

# Using song therapy to demystify the mystery that surrounds the comprehension of poetry: our experience

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## Abstract

**Background/Objectives:** The study, ‘Demystifying the mystery that surrounds the comprehension of poetry through song therapy: Our experience’, adopted a pretest, post-test quasi experimental research design to measure students’ comprehension in English poetry using song therapy.

**Methods/Statistical analysis:** 284 students from selected intact classes in Junior Secondary School II and Senior Secondary School II were used in both experimental and control groups. The experimental groups were taught poetry with songs, while the control groups used the conventional method. The study used 104 male students for the experimental groups, 31 male students for the control group, 107 and 42 females for the experimental and control groups respectively. Means and standard deviation were used for the research questions, while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used for the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

**Findings:** The findings of the study indicate a significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students taught poetry with song therapy and those taught with the conventional approach.

**Improvements/Applications:** good quality teaching makes an impact in the lives of students. Our experiences in the classrooms ignited the enthusiasm to have this study carried out in two different locations and the results still established our previous claims that songs ,when integrated into a poetry tutorial has the potentials to set the stage for erudition by increasing students’ interest, and activating their thinking and ingenuity.

**Keywords:** Song therapy, Demystify, Mystery, Poetry, Experience.

## 1. Introduction

Literature in English is one of the subjects of learning at the senior secondary schools in Nigeria, but at the junior secondary level, it is incorporated within the English language syllabus. Out of the three genres of literature in English obtainable in schools, poetry is often regarded as being abstract in nature. The researchers taught Literature- in -English at the junior and senior secondary schools and had amazing experiences that led to this topic. Poetry as a genre plays a very key role in our lives because it awakens our mind, connects us with ourselves and others and leads us to imagine in synthesizing ways, as necessary by its use of the language of metaphor [1]. Poetry is seen as an abstract course that poses a lot of difficulties to second language learners. This is because nearly all the students frequently get disillusioned, whenever they are in poetry classes and our ugly experiences as poetry teachers recommended that students appear not to like poetry. This is reiterated in the consistent low grades students obtain in poetry in most of the external examinations. This was further buttressed in the West African Examination Council (WAEC) Chief Examiner’s Report [2] on the poetry part of literature – in – English thus: Candidates were narrating poems, when they ought to be discussing, analyzing, probing or elucidation specific ideas, occurrences, view, and assertions etc. Candidates must note that recitation and conversation are not the same... The blunders (unforgivable mistakes) that abound in candidates’ answers often substantiate unfamiliarity with the poems.

This implies that nearly all the candidates, who sat for the WAEC examination of 2013, had trouble giving accurate answers to questions because they were not familiar with a number of the poems they were examined

on. Suffice it to mean that most of the students could have premeditated those poems without internalization hence, when questions were asked in those poems they were not able to memorize issues that relate to them. In other words, the students were never fascinated to the poems in the first place. Poetry has a unique kind of lure that is entrenched in its succinctness, brevity and the power to communicate so much in a limited space [3]. Poetry as a genre of literature is regularly abandoned and badly taught. This is without cognizance to the incredible benefit that literature offers to both teachers and students in particular. We experiential that most teachers of Literature-in-English often avoid teaching poetry due to its unique nature. Consequently they use the time chosen for poetry to teach prose or drama in its place. This is informed by the reality that most teachers are unaware of some meta-cognitive instructional strategies that could be adopted to make literature or poetry classrooms learner-centered spaces. Poetry has a central place in the secondary English syllabus because it helps students in the gaining and use of words. [4], describes poetry thus: Poetry matters because it is a central instance of the use human beings make of words to discover and appreciate. Like other forms of writing we rate, it lends shape and connotation to our experiences and helps us to move self-assuredly in the world we know then to step beyond it. The dispute here is that poetry should be given sufficient time in the English language studies because of the value of language it explores and the inventive experience it offers learners. In [5] provide bigger insight on the significance of literature as a study that makes for the growth of the cognitive, moving and psychomotor domains of an individual. It develops the cognitive domains of the human being as it develops the ability for unfairness, ruling and decision. In affective domain, it shapes an individual's experience, develops his/her compassion and empathy and the look of feelings and emotions. In the psychomotor domain, it provides road for performance and active contribution by the individuals concerned [6].

