooms, the calibre of teachers at the Kindergarten, background of the pupils and inadequate supervision.

### **1. Lack of formal training in early childhood education**

The first problem I identified was that the teachers do not have a formal training in early childhood education. This otherwise revealed that majority of teachers at the Kindergarten do not have formal training and the competence to handle the Kindergarten pupils making it difficult for them to prepare the pupils adequate enough for formal education through the use of effective teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten. When I interviewed the teachers, one of them indicated that, she studied basic education at the university and she did not pursue any course in pre-education, she also did not attend any in-service training on teaching Language and Literacy lessons especially on rhymes and songs.

Another teacher said; “I have no training in teaching of rhymes and songs and besides my former head teacher just asked me to go and teach at the Kindergarten, even though I told him, I did not study ‘early childhood education’ at school and I remains at the Kindergarten ever since. The head teacher also said “the teachers being posted or transferred to the school do not have early childhood education, so those who have affection for the Kindergarten children are send there to cater for them”.

To address the problem of Kindergarten teachers not having training in ‘early childhood education, teachers without ‘early childhood education’ should be trained through in-service-training and workshops to teach at the Kindergarten, those with the ‘early childhood education’ should be the best teachers to handle the pupils at the Kindergarten. District education and Municipal Education Directorates should transfer only well experience teachers with pre-education background to handle Kindergarten pupils to enhance effective teaching of rhymes and songs. Newly trained teachers being posted to Kindergarten schools should also have pre-school education background so that they shouldn’t go and mess up things. What is even more sorrowful and surprising is that, sometimes, when trained Kindergarten teachers are sent to schools; they themselves are not willing to go to Kindergarten, due to the bad conditions over there. There is also a misconception that it is the low grade and poor performing teachers that must teach at the Kindergarten and lower primary class. This is not true; it is rather well equipped, experienced and well resource teachers that need to handle the Kindergarten, for if the foundation of the pupils’ education is destroyed, the future of the country’s human resource is in jeopardy. It is therefore not surprising that 23rd National Best Teacher Award held on 5th October, 2017 at Koforidua was won by Faustina Coppson; a 41 year old, class one teacher at Richard Acquaye Memorial Basic School in Accra (Daily Graphic, Friday, October 5th, 2017, p. 3). I suggest that experienced professionals should be sent to Kindergarten, because it is the root of formal education and it must be strengthened for effective human resource development of the country.

There are also problems in using songs and rhymes for English teaching. Not all teachers are able to read musical notes and work out new songs. Therefore rhymes and songs should be an

important element in frequent refresher teacher training workshops. There should be provision of enough Compact Discs and appropriate equipment and aids for rhymes and songs lessons. A good help for quite unmusical teachers is to transfer written texts into well-known melodies.

## **2. Lack of instructional materials**

Instructional materials are resources that are used to ease, encourage, improve and promote teaching and learning activities. It is a wide range of materials and devices designed to provide realistic imagery and substitute experiences in order to enrich curricular experiences of many kinds through which knowledge, skills attitudes, ideas, beliefs and values got transmitted to the learner in order to ease teaching and learning process. These instructional materials include real objects, text books, equipment, visual aids, audio-visual aids, improvised objects, work books, supplementary readers, exercise books, writing materials and mathematical set among others. An instructional material such as a text book is a formal manual of instruction in a specific subject area which help both the teacher and the pupil for easy teaching and learning of subjects. I observed that there were no approve instructional materials for teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten. The teachers were not using any text book or any instructional materials related to Language and Literacy and more specifically rhymes and songs. When I interviewed the teachers, they said; “there were no text books on rhymes and songs”, one teacher said “we prepare our own rhymes and songs”. The teachers copy any rhyme and song they can remember or any rhyme they come across to teach their pupils and this makes it difficult for effective teaching of the rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten.

It was also observed that audio visual and audio aids such as digital video disc players and tape recorders were not used during the teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten. The head teacher indicated that, there was no money to buy the audio visual aids that can be of a great help to the pupils mastering rhymes and songs and building their confidence level in the classroom. Curriculum for Kindergarten (2006), page 51, appendix 'J' gave only 13 examples of short nursery rhymes, however, how it should be taught and the text book to use to teach them have been ignored. The curriculum only stated the rhymes to be used as an introduction to Language and Literacy lessons. It is however not stated as a lesson on its own. National Literacy Acceleration Programme, was aimed at encouraging the Kindergarten to primary three pupils to acquire literacy skills in their local languages. This would greatly enhance the teaching and learning of the English Language in primary four to Junior High School. The National Literacy Acceleration Programme was silent on rhymes and songs and this does not promote effective teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten. Currently, in place of 'National Literacy Acceleration Programme' is the 'An Integrated Approach to Literacy' designed to achieve a common strategy for teaching literacy and language acquisition in both Ghanaian Language and English Language using methodology that integrated mathematics, science and literacy in a holistic fashion. The mother-tongue (L1) based literacy instruction approach helps the child to develop literacy and language skills first in the L1 and systematically transfer these skills to English (L2). This approach is based on the evidence that the mother-tongue based instruction enhances the acquisition and acceleration of literacy skills in L1 and boosts transfer to L2.

A course book containing methods of teaching rhymes and songs and pre-school refresher in-service-training workshops and symposiums with training manuals should be provided for



Kindergarten teachers to make effective teaching of rhymes and songs in pre-schools to tackle reading difficulties right from the Kindergarten. The Kindergarten curriculum should include the teaching of rhymes and songs as a full lesson on its own for its effective teaching. Kindergarten curriculum and syllabus should include rhymes and songs with stated objectives. Audio-visual, audio aids and teaching learning materials should be made available in the various schools so that teachers can use them during rhyme and song lessons.

### **3. Inadequate instructional time**

Instructional time is all the contact hours the teacher spends with the pupils directly during teaching and learning process. It includes face to face interaction with the pupils for the purpose of teaching and assessing the pupils' achievement of outcomes, pupils' participation in the lesson, explanations and clarifications, teaching-learning activities, impacting of knowledge, class management and class control, marking of exercises and corrections among others. There was inadequate instructional time to teach rhymes and songs effectively at the Kindergarten. The rhymes and songs form part of Language and Literacy on the Kindergarten timetable. The Kindergarten timetable has Numeracy or Number Work, Language and Literacy, Creative activities, Environmental Studies, Religious and Moral Education, News Time, Drama, Outplay and Physical Activity. Rhymes and songs were used as an introduction to Language and Literacy lessons and the teachers find it difficult to have full period to teach the rhymes and the songs during the Language and Literacy lessons to improve on Kindergarten pupils' oral language development which will also help the children build a quality superstructure of education and advancement in their academic performance.

#### **4. Inadequate assessment of Kindergarten pupils on rhymes and songs**

Kindergarten teachers have approved Kindergarten Assessment Report Booklet to assess their pupils at the end of every term; however, due to inadequate supply of the assessment booklets, the teachers do not adequately assess their pupils especially on rhymes and songs. The approved Kindergarten assessment booklet entitled “Child’s Progress and Achievement Report” for assessing Kindergarten pupils includes the child’s bio data, language and literacy, mathematical skills, environmental studies and creative activities as well as psychosocial and communication skills and psychomotor skills. It includes assessing pupils on rhymes and songs under language and literacy and psychosocial and communication skills, however, the supply of these assessment booklets were woefully inadequate. When I interviewed the teachers about the assessment of Kindergarten pupils on rhymes and songs, they said, the assessment booklets supplied to the school was not enough and the head teacher also said there is no money to provide the assessment booklets for every Kindergarten pupil. One teacher pointed out that, On 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2017, Ga West Municipal Education Directorate distributed six copies of Kindergarten Child’s Progress and Achievement Report to every Kindergarten school in the municipality, however, every Kindergarten pupil is supposed to have a copy and since basic education including Kindergarten education is supposed to be free, the parents were not willing to pay for the assessment booklets making it difficult for the teachers to assess their Kindergarten pupils. The Kindergarten Assessment Report Booklets must therefore be adequate supplied for the teachers to properly assess their pupils. The Kindergarten teachers should be conscious of their pupils needs. The pupils may have different competency levels such as learning speed, retentive memory, pronunciation and understanding of rhymes and songs. The teachers should therefore give proper attention to the pupils and their special needs. The teachers should conduct

pupils' need assessment regarding rhymes and songs. According to the needs of the pupils, the teachers should develop some appropriate materials and strategies to present rhymes and songs lessons in the class to make effective use of the rhymes and songs. Kindergarten teachers should sensitize their pupils on the need to develop positive attitudes towards reading through the use of rhymes and songs. They should also assess their pupils to determine whether they are progressing or retrogressing and by so doing do the necessary corrections.

### **5. Physical nature of the Kindergarten classroom**

There was the problem of the decoration of the Kindergarten classrooms to enhance the effective teaching of rhymes and songs. When I interviewed the teachers whether the Kindergarten classroom was ok for effective teaching of rhymes and songs, they said they were much concerned about the Kindergarten classrooms.

