USE OF SONGS AS A MOTIVATIONAL TOOL
TO ENHANCE PUPILS' SPEAKING SKILLS

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my parents, **Mr Peter Savarimuthu** and **Madam Chelvi Madason** who never fail to motivate me in order for me to strive for my best in my studies. Without their support, it would have been impossible for me to accomplish this. I would also like to thank them for all the sacrifices they had done for me till this day. I would like to extend my gratitude to my humble and beloved supervisor, **Dr Shanti Chandran a/p Sandaran** who helped me a lot in completing this thesis and for all the guidance and knowledge given throughout my journey in UTM and for inspiring me in many ways. My heartfelt gratitude goes to all of you.

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ABSTRACT

The study is conducted to investigate the use of songs as a motivational tool to enhance pupils' speaking skills. The paper discloses the implementation of songs as a motivational tool to develop Year 4 pupils' speaking skills on the first part. The second part consist of knowing teachers' perception on teaching speaking skills to Year 4 pupils. This research employed a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative methods. For the quantitative part, 30 pupils participated in the experiment of using songs that contain conversations to develop their speaking skill. For this purpose. a pre test and post test is conducted. The findings obtained involved calculating the margin of difference of the pre test and the post test scores to determine the success of the treatment. Next, descriptive statistics was used to analyse the test scores by comparing the mean and the standard deviations. For the qualitative method, five primary school teachers were involved in a semi-structured interview. The data from the interview is transcribed and discussed based on the objectives of the study. The findings showed that the usage of songs as a motivational tool is effective in enhancing pupils' speaking skills. The teachers' perception on the importance, strategies and ways of teaching speaking skill in the classroom revealed significant understanding of the issue. Plus, teachers must consider the challenges encountered by pupils to develop their speaking skill and strive to incorporate different instructional methods in their classrooms in order to improve pupils' speaking skills. This paper sheds light on the value of using songs as a motivational tool to enhance pupils' speaking skills and to know teachers' perception in using songs to teach speaking skill.

KEYWORDS: Songs, Pupils, Motivation, Teacher's Perception, Speaking Skill

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini dijalankan untuk mengkaji keberkesanan penggunaan lagu sebagai alat motivasi untuk meningkatkan kemahiran bertutur pelajar. Maka, kajian ini mendedahkan pelaksanaan lagu sebagai alat motivasi untuk mengembangkan kemahiran bertutur pelajar pada bahagian pertama. Bahagian kedua terdiri daripada mengetahui persepsi guru terhadap pengajaran kemahiran bertutur kepada murid Tahun 4. Penyelidikan ini menggunakan kaedah kuantitatif dan kaedah kualitatif. Untuk bahagian kuantitatif, 30 pelajar mengambil bahagian dalam eksperimen menggunakan lagu video untuk meningatkan kemahiran bertutur. Bahagian ini melibatkan penerangan margin perbezaan ujian pra dan skor ujian pasca yang diperoleh oleh pelajar. Seterusnya, statistik deskriptif digunakan untuk menganalisis skor ujian dengan membandingkan min dan sisihan piawai. Untuk kaedah kualitatif, lima guru sekolah rendah terlibat dalam temu ramah separa berstruktur. Data dari temu bual itu dibincangkan berdasarkan objektif kajian. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa penggunaan lagu sebagai alat motivasi berkesan dalam meningkatkan kemahiran bertutur pelajar. Persepsi guru mengenai kepentingan, strategi dan cara mengajar kemahiran bertutur di dalam kelas menunjukkan pemahaman yang signifikan mengenai masalah ini. Selain itu, guru mesti mempertimbangkan cabaran yang dihadapi oleh pelajar untuk mengembangkan kemahiran bertutur mereka dan berusaha untuk memasukkan kaedah pengajaran yang berbeza di bilik darjah mereka untuk meningkatkan kemahiran pertuturan pelajar. Akhir kata, kajian ini memberi penerangan mengenai nilai menggunakan lagu untuk mengajar bahasa Inggeris di dalam kelas dan untuk pengembangan kemahiran bertutur melalui penggunaan lagu.