Poetry imparts very much on feelings and the mind as [5] observes thus: The words in poetry are cautiously chosen in a way to make them sound musical and meaningful. Poetry is written in verse and can only be realized when it is recited or sung. This is because every good poem is first and foremost meant to be sung. Poetry is not easily understood when reading. Research has shown that among the three genres of literature, poetry seems the most difficult. This is because of its vagueness, obscurity, and unfamiliarly nature. As a subject that features outstandingly in the school syllabus, the failure rate in it at the school certificate level in spite of all the good efforts of researches, is a phenomenon that is giving students, teachers and school authorities a big concern. Irrespective of the beauty of poetry, an abysmal record of disappointment has continued to follow it at the school certificate examinations. One begins to doubt why this situation should continue when poetry has a lot of benefits attached to it. We remember vividly that during the period we were teaching poetry in both the Junior Secondary School (JSS) and Senior Secondary School II, nearly all of our students were wholly uninvolved and felt that it does not stimulate their inquisitiveness as the other genres of literature do. The above submission from indicates that an average reader can identify the fact that poetry is an unsung songs. Thus studying poetry under an ineffectual teacher poses great difficulties to second language learners. Pedagogical factors have often been blamed with respect to students' attitude to and performance in poetry. Most of the poetry teachers in schools are not well knowledgeable on the right pedagogy that would make potential students' comprehension of poetry and improve their presentation in poetry related examinations.

The conventional approach that teachers use in the teaching of poetry in secondary schools in Nigeria makes poetry a uninteresting and independent subject of study. Such conventional methods are obvious departure from the child-centred strategies that are required for lifelong learning in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. According to [6], song is an adequate therapy that is able to change the monotonous humor often associated with conventional classrooms. The entertaining and comforting mood often brought by songs to the class eases the effects of certain emotional cases such as dullness, nervousness, lack of self-assurance and the feeling of being in danger. In addition to that, song has a positive pressure on the learning process by motivating students psychologically [7]. In all of the poetry lessons, where we applied song therapy, we revealed that our students were encouraged to be energetically involved in the learning process by making use of their musical awareness [8]. It had been argued that when students pay attention to and learn by heart songs in the class, the lyrics are entrenched in their long-term memory. Neurological researches have shown that musical and lingual processes happen in the same part of the brain and that there are significant similarities between musical and lingual syntax. Earlier observations by indicated that students use songs in the classroom for pleasure, not for erudition. Students have often trivialized the central part message of poetry as mere advisory statements from the poets. He however

concludes that using songs while knowledge can improve the process of erudition, if used with much more care and prudence on the side of the teachers, because students need to appreciate that the treatment is meant for improvement of understanding and not as a mere amusement. Williot as cited in [9], remarks that, song when used as a therapy for fixing comprehension breakdown “improves elocution memory through organizational framework, linear time order, expectation, recurrence, residual learning, lowering affective barriers, and expectation of patterns, declaration cues, gestalt cues or schema and anchors for memory”

In this study, efforts have been made to recognize how the song therapy would be efficiently implemented in English as a second language (ESL) literature classroom during poetry lesson. It is thought that a capable teacher of Literature –in- English should be able to use song in the education of poetry to help understanding and admiration of the poems. Understanding in this context is the capacity of the learners to build an independent meaning from the poems read. This means that Meta cognitively, the student should be made to have information, alertness, and control over any poem they encounter. It suggests mastery, and in this respect mastering the details of each poem studied. This includes the figurative languages of the poems, imageries, symbols, rhyming scheme, theme, plot and other necessary ingredients embedded in a poem. It means the stage, where a learner is at liberty with the details of the poem in a fun-like activity like song. Comprehension remains the trademark of every reading exercise and it could only be established, when a student has taken active role in the erudition exercise such that he/she is able to internalize the details of such exercise and afterward attempts the construction of independent meanings. Comprehension is seen as a critical thinking process because it is a critical thinking act [10].