One teacher said “the Kindergarten pupils need decent classrooms, not rabbit hutches. The classrooms should be well ventilated and decorated with well arrange objects and pictures. The four main corners of the Kindergarten classroom must be well demarcated. There must be ‘sand tray’, ‘shopping corner’, ‘made-to-believe corner’ and ‘nature corner’”. She also said “the decorations of the Kindergarten classrooms do not help the pupils to remember rhymes and songs easily”. The walls should have pictures of objects and animals associated with rhymes and songs, such as a picture of a lamb for ‘Mary has a little lamb’, Tea pot for ‘I have a little tea pot’, Black sheep for ‘Bar bar black sheep’, A little star for ‘Twinkle twinkle little star’, A traffic light for ‘When you see the traffic light, there is something you should do’, A medical doctor for ‘Mama I am sick, call the doctor very quick’, A fish for ‘Once I caught a fish alive’, Birds for

‘two little black birds standing on the wall’, A fox for ‘Fox fox fox, go into the box’ and A lion for ‘ A lion, a lion has a tail, it has a big head and a very small waist’. When I asked the teachers, why can’t they provide these drawings and pictures themselves? One teacher said, there was no money to buy the manila cards for the drawings, posters, felt pens, paint, brushes, poster colours and white cloths. Another teacher said “the Kindergarten classroom must be literacy friendly with colourful paintings and beautiful objects hanging on the walls to attract the pupils.”

#### **6. Calibre of teachers at the Kindergarten**

Kindergarten education is always left in the hands of elderly teachers especially elderly women who are about to retire, the few young teachers at the Kindergarten were attendants from national youth employment agency. One elderly teacher said that, she was not very healthy and besides, she taught for thirty years, and she just want to rest at the kindergarten. There was no effective teaching at Kindergarten; hence the teachers were not doing much there especially at the schools that are remote and far from the municipal capital and typically less endowed school such as Agorteman Municipal Assembly Kindergarten. Competent teachers with a background in early childhood education should teach at the Kindergarten. Teaching at the Kindergarten should not be used as a punishment for recalcitrant teachers and elderly women who are too old and weak to teach but given to teachers who have interest and formal training in early childhood education. Classification of teachers to various classes usually starts from upper primary down to lower primary. As for Kindergarten, when teachers are not enough, Kindergarten pupils were allowed to play. A female teacher returned from maternity leave instead of her returning to her class, she want to stay at the Kindergarten. There she will get time to nurse her baby. When chalks are not enough, Kindergarten pupils are not allowed to write. The Kindergarten classes need not only

white chalk but also coloured chalk to write and rule lines for better understanding at an early stage of learning. Head teachers always frown on them because every pupil needs to practice writing using slate and chalk and they are seen as wasting the chalk.

### **7. Background of pupils**

The background of pupils also has great influence on them. The teachers said, most of the pupils come from homes with low academic status and thus, are not very well expose to the English language at home which is most often used to recite the rhymes and the songs. The pupils too receive less tuition on reciting rhymes and songs from the school which could have been the appropriate place for learning of rhymes and songs. Therefore, it can be said that their experience with nursery rhymes is limited. The teachers also claimed that the native language of the pupils which is Ewe Language has a great deal of influence on the pupils' inability to pronounce rhyming words appropriately. The transfer of the native language of the pupils into the English language was clear during the pronunciation of the rhyming words. It was also noted that, the children's close associate at home such as parents, siblings and friends, do not recite rhymes with them. This makes learning of rhymes and songs a mere school affair and not part and parcel the children's life.

### **8. Inadequate supervision**

Bernard and Goodyear (1998) define supervision as an intervention provided by a senior member of a profession to a junior member of that same profession. It is a relationship that extends over time, evaluates and monitors to ensure work is done efficiently and effectively. Various reasons for supervision can be directed at possible areas that relate to the classroom teachers which focus

on checking on the availability of teaching materials, advising on the appropriateness of the teaching learning materials, assessing staff levels, advising on the school climate, assessing the availability and quality of advising support services available to the teacher, promoting curriculum change and innovation, time tabling and attending to the welfare of teachers. These are some of the requirements of the various district directors, circuit supervisors and Kindergarten coordinators to the various schools and Kindergarten centres in the country, however, supervision is not taken seriously by those in charge. This problem was revealed during interviews with the teachers to find out why they do not make effective use of rhymes and songs to enhance Kindergarten pupils' oral skills. In an interview with one of the teachers, she said "supervisors come once in a while and sometimes once in a year especially on 'My First Day at School' which is on the reopening day of the first term, though they do complain at staff meetings about inadequate instructional materials at the Kindergarten". She added that circuit supervisors and Kindergarten coordinators who sometimes come to find out how teaching and learning is going on are more concerned about their lesson notes and output of work and not the challenges that confront them as far as the Kindergarten facilities and instructional materials are concerned". Kindergarten coordinators should go round the schools to see what goes on in the Kindergarten classrooms. They should be resourced and strengthened for effective supervision.

#### **4.2 Research Question two: How can the teaching of rhymes and songs be taught effectively at the Kindergarten?**

The second research question is 'how can teaching of rhymes and songs be taught effectively at the Kindergarten?' The followings have been identified during the observation of rhymes and songs lessons: no detail lesson note on rhymes and songs, rhymes and songs as an introduction to

Language and Literacy lessons, selection of rhymes and songs, rhyming words in nursery rhymes, fulfill objectives for teaching, previewing and reviewing, medium of instruction at the Kindergarten, code switching, translation, safe talk and purposeful concurrent language usage.

### **1. Detailed lesson note on rhymes and songs**

Lesson note enables teachers to prepare their lessons logically to allow all the desirable instructional objectives to be achieved using appropriate instructional resources. It enables teachers to work within stipulated duration and useful activities are identified and given to pupils. A lesson plan is a well plan document that can be referred to at any time and also serves as a record of work done so that topics are not unnecessary repeated. From the lesson plan test items are prepared using the instructional objectives stated. When a lesson note prepared is not taught or taught successfully, it is referred and taught at another appropriate time. The study revealed that teachers do not write full lesson note on rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten. They teach rhymes and songs as an introduction to Language and Literacy lessons. They must write detail lesson note on rhymes and songs for their effective teaching. According to the teachers interviewed, rhymes and songs are not full subjects at the Kindergarten, hence they do not write lesson note for rhymes and songs. One teacher said “there was no period for rhymes and songs alone, it was part of Language and Literacy and if we spend more time on the rhymes and songs, we will have less time for the actual lesson”. According to one of the teachers, “Kindergarten curriculum should include rhymes and songs with stated objectives”. She claimed that, the rhymes and songs are used to introduce Language and Literacy lessons and draw the attention of the pupils and arouse their interest in the lesson. They are not full lessons and we teach them briefly by writing them on the white board and read through them with the pupils and

ask the pupils to recite them on their own and then move on to the actual lesson". There is therefore the need for provision of instructional materials on rhymes and songs; there must be text books on rhymes and songs with teacher's guide as well as Kindergarten syllabus to enable teachers to get references to write their lesson notes on rhymes and songs.

Learning Triangle is a three-part learning pattern that helps reach all types of learners by teaching through a variety of activities according to Anderson, Baker, Leavitt, McLaughlin, and Robinson (2010). Rhymes or songs can be played from a Compact Disc or recited by the teacher and the actions demonstrated. The song should be sung by the teacher or played from a Compact Disc once or twice while the students only listen. They begin to understand and to absorb the tune and the rhythm. During the next playing or singing the pupils can clap the rhythm or hum the tune. Before learning the rhyme or the song step by step, the teacher should explain the words to the children. Then the pupils recite the rhyme or sing the song several times, at first supported by the teacher's voice, later without the teacher's support. If the pupils understood the content, there is no need to translate word by word but the pupils should know what the rhyme or songs is all about. This step can be supported by visual aids. The pupils then learn the rhyme or the song step by step. Teachers can then use the three points of the Learning Triangle to teach rhymes and songs effectively, which are View, Read, and Do:

**VIEW** with children rhymes and songs that teach skills such as phonemic awareness, communicative competence, and reading readiness.

**READ** with the children selected rhymes and songs that emphasize skills such as the phonemic awareness, communicative competence, reading readiness and vocabulary acquisition.



DO activities with the pupils to reinforce the skills you want to emphasize and allow them to practise what they have learnt such as clapping, tapping, finger play, jumping and dancing to tune of rhymes and songs.

## **2. Rhymes and songs as an introduction to Language and Literacy lessons**

The study revealed that, rhymes and songs were used only as an introduction to Language and Literacy lessons; they are not taught as full lessons. One teacher I interviewed, said, they do not teach the rhymes and the songs as full lessons due to inadequate instructional period available to Language and Literacy under which rhymes and songs fall. She added that, for full benefits of rhymes and songs, they should be taught as full lessons, they can also be used every day in every lesson, it should be used in between lessons and interlaced with lessons. When teaching the rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten, the teacher must tell the pupils what the rhyme or the song is about, and then go through the words of the rhyme or song line by line at a time. Allow the pupils to repeat the words several times to master the pronunciation of the words. Recite or sing a line at a time and ask the pupils to repeat after you or sing back. Practise each line several times until the pupils can recite the rhyme on their own independently and then practise it two lines at a time and then finally put the entire rhyme or song together. The teacher then add rhythm to the words line by line with rhythmic accompaniment such as clapping, hand shuffling, foot tapping, finger snapping or whole body movement. The rhyme or the song should be recited or sung by the teacher or played from a compact disc once or twice while the pupils only listen to it. They begin to understand and to absorb the tune and the rhythm or hum the tune. Teach the pupils the lyrics step by step then allow them to recite or sing the rhyme or song at first supported by the teacher's voice, and later without the teacher's support. A teacher also mention

‘step by step method’, ‘say after me’ and ‘look and say’ methods’ as some of the strategies of teaching rhymes and songs. The ‘step by step’ approach is drilling the pupils on the rhyme or the song line by line until they master it and they can recite it on their own. The ‘say after me approach’ is the pupils reciting the rhyme or the song after the teacher until they master it and they can recite it fluently. The ‘look and say’ approach is the teacher showing a picture of an animal or an object of which a rhyme is written, or a piece of rhyme on the whiteboard or hanging on the wall and the children recite it.

