CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND REASEACH

This chapter reviews the literature and research related to African American Vernacular English and hip hop songs, and teaching English through songs and dialects. The review is divided into 5 sections: 1) history and social background of African American Vernacular English (AAVE), 2) AAVE grammatical features, 3) history of hip hop songs, 4) the importance of music and songs in EFL teaching and learning, and 5) a review of previous related studies about teaching English through songs and dialects.

History and social background of African American Vernacular English (AAVE)

African American Vernacular English (AAVE) originated from the trans-Atlantic African slave trade. It also has features spoken and used in the British Isles during the 16th and 17th centuries. The language was used by the African slaves and later adapted by the blacks who by then were in need of communication as African captives. Unique patterns were distinctly observed. These captives have eventually developed pidgins (mixture of two or more languages), these pidgins have soon turned into Creoles (i.e., full-fledge languages with their own linguistic features, which have native speakers). Until now, some blacks still speak these Creoles.

It is said that any language used by particular groups of people will gradually split into dialects. AAVE is in many ways reciprocal to the Southern American English in terms of pronunciation. West African languages are reflections of AAVE's traits. These are shown through its grammatical structures, changes in pronunciation, slang and the use of tenses. "Bogus and yam" are just few of some AAVE words that are adopted in Standard American English.

Due to the need of differentiation and pride, AAVE has seperated from the main stream SAE. This was also caused by the cultural differences between blacks and whites. Nevertheless, AAVE has survived and thrived through many centuries.

AAVE is used by most blacks, regardless of their social status, in both informal and intra-ethnic communication. This has caused controversy in the U.S. for some time because of its dinstinct forms. (Wikipedia encyclopedia, 2005. Online)

AAVE Grammatical features

This section covers AAVE phonological features, aspect marking, lexical features and other grammatical characteristics.

Phonological features

1. Diphthongs

Some diphthongs are reduced to monophthongs, for example, "my" is reduced to "ma" and "boy" is reduced to "boh"

2. Fricatives

Voiceless dental fricative [θ] and voiced dental fricative [ð] are changed into the alveolar stops [t] or [d], depending on the positon. The rule for AAVE can be expressed as the follows:

2.1
$$\begin{bmatrix} - & \text{sonorant} \\ + & \text{consonantal} \\ + & \text{continuant} \\ + & \text{dental} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} - & \text{continuant} \\ - & \text{dental} \\ + & \text{alveolar} \end{bmatrix} / \quad \#\text{---}$$

2.2
$$\begin{bmatrix} - & \text{sonorant} \\ + & \text{consonantal} \\ + & \text{continuant} \\ + & \text{dental} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} - & \text{dental} \\ + & \text{labiodental} \end{bmatrix} / \quad \text{---}$$

3. Non-rhotic

AAVE is non-rhotic; therefore, the alveolar approximant [ɹ] sound is omitted, if it is not followed by a vowel.

4. Absence of *ng* [ŋ]

AAVE drops the velar nasal *ng* [ŋ] and replaces it with the alveolar nasal [n] in both function and content morphemes with two syllables. For example, "living"

becomes "livin" and "riding" becomes "ridin, but this is not true to one-syllable words like "sing" which is not changed to "sin", and "ring" which is not changed to "rin". However, "singing" is pronounced as "singin", and "ringing" as "ringin".

5. Homogeneous Final Consonant Clusters

These are reduced as in "tes" (test) and "han" (hand). "Pant" is retained because it contains a voiced [n] and an unvoiced [t] sound.

6. Transposition of Consonants

Adjacent consonants are transposed as in "aks" (ask) and "maks" (mask)

7. Pronunciation of /ɛ/ and /ɪ/ as /ɪ/ ; thus, making words homonyms. For example, "pen" and "pin" are pronounced the same.

8. Pronunciation of /ɪ/ and /iː/ before 'l', making "feel" and "fill" homonyms.

9. Absence of /t/ for contractions. For example, "don't" and "ain't" are pronounced as /doʊn/ and /eɪn/, respectively.

10. Word initial /d/, /b/, and /g/ are dropped. For example,"don't" becomes "own".

11. Lowering of /ɪ/ to /ɛ/ or /æ/ before /ŋ/ as in "theng/thang" for "thing".

Aspect marking

The use of forms of *to be* to mark aspect in verb phrases is the most distinguishing feature of AAVE. One can determine the performance of the verb as habitual in nature through the use of *usually, often, sometimes,* and the like.