Schema theory posits that the understanding and elucidation of the text are relative, meaning that definitive conclusions cannot be reached, instead readers seek to land at a coherent and consistent understanding of the text being read. Therefore, [11] buttresses the concept of comprehension in these words: There is no absolute meaning on the page to be interpreted the same by all that is, there is no correct comprehension. The goal of reading extended text is to arrive at a coherent representation of the text. This goal is achievement by readers, weighing and comparing data from their schemata, the text and the context in which the act occurs. To improve readers’ capability to achieve the understanding of poetry, the reader uses his/her metacognitive information and applies met cognitive strategies in a good-humored, but purposeful way throughout the critical thinking process. For the purpose of this study, the researchers resort to the poems in the scheme of work of the intended target audience. The curriculum for the target classes already had poems that were designed for students’ comprehension for the term. From the bank of these poems, the researchers selected the poems that were used for the experiment. In the selection of poems, strict adherence was paid to these rules:

1. We chose poems that were already preselected for students’ use within the period of their study.
2. We selected poems that are not gender biased. To ensure maximum cooperation of both male and female students, we selected poems that have general themes without any form of segregation on gender.
3. All the poems selected had no embarrassing part (s) that would be difficult to explain to the students.
4. Poems that are within the comprehension ability of the learners. In other words, poems that is commensurate to the age of the target audience.

Based on these criteria, the researchers set out to experiment their previous experiences with different sets of students in a different State entirely. Students from both rural and urban areas were also selected to be part of the study. The reason was basically to ascertain, if the song therapy would yield the same result, when used with students in both the rural and urban areas. Music is often referred to as a soothing balm to the soul which does not exclude people living in rural areas. In fact, experience has shown that the students at both the rural and urban areas would perform favorably well in examinations, if they are given equal degree of comfort in learning and are both exposed to child-centered instructional strategies.

## 2. Significance of the study

It is naturally understood that poetry is the hardest and most tricky genre in literature-in-English. This is informed by its strange structure [12]. Most literature-in-English teachers do not teach the poetry aspect of literature, because of the mystery of lack of understanding and difficulty that encircle it. Our decision and choice of song therapy was informed by the reality that poetry, like songs is usually printed in stanzas. Poems are

unsung songs and if students do poorly in it, it is simply because they have neither realized the amusing quality of poem nor the fact that the songs in their hymn books, which they often take delight in chanting, are also poems. Thus we need to find meaningful ways to connect students with poetry in order to widen their understanding of life [13]. Songs are some of those significant ways through which the secrecy surrounding poetry will be demystified. Poetry teachers and students will benefit hugely from this research because it acts as an opener to all.

### 3. Statement of the problem

Song and music in classrooms are often regarded as means of amusement and hobby only. Based on this, students often underestimate the importance of song as an instructive tool. The ceaseless boredom, dissatisfaction, passivity and abstractness that typify poetry lessons are made more manifest in students' poor performance in poetry aspect of the literature- in- English examinations in Nigeria. This study stems from our personal experiences as poetry teachers in secondary schools some years back. We had the greatest challenge of our time trying to fix comprehension breakdown in almost every poetry lesson we had. Thus, when we complained to students of their nonchalant attitude to poetry lesson, they suggested that we should rather concentrate more on other genres of literature such as drama and prose than waste time trying to make them appreciate poetry. This was a sincere demand arising from their obvious extrication with the poetry lessons. Therefore, we met and brainstormed on the best way to fix the comprehension breakdown and we finally resorted to the use of song therapy. This study is a replay of the experiences of the researchers in another empirically verified study.

