

**The Influence of Watching English Cartoons
on English Language Acquisition:
A Case of Selected Filipino Preschoolers**

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ABSTRACT

In this 21st century era, young children have become keen users of multimedia technologies, more so than in the past generations when children could access various English cartoons. Due to exposure to English cartoons, preschoolers proficient in English tend to have difficulties acquiring the first language used in the speech community. Therefore, the study investigated the influences of English cartoons on preschoolers' English language acquisition. It is anchored on Skinner's Behaviorism, Krashen-Terrell's Input Hypothesis, Kress and Van Leeuwen's Multimodal Discourse, and Critical Age Period Theory. It adheres to Yin's single holistic case study research design, where two (2) preschoolers were selected through a purposive sampling technique. The data were gathered during the four-week series of home observations and semi-structured in-depth interviews within the seven-month study duration. Furthermore, data were analyzed following the thematic analysis method. Results revealed that preschoolers' English language acquisition is affected by certain factors, i.e., exposure to multimedia technologies, social relationship/linguistic environment, motivation, attitudes, and interests of the child. Regarding phonological influence, preschoolers articulate terms based on

the pronunciation heard from cartoon shows. F/P1 acquires a British accent, and both participants can utter all vowel/consonant sounds except 'r.' They can use words even without understanding their context. Concerning semantic influence, active exposure to cartoons and engagement in an immediate environment led to meaning-making processes strengthening critical and creative thinking skills. Regarding syntax, participants' multi-word utterances are drawn from longer potential sentences that express a complete thought. Although the words produced are ungrammatical by adults' standards, they still adhere to grammatical rules.

Keywords: English Language Acquisition; English Cartoons; Preschoolers; Factors; and Influence.

INTRODUCTION

In this 21st century era, young children have become keen users of technologies—more so than the past generations. It is due to the significant changes and development caused by globalization and modernization. In this digital age, children are immersed in digital and smart devices such as televisions, smartphones, and tablets with the internet that welcome them to different experiences on and off the screen. Research says that young preschoolers, even before they are sent to school and exposed to books, already know and are familiar with the use of technologies (Brody, 2015; Hopkins, Brookes, and Green, 2013; Fatimah et al., 2019; Santiana et al., 2021). According to Beers (2012), children in this generation can easily access the media, the internet, and all that is available, including television programs such as English cartoons. Hence, through technologies, preschoolers can access English cartoons that offer so many advantage/s, especially to the acquisition of the English language.

In addition, these English TV cartoons facilitate and enable young preschoolers to acquire the English language. For one, a significant number of studies increasingly show that during preschool (early childhood), language development, particularly speech, is most active, quick, and effortless for children (Alghonaim, 2019). Also, age ranging from 0-6 is considered the most crucial or sensitive period for children's speech development. Therefore, the child would easily acquire whatever language he/she is exposed to at that age. Moreover, it is significant to note that preschoolers are expected to achieve particular linguistic abilities and competence during this stage. The age ranges from three to five (3-5) years old; during that period, Indrayani (2016) observed that their skills in organizing and establishing differentiation of words and sentences become more appropriate and contextualized. In terms of phonological development, preschoolers may still struggle with articulating pluralistic and complex consonants.

Meanwhile, their vocabulary started to grow increasingly. Also, during this period, their language for communication starts to function correctly. They are eager to share their perceptions and experiences with other people, especially children of the same age. Moreover, preschoolers start morphological development, characterized by plural words, changing the suffix, and changing verbs. Young preschoolers can unconsciously acquire the language in TV Cartoon shows they watch every day for

hours (Alghonaim, 2019). It is a general observation that young preschoolers who are highly exposed to varied cartoons in English during their childhood have excellent pronunciation and communication skills much more fluently in English than those not immersed in the English language since early childhood (Poštič, 2015).

Based on the empirical observations, they can even imitate a native-like pronunciation, accent, diction, and even the character's behaviors. That certainly is supported by Alexiou (2015), who considered preschoolers the best language learners because of their spontaneous language acquisition. Aside from excellent pronunciations, exposure to English cartoons leads children to learn new words or vocabularies, learn how to construct a complete sentence, ask questions, and use them in the appropriate context (Alghonaim, 2019). Enayati and Kakarash's (2016) previous study noticed that English cartoons facilitate preschoolers' grammatical accuracy and structure.

In a study review, Derakshan and Karimi (2015) point out that many factors cause L1 interference in L2. These include similarities and differences in the structures of two languages, the child's background knowledge, proficiency in a second language, and the structure of consonant clusters in L1 and L2. Karim and Nassaji (2013) explored the first language transfer in L2 writing and found that when second language learners write in L2, their L1 affects their writing. Additionally, Fatemi et al. (2012) investigated the differences, particularly in the oral consonant clusters in the first and second language and stressed that the structures of L1 and L2 were different. They eventually discovered that learners have difficulty in L2 pronunciation because they are exposed to unfamiliar phonological rules. Therefore, it only implicates that L2 learners depend on their native language, especially when they want to produce a meaningful response in the target language; thereby results in a high frequency of errors occurring in the second language when the structures of two languages are different, so it certainly presents an interference of L1 on L2 (Nemati & Taghizade, 2013, p.2482).

They have seen that the differences between children's first language (L1) and second language (L2) lead to interference, which is the cause of language difficulties and errors. At this point, a child's L1 promotes two factors regarding the acquisition of L2: transfer and interference. When L1 habits help acquire the L2, a positive transfer occurs; however, interference or negative transfer occurs when it hinders the acquisition of the target language. It happens as a result of exposure to the L2 through cartoons.

