

An Analysis of English Language Exposure at Home and Its Perceived Impact on Young Children

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the forms of English language exposure provided by parents at home, parents' perceptions of its impact on young children's English development, and the challenges they face in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. Using a qualitative descriptive design, data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed to 18 parents of children aged 4–6 years. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics for closed-ended questions and thematic analysis for open-ended responses. The findings reveal that English exposure at home is primarily delivered through multimodal activities, including watching videos, singing songs, reading storybooks, and engaging in simple conversations, with digital media especially YouTube as the dominant source. Most parents reported observing positive developments in their children's English abilities, particularly in vocabulary recognition, pronunciation imitation, passive comprehension, and increased interest in English content. However, several challenges were identified, including parents' limited English proficiency, time constraints, children's fluctuating interest, and difficulties in selecting appropriate learning materials. These findings highlight the important role of the home environment in supporting early second language acquisition, particularly through informal and interaction-based exposure. The study contributes to the understanding of how home literacy environments function in EFL contexts and emphasizes the need for supporting parents in providing effective English exposure at home.

Keywords: English Language Exposure; Early Childhood; Home Literacy Environment; Parental Perception; EFL Context

INTRODUCTION

In English language and literature studies, language exposure plays a crucial role in the process of language acquisition, especially in early childhood exposure refers to the amount and quality of language input a child receives, which is central to theories of second language learning. In non-native contexts such as Indonesia, early exposure to English is often limited to informal environments like the home becomes essential from the perspective of applied linguistics. Zhang, X., Lau, C., & Su, Y. (2023) says that considering the prevalence of electronic devices in contemporary societies, this finding may inform the use of diverse materials to cater to the different needs and abilities of young Asian children. Finally, our findings that children's cognitive- linguistic skills mediated the influence of the home environment on young children's English development suggest that it is important

for parents and educators to pay attention to children's characteristics and skills that can potentially influence the extent to which the home environment can benefit children's English learning.

Susanty et al (2021) mentions that whatever the main points we analyze, parents can effectively apply some tricks and approaches proven to teach English in other countries for example, teaching refracted at home, selecting and selecting the proper method for early childhood, such as the storytelling method from illustrated books relevant to Indonesian children's interests and ages. Because we believe that every child has their strengths and strengths in learning with their mothers at home another example that we review is learning roleplays and singing songs together at home when parents are active at home homemakers. We present this kind of approach based on the findings and recommendations of experts with findings in learning English.

Furthermore, many studies more focus on using the object of study such as a school rather than at home. The study about early English exposure more focus on explaining classroom learning, preschool curriculum, and teachers. So that, the role of parents at home is less explored. It is emphasized from this study. Gillet et al (2021) in Early bilingual immersion school program and cognitive development in French-speaking children says that the results of studies targeting cognitive and academic advantages in children frequenting early bilingual immersion school programs (CLIL) have been contradictory. The sample included a total of 230 French speaking children attending second (141) and fifth (89) grade classes. Within each grade, there were three matched language groups composed of children respectively immersed in English, immersed in Dutch, and non-immersed controls.

Nowdays, many parents also use digital media on online content such as YouTube and mobile applications to introduce English to their children. In another word, it still limited to have studies that see how the parents use them. Jahrani and Listia (2023) says that the majority of the articles examined agree that exposure helps people learn a second language. There are many types of exposure, such as listening to English music and podcasts, viewing English movies, interacting with English native speakers, chatting in English on social media, reading English books, etc. The article also stressed the significance of exposure in language acquisition, stating that because there is no detrimental impact of exposure on second language acquisition, the more learners are exposed to English, the more they will read and speak the language. The more exposure, the bigger the impact on their second language acquisition.

