

# A CASE STUDY OF CHILD'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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## *Abstract*

*The study delved into the English language acquisition of two young children who had been exposed to television and digital media at an early age. It is a qualitative research under the two-case study type. The two children who served as the subjects of the study were purposively selected. Video compilations, an interview guide, a checklist for subject-observation, and an open-ended questionnaire were utilized in gathering data. The findings revealed that the subjects' early exposure to TV and digital media programs contributed to their grasp of the English language. Nevertheless, it was found that language input from the family members played a vital role in the two children's language acquisition. Also, the results indicated that early detection of a child's preferred and learned language is important to effectively assist him/her in the process of learning, while late detection of the child's learned language causes problems on the part of the child. The results further showed that late detection hinders the child from effectively interacting with his/her environment and causes him/her to suffer from negative social experiences.*

**Keywords:** *English language acquisition, delayed language acquisition, TV exposure, child interaction*

## **1.0 Introduction**

Over ninety percent (90%) of infants, specifically those below 2 years old, have been found to regularly watch television (Zimmerman et al., 2007; Brown, 2011). In fact, beginning in the late 1990s (Christakis, 2009) and even in the current decade (Madigan et al., 2020; Grané, 2021; Medawar et al., 2023), having young children view TV is not an uncommon scenario.

Evidence on the detrimental effects of early and extreme exposure to TV and digital media has continually emerged, which means that the problem remains rampant even at present (Stiglic & Viner, 2019; Heller, 2021; Kim, Wi, & Kim, 2023). To address the issue of children's media use, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), in particular, released a policy statement that aims to educate parents about how media content and the amount of

media consumed may affect children. Also, the AAP suggested the need for pediatricians to persuade parents to avoid exposing their children who are below 2 years old to television (Brown, 2011).

The same recommendation has been made by Dr. Merlyn Flavier, consultant of the Department of Pediatrics of the Southern Philippines Medical Center. Flavier, according to Rizal (2016), emphasized the need for parents to intensely control the usage of digital media by children 2 years old and younger or even 3-year-old children. Flavier believed that children exposed to digital media at an early age could encounter developmental problems.

Admittedly, several researchers have conducted quantitative studies examining the effects of TV viewing on infants. They found that children could suffer from language acquisition delay if they watch videos or television before the age of 2 (Chonchaiya & Pruk-sananonda, 2008; Tomopoulos et al., 2010; Dy, Dy, & Santos, 2023). However, in Chomsky's theory of language, it is upheld that children are born with a language acquisition device, which is a natural ability to acquire a language (Campbell & Wales, 1970). Meanwhile, the findings of Linebarger and Walker (2005) indicated that watching educational programs like *Dora the Explorer*, *Blue's Clues*, and *Arthur*

is beneficial to children who are between 6 and 30 months old in terms of acquiring greater vocabulary as well as higher expressive language scores. Moreover, despite other scholars' warnings regarding the negative implications of digital media in children's learning, it has been concluded that a TV program's educational content is what truly matters (Radich, 2013; Ebadi et al., 2023).