KATA-KATA KUNCI: Lagu, Pelajar, Motivasi, Persepsi guru, Kemahiran bertutur

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UTM	-	Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
LAD	-	Language Acquisition Device
TESL	-	Teaching English as a Second Language
CEFR	-	Common European Framework of Reference
MEB	-	Malaysian Education Blueprint
ALM	-	Audio Lingual Method
SLA	-	Second Language Acquisition
UPSR	-	Ujian Pencapaian Sekolah Rendah
SPM	-	Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia
KSSR	-	Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah

LIST OF SYMBOLS

S.D   -   Standard Deviation

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

English is known to be a universal language as it is the most spoken language around the world. A statistic by the Malta University Language School revealed that more than a quarter of the world's population speaks English which is about 1.6 billion people (Malta University Language School, 2017). In communication, English is the primary mediator for delivering and sharing information. Listening and speaking abilities are closely related from a communicative viewpoint of the language classroom (Brown, 2001,). However, speaking skill is as equally important as other skills in children's overall language development. It is the first output after the first input (Listening) before they can write.

Chaney & Burk (1998, p. 13) defined speaking as "building and sharing meaning in a variety of contexts, by using verbal and non-verbal symbols". Speaking in English enables a person to broaden their world and helps to improve the quality of life by providing job opportunities globally. Most employers prefer their employees to be able to speak and write fluently in English. Despite its significance, developing pupils' speaking skill has been undervalued for many years and English language teachers teach speaking only as a repetition of exercises or memorising common dialogues from the textbooks. Nevertheless, today's education requires that the goal of teaching speaking should enhance pupils' communicative skills as it is the only way for pupils to express themselves and learn how to follow the social and cultural rules appropriate in each communicative circumstance.

Hence, this section discusses how the education reformation in Malaysia has brought various changes that have led the education to focus on developing the speaking skill in the primary school context in Malaysia. Thus, the upcoming discussion will provide background information about the emergence of the currently implemented CEFR curriculum for year 4 primary school pupils which emphasises on developing pupils' speaking skills. The significance of the CEFR curriculum is discussed because it is related with the pupils involved in this study. A brief introduction of past research which shows dominant trends in the implementation of songs in learning will also be discussed in this section.

Significant with the fact that English is widely used in daily communication, the education system in Malaysia also focuses on the importance of pupils acquiring this language. Aligned with the constant shift towards the 21st century learning skills, pupils in primary school continuously undergo changes in the learning of English language. The English language is introduced to a child as early as preschool and continued to be taught as a compulsory subject in the primary school, secondary school and post-secondary and tertiary levels education. Therefore, after learning English for at least 11 years or more pupils are expected to be fluent and capable of communicating effectively in English and being able to articulate their thoughts clearly either in writing or speaking with confidence. However, a study conducted by Darmi & Albion (2016, p.4) revealed that there are still some Malaysian graduates who are unable to master the English language especially the spoken language.

To overcome this problem, the education ministry and the government introduced the current curriculum which is based on the Common European Framework of References or also known as the 'CEFR'. It is a comprehensive approach that focuses primarily on the spoken interaction and the spoken production between learners. By dividing listening and speaking in two separate parts, the CEFR focuses both on the learner's production and their ability to take part in conversations and discussion. Thus, the CEFR emphasises the teacher's role in ensuring that pupils are equipped with the right skill for their future. Hence, the general aim of this study is to look for ways to develop speaking skills of pupils involved in this CEFR

curriculum in primary school.

Apart from a comprehensive and engaging curriculum such as the CEFR, past studies and learning theories proposed by scholars admitted that language learning should be in a fun-filled environment. When a learner's anxiety level is lowered, it enhances their learning process. This is clear through Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis which claims that the best acquisition will only occur in environments where anxiety is low or the affective filter is low (Brown, 2007). Young (1992), informed on the importance of developing a low anxiety environment in the language classroom through the usage of effective pedagogical approaches and challenging classroom materials to develop language skills (Wu, 2010).

The approach of including songs in teaching and learning is loved by English teachers and it is also a way to lower pupils' affective filter. Moreover, Kirsch (2006), asserted that singing is one of the most beneficial manners of language acquiring strategy. He also states that musical expression is vital for human experience. Singing is one of the most exciting language learning approaches described by children. Therefore, it is known that songs have a fun approach on its own whereby it makes young learners learn in an exciting manner and in an anxiety free environment.