This study has three goals; to explain the forms of English language exposure which parents provide at home to their young children, as seen from the perspective of the Home Literature Environment theory; to explain the parents' perceive regarding to the impact of home-based English exposure on their children's English development, and to know the challenges they face, as seen from the perspective of early second language acquisition theory.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Related Study

Tao and Taft (2017) examined how early home language environment affects language ability. Adult participants retrospectively reported the type and amount of language exposure they received at home during childhood and were grouped by whether they were mainly exposed to a heritage language or the majority language. The study found that early exposure significantly influenced vocabulary, speech perception, and pronunciation. Greater exposure to the majority language was associated with more native-like ability, highlighting the lasting role of home language input in language development. Unlike Tao and Taft (2017), which relied on adults' reflections on childhood experience, the present study focuses directly on young children and explores how parents provide English exposure at home, how they perceive its impact, and what challenges they face in an EFL context.

Li and Kong (2024) investigated how parents' beliefs and the home literacy environment influence preschool children's attitudes toward learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Using survey data from 405 primary caregivers in Zhengzhou, China, the study showed that a supportive home literacy environment shaped children's attitudes through the availability of English resources and informal activities such as reading and language interaction at home. Parents' positive beliefs about English education were also linked to a richer home literacy environment, which supported children's cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes toward English learning. Although centered on children's attitudes, this study also shows how parental beliefs and the home literacy environment shape young children's early English exposure at home.

Mak et al. (2023) explored the relationship between parental perceptions of bilingualism, the home language and literacy environment, and children's home language proficiency among dual-language learners from immigrant families in the United States. The study involved 132 Mexican American and Chinese American families with children aged 50–88 months. Through parental interviews and individual language assessment, the researchers found that parents who valued bilingualism were more likely to support literacy activities at home, such as shared reading and encouraging use of the home language, which contributed to better language outcomes. The findings underline the role of parental beliefs and home literacy practices in children's language development. Although Mak et al. (2023) focused on maintaining the home language in immigrant families, it remains relevant because it shows how parental perceptions and home literacy practices affect children's language development. Overall, previous studies emphasize the importance of home exposure, parental beliefs, and literacy environments, but most focus on proficiency, learning attitudes, or bilingual and immigrant contexts. Research is still limited on how parents in EFL settings provide English exposure

at home, how they perceive its impact, and what challenges they face. This study addresses that gap.

Paradis and Kirova (2014) examined the English proficiency of 21 preschool English language learners (ELLs) from diverse first-language and low-income backgrounds, as well as the role of the home language environment in their development. Children's English was assessed through a standardized storytelling instrument measuring story grammar, sentence complexity, lexical diversity, utterance length, and story length, while parents completed a questionnaire about the home language environment. The findings showed uneven development across language sub-skills. Story grammar and story length were within the monolingual normal range, while skills requiring stronger English grammar and vocabulary knowledge, such as utterance length and lexical diversity, were lower. Children born in Canada and exposed to more English at home did not outperform foreign-born children, and home language variables were not significantly related to storytelling outcomes. The study suggests that the richness of the English environment may matter more than the amount of English used at home. In other words, greater English exposure at home did not automatically lead to higher proficiency; the quality or richness of the language environment was more important. The authors also concluded that preschool settings may support English growth effectively, while the home environment contributes in different ways.

Al-Zoubi (2018) investigated the impact of English exposure on language acquisition among 42 EFL students from the Department of English Language and Literature at Ajloun National University, Jordan. Using a 22-item Likert-scale questionnaire, the study examined learners' exposure to English and its relationship with language development. The results showed a strong positive effect of exposure on language acquisition, with a high overall mean score of 3.72. Exposure was positively related to the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—and occurred through activities such as watching English programs and movies, listening to songs, reading books or magazines, using the internet, and interacting with English speakers. The study concluded that more frequent English exposure supports language acquisition and improves fluency and proficiency. Therefore, learners are encouraged to engage regularly with English through media and everyday language activities.