Moreover, it was also seen how language acquisition at a preschooler's level also depends on the essential motivation or encouragement they experienced from their immediate environment concerning their exposure to cartoons. Thus, children with high motivation led to a higher level of language competence. Second language acquisition also acknowledges how the role of social factors contributes to the success of second language acquirers. With this, many studies have widely accepted how the essential condition of motivation from a child's immediate environment is considered a specific factor in determining the success of language acquisition. Consequently, Atta and Jamil (2012) mentioned that parental involvement is highly relevant to the educational achievement of children, which only means that parents have a significant influence on their children's academic success and help them further improve their foreign language acquisition and learning. In the context of SLA (Second Language Acquisition), a child whose parents support and are interested in their child's language

activities may have a better probability of acquiring the language well. Through this encouragement, children will be greatly interested in the language and actively acquire the language. A similar study conducted by Asgari (2010) found that a child's environment that provides excellent inspiration led to an increased eagerness to read, speak, and learn new words in English. Hence, a child's drive and level of motivation to acquire the English language are related to parental encouragement and positive influence in their environment. Furthermore, the identified gaps led the researchers to conduct this study to explore and investigate how English Cartoons facilitate the English language acquisition of three to five-year-old Waray preschoolers exposed to TV cartoon shows for at least six months or a year. Additionally, these children-participants understand and speak Waray, Tagalog, and even the English language. The researchers sought to discover and observe factors and variables, linguistic background, and linguistic behaviour that would help them analyse and understand the influence of English cartoons on language acquisition.

Thus, this study answered the following research questions: (1) What factors influence the language acquisition of Filipino preschoolers who watch English cartoons? (2) How does watching English cartoons facilitate or influence the preschoolers' English language acquisition? These all were achieved through a series of home observations and interviews to gather essential data. Thus, this study documented significant experiences, interactions, and behaviors of the selected Waray preschoolers towards language acquisition, providing researchers with the data essential to the study's success.

METHOD

This study is qualitative in nature that follows a single holistic case study. As defined by scholars, a case study is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not evident...[and] addressing the "how" or "why" questions concerning the phenomenon of interest [and] relies on multiple sources of evidence" (Yin, 1994, p.13).

Accordingly, this study was carried out within the given two whole semesters of the research course or equivalent to a whole academic year (A.Y. 2020-2021) in Tunga, the smallest municipality in the province, located in the northern part of Leyte's islands. Based on the data provided by the municipal registrar officer, in terms of age group population and percentage, children aged one to nine years old (1-9) got the highest population: one-thousand and four-hundred ninety-six (1496) or 19.72 % in the whole municipality. Thus, preschoolers aging four to five (4-5) years old belong to that age group with the municipality's highest population.

Meanwhile, two preschooler-participants were chosen through the purposive sampling technique. According to Creswell (2012), a purposive sample is a nonprobability sample that is also referred to as a judgmental or expert sample. Its main objective is to produce a sample that can be logically assumed to represent the population. Thus, a sample is selected based on the study's objective and the characteristics of the population. Thereby, it is an intentional selection of participants that would best elucidate a specific theme, concept, or phenomenon. Thus, the participants were carefully chosen based on a set of inclusion-exclusion criteria laid out by the researchers.

Furthermore, a researcher-made questionnaire format was used in gathering the preschoolers' demographic profiles relating to the study. The researchers could check whether the participant fits the criteria provided. It also helped the researchers conduct background assessments or evaluations of the participants. Additionally, a home observation guide was used in this research work to obtain important data and information. Through direct home observation, the researchers could observe, evaluate, and assess the linguistic activities, behavior, and capabilities of the preschooler-participants, who helped the researchers provide data essential to realizing the research's objectives.

Meanwhile, the role of the researchers as a 'complete participant' during the observation process provides full engagement and participation, which is the fundamental level of involvement. Finally, the researchers used a semi-structured interview schedule to obtain more information from the participants, including open-ended questions and some follow-up detail questions for clarification and verification purposes. This interview protocol and schedule were validated by two experts in the field of a qualitative study from the languages and literature department and later revised based on their suggestions and recommendations. These validator-experts have earned masters and doctorate degrees in line with language and literature in reputable institutions. Moreover, before the researchers gathered the data, permissions were ethically secured by authorities and the people involved in this study. Letter of permission and informed consent forms were properly distributed to involved individuals. Orientations were conducted to ensure that everything was clear and understood, especially with the participants. During the orientation, the activity's background and purpose, participants' rights, procedure and policies, possible risks, confidentiality, consent, and other agreements were clearly discussed. Accordingly, the researchers secured that the subjects' identities would remain anonymous and that the data gathered would be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Finally, the data were carefully analyzed, adhering to the thematic analysis method. It is the method of categorizing patterns or themes based on the gathered qualitative data. According to Wa-Mbaleka and Gladstone (2018), thematic analysis is the most used qualitative study method. In the same way, Yin (2002) has identified five dominant techniques for data analysis, and two of these are pattern matching and critical explanation building. Since the researchers gathered data from direct home observations and interviews, it is already given that data were transcribed verbatim, especially those that were recorded during the data gathering process. In addition, Yin (2003), the qualitative case study researchers need to secure the construct validity through the triangulation method or triangulation of multiple sources of evidence, chains of evidence, member checking, internal validity (through the use of established analytic techniques such as pattern matching), external validity (through analytic generalization), and reliability (through case study protocols and databases). Thus, the qualitative data were analyzed with transparency and truthfulness to ensure that data are truthful and accurate based on the participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Factors that influence Filipino Preschoolers' English language acquisition

