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# THE EFFECT OF USING NURSERY RHYMES ON THE WRITING PERFORMANCE FOR YEAR SIX PUPILS IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL



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UNIVERSITI PENDIDIKAN SULTAN IDRIS

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DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO QUALIFY FOR A  
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FACULTY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
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## KESAN MENGGUNAKAN NURSERY RHYME TERHADAP PRESTASI PENULISAN TAHUN ENAM DI SEBUAH SEKOLAH RENDAH

### ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengetahui kesan menggunakan nursery rhyme terhadap prestasi penulisan murid tahun enam di sebuah sekolah rendah. Pengkaji menggunakan Model Pengajaran Ekspositori untuk menjelaskan pembelajaran yang bermakna dengan mendedahkan beberapa nursery rhyme untuk menulis karangan. Konstruktivisme juga digunakan untuk menggambarkan pemerolehan pengetahuan dan motivasi di kalangan murid-murid. Untuk reka bentuk penyelidikan, penyelidik menggunakan reka bentuk kuasi eksperimen untuk menentukan kesan penggunaan nursery rhyme terhadap prestasi penulisan bagi murid tahun enam di sebuah sekolah rendah. Kumpulan eksperimen menggunakan nursery rhyme dan kumpulan kawalan menggunakan kaedah tradisional dengan buku teks. Sampel enam puluh murid dari murid tahun enam dipilih dan dibahagikan kepada kumpulan eksperimen ( $n = 30$ ) dan kumpulan kawalan ( $n = 30$ ) secara rawak. Pengkaji menggunakan beberapa instrumen, iaitu ujian pra dan pasca dan satu set soal selidik. Kebolehpercayaan soal selidik adalah agak tinggi berdasarkan Cronbach Alpha  $\alpha = 0.807$ . Sebelum kajian dijalankan, ujian pra diberikan kepada kedua-dua kumpulan. Hasil ujian pra untuk kedua-dua kumpulan menunjukkan min hampir sama untuk kumpulan eksperimen ( $M = 38.07$ ;  $SD = 7.21$ ) dan kawalan ( $M = 32.33$ ;  $SD = 9.89$ ). Uji  $t$  sampel pasangan digunakan untuk melihat perbezaan antara keputusan ujian pra dan pasca. Skor min ujian pasca bagi kumpulan eksperimen adalah lebih tinggi ( $M = 73.8$ ;  $SD = 9.09$ ) daripada min ujian pasca untuk kumpulan kawalan ( $M = 46.67$ ;  $SD = 8.38$ ). Ujian- $t$  untuk kumpulan eksperimen menunjukkan perbezaan yang signifikan antara ujian pra dan pasca [ $t(29) = -27.95$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ]. Begitu juga, ujian- $t$  untuk kumpulan kawalan juga menunjukkan perbezaan yang signifikan antara ujian pra dan ujian pasca [ $t(29) = -10.076$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ]. Data soal selidik menunjukkan min yang sama untuk motivasi antara murid lelaki ( $M = 4.83$ ;  $SD = 0.16$ ) dan perempuan ( $M = 4.83$ ;  $SD = 0.14$ ) dalam kumpulan eksperimen. Dari segi minat, murid perempuan ( $M = 4.06$ ;  $SD = 0.46$ ) menunjukkan min yang lebih tinggi daripada murid lelaki ( $M = 3.86$ ;  $SD = 0.43$ ). Akhirnya, pencapaian dalam penulisan Bahasa Inggeris lebih tinggi bagi murid perempuan ( $M = 4.70$ ;  $SD = 0.13$ ) berbanding dengan murid lelaki ( $M = 4.52$ ;  $SD = 0.34$ ). Kesimpulannya, data empirikal menyokong penggunaan nursery rhyme terhadap kumpulan eksperimen dalam meningkatkan prestasi penulisan murid dalam Bahasa Inggeris berbanding dengan kawalan yang menggunakan buku teks sahaja. Berdasarkan jantina, murid perempuan menunjukkan minat dan pencapaian yang lebih besar dalam penulisan Bahasa Inggeris berbanding dengan murid lelaki. Ini menunjukkan bahawa nursery rhyme menarik minat perempuan untuk cemerlang dalam penulisan Bahasa Inggeris. Secara implikasinya, nursery rhyme dapat digunakan oleh guru untuk meningkatkan pembelajaran yang menyeronokkan bagi murid untuk belajar menulis dalam Bahasa Inggeris.





## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to determine the effect of using nursery rhymes on the writing performance of year six pupils in a primary school. The researcher used Expository Teaching Model for explaining meaningful learning by exposing a few nursery rhymes for writing an essay. Constructivism was also used to describe knowledge acquisition and motivation among the pupils. For research design, the researcher used a quasi-experimental design to determine the effect of using nursery rhymes on the writing performance for year six pupils in a primary school. The experimental group used nursery rhyme and control group used traditional method with text book. A sample of sixty pupils from year six pupils were selected and assigned to experimental group ( $n = 30$ ) and control group ( $n = 30$ ) randomly. The researcher used several instruments, namely, pre and post tests and a set of questionnaires. The reliability of the questionnaire was relatively high which was based on Cronbach Alpha  $\alpha = 0.807$ . Before the research was conducted, a pre-test was given to both groups. The pre-test result for both groups showed the means were almost the same for experimental ( $M = 38.07$ ;  $SD = 7.21$ ) and control ( $M = 32.33$ ;  $SD = 9.89$ ) groups. Pair sample t-test was used to see the differences between pre and post test results. The post-test mean score for the experimental group was higher ( $M = 73.8$ ;  $SD = 9.09$ ) than the post-test mean for the control group ( $M = 46.67$ ;  $SD = 8.38$ ). The t-test for the experimental group showed a significant difference between the pre and post tests [ $t(29) = -27.95$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ]. Similarly, the t-test for the control group also indicated a significant difference between the pre and the post tests [ $t(29) = -10.076$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ]. The questionnaire data showed the same mean for motivation between male ( $M = 4.83$ ;  $SD = 0.16$ ) and female ( $M = 4.83$ ;  $SD = 0.14$ ) pupils in the experimental group. In terms of interest, the female pupils ( $M = 4.06$ ;  $SD = 0.46$ ) posited higher mean than the male pupils ( $M = 3.86$ ;  $SD = 0.43$ ). Finally, the achievement in English writing was higher for female pupils ( $M = 4.70$ ;  $SD = 0.13$ ) as compared to male pupils ( $M = 4.52$ ;  $SD = 0.34$ ). In conclusion, the empirical data supported the use of nursery rhymes in the experimental group in improving the pupils writing performance in English as compared to the control which used text book only. Based on gender, female pupils showed greater interest and achievement in English writing as compared to male pupils. This showed that nursery rhymes attracted girls to excel in English writing. In implication, nursery rhymes could be used by teachers to enhance fun learning for pupils to learn writing in English.





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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

KSSR	Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah
TPR	Total Physical Response
CEFR	Common European Framework
SAPS	Sistem Analisis Peperiksaan Sekolah
SPSS	Statistical Package For The Social Sciences





## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION



#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a fundamental part of human life. It is a means of communication that is possessed by human being in the world. With language a man can express his ideas and wishes. With language a close relationship among members of society can be established. Teachers prefer to adopt traditional methods and find the application of communicative methodologies difficult due to various socio-cultural and institutional constraints (Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013). Thus, without a language it is hard to imagine how people can cooperate and get along with each other. People in this world speak various languages. There are so many languages in this world so that mastering one language only is not enough. When we speak to people of different languages, we need other means of communication that can be understood by our listener and





ourselves. As we know, Malaysia consists of multiracial, multireligion and multicultural country. However, English Language became a second language in Malaysia after national language, Bahasa Melayu.

We cannot use our national language anymore if we want to speak with people from overseas. In this case, of course we need other languages. To have relationship with many people from many countries who have different languages and cultures, we have to master at least one foreign international language. There are a number of international languages in this world such as English, French, Dutch, etc. Since Bahasa Melayu is not an international language, we have to learn at least one international language to get along with people from other countries. Thus, society and culture are more than background and even more than context, what happen in a language classroom is inseparable from its sociocultural context

(cited in Hall, 2011,pg.200).



English is the most common international language that is used in this world. As the first international language in Malaysia, English possess a major position in Malaysia educational system. It is one of the compulsory subjects to be studied at primary school, secondary school and university. Moreover, now English is taught at kindergarden school as a medium.

