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EFFECTIVENESS OF SONGS AND RHYMES IN TEACHING BASIC FRENCH VOCABULARY IN SOME PRIMARY SCHOOLS WITHIN LOKOJA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effectiveness of songs and rhymes in teaching basic French vocabulary in some primary schools within Lokoja Local Government Area of Kogi State. The study was guided by three research questions which examined the impact of songs on basic French vocabulary acquisition, the role of rhymes in improving French pronunciation and retention, and the challenges faced by teachers in incorporating songs and rhymes into French language teaching. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The respondents comprised 10 French language teachers and 50 pupils selected from five primary schools in Lokoja Local Government Area. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analysed using mean scores, with a criterion mean of 2.50. The findings revealed that songs have a positive impact on pupils' interest, participation, vocabulary acquisition and recall, with teachers recording a grand mean of 3.30 and pupils 3.33. The findings also showed that rhymes improve pupils' French pronunciation, oral confidence, sound-pattern recognition and vocabulary retention, with teachers recording a grand mean of 3.24 and pupils 3.33. However, the study identified inadequate instructional materials and audio resources, limited instructional time, insufficient teacher competence and classroom-management difficulties as major challenges, with a grand mean of 3.14. The study concluded that songs and rhymes are useful pedagogical resources for teaching French vocabulary and pronunciation. It was recommended that teachers regularly integrate songs and rhymes into French lessons, while schools should provide appropriate instructional resources, adequate teaching time and relevant teacher training.

KEYWORDS: Songs, Rhymes, French Language Teaching, Vocabulary Acquisition, Primary School Pupils, Language Learning, Teaching Strategies, Lokoja Local Government Area.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

language acquisition, particularly in young learners, is a complex process influenced by various pedagogical strategies. teaching basic vocabulary in language like french to primary school pupils often poses challenges due to limited attention spans and varying cognitive levels. innovative techniques such as the use of songs and rhymes have gained prominence because they engage multiple learning modalities—auditory, linguistic, and mnemonic thereby facilitating better retention and recall of vocabulary (murphey, 1992: 112).

The global trend towards music-oriented lifestyles has fundamentally reshaped the classroom environment, where educators are increasingly turning to music and songs defined as organized auditory practices that express human emotion and provide rhythmic, repetitive structures—to facilitate learning (Balogun, 2025: 136). In the context of basic schools, which represent the critical foundational phase of a child's education, this approach is particularly transformative. Because children at this level possess an innate capacity for language acquisition, the "ludic" or playful nature of music serves as an effective conduit for introducing the French language, a tongue often characterized by its melodic and romantic structure (Benmedjahed, 2018: 25).

The effectiveness of this approach relies on the process of teaching, which is no longer limited to rote memorization but involves the purposeful use of songs as authentic pedagogical tools to guide learners through pre-listening and post-singing activities (Balogun, 2025: 141). Through this systematic instruction, the primary goal is to enhance vocabulary the essential building blocks of communication. Unlike traditional textbook methods that can lead to boredom, songs utilize natural repetition, which has been shown to significantly improve the retention of these words by creating meaningful contexts for the learner (Dzakey & Agobia, 2024: 249).

Furthermore, the integration of music into these lessons plays a vital role in refining pronunciation. By engaging with French lyrics, students are exposed to the specific phonology, rhythm, and intonation of the language, allowing them to internalize these sounds in a low-pressure environment (Balogun, 2025: 137). This exposure is crucial for young learners who may struggle with the phonetic nuances of a foreign language; the rhythmic cadence of the song acts as a mnemonic device that helps students bridge the gap between hearing the target language and speaking it with confidence (Benmedjahed, 2018: 27).

Songs and rhymes integrate melody and rhythm, which stimulate memory and make repetitive language input more enjoyable (Medina & Clarke, 2019: 121). In language instruction, music has been shown to enhance phonological awareness, vocabulary acquisition, and pronunciation skills. For young learners, songs and rhymes provide contextualized language input within an emotionally positive environment, increasing motivation and lowering affective filters (Krashen, 1982: 24). This holistic engagement is particularly effective in early childhood education where play-based and multisensory learning approaches prove beneficial.