Rhyming is very important to a child’s language development. It improves the child’s fluency skills, pronunciation skills, listening skills, spelling and dictation skills and prepare pupils towards effective reading. It is an oral drill and speech activity learners are taken through to help them to acquire skills of speaking the language they are learning accurately, intelligently and fluently. Pupils should actively take part in rhyming lessons and be encouraged to speak fluently especially when in school. By so doing, pupils’ mistakes will be identified and corrected and thus continuous practice of this can help improve the children’s communicative competence.

### **3. Selection of rhymes and songs**

Some rhymes and songs contain old expressions, dialectal, profane, or distorted linguistic materials; therefore teachers should check their collection of rhymes and songs for useful and suitable content. There are many types of rhymes and songs according to the study conducted and there must be correct selection of rhymes and song appropriate to Kindergarten class, and when I asked the teachers about the criterion for choosing rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten, they said the rhyme or song must contain little vocabulary and the language and the musical

lyrics should be very simple and easy to remember. The rhythm should contain alliteration or assonance, be repetitive and straightforward. The nursery rhyme topics should be within the experience of the pupils and it must be accompanied by rhythmic actions. One teacher said “rhymes and songs composed during dark ages such as war songs should be avoided. They should not contain implements or weapons involving fight, injury, blood or death that will scare the pupils”. She added that “while lullabies and work songs are highly recommended, dirges and funeral songs must be avoided. Rhymes and songs that are composed to tease, ridicule or mock people in authority, disable or physically challenged or people with different race should not be encouraged and taught in the classroom”. According to Nwoga (1967), though poetry speaks a universal language, it is natural that, at least in the early stages, one comes more easily and directly into the enjoyment and appreciation of literature that deals with one’s own environment, fears, joys and way of life, however most of the rhymes and songs observed were in the target language and only few were in the native language which is the Ewe language. This makes it difficult for the pupils to relate the rhymes and the songs to their real life situations. Apart from rhymes and songs, I also observed tongue twisters such as:

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.

Did Peter Piper pick a peck of pickled peppers?

If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,

Where’s the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?

Moses supposes his toeses are roses,

But Moses supposes erroneously,

‘Cause nobody’s toeses are roses

As Moses supposes his toes to be.

She sells sea shells at the sea shore.

At the sea shore she sells sea shells.

She sells sea shells on the sea shell shore,

The sea shells she sells are sea shore shells,

Of that I'm sure.

Atoto totola

Maŋle atoto totola

Tso atoto totogble la me

Sidi atoto!

A confused pineapple seller

I want to buy a mess up pineapple

From a mess up pineapple farm

The five cedis one!



#### **4. Rhyming words in nursery rhymes**

In nursery rhymes, words rhyme with one another to bring about repetition of similar sounds.

Words that rhyme with each other are often used in rhymes and songs. When asked how to identify rhyming words in a nursery rhymes, one teacher said “during the rhyme lesson, the teacher must select words with similar sound endings such as ‘peel, feel, heel, seal and meal’ and ask the pupils what they notice about the sounds of those words? They will notice similarity in the sounds of the words”. She added that, the teacher then asks the pupils to mention some other

words that rhyme with the words provided such as ‘steal, deal, and real’. I observed rhyming words in a number of rhymes such as:

Rain rain go away

Come again another want day

Little children want to play

Rain rain go away

Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland,

Beasts of every land and clime,

Hearken to my joyful tidings

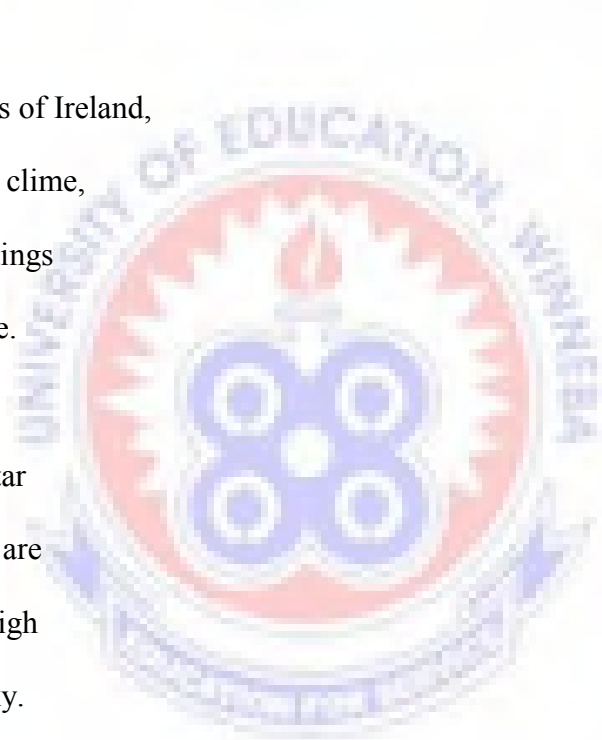
Of the golden future time.

Twinkle Twinkle little star

How I wonder what you are

Up above the world so high

Like a diamond in the sky.



The teacher guides the pupils to listen to the rhyme or song provided and sees if they could find the rhyming words. The teacher then guides them to identify words that rhyme in the above rhymes such as ‘away, day and play’, ‘England, Ireland and land’, ‘clime and time’, ‘star, are, high and sky’. The pupils tap their finger on the table; tap a foot on the floor or other tapping motion every time they hear two or more words rhyme. The teacher then guides the pupils in tapping the appropriate times a rhyme sound is heard.

In teaching rhymes and songs the teacher must introduce rhyming words through songs, stories and rhymes. Read and recite nursery rhymes with the children. Repeat them until the children know them well. Sing songs with rhyming words such as "The goat got caught." Read stories that include rhyming words such as "She sells sea shells at sea shore." Point out that these are fun because they have rhyming words, words that end with the same sounds. Recite nursery rhymes together but let the child identify the rhyming words. For example, "It's raining, it's pouring, and the old man is \_\_\_\_?" Let the child come up with the word "snoring." Play rhyming games by changing the rhyming words in nursery rhymes. For example, "Jump, Jump, Jump (Together), Jump, Jump Away, (Jumping) is an (Exercise) Jump, Jump (Away)." You can create new nursery rhymes this way by using the pupils' own names such as 'Edem, Etɔnam and Ewoenam (God saves me, God has answered my prayers and God has done it for me)'; you can also mention two words and ask the pupils if they rhyme. Play a matching game such as memory in which the child must match rhyming words. Have the child come up with words that rhyme. Correct the children's mistakes as needed. Pupils should not be made to commit rhymes into memory at a go. It should be spaced over a number of lessons. At a higher class, read or recite rhymes and songs to pupils and through questions, pupils identify the moral lessons in the rhymes and the songs and show how they apply to real life situations. Teaching of rhyme should not only be used as an introduction to Kindergarten lesson, but rather a detail lesson on its own to bring out its usefulness to the pupils. The rhymes should also be exciting and captivating to the pupils.

In a rhyming scheme as I observed rhymes and songs lessons, it was revealed that, rhyming scheme is determined by the ending words of each line. There are different patterns for each stanza that follows. In this perspective, Herzuah (2009) pointed out that a rhyme scheme is indicated by matching lowercase letters to show which lines rhyme. The letter 'a' usually denotes the first line and all other lines which rhyme with the first line. If the end word of the next line has a different sound ending, it is given 'b', any line which end sound rhymes with 'a' or 'b' is given the same letter. If an end word of a line does not end with 'a' or 'b', it is given 'c'.

This continues till the end of the stanza. For instance:

Good better best (a)

May I never rest (a)

Until my good is better (b)

And my better best. (a)

A man of words and not of deeds (a)

Is like a garden full of weeds (a)

And when the weeds begin to grow (b)

It is like a house full of sorrow (b)

Roy is a little boy (a)

Who has a tiny toy? (a)

He plays with it with joy (a)

In the wet soil! (a)

In the above rhyme, the words ‘boy’, ‘toy’, ‘joy’ and ‘soil’ all produce the diphthong /ɔi/ and therefore have a rhyming effect that makes the rhyme interesting.

### **5. Fulfill objectives for teaching**

The objective for teaching is one of the salient things a teacher projects to achieve at the end of his or her lesson. It is the goal set to achieve in class after a particular subject is taught. Ghana Education Service expect teachers to write detail lesson note before they commence to teach and the lesson note must include; date and time for the lesson to be taught, topic to be taught, objectives for teaching the topic, activities to enhance teaching of the topic, core points, references and remarks- given by teacher whether he or she was able to teach the topic and achieve his objectives or not. With this detail lesson note made by the teacher before going to the classroom to teach, all she wishes to achieve at the end of the lesson is her objectives. The teacher will then consider the language which will be appropriate for achieving her objectives. The Kindergarten objectives for Language and Literacy lesson does not cover details of rhymes and songs and the teachers only uses the rhymes and songs to arouse the interest of the pupils for the Language and Literacy lesson and for this reason, they only brush through the rhymes and the songs.

Teacher ‘X’ said “I have to make every effort to be able to finish the whole lesson on Language and Literacy making it difficult for me to have enough time to teach the rhymes and songs in detail”. She added that “the Kindergarten coordinator does not allows us to put rhymes and songs on the Kindergarten time table. With the rhymes and songs on the Kindergarten time table or even as a full topic under Language and Literacy, it will help the teachers to have an ample time to teach the rhymes and the songs into detail.