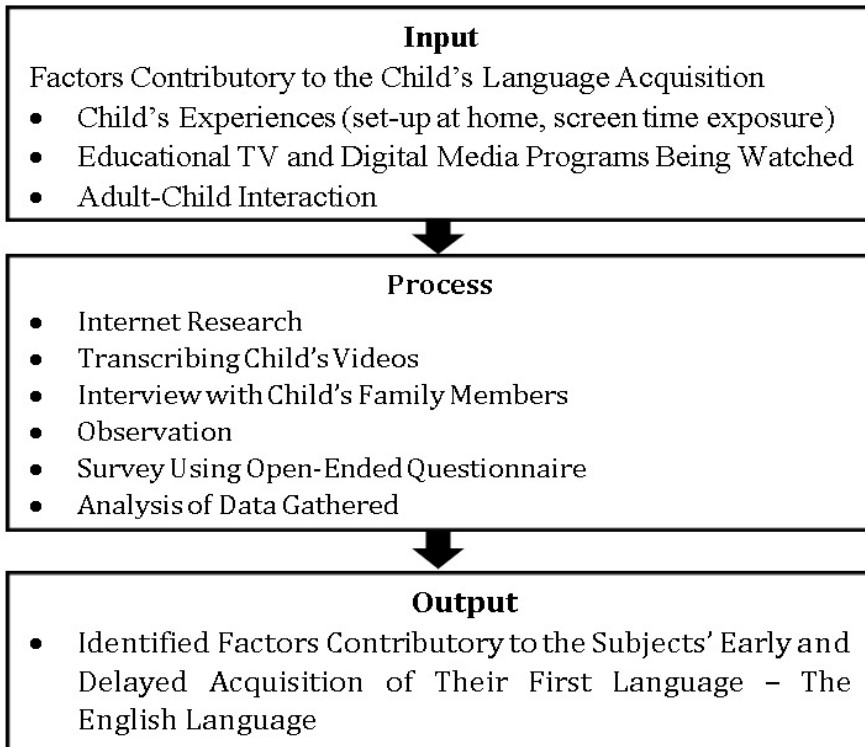
These opposing findings relevant to digital media exposure encouraged the researchers of the current study to further explore the effects of media exposure on children's English language acquisition. The researchers had known two children who had almost similar environments and exposure to media as early as age 1; however, these children differed on how early they acquired their first language. To fully investigate the effects of media exposure and environmental factors, a qualitative approach of research, specifically a case study, was carried out. The proponents deliberately agreed on utilizing the two-case type, which they deemed as appropriate to the objectives of the study. In this inquiry, the time that the parent and family members have spent directly talking to the child, or the nature and quality of this verbal exchange between adult and child was examined because this aspect has been less studied in

existing research. Aside from that, the English language acquisition of a child, whose family does not speak English at home, is less scrutinized by other scholars, making the conduct of this study necessary.

## 2.0 Conceptual Framework

The Input-Process-Output diagram was used to show the direction of this study. The input includes the subjects' experiences since birth, the educational TV and digital media programs they watch at home, and the adult-child interaction occurring in their respective

households. The process involves internet research, transcribing videos, and interviewing the subjects' family members. The subjects were observed closely and a questionnaire containing open-ended questions was used to gather and supplement more data. Moreover, the data collected were collated and analyzed thoroughly. Finally, the output of the study contains the identified factors that are contributory to the subjects' early and delayed acquisition of their first language—the English language. The diagram below presents all the variables discussed herein.



**Figure 1: Diagram of the Conceptual Framework of the Study**

### 3.0 Methodology

**Research design.** A qualitative research is an approach that provides deeper understanding and exploration of real-world issues (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Hen-nink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2020). It entails the emergence of questions and protocols and the information are usually gathered in the partici-pant's environment. The data analy-sis is derived from specifics to broad themes. The researchers then formu-late the interpretations and judg-ments of the significance of the data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This type of research is used in this study to have a comprehensive analysis of the child's English language acqui-sition. A case study, specifically the two-case type, is a qualitative meth-od of research that gives an in-depth examination and detailed investiga-tion of situations having contrasting cases. In this study, the situation be-ing examined is the two children's early exposure to TV and digital media. The results were contrasting since there was an early and delayed acquisition of the first language—the English language.

**Research subjects.** The subjects of this research are named "Sarah" and "Farah." They were chosen based on the following cri-teria: (a) they were exposed to me-dia as early as one year old; (b) they

had working mothers; (c) they were taken care of by their grandmothers; and (d) they were not formally in-troduced to the English language. Subjects who failed to possess the enumerated criteria were excluded from this study.

The following descriptions of the two subjects helped the re-searchers understand why Sarah learned to speak the English lan-guage more easily than Farah did.

**Sarah.** The first subject of the study is 4 ½-year-old Sarah, who was raised by a single parent. Sarah is an active kid who loves to play outdoor games and watch TV and digital media programs. She is her mother's first child. Her mother is a kindergarten teacher assigned in one of the hinterlands of Bayawan City. As young as 8 months old, Sarah was already exposed to TV and digital media. She lives in her grandparents' house together with her mother's two siblings and their children. Although she grew up in a household where family members speak Cebuano, Sarah would watch TV and digital media programs that use the English language. Sarah's case in acquiring the English lan-guage at an early age is a special one considering that English is not her family's first language. She only learned English through her expo-sure to TV and digital media.