Language acquisition is a natural occurrence, and young preschoolers are born with the ability to acquire a language. Having that capacity in the context of language, all preschoolers go through the same way of acquisition in which formal teaching is

dismissed. However, the process of acquiring a language may vary for each child as there are significant factors and influences on a child's language acquisition process. They have different ways and/or strategies that help them effectively acquire a language and factors that are affecting it. The researchers drew the findings based on a series of home observations and interviews conducted with the preschooler-participant. Thus, it was found that factors such as (1) exposure to multimedia and technologies, (2) social relationship and linguistic environment, and (3) motivation, attitudes, and habits influence the Filipino preschoolers' acquisition of the English language.

1) Exposure to Multimedia and Technologies

Both the participants in this study were exposed to technologies such as smart TVs (television), mobile phone, iPad, and laptop which contributed to the language acquisition process of the two preschoolers. These smart devices have become the existing essential tools and instruments for the two preschoolers to acquire the English language, and access various linguistic inputs through watching a series of English cartoons. Moreover, taking English cartoons in the context of language acquisition, a longitudinal study by Alghonaim (2019) found that English cartoons are authentic materials that contain rich comprehensible inputs. Furthermore, the latest study conducted by Perween and Hasan (2020) concluded that preschoolers must be exposed to rich linguistic inputs for fast acquisition of language at such a young age.

Hence, in the case of the two preschoolers, during the series of observations, it was noted that both were exposed and focused on using their gadgets. These gadgets with the internet enable the participants to access various linguistic inputs. For instance, preschoolers can access YouTube Kid videos and other online websites containing cartoons designed for young children. With the television, since both participants have a cable connection, they can access different TV programs with cartoon shows from the existing channels such as Nick Jr., Nickelodeon, Boomerang, and Disney Channel.

During the observation, F/P1 was really exposed to watching English cartoons on their Smart TV. She emulates the characters and dances when the soundtrack or the music of English cartoons play. She finished watching 3 English cartoons. The first one was Peppa Pig which she watched on TV. The second was Blues clues which she was via her Tita's laptop. And the last one was Paw Patrol which she watched via the iPad. During the observation, F/P1 loves switching gadgets in watching cartoons. She switches from one gadget to another. Another significant observation is that F/P1 knows how to use the iPad and knows how to operate their TV. As observed, she emulates everything that she sees on screen especially the character's way of speaking and actions.

Figure 1. Evidence on F/P1's exposure to multimedia and technologies observed on August 4, 2021

In the case of F/P1, she does not like being disturbed when she uses her gadgets because she enjoys watching various English cartoons on and offline, like Paw Patrol, Peppa Pig, and Blues Clues. The same thing happens when she watches her favourite cartoons on TV (television). She also does not like to shift channels from one channel to another. Upon completion of several sessions of observations, patterns and traces have become more evident. It was found that certain elements in English cartoons, such as graphics, colours, colourful effects, music, actions, language, and humorous

concepts, are why F/P1 is glued to her seat in front of the TV or gadget for a long period. Meanwhile, another recurring instance observed is that F/P1's being focused on watching English cartoons enabled her to acquire certain English words which she emulates after the cartoon characters said them. During the third week of observation, she imitated the way Peppa snores, the way she speaks with an accent, and her actions. There were even instances where she precisely portrayed the character of Peppa as she adopted it from a specific episode. Whenever she watches cartoons on TV, laptop, or iPad, she would always laugh and share comments related to the humorous actions portrayed by the character. As observed for several sessions, F/P1 has a habit of sharing stories and reactions after watching a particular episode of the cartoons she has watched. As she shared, she emulates certain words or phrases said in a particular episode of the cartoon.

Meanwhile, for the case of F/P2, the same observations were drawn. She was also exposed to technologies, mainly on TV and mobile phones. The same with F/P1; she spends long hours watching English cartoons on and offline with his younger brother. During the series of home observations, F/P2 consistently asked and told questions before, during, and after watching her favourite English cartoons, Peppa Pig, Coco Melon and Paw Patrol. She asks many questions regarding the new episode of the cartoon show; however, she no longer asks when the cartoon is familiar to her. As one of the activities done during the observation, F/P2, while watching the cartoons, had many observations on the characters, especially the language and actions.

The observers let the participant watch some episodes of the Peppa Pig series on TV. With that, it is observed that F/P2 is focused on watching the English cartoon with her little brother as her companion. When the participant gets distracted, her mother would scold her, and eventually, she would tell her to behave and cooperate, or else she would sleep. She also listens attentively to the series she is watching because when she is asked about small details in the show, she can answer.

Sample Conversation:

"Queen" (Pointing to the character)

"Why do you say so?"

"Because she said Queen"

Figure 2. Evidence on F/P2's exposure to multimedia and technologies observed on July 19, 2021

She always has comments and describes every detail that attracts her attention while watching. That is why from the first week to the culminating week, the participant was talkative and threw many questions to the researcher-observers.