In teaching rhymes and songs, use popular actions and gestures for easy memorization and understanding by the pupils. Sing songs or recite rhymes several times for pupils to imitate with correct stress and rhythm. Write rhyme on the whiteboard for pupils to select words not familiar to them. Use real objects or pictures to explain selected words in context. Following the same procedure, draw attention to rhyming words. Guide pupils to sing songs and recite rhymes with actions or gestures while clapping or tapping to the rhythm. Guide pupils to pronounce words correctly in rhymes or songs with particular reference to contrast in stress and rhythm. Engage pupils vigorously in recitation of the rhymes and the songs for mastery and perfection. The teachers can also organize a contest where the children recite their favourite rhymes or sing their favourite songs. They can perform it alone or in groups. A jury chooses the best performer but all children involved should get an appreciation to keep up their motivation. It is also possible to celebrate a "Language and Literacy Day" of the pupils where the children can show their knowledge in songs, rhymes and plays. Select suitable materials for listening, singing or recitation, for example, the national anthem, the national pledge or a patriotic song. Select suitable and simple rhymes for listening, singing or recitation such as:

One, two, three, four, five

Pounding fufu near the door

Six, seven, eight, nine, ten

Lunch is ready, don't be late.

I am a little teapot

Standing on the table

If you want a cup of tea

Just pour me out

Just pour me out.

## **6. Previewing and reviewing**

Previewing and reviewing was another strategy teachers at Agorteman Municipal Assembly Basic School used to teach their Kindergarten pupils. Previewing is a preliminary view of presentation. It gives a gist of what is to come. When a teacher preview a lesson, the pupils are more likely to remember it after the study session and they are more likely to store it in long term memory by relating it to items previously learned. The teachers tried to use what is prevalent in the pupils' environment in order to draw their attention to the topic of the day. For instance, a teacher who was to teach a rhyme 'Mary has a little lamb' asked the pupils; 'how many of you rear sheep in the house or see a sheep in your Neighbourhood?' After some of them raised their hands, she asked them again 'does the sheep or the lamb follow you wherever you go? Some said yes, others said no. These questioning and answering were used to preview the rhyme of 'Mary has a little lamb'.

Reviewing refers to a process of reexamining or going over what has been learned already to prepare the children's mind for a new lesson. Some teachers observed during teaching sought to review topics which were similar to topics to be introduced to the pupils in order to have an idea of what is to be taught. For example, a teacher who previously taught;

See, see, see, I can see a bird

Standing on a tree

Ah! ah! ah! if I have a gun,

The bird will be mine!

The bird will be mine!

Asked the pupils to recite the above rhyme and then introduced the new rhyme;

Once I saw a little bird

Jumping hop, hop, hop,

So I cried little bird!

Will you stop, stop, stop!

I was going to the window to say

How do you do?

But it shook its little tail

And away it flew!

The review made by the teacher as I observed helped the pupils to understand the next rhyme to be taught without confusing the two similar rhymes. The pupils' participation in the review refreshed their minds on the previous rhyme which made it easier for the teacher to introduce the new and the similar rhyme.

## **7. Medium of instruction at the Kindergarten**

In the Kindergarten, out of a total of ninety minutes for combined language and literacy period, teachers are to use seventy minutes for Ghanaian Language as a medium of instruction and twenty minutes for English Language and this policy was being supported by an Integrated Approach to Literacy' designed to achieve a common strategy for teaching literacy and language acquisition in both Ghanaian Language and English Language using methodology that integrated

mathematics, science and literacy in a holistic fashion. The mother-tongue (L1) based literacy instruction approach helps the child to develop literacy and language skills first in the L1 and systematically transfer these skills to English Language (L2). This approach is based on the evidence that the mother-tongue based instruction enhances the acquisition and acceleration of literacy skills in L1 and boosts transfer to L2, however, the teachers were not using the required medium of instruction but rather resorted to their own techniques and strategies to enhance teaching and learning at the Kindergarten which includes;

1. Code switching
2. Translation
3. Safe talk
4. Purposeful concurrent usage

These strategies were identified by Andoh-Kumi (2001) as teaching strategies by teachers who did not adhere to the language policy of education.

### **8. Code switching**

Code switching refers to the simultaneous syntactically and phonologically appropriate use of more than one language. It is the alternation between two or more languages in the context of a single conversation which is the use of both languages together that is meaningful drawing on the associations of both languages and indexing dual identities. Multi-linguals thus sometimes use elements of multiple languages when conversing with each other. The approach to teaching of rhymes and songs should be more lovely and friendly to the children so that they can participate fully in the lessons. As an introduction to a rhyme lesson, the teacher can first read or recite the rhyme to the children while showing them the pictures relating to the rhyme. The

teacher explains the key words in the rhyme or the song and then asks the pupils to sing or recite along with her. The children repeatedly recite the rhyme on their own as the teacher continues to correct their mistakes, until they master the rhyme fully. In an interview with the teachers to find out the reason why they are using more English Language than the Ewe Language which was the mother tongue of the pupils, one teacher said Ga Language is her mother tongue different from that of her pupils and beside, most of the rhymes and songs that she could teach are in English Language and that make her use more English Language during rhyme and song lessons.

### **9. Translation**

Translation is the act of converting text from one language to another. I observed that one of the teachers in an attempt to make the pupils understand the content of the rhymes and songs being taught had to translate the rhymes and the songs from Ewe Language into English Language making more use of the English Language at the Kindergarten, though out of ninety minutes for literacy lesson, English Language is supposed to be only twenty minutes. Some of the translations during the direct observation of rhyme and song lessons were:

Fofonye loloto danye loloto!

Azola meyina de suku

Nye makano mia gbo o

Nusrorsro linam le suku

Meyilo, meyilo, nyedzilawo

Azola meyina de suku!

My lovely father, my lovely mother

Now, I am going to school

I will not stay with you again  
I have things to study at school  
I am going, I am going my parents  
Now, I am going to school.

ɔkɔmenyawo, neka wohã  
Miabuŋ ŋdi, ŋdɔ kple ezã  
Le miafe gbedɔdɔdawome  
Mia ɖekuku na Mawu  
Atsɔ Ghana aɖesi  
Eya enye ɖumevi nyuie  
Eya enye lolɔ  
Lɔlɔ namia ɖe  
Eya enyo, eya enyo  
Lɔlɔ namia ɖe  
Eya koe hã!



The affairs of this country be of concern to you  
We should think about it in the morning, afternoon and night  
In our prayers, let us beg God and put Ghana in His hands  
This is an act of good citizenship, this is love  
Love for our motherland  
This is good, this is good  
Love for our motherland

That is what is necessary.

Gbogboawo d̄i d̄e atiame

Ma gbe maḍe kaze

nyɔnuvi aḍe le asinye

Eṅkoenye Fafa

Fafa fe tame le vevem

Ma fle adzalē

Ma nyae ne

Dada na to awuvi nam

Kristoto krinyanya!

Kristoto krinyanya!

Unripe fruits have ripe in the tree

Let me pluck some and keep them to ripe

I have a toy girl, her head smells

Let me buy soap and wash her head

And mother will sews a new dress for me

New dress, new life!

New dress, new life!

Alevi aḍe, alevi aḍe

Alevi d̄e le Mary si!

Afisiafi si Mary yina



Alevi suie sia kplɔ neɔo

Afisiafi si Mary yina

Alevi suie sia kplɔ neɔo!

(Summarize verse of ‘Mary has a little lamb’)

Abɔdzokpodada, nuka miadu

Miadu kafa, kafa meɔɔja foɔo o!

Kokonte aba! Kokonte aba!

Kindergartener, what shall we eat

We will eat kafa, kafa will not satisfy us

Kokonte very delicious! kokonte very delicious!

Kokloɔetsi, akplea na vivi

Ganemetɔwo gbɔna

Kokloɔetsi, akplea na vivi

Ganemetɔwo gbɔna

Chicken soup and palatable banku should be ready

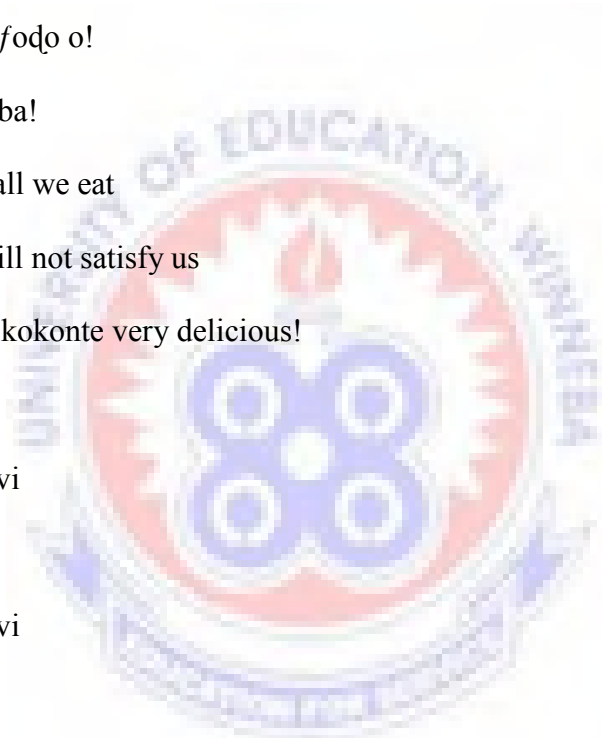
Official workers, who closes at four o’clock, are coming back home

Chicken soup and palatable banku should be ready

Official workers, who closes at four o’clock, are coming back home!

Pa papapa woe zɔlo

Dada mlɔ anyi le xɔme





Avuvɔ le wɔm, 'parasitam' meleo!

Pa papapa woe zɔlo!

Daddy, daddy you are welcome

Mama is sleeping in the room

She is feeling cold and there is no pain killer; paracetamol!

Daddy, daddy you are welcome!

Ayi be n̄ɛn̄ɛ

Ayi be dɔe lewum

Ayi be wɔle wɔzeame

Ayi be dae mia du

Ayi be dada gbɔ matuene

O! degblefetu, esasagbli, sasagbli!