**Farah.** The second subject

of the study is 10-year-old Farah. She is also a first-born child raised by a single mother. Like Sarah, she also lives with her grandparents and her mother's brother. Unlike Sarah, however, Farah prefers to play alone and has no playmates at home. Although she has been exposed to English TV shows and digital media programs at an early age, Farah suffered a delay in acquiring the English language, which is what makes her case also unique.

In view of these two distinct cases of English language acquisition, the researchers became interested in knowing what constitutes the early and delayed first language acquisition of the two subjects. The researchers had personally seen the subjects grow up and had even known certain problems that the two had encountered especially while learning their first language.

#### **Research instruments.**

The researchers made use of video compilations, an interview guide, a check list for subject-observation, and an open-ended questionnaire in conducting the study. The variables included in the questionnaire were based on literature read by the researchers with special consideration of the areas that interest the subjects most.

**Research procedures.** As previously mentioned, the research-

ers considered various sources of information to obtain all the data necessary for the study. During the conduct of the study, the researchers upheld all ethical considerations. Participation in the interviews was solely based on the participants' preference. The participants were the mothers, grandmothers, and those in close contact with the two subjects of this study. No participants were allowed to participate in the interview unless they understood and signed the terms stipulated in the informed consent form. To preserve the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants, the researchers personally transcribed the interview recordings. Transcripts bore no identifiable names of the persons involved. Instead, aliases were used to represent their identities. The researchers also reviewed each of the transcriptions to ensure accuracy. All audio files were then destroyed following these steps.

**Transcribing videos.** Aware that Sarah's family has kept video compilations of her since she was 3 years old, the researchers sought permission from the subject's mother, allowing them (the researchers) to study the materials and transcribe the conversations in the videos as part of the research's data gathering. For data analysis, the checklist was utilized. This provided concrete evidence that Sarah indeed absorbed

some words and even sentences by imitating the conversations uttered by TV characters. Furthermore, the videos clearly show that, besides plain imitation, Sarah also knows how to sensibly express her feelings and thoughts.

**Conducting interviews.** The semi-structured individual in-depth interview was also applied in this study. This type of interview enables researchers to delve deeply into the subjects' social and personal matters (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Interview questions were formulated to unravel the factors relevant to the subjects' early acquisition of the English language.

The researchers conducted the interviews with the mothers and grandmothers of the two subjects. Permission was sought first and then the interview date was set. The interview guide was utilized and the interviewees were allowed to freely express themselves or say anything they wanted. The researchers also asked follow-up questions to clarify some vague information. To keep track of all pieces of evidence, the responses of the interviewees were recorded and transcribed. Their answers were also carefully consolidated and analyzed. In particular, Farah's teacher and Sarah's aunt were also interviewed to obtain supplemental information about the subjects. The interview with Farah's

teacher supported the findings that Farah is lacking in terms of socialization skills, while the interview with Sarah's aunt proved that Sarah is quite a conversant child.

**Conducting subject-observation.** Since the two subjects are in close relations with the researchers, the researchers themselves could attest to how Sarah and Farah grew up. Additionally, the researchers were updated and well aware of the circumstances the subjects had gone through while acquiring their first language. Observations were already made even before and throughout the conduct of the study. During the current observations, the researchers have prepared a checklist containing the things they needed to consider about how the subjects use the language. Those observations aided the researchers in concluding that Sarah can fluently communicate her thoughts in English, while Farah, although she knows how to speak English, seldom interacts with peers.

**Distributing open-ended questionnaire.** The mothers of the two subjects were made to answer a survey containing open-ended questions and were given enough time to write their answers. Their responses helped the researchers in gathering and clarifying some details that were not covered during the inter-

views.

Finally, the researchers were able to triangulate all the data gathered. The aforementioned data-gathering methods were applied with formal approval from the families concerned. The family members of both subjects were also assured that the data collected would be treated with utmost confidentiality and no names would be mentioned in any part of the research.

**Reflexivity.** The researchers identified the following as possible biases in data interpretation. First, they know the family background of the two subjects so well. They have been very close to the families of the two children and have always been invited by both families during birthday celebrations and other special occasions. Furthermore, they were witness to some of the challenges encountered by the subjects in the process of acquiring their first language.