Young Learners in Language Learning

Young learners are commonly defined as children between the ages of 3 and 6 in the early stages of formal education. According to Pinter (2017), these learners are naturally curious, emotionally expressive, and responsive to interactive learning methods. They learn best through play, repetition, songs, visuals, and real-life interaction, which makes their home environment an ideal space for early exposure to language. Moon (2011) also highlights that children at this age absorb language through repetition, exposure, and emotional engagement rather than through formal instruction. This makes them especially responsive to language input that comes in

natural and familiar contexts, such as those found in the home. Therefore, parents play a central role in shaping children's initial understanding of a second language by embedding English into daily communication, storytelling, and play.

Home Literacy Environment (HLE) Theory

The Home Literacy Environment (HLE) theory, proposed by Hans-Günther Niklas and Wolfgang Schneider (2013), emphasizes that the frequency and quality of literacy-related activities at home play an important role in children's language and reading development. HLE refers not only to the availability of books or literacy materials but also to parents' attitudes, interactions, and activities that support children's early literacy experiences. These activities include shared book reading, storytelling, parent-child conversations, and access to language-related media that stimulate children's early language development. Empirical studies have demonstrated the importance of HLE in supporting children's early literacy development. For instance, a study by Kartika Nuswantara et al. (2022) found that parent-child interactions and literacy-related activities, such as phonological awareness practices and introducing letters and sounds through songs or playful activities, contribute to preschool children's emergent literacy skills. Similarly, research conducted by Altun, D. (2019) revealed that home literacy environment, shared book reading activities, preschool education experience, and maternal education significantly contributed to children's development, explaining 46% of the variance in preschoolers' performance.

A review study conducted by Yu Sun and Mei Wang (2022) also highlighted that HLE has a positive predictive effect on children's cognitive development, particularly in early literacy and number skills. From the perspective of ecosystem theory, HLE is considered part of the microsystem that directly influences children's development through everyday interactions within the family environment. Further evidence regarding the role of HLE in second language learning is provided by the meta-analysis conducted by Yang Dong and Bonnie Wing-Yin Chow. Their analysis of 18 studies involving 4,401 participants showed that HLE factors have small to moderate effects on children's English as a Second Language (ESL) performance. Among the various factors examined, parental literacy teaching behaviors, such as shared reading and parental involvement in literacy activities, were found to have stronger effects on children's ESL ability than parental beliefs or the availability of literacy resources at home.

Longitudinal research conducted by Kim et al (2015) further highlighted the importance of early home literacy experiences. Using a large-scale dataset of more than 6,000 children, the study found that home literacy environment during toddlerhood predicted children's vocabulary and decoding skills at preschool age. The findings also indicated that vocabulary partially mediated the relationship between early HLE and later decoding skills, suggesting that early exposure to literacy activities such as reading books, storytelling, and singing songs contributes to vocabulary development that subsequently supports early reading skills.

In addition, research conducted by Carroll et al (2019) examined the relationship between literacy interest, home literacy environment, and emergent literacy skills among preschool children aged four to five years. The findings revealed that literacy interest explained nearly 25% of the variance in emergent literacy skills even after controlling for HLE and socio-economic status (SES), while HLE and SES also made significant independent contributions. These results indicate that both children's interest in literacy activities and supportive literacy environments at home contribute to the development of early literacy skills. This theoretical perspective is particularly relevant in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts such as Indonesia, where opportunities for children to encounter English outside school may be limited. In such contexts, parents can provide English exposure at home through activities such as reading picture books, listening to songs, watching educational videos, or engaging in simple conversations in English. Through these interactions, the home environment can serve as an important setting that supports children's early language development before formal schooling begins.