This one is crying

This one said, she is hungry

This one said, there is corn flour in the pot

This one said, cook it for us to eat

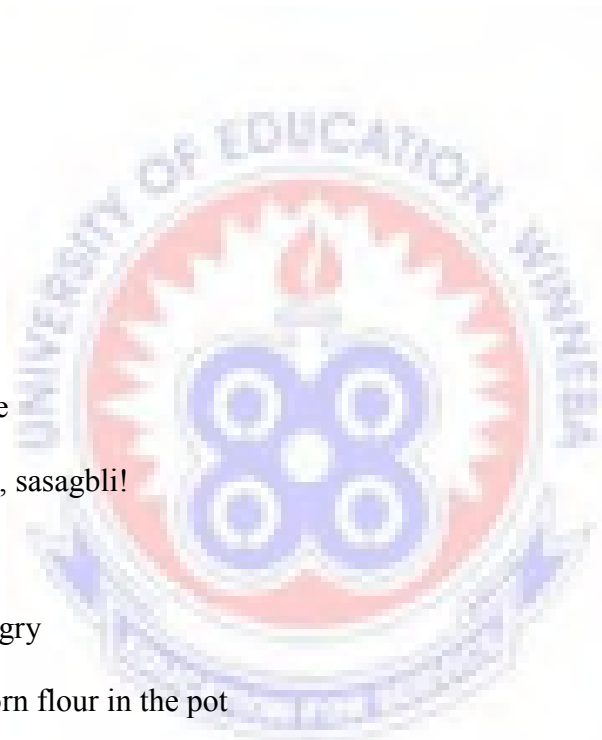
This one said, when mama comes, I will tell

O! You 'thumb' you betrays too much!

Tom, tom, mie le fufua tom

Miva ne miadue

Miyɔ Kofi kple Ama ve



Fufu bɔ̀bɔ̀ela suagbe, aba!

Fufu bɔ̀bɔ̀ela suagbe, aba!

Pound, pound, we are pounding fufu

Come and let us eat

Call Kofi and Ama

The soft delicious fufu is ready!

The soft delicious, fufu is ready!

Kpɔ̀ ɔ̀a ɔ̀evi ko meganyɛ̀

Nyɛ̀ ɲuse hã le sue

Mele didim be, naxɔ̀ nam

Yesu fia mɔ̀ nyui lam!

Look, I am still a young child

My strength too is small

I want you to protect me

Jesus teach me the right path!



Kekle kekle letsivi

Nuka gɔ̀ ne nye nam hã

Wo kekkle le dzifo vi!

Abe sikakpe ene!

Twinkle, twinkle little star

How I wonder what you are

Up above the world so high

Like a diamond in the sky!

Tutugbɔvi, Tutugbɔvi,

Dada mele afe me o

Papa mele afe me o

Mekae nafa via na

Awo ɔɔɔvinye bɔnubɔnu kpo o

Awo ɔɔɔvinye bɔnubɔnu kpo o!

Poor baby, poor baby!

Mama is not in the house

Daddy is not in the house

Who will you cry for?

O' my lovely baby, keep quiet

O' my lovely baby, keep quiet!

Ɔko yeye mia xɔ tso Mawu gbɔ

Ameadeke maten anya o

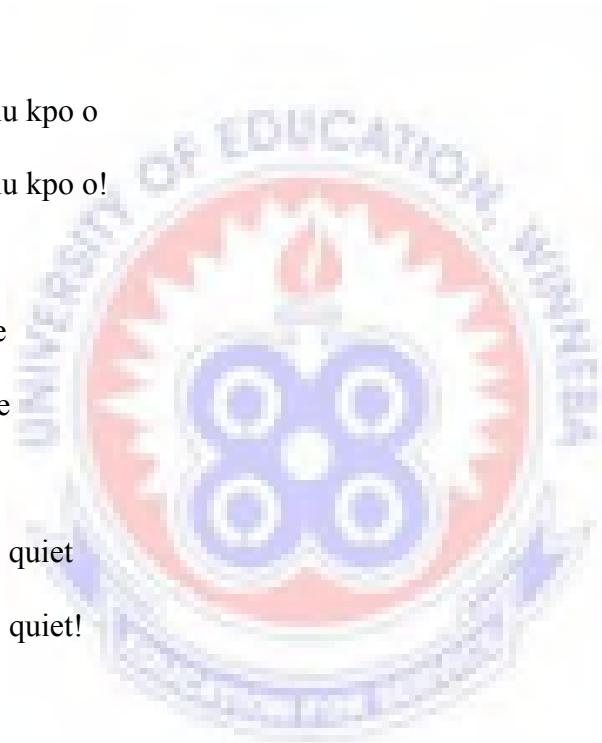
Wofe hamesi etsoe nawo

Aseye neɔi

Ɔko yeye, ɛko yeye

Mia xɔ tso dzifo!

New name we received from God



No one knows

Your close mortal relations gave it to you

Let us jubilate

New name, new name

We received from heaven!

Amekae fe ɖeɖevi lo toboli

Amekae fe ɖeɖevi lo toboli

Amekae foe nam lo toboli

Meka favi le zāme nam o

Meka favi le zāme nam o!

Nuɖe na va xɔ gbe le asiwo nam lo!

ɖeɖevinye lo toboli!

Whose sweet baby is this?

Whose sweet baby is this?

Who beat her?

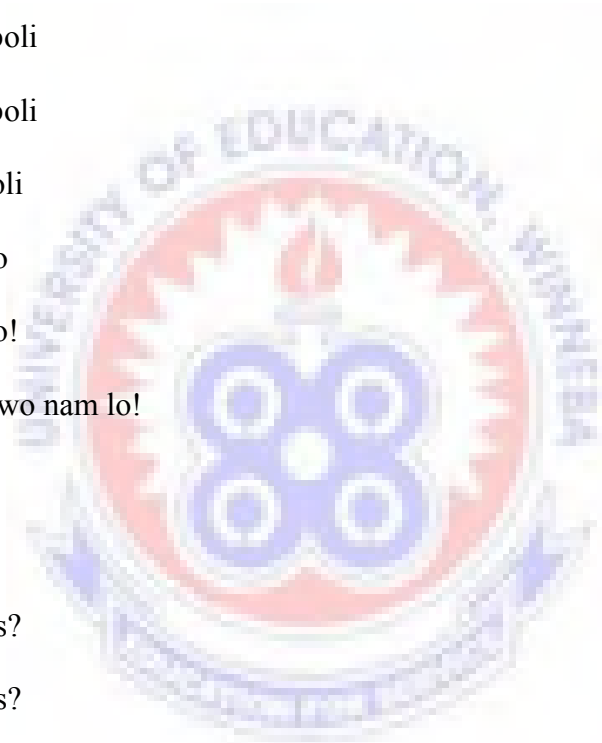
Do not cry in the night

Do not cry in the night!

So that something will cease your voice

My sweet baby!

Atukpa ɖeka ele akpatame



Atukpa ɖeka ele akpatame

Atukpa ɖeka wokatsɔ ɖeka kpuie

Ele atukpa eve ele atakpame

Atukpa eve ele akpatame

Atukpa eve wokatsɔ ɖeka kpuie

Ele atukpa etɔ ele atakpame!

One bottle on a veranda

One bottle on a veranda

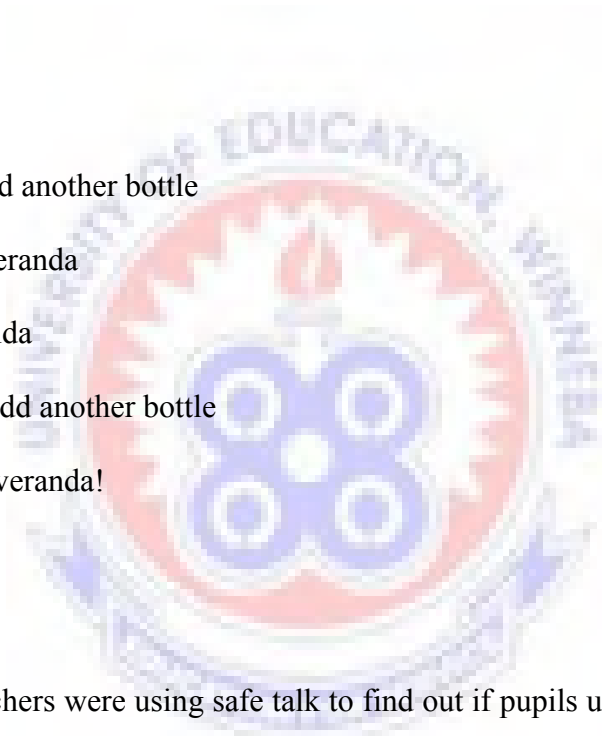
One bottle, when you add another bottle

It is two bottles on the veranda

Two bottles on the veranda

Two bottles, when you add another bottle

It is three bottles on the veranda!



## 10. Safe talk

It was observed that teachers were using safe talk to find out if pupils understand what they were teaching. Safe talk is one of the techniques teachers adopt to engage pupils to participate in teaching and also to find out if pupils understand what is being taught. Some of these safe talks include; ‘do you understand?’, ‘are you with me?’, ‘is it clear?’, ‘am I making sense?’, ‘are you ok?’, ‘are you following?’ The teachers at a point make use of a lot of safe talk to check if the pupils understand the lesson or not. At times, the response to some of the safe talk in English Language is always ‘yes’ but when the teacher translates it into Ewe Language the response is sometimes ‘no’, for example, a teacher was trying to explain the meaning of a lamb to her

Kindergarten pupils, asked ‘do you understand?’ the response was ‘yes’, then she asked them the same question in Ewe Language, ‘miese egomea?’ and the response was ‘awo; ‘no’, when she explained that a lamb is a young sheep in Ewe Language, they now said they understand. This indicated the importance of mother tongue at the Kindergarten and the pupils are greatly enthused when teachers give adequate time in teaching in the mother tongue.

