

## النهج الخطابي في تحليل أناشيد الحضانة الانكليزية

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### ملخص البحث:

أناشيد الأطفال هي شعر بسيط بطبيعته مكتوب بلغة يمكن للأطفال فهمها والاستمتاع بها . تبحث الدراسة الحالية في أناشيد الأطفال في اللغة الإنجليزية من وجهة نظر خطابية. تستهدف الدراسة إجراء تحليل خطابي لبنية أناشيد الأطفال في اللغة الانكليزية من خلال تمحيص الخصائص الثيماتية والبنية الخطابية واللغوية. لتحقيق هذه الأهداف ، تقترض الدراسة (1) أن اللغة الإنجليزية تظهر قيمًا خطابية مختلفة في نصوص أناشيد الحضانة. وأن لأناشيد الحضانة الإنجليزية بنية كبرى وفوق الكبرى وبنية دقيقة. وتم إجراء تحليل البيانات على أساس نموذج فان ديك الاجتماعي الإدراكي لتحليل الخطاب.

لوحظت نتيجتان أساسيتان في التحليل:

أولاً ، تختلف أناشيد الأطفال الإنجليزية في موضوعاتها. أذ تركز على القضايا الاجتماعية والعاطفية.

ثانيًا ، على مستوى البنية الدقيقة ، تظهر أناشيد الحضانة الإنجليزية اختلافات في سماتها الدلالية والنحوية والأسلوبية والبلاغية. وتتمثل هذه الاختلافات إما في نوع العناصر المستعملة أو في تكرار حدوثها.



## **A Discoursal Approach to Analysing English Nursery Rhymes**

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### **Abstract:**

Nursery rhymes are simple poetry written in nature, in a particular language that children can understand and enjoy. The present study investigates nursery rhymes in English from a discoursal point of view. The study aims at making a discoursal analysis of nursery rhymes in English through examining their thematic, schematic and linguistic features. To achieve these aims, the study hypothesizes that 1) English shows various discourse principles in their composition of nursery rhymes. 2) English nursery rhymes have macrostructural, superstructural and microstructural organization. To attain the data relevant to the topic of the study, five English nursery rhymes have been selected to be investigated. Data analysis is conducted on the basis of Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach of discourse analysis. The study has revealed the following main findings. First, English nursery rhymes vary in their themes. They concentrate on social and emotional issues. Second, at the microstructural level, English nursery rhymes show differences in their semantic, syntactic, stylistic and rhetorical features. Such differences are represented either in the type of the used discoursal elements or in the frequency of their occurrence.

**Key words : English nursery rhymes, Discoursal study, thematic organization.**



## 1.1 Introduction

One form of entertainment for all people is singing songs, regardless of age, time and location. Nowadays, there are many types of songs such as pop, country, rock, folk, as well as nursery rhymes. As they are produced to serve different purposes, these types of songs have distinct features. For example, folk songs are made for education and entertainment. Moreover, they match ritual acts, arouse the spirit and function as a means to give lessons through reminders as well as sarcasm (Hamid, et. al., 2015). A song is deliberated as a component of literature and is branded under poetry (Sulong and Rahim, 2015).

Nursery rhymes are originally written to help children to learn about their environment. Some ancient popular nursery rhymes, such as *Mary Had A Little Lamb* and *Baa Baa Black Sheep*, have strong relations with culture and history. Sometimes, nursery rhymes are used to describe a wide range of rhymes for children. They might tell little stories, sometimes strange stories whose meaning is lost in history, and they are sometimes padded out with nonsense words. Some of the rhymes are recited simply like poems, whereas many of them are in fact songs with associated melodies, and they may be hundreds of years old and have passed frequently from generation to generation via an oral tradition. Nursery rhymes are often very simple in form with plenty of repetitions, and frequently with simple up and down patterns in their melodies. No doubt, this simplicity means that they are easy for young children to learn and repeat, and singing nursery rhymes to children will surely contribute to their early education (Lim, 2014).