As a second subject, English is taught to pupils of standard 1 to 6 in primary school. So, many parents who realize the importance of English enrolled their children to some English courses to study English. The function of the teaching of English at the primary school is to initiate English as an international language to the pupils that they will be able to speak in





simple communication. By learning English, the pupils are supposed to have an objective to expand their information of technology, science and culture. They learn basic story patterns, encounter clear plots, construct a sense of theme, and meet intriguing characters that in turn become the stepping stones for subsequent literary education (Bodden, 2010)

The ulterior motive of the teaching of English at the primary school is to stimulate them to be ready and self-confident in learning English at higher level towards university soon. The modular approach based on Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah (KSSR) covers five elements such as reading, listening, speaking, writing and language art.

Vocabulary is one of the language components that have to be mastered by the pupils in acquiring a new language. It should be mastered as well as listening, speaking, reading, writing and language art.. Teaching English vocabulary to children especially at primary school is not easy and it is different from teaching English vocabulary to secondary school, because they have contrast interest, and different motivation. In the teaching and learning process, a teacher plays an important role. He or she must be able to attract young learners with the variety of teaching aids and tools to make lesson becomes alive. They can make readers feel strong emotions manifested through crying or laughing, sighing or screaming (Bodden, 2010, p. 3).

Thornbury (2006) stated that, teaching words was a crucial aspect in learning a language as languages were based on words. It was almost impossible to learn a language without words; even communication between human beings was based on words. Both teachers and pupils were factors in nurturing a language. Teaching vocabulary is one of the most vital





parts of teaching English as an international language in Malaysia. Alqahtani (2015) stated that without grammar very little could be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed. That means, even pupils had good grammar, but it would be meaningless if they did not acquire many vocabularies to construct the sentences either for writing or communication.

When teaching vocabulary at primary school, the teacher should be more creative in teaching and keep the pupils away from feeling bored in learning English words. A child may also respond to the repetition of sounds in a phrase or line of a nursery rhyme by saying them over (Norton, 2011). So, mostly nursery rhymes phrases repeating by stanzas to let the pupils remember them thoroughly. Teacher must make sure that the latest teaching method requires to cross all the subject, applicable while teaching and post teaching. The various techniques could arouse pupils' interest and motivation towards their achievement, pupils have understood the new words with the given specific formula and managed to memorize high frequency words as much as they could.

The pupils will remember longer if a teacher uses an appropriate method with great facial expression and body gestures in teaching them with. The continuous use of the same teaching model day after day generally result in boredom on the part of learners. In order to keep the pupils away from feeling bored in learning English vocabulary, it is more effective if the teacher uses media such as video, songs and drawings to let them feel free to study effectively. Exaggeration along with rhyme, repetition, and humorous combine to create attractive topics, events and characters for young children (Norton, 2011,p.160)





The simple rhythm and rhyme of the language, the often predictable structure of the narratives, and the appealing characters combine to produce memorable language models for young children (Cullinan & Galda, 2010; Temple, Martinez, & Yakota, 2011). Based on the statements above, the researcher wants to promote nursery rhyme as the medium in vocabulary education. Children are overjoyed in the chance to chant the catchy phrases, mimic the nonsense words, and recite the lines endlessly. That songs appeal to the young child and they can develop and expand their vocabulary. Music activities also develop skills, increase attention span, improve comprehension and memory and encourage the use of compound words, rhyme and images. It can be concluded that teaching vocabulary through nursery rhyme is one of the appropriate techniques to arouse the pupils' attention in essay writing. By using nursery rhymes as an alternative technique in teaching vocabulary, primary school pupils are given something new and different from what they usually get in class. As the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, it is pupils' centered learning. So, the teacher as a spoon feed is not applicable anymore.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

English Language as a second language in Malaysia. Pupils are hardly to acquire the knowledge because it is only write and speak during the class period. Communication skill is vital element to nurture the process of language. The problem is pupils feel shy to speak in public due to lack of vocabularies and fear. So, as a teacher, the researcher would like to motivate them to speak and write freely in order to implement therapeutic environment because







there is 3 questions for writing the dialogues in Section B, Paper 1 in UPSR. As the proverb goes “practice makes perfect.”

Teaching in primary school is totally different from secondary school due to differences in habit and motivation. According to Yeh (2014) notes discrepancies across various cultures and concludes that teaching cannot be excluded from the social contexts and the implementation of new approaches must require modifications according to social and cultural demands. So, the researcher found that pupils learn through hands on activities and body language whereby they love edutainment, play and songs.