### **11. Purposeful Concurrent Usage**

Purposeful concurrent use of two languages is an equal amount of time being allocated to two languages in the classroom during lessons, and teachers consciously and strategically move from one language to another in multi-lingual environment. In this perspective, there must be a conscious and planned movement from one language in a regular and rational manner. My observation in the Kindergarten classroom saw this concurrent usage of two languages; the mother tongue and the English Language used as the medium of instruction. A teacher introduced her lesson in English Language then switched to the mother tongue to explain to the pupils. She introduced her lesson as quoted below.

Teacher: Today we are going to learn about sources of water, mention one source of water.

Nufiala: Egbea mia srɔnu tso afisiwo mia kpɔ tsi le, yɔ tefe deka si mia kpɔ tsi le?

Pupil A: Tsidzadza! Rain water!

Pupil B: Atsavu! Sea water!

Pupil C: Tɔme! Water from a river!

Teacher: Very Good, we will continue with a rhyme concerning ‘riverside’. Eyoɔtɔ, mia yidzi asrɔ ha tso tɔmeɔ;

Kofi kple Ama woyi tɔlato

Be woa kutsi ve na wo dada!

Kofi dzeanyi efe ta gba

Ama tsɔ ɔkui xlaɔ anyi!

Kofi and Ama went to the riverside

To fetch water for their mother

Kofi fell and breaks his head

Ama hit herself on the ground!

After the teacher arouses the interest of her pupils with the rhyme, and makes them pay attention, she then continues with her lesson about the uses of water and the pupils participated fully in both the mother tongue and the English Language.

Teacher: Mention one use of water?

Nufiala: Yɔ nusiwo mitsɔna tsi wɔnae?

Nusrɔla Kpaɔtɔ: ‘Mie lena tsi’

Pupil A: ‘We bath with water’

Nusrɔla Evelia: ‘Mie tsɔne daanu’

Pupil B: ‘We cook with water’

Nusrɔla Etɔlia: ‘Mie tsɔne ɔɛa agble’

Pupil C: ‘We use water for irrigation’

Nufiala: ‘Miɔa akpe na miadɔkuiwo; mikataa midzeagbagba!’

Teacher: ‘Clap for yourselves; all of you have done well!’

Nufiala: ‘Mia yiɔe nusrɔsrɔ sia dzi etsɔ ’

Teacher: ‘We will continue with this lesson tomorrow’

Nusrɔlawo: ‘Yooo! Miesi, akpe!’

Pupils: 'Ok, thank you madam!'





## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION: SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This final chapter discussed the overview of research problems and methodology used in the study, summary of findings, recommendations for the study and recommendations for further studies. In this chapter, I gave my observations on the teaching of rhymes and songs at Kindergarten and the findings revealed from the interview conducted on problems associated with the teaching of rhymes and songs and how the teaching of rhymes and songs can be taught effectively at the Kindergarten. I also gave my recommendations on the findings and recommendations for further studies.

#### 5.1 Overview of research problem and methodology

This study was carried out to find out the problems associated with teaching of rhymes and songs and how the teaching of rhymes and songs can be taught effectively at the Kindergarten. I selected six teachers and twenty pupils of the Kindergarten class as my sample size. The data collection instruments used were direct observation and semi-structured interview. The direct observation was chosen because it gave me the opportunity to interact with the participants and watch carefully how rhymes and songs are taught at the kindergarten class and the problems kindergarten teachers face when teaching the rhymes and songs. The direct observation then helped me to come out with the real problems in teaching and learning of rhymes and songs and how rhymes and songs can be taught effectively at the kindergarten. I interviewed six teachers on problems associated with teaching of rhymes and songs and how teaching of rhymes and songs can be taught effectively at the Kindergarten. An interview guide was prepared for the interview.

The interview was conducted on various themes and these were: the competence of the teachers as far as pre-education background is concerned, availability of instructional materials, instructional time and assessment on rhymes and songs, teaching strategies and how rhymes and songs can be taught effectively at the Kindergarten. The interview was conducted in accordance with the interview guide. The semi-structured interview conducted helped me to direct the interview towards getting answers to the research questions in order not to bring personal sentiment into the data being collected.

## **5.2 Summary of findings**

I observed a number of problems associated with the teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten based on the two research questions of the study which are ‘ the problems associated with teaching of rhymes and songs and how can the teaching of rhymes and songs be taught effectively at Kindergarten’.

### **1. The problems associated with teaching of rhymes and songs.**

\*The teachers at the Kindergarten lack formal training in early childhood education. This make majority of teachers at the Kindergarten not to have the competence to handle the Kindergarten pupils making it difficult for them to prepare the pupils adequate enough for formal education through the use of effective teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten.

\*The study revealed that, there were no approved instructional materials for teaching of rhymes and songs. The teachers were not using any text book for the teaching of the rhymes and songs. The teachers prepare their own rhymes and songs. The teachers copy any rhyme and song they

can remember or any rhyme they come across to teach their pupils and this makes it difficult for effective teaching of the rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten.

\*There was inadequate instructional time to teach rhymes and songs effectively at the Kindergarten. There was no detail lesson on rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten. It was used as an introduction to Language and Literacy lessons. The Kindergarten timetable has Numeracy or Number Work, Language and Literacy, Creative activities, Environmental Studies, Religious and Moral Education, News Time, Drama, Outplay and Physical Activity and there was no full period for rhymes and songs.

\*Kindergarten teachers do not adequately assess their pupils on rhymes and songs. The supply of Kindergarten assessment booklet entitled “Child’s Progress and Achievement Report” for assessing Kindergarten pupils were woefully inadequate and this make it difficult for the Kindergarten teachers to assess their pupils on Language and Literacy including rhymes and songs.

\*There was the problem of the decoration of the Kindergarten classrooms to enhance the effective teaching of rhymes and songs. The Kindergarten pupils need decent classrooms, not rabbit hutches. The classrooms should be well ventilated and decorated with well arrange objects and pictures. The four main corners of the Kindergarten classroom must be well demarcated. There must be sand tray, shopping corner, made-to-believe corner and nature corner. The decorations of the Kindergarten classrooms do not help the pupils to remember rhymes and songs easily.

\*Kindergarten education was always left in the hands of elderly teachers, especially elderly women who were too weak to teach effectively, the few young teachers at the Kindergarten are attendants from national youth employment agency. There was no effective teaching at the Kindergarten.

\*The background of pupils also has great influence on them. Most of the pupils come from homes with low academic status and thus, are not very well expose to the English language at home which was most often used to recite the rhymes and the songs. The pupils too receive less tuition on reciting rhymes and songs from the school which could have been the appropriate place for learning of rhymes and songs, therefore their experience with nursery rhymes was limited.

\*Supervision is not taken seriously at the Kindergarten. This problem was revealed during interviews with the teachers to find out why they do not make effective use of rhymes and songs to enhance Kindergarten pupils' oral skills. Supervisors come once in a while and are more concerned about teachers' lesson notes and output of work and not the challenges that confront the teachers as far as the Kindergarten facilities and instructional materials are concerned.

## **2. How can teaching of rhymes and songs be taught effectively at the Kindergarten?’**

\*The study revealed that teachers do not write detail lesson note on rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten. The rhymes and songs are not full lessons at the Kindergarten, they form part of

Language and Literacy lessons, and hence they do not write detail lesson note on them for their effective teaching.

\*The study revealed that, rhymes and songs are used only as an introduction to Language and Literacy lessons instead of being taught as a full lesson; apart from being taught as full lesson they can also be used in every day in every lesson; it should be used in between lessons and interlaced with lessons.

\*There are many types of rhymes and songs according to the study conducted and there must be correct selection of rhymes and songs appropriate to Kindergarten class, however, since there was no text book on rhymes and songs, the teachers uses any rhyme and song they come across.

\*In nursery rhymes, words rhyme with one another to bring about repetition of similar sounds according to the study. The study revealed that teachers do not pay much attention to words that rhyme in rhymes and songs.

\*The medium of instruction at the Kindergarten was supposed to be the mother tongue seventy percent and English Language twenty percent, however, the study revealed that teachers were using more English Language than the Ewe Language which was the mother tongue of the pupils. This was as the result of some of the teachers having their mother tongue different from that of their pupils and most of the rhymes and songs taught at the Kindergarten were in English Language.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The main focus of this study was to find out ‘what problems are associated with the teaching of rhymes and songs and how the teaching of rhymes and songs can be taught effectively at the Kindergarten?’ A number of problems associated with the teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten have been observed. The following were the problems: Lack of formal training in early childhood education, lack of instructional materials, inadequate instructional time, inadequate assessment of Kindergarten pupils on rhymes and songs, poor physical nature of the Kindergarten classrooms, inadequate supervision, no detail lesson note on rhymes and songs, rhymes and songs used only as an introduction to Language and Literacy lessons, poor selection of rhymes and songs, lack of teaching of rhyming words in nursery rhymes and rhyming scheme, inappropriate medium of instruction at the Kindergarten such as: code switching, translation, safe talk and purposeful concurrent language usage. Kindergarten is the bed rock of formal education and so it must be handled with the expertise that it deserves.

