



# Teachers' Perspectives on the Use of Rhymes in Teaching English as a Second Language at Early Childhood Development Level in Gweru Rural District Primary Schools of Zimbabwe

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**Abstract:** *The paper explored teachers perspectives on the use of rhymes in the teaching of English as a second language at ECD level in Gweru rural district primary schools. A mixed methods approach in the form of a descriptive survey was used in this study. Ten school heads and fifty (50) Early Childhood Development teachers were purposively selected. These responded to interviews and questionnaires respectively. The findings revealed that when teaching English, teachers concentrated more on teaching language structures more than allowing learners to learn through action rhymes. While participants agreed that learners benefit tremendously from reciting action rhymes which in turn promote logical thinking it was also noted that teachers tended to use the same rhymes over and over again without really concentrating on form and structure. This has been attributed to lack of resources such as books and technological equipment. Participants felt that not much was being during training on the use of rhymes in teaching English as a second language. Teachers lacked skills on use of rhymes and of producing original rhymes. The implications are that teachers need training on the use of rhymes in teaching English as second language. The recommendations are that rhymes should underpin the teaching of English as a second language in order to stimulate learner's abilities through action. Teachers should keep abreast with new and meaningful rhymes.*

**Keywords:** Early Childhood Development, English, Language, Skills Perspectives, Rhymes

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## 1. Introduction

This paper focuses on teachers' perspectives towards the use of rhymes at ECD level in teaching English as a Second Language in Gweru rural district primary schools of Zimbabwe. Early childhood development in this paper

refers to children between the ages 3years to 6 years. In Zimbabwe, ECD comprises two classes of pre- academics which are ECD class A and ECD class B with the latter being the senior (Ministry of Education Sports, Art and Culture (MoESAC), 2004). Teaching in these classes revolves around play way methodologies such as role

play, song and rhymes. Rhymes are correspondence of sound between words or the endings of words, especially when these are used at the ends of lines of song or poetry. Usually, the rhymes are action packed following funny sounds. These actions usually assist in comprehension of word meanings and understanding of English as a second language. However, researchers have observed that there are some mixed reactions in the use of play way methods such as rhymes between and among teachers. Thus it is the aim of this study to establish the teachers' perspectives on the use of rhymes in teaching English as a second language and what motivates them.

## 2. Literature review

The paper is guided by Vygotsky's Social Cultural Theory and Skinner's behaviorist theory. Donato 2000 cited in Cherry (2022) indicates that sociocultural theory considers learning, as a semiotic process where participation in socially-mediated activities is essential. The individual's own mental functioning is also mediated. The social and individual planes of human psychological activity are interwoven through socially mediated activities. Instruction is regarded as crucial to second language development in the classroom and it should be geared beyond the learner's actual development level, which Vygotsky refers to as the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). "Vygotsky's theory views language first as social communication, gradually promoting both language itself and cognition (Nath, 2010:7)." Within the home context, the child experiences the native language through language input, specifically directed to the child. Rhymes, songs and story book reading are activities in which the child is exposed to socially constructed language, which may have an extensive impact on the child's language development. In second language classes, learning is more of a collaborative achievement rather than an isolated individual effort. The structure and function of language is developed by using it in social interaction both at home and during instruction.

Operant or Instrumental Conditioning is another theory to be considered as propounded by Skinner, a proponent of behaviourism. The theory hypothesized that when children imitate language produced by those around them, their attempts to reproduce what they heard will receive praise and they in turn become motivated. The theory is applied to language learning because children are capable of imitating behaviours. Language acquisition is a behavior which can be learned like any other behavior. As children learn a language there is habit formation through trial and error. Teachers and parents are models in the child's environment who are there to provide stimuli, shape behaviours and reward acceptable behavior through reinforcement. This theory gives great importance to the environment as the source of everything the child needs to learn (Borich and Tombari 1997; McLeod, 2015).