Scholars have provided various explanations for the development of speaking skills. First, speaking is described by Fulcher (2003, p. 23) as "the verbal use of language to interact with others." He indicated that speech is an efficient oral ability typically carried out by two or more persons. In the other hand, Harmer (2001) proposed that the ability to communicate fluently assumes not only the characteristics of intelligence (e.g., voice, expressive, lexical and grammatical as well as language negation) but also the abilities of information processing (language processing, interacting with information processing and others). Brown (2007), however, argued that the ability to communicate depends on two concepts, namely: the form and role of expression. The language type is how to use language that fits the elements of pattern, arrangement, vocabulary and language, while the language feature focuses on how to use elements of language and their purposes

Songs can also enhance other language skills and language acquisition. Songs enhance memory of text and spurs language acquisition. Several researchers such as Chazin & Neuschatz (1990) did expound the benefit of songs as a memory aid. Plus, songs also enhance learners' grammatical structures learnt in class. Children would copy accents, intonation and rhythm. Their pronunciation will progress as they focus on sounds and not the meaning. Songs help to develop children's language skills, cultural awareness, linguistic awareness and pronunciation. In short, teaching songs has various benefits on pupil's language acquisition. There are many strategies in teaching songs that teachers can explore for the use in the classroom.

From the extensive review of previous similar studies on the usage of songs, the researcher had found several journals that employed the usage of songs in developing speaking skill. A study done by Romero, Bernal, & Olivares (2012) on "The Usage of Songs to Encourage Six Graders to Develop English Speaking Skill" identified that the learners were pleased and happy with the learning process because they managed to improve their speaking skill by listening to the songs and through practice. Next, another study done by Baltazar (2017), on "The Use of Songs to Improve Speaking Skill of Second Semester Pupils of Teachers Training and Education Science faculty of Unital in Academic Year 2017" provided clear evidence that songs can become a media of introduction of new language, provided motivation to pupils and can strengthen the memory of pupils.

Based on previous research discussed, it can be concluded that there has been no study conducted on the implementation of songs as a motivational tool. Hence, this study will be carried out to investigate if songs can be used as a motivational tool to improve primary school pupils' speaking skills. The aim is to focus on improving pupils' speaking skills, which is a productive skill that is often neglected by most teachers in primary schools since greater emphasis is given on receptive skills that are tested in the public examinations. The study also aims to know the perception of teachers in teaching speaking skill based for year 4 pupils. This study considered speaking skill to be the foundation in learning and acquiring a language, thus the focus will be on improving pupils' accuracy in speaking.

1.2   Background of the Study

In Malaysia, English is an important second language. Over the years, many changes have taken place in relation to the textbooks, educational policies and curriculum of English subject in schools in response to the nationwide strain over English language performance issues. The most recent reform, basically adapted from the Malaysian Education Blueprint (MEB), is the adoption of the 2015-2025 English Language Education Roadmap for Malaysia (Don et al. 2015). The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) was launched in 2013 as an effort to encourage schools to teach and study the English language.

As a guide for English language curriculum creators and teachers, the increasingly integrated blueprint with the MEB helps to ensure that pupils meet globally compatible levels of competency in competencies aligned with international norms, benchmarked against the Common European Framework of Reference or CEFR. The global proficiency scale and the "can do" phrases are components of the CEFR. Five communication capacities, including listening, reading, spoken conversation, spoken development and writing, are characterised by the CEFR. While listening and speaking are normally related and function together, spoken engagement and spoken development are emphasized in Year 4 as well as other abilities.

Unlike the previous KSSR curriculum which combined the listening and speaking skills, in the CEFR, speaking skill is divided into two new additional sub-skills which are the spoken interaction and spoken production. According to Cambridge University Press (2013), "the CEFR is especially helpful when all the various sub-skills and fields of expertise are protected under the same collection of levels: the main four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing communicative language (e.g. turn-taking, seeking clarification), types of interaction (e.g. purchasing goods and services, interviewing) and further linguistic skills' (e.g. vocabulary range, phonological control). This enables teachers to connect the skills in each of these fields with the overall standard of the pupil. Therefore, CEFR is a holistic approach enforced to meet the needs of boosting the 21[st]century skills among the pupils.