The origin of the verb *to be* to indicate a habitual status or action in AAVE is a hotly contested issue among experts and is believed to come from the West African Languages. (Wikipedia encyclopedia, 2005. Online). A summary of aspect marking of AAVE is shown in Table A.

Table A: Aspect marking

Example	Name	SE Meaning / Notes
He walkin'.	Simple progressive	He is walking [right now].
He be walkin'.	Habitual/continuative aspect	He walks frequently or habitually. Better illustrated with "He be walkin' morning week."
He be steady walkin'.	Intensified continuative	He is walking in an intensive/sustained manner.
He been (unstressed) walkin'.	Perfect progressive	He has been walking.
He been had that car.	Remote phase (see below)	He has had that car for a long time, and still has it.
He done walked.	Emphasized perfective	He already walked. Syntactically, "He walked" is valid, but "done" is used to emphasize the completed nature of the action.
He finna [or "fittin' (fi-t&n) nuh"] go to work.	Immediate future	He's about to go to work. *Finna* is a contraction of "fixin' to
I was walkin' home, and I **had** worked all day.	Preterite narration.	"Had" is used to *begin* a preterite narration. Usually it occurs in the first clause of the narration, and nowhere else.

Negation

In addition to aspect marking, negatives are formed differently from the SAE as follows:

1. The use of "ain't" as a general negative indicator instead of SAE "am not", "isn't", or "aren't".

2. Negation agreement as in "I didn't go nowhere". That is, if the sentence is negative, all negatable forms are negated too. It may take its roots from the West African languages, but is usually stigmatized in SAE.

3. In the case of indefinite subjects (e.g., "nobody" instead of "Molly" or "he"), it can be inverted by the negative qualifier. For example, " Don't nobody know the answers" (Nobody knows the answer) is a multiple negation, which emphasizes the nagative and is not interrogative, as it should be in SAE. (Wikipedia encyclopedia, 2005. Online)

Lexical features

SAE is still influenced in AAVE. However, some difference in the meaning is likely to be observed. For example, "chill" means "to relax".

AAVE has its separate vocabulary that does not have any equivalent to the SAE. This is most striking. Some of these words are of no knowledge to the whites and only limited blacks recognize these. (Wikipedia encyclopedia, 2005. Online)

Other grammatical characteristics

William Labov, a sociolinguist, published the first thorough study of AAVE in 1965. He stressed the notable characteristics of dropping few words especially in double negatives and the use of "has been", as demonstrated below.

1. Dropping of Copula (a verb as be or seem that links the subject to the predicate) as in "You crazy!" instead of "You are crazy!".

2. Uninfection for third person singular verbs. The –s ending is omitted in the

third person singular verb, as in "She write poetry", instead of "She writes poetry".

3. No -s ending possessions. The unmarked possitive is understood by the way words are arranged in order, as in "My mama sister" for "My mama's sister".

4. "It" means something and is similar to "there" in SAE. For example, "It's a doughnut in the cabinet" means "There's doughnut in the cabinet." Also, "It ain't no spoon" means "There's no spoon".

5. Syntactic alternation especially in questions. Words are mixed up and therefore appears to be vague. For example, "How you tole her I'm try'na see him?" means "Why did you tell her I want to see him?".

6. Usage of "say" in introducing quotations either direct or indirect, for example, "I thought, say, 'Why don't he rap wit' her?'" (Wikipedia encyclopedia, 2005. Online)

Ibrahim (1999), Fromkin and Rodman (1998) also concluded features that make AAVE different from the standard language are as follows:

1. Absence of the auxiliary "Be": in Standard English the verb can be contracted, while in AAVE sentences it is deleted. For example, in Standard English "They are so cool" is replaced by "They so cool" in AAVE.

2. AAVE negative concord: they use double negative in their sentences. For example, "He is not doing nothing" is considered to be illogical by some people and teachers.

3. The distributive "Be" is used if the speaker is referring to habitual action. For example, "Kelly be late" has the same meaning as "Kelly is habitually late" in Standard English.

4. Absence of "R": AAVE includes a rule of r-deletion that deletes /r/ everywhere, except before a vowel. For example, "god" is used for SAE "guard", "saw" for SAE "sore", and "caught" for SAE "court".

5. Absence of "L": AAVE speakers use an l-deletion rule, like "huk" for SAE "hulk", "hep" for SAE "help", and "awe" for SAE "all".