Orernov- Palchik, Wolf & Patel (2018) say, that lack of motivation experienced by some second language students

could be partly attributed to over-emphasis on teaching language structure which is ineffective in setting to motion students' intellectual abilities. Rhymes are one of the most enthralling and culturally rich resources that can easily be used in a language classroom, and it offers a change from droning classroom activities (Otchere- Larbi & Amoah, 2020). The significance of repeated singing of a rhyme lies in the interaction between the adult and child, where imitation is a frequent occurrence. English is a global language which is highly esteemed and has continued to enjoy an important status in the Zimbabwean education system and in all other sectors since the colonial era. It is one of the core subjects which determine one's future educational and professional pathways. However, the teaching of English as a second language to learners in rural schools in Zimbabwe seems not to be an easy task for teachers, especially in early grades since these children rarely hear people speak in English at home and during social interactions, except when they are at school, mostly during lessons. Language is a device for communication. It is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols which permit all people in a given culture, or other people who have learned the system of that culture to communicate (Brown, 2000; Child, 2004). The symbols have conventionalised meanings to which they refer. Language is essentially human although not limited to humans. Sign languages are also language in their own right.

When children are enrolled in the school system their language abilities continue to develop through interactions with teachers and peers. According to Lefebvre, Bolduc & Pirkenne (2015:2) "Nursery rhymes are part of a long-standing tradition in early childhood education. Many generations of children have learned and recited nursery rhymes in their homes and schools." Although this statement is true, rhymes are culture and language specific. In countries where English is a first language, rhymes recited in English are used all the time by parents and older children. They are part of the culture. Pourkalthor & Tavakoli (2017) also observe that most children are interested in singing songs, and they can positively change their routine form of learning a foreign language through rhythmic sounds for educational purposes. Most English language syllabuses for second language learners almost always focus on the communicative use of the English language. Listening and speaking skills are set as priorities, especially in primary education and songs are included as essential teaching tools in teaching English as a foreign language.

In a study by Lefebvre, Bolduc & Pirkenne, (2015) on Kindergarten Teachers' Perception of Linguistic and Musical Challenges in Nursery Rhymes, a sample of eighty eight kindergarten teachers was selected and was asked to teach using the provided rhymes. Teachers responded to a questionnaire and results revealed that teachers valued nursery rhymes and indicated that learners liked these rhymes. However, teachers tended to use those rhymes which children already knew at the expense of introducing new rhymes, thereby depriving children of

acquiring new vocabulary. Yet, according to Redig (2018), one of the main functions of rhymes in young learners is the development of new vocabulary. Results also revealed the need for continuing professional development of teachers on the use of arts in the teaching literacy.

In a research paper by Magbule (2016) in Kosovo, Songs, rhymes and chants have been found to be very useful tools that help children learn a foreign language in an enjoyable environment without making them feel the pressure of learning a new language. These tools are full of lexicon since they use authentic language. Learners can take advantage of their repetitive and musical nature which greatly contributes to the learning of new expressions. When introducing second language to beginners, it is easier for them to sing or recite a rhyme in English than it is to communicate personal information, wants or needs.

Results of a study carried out in Iranian primary schools by Pourkalthor and Tavakoli (2017) indicated that, '...rhymes provided an interesting atmosphere for learners to improve their listening comprehension while benefiting from peer interaction and teacher's support in the listening classroom.' Rhymes are important in that teachers can use them to teach listening skills because they bring about meaningful interaction and attract the learners' attention toward the listening task.

In a study by Grofcikova and Macajova (2021) in Slovakia, use of rhyming activities in teaching English (second language) to young children, was found to be effective in developing phonological awareness as long as it was fun and interesting. Young children like singing and picking up vocabulary, sentence structures, and the rhythm of the language becomes simple through music. Conesa and Rubio (2015:99) also indicate:

Rhymes and songs have an important function in teaching English as a foreign language in primary schools. Rhymes and songs combine important didactic claims with fun, activity, and motivation. Almost incidentally, the children become familiar with parts of the foreign culture and see them as enrichment for their own life.

Orzernov- Palchik et. al (2018) suggest a connection among rhythm, perception, phonological awareness, and letter sound knowledge (a significant precursor to reading). Simple rhythm and rhyme of the language structure of the narratives, and the appealing characters combine to produce memorable language models for young children. Children delight in the opportunities to chant the catchy phrases, mimic the nonsense words, and recite the lines endlessly (Grofcikova & Macojova, 2021). This pleasure in nursery rhymes translates into developing many reading, writing and oral language skills such as naturally segmenting sounds in spoken words and playing with real and nonsense words. Additionally, young children appreciate the stories and verses for their rhythm, repetition, and rhyme.