As a teacher, the researcher have knew how to arouse the pupils’ attention in the class. We have to use variety of techniques to balance their interest and motivation. Language teachers teaching in unfamiliar contexts need to acquire the appropriate contextual knowledge which will develop not only their teaching skills but also the norms of practice expected of them in an educational institution, both inside and outside the classroom (Richards, 2014). Then, teaching includes understanding within the classroom towards the rules and behaviours to a certain education setting.

Teachers are not autonomous to pick and choose their teaching methods. In fact, they are bound by social conventions, learners’ expectations and school and ministry’s policies about how to teach and what methodology to follow (Hall 2011, p. 116). For these reason, they continuously change between pedagogy and social oriented and try their best to achieve learning needs of the pupils. So, they are a few techniques in teaching of English Language by using Total Physical Response (TPR), whereby the teacher stress more on hands on activities and visualize such as video, music and pictures. TPR was created by Dr. James J Asher (2011).





It is based upon the way that children learn their mother tongue. Parents have 'language-body conversations' with their children, the parent instructs and the child physically responds to this.

The parent says, “give me the ball” and the child imitate the phrase. Even the child can’t communicate during that moment, he or she is grasping all the language, sounds, pattern and pronunciation. When the time past by, the child managed to reproduce the language spontaneously in their daily life. Total Physical Response (TPR) seems to mirror this effect in learning English. Dr. James J Asher (2011) stress that teacher should use it in the classroom because it works well with mixed ability classes.

For phonics teaching, normally the researcher used TPR to let the pupils comprehend it better and memorise them well. The physical movements let them understand the meaning effectively and imitate the actions to interpret the phrases in a particular way.

According to the study, the researcher would like to identify “The effectiveness of using nursery rhymes in upgrading the writing performance for year 6 at SK Proton City, Tanjong Malim, Perak.

Research problems mean the difficulty arise during the teaching session. As for primary school children, their previous knowledge are limited due to family background and environment. The pupils from advance, intermediate and lower level got different abilities in essay writing. For weak group, they tend to have maximum teaching how to do essay writing. Normally, they wait for the answer given. Drilling session were needed to improvise their sentences structure. The researcher found that:





1. It is so hard for pupils to memorize the vocabularies.
2. Lack of interest in English Language due to minimum understanding.
3. Learning English Language is not fun.

Based on that particular problems, the researcher would like to help the pupils in improving their vocabularies, motivation and interest. Kids loves song so much and nursery rhymes is one of the vital element in KSSR as parallel with 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning which is stress on pupils centered learning. According to Roehl, Reddy and Shannon (2013), to apply 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning for pupils, the learning environment from teacher centered learning change to pupils centered learning. Helen B. Boholano (2017) claimed that 21<sup>st</sup> century learning is to promote collaborative learner-centered environment to get the pupils relate and respond.



Besides, according to Badrul and Nasruddin (2015), a few components of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning such as practical thinking, communication skill, reflection, collaboration, assessment, problem solving, technology, creativity and innovation must be integrated in teaching approach to achieve success criteria. So, nursery rhymes as a medium by making a few innovations in the lyrics to meet writing need for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning approach. Pourkalhor, O. and Tavakoli, M. (2017) stressed that nursery rhymes is the interactive atmosphere of the classroom, particularly for young learners who are a lot concerned with singing together. The role of integrating nursery rhymes in the language learning has been recognized because it assist the teachers towards the pupils motivation. In addition, nursery rhymes simultaneously inspire them to have communication while encouraging them to get interaction in listening the songs and improving their vocabularies.





### 1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To identify how nursery rhymes improve the vocabularies of the pupils in essay writing.
2. To identify the motivation of pupils through nursery rhymes teaching in essay writing.
3. To identify the pupils' interest through nursery rhymes teaching in essay writing.
4. To identify the pupils achievement towards motivation and interest in essay writing.

### 1.4 Research Questions



1. To what extent does nursery rhymes improve the vocabularies of the pupils in essay writing?
2. To what extent does motivation of pupils through nursery rhymes teaching in essay writing?
3. To what extent does pupils' interest through nursery rhymes teaching in essay writing?
4. To what extent does the pupils achievement towards motivation and interest in essay writing?





## 1.5 Research Hypothesis

There are a few hypotheses in the research:

- HO1 There is difference of achievement was significant towards vocabularies of the pupils between experimental group and control group.
- HO2 There is difference of motivation was significant towards essay writing between experimental group and control group.
- HO3 There is difference of interest was significant towards essay writing between experimental group and control group.
- HO4 There is difference of achievement was significant towards motivation and interest essay writing between experimental group and control group.