6. Consonant cluster simplification: AAVE simplifies consonant clusters, particularly at the ends of words and when one of the two consonants is an alveolar (/t/,/d/,/s/,/z/). For example, "meant" and "mend" are pronounced as "men", and "past" and "passed" are pronounced as "pass".)

7. Neutralization of [$\acute{\iota}$] and [ε] before nasals. The lack of distinction between /$\acute{\iota}$/ and /ε/ before nasal consonants produce identical pronunciations of "pin" and "pen", "bin" and "ben", and so on. Another change is reduction of a diphthong to a simple vowel without a glide, as in "boy" for "boil".

8. Loss of interdental fricatives. A regular one is changed. For example, "Ruth" is pronounced as [ruf]

African American Vernacular English (AAVE) in the United States is referred to be the language of the urban and rural communities. It is spoken everyday by the working class as well. AAVE in some respects is in common with the southern U.S. English. Considering its origins and pronunciation features, it is similar to West African languages. It also shares common features with the Creole English dialects used by blacks in most places.

History of hip hop songs

Hip hop songs are rooted from West African and African American music. It is a cultural movement of which music is a part. It is composed of rapping, delivery of fast lyrics, vocals, and Djing. Fashion is also an important factor.

In the 1970's, hip hop arose in New York City, especially in the Bronx. It was started by the block parties. This happened along the streets of Bronx where teenagers gathered together. Block parties usually had music which was either funk or soul. Arrangements of the sound were then made, making the music more danceable and entertaining. Jamaicans who moved to the U.S. made a great impact on the birth of this type of music. These people became famous for this technique for they were lovers of fast-beat music. (Wikipedia encyclopedia, 2005. Online)

The importance of music and songs in EFL teaching and learning

Murphy (1990. cited in Ronnapop Klomkliang, 2000. p. 21) distinguishes two definitions of songs from the statement of Rousseau (1781):

Song-1 is intonational vocalizations having musical features of pitch, intensity,

and rhythmic variation, characterized by continuous repetition and functioning emotionally, or playfully.

Song-2 is the definition of song-1 plus language used in a contiguously musical fashion.

From these definitions of songs, we can see that songs have something that can be generally grouped into two: songs that are devoid of language (words) and songs by plus language.

Many teachers are amazed on how quick students are at learning songs. It is a common experience to forget nearly everything we learn in another language except the few songs that we learn. Murphy (1992. pp. 6-8) gives reasons why songs stick in our minds and become part of us, and lend themselves easily to exploitation in the classroom as follows:

1. Although modern technology has universalized access to song, it is possible that song actually precedes and aids the development of speech in homo-sapiens. To sing vocalizations is significantly easier than speech and it is easier to sing language than to speak it.

2. Songs also appear to precede and aid the development of language in young children. A growing body of research indicates that the musical babbling is extremely important in the development of language in young children.

3. Songs are 'adolescent motherese' for adults. Their fascination with music may be seen as partly stemming from their need and desire for such attention.

4. It is hard to escape music and song, as it occupies ever more of the world around us: in operating theaters, restaurants, shopping malls, at sports events, in our cars, and literally everywhere for those with a walkman.

5. 'The song stuck in my head' phenomenon (the echoing in our minds of the last song we heard after leaving our car or a restaurant, and which can be both enjoyable and sometimes unnerving) also seems to reinforce the idea that songs work in our short-term and long-term memory.

6. Songs may strongly activate the repetition mechanism of the language acquisition device. It certainly seems to do so with children, who learn songs almost effortlessly.

7. Songs in general also use simple, conversational language, with a lot of repetition, which is just what many language teachers look for in sample texts. The fact that they are affective makes them many times more motivating than other texts.

8. Songs can be appropriated by listeners for their own purposes, largely because most pop songs do not have precise people, place, or time references. For those who find them relevant, songs happen whenever and wherever one hears them and they are, consciously or subconsciously, about the people in one's own life.

9. Most songs are relaxing. They provide variety of fun, and encourage harmony within oneself and within a group. This is why they are important tools in sustaining cultures, religions, patriotism, and revolutions.

10. Songs are short, self – contained texts, recordings, and films that are easy to handle in a lesson. Moreover, the supply is inexhaustible.