In Malaysia, most pupils are multilingual. They can at least speak in the Malay language and in English. English is a mandatory subject that must be retained at school. However, some pupils still regard English as a foreign language, which results in their inability at the end of their school years to be fluent in the language. Moreover, English is considered insignificant by some pupils and parents as it is not a required subject to pass the public exam. Globally, English maintains its position in business and science as a world language, which is why it will remain popular as one of the languages that Malaysian pupils need to acquire.

This in a way has also impacted teachers' pedagogical beliefs that diversely contributed to the change in classroom practices of teaching English especially in the aspect of speaking. The analysis of recent studies in Malaysia on English language literacy shows a strong tendency to look at literacy as autonomous skills. Classroom practices are mainly characterised by answering questions about reading comprehension and essay writing with limited listening and speaking exercises (Musa, Koo & Hanita, 2012).With that, it can be summarised that there is indeed a need to study on the usage of songs to develop speaking skills among the primary school pupils in Malaysia.

1.3   Problem Statement

Formal exposure to the English language begins as early as 4 years of age. It is taught as a compulsory subject from kindergarten until secondary level of education and is formally used in most tertiary education institutions in Malaysia. Despite the early exposure, the application of the language outside the classroom remains scarce, resulting in low English language competency among Malaysian pupils pursuing tertiary education. Similarly, English is an important subject in UPSR examination that every Year 6 pupils in this country must undergo before moving on to their secondary education. The emphasis on the exam starts once pupils enter level 2 from Year 4 to Year 6. Due to this reason, this current study was conducted on the year 4 pupils in a primary school in Malaysia so as to enable the researcher to assess their speaking skill through the usage of songs.

The teaching of English language in the primary schools of Malaysia traditionally focuses on the development of reading and writing skills, while less attention has been given to the development of speaking skills despite speaking being an essential skill in language learning and one of the most common means of communication.

During speaking lessons, it was noticed that several pupils' struggle to complete a sentence. The pupils were aware of what they wanted to say but they failed to put it in meaningful words. The most that they struggled was to provide answers to simple questions and in asking simple questions to their friends. This is a serious problem as by Year 4 at the age of 10, they should have mastered this skill of asking and answering simple questions as it is one of the speaking skills stated in the syllabus. In order to help them overcome this problem, many examples were provided during following speaking lessons, yet the pupils' speaking ability of asking and answering questions did not develop.

Therefore, it could be deduced that this problem occurred as speakers who have a different first language have difficulty in producing different sounds in speech (Harmer, 2004). He also mentioned that a way of dealing with this is by gradually training the pupils' ears. "When they hear correctly, they are on the way to being able to speak correctly" (Harmer, 2004, p. 185). It is also known that problems in speaking are prominent among second language learners. EFL pupils undergo challenges to speak in English because they do not have ample opportunities to practice and use the language (Thornbury, 2011). Hence, this current research is conducted to examine the impact of using songs as a motivational tool to develop pupils' English-speaking ability.

1.4   Purpose of the Study

Considering the benefits of using songs in teaching and learning, it is obvious that there is a need to develop pupils' speaking skill since speaking is the most important skill among all the four language skills. Additionally, pupils in this class have problem in speaking specifically in asking and answering questions in the

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classroom. Hence, this study will be conducted to investigate the usage of songs as a motivational tool to teach speaking skills as well as to understand the teacher's perception on developing speaking skills to Year 4 pupils.

The teacher's perception is needed to provide insights on the speaking lesson that is firstly introduced through the newly implemented CEFR Year 4 English curriculum since the beginning of the year 2020. The information gained will be useful in determining the approaches and techniques used by the teachers in conducting speaking lessons. This in a way will also reveal the pedagogical understanding of teachers in implementing speaking lessons based on the CEFR curriculum.

1.5   Research Objectives

The main objectives of this study are as follow:

i) To investigate the usage of songs as a motivational tool to enhance pupils' speaking skills.

ii) To identify the perceptions of teachers in using songs to teach speaking skills for Year 4 pupils.