Focusing on French as a foreign language, its introduction at the primary school level in Nigeria aims to prepare learners for global communication and multicultural understanding. French ranks among the widely taught second foreign languages in Nigerian schools due to its diplomatic, cultural, and economic relevance (Adeyemi, 2017: 8). However, teaching French vocabulary effectively remains a challenge because of limited exposure outside the classroom, phonological differences between English and French, and resource constraints (Chukwuemeka, 2015: 14). This necessitates the search for teaching methods that reinforce vocabulary acquisition in engaging ways.

Lokoja, the capital of Kogi State, presents a unique sociolinguistic environment where primary schools have increasingly incorporated French language instruction into their curricula. Despite policy support, there is scant empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of pedagogical tools, such as songs and rhymes, used by teachers to improve French vocabulary among young learners in this region. Understanding how these methods impact pupils' vocabulary learning outcomes could inform curriculum development and teacher training programs.

This study therefore seeks to investigate the effectiveness of songs and rhymes in teaching basic French vocabulary in some selected primary schools in Lokoja, Kogi State. It situates itself at the intersection of second language pedagogy, early childhood education, and applied linguistics, contributing both to practical teaching strategies and theoretical understanding of language acquisition in multilingual African contexts.

By examining the effectiveness of these tools, this study addresses a critical gap in the local curriculum. The goal is to provide evidence that songs and rhymes are not just recreational devices, but robust instructional tools that can significantly improve the acquisition of basic French vocabulary, phonological awareness, and overall communication skills among students in Lokoja.

1.1 Statement of Problem

The research problem centers on a persistent disconnect between the theoretical potential of music in language learning and its systematic application in basic schools. Thematically, a major barrier is the entertainment belief by educators and curricula, who see songs as recreational roleplay rather than viewing them as rigorous instructional assets. While literature affirms that music engages both the heart and mind, there remains a critical lack of focus on how this emotional engagement can be harnessed to achieve measurable, foundational gains in French vocabulary. Consequently, teachers in Lokoja Local Government often struggle to move beyond superficial use of music, leaving the potential for deep, context-rich linguistic acquisition largely untapped.

Currently, many teachers use music in the classroom without a formal plan, often treating it as a fun break rather than a serious teaching method. This approach makes it difficult to determine if students are truly learning or simply being entertained. As Balogun (2025) points out, the lack of a standardized framework specifically the step by step use of pre-listening, listening, and post-listening activities, prevents teachers from turning songs into effective lessons. This study addresses this gap by replacing informal practices with a structured, empirical model. This process creates a clear "roadmap" for teachers: first, identifying vocabulary gaps; second, using song rhythm and repetition to introduce new words; and third, applying exercises to ensure long-term retention. By moving from personal opinion to measurable data, this study provides a practical guide that will help teachers in Lokoja improve their students' vocabulary and confidence in the French language.

Theoretically, there is a need to better align the "melody-text integration" model with the specific linguistic challenges faced by Nigerian students. Although, evidence suggests that songs act as mnemonic triggers for text retention, there is insufficient research on how this cognitive integration functions when students must reconcile the phonetic nuances of French with their own native linguistic structures (Dzakey & Agobia, 2024, p. 251; Balogun, 2025, p. 147).

This study seeks to close these thematic, methodological, and theoretical gaps by providing empirical evidence that music, when applied with intentionality, serves as a high-impact instructional vehicle. By shifting the focus toward a systematic, song-based vocabulary framework, this research aims at transforming the instructional landscape in Lokoja, proving that the strategic use of rhythm and rhyme is essential for overcoming the barriers of foreign language acquisition in basic schools.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of songs and rhymes in teaching basic French vocabulary in primary schools in Lokoja local governmrnt, Kogi State. The set objectives are;

i. Examine the impact of songs on pupils’ acquisition of basic french vocabulary in basic schools in Lokoja

ii. Assess the extent to which rhymes improve pronunciation and retention of french words among pupils’ in these schools and;

iii. Identify the challenges/difficulties faced by French teachers of Lokoja local government in using songs and rhymes as teaching tools for French vocabulary in those schools?