Generally speaking, nursery rhymes are used as learning materials by which kindergarten teachers incline to conduct singing activities during their lessons. This is considered as one of the well-known activities among the children because it is fun and entertaining (Liao and Campbell, 2014). Besides their function as a source of entertainment, nursery rhymes can also support the children's development of both linguistic and musical skills. Hence, nursery rhymes are not employed for enjoyment purposes only, but also work as a learning device to assist the children's musical and linguistic development (Liao & Campbell, 2016).

According to (Ibid: 2016), young children showed greater interest and pleasure when singing some old children songs like *Old McDonald in the Farm* and *London Bridge is Falling Down*, in comparison with the new ones which have been recently produced. They also revealed that children exhibited more preferences towards nursery rhymes that are being supplemented with gestures or movement. For Renegar (1990), nursery rhymes which are brief and being accompanied with simple rhymes are the ideal ones for young children since they stimulate them to be involved in the songs along with their friends or parents.

## **1.2 The problem**

It requires full knowledge of the language in which it is written to understand nursery rhymes, and comprehending a language requires knowing its linguistic and cultural aspects. Lack of understanding these aspects can lead to failure to know the nursery rhyme 's discourse values. The songs and nursery rhymes of children have been the topics of many studies around the world. ,but nursery rhymes have not been given



enough consideration yet. Therefore, this study comes as an attempt to disclose the discursal features of English nursery rhymes and fill the existing research gap.

### **1.3 Definition of Nursery Rhymes**

Nursery rhyme has been defined and described differently by many scholars. For instance, York (2011) in describing nursery rhymes, states that they are simple poetry written in nature, in a particular language that children can understand and enjoy. As York (2011) adds, most nursery rhymes can be divided into several lines each with different beats. Beats actually help the kids get a better exposure to the lines then create the rhymes. Hearne (cited in Norton, 2011) highlights the appeal of these rhymes and mentions that "with their changing cadence and compressed story elements, Nursery Rhymes are just a step away from the song" (p.160).

### **1.4 Discourse Analysis**

The origins of discourse analysis can be traced back many years ago. Gray, in introducing his book *The Grammatical Foundations of Rhetoric: Discourse Analysis* (1977, p. 1), stated

" rhetoric has been the study of extended discourse, and not so much the breaking down to extended discourse as the building up. But like grammar, rhetoric has tended to take for granted the sentence, distinguish it has looked for its data in more extended, complex discourse rather than within sentences."

In the seventies and eighties there was a kind of distinction between the theoretical and methodological approaches in the study of the language. The former is concerned with language use in social contexts, while the latter is concerned with the organization of language above the sentence. To put together, text is seen as a semantic unit while



discourse as a social practice. This was the first step to demonstrate the mutual relationship between discourse analysis and other disciplines: anthropology, philosophy, sociology and religion, among others. In addition, this has led to deal with the text not as a closed element but rather as a production that provokes a reaction in the receptor (Hernández-Guerra, 2014).

On the basis of what have been discussed above, discourse analysis of nursery rhymes requires, in addition to the analysis of abstract linguistic features, the analysis of some extra linguistic aspects, such as text coherence, intertextuality of text and the functions or purposes of linguistic forms.

### **1.5 Van Dijk's Socio-cognitive Approach to Discourse Analysis**

Van Dijk's approach like Fairclough's approach attempted to connect the micro-structure of language to the macrostructure of society (Kintsch & Van Dijk, 1978). The other parameter of van Dijk's (1993) structural analysis dealt with the reception processes that assess how text is comprehended, memorized and reproduced. The analysis carried out by van Dijk (1998) at microstructure and macrostructure levels categorizes the text production process into three levels as (a) structure, (b) production, and (c) comprehension, and attempts to interrelate the three with each other and with the border social context.

Van Dijk (1995) comprehended and ascertained that discourse analysis can be essentially termed as ideology analysis. According to him, "ideologies are typically, though not exclusively, expressed and reproduced in discourse and communication, including non-verbal semiotic messages, such as pictures, photographs and movies"



(ibid., p. 17). He perceived that ideologies are articulated and expressed in discourse. The verbal, non-verbal and semiotic messages are, to some extent, great communicative mediums that allow ideologies to be reproduced and expressed. He conducted a three-tier analysis to investigate the ideologies and adapted a social, cognitive and discourse analysis approach in this regard. His social analysis dealt with examining the various aspects of society, while discourse analysis focuses on investigating the syntactic, lexical, schematic structures of the text. However, Bronckart (1997, p. 80) suggested that texts depend on multiple and heterogeneous parameters ranging from situated actions and speech genres to discourse types, text structures and linguistic components. In this concern, van Dijk (1997, p. 30) stated that:

"... discourse analysts tend to theoretically decompose discourse at various layers, dimensions or levels and at the same time to mutually relate such levels. These levels represent different types of phenomena involved in discourse, such as sounds, forms, meanings, or action."