1.6   Research Questions

To address the above research objectives, this research aims to answer the following questions;

i)   Does the usage of songs as a motivational tool enhance pupils' speaking skills?

ii)   What are the perceptions of teachers in using songs to teach speaking skills to Year 4 pupils?

1.7   Significance of the Study

In the past KSSR curriculum that was implemented, the speaking skill was often overlooked since the listening and speaking skill was combined in the KSSR curriculum. Assessment of speaking skill is neglected in school-based assessments and public examinations such as the UPSR. Thus, highlighting the importance of teaching speaking skill for young learners through the incorporation of songs will be reviewed in this study.

Providing insights on creating a new emphasis on the speaking environment is another significance of this study. Firstly, there is a need to create an atmosphere that language acquisition, a 'shield' mediated by emotional variables that can impede the process of learning (Brown, 2007). A conducive environment encouraging pupils to speak especially through stimulus such as songs would be able to lower the affective filter or in other words the anxiety that has been building in these pupils. Moreover, the effectiveness of teaching and learning environments depends on the manner of interaction among teachers, pupils, teaching-learning activities and materials as well as physical facilities (Mok, 2008, p.4). Therefore, all these factors influence the learning environment so that learning can take place effectively.

Teachers would benefit from this study as it gives them suggestions and ideas to teach speaking skills effectively in the classroom. They will also find ways to engage songs with their speaking lessons and to utilise the language forms in songs to develop pupils' speaking skills. Teachers will find it easy to manage the group of pupils when the attention is turned to the step-by-step planned lessons. Teachers will learn ways to find suitable songs that suit their pupils' proficiency level, interest and culture instead of relying on the songs provided in the CEFR textbooks. It is also expected that this study will identify ways that songs can be used to promote speaking skills in teaching English Language. Apart from that, understanding the perceptions of teachers on teaching speaking skill is also expected from this study.

It is important that this study will be able to benefit pupils in many ways in the aspect of developing their speaking skill. Pupils will develop their speaking skills whereby they are taught on how to listen to songs and use that song to practice speaking especially in daily communications such as greetings, conversing with friends and families and meeting people. At the end, pupils will be able to develop their spoken production and spoken interaction as proposed in the CEFR Year 4 curriculum. They will also be able to develop their vocabulary in speaking, speak with confidence and be able to use the target language appropriately in a meaningful context.

The focus of this research is to enable pupils to produce meaningful English output in a fun manner which can enhance pupils' speaking skills. The input and supporting activities rendered to the pupils would be researched upon. Songs will be used as a motivational tool to gain better insights of its usage in developing the pupils' speaking ability.

Furthermore, the findings of this current study will contribute to the field of knowledge as the data that will be obtained can be used as a reference to know if the usage of songs is effective in improving pupil's speaking skills and motivating pupils to learn. Not only that, various perceptions of teachers on teaching speaking skill to Year 4 pupils will be revealed. Plus, this study can be considered as a recommendation to future studies that can be conducted on the study of implementing songs in developing second language learners' speaking skills as well as increasing their motivation. The teachers' perceptions on teaching speaking skill based on the newly implemented CEFR syllabus will also be a great review for educators and curriculum developers. The target group and its significance are summarised in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1   Significance of the Study

Target Group	Significance
School	Create a conducive environment for speaking
Teachers	1) Finding suitable songs that suit pupils' proficiency level, interests and cultural beliefs. 2) Identifying the ways songs can be used as a motivational tool to enhance speaking skills in teaching the English Language and understanding the benefits of using songs as a motivational tool.
Pupils	The usage of songs in learning will enable pupils to gain confidence in developing their speaking skill on asking and answering questions.
Researchers	For future studies of the usage of songs and as a motivational tool in developing second language learners' speaking skill as well as increasing their motivation

1.8   Scope

This study focusses on developing Year 4 pupils' skill in speaking particularly in asking and answering simple questions. For this purpose, songs for children that contains conversation practice or dialogues are exploited. For that, 30 pupils are chosen to participate in the study. English is their second language and they only speak in English at school. Next, to know teacher's perception on the usage of songs to teach speaking skill to Year 4 pupils, a semi structured interview was conducted. Five teachers who teaches Year 4 pupils in National type primary schools were selected for the interview. The interview focusses on obtaining information on the teacher's perception in using songs to teach speak skills to Year 4 pupils.