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the impact of songs on pupuils' acquisition of basic French vocabulary in selected basic schools in Lokoja?

2. How do rhymes improve pronunciation and retention of french words among pulpils in the selected basic schools of Lokoja local government?

3. What challenges do teachers of French face when incorporating songs and rhymes in teaching French vocabulary?

2.0 Literature Review

Vocabulary and Its Role in Language Learning

In the modern foreign language classroom, vocabulary is the essential building block of communication. As highlighted by researchers, vocabulary acquisition extends beyond simple word recognition to include an understanding of phonology, context, and usage (Dzakey & Agobia, 2024: 249). For young learners, vocabulary development is a critical stage that forms the foundation for later listening and speaking proficiency. In the Nigerian context, however, learners often face significant hurdles, including limited exposure to French outside the classroom and the phonological interference of native languages (Adeyemi, 2017: 8). Because children in the basic school age range have shorter attention spans, traditional rote memorization often leads to boredom and low retention. Consequently, current pedagogy emphasizes the need for experiential and multisensory methods that align with the developmental stages of a child, ensuring that vocabulary is presented in ways that are engaging, repetitive, and contextually meaningful (Dzakey & Agobia, 2024; Balogun, 2025).

At the primary level, acquiring basic French vocabulary such as common nouns, verbs, adjectives, and everyday expressions is critical for developing future language skills (Dzakey et al., 2024). However, in Lokoja and similar Nigerian contexts, learners face challenges including limited exposure to French outside classrooms, phonological differences between French and native languages, and shortage of instructional resources (Chukwuemeka, 2015; Adeyemi, 2017). Young learners differ cognitively, emotionally, and socially from adult learners. They have shorter attention spans but are highly responsive to play, rhythm, repetition, and physical movement (Cameron, 2001). Their learning is often experiential and multisensory.

Children learn best when instruction incorporates auditory and kinesthetic elements. Repetition, pattern recognition, and rhythm facilitate memory consolidation in early childhood education (Paquette & Rieg, 2008). Therefore, teaching strategies for primary school pupils must align with their developmental stage to ensure effectiveness. In the Nigerian context, especially in primary schools, classroom engagement plays a major role in language retention. Interactive and participatory methods are more effective than rigid memorization techniques.

Songs as a Pedagogical Tool in Language Teaching

Songs are defined as organized auditory practices that provide rhythmic and repetitive structures, serving as powerful tools to bridge the gap between abstract linguistic structures and meaningful input (Balogun, 2025: 18). Modern educational research has debunked the notion that songs are mere "entertainment" or "fluff," instead classifying them as authentic pedagogical assets (Dzakey & Agobia, 2024: 247). Through their "ludic" or playful nature, songs reduce the affective filter, or the anxiety associated with learning a foreign language, and foster a low-pressure environment conducive to learning. Furthermore, songs act as a "memory trigger," where the melody and the text are encoded as an integral unit in the learner's mind. This melodic-linguistic integration ensures that pronunciation, rhythm, and vocabulary are internalized simultaneously, providing a

more effective pathway for young learners to gain confidence in their speaking abilities (Benmedjahed, 2018; Dzakey & Agobia, 2024).

Songs also reduce anxiety and create a relaxed learning environment, which enhances language acquisition. The emotional engagement created by music strengthens memory retention and improves learners' motivation. When pupils sing French songs containing vocabulary items, they internalize pronunciation and meaning simultaneously. Furthermore, songs promote listening comprehension and speaking practice, which are vital components of vocabulary mastery. They are powerful pedagogical tools that combine melody, rhythm, and repetition to enhance language acquisition by supporting memorization, improving pronunciation, and providing meaningful context for vocabulary. These methods engage multiple learning styles and reduce learners' anxiety, fostering a motivating learning environment (Medina & Clarke, 2019). This is particularly valuable in early childhood education, where multisensory approaches are effective.