Abbott (2004. pp. 10-13) stated that many ESL teachers opted to use music in their classrooms because it played a significant role in culture and communication. Cultures had musical traditions because of the enjoyment people received from creating rhythms and expressing their feelings, ideas, thoughts, and cultural values through lyrics. Song lyrics generally used rhyme, and rhyming was fun. Hence, singing, performing, listening to music were often associated with play, happiness, and relaxation. Evidently, music activities had the power to excite, move, and soothe learners in the language classroom. There were several additional cognitive and affective benefits for using music in the EFL classroom. Because song lyrics were often highly repetitive, their use might help automate L2 (second language) skills by exposing learners to forms, syntax, lexical items, segmentals, and suprasegmentals. Additionally, the repetitive nature of the lyrics could promote the learning of formulaic chunks of language that could be used as ready made words in future conversations and provide meaningful contexts for teaching vocabulary, they dealt with relevant topics and included forms and functions that could reinforce common themes and structures that were being covered in the language program. Another important rationale for using music in the classroom was that music activities could resist in developing language abilities in listening, speaking, reading, and writing while also providing a break from regular classroom routines.

Lem (2001: cited in Kannika Martom p.26) believed that music could be used to

build listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing skills; to increase vocabulary; and to expand cultural knowledge. Students discovered that the natural stretching and compacting of the stream of English speech introduced the features of supra-segmental (how rhythm, stress, and intonation affect the pronunciation of English in context). For example, the reduction of the auxiliary *have* to the sound /uv/, that could be heard in the song by Toni Braxton "*You've* Been Wrong for So Long", showed the value of using songs for pronunciation practice with Asian learners because of many phonemic differences between Asian languages and English. However, students from any language background could benefit from choral or individual reading of the lyrics of many songs, understanding natural reductions that occur in spoken English. Lem suggested that song lyrics should be clear and loud, not submerged in the instrumental music, the vocabulary load for the song should be appropriated to the proficiency level and songs should be pre-screened because many songs contained explicit language that referred to violent acts or sex.

Cullen (1999) stated that song dictation could be a fun way of bringing dictation to life. Songs were one of the language resources that almost all students love, and teachers may find that song dictation became a hobby for some of their students as they realized that they could figure out the words of their favorite songs.

O'Neil (1997) believed that music was an excellent way to teach English at any level. Music could be used as an "extra" activity; for example, as a treat on a given day after a successful week of teaching. He outlined some ideas on using music and provided a list of songs and activities that could be used in English classes. He used music in teaching because he wanted to stress to the students that it was important to be able to express what they thought and felt about the song at hand. The study suggested that instructors must have a purpose for choosing and using a particular song at a particular time.

Newham (1995, 1996: cited in Abbott, 2004, p. 10) suggested that the patterns produced through rhyme were known to aid memory and enhanced language learning. He stated that "the primarily right hemisphere-oriented process of music making could enhance the process of language acquisition and memory which place demanded upon the left hemisphere". Thus, songs presumably enhance and stimulate memory because

dual coding leads to deeper processing and better retention.

Trudgill (1983: cited in Ronnapop Klomkliang,2000. p.18) revealed that most British pop stars attempted to sing with American accents, implying identification and genre compliance, but that they overgeneralized the phonological rules. More recent Punk Rock groups mingle working class British with American reflecting a mixture, or conflict, of identification.

Obviously, songs are beneficial in English language teaching and learning, and it is stated that there are some indications that language acquisition might be aided through the use of songs.

Previous Related Studies

Research in Foreign Countries

A number of researchers have been interested in quantifiable linguistic research on culture, dialects, and songs, for example, Beliavsky (2001), Ibrahim (1999), and Medina (1991).

Beliavsky (2001), an assistant professor of ESL at the Institute of ESL at St. John's University, Queens, New York, suggested that ESL students could learn English through opera. She agreed with Krashen and Freire that ESL learners wanted real life and English learning should be active, not passive. ESL learners who were exposed to authentic content in their ESL classrooms often built bridges of cross-cultural awareness between themselves and their peers with diverse backgrounds. Opera could encourage ESL students to have an intrinsic motivation. She asked her students what they knew about opera or similar musical traditions in their own countries but not all students were familiar with opera; therefore, the researcher introduced *La Traviata* by Giuseppe Verdi. This work was based on a play, *La Dame aux Camelias* (The Lady of the Camellias) written in 1852 by Alexander Dumas. The students were given the historical background of the play. Then, the researcher presented four songs from the play, which was consisted of "Libiamo," "Morro! La Mia Memoria," "Di Provenza il Mar," "Parigi, 0 Cara", to capture the students' attention and interest. The students listened to the original areas and duets in Italian while following along the Italian/English libretto. They

had to listen, follow along with the translation, and imagine the characters and the stage. After that, the participants were asked to determine whether there was a conflict between the characters and discuss in groups. They were also asked to predict the complete story from the music that they had just heard. Next, the participants were grouped and asked to do gap information activities. They could share their knowledge and engage in cooperative learning in order to answer more complex comprehension questions, complete the story of the play, and do vocabulary and grammar exercises. The participants were fascinated and intrigued by these unusual and creative activities and were extremely motivated. They discussed and commented on their feelings and reactions, and they often understood the story from the opera songs. Therefore, the participants were exposed to written and spoken language while learning interesting content.