### 4. Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of song therapy in demystifying the mystery that usually surrounds the comprehension of poetry. Specifically, this study sought to:

- (1) Examine the effect of song therapy on the mean accomplishment scores of students in poetry.
- (2) Establish the mean accomplishment scores of urban and rural school students that were taught poetry using the song therapy.
- (3) Find out the mean accomplishment scores of junior and senior secondary school students that were taught poetry using the song therapy
- (4) Ascertain the mean accomplishment scores of male and female students that were taught poetry using the song therapy

### 5. Research questions

1. What are the effects of song therapy on the mean accomplishment scores of students in poetry?
2. What are the mean accomplishment scores of urban and rural school students that were taught poetry using the song therapy?
3. What are the mean accomplishment scores of junior and senior secondary school students that were taught poetry using the song therapy?
4. What are the mean accomplishment scores of male and female students that were taught poetry using the song therapy?

### 6. Hypotheses

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean accomplishment scores of students taught poetry using the song therapy and those taught with the conventional approach.

**HO<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean accomplishment scores of junior and senior secondary students taught poetry using the song therapy

**HO<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean accomplishment scores of urban and rural secondary students taught poetry using the song therapy

**HO<sub>4</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean accomplishment scores of male and female secondary school students taught poetry using the song therapy.

## 7. Methodology

The population of the study consists of all the JSS II and SSSII students in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State. A multi-stage sampling technique was used in selecting a sample of 284 Junior and senior secondary school students from Abakaliki Education Zone. Six schools were arbitrarily selected from this zone by the ballot system and purposive sampling technique was applied in the assortment of the intact classes from each of the selected schools in both the urban and rural areas. Two JSSII treatment classes and one control were selected from urban and rural schools respectively. The same process was also used in the selection of the SSII classes for the study. The students in each of the classes selected were used without randomization because we needed heterogeneous intact classes of male and female students. We had 120 male and female students for the junior experimental classes, 91 male and female students for the senior experimental classes and 73 students from the two control groups. Making a total of 284 students used as sample for the study. The study adopted a pretest posttest nonequivalence group quasi experimental research design. Six intact classes from urban and rural schools were used in the experiment. Two strategies were adopted for this study: The first strategy was song therapy, while the second strategy was predictable strategy. A test instrument made up of short essay was designed based on the scheme of work of the JSS II and SSSII students in poetry and used for data collection (See Appendix 1). A test retest procedure was applied to a sample of 32 students selected from another education zone not used for study, for the purpose of establishing the internal consistency of the test instrument. A period of two weeks was used for the exercise. The reliability of the test was calculated and 0.82 was obtained using Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient. Six groups of students were used for the study. They are:

1. Experimental Group I: This consists of the JSS II students in the rural school.
2. Experimental Group II: This is made up of the JSSII students in the urban school
3. Experimental Group III: SSS II students in the rural school
4. Experimental Group IV: SSS II students from the school in the urban area
5. Control Group I: JSS II students.
6. Control Group II: SSSII students.

The six groups received 8 weeks of instruction on poetry using song therapy and conventional strategies respectively. Meanwhile, the participants in the six groups were administered the pretest prior to the 8 weeks of treatment. At the end of the treatment, they were also subjected to the posttest. The research assistants, who participated in the study, were also subjected to two weeks of training before the commencement of the treatment. The entire study lasted for 12 weeks. The following steps were used in the administration of the treatment

### 1. Step I: mastery of the song therapy in a poetry class

The songs used in a poetry class must be simple in terms of the rhythm and lyrics and to utilize songs in the poetry class, a certain amount of attention is required. Therefore, the researchers took into consideration the rhythm of some of the popular Christian songs "Stand up, Stand up for Jesus", "Fade, fade each earthly joy" and any other conventional tune that suits the lyrics of the chosen poem(s). The teacher of poetry, who wishes to use song therapy, must be innovative and ingenious to be able to carry the students along. When a particular tune failed to match the words of the selected poem, the teachers kept the class going by realigning the poem to suit any particular tune that might be composed spontaneously. This was exactly the step taken by the researchers in this study.