Rhymes and Their Role in Vocabulary Development

Rhymes provide a structured linguistic framework characterized by predictable rhythm and phonological similarity, which is instrumental for developing phonemic awareness in young learners. As noted by researchers in contemporary linguistics, rhymes expose children to word families and sound patterns that simplify the retention of new vocabulary (Goswami, 2015: 12). In the Nigerian educational landscape, the integration of rhymes is recognized as a vital strategy to teach not only language but also cultural identity (Adeyemi, 2018: 9). The repetitive nature of rhymes aligns with the cognitive preferences of primary-aged children, turning vocabulary practice into a form of active engagement rather than passive memorization. When students recite rhymes, the lexical items are embedded into long-term memory through a process of rhythmic reinforcement, which is particularly effective for mastering the phonetic nuances of the French language (Pretorius & Mphahlele, 2019; Dzakey & Agobia, 2024).

In Nigerian contexts, traditional rhymes and songs are used to teach language and cultural values (Adeyemi, 2018: 8). For example, rhymes like "Aki and Olukun" are used to teach children about friendship and sharing. These rhymes not only aid in vocabulary development but also help children develop social skills and cultural identity. Furthermore, research has shown that children who are exposed to rhymes and songs have better language skills and are more likely to become proficient readers. The use of rhymes in vocabulary development is supported by various studies. A study by Ehri et al. (2001: 19) found that children who received phonological training, including rhyming activities, showed significant gains in reading and vocabulary skills. Thus, children's ability to recognize rhymes was a strong predictor of their later reading abilities. These findings suggest that incorporating rhymes into language learning activities can have a positive impact on vocabulary development.

Rhymes also encourage participation and collective learning. Their predictable structure makes them easy to memorize, thus strengthening vocabulary retention. When learners recite rhymes repeatedly, lexical items become embedded in long-term memory. The repetitive and rhythmic nature of rhymes aligns with young learners' cognitive preferences, making them effective tools for vocabulary instruction.

Effectiveness of Music-Based Instruction in Vocabulary Retention

The integration of music into language instruction has garnered significant attention in recent years, with research suggesting its efficacy in enhancing vocabulary retention. Studies have consistently shown that music-based instruction can improve vocabulary acquisition and retention, particularly in young learners and second-language learners (Calvert & Tart, 1993; Good et al., 2020). The use of songs and melodies create associations between words and meanings,

facilitating memory recall and promoting phonological awareness. Furthermore, music-based instruction has been found to increase engagement and motivation, leading to improved learning outcomes (Good et al., 2020; Ludke, Ferreira, &Overy, 2014).

A meta-analysis of 20 studies on music-based instruction revealed a significant positive effect on vocabulary retentio. The analysis suggested that music-based instruction is particularly effective for young learners and those learning a second language. The findings of this meta-analysis are supported by previous research, which has consistently shown that music-based instruction can be an effective tool for vocabulary development (Good et al., 2020; Calvert & Tart, 1993; Ludke et al., 2014). As such, music-based instruction can be considered a valuable addition to language instruction, providing an engaging and effective means of promoting vocabulary retention.

Music-based instruction combines cognitive, emotional, and auditory processes, enhancing information processing and recall. Research in language acquisition indicates that melody and rhythm activate multiple areas of the brain, supporting memory consolidation (Medina, 1993: 33). Songs and rhymes transform vocabulary learning from passive memorization to active engagement. This approach enhances participation, motivation, and confidence among pupils. In contexts where foreign language exposure outside the classroom is limited, songs and rhymes provide repeated input necessary for vocabulary acquisition. Thus, integrating songs and rhymes into French vocabulary instruction may improve both immediate recall and long-term retention among primary school pupils. By so doing, such a vocabulary becomes part of their own lexical items.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive survey research design to investigate the effectiveness of songs and rhymes in teaching basic French vocabulary in selected primary schools in Lokoja, Kogi State. The design is considered appropriate because it enables the researcher to collect information from respondents concerning their opinions, experiences and perceptions of the use of songs and rhymes in French vocabulary instruction without manipulating any variables.