Beliavsky concluded that learning English through opera could serve as a bridge to other activities, for example, learning English through movie. The study encouraged the ESL students to learn traditional elements and skills of language learning: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students were supposed to participate in authentic and contextualized activities. The activities could also help students develop critical thinking skills.

Ibrahim (1999), a professor at the Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa, revealed that to learn was to invest something that had a personal or a particular significance to what one had become and language was not neutral. Black English was the language that African people used to identify their identities and social positions. His research looked at the lives of a group of continental Francophone African youths in Canada. They were faced with a social imaginary that implicated in how they identified themselves and had influence on them in learning a language. They learned Black English which referred to ways of speaking that did not depend on a full mastery of the language. The study took place at Marie-Victorin, a small Franco-Ontarian intermediate and high school, in southwestern Ontario, Canada. The participants varied in their length of stay in Canada (from 1-2 to 5-6 years), in their legal status (some were immigrants, but the majority were refugees), and in their gender, class, age, linguistic, and national background. The researcher attended classes, and generally spent time

(for over 6 months) with the students who were French-speaking immigrant and refugee continental African youths, and observed activities two or three times per week. After a month, he chose 10 boys (6 Somali speakers, 1 Ethiopian, 2 Senegalese, and 1 Togo speaker) and 6 girls (all Somali speakers) for extensive ethnographic observations (inside and outside the classroom and inside and outside the school) and interviews.

The participants were compelled to speak English in order to be understood and in order to perform simple everyday functions. The inescapability of interacting in English became a will to learn English rapidly, and they all learned almost from television. They accessed the Black cultural identities and Black linguistic practice through Black popular culture, especially rap music videos, television programs, and Black films.

From the interviews, the boys were clearly influenced by rap lyrics, syntax, and morphology. The girls had an ambivalent relationship with rap, the older females (16-18 years old) tend to be more eclectic than the younger ones because their dresses were a matching of elegant middle class and hip-hop style, and they learned plain Canadian English. The younger females (12-14 years old) dressed in hip-hop style and performed Black English.

The researcher detected three features of Black English in females' speech. They were as follows:

1. The absence of the auxiliary be, (which occurred in 19 occasions; e.g., "they so cool" as opposed to "they are so cool")

2. BE negative concord (4 occasions; "....you know, he is not doing nothing", which is incorrect in Standard English because of the double negative)

3. The distributive be (4 occasions; e.g., "I be saying dis dat you know?")

The researcher had identified rap and hip-hop as influential sites in African students' processes of becoming black, in which in turn affected what and how they learned. The students were quite conscious of their identification with Blackness and the impact of race on their choices. They tried to follow the model of the Americans who were Blacks to identify and express themselves to belong to a group or a society.

For the African students, rap and hip-hop let them saw multiple ways of speaking, being, and learning. To introduce them in the classroom was to hope to link their world, identities, and desires with their word. Hence, ESL learners could learn

Black culture through rap and hip hop songs.

Medina (1991), a professor at California State University, presented the effects of music upon the acquisition of L2 vocabulary. The participants of this study were 48 second grade Spanish-speaking students with limited English proficiency in an elementary school belonging to the Los Angeles Unified School District. A pretest-posttest controlled group design with matching and repeated measures (consisted of a 20-item multiple-choice paper-and-pencil test) was developed so that it could be administered to large groups of students. Four equivalent groups were classified. After the pretest for two days, a four-day treatment period of one and a half weeks had begun. During the treatment period, tapes were played three consecutive times. At the end of this treatment period, the first posttest was administered while the second vocabulary posttest was administered one and a half weeks later. The test's multiple choice options consisted of four illustrations as follows:

1. No Music-Illustrations (story spoken with illustrations)

2. No Music-No Illustrations (story spoken without illustrations)

3. Music-Illustrations (story sung with illustrations)

4. Music-No Illustrations (story sung without illustrations)

In the test instrument, the students heard the practice words pronounced three times by the investigator. They were asked to circle the illustration which they believed that it was the best match of the spoken word. The target words used in this testing instrument were as follows: *butler, tailor, magician, country, mirror, search, coat, message, carriage, suit, parlor, manor, measured, share, stare, knocked, unzipped, woke up, unhappy, chair.* The story illustrations were large, colorful, and clearly illustrated key vocabulary and concepts in the story. The story had content and vocabulary appropriate for students and contained at least 20 vocabulary words, which might be unfamiliar to some of the students.