Research has shown that during electroencephalogram, rhymes can change brain waves and make the brain more receptive to learning. Rhymes connect the functions of the right and left hemispheres of the brain so that they work together and make learning quick and easy. Brain function is increased when reciting rhymes and studies have shown that rhymes promote more complex thinking (Anderson, Sandberg & Garpelin, 2019). This means that a state of disequilibrium or a zone of proximal development is, which will in turn drive the young learners to acquire more knowledge through social interactions and through construction of knowledge mentally.

Fox (2001) indicates that experts in literacy and child development have discovered that if children know eight nursery rhymes by heart by the time they are four years old, they are usually among the best readers by the time they are eight. When children hear nursery rhymes, they hear the sound vowels and consonants; they learn how to put these sounds together to make words. Anderson, et. al (2019) advances that rhymes do play a very important role in the language development since the brain will develop rapidly during the first three years and is stimulated most by exposure of sights, sounds and being talked to. Adu (2018) contends that repetitive nature of rhymes helps children to learn vocabulary and the rhythm of the language memorize the lyrics of the rhyme quickly and develop listening and comprehension skills. Thus, reciting and acting out scenes from the stories and rhymes are good language skills builders. Songs, chants and rhymes are natural part of a quality early childhood programme as they are not just for fun but they have enormous educational value and there is need for them to be taught to early childhood education learners. Educators use the rhymes for many purposes such as to assist with transitions, to enhance thematic units, to get children focused, to get them up and moving. According to Redig (2018), integrating experiences with music in the early childhood classroom supports English language learners' literacy development. The benefits of incorporating musical experiences into daily instruction include improved reading fluency, and writing progress. The value of fostering creativity and enhancing literacy instruction through music is vital in today's diverse early childhood classrooms. Music can transform classrooms into positive learning environments where children thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Structured and open-ended musical activities critical components of literacy disposition through the development of vocabulary and phonological sensitivity.

In addition Clark, Collin and Fletcher (2007) contend that, when children hear nursery rhymes they hear the sounds. Learners also practice volume, pitch and voice inflection and rhythm language. Since rhymes are short and easy to repeat, they become some of the child's first sentences. The nursery rhymes are patterns which help children to learn easy, recall and memorize. Nursery rhymes usually tell a story with a beginning, middle and an end and that teaches children that events do happen in sequence thereby helping them to understand stories and follow along.

Rhymes introduce children to the idea of narrative, promote social skills, enhance language development and lay the basis for learning to read and spell (Bodden, 2010). Kirsch (2006) indicates that using traditional rhymes and songs over and over in early childhood education, embedded in physical and interactive activities, is one way to increase children's ability to predict words and phrases as well as increase vocabulary and rhyming in English. The more enjoyable, interactive and personalised the nursery rhyme activities the better the learning that follows. In addition, Norton (2011) expresses the opinion that rhymes increase children's listening skills that will improve their rhyming, alliteration and phonemic awareness. It is these phonological skills that pave the way for successful reading.

However, there seems to be a gap in countries where English is a second language, in the way the rhymes are utilized in learning the language. Since English is a second language for both teachers and children in Zimbabwe, not many of the English rhymes are used by children at play. Yet according to Conesa and Rubio (2015), rhymes and songs produce a positive feeling. Although children may not understand all the words in the rhyme or song, but they do not feel inhibited to sing or act it out by themselves. Rhymes and songs support vocabulary and structure learning.

Preliminary researches have revealed that teachers use nursery rhymes as introduction and/or conclusion to their lessons but not for teaching the whole lesson. This is so because teachers do not have a large repertoire of English nursery rhymes. In most instances, these rhymes, which are used for introducing the lesson are not related to the lesson objectives in any way. Teachers use rhymes as a strategy mainly to capture learners' attention. Yet if rhymes are used to enhance English language literacy among rural early childhood education learners, they can work wonders in developing children's literacy skills. To the researchers' knowledge there is scarcity of published works which focus on the use of nursery rhymes in teaching of English literacy in Zimbabwean rural primary schools. Thus, such grey areas need to be explored through empirical research.

## Research Question

The study is guided by the following research question:

How do early childhood education teachers perceive the use of rhymes and songs in the teaching of English as a second language to early childhood education learners in Gweru Rural District Primary schools of Zimbabwe?