### **1.6 Aim of the Study**

The present study aims at investigating the thematic representation of English nursery rhymes and figuring out their linguistic features through the application of Van Dijk's model of discourse analysis. Such analysis is carried out at the macrostructural (thematic), superstructural (schematic), and microstructural analysis of nursery rhymes in English.



### **1.7 Hypothesis of the Study**

1. English shows various discourse principles in their composition of nursery rhymes.
2. Nursery rhymes have macrostructural, superstructural and microstructural organization.

### **1.8 Method of the Study**

This study investigates the discorsal features of English nursery rhymes. The method involves analyzing themes, contents and the most influential linguistic features of the selected English nursery rhymes.

### **1.9 Data Collection**

Five English nursery rhymes have been selected from a collection of nursery rhymes found on the internet and in nursery rhyme books. The selection of these rhymes in terms of theme, linguistic features and cultural references was made on the basis of their variety.

The selected nursery rhymes include, Jack And Jill, London Bridge is falling down, Twinkle, twinkle little star, The little piggy, The old woman who lived in a shoe.

### **The Model Used for Analyzing English Nursery Rhymes**

On the basis of Van Dijk's views on discourse analysis, a schematic model for analyzing English nursery rhymes has been designed. This model includes most of the text components referred to by van Dijk in his socio-cognitive approach of discourse analysis. The developed model comprises three levels of analysis and in each level there are some units or aspects of texts for analysis. Table 1 below shows the general form of the developed model used to make a discorsal analysis of the collected data.

Table (1) Model of discourse analysis of English nursery rhymes

Name of Rhyme	Level of Analysis	Unit of Analysis	Text
	Macrostructure	Theme, Topic	
	Superstructure	Introduction, Content, Closing	
	Microstructure	Semantics, Stylistics, Syntax, Rhetoric	

### 1. Macrostructure (Thematic)analysis of Arabic nursery rhymes

Table (2) Thematic features of English nursery rhymes

No.	Name of Rhyme	Representation
1	Jack And Jill	Adventure and Heroism
2	London Bridge is falling down	Bringing a landmark to light
3	Twinkle, twinkle little star	Exploring the world
4	The little piggy	Wonder and Fear
5	The old woman who lived in a shoe	Misery and Survival

From the data presented in the table above it is noticed that majority of the investigated English nursery rhymes have educational and social lessons. This result supports the view that nursery rhymes are not just for fun. They also promote various moral values,

such as love, cooperation, friendship. However, English nursery rhymes focus on social and emotional themes. This reflects the specific ideological and cultural background of the English society.

### 1. Superstructure (Schematic)analysis of English nursery rhymes

#### Text (1) 'Jack and Jill'

Table (3) Superstructure features of the English nursery rhyme

Name of Rhyme	Unit of Analysis	Data
<b>Jack and Jill</b>	Introduction	<b>Jack and Jill went up the hill, To fetch a pail of water;</b>
	Content	<b>Jack fell down and broke his crown, And Jill came tumbling after. Then up Jack got and home did trot, As fast as he could caper;</b>
	Closing	<b>To Old Dame Dob, who patched his knob, With vinegar and brown paper</b>

## Discussion

The introductory of the song tell the children about the location where Jack and Jill had their adventurous chore, the hill. And the purpose of this chore, to fetch some water.

As for the content of the song, it describes simply and briefly the accident that happened to Jack and Jill. It also explains Jack's bravery through went home quickly to get treatment without crying. This event makes the children more attracted to listen to the song.

The rhyme was closed by describing the way Jack was cured and by whom he was given the treatment. This happy end tries to make children to be more confident of themselves and do the same tasks as Jack and Jill did. This rhyme is not concluded by repeating the same lines in the introductory part of the song.