The music treatment group listened to the song in its sung version while the No Music group heard the spoken rendition of the same story. The participants in the Illustration treatment groups were shown large color pictures of the story while listening to the tape-recording. The participants were able to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from the illustrations. The No Illustration group heard the story without the benefit

of pictures; therefore, they extracted meaning from contextual information.

The results of performing two-way analyses of variance, sample mean scores were consistently higher for Music and Illustration treatments than any other treatments. The combination of Music and Illustrations resulted in the largest vocabulary acquisition gains.

Research in Thailand

Studies on English dialects and songs, which were conducted in Thailand, include Nawarat Maseekuk et al., (2005), Kannika Martom et al., (2004), Ronnapop Klomkliang (2002), as reviewed below.

Nawarat Maseekuk et al., (2005) did research on "A Study of American English versus British English Lexicon Understanding by Students at Rajabhat Universities in the Lower North of Thailand". The researchers attempted to study and compare university students' lexicon understanding of American English versus British English.

The subjects were 232 fourth year students in the English Program of either the Education Division or the Liberal Arts Division at Rajabhat Universities. The researchers designed a questionnaire which was consisted of two sections: a check list for personal information and a multiple choice test on American English versus British English lexicon. The questionnaire included 1,018 lexicons: 509 American English and 509 British English word. The participants were asked to complete the questionnaire in one hour.

The findings showed that most students (67.23 percent) could recognize the studied words in both American English and British English and the results also indicated that the knowledge of American English versus British English lexicons between the university students in the Education Division and the Liberal Arts Division were different. The researchers concluded that the difference resulted from the learners' experience in different pedagogical materials, teaching approaches and curriculums.

Kannika Martom et al., (2004) conducted a research on "A Development of Listening Skill by Using Songs with the first year Certificate Level Students at Sukhothai Vocational College". The researchers attempted to determine the importance of songs in relation to foreign language teaching, especially in the development of the listening skill. They designed a pre-questionnaire, a post-questionnaire, three lesson plans, and

six listening activities from selected three songs ("Out of reach" by Gabrielle, "How deep is your love" by the Bee Gees, and "Emotion" by Samantha Sang).

The participants, 80 students in the Business Administration program, were given the pre-questionnaire. After that, the researchers taught a listening skill through songs. Then, the students were given the post-questionnaire to evaluate their satisfaction with the teaching techniques.

The results indicated that most of students agreed that using songs was one way to communicate with other people. They could use songs to develop listening skill in English and they were eager to participate in learning through songs.

Ronnapop Klomkliang (2002, p. 20: cited in Kannika Martom, 2004. p. 26) analyzed the themes and contents of the 211 songs of the Beatles by concentrating on the themes and values which the songs attempted to convey. The results indicated that love was the principle theme in the songs, and the second was life searching or the identity conflict theme. The study also showed the grammatical features in the songs, for example, pronouns, present tense verbs, progressive present, and modals. The researcher found that the language of songs resembled foreigner talk in their simplicity and motherese (the kind of language that a mother uses with her baby) in the degree of their enjoyment. The songs of the Beatles were appealing to Thai listeners from the past to the present and many teachers still used the Beatles' songs as teaching materials in the EFL classroom. The western cultural influences from the songs of The Beatles had prevailed to Thai culture.

Based on discussion of literature and previous related research, it can be seen that language and culture are expressed together in the form of songs, which can be used efficiently for language teaching either inside or outside a classroom. This is true for AAVE in hip hop songs where particular linguistic words and features that differ from Standard English are found. The similarity between these related studies and the current study is that they explore the use of language in songs, dialects, and cultures. This study investigates Thai university students' understanding of AAVE in songs. Songs from popular hip hop albums have appealed to young Thai listeners, and some teachers have been using them as materials in teaching English as a foreign language. Therefore, a study on the students' knowledge of certain AAVE features and words

shown in the songs should reveal how well students know the features. In addition, a survey of the students' attitudes towards hip hop songs and teachers' using songs as a teaching tool should help determine whether songs are an efficient material for teaching English at a university level. The next chapter demonstrates the methodology used in this study.