Moreover, F/P2 has emulated some words or new terms from the cartoons she watched with the help of the technologies. However, it was found that despite exposure to English cartoons and technologies, F/P2 has failed to acquire the British accent from the Peppa Pig series and other cartoons she had watched. She still has the same accent but was able to acquire language. Moreover, the exposure to English cartoons through multimedia and technologies enabled her to acquire and imitate certain words and helped her develop the language features. Furthermore, the researchers found out that when F/P2 hears something from the cartoon she is watching, she imitates them and repetitively utters them when she communicates with her younger brother. For instance, while watching the cartoon, she heard the word 'queen' from a character, and she immediately pointed to her and said 'queen.' Her

brother was with her during that time, and her brother immediately asked her, “why do you say so?” She responded, “because she said the queen.” In that case alone, due to exposure to technologies and multimedia, it was evident during the observation that she could emulate words and identify characters based on what she heard and saw, whether it was on TV or any gadget she had and used at home. Finally, based on the significant findings drawn for F/P2, her English language acquisition was influenced by her exposure to multimedia and technology. However, unlike F/P1, she did not acquire the British accent from the English cartoons.

2) Social relationships and the linguistic environment

In connection to the first one, the researchers identified another factor that influences Filipino preschoolers' English language acquisition: their social relationships and/or social connection with the people around them and their community.

As for the case of F/P1, it has been observed how talkative she is when she communicates with the people that she is close to and comfortable to be with. She sometimes speaks too fast with her British accent leading the person she is talking to misunderstand and misinterpretation the message she intends to convey. At first, if you are a stranger to her, she would not bother talking to you or even saying a word, but as she gets to know you along the process, she would even play with you and talk about things.

The observers have also noted how the child has limited interaction with other kids because she only interacts with those who speaks English. Other children in their community do not want her as a playmate because they could hardly understand the language except her cousins. According to her mom, she may have less interaction with people, but she still can learn, communicate, and grow. Her Mom even said that she was afraid that her child has no friends because once she enters formal school—she really would be culturally shocked. Because in public kindergarten school not all knows how to speak the English language. However, they have considered the idea of enrolling her in a private institution, but they still have to earn for the tuition especially in this pandemic time. In addition, this pandemic time has isolated the Participant in their house which made her explore more things on the internet. For one, her Lola had a chance to expose her to Waray language and fortunately, now she’s able to speak few Waray terms.

Figure 3. Evidence on F/P1’s social interaction as observed on July 21, 2021

She speaks English with British accent. The way she pronounced the English terms are clear and correct. Problem arises only when she speaks few Waray terms in a complete straight sentence because you really can’t clearly understand what she’s trying to say. The way she pronounced the Waray terms are like slang or she’s generalizing the pronunciation of words, for example her Waray pronunciation is based on her English pronunciation.

Figure 4. Evidence on F/P1’s social interaction as observed on July 19, 2021

As it was consistently shown during the home observation, it was found that communication and the child's interaction are important in the language acquisition process because it helps them collect and acquire experiences that provide knowledge. It is evident how it plays a vital role and contributes to the child's linguistic development. As observed, the researchers claim that through the language she acquired in watching the English cartoons, she can share her thoughts, ideas, and

feelings with the people around her. As she interacts with people who understand her, she can acquire more and practice the language and eventually learn it along the process. As noted during the observation, it was observed that F/P1 was sharing many stories about her dream house as she built it using LEGO bricks. It was interesting to know that at such a young age, a child has already her vision and/or mission, and she expresses it, and it was truly interesting to note that she shares it through storytelling. Her creations and outputs may not be the perfect house expected for a child; however, creativity is evident in that masterpiece. Moreover, she acquires certain things about language through language, communication, and meaningful conversations.

The people around Participant A speaks the English and Waray language. Her Tita who is an AB English Senior student in one of the HEIs (Higher Educational Institutions) in the region speaks English whenever she's talking to her. Her Mom, Uncle, and grandparents speak the Waray language in their daily life. Also, whenever her other relatives, Titos and Titas are visiting her, they also speak English. And most of all, the family is a family of English teachers, Doctors, and OFWs, etc. No one speaks the Filipino language, so she has no knowledge or idea about the Filipino and/or Tagalog language.

Figure 5. Observation Note # 5, July 19, 2021

Since F/P1 is surrounded by English and Waray speakers—her *tita* (aunt) is an English teacher and the other one is a language major, the child was guided accordingly in acquiring and nurturing her language skills. Her aunt has exposed her to English cartoons since she was 2 years old. Thus, in this case, F/P1's meaningful conversation or even a simple interaction with her aunt would benefit to her linguistic development and progress. Especially since children can easily imitate what they see and hear in the environment. Finally, it is significant to note that the social relationship or social connection of F/P1 has helped and will help her succeed in the linguistic milestones she has to undergo. In that case, it is supported by social interactionism theory that argues meaningful social interaction happens when further assistance is given by an MKO or a more knowledgeable other. In the case of F/P1, the people around served as the MKO or someone who has a notch higher level of knowledge compared to the F/P1. As noted, F/P1 already has the initial knowledge of the English language. However, due to consistent exposure to rich comprehensible linguistic inputs present in English cartoons, mainly given by her *Tita*, F/P1 was able to develop linguistic features despite the errors committed in some instances.

F/P2 went to their store and got some candies. Then, she went to their gate and called the children in their neighbors. She told them stories about Peppa Pig, and she even introduced her new friend (the observers) to them. She was very excited to meet those children, and after that she distributed the candies to them. She even invited them inside to play with her, however their gate was locked.