### Text (2) 'London Bridge is falling down'

Table (4) Superstructure features of the English nursery rhyme

Name of Rhyme	Unit of Analysis	Data
<b>London Bridge is falling down</b>	Introduction	<b>London Bridge is falling down, Falling down, falling down. London Bridge is falling down, My fair lady.</b>
	Content	<b>Build it up with silver and gold, Silver and gold, silver and gold.</b>



		<b>Build it up with silver and gold, My fair lady.</b>
	Closing	<b>London Bridge is falling down, Falling down, falling down. London Bridge is falling down, My fair lady.</b>

### **Discussion**

This introductory part focuses on the main theme of the song, which is the falling down of London bridge. Which has been repeated twice and four times at the level of the whole poem. This is to drive the children's attention to the main theme of the song, which is the collapse of London bridge.

The content of the song includes declarative and imperative statements as if made by the child for his fair lady. These statements ask the fair lady to rebuild it by using more valuable and stronger metals, silver and gold. It is noticeable that this rhyme is full of repetitive. This repetition is meant to simplify the song for the children.

The poem is concluded in the same way with which it is started. This form of introducing and closing the song is made to focus on the main theme and to make it easier for the children to repeat and memorize.

### Text (3) 'Twinkle, twinkle little star'

Table (5) Superstructure features of the English nursery rhyme

Name of Rhyme	Unit of Analysis	Data
Twinkle, twinkle little star	Introduction	<p><b>Twinkle, twinkle little star</b> <b>How I wonder what you are.</b></p>
	Content	<p><b>Up above the world so high</b> <b>Like a diamond in the sky.</b></p>
	Closing	<p><b>Twinkle, twinkle little star</b> <b>How I wonder what you are.</b></p>

### Discussion

The introductory two lines characterize the main theme of this song. It starts with the curiosity of the child who wonders over the twinkling of the stars. Due to his fascination of the pleasant nature of stars.

The content of the song provides more description and inquiries about the object to which the child is talking. This description includes the high position of the star. In addition, the simile in 'Like a diamond' is a literary device used in this song for the purpose of making the child's imagination of the star more familiar.



The rhyme is concluded with repetition of the introduction. As usual, this closing is meant to attract children's attention to the main theme of the rhyme and to make it easier to be memorized.

#### **Text (4) 'The little Piggy'**

Table (6) Superstructure features of the English nursery rhyme

<b>Name of Rhyme</b>	<b>Unit of Analysis</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>The little Piggy</b>	Introduction	<b>This pig went to market;</b>
	Content	<b>This pig stayed at home;</b> <b>This pig had a bit of meat;</b> <b>And this pig had none;</b>
	Closing	<b>This pig cried</b> <b>Wee! Wee! Wee!,</b> <b>I can't find my way home.</b>

#### **Discussion**

The introductory line of the poem presents the last destination in the life of pigs, which is the market to be sold or slaughtered. Before describing the kind of care given to pigs. The content lines of the poem describe briefly the kind of pleasant life that pigs have before they are taken to the market. it represents the happy aspect of pigs' life.

The rhyme is closed with the facet of fear. The poor pig finally realizes that it is brought to the end. It has started to cry because it will not go back home. The cry 'Wee! wee! wee!' represents the fear of the pig.

**Text (5) 'The old woman who lived in a shoe'**

Table (7) Superstructure features of the English nursery rhyme

Name of Rhyme	Unit of Analysis	Data
The old woman who lived in a shoe	Introduction	<p><b>You know the old woman who lived in a shoe,</b></p> <p><b>And had so many children she didn't know what to do?</b></p>
	Content	<p><b>She gave them some broth without any bread,</b></p> <p><b>She whipped them all around, and put them to bed.</b></p>
	Closing	<p><b>I'm sure if she lived in a little shoe house,</b></p> <p><b>That little old woman was surely a mouse!</b></p>

## Discussion

In an interrogative manner, this introduction presents the family of the old woman as a big one who has so many children. Furthermore, the old woman appears in this part of the rhyme as a frustrated mother who does not know what to do for her big family.