#### 4.0 Results and Discussions

In this section, the five themes comprising the results of the study are presented. These themes were formulated based on the overall data collected by the researchers through interviews, recorded videos, and subject-observation. Themes were also carefully framed to lay out the sequence on the pos-

sible situations or occurrences depicting the two subjects' acquisition of the English language as their first language.

#### Theme I. Subjects' Experiences Since Birth

**On Sarah.** The data revealed that the first subject, Sarah, is being attended to by different family members at home, although most of the time it is her grandmother who looks after her whenever her mother is at work. After bath and breakfast, Sara is left alone in her room with the TV turned on until bed time. Every now and then, she is monitored by family members while the latter do their home chores. In the interview, Sarah's grandmother stated:

*"Naa raman na siya sa kwarto gikan buntag hangtod hapon. Buotan na siya. Mulantaw ra na siya ug TV. Dili rapud na siya muhilak. Manga-yo ra na ug milk kung gutumon. Dili raka mag problema ana niya."*

*Translation:*

*"She just stays in the bedroom from morning till afternoon. She is well-behaved. She watches TV all the time. She does not cry at all. She just asks for milk whenever she's hungry. You won't have problems with her."*

Sometimes, Sarah would fall asleep in the midst of watching TV.

Then, she would wake up silently afterwards and continue watching again. She only calls the attention of any family member when she needs to eat, drink her milk, and take a pee or a poo. These are manifestations of the so-called "elementary mental functions," which, according to Vygotsky's theory, are genetically acquired by the child (cited by Anastasia, 2016).

No rules have been implemented concerning Sarah's TV viewing since she was 8 months old to 4 years old. She consumes an average of 9 hours per day watching different TV programs. When she turned 3, her family enrolled her in a Day Care Center. Currently, at 4 ½ years old, she is enrolled in a government Montessori school in Bayawan City.

**On Farah.** The second subject, Farah, is also attended to by her grandmother. Following her morning bath, Farah starts watching TV while her grandmother does household chores. Only the two of them are left at home. When asked about Farah's daily routine, the grandmother replied:

*"Maglantaw raman na siya ug TV kay daghan man ko trabaho sa panimalay. Manglaba pa ko, magluto ug manglimpyo. Magdula rapud na siya sa iyang dolls."*

*Translation:*

*"She usually spends time watching TV because I have a lot of household chores to do. I have to do the laundry, cook, and clean the house. She would just play with her dolls."*

Since Farah was 1 year old until she was 4 years old, no rules have also been implemented concerning her TV watching. She consumes an average of 7 hours per day watching different cartoon programs. At the age of 5, she was enrolled in a Day Care Center, and at 10 years old now, she is enrolled in one of the private schools in Dumaguete City.

The information stated above simply illustrates that both Sarah and Farah are exposed to TV most of the time and that their media viewing is not regulated. This is in line with the findings of De Decker et al. (2012) that children are allowed by their parents to watch TV anytime and without formal rules to follow. The data also signify that both Sarah and Farah have early TV and digital media exposure, which, according to the report of Brown (2011), should be avoided by children below 2 years old. The lack of data demonstrating the educational or developmental advantages of media exposure for children under the age of two has been emphasized by Brown (2011).

The screen time of both subjects, when they were already 2 years old, is also beyond the allow-



able screen time emphasized by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies (2011) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (Brown, 2011), which maintain that children's screen time viewing should be limited to less than 2 hours per day. Reinforcing such controlled screen time viewing is due to the possible developmental problems these children might encounter. This claim is supported by Byeong and Hong (2015) who found that exposure of 2-year-old toddlers to TV for more than 2 hours per day is associated with language delay. This also backs the findings of researchers that children who watch videos or television before the age of 2 could suffer from language acquisition delay (Chonchaiya & Pruksananonda, 2008; Tomopoulos et al., 2010). Additionally, sentence construction and vocabulary can be adversely affected when one watches television, according to Medawar et al. (2023).

On the contrary, Linebarger and Piotrowski (2009) asserted that children exposed to educational programs can acquire enriched skills in understanding stories or narratives. It is also cited by Nichols and Vaala (2010) that 2-year-old and older children exposed to educational television learn media-presented words and expressions. Lefever (2010), on the other hand, found that parents consider digital media exposure as one of the factors that

help their children acquire the English language. Furthermore, according to Krcmar et al. (2007) and Hoff (2013), well-structured educational media were found to have a positive contribution to the vocabulary acquisition of young children.