Figure 6. Observation Note # 1, August 04, 2021

As for the case of F/P2, the child is more talkative compared to F/P1. She loves communicating with people using three languages. Unlike F/P1, she can socialize with a few children in their community, however, it is done with physical barriers (i.e., gate). During the interview, F/P2's parents revealed that their child can interact with other children despite the language barriers and physical barriers present. These physical

barriers have strengthened the interest of F/P2 to get along with other children to engage in meaningful conversation (at their level of thinking) while playing. During the 3rd session of week 2, it was found out that despite being multilingual of F/P2, it was seen how she is interested to find ways to get along with other people most especially in understanding and/or comprehending language and interpreting message.

In F/P2's case, just like the first participant, she also experienced limited interaction with kids of her age, but for a different reason. The fact that the child's residence is located near the national highway, it is of natural response for the parents to restrict the participant from going out of the house to avoid accidents and ensure the safety of their children. The lack of genuine interaction resulted in the child's desire and craving for a meaningful relationship with other kids. Therefore, as noted by the researchers, it was observed that F/P2 keeps on inviting kids to her house to play with her, and there was an instance when she gave the children candies from their Sari-sari store so that she could be friends with them.

The participant and the observer converse in Tagalog, Waray, and English language, simultaneously. However, the dominant language used was Tagalog. Sometimes, F/P2 would speak words and sentences in the English language, but in rare situations.

Sample Statements:

"This for you, this for me."

"No, Cute. That's mine. Ako gawa niyan eh."

"Stooooopppp!"

Figure 7. Observation Note # 3, July 30, 2021

In addition, even though F/P2 is a multilingual kid who speaks three different languages—Waray, the native language, Tagalog, and English, the development of these languages is diverse; she is more skilled in English and further lacks the ability in her native language. As observed, due to less interaction with her parents and her linguistic community, the child's native language development is somewhat inappropriate for her level. At the age of five, she still struggles in crafting complete sentences in the Waray language. She simultaneously interchanges the three languages when communicating with other people; she cannot stick to one language. One example utterance is "*Si Cute nagpapasaway hiya kay Mommy.*" (Cute is making mommy mad.) The participant used three languages in a one-sentence context. From that sample alone, the significance of genuine interaction in the linguistic environment, especially coming from the parents, can be recognized. According to Safwat (2014), parent-child interactions increase responsiveness and are essential in shaping a child's literacy environment and language development. In F/P2's case, since her father works as a seafarer and her mom is always busy managing their business and her children, the child is left alone in the comfort of technology. That is why, at a very young age, there was already extensive exposure to gadgets and technology, which at some point offers a wide array of meaningful comprehensible linguistic inputs that are essential for the child's target language development. The consistent exposure to the English language of F/P2 through multimedia technologies, in turn, disrupts further development of her native language, which is undoubtedly visible during her interactions with her. Same is through with the case of F/P1, who is linguistically challenged in acquiring the Waray language due to intensive contact with English cartoons. Thus, as proven during the series of home observations, the more Filipino

preschoolers are exposed to English Cartoons, the more they acquire knowledge about the English language, and the lesser the probability of native language acquisition.

3) Motivation, attitude, and habits influence the Filipino preschoolers' acquisition of the English language

In terms of preschoolers' acquisition of the second language, motivation and/or personality attitudes are among the emotional factors that influence the result and/or the success of second language acquisition. These mentioned factors are significant determiners concerning a child's willingness to spend more time acquiring the target language. As every child is unique, the identification and presence of motivation they experience from their immediate environment empowered them to further their language acquisition engagement because motivation is considered as an extremely internal drive for language acquisition. With an environment that reinforces a positive attitude and strong motivation toward a child's language acquisition, there is a high possibility that it will facilitate favourable results. However, the lack of motivation and the presence of a negative attitude towards language acquisition can lead to challenges in acquiring the target language. Thus, with the series of home observations, the researchers have noticed that there is an effective relationship between language acquisition and motivation.

With that, the present study has found traces of motivation as a factor that contributed to the language acquisition of the participants. There is a considerable amount of evidence found after conducting the series of home observations, in support that the participants' language acquisition was influenced by the driving force of motivation. The results obtained from the series of home observation has proved that motivation has a significant role in achieving efficiency of preschoolers' acquisition of the English language.

Behavioral perspectives

In this research work, the factor of motivation would be discussed from a theoretical perspective given the fact that motivation has been evidently influenced by a psychological behavioural occurrence. With this, from the behavioural perspective of motivation, the study focuses on the extrinsic factors and reinforcements of desired behaviours of the participants which were observed during the conduct of the home observations. The behavioural perspective's main belief is that the environment that surrounds the child influences his/her behaviour, and in the context of language acquisition, the child acquires linguistic behaviour through reinforcements and encouragements.

The participants' linguistic behaviour from the home observations conducted can be analysed in the area of the following:

1) Reinforcements

Both the participant's linguistic behaviour regarding the English language was strengthened with the positive reinforcements given by the people that surround them, and also by the researchers as observers. It was observed that the participants linguistic behaviour strengthened when reinforced by rewards coming from their immediate environment. Rewards and/or reinforcements coming from the participants' surroundings were done through verbal reinforcements which include the response of good feedback and/or words which later motivated the participants to proceed in what they were engaging in as it produces desired consequences and/or results.