The content shows the old woman's patient and positive in spite of the family poverty. The second stanza describes the struggle of the old woman who tries to survive with her children by giving them very simple food, some broth without any bread. The old woman is used to whipping her children all around and put them to bed.

The poem is concluded by providing one more idea of the frustrated circumstances. Living in a shoe symbolizes a hut or a small house and represents poverty and the miserable life of the family.

### 1. Microstructure analysis of English nursery rhymes

#### Text (1) ' Jack and Jill '

Table (8) Microstructure analysis of the English nursery rhyme

Unit of Analysis	Data
Semantics	<b>Synonymy:</b> fall down- tumble <b>Collocation:</b> a pail of water
Syntax	<b>Sentence pattern:</b> SVO/Adv., AS <b>Active voice</b>



Stylistics	<p><b>Word Choices:</b> went up, hill, fetch, trot, patched.</p> <p><b>Parallel Structure:</b> Frequent use of SVO/Adv. pattern</p> <p><b>Foregrounding:</b> Then up Jack got and home did trot,</p>
Rhetoric	<p><b>Assonance:</b> down-crown, got-trot, Dob-knob</p> <p><b>End rhyme:</b> water, after, caper, paper</p>

### Discussion

Semantically, the words 'fall down' and 'tumble' are synonymous refer to the same kind of event happened to Jack and Jill. The word 'pail', collocates with the noun 'water'. This collocation indicate the reason why Jack and Jill went up the hill.

Regarding the syntactic component, it is observed that the patterns followed are SVO/Adv. and AS. The first one is used in 'Jack and Jill went up the hill', whereas the second pattern is used in 'Then up Jack got and home did trot'. In addition, all sentences are in active voice since the focus of the song is on the subjects, Jack and Jill.

Stylistically, word choice represents the main themes of the rhyme clearly. The words 'went up', 'hill, and 'fetch' show Jack and Jill's bravery in doing a domestic work in spite of their little age. The words 'trot' and 'patched' represent the two children's heroism in doing the right things after getting injured. In addition, all the sentences are almost



paralleled in their SVO/Adv. structure. The style of foregrounding is clearly shown here 'then up Jack got home' to emphasize the location.

Rhetorically, for assonance, the use of similar vowel sounds between consonants as in 'down-crown', 'got-trot' and 'Dob-knob' makes the song more melodious. For end rhyme, the repetition of the same ending consonant in 'water', 'after', 'caper' and paper at the end of each statement provides the poem with the same melodious sense of assonance.

## **Text (2) ' London Bridge is falling down '**

Table (9) Microstructure analysis of the English nursery rhyme

<b>Unit of Analysis</b>	<b>Data</b>
Semantics	<b>Collocation:</b> fall-down <b>Opposites:</b> fall down - build
Syntax	<b>Sentence pattern:</b> SV/ V Adv. <b>Active voice</b>
Stylistics	<b>Word choice:</b> London bridge, silver and gold, fair lady <b>Parallel structure</b> <b>Short clauses</b>



Rhetoric	<b>Apostrophe:</b> My Fair Lady <b>Hyperbolic expression:</b> 'silver and gold'
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### **Discussion**

Semantically, the collocation 'fall down', and the oppositeness of meaning 'fall down' and 'build' are clearly shown in the text. The expression 'London Bridge' is used to symbolize the British civilization as it is one of the most famous buildings that needs real consideration, whereas the expression 'falling down' implies the dangers surrounding this important structure. In addition, the expression 'build it up' denotes the urgent actions required to protect such a sign of civilization.

In relation to the syntactic elements, the simple SV/ V Adv. forms are used in many positions of this poem to match the children's linguistic knowledge of the language. As in 'London Bridge is falling down' and 'Build it up with silver and gold' respectively. Besides, all the sentences are in active voice as the focus on the subject 'London Bridge' rather than any other element.

The stylistic features in the poem can be discussed from three sides. The first one is the selection of words. The expression 'London Bridge' is used to refer to one of the most popular places in Britain, the expression 'silver and gold' implies appropriate actions towards repairing the bridge. 'Fair lady' it is a lovely expression to make the song enjoyable for the children. The second one is the parallel form of sentences appearing in SV or V Adv. structures. This parallelism serves to give simplicity and consistency to the

poem. Finally, short clauses support simplicity of the rhyme as the target readers of the text are children.