In general, experts and researchers have different findings regarding the impact of TV on a child's language acquisition.

## **Theme 2: Educational TV and Digital Media Programs Watched**

Sarah and Farah are frequently left in their rooms during weekdays. As early as 1 year old, they have been exposed to different TV and digital media programs.

**On Sarah.** Here are the programs under Disney Junior Channel that Sarah is exposed to: Sofia the First, Doc McStuffins, Olive and the Ostrich, Diego and Friends, Minmin and Friends, Word World, Bunny Purple, Hi-5, Vamperina, Princess Elena of Avatar, Spaceship, and PJ Mask. Sarah also loves watching these programs under Nick Junior Channel: Dora the Explorer, Blue's Clues, Shimmer and Shine, Paw Patrol, Blazing Jake, and Team Umizoomi. Moreover, she enjoys the following digital apps stored in her tablet: Temple Run, Coins Train, Cooking Mania, Quest Adventure, Kids Preschool, Preschool Alliance, Kindergarten and Funlight, and Al-

phabet Aquarium. These programs are advertised to be educational media materials.

**On Farah.** Farah also watches Nick Junior (Dora the Explorer and Blues Clues), Disney Junior (Sofia the First, Doc McStuffins, Kate and Mimmin), Disney Channel (Frozen, Duck Tales, Tangled The Series, and Olaf's Frozen Adventure), and Nickelodeon (Barbie: Life in the Dreamhouse). Moreover, she enjoys the following digital apps downloaded on her tablet: Girls Life Craft, Metro Craft, Super Pads, Shadow Fight, Wordscapes, Cheerleaders, and Smash Hit.

Some researchers have found that the content of the programs and how children watch these programs matter more than the number of screen viewing time (cited in Christakis, 2009). Wolfe (2013) maintained that Disney Junior and Nick Junior are designed for preschool children between 2 and 5 years old. These educational programs are intended to enhance preschoolers' social skills, language skills, problem-solving skills, hygiene, and behavior.

In particular, Sarah and Farah watch Sofia the First, which is the number 1 series for preschoolers, and Doc McStuffins, a program nominated for Emmy Awards. Both Sofia the First and Doc McStuffins are under Disney Junior. Sarah and Farah also view Dora the Explorer,

which is Nick Junior's top program, and Blue's Clues. The data suggest that the two subjects are exposed to programs that are well-designed and appropriate for preschoolers. Correspondingly, Linebarger and Walker (2005) found that watching Dora the Explorer, Blues Clues, Arthur, Clifford, or Dragon Tales beginning in infancy contributed to higher vocabulary acquisition and greater expressive language ratings. However, according to Wolfe (2013), no research has been done on the impact of the programs under Disney Junior Channel because it was only launched in 2012. Nonetheless, Disney remarkably outperforms Nick Junior due to the former's program content.

### **Theme 3: Impact of Educational TV and Digital Media Programs**

**On Sarah.** Sarah's exposure to different educational TV and digital media programs allows her to imitate the words, phrases, and short sentences she hears from the shows. In addition, since the morning programs are aired again in the evening, she tends to memorize the lines used in the conversations. Sometimes, she utters the same words and phrases in answer to the person asking on TV. She does this along with hand movements and facial expressions. Her mother has also observed that Sarah tries to communicate with

her in English using expressions like “Yes, Mama,” “Ok, Mama,” and “Up there,” among others. Sarah started doing this when she was 3 years old although she could not yet utter the words properly during that time because she would speak so fast.

This was the response of Sarah’s mother when asked about how Sarah behaves while watching TV shows:

*t“Naa’y magabii usahay nga maglantaw mi ug TV unya mutubag na siya sa conversations sa mga characters. Mao diay kabalo siya unsay itubag tungod kay nasalida na diay na anang buntag, unya sigi na diay na gibalik balik.”*

*Translation:*

*“There were nights, while we were watching TV that she would respond to the conversations made by the characters. That is why she would know what to reply because it has already been shown in the morning and has been repeated several times.”*

A video of Sarah having a conversation with her cousin during their playtime had been taken. At first, nobody could understand the dialogue transpiring in the video. However, curiosity urged the family to view the video again, try to comprehend the words spoken by

Sarah, and analyze her gestures and the situation. Finally, the family understood what Sarah was saying in the video and got these statements: “Where is Van Van?”, “Van Van disappeared!”, “He is gone!”, “He is lost!” These utterances were delivered with hand movements and emotions. After this discovery, Sarah’s mother and the family members felt encouraged to communicate with her using the English language.