The transcript of the dialogue below shows some of the sample verbal reinforcements given by the researcher observers in an effort to build motivation. From the interviews made with the participants, the researcher observers never forget to give praise for what the participants said or do. The motivation to the participants was conducted by providing positive reinforcement, using verbal reinforcement in the form of praise and recognition, as well as by nonverbal reinforcements given in the form of a smile, clapping, thumbs up, and gifts such as chocolates.

Conversation with F/P1

Researcher Observer: What words have you learned from watching cartoons?

F/P1: I learned so many words. Peppa Pig said we say "thank you". She is also playing muddy puddle.

Researcher Observer: Very good! I will give you your favorite chocolates the next time we would be here, because you are so good.

Conversation with F/P2

Researcher Observer: Does the way he/she talks amaze you? Does the way he/she acts amaze you? How does your favorite character talk?

F/P2: She sound like urkkk urkkkk urkkkkk (snort)

Researcher Observer: Wow! You have good imitation skills. Thumbs up!

Figure 8. Evidence on Building Participants' Motivation through Sample Reinforcements

With this, the perception of giving reinforcements to the participants and/or to young preschoolers even in the means of appraisal is essential as it contributes to an increased motivation concerning language acquisition. On the other hand, negative reinforcements were not observed in any way during the acquisition process because even though some of the participants' utterances are not grammatically correct and utterances were not clearly pronounced, still the participants showed high interest in the English language by speaking the language.

2) Parents and Relatives' Influence

With the series of home observations conducted, the results of the study also revealed that the family with whom the participants interact regularly have great influence and/or contribution on their motivation towards the acquisition of the English language as they are the surrounding environment involved in the acquisition of the participants. It was observed that even though both parents and relatives do not speak much of the English language, still they motivate and engage the participants to speak and practice the English language better. Moreover, the study also showed how parents' point of view on the English language influenced the language acquisition of the participants to a great degree and motivate them to further improve linguistic behaviour.

Para akon dako na epekto talaga iton pagkita niya hin Peppa Pig kay advance hiyan duro. Naayon ako kay advance hiyan mga English, an iya pagyakan, tapos an iya huna huna dakon gin-improve. Tas nababaro hiya.

[For me, the biggest impact of watching Peppa Pig is that she became advanced. I love it that she is advanced in the English language especially in terms of speaking, also her thinking skills improved.]

Figure 9. Interview with F/P1 Parents Observed on July 23, 2021

These details the perspective of parents on the English language which proves the idea when parents are interested in their child's acquisition activities, there is a high probability of increased motivation within the child which will further the language acquisition of the child. In line with this, Philips et al. (1998) accent that if parents observe or participate in every activity of their children, appreciate educational activities, and reduce other activities which are not related to study, they can improve children's performance greatly. The point of view of the members of the family for F/P1 and F/P2 greatly contributes to and influences the language acquisition of both participants. Both family members do not force the participants to speak the language, but rather, encourage the participants to further what they are doing. For instance, in the case of F/P1, her *Tita* (Aunt) enable conversations with him which will help and support F/P1 in language acquisition. With this, both participants who have an immediate environment in which all the family members support acquisition activities will result in better probability of acquisition well as the participants will have a greater and more active interest in the language.

3) Peer's influence

As family plays a central role in the language acquisition of the participants, the people with whom the participants interact outside of their immediate environment influenced them as well. In this study, it has been observed that peer effects are also significant determinants of motivation among the participants. In the case of F/P1, peers who also speak and practice the English language the same as she have beneficial effects on the development of the language to a certain extent. For instance, the friends with whom F/P1 interacts during leisure time and/or activities become a source to further the practice of the language as it motivates and engages F/P1 more.

In this vein, the behavioural perspective concerning reinforcements, and the influence of family members and peers played a major role in the language acquisition of the participants resulting in a presence of a positive emotional factor of motivation. To acquire the English language well, not only do the participants' effort is needed, but also the reinforcements and influence coming from the people that surround them. And with that, as long as the positive motivation is provided, favourable circumstances of linguistic behaviour would be acquired successfully.

The influences of English Cartoons on English language acquisition

1) Influence on phonological acquisition

In a usual course of language development, preschoolers, whose ages fall under three to five, already have the mastery to speak almost all of the speech sounds, except for sounds that are much harder to articulate. Hence, the participants of the study, F/P1, and FP2, whose ages are 4-5 years old, belong to the preschooler's level of language development. During the data collection, which is done through a series of home observations, the researchers collected several pieces of evidence that show the influence of watching the English Cartoon on the phonological development of the participants.

On the 21st of July 2021, one activity the researchers had during the home observation was playing with Lego bricks. While playing, the participant keeps on telling stories about the thing she was building and one remarkable thing the researchers noted was her articulation of the word "purple" in which she pronounced as /pah-pol/.

F/P1: No, because pig is big and oink *oink, orrk orkkkk!* But I will build a big house! I want big house! So, peppa pig will live inside.

Observer: Nice! What color is that house of Peppa Pig?

F/P1: Purple. (Pronounced as pah-pol)

Observer: Is that your favorite color?

F/P1: Yes, I want purple.

Figure 10. Evidence on F/P1's Acquisition of the British Accent Observed on July 21, 2021

Peppa Pig is a family-oriented British animated series that focuses on the life of Peppa and her family. Since F/P1 is extensively exposed in watching the Peppa Pig series, the possibility of acquiring the British accent is high. Thus, it can be noted that since one of the phonological features of the British accent is the 'r' sound being silent, then the pronunciation of F/P1 of the word "purple" which is /pah-pol/ can be classified as a British accent.