3.2 Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

The population of the study consists of French language teachers and primary school pupils offering French in five selected primary schools in Lokoja, Kogi State. The schools are Christ Apostolic Church Nursery/Primary School, Eagle Academy Nursery/Primary School, Faith Academy Nursery/Primary School, St. Anthony Nursery/Primary School and CEFN Nursery/Primary School. The study focuses on pupils in Primary Four to Six because they have had some exposure to French language instruction and can respond meaningfully to the research questions.

The sample comprises 10 French language teachers and 50 pupils, with 10 pupils selected from each school, making a total of 60 respondents. Purposive sampling was used to select schools where French is taught, while simple random sampling was employed to select pupils. Total enumeration sampling was used to include all available French language teachers in the selected schools.

3.3 Instrument for Data Collection

The major instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire designed by the researcher. Two sets of questionnaires were developed: Teachers' Questionnaire (TQ) and Pupils' Questionnaire (PQ). The teachers' questionnaire covered demographic information and items relating to the frequency of using songs and rhymes, vocabulary retention, pupils' engagement,

pronunciation and the effectiveness of music-based instruction. The pupils' questionnaire focused on their enjoyment, participation, understanding and retention of French vocabulary through songs and rhymes. The instruments were structured on a four-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD) and Disagree (D). The pupils' questionnaire was simplified to ensure that the questions were appropriate to their level of understanding.

3.4 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The validity of the research instruments was established through expert assessment. The draft questionnaires were submitted to specialists in French language education, educational measurement and evaluation, as well as the research supervisor, to examine their clarity, relevance and suitability for the study. Their corrections and recommendations were incorporated before the final administration. Reliability was determined through a pilot study conducted in a primary school outside the selected study area, involving five French teachers and 50 pupils. The responses were subjected to Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis, with a coefficient of 0.70 or above considered acceptable.

3.5 Procedure for Data Collection

An introductory letter was obtained from the researcher's institution, and permission was sought from the management of the selected schools before the administration of the questionnaires. The purpose of the study was explained to the respondents, after which the questionnaires were personally administered by the researcher. Pupils were guided where necessary to ensure that they understood the questions correctly. Completed questionnaires were collected immediately to encourage a high response rate. Voluntary participation and confidentiality of respondents' information were maintained throughout the exercise.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics, particularly frequency counts, percentages and mean scores. The mean score was used to determine respondents' level of agreement with each questionnaire item. A decision benchmark of 2.50 was adopted, such that items with a mean score of 2.50 and above were accepted, while those below 2.50 were rejected. The results were presented in tables and interpreted in line with the research questions guiding the study.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Demographic Characteristics of the Teacher Respondents

Table 4.1: Distribution of Teachers by Gender.

S/N	Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Male	4	40.0
2	Female	6	60.0
	Total	**10**	**100**

Table 4.1 shows that 4 (40.0%) of the teacher respondents were male, while 6 (60.0%) were female. This indicates that female teachers constituted a slightly higher proportion of the teacher respondents.

Table 4.2: Teachers' Highest Academic Qualification.

S/N	Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	NCE	2	20.0
2	B.A. (Ed)/B.A. French	5	50.0
3	B.A. with PGDE	2	20.0
4	M.Ed./M.A. French	1	10.0
	Total	**10**	**100**

Table 4.2 reveals that 50% of the teachers possess B.A. (Ed)/B.A. French qualifications, 20% hold NCE, another 20% have B.A. with PGDE, while 10% possess M.Ed./M.A. French qualifications. This indicates varied academic qualifications among the teachers.

Table 4.3: Teachers' Years of Teaching Experience.