### **5.4 Recommendations for the study**

Sekera and Bougie (2010) pointed out that, research is usually carried to examine a problematic situation or examine an existing theory or researching a new theory mostly. Therefore, researchers will end up with many numbers of findings that require exact solutions or several options or the best alternatives. This may direct the researcher to suggest several recommendations at the end of the research to explain the way of minimizing the problematic situation in addition to provided research solutions. While the suggested solutions reduce the impact of the problem, these recommendations will make sure the occurrence of the problem is minimized. Recommendations provide with a series of corrective steps, post findings that are

derived. The recommendations typically build a vital portion of a research. The recommendations are mostly focused on the research area and on any other applicable fact obtainable to the researcher, comprising their private and prior experience in a particular field. Recommendations are part of the research report which is included in the final report sections. A researcher will have to summarize the findings that are made with clear articulation of the range of recommendations as concluding remarks from a research process. With respect to the findings of the study, the followings are recommended to help promote effective teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten:

\*To address the problem of Kindergarten teachers not having formal training in ‘early childhood education, teachers without ‘early childhood education’ should be trained through refresher in-service-training, workshops and symposiums with training manuals to enhance effective teaching of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten. Teachers with the ‘early childhood education’ background should be the best teachers to handle the pupils at the Kindergarten because it is the root of formal education and it must be strengthened for effective human resource development of the country.

\*It is recommended that a course book containing rhymes and songs and methods of teaching rhymes and songs be provided at the Kindergarten as well as other instructional materials. The Kindergarten curriculum should include the teaching of rhymes and songs as a full lesson on its own for its effective teaching. Kindergarten curriculum and syllabus should include rhymes and songs with stated objectives. Audio- visual aids and audio aids and teaching learning materials

should be made available in the various schools so that teachers can use them during rhyme and song lessons.

\* Language and Literacy periods must include full lessons for rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten for their teaching to improve on Kindergarten pupils' oral language development which will help the children build a quality superstructure of education and advancement in their academic performance.

\*Kindergarten classrooms should be well ventilated with pictures of objects relating to rhymes and songs hang on the walls to make rhymes and songs' lessons more real and also to help the children remember the rhymes and songs easily. Pictures of objects relating to rhymes and songs should be hang on the walls of the Kindergarten classrooms to make rhymes and songs lessons more real and also to help the children remember the rhymes and songs easily. For example a picture of a sheep or a lamb in the Kindergarten classroom can help the children remember rhymes like 'Mary has a Little Lamb' and 'Black, Black Black Sheep' easily.

\*Kindergarten is the bedrock of formal education; hence the calibre of teachers there should be professionals. Teaching at the Kindergarten should not be used as a punishment for recalcitrant teachers; rather it should be for very competent teachers with formal training in early childhood education with high interest to handle young children.

\*Kindergarten teachers must assess their pupils regularly on Language and Literacy including rhymes and songs. The approved Kindergarten assessment booklet entitled "Child's Progress and



Achievement Report” for assessing Kindergarten pupils includes the child’s bio data, language and literacy, mathematical skills, environmental studies and creative activities as well as psychosocial and communication skills and psychomotor skills. It includes assessing pupils on rhymes and songs under language and literacy and psychosocial and communication skills. The supply of these assessment booklets must be on time and adequate for every Kindergarten pupil to have a copy. With the supply of these Kindergarten assessment booklets, the teachers can promptly assess their pupils on rhymes and songs.

\*There be must detail lesson note on rhymes and songs for their effective teaching and this call for a full period for rhymes and songs during Language and Literacy lesson at the Kindergarten. The Kindergarten curriculum should include syllabus on rhymes and songs with stated objectives. There is therefore the need for provision of instructional materials on rhymes and songs; there must be text books on rhymes and songs with teacher’s guide to enable teachers to get references to write their lesson notes on rhymes and songs.

\*There must be correct selection of rhymes and songs. The rhyme or song must contain little vocabulary and the language and the musical lyrics should be very simple and easy to remember. The rhythm should contain alliteration or assonance, be repetitive and straightforward. The nursery rhyme topics should be within the experience of the pupils and it must be accompanied by rhythmic actions. Rhymes and songs composed during dark ages such as war songs should be avoided. They should not contain implements or weapons involving fight, injury, blood or death that will scare the pupils. While lullabies and work songs are highly recommended, dirges and funeral songs must be avoided. Rhymes and songs that are composed to tease, ridicule or mock

people in authority, disable or physically challenged or people with different race should not be encouraged and taught in the classroom.

\*Words in rhymes and songs must rhyme so teachers must draw attention to rhyming words. Let the pupils listen to the rhymes or songs provided and see if they can find the rhyming words. Let pupils tap their finger on the table, tap a foot on the floor or other tapping motion every time they hear two or more words rhyme. The teacher then guides the pupils in tapping the appropriate times a rhyme sound is heard.

\*When teaching rhymes and songs, the teacher can use popular actions, gestures, recite rhymes or songs several times for pupils to imitate the correct stress and rhythm. Use objects or pictures to explain selected words in context. Guide pupils to recite rhymes and sing songs with actions or gestures while clapping or tapping to the rhythm. Guide pupils to pronounce words correctly in rhymes and songs with the right stress and rhythm. Pupils should not be made to commit rhymes and songs into memory at a go. It should be spaced over a number of lessons. In turns, pupils recite their rhymes in class for enjoyment.

\* The medium of instruction at the Kindergarten which is the mother tongue seventy percent and English Language twenty percent must be adhere to, to make the maximum use of the mother tongue of the pupils to improve on the communicative competence of the pupils.

\*There must be effective supervision at the Kindergarten to make sure that the right thing is being done. Kindergarten coordinators should go round the various schools to see what goes on

in the Kindergarten classrooms. They should be resourced and strengthened for effective supervision.

\*Children have unique characteristics in terms of personal attributes such as intelligent, age, emotions, interest, life experiences and family background. These differences have influence on the child's ability to learn at an early age and then later on in life. Kindergarten is the bedrock of formal education and rhymes and songs play an important role in the learning process of the Kindergarten pupils. Rhymes and songs create phonemic awareness and it helps the pupils to identify and appreciate different pattern of sounds. Rhymes and songs are very good tools to prepare children to read fluently and if these rhymes and songs are used effectively to teach beginners, it will help them to overcome reading difficulties in life.

### **5.5 Recommendations for further studies**

\*In view of the fact that Kindergarten curriculum plays a vital role in enhancing language competence, as revealed by the research findings, I suggest that a research be conducted to investigate the effectiveness of the Kindergarten curriculum as it exists presently and how it affects kindergarten pupils' English Language competence.

\*Specialized teachers with pre-education background need to handle the Kindergarten pupils at the pre-school level as done at the second cycle and tertiary levels; hence there is the need to investigate the calibre and competence of teachers teaching at the Kindergarten fully.

\*Methods of teaching rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten level and time allocated to teaching of rhymes and songs during Language and Literacy periods needs to be looked at critically since it has an effect on the pupils' performance as they climb the educational ladder, hence a research should be conducted to this effect.



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**APPENDICE ‘A’**

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS

Guided Interview designed on the topic: Teaching of Rhymes and Songs at Kindergarten.

I am a student in the Department of Applied Linguistics of University of Education, Winneba undertaking a research on the above topic as part of my post graduate degree course. I will be grateful if you will agree to provide answers to the interview questions I have on this form.

Please, the information you will provide for this interview is purely for conducting a qualitative research and will be treated as confidential.

**1. Background information of respondents.**

I. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

II. Gender: Male ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) Female ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

III. Age: \_\_\_\_\_ IV. Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

V. Teaching experience: One to Three Years { \_\_\_\_\_ }, Four to Eight Years { \_\_\_\_\_ }, Nine Years and above { \_\_\_\_\_ }.

VI. Educational background: GCE O’LEVEL / WASCE [ \_\_\_\_\_ ], CERT. ‘A’ [ \_\_\_\_\_ ], DIPLOMA [ \_\_\_\_\_ ], POST DIPLOMA/DEGREE [ \_\_\_\_\_ ].

VII. Hometown \_\_\_\_\_

VIII. District \_\_\_\_\_

IX. Region \_\_\_\_\_

X. Religion \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Denomination \_\_\_\_\_

**2. What are the problems associated with teaching of rhymes and songs at Kindergarten?**

I. Are you a professional teacher with training in pre-school education? Yes ( ) No ( ).

II. Do you have approved instructional materials such as text books and audio visual aids for teaching of rhymes and songs? Yes ( ) No ( ). If no, how do you get the rhymes and songs for your lessons?

III. Is there any instructional time for teaching of rhymes and songs on the Kindergarten timetable? Yes ( ) No ( ).

IV. Do you assess the pupils on rhymes and songs in Kindergarten? Yes ( ) No ( ). If no, why?

V. Does the decoration of the Kindergarten classroom with paintings, pictures and other objects conducive for teaching and learning of rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten? Yes ( ) No ( ).

VI. Which calibre of teachers usually teach at the Kindergarten?

VII. Do the Kindergarten pupils' background also have influence on their learning of rhymes and songs? Yes ( ) No ( ). If yes, in which way?

### **3. How can rhymes and songs be taught effectively at the Kindergarten?**

I. Do you write lesson note on rhymes and songs? Yes ( ) No ( ). If no, why?

II. Do you teach rhymes and songs every day in every lesson? Yes ( ) No ( ).

III. How do you select correct rhymes and songs appropriate for Kindergarten class?

IV. How do you teach rhyming words in rhymes and songs at the Kindergarten?

APPENDIX B

**GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE**

For the purpose of  
this service, no fee is  
charged for the use of  
this form.