Rhetorically speaking, apostrophe, the direct addressing of someone who is not present or who is not real, is one of the rhetorical devices used in this poem 'My fair lady' so as to recall children's imaginary skills. The other rhetorical feature is the hyperbolic expression 'silver and gold'.

### Text 3' Twinkle, twinkle little star '

Table (10) Microstructure analysis of the Arabic nursery rhyme

Unit of Analysis	Data
Semantics	<b>Collocation:</b> sky, high, star <b>Synonymy:</b> up, above
Syntax	<b>Sentence pattern:</b> VS <b>Active voice</b> <b>Sentence type:</b> Imperative & Exclamatory
Stylistics	<b>Words choice:</b> twinkle, little star, up above <b>Short clauses</b>
Rhetoric	<b>Personification :</b> star



	<b>Simile:</b> like a diamond in the sky
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## Discussion

Semantically, the word 'twinkle' is used as a reference to the nature of that object which appears only at night and shines in the dark with an unsteady light. The word 'wonder' denotes the child's doubts about the nature of the star. The word 'diamond' signifies the similarity in shape between the two objects. In collocation, the association of the words 'sky', 'high' and 'star' represent the child's wondering over the twinkling of the stars in the sky, whereas the synonymous words 'up' and 'above' represent the high location of the star.

The syntactic features can be addressed in terms of language simplicity, First, in relation to sentence pattern VS, the child-speaker in the song uses a very simple language to pay more attention to the matter of twinkling in a requisitive mood. The song starts with the exclamatory word 'how' to focus on the child's wonder over the star. Second, all sentences are in the active voice cause it is hard for the child to form sentences of passive voice.

In the stylistic elements, the choice of the word 'twinkle' reflects the appearance of the star at night as perceived by the little boy. The word 'little star' shows the child's realization of the star as a small object. The words 'up above' show how far the star is from the child. All these words represent the child's eagerness to explore the real nature of the star so, short clauses are used in the rhyme.

Finally, the rhetorical features used in the rhyme are of two types. The first one is the personification of the star. The star seems to be as a human being to whom the child

is talking. The second one is the simile 'like a diamond in the sky' in which the boy is comparing the star to diamond. These features provide the song with the imaginary sights the child has got about the star.

#### **Text 4 ' The little Piggy '**

Table (11) Microstructure analysis of the English nursery rhyme

<b>Unit of Analysis</b>	<b>Data</b>
Semantics	<p><b>Ambiguity</b></p> <p><b>Oppositeness:</b> go - stay</p> <p><b>Collocation:</b> find – way</p>
Syntax	<p><b>Sentence pattern:</b> SVO/Adv., Negative, Active voice</p> <p><b>Sentence type:</b> Exclamation</p>
Stylistics	<p><b>Word Choice:</b> meat, home, market, none, cried</p> <p><b>Parallel structure</b></p> <p><b>Short Clauses</b></p>
Rhetoric	<p><b>Onomatopoeia</b></p> <p><b>Anaphora</b></p>

## Discussion

Semantically, first, in line three 'This pig had a bit of meat;' exhibits a sense of grammatical ambiguity for the two possible meanings it bears: either the pig has been given a bit of meat to be fed or the pig itself has meat to be sold or eaten by someone else, and that is why it was brought to the market. Second, oppositeness comes from the use of the words 'go' and 'stay' which express two different actions. Third, collocation of the words 'find' and 'way' is used in the last line of the song.

Syntactically, all the sentences in the poem are simply made of SVO/Adv. pattern. Simple language structure is the common form of nursery rhyme. The negative statement 'I can't find my way home.' reflect the sad and unexpected end of pigs life. The exclamation mark '!' is used in the poem after the pig cries 'Wee!, Wee!, Wee!' as a representation of its' wonder of the unexpected end.

stylistically, this short poem includes a small number of words related to the simple and usual life of pigs in accordance with its main themes. The words 'home' is used to represent the nice place where this pig used to live and the word 'meat' denotes the proper food it has. The word 'market' denotes the last destination in the pig's life, while the word 'none' is what the pig has found in the market, the word 'cried' and the sounds 'wee! wee! wee!' made by the pig. For parallel structure, almost all the sentences are of SVO/Adv. pattern. This similar form adds to the musical and melodious tone of the song.