S/N	Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	1–5 years	3	30.0
2	6–10 years	3	30.0
3	11–15 years	2	20.0
4	16 years and above	2	20.0
	Total	**10**	**100**

Table 4.3 shows that 3 (30.0%) of the teachers had 1–5 years of teaching experience, 3 (30.0%) had 6–10 years, 2 (20.0%) had 11–15 years, and 2 (20.0%) had 16 years and above. The distribution indicates that the respondents had varied teaching experience.

Analysis of Teachers' Responses

Research Question One: What is the impact of songs on basic French vocabulary acquisition among primary school pupils in Lokoja Local Government Area, Kogi State?

Table 4.4: Teachers' Responses on the Impact of Songs on Basic French Vocabulary Acquisition.

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	The use of French songs increases pupils' interest and active participation during vocabulary lessons.	5	4	1	0	3.40	Accepted
2	Songs help pupils acquire and remember new French words faster than traditional rote memorization methods.	4	5	1	0	3.30	Accepted
3	Systematic integration of pre-listening and post-singing activities enhances long-term vocabulary retention.	4	4	2	0	3.20	Accepted
4	Pupils easily recall basic French vocabulary when learned through songs.	5	3	2	0	3.30	Accepted
S/N	**Item**	**SA**	**A**	**D**	**SD**	**Mean**	**Decision**
5	Integrating songs lowers pupils' language anxiety and creates a relaxed environment for learning new words.	4	5	1	0	3.30	Accepted
	Grand Mean					**3.30**	**Accepted**

Table 4.4 presents teachers' responses on the impact of songs on basic French vocabulary acquisition. All the five items recorded mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. The highest mean of 3.40 was recorded for the view that French songs increase pupils' interest and active participation during vocabulary lessons. This was followed by items 2, 4 and 5, which recorded mean scores of 3.30 each. Item 3 recorded a mean of 3.20. The grand mean of 3.30 indicates that the teachers generally agreed that the use of songs has a positive impact on pupils' acquisition of basic French vocabulary.

Research Question Two: What is the role of rhymes in improving French pronunciation and retention among primary school pupils in Lokoja Local Government Area, Kogi State?

Table 4.5: Teachers' Responses on the Role of Rhymes in Improving Pronunciation and Retention.

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
6	Rhymes expose pupils to sound patterns, making it Easier to master French pronunciation.	5	3	2	0	3.30	Accepted
7	The rhythmic structures of rhymes help pupils overcome first-language phonological interference when speaking French.	3	5	2	0	3.10	Accepted
8	Reciting French rhymes repeatedly reinforces long-term memory of target lexical items.	4	5	1	0	3.30	Accepted
9	Rhyming activities help pupils build oral confidence when pronouncing complex French lexical items.	4	4	2	0	3.20	Accepted
S/N	**Item**	**SA**	**A**	**D**	**SD**	**Mean**	**Decision**
10	Pupils demonstrate better recall of vocabulary word families when taught using structured rhymes.	5	4	0	1	3.30	Accepted
	Grand Mean					**3.24**	**Accepted**

Table 4.5 shows that all five items were accepted because their mean scores were above 2.50. The highest mean score was 3.30, recorded for items 6, 8 and 10. Item 9 recorded 3.20, while item 7 recorded 3.10. The grand mean of 3.24 shows that the teachers agreed that rhymes play an important role in improving pupils' French pronunciation and vocabulary retention.

Research Question Three: What are the challenges faced by teachers in incorporating songs and rhymes into French language teaching in primary schools in Lokoja Local Government Area?

Table 4.6: Teachers' Responses on Challenges of Incorporating Songs and Rhymes.