## 3. Methodology

In an endeavour to establish the teacher's perspectives towards the use of rhymes and songs in the teaching of English as a second language in early childhood classes, a mixed methods approach was adopted. Descriptive survey design was used. The population for the study consisted of ninety two primary schools, ninety two school heads two hundred and seventy six early childhood educators. A sample of ten school heads and 50 Early Childhood Development teachers was purposively selected for the study. Purposive sampling involves the researchers handpicking the cases to be included in the sample on basis of the researcher's judgmental (Chiromo, 2006). School heads responded to face to face interviews. Interviews enabled the researchers to gain knowledge from individuals about the research at hand. All the early childhood development teachers in the ten schools (50) were included in the survey and responded to a questionnaire. Data were presented in tables, numbers and in prose. Presented data were analysed in themes.

## 4. Results and Discussion

The study sought to find out teachers' perspectives on the use of rhymes and songs in the teaching of English as a second language to early childhood learners. Teachers responded to questionnaire items to that effect. The data were presented and analysed in two themes which were:

1. Frequency of use of rhymes in the teaching of English
2. The benefits of using rhymes in teaching English at early childhood development level.

### Theme 1: Frequency of use of rhymes in teaching English

When asked to indicate their perspectives on the use of teaching of English in rural primary schools, participants gave the following responses as indicated in Table 1.

**Table 1: Teacher’s responses on the use of rhymes in the teaching of English as second language to early learners in rural primary schools (N=50)**

ITEMS	RESPONSES					
	Always	%	Some-times	%	Not At all	%
Teachers concentrate more on language structures than on the using rhymes and songs.	50	100	-	-	-	-
Mainly the same old English rhymes and songs are used every year.	50	100	-	-	-	-
Teachers take time to teach rhymes and songs during lessons.	5	10	15	30	30	60
Developing listening skills enhances second language learning	50	100	-	-	-	-
There are English rhymes resources books in schools.	-	-	-	-	50	100
Teachers use rhymes and songs to introduce or conclude lessons and for fun.	50	100	-	-	-	-
Rhymes and songs promote logical thinking	50	100	-	-	-	-

Data in Table 1 reveal that 100% of the respondents indicated that teachers concentrate more on English language structures than on the using rhymes when teaching second language. Responding to an item which said that mainly the same old English rhymes are used every year, all teachers (100%) indicated that they always repeat the same rhymes. Concerning the time which teachers take to teach rhymes, 10% of the respondents indicated that teachers always took time to teach rhymes while 30% indicated that sometimes rhymes were taught. Sixty percent of the respondents indicated that rhymes were not being taught at all. On listening skills, 100% of the respondents indicated that developing listening skills enhances second language learning. Concerning the issue of availability English rhymes resources books in schools, all respondents (100%) indicated that they do not have such resources. On how the known rhymes were used, 100% of the respondents indicated that teachers always use rhymes to introduce or conclude lessons and also for transition purposes. However, rhymes are rarely developed into a language lesson. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents indicated that rhymes always promote logical thinking in learners.

To get further information on challenges faced by teachers in teaching English (second language) using rhymes, respondents were asked to explain the challenges. In the interviews, the following were some of the consistent responses from participants:

School Head 1 said, *“It is not an easy task because the learners mainly use English when they are at school”*.

School Head 2 added, *“Learners in rural areas rarely use English rhymes when they are playing”*.

School head 3 also said, *“There are no resources for teachers to be able to teach second language rhymes. Teachers do not have a collection of second language rhymes”*.

School Head 4 weighed in, *“There is a very big difference between rural and urban schools in terms of resources”*.

School Head 5 added, *“Most teachers are trained to believe that rhymes are for motivation, calling for attention and are used for transitioning from one lesson to the next but not really to develop lessons”*.

School Head 6 also said, *“Teachers are never taught to write or to come up with original rhymes in second language”*.

Responses given by participants can be interpreted to mean that, teaching English in rural areas is a challenge for teachers because the language is not used at play yet play is one of the most important vehicles for children’s learning. Parents in rural settings hardly use English for communication. There is also lack of material resources in

the form of books for teachers to use .The other issue is that participants feel that not much is done during training on the use of rhymes in teaching English(second language). As a result teachers do not have skills for using rhymes in teaching. They also do not have personal collections of nursery rhymes. Responses also show that teachers are not taught to write their own original rhymes

.They continue to rely on the few rhymes which they learned when they were in primary school.