As for the rhetorical features, the onomatopoeia 'Wee! wee! wee!' used to express the sound of fear made by the pig. And the anaphora manifested by the regular repetition of



the same phrase 'This pig' at the beginning of the successive lines. This is made to help in accomplishing the writer's intention to convey and emphasize specific ideas.

**(Text 5) ' The old woman who lived in a shoe '**

Table (12) Microstructure analysis of the English nursery rhyme

<b>Unit of Analysis</b>	<b>Data</b>
Semantics	<b>Collocation:</b> old - woman, put – to bed, live in
Syntax	<b>Sentence pattern:</b> SVO- Adv./Complement <b>Sentence type:</b> Interrogative, Conditional, Exclamation
Stylistics	<b>Word Choice:</b> old woman, so many children, lived in a shoe, some broth, without any bread, whipped them <b>Parallel structure</b> <b>Complex and simple sentences</b>
Rhetoric	<b>Metaphor</b> <b>Symbolism</b> <b>End rhyme</b>

## Discussion

The semantic features of the poem can be discussed in terms of the propositional structures expressed in the rhyme. The words 'some' and 'without' denote the dearth of food for this family. The verb 'whip' represent the unpleasant kind of treatment for children, which occurs continually, 'all around'. The words 'liddle' and 'mouse' describe the unfortunate housing of the family. The collocation words 'old woman', 'put to bed' and 'live in' show the habitual co-occurrences of words with certain other words in English.

Syntactically, two patterns of sentence are used in the poem. First, SVO/Comp., such as 'You know the old woman who lived in a shoe' and 'And had so many children she didn't know what to do?'. Second, SVO/Adv., such as 'She give them some broth without any bread' and 'She whipped them all around, and put them to bed'. Declarative, interrogative and conditional statements have been used throughout the rhyme. Interrogation ends with a question mark. The conditional subordinating sentence '.if she lived.. That old woman was surely a mouse!' contributes with its deictic function to emphasize the message transmitted to the audience. An exclamatory sense is noticed by using the exclamation mark '!'. This represents the unbelievable conditions of the family described in the song.

Stylistically, all the words choice are made by the songwriter purposefully so that the readers may understand the theme and the message of the song. Parallelism in the poem can be noticed from the frequent use of the same structures in the rhyme.

Rhetorically, for metaphor, an implied comparison is made between the objects different in nature. Living in a shoe is a metaphor of poverty. Symbolism used to signify



ideas and qualities, by giving them symbolic meanings that are different from their literal meanings. The word 'shoe' is used in the rhyme to symbolize a hut or a small house. Finally, the repetition of the same ending vowel in 'shoe' and 'do' and the same ending consonant in 'house - mouse' and 'bread - bed' at the end of each stanza makes the poem melodious.

## **Conclusion**

The current study has arrived at the following conclusions:

1. English nursery rhymes exhibit different discursal values in most of the different levels analysed. At the macrostructural level, the English nursery rhymes are more interested in showing social and emotional themes. At the microstructural level, nursery rhymes show differences in their semantic, syntactic, stylistic and rhetorical features. Such differences are represented either in the type of the features used or in the frequency of their occurrence. The only typical aspect of English nursery rhymes is their superstructural features. They comprise all the schematic categories; introduction, content and closing in the same hierarchical organization. Accordingly, the first hypothesis of this research " English shows various discourse principles in their composition of nursery rhymes" has been verified.
2. Regarding nursery rhymes organization, this study has reached the following conclusions. First, nursery rhymes are not written for entertaining only. They provide several educational and social lessons and promote various moral values.



Second, nursery rhymes follow the same schematic structure. They are composed of all the conventional categories; introduction, content and closing in the same hierarchical organization, in which each category has its own properties and functions. Third, nursery rhymes are written in a highly selected linguistic devices that match the children's mentality and their ability of comprehension and acquisition. Accordingly, the third hypothesis of the present study which reads as "Nursery rhymes have macrostructural, superstructural and microstructural organization" has been verified.

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