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
11	Lack of standardized curriculum materials and audio resources hinders effective use of songs/rhymes in French lessons.	5	4	1	0	3.40	Accepted
12	Insufficient instructional time allocated to French periods limits the full execution of pre-, during-, and post-listening activities.	4	5	1	0	3.30	Accepted
13	The belief that songs are mere recreation or entertainment discourages their systematic use as teaching assets.	3	4	2	1	2.90	Accepted
14	Teachers lack technical and formal competence on how to integrate musicand rhymes effectively into French pedagogy.	4	4	1	1	3.10	Accepted
S/N	**Item**	**SA**	**A**	**D**	**SD**	**Mean**	**Decision**
15	Over-excitement or noise generated during song activities makes classroom management challenging.	3	5	1	1	3.00	Accepted
	Grand Mean					**3.14**	**Accepted**

Table 4.6 shows that all the five identified challenges were accepted by the teachers. Lack of standardized curriculum materials and audio resources recorded the highest mean of 3.40, while insufficient instructional time recorded 3.30. Lack of technical and formal competence recorded 3.10, classroom management challenges recorded 3.00, and the perception of songs as mere entertainment recorded 2.90. The grand mean of 3.14 indicates that the teachers generally agreed that the identified factors constitute challenges to the effective use of songs and rhymes in French teaching.

Analysis of Pupils' Responses

Research Question One: What is the impact of songs on basic French vocabulary acquisition among primary school pupils in Lokoja Local Government Area?

Table 4.7: Pupils' Responses on Learning French Vocabulary Through Songs.

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	I enjoy learning new French Words when my teacher uses songs in class.	27	17	4	2	3.38	Accepted
2	Songs help me remember the meanings of French words easily during Exams or revision.	24	19	5	2	3.30	Accepted
3	Singing in French helps me learn new words faster than reading straight from the textbook.	22	20	6	2	3.24	Accepted
4	I feel happy and relaxed whenever we sing French songs in the classroom.	29	15	4	2	3.42	Accepted
5	Learning French through songs and rhymes improves my pronunciation of French words.	25	18	5	2	3.32	Accepted
	Grand Mean					**3.33**	**Accepted**

Table 4.7 shows that all five items recorded mean scores above the 2.50 criterion mean. The highest mean score of 3.42 was recorded for the statement that pupils feel happy and relaxed when French songs are used in class. This was followed by item 1 with a mean of 3.38. Items 5, 2 and 3 recorded mean scores of 3.32, 3.30 and 3.24 respectively. The grand mean of 3.33 indicates that pupils generally agreed that songs contribute positively to their acquisition of French vocabulary.

Research Question Two: What is the role of rhymes in improving French pronunciation and retention among primary school pupils?

Table 4.8: Pupils' Responses on Improving French Pronunciation Through Rhymes.

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
6	Rhymes help me pronounce difficult French words correctly.	26	18	4	2	3.36	Accepted
7	Reception of French rhymes helps me remember the words for a long time.	23	20	5	2	3.28	Accepted
8	I feel confident speaking and repeating French words aloud when we recite rhymes together in class.	25	18	5	2	3.32	Accepted
9	I can repeat French sound patterns easily when my teacher uses rhyming words.	27	16	5	2	3.36	Accepted
	Grand Mean					**3.33**	**Accepted**

Table 4.8 shows that the four items recorded mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. Items 6 and 9 recorded the highest mean of 3.36 each. Item 8 recorded 3.32, while item 7 recorded 3.28. The grand mean of 3.33 indicates that the pupils generally agreed that French rhymes assist pronunciation, confidence and retention of French vocabulary and sound patterns through repetition.

Research Question Three: What are the challenges associated with the use of songs and rhymes in French language lessons?

Table 4.9: Pupils' Responses on Classroom Practice and Challenges.