**Theme 2: Benefits of using rhymes in teaching English (second language) at early childhood level in rural primary schools.**

**Table 2: Teachers’ responses on the benefits of using rhymes in teaching English (second language) at early childhood level in rural primary schools. (N=50)**

ITEM	ALWAYS	%	SOMETIMES	%	NOT SURE	%
1) If children know eight nursery rhymes by heart by the time they are four years old, they are usually among the best readers by the time they are eight.			32	64	18	36
2) Repetitive nature of rhymes helps children to learn vocabulary and the rhythm of the language.	50	100	-	-	-	-
3) Songs, chants and rhymes are natural part of a quality early childhood programme.	50	100	-	-	-	-
4) Educators use the rhymes to assist with transitions, to enhance thematic units, to get children focused, to get them up and moving.	50	100	-	-	-	-
5) The structure of a rhyme is highly correlated with early reading achievement in children.	-	-	15	30	35	70
6) Vocabulary and phonological awareness is developed.	50	100	-	-	-	-
7) Nursery rhymes usually tell a story with a beginning, middle and an end.	50	100				
8)Rhymes teach children that events do happen in sequence.	50	100				
9) Rhymes introduce children to the idea of narrative, promote social skills, enhance language development and lay the basis for learning to read and spell.	50	100				
10) Reciting nursery rhymes make learning of second language interesting.	50	100				
11) When rhymes are used as educational intervention, children with a variety of developmental disorders are better able to build language skills.	15	30	24	48	11	22

Data in Table 2 revealed varied responses from participants on the likert scale. Item 1 which reads ‘If children know eight nursery rhymes by heart by the time they are four years old, they are usually among the best readers by the time they are eight.’, none of the respondents selected ‘Always’. This could mean that teachers were not aware of that statement or they have never followed up reading progress of children basing it on knowledge of rhymes. Sixty-four percent indicated that

sometimes the statement is true and 36% indicated that they were not sure of the statement. For items 2, 3, 6,7,8,9 and 10 all respondents (100%) selected ‘Always’ as their response. The items read as follows: (2) ‘Repetitive nature of rhymes helps children to learn vocabulary and the rhythm of the language.’ 3) Songs, chants and rhymes are natural part of a quality early childhood programme;4) Educators use the rhymes to assist with transitions, to enhance thematic units, to get children focused, to get

them up and moving; 6) Vocabulary and phonological awareness is developed; 7) Nursery rhymes usually tell a story with a beginning, middle and an end; 8) Rhymes teach children that events do happen in sequence ; 9) Rhymes introduce children to the idea of narrative, promote social skills, enhance language development and lay the basis for learning to read and spell; 10) Reciting nursery rhymes make learning of second language interesting.

The interpretation is that for teachers, it is an undeniable fact that learners benefit a lot from English rhymes. Their vocabulary is widened and that a strong foundation for learning to read and write is laid.

Item 5 which read, 'The structure of a rhyme is highly correlated with early reading achievement in children' no one selected 'Always' as their response. This could be interpreted to mean that respondents were not aware of this correlation. Thirty percent of the respondents indicated that there was sometimes a correlation. This could mean that some teachers have actually noticed this as they teach reading. A larger percentage (70%) indicated that they were not sure. This could mean that they knew nothing about this research finding or they did not understand what was being conveyed by the statement.

On item 11 which read, 'When rhymes are used as educational intervention, children with a variety of developmental disorders are better able to build language skills.', none of the respondents selected 'Always' while 48% selected 'Sometimes' and 37% indicated that they were 'Not sure'. The interpretation could be that for most mainstream teachers do not really focus on learners with developmental disorders because of lack of training in disability challenges.

During the interviews, school heads, were asked to indicate any other benefits of using rhymes when teaching English to learners in rural schools, the following are some of the responses they gave:

School Head 1 said, "*Learners have an opportunity to learn English in a natural and interesting way. They can recite rhymes even when they are at play or when they are at home*".

School Head 3, added, "*Learners find joy in reciting rhymes at functions like prize giving days. So this gives them confidence of speaking the language in public*".

School Head 4 also said, "*Parents also take pride in hearing children reciting English rhymes. They encourage children to learn more rhymes so that they can speak English*".

School Head 6 advanced, "*Rhymes are good for children. Lullabies which we sing for babies really introduce children to rhymes*".

School Head 7 reiterated, "*They learn rhythm and vocabulary*".

School Head 8 added, "*Learning English through rhymes is important and children need rhymes illustrated with pictures*".

School Head 9 said, "*Parents do not use English at home so if children learn rhymes they automatically bring English in their homes*".