### 2. Step II: steps to adhere to in the use of song therapy

Whenever a poetry teacher wishes to use song therapy in any classroom environment, such a teacher must ensure that:

1. The classroom is favorable enough. Conduciveness implies a well-ventilated classroom with roomy aisle, where the teacher is able to move around and encourage students, who sit at the far ends of the classrooms to participate.
2. The interest of the students is taken into cognizance. This is predicated on the age of the students, number in class and the general appeal of the chosen rhythm.
3. Teacher factor also played an important role. The teacher has to be involved in music in the first place; his age should also be measured because the older generation of teachers appears see song therapy as an unnecessary distraction and undue waste of instruction time. This is because of their conservative inclination to traditional teaching strategies. Hence, the researchers considered age as an important factor in the selection of research assistants.
4. The lesson hours are adequate and appropriate. This therapy was used throughout double periods because the aim was to give the teacher huge time to sing the poem repeatedly before delving into the literary appreciation/analysis of the poem.

### **3. Step III: interactive / demonstration sessions in poetry classes using song therapy**

Model expression with regards to the reading/narration of the poems is the first approach to this therapy, followed by singing the selected poems by the teacher. The social learning theory highlights the importance of learning in a social context, because it is known to enhance comprehension. Therefore, during treatment, interactive sessions and demonstrations were built into the lesson. Every student was given opportunity to interact freely with other members of the class. At this step students were made to sing the poems repeatedly after the teacher, following the adopted tune; form small groups of 8-10 students, where those, who had mastered the tune of the song act as models for their peers. This was followed by the literary appreciation of the poem both in small groups and whole class situation.

### **4. Step IV: ways of adhering to an already known tune in every poetry class**

This is where the ingenuity of the poetry teacher is required. The poetry teacher adapts the poem to the chosen conventional tune and models the tune to the students. In this regard, the researchers made use of the popular conventional tunes of "Stand up, Stand up for Jesus" and "Fade, Fade each earthly Joy". If a teacher finds out that the words of a poem are longer or shorter to adapt to an already known tune, the teacher should quickly switch to another tune. This approach calls for adequate preparation and practice by the teacher prior to the lesson.

### **5. Step V: ways to ensure maximum students' participation**

During the use of song therapy, the students were divided into smaller groups to achieve a deeper comprehension of the poem. The teacher produces the model tune and synchronizes the tune with the poems in a whole class. After that, the song continues until the teacher assigns them to their groups, where they consolidate on the practice and go into the admiration of the poems. At the end of the small group meetings, the teacher reconvenes the students for a whole class discussion of the poems and further literary analysis of the poems.

### **6. Step VI: modeling pattern required of any teacher who uses song therapy in a poetry class**

In the study, we took severe adherence in training the research assistants into the right modeling pattern required of them during the experiment. This modeling pattern includes the following:

1. Creativity
2. Spontaneity
3. Availability
4. Relative good voice
5. Movement and
6. Flexibility

The research questions were answered using inferential statistics of mean and standard deviation, while the hypotheses were analyzed with the Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) at 0.05 level of significance.

**7. Results**

*Table 1. Mean achievement scores of secondary school students taught poetry using the song therapy and those taught with the conventional approach*

<b>Methods</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
Song Therapy	56.55	9.7	211
Conventional Method	33.85	10.81	73

What is the effect of song therapy on the mean achievement scores of students in poetry? Table 1 show that the experimental groups had a mean of 56.55 and a standard deviation (SD) of 9.7, while the control groups taught with conventional strategy had a mean of 33.85 and a standard deviation of 10.81. This is an indication that the song therapy had a positive effect on students exposed to the treatment. What are the mean achievement scores of urban and rural school students that were taught poetry using the song therapy?

*Table 2. Mean achievement scores of urban and rural secondary school students taught poetry using the song therapy*

<b>School Location</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
Urban	56.82	9.73	123
Rural	56.18	9.93	88

Evidence from the result on the mean achievement in Table 2 scores of urban and rural students taught poetry using song therapy, shows that the urban students obtained a mean of 56.82 and a SD of 9.73, while the students in the rural schools had a mean of 56.18 and SD of 9.93. The closeness in the results proved that both the students in the rural and urban areas had better performance through exposure to the song therapy. What is the mean achievement scores of Junior and Senior secondary school students that were taught poetry using the song therapy?