The participant's acquisition of the British accent is considered an influence caused by watching English cartoon shows. Theoretically, behaviourists believe that observable behaviours, such as the imitation of accents, are acquired and learned through conditioning and interaction with the environment. Through consistent exposure to English cartoon shows, F/P1 acquired linguistic inputs that are beneficial to her phonological development. In this case, through F/P1's constant exposure to English cartoons at the critical age period—the stimulus, leads to the development of response—imitation of sounds, particularly accent, which is essential in the phonological development of children.

To support the notion, the study by Tobias (n.d.) shows evidence that watching English cartoons helps acquire phonological development. The respondents watch English cartoons for about three to five hours daily. The said group of pupils excelled in speaking skills along with their intonation and pitch wherein their tone rises and falls in the appropriate places as confirmed by the mean as per statistical result verbally interpreted as "excellent." Based on the research findings of Tobias, it can be inferred that extensive watching of English cartoons affected pupils speaking concerning their phonological sensitivity and pronunciation skills.

2) Influence on the morphological acquisition

Children's morphological development develops at a different rate. Every child is diverse, and their language development progresses at their own pace. In terms of morphological development, a child's foundation around the age of 3-5 years old is far from complete. At this point, the child's cognitive abilities develop more, wherein, it allows them to do more with language, such as the use of contractions (wasn't, couldn't, isn't, wouldn't,) and this growth continues further into adulthood.

Therefore, to determine the influence of English cartoon shows on the second language acquisition of preschoolers, the researchers collected pieces of data that illustrate acquired terms from the English cartoon series. Based on the data gathered, F/P1 can already pronounce words, regardless of word length, as long as the words

are familiar to her. Same as in the case of the second participant, wherein she correctly produces terms present in her vocabulary. Moreover, it is crucial to note that both the participants articulated these terms correctly based on the pronunciation they heard from English cartoons, as well as from their immediate linguistic environment. One example is the conversation between the observer and the second participant while the child is watching several episodes of the Peppa Pig Series:

Observational Note # 1:
The participant is a talkative child who is fond of asking questions, especially those things that are unfamiliar to her.

Sample conversation:
F/P2: What strawberry jam?
Observer: That's what you put in your bread, just like peanut butter.
F/P2: Ahh, si Mommy gagawa ng sandwich pagpunta ni Pitcher Kenneth. (Ahh, My mom will make a sandwich when teacher Kenneth arrives.)

Figure 11. Evidence 7, Field Note 5 (July 28, 2021- F/P2)

Based on the sample conversation, F/P2 articulated the complicated term "strawberry jam" because she heard a character from the English cartoon series pronounce these words. In short, she simply imitated the pronunciation of the character and articulated it correctly even without having the initial knowledge with regards to the meaning of the terms.

It is also the same in the case of the first participant wherein through exposure to diverse inputs coming from technologies and her immediate environment, which comprises English-speaking people, she can imitate terms correctly and properly.

Tired from singing and dancing, F/P1 made some requests from her Mother. One utterance of her using the English language is "Mama, I want soup". According to her Mother, F/P1's ability to request something and also being aware of what she is requesting was because of the influence of her Tita in which she often saw the same food her Tita eats, and might have imitated that behavior. Moreover, F/P1's mother added that there are also times when she requests in a manner like "Soup with egg. Like Tita, Mama, I want soup with egg".

Figure 12. Evidence 8, Field Note #9 (August 06, 2021- F/P1)

Based on the observation of F/P1's mother, she was able to correctly utter a word and further make a request based on what she heard from her *Tita*, including the people as well in her immediate environment. In addition, another notable occurrence observed among the series of observations with regards to morphological development was F/P2's acquisition of the word "police" which she heard from an English cartoon series, and then further utilized in a sentence later on.

In one part of the home observation, F/P2 was presented an episode of Peppa Pig wherein the episode includes the scene in which the characters were visited by two police officers, Police officer Squirrel and Police Officer Panda. At a later time, the participant asked the researcher-observer with regard to the episode she just watched:

F/P2: What is the two characters called?
 Researcher-observer: The two visitors are called the police. Police are people who keep order among the community.

Figure 13. F/P2’s Acquisition of the Word “Police” (August 04, 2021)

The abovementioned occurrence demonstrates that through the exposure of F/P2 to English cartoon shows, there is a successful acquisition of significant linguistic inputs that happened. In this case, F/P2 was able to acquire the word “police” from watching the English cartoon show which serves as the stimulus, after such, through inquiring about the characters, the schema was further reinforced by the researcher, then, later on, leads to the development of response upon seeing the image of the police car in an online game.

As supported by Alghonaim (2020), he found out that watching English TV cartoons in an EFL setting at an early age impact acquiring grammatical inflections. The study's main findings show that the child started to acquire basic vocabulary soon after watching TV cartoons. Gradually, he started to imitate the characters' speech on TV using some verbs. Later the child started to use grammatical inflections in English and developed broader use of correct grammatical structures, which shows the phonological development of the child. Therefore, the participants' exposure to English cartoon shows at their early stage of development has become the catalyst for English language acquisition to happen, as well as their morphological development to prosper.