1.9   Theoretical Framework

According to Hughes (2019), spoken discourse consists of several aspects which are context dependent, unplanned, transient, involves oral/ aural skills and lastly are dynamic. These aspects of speaking can be taught to pupils directly without using the pupils' native language to explain the new words or grammar in English. This method is known as the 'Audio Lingual Method' (ALM). Harmer (2007) acknowledged that ALM relied heavily on drills to form habits, substitutions was built into these drills so that the pupils are constantly learning little by little (p. 79). There are two important features of ALM which can easily be adapted for the young learners in the classroom which are drill with choral response and dialogues. The characteristics of ALM may be summed up in the following list according to Prator & Celce-Murcia (1979), as cited in Brown (2001)

1.   New content is introduced in dialogue form.

2.   There is dependency on repetition, memorisation of given words, and over-learning.

3.   Structural patterns are taught using repeated exercises.

4.   Few or no grammatical clarification is given.

5.   Vocabulary is learnt in context.

6.   Tapes, language laboratories and visual aids are used a lot.

7.   Minimal use of mother-tongue is permitted to pupils.

8.   Successful responses are immediately reinforced.

A few aspects discussed on the characteristics of ALM will be incorporated in the treatment process of this study. ALM is a suitable method to be implemented in a classroom of average learners since it provides opportunity for them to practice the language through repeated drilling. Plus, this teaching method focuses solely on the language forms and not the meaning which will help beginners to master the skill of speaking before moving into the context or the meaning.

1.10   Conceptual Framework

Speaking skill is one of the most crucial language skills that needs to be internalised by language learners. Speaking plays a major role in first language acquisition and many researchers have indicated this natural process should be replicated in the teaching of the second language too. For pupils to become fluent in speaking, the learners need to be exposed to real and authentic sources. Since English is a second language in Malaysia, speaking is a challenging task for Malaysian pupils. According to Rusreena, Melor & Harwati (2018), in the SPM 2011 English paper, only 28 percent of pupils achieved a minimum credit against the Cambridge 1119 requirements. Most of the pupils find it difficult to master this language skill and teachers find it challenging to implement this skill in the classroom.

However, some pupils fail to master the speaking skill competently by the end of their schooling years. In line with that, the recent CEFR curriculum introduced in the English Language teaching emphasises on speaking skill. When reviewing the curriculum, it is understood that the Speaking Content Requirements focus on improving the capacity of the pupil to connect with others, the ability to communicate with others, their ability to use techniques when communicating with others, and their ability to communicate with a community (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 2003, p. 25). Pupils need to develop these abilities concurrently over the school years and have enough opportunity to learn multiple speech skills in varied sequence through their English lessons in the classroom.

Therefore, the research aims to look at the ways to teach speaking skills in the language classroom by incorporating songs with speaking task. In order to develop pupils' speaking skills, the principles of teaching speaking skill should be employed

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in the classroom based on the pupil's proficiency level and their interest. Next, songs should be incorporated in the teaching steps and the language content of the songs should be practised by the pupils through speaking tasks. For instance, in this study, asking and answering questions will be focused. Lastly, if the usage of songs can act as a motivational tool will be looked through.

Speaking has two major aspects which are fluency and accuracy. Accuracy is the ability to use proper grammar and terminology to create correct sentences. Speaking correctly involves doing without or with very few mistakes. Whereas, fluency is the capacity to quickly and seamlessly generate expression. In fact, precision and fluency are closely coupled, which contributes to the notion that communication involves precision as well as fluency. However, since the pupils are still young and have a long way to develop their fluency in speaking skill, the aspect of accuracy is focused during the implementation of the treatment.