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
10	My teacher frequently uses songsand rhymes during Frenchlessons.	18	21	8	3	3.08	Accepted
S/N	**Item**	**SA**	**A**	**D**	**SD**	**Mean**	**Decision**
11	It is sometimes difficult to hear or understand the French lyrics when we all sing at the same time.	17	20	9	4	3.00	Accepted
12	I want my teacher to use French songs and rhymes in every French lesson.	25	18	5	2	3.32	Accepted
13	My teacher hardly uses French songs and rhymes in disseminating his/her teaching.	8	13	19	10	2.38	Rejected
	Grand Mean					**2.95**	**Accepted**

Table 4.9 presents pupils' responses on classroom practice and challenges associated with songs and rhymes. Items 10, 11 and 12 recorded mean scores of 3.08, 3.00 and 3.32 respectively and were accepted. Item 13 recorded a mean of 2.38 and was rejected. The grand mean of 2.95 indicates that pupils generally acknowledged the use of songs and rhymes in their French lessons and expressed a preference for their continued use. However, the response to item 11 also indicates that excessive simultaneous singing can sometimes make it difficult for pupils to hear or understand the lyrics.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that songs and rhymes are effective instructional strategies for teaching basic French vocabulary among primary school pupils in Lokoja Local Government Area, Kogi State.

Regarding research question one, the results showed that songs positively influence pupils' acquisition of basic French vocabulary, with teachers recording a grand mean of 3.30 and pupils 3.33, both above the criterion mean of 2.50. This indicates that songs make French lessons more interesting, enjoyable and participatory. They also help pupils remember and recall basic vocabulary, including greetings, numbers and family-related words. The findings suggest that songs promote vocabulary retention, improve pronunciation and encourage active classroom participation.

For research question two, the findings established that rhymes contribute positively to pupils' French pronunciation and vocabulary retention. Teachers recorded a grand mean of 3.24, while pupils recorded 3.33. This suggests that rhymes expose pupils to repeated French sound patterns, improve their ability to pronounce unfamiliar words and strengthen their confidence in oral communication. The rhythmic and repetitive nature of rhymes also helps pupils remember vocabulary for longer periods and participate actively in language-learning activities.

Regarding research question three, the findings revealed that teachers encounter several challenges in incorporating songs and rhymes into French language teaching, with a grand mean of 3.14. The major challenges include inadequate standardized curriculum materials and audio resources, limited instructional time, insufficient teachers' singing skills and inadequate competence in integrating music into language instruction. Classroom management was also identified as a challenge because excessive excitement and noise may affect pupils' concentration and understanding of French lyrics.

In summary, the findings demonstrate that songs and rhymes are valuable tools for improving basic French vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, retention and pupils' participation. However, their effective application requires adequate instructional materials, appropriate teacher training, sufficient lesson time and proper classroom management.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that songs and rhymes constitute useful instructional resources for teaching French vocabulary and pronunciation to primary school pupils in Lokoja Local Government Area. The responses from both teachers and pupils showed that songs can make vocabulary learning more enjoyable, encourage participation and improve recall of new French words.

The study also concluded that rhymes can assist pupils in mastering French pronunciation and retaining vocabulary through repeated exposure to sound patterns. However, the effectiveness of these strategies can be affected by inadequate instructional materials, insufficient time, limited teacher competence and classroom-management challenges.

Therefore, songs and rhymes should be viewed as purposeful pedagogical resources that can complement conventional French language teaching rather than as activities meant solely for entertainment.

6.0 Recommendations

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

1. **vocabulary lessons** to improve pupils' interest, participation and retention of newly introduced French words.
2. **Teachers French language teachers should regularly incorporate appropriate songs into should use French rhymes systematically during pronunciation lessons** to provide pupils with repeated opportunities to practise French sound patterns and develop oral confidence.
3. **School administrators should provide appropriate audio and instructional materials** that will enable French teachers to use songs and rhymes effectively in classroom instruction. Similarly, efforts should be made towards increasing the periods set aside for French lessons.
4. **French teachers should be exposed to workshops and in-service training** on the effective selection and pedagogical use of songs and rhymes in teaching French vocabulary and pronunciation. Equally, teachers should regularly be participating in workshops on how to use songs and rhymes in teaching foreign language like French.
5. **School administrators should provide adequate instructional time for French language activities,** allowing teachers to introduce, practice and reinforce songs and rhymes without unnecessary pressure.

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