## 1.6 Research Interest

The research is important to assist year 6 pupils in answering Paper 2, particularly Section C. Moreover, the nursery rhymes module is to engage pupils' understanding how to expand supporting details towards their main idea. It is to let them grasp the lesson as much as they could. As a second language, learning English is not a nature. So, as an educator we should nurture it to fulfill the requirement. On the other hand, facial expression, body language and music should be combine to gather edutainment. In conclusion, the importance of the research as follows:



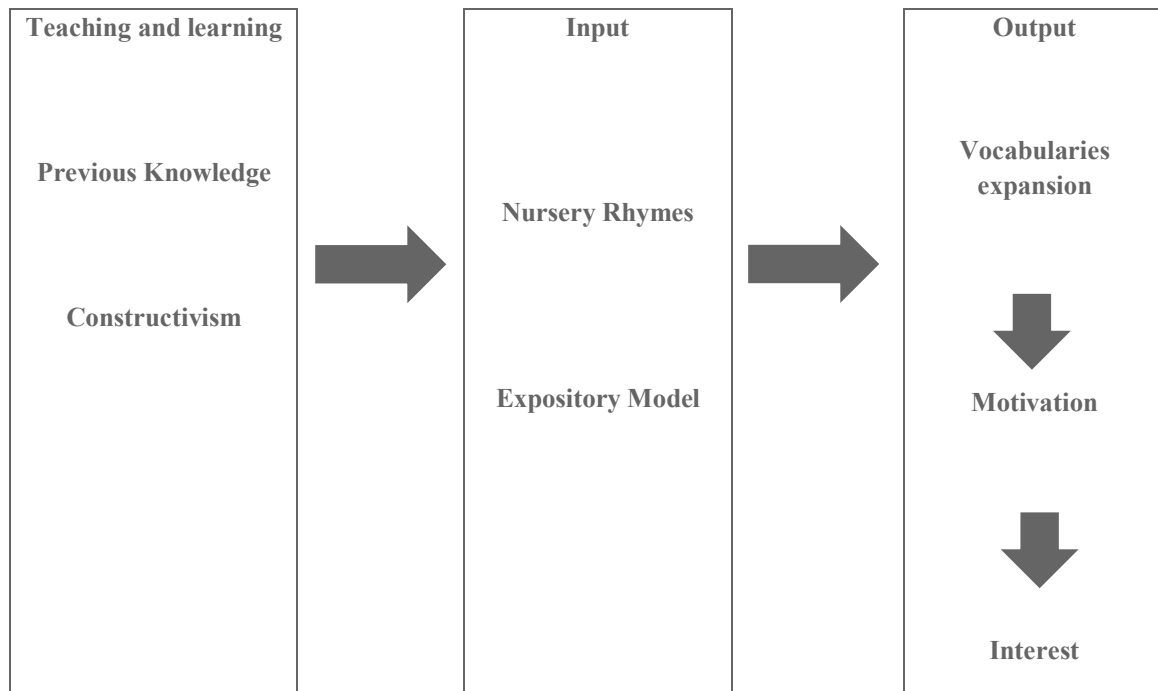


1. Ministry of Education. The researcher fervently hopes that the research could assist the ministry to come out with great programs for weak pupils to improve their essay writing especially primary school pupils.
2. Teachers. The research will help them as by introducing nursery rhymes module. The teacher could apply the different methods in the lesson. The repetition of phrases and sentences will bear in pupils' mind positively. Edutainment is one of the elements in Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah (KSSR).
3. Pupils. The objective of the research is to arouse the pupils' interest in order to let them engage with the lesson. The effectiveness of using nursery rhymes in essay writing will upgrading the pupils' vocabularies through different tenses with variety of experiences.

Besides, it will upgrade their motivation how to produce a superb essay writing.



## 1.7 Theoretical Framework



Based on figure 1.1, it is explained about the entire framework, whereby there are teaching and learning process by engaging previous lesson. Constructivism is a theory of knowledge (epistemology) that argues that human generate knowledge and meaning from an interaction between their experiences and their ideas Vygotsky (1987). So, based on constructivism pupils cognitive will be engage towards environment, parents and peers. Then, nursery rhymes as an input for writing essay effectively by replacing a few phrases to construct compound sentences. It looks like a mould.