Ministry of Education  
Accra

  
REPUBLIC OF GHANA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
GENERAL SERVICES  
ACCRA  
E-mail: [general@education.gov.gh](mailto:general@education.gov.gh)  
07-09-2017

**MEMO**



FROM: Headteacher: AGORTEMAN MMBASIC SCHOOL  
TO: Circuit Supervisor: KWASHIKUMA

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A CASE STUDY AT AGORTEMAN MMBASIC SCHOOL

AGORTEMAN MMBASIC SCHOOL  
DUMBOURAH ROAD, AGORTEMAN

Signature & Stamp: [Signature] DATE: 6/11/17

FROM: Circuit Supervisor: Kwashiikuma  
TO: Director: G.M. Directorate

COMMENT: To conduct a research.

Signature & Stamp: [Signature] ✓



3<sup>rd</sup> September, 2012

The Municipal Director of Education,  
Ga West Municipal Education Directorate,  
P. O. Box 44180,  
Accra,  
Ghana

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A CASE STUDY RESEARCH AT KORLEWA M/A BASIC SCHOOL ON THE  
TOPIC "TEACHING OF RHYMES AND SONGS AT KINDERGARTEN"**

I am teacher at the above named school who is conducting a case study on 'teaching of rhymes and songs at Kindergarten' at the same school to find out the problems KG teachers face when teaching rhymes and songs and how the teaching of rhymes and songs can be taught effectively at the KG level. I expect that Ghanaian parents and stakeholders in educational sector and the general public have greatly witnessed the steady decline in the standard of English language in our examination institutions. The Junior High School teachers who prepare the Basic Education Certificate Examination candidates for the West African Examination Council examination tend to blame primary school teachers for not preparing their pupils well before entering the JHS, however, the Kindergarten education which is the main foundation of formal education has been neglected. The Kindergarten teachers have been teaching rote-learning, memory and Ghanaian Language, creative activities and Environmental Studies to the neglect of rhymes and songs which promote phonetic awareness skills of the pupils hence promote pronunciation in reading at an early age. It is against this background that it becomes necessary for investigation to be done in this regard to find out the problems of teaching of rhymes and songs and how they can be taught effectively at the Kindergarten level. I intend to find out the best means of teaching of rhymes and songs among pupils.

The participants of the study will include KG teachers and their pupils. The data collection instruments to be used will be guided into view of the KG teachers and observation of the KG pupils. For the above mentioned activities data collection activities will be conducted. I am sure that you will give your permission to conduct this research purely as an academic exercise. Thank you for your cooperation and I hope to hear from you soon.

Victor Aspinu  
*(Signature)*  
Victor Aspinu

*Discussed and Approved*  
*(Signature)*  
14/09/2012

*AS*  
*PH*  
*Jul*  
21/09/12

## APPENDIX C

### EXAMPLES OF RHYMES AND SONGS

#### 1. A LION, A LION

A lion, a lion

A lion has a tail

It has a big head

And a very small waist

And a very small waist.

#### 2. GOOD BETTER BEST

Good better best

May I never rest

Until my good is better

And my better best.

#### 3. FOX, FOX, FOX

Fox, Fox, Fox

Go into the box

No! No! No!

Why? Why? Why?

Because I am too big

Because I am too big.

#### 4. RAIN RAIN GO AWAY

Rain rain go away

Come again another want day



Little children want to play

Rain rain go away

### **5. MAMA, MAMA I AM SICK**

Mama, mama I am sick

Call the doctor very quick

Doctor, doctor shall I die?

No my dear do not cry.

### **6. WHEN YOU SEE A TRAFFIC LIGHT**

When you see a traffic light

There is something you should know,

Red means stop!

Yellow means get ready!

Green means go, go and go away.

### **7. IF YOU WANT TO GROW**

If you want to grow!

If you want to grow Hallelujah!

Read your Bible, pray everyday

Pray everyday, pray everyday

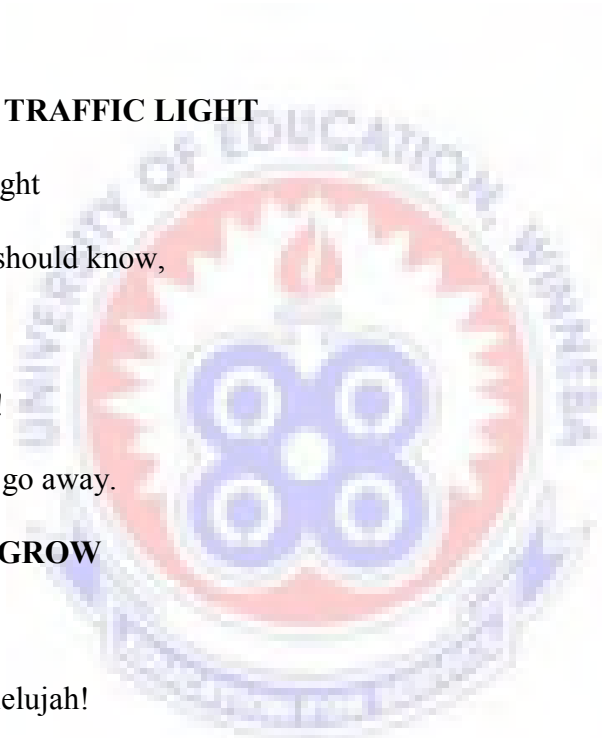
Read your Bible, pray everyday

If you want to grow!

### **8. ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR, FIVE.**

One, two, three, four, five

Pounding fufu near the door



Six, seven, eight, nine, ten

Lunch is ready don't be late.

### **9. ONE, TWO BUCKLE MY SHOE**

One, two buckle my shoe

Three, four, shut the door

Seven, eight, lay them straight

Nine, ten, a big fat hen.

### **10. BAA! BAA! BLACK SHEEP**

BAA! BAA! BLACK SHEEP!

Have you any wool?

Yes! Sir Yes; sir, three bags full,

One for the master, One for the dame,

One for the little boy, Who lives down the lane.

### **11. TWO LITTLE BLACK BIRDS**

Two little black birds

Sitting on a wall

One named Peter

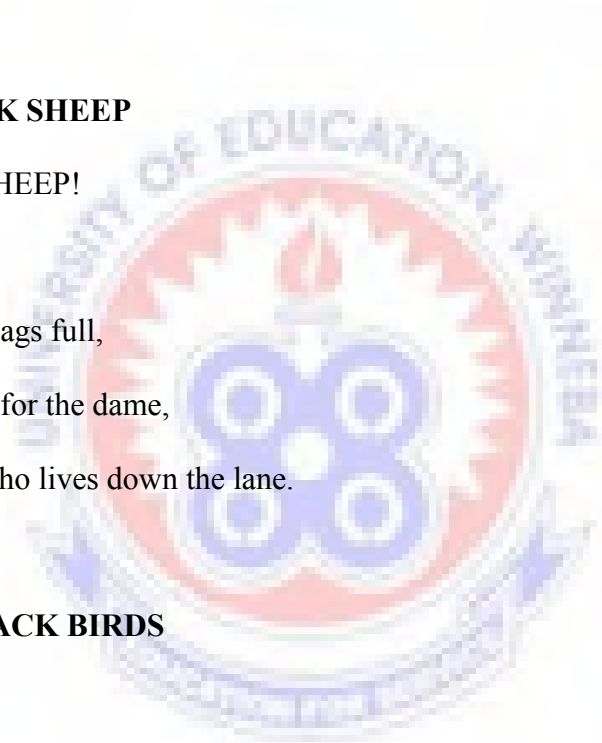
One named Paul

Fly away Peter

Fly away Paul

Come back Peter

Come back Paul.



## 12. DILEMMA OF A GHOST

One early morning

When the moon was up

Shining like the star

I went to Elmina junction

And there and there

I saw a wretched ghost

Going up and down

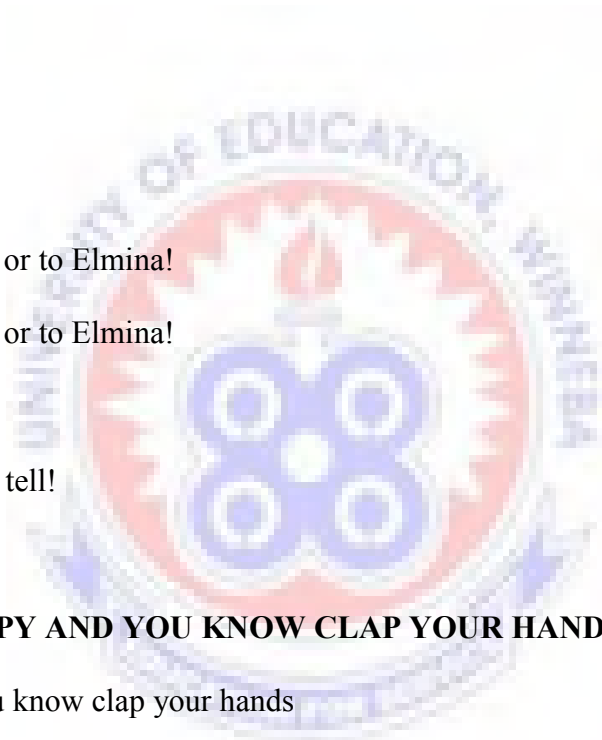
Crying to himself

Shall I go to Cape Coast or to Elmina!

Shall I go to Cape Coast or to Elmina!

I don't know, I can't tell

I don't know Oh! I can't tell!



## 13. IF YOU ARE HAPPY AND YOU KNOW CLAP YOUR HANDS

If you are happy and you know clap your hands

If you are happy and you know and if you really want to say clap your hands

If you are happy and you know say Amen

If you are happy and you know and if you really want to show say Amen

If you are happy and you know stamp your feet

If you are happy and you know and if you really want to show stamp your feet.