*Table 3. Mean achievement scores of junior and senior secondary school students taught poetry using the song therapy*

<b>Class categories</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
Junior Secondary	56.81	9.51	120
Senior Secondary	56.22	10.21	91

Table 3 shows that JSS II students, who were taught poetry with song therapy had a mean score of 56.81 and a SD of 9.51, while the SSII students taught with the song therapy had a mean score of 56.22 and a SD of 10.2 showing that both performed significantly well with the song therapy. What are the mean achievement scores of male and female students that were taught poetry using the song therapy? From the result presented in Table 4, we can deduce that the male students obtained mean scores of 56.74 and SD of 9.24, while the female students had a mean achievement score of 56.37 and a SD of 10.35. The nearness in the mean scores shows that both the male and female students did well with the therapy.

*Table 4. Mean achievement scores of male and female secondary school students taught poetry using the song therapy*

<b>Gender Categories</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>N</b>
Male	56.74	9.24	104
Female	56.37	10.35	107

### 8. Hypothesis

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students taught poetry using the song therapy and those taught with the conventional approach

*Table 5. Analysis of Co-variance for students overall poetry achievement scores by teaching method*

Sources of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F.cal	F.cv
Covariate	35845.170	1	35845.170	904.730	
Main Effect (Method)	8625.210	1	8625.210	217.700	3.89
Explained	45517.171	5	9103.434	229.770	
Residual	11014.294	278	39.620		
Total	56531.465	283	199.758		

Result of data analysis summarized in Table 5 reveals that the calculated F. value is 217.700, while the critical value at alpha level of 0.05 is 3.89. The decision rule is to reject the null hypothesis when the calculated value exceeds the critical value. Based on the decision rule, the null hypothesis was rejected and the study concludes that there is a significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students taught poetry using the song therapy and those taught with the conventional strategy. **HO<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of junior and senior secondary school students taught poetry using the song therapy.

*Table 6. Analysis of Co-variance for students' poetry achievement scores by class category*

Sources of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F.cal	F.cv
Covariate	9962.301	1	9962.301	216.944	
Main Effect (Class)	229.418	1	229.418	4.996	3.89
Explained	10880.071	8	1360.009	29.616	
Residual	9276.052	202	45.921		
Total	20156.123	210	95.982		

Summary of data analysis in Table 6 reveals that the calculated F. value is 4.996, while the critical F. value is 3.89. Since the calculated value is greater than the critical value at 95% confidence level, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that there is a significant difference in the mean achievement scores of junior and senior secondary school students exposed to the treatment. **HO<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of urban and rural secondary school students taught poetry using the song therapy.

As shown in Table 7, the calculated F. value (15.320) is greater than the critical F. value (3.89) at the alpha level of 0.05. The researchers therefore reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant difference in the mean achievement scores of urban and rural secondary school students taught poetry using the song therapy

**HO<sub>4</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of male and female secondary school students taught poetry using the song therapy.

*Table 7. Analysis of Co-variance for students' poetry achievement scores by school location*

Sources of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F.cal	F.cv
Covariate	9962.301	1	9962.301	216.944	
Main Effect (location)	703.523	1	703.523	15.320	3.89
Explained	10880.071	8	1360.009	29.616	
Residual	9276.052	202	45.921		
Total	20156.123	210	95.982		



The result on Table 8 shows that the calculated F. value is 0.587, while the critical F. value at the alpha level of 0.05 is 3.89. The calculated value in this case is less than the critical value at the given alpha level. Based on the decision rule, the researchers accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of male and female secondary school students taught poetry using the song therapy.