As for final out put we can see vividly, the vocabularies expansion derives motivation and interest in pupils writing. After applying adopt and adapt rules, they manage to substitute the story line individually. The effects of nursery rhymes will increase pupils' motivation in





learning English spontaneously and at last they get to comprehend the sentences. The rhythm and lyrics make the essay easier to write. As a teacher, researcher could see an expansion of vocabularies and story line during discussion with peers. 21<sup>st</sup> century learning techniques like mind mapping, think pair share, 3 stray 1 stay, hot seat and other are vital elements to let them grasp the vocabularies as much as they could.

## 1.8 Research Limitation

The objective of the research is to apply the nursery rhymes' technique in essay writing for year 6 pupils. The research was carried out to 60 pupils in SK Proton City whereby 30 pupils from 6 Alpha and another 30 pupils from 6 Beta. The experimental group was 6 Alpha and 6 Beta was control group. The validity based on the pupils' achievement in Paper 2, UPSR.

The validity depends on the data collection from the module given. Hence, the pupils vary from lower, intermediate and higher level. There are 10 modules based on nursery rhymes given. Before the lesson start, the researcher does sing along with the pupils for induction set. The ulterior motive is to attract pupils' attention to write an essay. Pupils need to memorize the rhythm to let it instill for long term memory in their mind. For drilling the lyric, they did popcorn reading to practise their pronunciation.





To put in a nutshell, the limitation of the research are:

1. Multiple intelligences in each class and various background based on economic performances.
2. Different lesson plans for different group.
3. Different nursery rhymes for different theme of essay

## 1.9 Operational Definition

### 1.9.1 Effect

According to the Oxford Dictionary, it means the degree to which something is successful in producing a desired result or success. Then, Mutch (2013) effect means a systematic effort, full with manner and optimum learning to achieve maximum goal. The researcher wants to use nursery rhymes technique to make an effective writing for primary school because it is closely connected with their learning.

### 1.9.2 Nursery rhymes

A nursery rhyme can be defined as a short poem or song for children, considered sleep songs, nursery rhymes are waking songs. They are engaging verses of an adult to sing or chant with children. Many of these anonymous verses, with their oral tradition, have transferred from generation to generation and one can often find the echoes of these poems. These verses are “highly rhythmic, tightly rhymed, and popular with small children” (Temple, Martinez, &





Yokota, 2011, p. 171). Considered traditional poems for young children in Britain and many other countries, their usage dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in North America the older “Mother Goose Rhymes” are still often used in primary classrooms. Betsy Hearne (as cited in Norton, 2011) emphasizes the appeal of these rhymes and notes that “Nursery Rhymes are only a step away from song in their changing cadence and compressed story elements”. Where lullabies according to the Oxford Dictionary, it means simple traditional song or poem for children. So, the researcher used ten modified nursery rhymes because they are pertinent to the particular matters to suit the pupils essay in class. As for fun learning, pupils need to memorize the lyrics and rhythm with facial expression and body languages. Next, they have been taught how to adopt and adapt the song to suit their essay theme.



### 1.9.3 Motivation



Motivation refers to “the reasons underlying behaviour” (Guay et al, 2010). Paraphrasing Gredler, Broussard and Garrison (2012) broadly define motivation as “the attribute that moves us to do or not to do something”. Intrinsic motivation is motivation that is animated by personal enjoyment, interest or pleasure. As Guay et al, (2010) observe, “intrinsic motivation energizes and sustains activities through the spontaneous satisfactions inherent in effective volitional action. It is manifest in behaviors such as play, exploration, and challenge seeking that people often do for external rewards” . Researcher often contrast intrinsic motivation with extrinsic motivation, which is motivation governed by reinforcement contingencies. Traditionally, educators consider intrinsic motivation to be more desirable and to result in better learning outcomes than extrinsic motivation (Guay et al,2010)





### 1.9.4 Interest

According to the Oxford Dictionary from *Linguistics perspective*, it means an individual's use of a language, i/e. what a speaker actually says, including hesitations, false starts, and errors. To arouse pupils' attentiveness in learning second language with enthusiasm.

### 1.10 Conclusion

So, the researcher found that music like an electric power to boom the spirit. Music gives a big impact to improve language skill, memory and attention to build someone's emotion orally.

Kids enjoy the music and fun learning to improve their understanding and vocabularies for writing. Nowadays, we can see the latest nursery rhymes updated in social media like facebook,

Instagram and you tube application. Total physical response especially facial expression and body language engage the lesson perfectly. The repetition of lyrics make the kids easier to recall it.