The responses given by teachers are emphasizing the importance of using rhymes when teaching English (second language) in rural schools. Rhymes help children to learn new vocabulary, rhythm and they also learn to express themselves in English.

## Discussion

Results of the on teachers' perspectives towards the use of rhymes in the teaching English as a second language to early learners revealed quite a good number of insights. Responses given by participants can be interpreted to mean that, when teaching English in rural areas teachers concentrate more on teaching language structures than on using rhymes. As a result the language is rarely used at play yet play is one of the most important vehicle for children's learning of a new language. It is a well-known fact that parents in rural settings in Zimbabwe hardly use English for communication with their children because of several reasons. Ghanbari and Hashemian (2014) indicate that in societies where English is not used as a language of instruction, children lack opportunities to hear the language being spoken so that they improve their linguistic skills. Cherry (2022) says that lack of motivation experienced by some second language students could be partly attributed to over-emphasis on teaching language structure which is ineffective in setting to motion students' intellectual abilities. This implies that passive methods of teaching do not stimulate learners' capacities to learn the English language. Adu (2018) also contends that the English language syllabuses almost always focus on the communicative use of the English language to the extent that listening and speaking are set as priorities especially in primary education. Songs are included as essential teaching tools for teaching English as a foreign language without really using them as an important strategy in the teaching of English. Sevik (2011) argue that games and songs have played a central part in a number of approaches in various countries.

While participants agreed that rhymes promote logical thinking and also that there is need to develop listening skills in young learners, it was also noted that teachers tended to use the same old rhymes over and over again without really concentrating on form and structure. This has been attributed to lack of material resources in the form of books for teachers to use. However, educators are urged to change words in certain rhymes replacing them with different and more advanced. According to Conesa and Rubio (2015), teachers are urged to make use of different types of songs and rhymes with special characteristics and actions in the teaching of English. A

collection of useful songs and rhymes is essential for early childhood teachers as they can always use these to enhance language development.

The other issue is that participants feel that not much is done during training on the use of rhymes in teaching English (second language). As a result teachers do not have skills for using rhymes in teaching. They also do not have personal collections of nursery rhymes. Responses also show that teachers are not taught to write their own original rhymes. They continue to rely on the few rhymes which they learned when they were in primary school. In a study by Ara (2009) in Bangladesh, results revealed that teachers lacked knowledge of interesting songs and rhymes for young learners and they did not use as tools or strategies in the teaching of English. Instead of children learning the language with understanding, they memorized structures which they could not use effectively. Songs are dealt with in an ad hoc manner in Turkish EFL settings and that there is a need for a structured and systematic approach regarding songs (Sevik, 2011).

Results revealed that learners benefit tremendously from reciting action rhymes. It is a fact that learners benefit a lot from English rhymes. Their vocabulary is widened and a strong foundation for learning to read and write is laid. As children repeat rhymes in a playful way, the language structures and new words which they learn are stored in the short memory for immediate use and in the long term memory for future use. Anderson, et. al. (2019) indicate that the influence of nursery rhymes as a primary source of teaching English language has remained pivotal since the beginning of the tradition in the seventeenth century. Nursery rhymes have always proven to be one of the best ways to teach a language to young learners, as they convey a lot to learn, keeping the learner's attention intact. A

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young learner loves to play with colours, catchy rhyme and gripping music. Grofcikova and Macajova (2021) says nursery rhymes are a perfect combination of all these.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusion

From the findings of the study, it can be concluded that rhymes are indispensable in the effective teaching of English language and they have stood the test of time. The teachers were using rhymes in the teaching of English as a second language. Though the teachers used rhymes, there was a challenge of creativity on their part and they mostly relied on the old and rhymes. This may be attributed to lack of resource materials. The implication is that teachers need to intensify the use of rhymes in the teaching of English language since these are widely used in English speaking countries and they have remained pivotal. However, though it is agreeable that rhymes are of great help in the teaching of a second language with children mastering language skills such as reading with much ease, it is unfortunate that teachers are not able to link the children's language progress with rhymes. It may also be concluded that teachers for some other reasons may not be tracking the children's progress basing on the use of rhymes.

### 5.2 Recommendations

The study recommends that rhymes should underpin the teaching of English language in early childhood classrooms. Teachers should keep abreast with new and meaningful rhymes for children through available technology. Teachers should have a collection of traditional and modern rhymes in their teaching kit.

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