The conceptual framework presents what is expected from this study. It also reflects the structure of the content and the concepts that will be incorporated in this research. Figure 1.1 shows the conceptual framework of this study. Based on Figure 1.1, there are three concepts that will be implemented. Firstly, the principles of teaching speaking skills to young learners. Next, the importance of teaching Speaking skill and lastly on the challenges faced by learners in speaking is explored through this study. The participants of this study are Year 4 Primary school pupils. A pre-test and post-test and a semi-structured interview is employed as the data collection method. The findings obtained from the data is further analysed to answer the research questions proposed in this study.
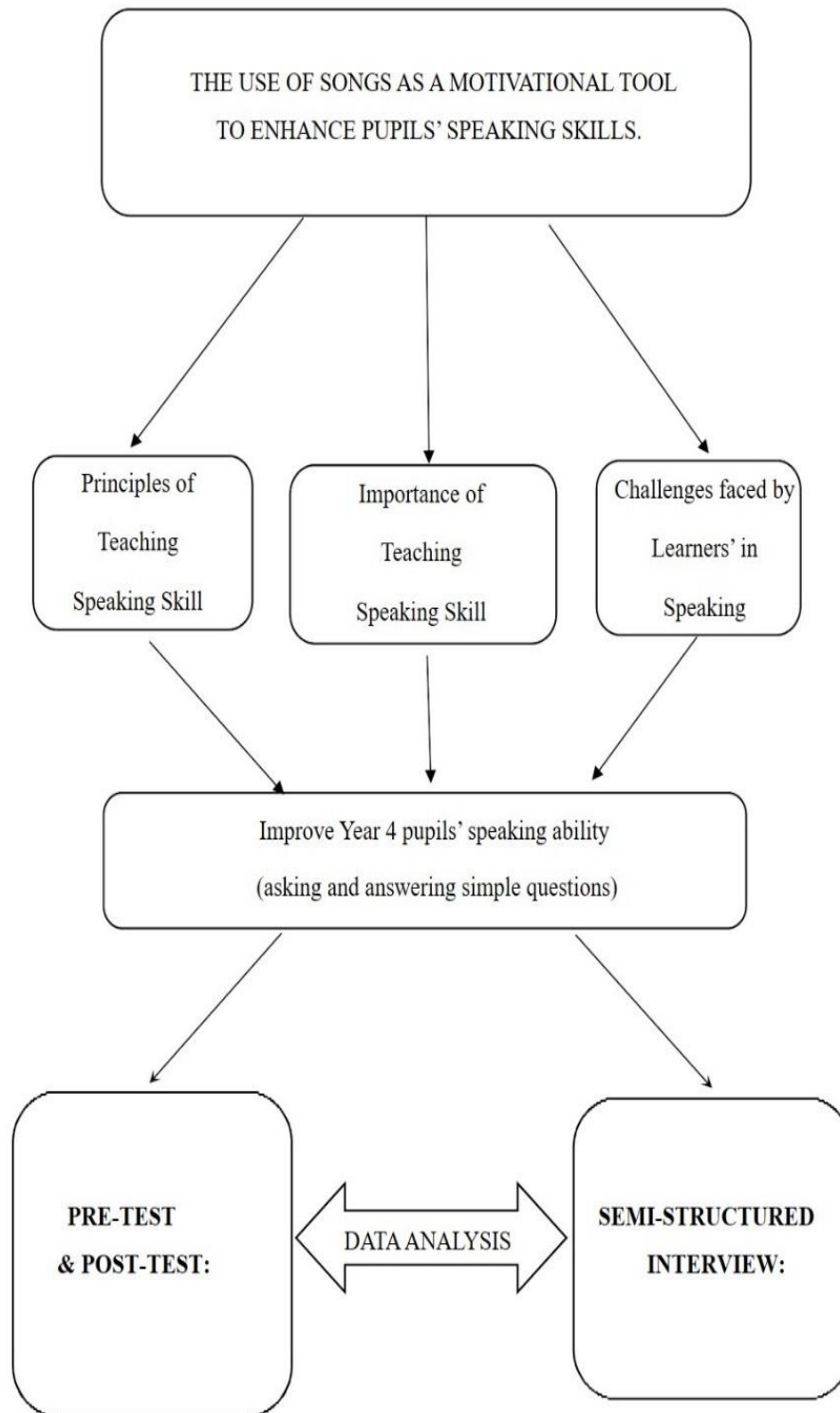
Figure 1.1   Conceptual Framework

1.11   Definitions of Terms

The terms that will be used throughout this study are as follows:

1.11.1 Second Language Learning and Acquisition

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is intertwined with second culture study, intervention, the emergence of modern linguistic structures and the learning of discourse and communicative roles of the language, involving cognitive differences that are directly linked to one's personality form (Brown, 2000, p.271) The respondents' first language or the mother tongue is Bahasa Melayu. According to Lightbown & Spada (1993, p. 111-116) as cited in Brown (2007, p.289), "the earlier a second language is introduced in school programs, the greater the likelihood in success of learning". Learning is a mindful progression whereby learners figure out rules and are often aware of their own developments (Newby & Hanak-Hammerl, 2003) while Acquisition is a subconscious progression which leads to fluency.