The transcriptions of the conversations in the compiled videos were then analyzed. How Sarah speaks and uses vocabularies like gallop, log, bandit, presents, amazing, and other words basically confirms that she acquires language through the shows she watches every day. In addition, the conversations that have transpired serve as evidence that Sarah can understand and converse in English. This scenario corresponds to the findings of various studies cited in Brown (2011) that children 1-2 years of age can recall an event as a result of numerous repetitions of the scenes. Infants absorb things or situations by repetition and consistency (Barr et al., 2010). As Radich (2013) indicated in his study, technology supports learning when properly utilized. Also, Brown (2011) posited that some high-quality programs have positive contribution to toddlers older than 2 years old.

**On Farah.** The case of Far-

ah is different from that of Sarah. Farrah would talk to herself alone and mumble words that the family members could not understand. She would also play with her toys all by herself. The family members felt worried about her talking neither in Cebuano nor in English. Sometimes, she imitates some scenes and words expressed on TV, but the words she would utter are only limited to 2-3 words and the rest are just plain gibberish.

When asked about Farah's behavior at home, her mother said:

*"One time, naglantaw mi ug TV duha. Natingala ko nga kabalo siya unsay itubag. Nalibog gud ko ngano. Niingon si Mama (grandmother of Farah) nga ang salida sa buntag ibalik diay ug gabie."*

*Translation:*

*"One time, we were watching TV together. I was astonished at how come she knew what to say/answer. I was really confused why. My mom (Farah's grandmother) then told me that the movie shown in the morning is usually aired again at night."*

In today's digital age, the characters featured in TV programs serve as The More Knowledgeable Other (MKO), which, according to Vygotsky, plays a crucial role in learning (cited in Anastasia, 2016).

Likewise, Brown, as mentioned by Meniado (2016), explained that the Behaviorist theory sees language learning as a result of habit formation, imitation, feedback on success, and practice. This theory claims that language learning is attained through the conditioning and reinforcement of those people in the learner's environment, which include his peers, teachers, family members, and the society in general.

#### **Theme 4: Adult-Child Conversation that Transpired at Home**

**On Sarah.** When it was already affirmed by the family that Sarah does speak English, every family member began using the English language as a medium of communication at home. Sarah's mother started communicating with her in English. Sarah's grandfather and her uncle, who have reached college level, also began conversing with her in English. The same goes with the grandmother, who is a college graduate and presently connected with DSWD. Two of Sarah's aunts, who are teachers by profession, as well as her cousin, who is a Grade 7 student, also did the same thing.

Sarah's grandmother shared this during the interview:

*"Kami diri tanan sa balay ga ininglis kay dili man kasabot si Sarah."*

*Hasta gani si Tatay niya (grandfather) ga ininglis pud kay pwerte man kaayo mu English si Sarah. Makalingaw man."*

*Translation:*

*"All of us here in the house speak in English because Sarah does not understand any other languages. Even Sarah's grandfather speaks English because Sarah is very fluent in English. It's quite amusing."*

Such support from the family further helped Sarah acquire the English language at the age of 3. Indeed, as what Nichols and Vaala (2010) postulated, early language acquisition is attributed to the language input from parents, siblings and other family members. Sarah's interaction with family members certainly aided her in honing her conversational skills. As emphasized by Linebarger and Piotrowski (2009), effective interventions at home have considerable impact on kids.

In addition, Otto (2010) asserted that small children obtain knowledge in language through the various stimuli coming from their environment. This statement also concurs with Vygotsky's concept of Zone of Proximal Development, which upholds that learning acquired by the child independently is enhanced with the help or collaboration with others (Mehrpour & Fo-

rutan, 2015).