3) Influence on the syntactical acquisition

In the context of syntax, both the participants’ multi-word utterances are words drawn from longer potential sentences that express a complete thought, which was enough for a sentence to make sense. Moreover, with the home observations conducted, it has been found that the participants learned to follow the syntactic rules by listening to the speech patterns of the characters in the English cartoon, wherein the participants either repeat and/or imitate what they hear or say something that is more or less related to it. Following this, the imitative utterances were compared for each participant’s previous and succeeding utterances constituting the same syntactic features to determine if there were structural differences between the kinds of utterances:

Table 1. F/P1’s Previous Utterances with the Acquired Syntactic Feature

F/P1 Previous Utterances	Syntactic Feature	Imitated Sentences with the Syntactic Feature	Succeeding Spontaneous Utterances with the use of the Acquired Syntactic Feature
I speak in English.	Use of suffix -ing to base words.	<i>I’m going to have a party.</i>	<i>I’m playing with my Lego.</i> I’m building a house Lego.
Mama and Tita happy.	Subject-verb sentence using plurals.	<i>Peppa and George are playing with</i> Subject-verb sentence using plurals	Chocolate and juice are sweet.

Table 2. F/P2's Previous Utterances with the Acquired Syntactic Feature

F/P1 Previous Utterances	Syntactic Feature	Imitated Sentences with the Syntactic Feature	Succeeding Spontaneous Utterances with the use of the Acquired Syntactic Feature
Juice on the fridge.	Use of be verb	<i>It is time for a bath, add the soap and the water.</i>	Peppa is funny. Cute is crying. Juice is healthy drink.

As can be seen in the table above, there was a clear division between the utterance types the participants have previously uttered, and then imitated and those that were produced spontaneously in which there was a change in the syntactic feature. In line with this, any utterance type which had at least one change in the syntactic feature showed an increase on language complexity wherein which suggest that there is an improvement in the syntactic development and/or it signifies the acquisition of the syntax of language among the participants. Following the claim of Bulte and Housen (2014), language complexity is a quantitative property of language units. With this, the greater the number of components a construction has and the more levels of embedding it contain, the more complex it is which is a valid descriptor of L2 acquisition performance, and indicator of language development and progress.

4) Influences on the semantical acquisition

In the area of semantics, one striking observation suggests that the participants' understanding of word meaning is best understood from the perspective of developing sensitivities to the English language in which the participant's ability to comprehend the general meaning of words before understanding the individual words is because they were able to decipher external clues like gestures, actions, facial expressions, and circumstances. For instance, the word '*whistle*' was reliably associated by one of the participants with the perception of puckering the lips and blowing shown in the English cartoon, and with that, the meaning of the word was quickly and accurately acquired. Hence, this observation favours the position that the participant used a word quickly after hearing the initial input, and simply hearing a word in context, without any definition is in any case enough to be an indicator of the process of semantics acquisition. Furthermore, in a study conducted by Gogate et al. (2000), it was shown how actions and words that co-occur in the child's multimodal environment support word acquisition and learning following how the consistency of co-occurring words and actions influences 30-month old's and three to four-year-old children's word meaning acquisition. With that, the present study extends Gogate et al. (2000) claims critically, showing that the participants acquire new words through a sensitivity to the co-occurrence of what they have been exposed to, in which even days after acquiring the new word, the participants typically retained understanding of its meaning.

CONCLUSION

The intensive exposure to technologies at a very young age facilitates preschoolers' language acquisition unconsciously and contributes to holistic language development. For that reason, there is particular significance to determine the influence of watching English cartoon shows on the English language acquisition of preschoolers, along with the factors involved in the systematic process. Therefore, several factors involved in language development, particularly multimedia and technology, social relationships and linguistic environment, and motivation, have been revealed through the thematic analysis method.

A recent study also identified that watching English cartoons has significant linguistic influences on preschoolers' English language acquisition. Children can articulate terms adequately based on the pronunciation they have heard from the cartoon characters. Interestingly, F/P1 acquired the British accent, and both can recite all the vowels and consonant sounds appropriate. Moreover, schema and vocabulary are enriched due to extensive exposure to linguistic inputs from English cartoon shows. This, in turn, allowed the preschoolers to develop their capability to utilize diverse words without fully understanding their context. Regarding the semantic influence, exposure to English cartoons and engagement with the immediate environment has also helped the preschoolers develop meaning-making processes that further strengthen their creative and critical thinking skills. Lastly, in terms of syntax, both participants can produce multi-word utterances that express complete thought but are ungrammatical by adult standards.

Through further analysis, it has been observed that the participants have different proficiency levels in the English language despite being exposed to English cartoon shows at an early age; F/P1 is the more adept one despite being younger than F/P2. The vast discrepancy in the participants' proficiency level is because F/P1 is bilingual while F/P2 is multilingual; F/P1 has a more significant advantage in acquiring the target language due to the lesser languages she has to focus on. Also, F/P1 experienced extensive supervision from a more knowledgeable other than F/P2. Moreover, the results presented have shown that despite the exposure to English cartoons, it is not always a guarantee that preschoolers would be able to correctly acquire what is seen, heard, and done by the characters. As for the case of the participants, both were exposed to correct English. However, there are still errors that the participants have noticed. Meanwhile, those things are understandable knowing their age and level of knowledge. Thus, it is safe to conclude that English cartoons significantly contribute and are an essential tool for successfully acquiring the English language.

In that case, future local research is also needed to identify further influences of English cartoon shows on English language acquisition and innovate ways to lessen the adverse effects involved in the process.

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