1.11.2 Young Learners

Young learner is defined as children from the first year of formal schooling (five or six years old) to eleven or twelve years of age (Philips, 2010, p.3). However, in education, it is not so much the age of the kids that matters, but how mature they are at school. Hence, the type of activity that will be used in the classroom will be influenced by the knowledge of their circumstances, attitudes and interests rather than simply by looking at the children's physical age. Therefore, it is important to create tasks within their ability and proficiency where it needs to be achievable but sufficiently stimulating at the same time to make them feel comfortable with their task. Moreover, Philips (2010, p. 5), argued that "the activities should be largely orally based and the kinds of activities that work well for that are games and songs" such as simple and repetitive speaking activities.

1.11.3 Pupils

According to Hornby (2010, p. 1178) in the Oxfords Advanced Learner's Dictionary, pupil is defined as a person who is being taught especially a child in a school. Generally, the term "pupils" is used for primary school pupils who are below 12 years of age.

1.11.4 Songs

As defined by Macmillan, a song is music with words that you sing (Rundell, 2007). Hornby, A.S (2010, p. 1450) defines a song as a piece of music with words that is sung. It is the arrangement of sounds that affect the emotion and the surroundings. The noticeable features of songs are for their musical and repetitive nature. It is the repetitiveness of songs, and the pleasure of songs executed to the learning and the attainment of language to be internalised (Sevik, 2012).

1.11.5 Speaking Skills

Nunan (2003, p. 48), defined speaking as the productive skill in the oral mode. It consists of producing systematic verbal utterance to convey meaning. Speaking is an important part in language teaching. Richards (2006) explained that "the mastery of speaking in English is a priority for many second language or foreign language learners". Therefore, speech is one of the language skills that is really important for learners to acquire in order to be a successful communicator. Burns and Joyce (1997), on the other hand, described speech as an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves the creation of information obtained. The style and interpretation depend largely on the context in which it takes place and the intention of speaking. The operational definition of speaking for this study is the ability of EFL learners to use correct grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary to convey a message or any information.

1.11.6 Teachers' Perception

Nanay (2013) stated that teacher's perception is about action. Action taken by the teacher in teaching and learning and on classroom activities. Whereas, Woods (1996) as cited by Golombek (2009) mentioned that teacher's perception is linked to belief, attitude and knowledge. Generally, knowledge refers to a subset of facts. Belief refers to a conception believed by people (narrower than knowledge) that affects attitude. Attitude refers to the action or actions of a person that expresses his or her values. Hence, it can be concluded that perception refers to individual awareness, values, and attitudes about a specific matter.

1.11.7 Motivation

Motivation is defined as 'to make somebody do something especially something that involves hard work and effort' (Hornby, 2010, p.956). The fundamental involvement of motivation in learning is to stimulate and facilitate learning activity. Although learning is self-initiated but motivation must be used to help the learners succeed in the learning activity.

1.12   Conclusion

This chapter mainly highlights the background, problem, purpose, objectives, and the significance of the study. It can be inferred that speaking is indeed a difficult skill to be acquired by young learners in the primary school. Additionally, it is more difficult since these learners are non-native speakers. Considering these views, the current study will employ the usage of songs as a motivational tool to enhance Year 4 pupils' speaking skills. Perception of teachers who teaches English to Year 4 pupils on the usage of songs to develop pupils' speaking skills is also explored. The next chapter discusses a critical literature review pertaining to the study by looking into past research on the implementation of songs to develop speaking skills, principles of teaching speaking skills, importance of using songs to develop students' speaking skills and the challenges faced by learners in developing speaking skill is discussed

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