**Table 8.** Analysis of Co-variance for students' poetry achievement scores by gender

Sources of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F.cal	F.cv
Covariate	9962.301	1	9962.301	216.944	
Main Effects (gender)	26.957	1	26.957	0.587	3.89
Explained	10880.071	8	1360.009	29.616	
Residual	9276.052	202	45.921		
Total	20156.123	210	95.982		

## 9. Summary of findings

The summary of findings includes the following:

1. The students in the experimental groups had a higher mean achievement scores compared to students in the control group
2. The mean achievement scores of students in the urban school was higher than the mean scores of the students in the rural secondary school
3. The mean achievement scores of junior secondary school students(JSSII) students exposed to the treatment was greater compared to their senior secondary school secondary (SSS) counterparts
4. The male students exposed to the treatment had a higher mean score than the female students ,therefore the null hypothesis was rejected
5. The mean achievement scores of junior and senior secondary students taught with the song therapy was significant
6. The null hypothesis was rejected
7. There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of male and female secondary school students taught poetry using the song therapy

## 10. Discussion

The findings of this study are quite interesting. They confirm the experiences we had in our classrooms, when we used song therapy. The result shows that song therapy has no limit or boundary with respect to its application because all the students in the experimental classes (JSS and SSS II) showed a remarkable improvement in their comprehension of poetry. This is in agreement with the assertion of [14], that music has a way of connecting the function of the right and left hemisphere of the brain so that they work together towards making learning quick and easy. He further opines that music and song promote more complex thinking and assist in making connection for emotions, thinking and learning. This result also collaborated the assertions of Temple, Ogle, Crawford and [15], that song helps students recognize and use rhymes; memorize words, phrases and sentences. This is true because song enhances repetitions and constant repetitions of words register such words in the memory of singers.

The findings also show that both students at the rural and urban areas enjoyed the use of song therapy. This was predicated on their commendable performances. The variable of 'location' was deliberately built into this study, because the researchers wanted to establish the fact that song therapy would also assist students in the rural areas as it does those in the urban area. However, there was an indication that students in the urban areas

performed better than their contemporaries in the rural areas. The difference in the performance may be attributed to certain factors associated with students who attend schools in the rural areas: truancy, constant absenteeism from classes; poor attitude to reading, poor parental involvement in students' school work, poverty, and low linguistic ability. It was found that most of the students in the rural schools were not regular and consistent in their participation. This is believed to have affected their performances in the study and this therefore confirms the earlier assertion by [16] that most students often trivialize the core essence of song therapy as a tool for learning.

The improvement in the comprehension of poetry cuts across class levels, exposing the dynamism of using song therapy and the resultant effect. The performance of the junior secondary school students involved in the study was quite impressive compared to those in the senior secondary levels. This could be attributed to their age and class levels, because they are still fresh from primary school where they have been immersed in song and play as major tools for learning. The performance of the male and female students provided another area of excitement in this study. It has generally been argued that boys performed better than girls in cognitive tasks but the use of songs provided an opportunity for girls to make their voices heard. This confirms [17] submission that song, when used across curriculum helps all students' not just boys, learn across the curriculum. The findings of the study, therefore, is a positive indication of the need for language educators and reading teachers to provide diverse student - centred pedagogical strategies in their classrooms to meet students' needs, fortify their identified areas of strength and make them more independent and successful learners.

## 11. Conclusion

Teachers in this 21<sup>st</sup> century should explore all the available options through which learning will be maximized [18] avers that since Advertisers and filmmakers realize and utilize the power of music to evoke not only emotions, but also get our attentions and affect our choices and decisions in the products they promote, educators should explore the potentials in music, as advertisers of industries have done, and use it to advantage towards helping students to learn. Songs are powerful pedagogical strategy that could be used to demystify the mysteries that often shroud the act of mastering poems. Most students, who developed aversion for poetry as a genre of literature, attributed that to the abstract and technical nature of poetry.

They feel that the poetic license of the poets gives them opportunity to use obsolete, queer and difficult words that often mar comprehension. However, our experiences in the classrooms were very productive, because our students changed their conception of poetry and developed interest and likeness to it as they do their favorite songs. Good teaching makes an impact in the lives of students. Our experiences in the classrooms ignited the passion to have this study carried out in two different locations and the findings still confirmed our earlier claims that songs ,when incorporated into a poetry lesson has the potentials to set the stage for learning by increasing students' interest, and activating their thinking and creativity. It was a worthwhile study, because all the students enjoyed every bit of the class interaction and a social learning environment was created in for maximum comprehension. We were able to build confidence in the learners though this strategy and their active involvement helped them to take control of their learning and become independent readers.

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