**On Farah.** Farah's case is different because the family members were unaware of or unable to detect earlier her language preference. Farah kept on mumbling words until she reached age 6. She would seldom talk. If she wanted something, she would just point at the object or direct her family members to the things she wanted.

In an interview with Farah's mother and grandmother, it was found that their family rarely speaks English at home.

Mother: *"Wala man mi ga English sa balay. Wala man mi kabalo nga English speaking diay siya. Mag English mi pero kana ragud, "Stand up!", "You eat.", "Let's play." Inana ra. Dili gyud katong mag English gyud. Nalibog pud mi ngano dili siya mu sulti kaayo. If naa siya ganahan, birahon raka niya unya itudlo niya iya ganahan kuhaon."*

*Translation:*

*"We don't really speak English at home. We had no idea that she speaks English. We may have spoken English but only the basic utterances like "Stand up!", "You eat.", "Let's play." That's it. We don't really talk to her in pure straight English. We were also confused why she does not talk often. If she wanted something, she would just pull your hand and then simply point at*

*what she wanted."*

*Grandmother: "Wala man mi gatudlo niya. Nakabalo ra siya kay siya lantaw English nga programs."*

*Translation:*

*"We never taught her. She just learned from watching English programs on TV."*

It was also revealed that Farah appeared to be very quiet in school and had less interaction with her classmates. These were stressed by her teacher during the interview. Farrah also experienced being bullied. Her Grade 1 teacher had a hard time dealing with her since she would not respond during conversations. Aside from being timid, Farah would speak in a low voice and could not even speak straight. It was around the end of the school year during the 1st Grade when Farah's family members finally noticed that she speaks English.

The aforementioned information implies that Farah had a delay in language acquisition because of less language input from her family members. It should be recalled that, as claimed by Otto (2010), environmental factors or stimuli help small children learn all areas of a language (i.e. listening, responding, and interacting). The absence of these factors will surely create problems in language development. This notion runs parallel with the

findings of researchers that as a child focuses most of his time on watching TV, the quality and quantity of "talk time" are being compromised (Byeon & Hong, 2015).

While being exposed to TV allows Farah to understand the English language, still her communicative skills are not properly developed because she had been exposed to two different languages, which may have created confusion on her part. Although she watches TV programs that use the English language, her family members use the native dialect when interacting with her. On top of this, she lacks social interaction with other kids, which may have added to her language delay problems. According to Hoff, as cited in Byeon and Hong (2015), two-sided conversations enhance communication abilities. Moreover, exposing very young children to media prevents them from engaging and playing with others (Schmidt et al., 2008).

In the case of Farah, she somehow slowly developed her conversational skills when she entered school and became surrounded with different kinds of pupils. While she may be less socially involved with her classmates, she sees and hears how they converse with one another. Eventually, she has learned to express her thoughts. As what Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory infers, social interaction makes

effective learning possible (Mehrpour & Forutan, 2015).

## 5.0 Conclusions

The subjects' early exposure to TV and digital media programs significantly contribute to their grasp of the English language. Primarily, this happens because of repetition, wherein the morning programs are being repeated or aired again in the evening. Through repetition, the two subjects were able to absorb and imitate things and understand the situations presented on screen (Barr et al., 2010). Their exposure to and interactions with the TV characters manifest the kind of learning they initially attained, which was eventually enhanced through the assistance of The More Knowledgeable Others, a concept of Vygotsky's theory.

Although watching TV enables the two children to learn English independently, the assistance and involvement of their family members still prove essential for the children's full language development. This assertion is emphasized in Vygotsky's concept of Zone of Proximal Development. In addition, Mehrpour and Forutan (2015) theorized that support from the environment motivates children to realize their full potential.

Sarah fully acquired English language learning at an early age be-

cause she received enough language input from her family. Farah, on the other hand, had a delay in acquiring the language because she lacked English language input from the people in her household. Initially, Farah's family had been unaware of her language preference. Detecting a child's learned language is, therefore, important to be able to assist him/her in the process of learning.

The researchers then believe that early detection of a child's language preference can encourage family members to provide their due support by interacting with the child using the language he or she favors, while late detection of the child's learned language causes problems on the part of the child. Furthermore, late detection hinders the child from effectively interacting with his/her environment and causes him/her to suffer from negative social experiences.

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