The Home Literacy Environment (HLE) plays a crucial role in children's early development, particularly in shaping both linguistic and socioemotional competencies. A longitudinal study by Wirth et al. (2021) involving young children aged 2 to 4 years found that HLE especially parental shared reading habits and early exposure to literacy activities significantly predicts children's socioemotional development through the mediation of linguistic abilities. This means that while HLE may not directly influence socioemotional skills at an early age, it supports language development, which in turn enhances children's ability to regulate emotions, interact socially, and reduce problem behaviors. The study also highlights that frequent shared reading, early initiation of literacy activities, and quality parent-child interactions contribute to both cognitive and emotional development. Overall, these findings emphasize that a supportive literacy environment at home is a key foundation for children's holistic development in the early years.

Early Second Language Acquisition

Early second language acquisition refers to the process by which young children acquire an additional language in their early developmental years, usually before formal schooling. According to Moon (2011), children at this age do not learn language through explicit grammar instruction, but rather through meaningful and repeated exposure such as songs, stories, and everyday interaction. Their ability to imitate sounds and absorb vocabulary is enhanced when the input is emotionally engaging and relevant to their experiences. Tamis Le-Monda (2019) further explains that language development in early childhood is supported not just by the presence of language input, but by how it is delivered through emotional connection, interaction, and repetition. For example, when parents sing, read, or talk in English as part of everyday routines, it builds both cognitive and emotional pathways that help children understand and internalize the language. Therefore, early second language acquisition theory supports the idea that home based English exposure especially when delivered through storytelling, music, and visual media

can positively impact a child's early English development, even without formal instruction.

Early second language acquisition is closely related to both linguistic development and cognitive growth, particularly when children are exposed to intensive language input. A study by Trebits et al. (2021) found that children enrolled in immersion programs significantly outperformed their peers in regular EFL settings in terms of second language (L2) proficiency, including vocabulary and grammar, as well as cognitive abilities such as working memory and phonological awareness. The findings highlight that early and consistent exposure to a second language through immersive environments provides richer and more frequent language input, which accelerates both language acquisition and cognitive development. Furthermore, the study revealed that socioeconomic status (SES) had a weaker influence on children in immersion programs compared to those in regular learning settings, suggesting that intensive bilingual education can help reduce educational disparities. Overall, this study supports the view that early second language acquisition, particularly in immersive contexts, not only enhances linguistic competence but also contributes to broader cognitive advantages in young learners.

Early second language acquisition is a complex and gradual process influenced by multiple internal and external factors rather than a rapid and uniform development. Research by Paradis, J. (2019) demonstrates that children who begin learning a second language in early childhood require several years to approach the proficiency levels of monolingual peers, with different linguistic domains such as vocabulary, morphology, and syntax developing at varying rates. The study also highlights significant individual differences among learners, shaped by internal factors such as age, first language background, and cognitive abilities, as well as external factors including the quantity and quality of language input and the learning environment. Importantly, language input is identified as a key and modifiable factor, where richer and more consistent exposure can significantly enhance language development. Overall, these findings challenge the common assumption that early L2 learning is fast and effortless, emphasizing instead that it is a long-term, variable process that depends heavily on both individual learner characteristics and environmental support.

Early second language acquisition is closely linked to brain development and neuroplasticity, particularly when exposure occurs during early childhood. A neuroimaging study by Tabuenca et al. (2024) found that bilingual individuals show higher global brain efficiency compared to monolinguals, indicating more effective functional integration across brain networks. Importantly, the age of second language acquisition plays a critical role, as earlier exposure is associated with stronger neural connectivity, particularly between cortical and cerebellar regions involved in language processing. These findings suggest that learning a second language during periods of high brain plasticity leads to more optimized neural organization and more efficient language processing mechanisms. Although second language learning remains possible later in life, the neurological processes involved

differ and may be less efficient than those established during early childhood. Overall, this study highlights that early L2 exposure not only supports language acquisition but also shapes the brain's functional architecture in ways that enhance cognitive and linguistic efficiency.

Second language acquisition (SLA) refers to the process through which individuals acquire a language other than their first language, often occurring in both subconscious and conscious ways. According to Hoque (2017), SLA is largely a subconscious process that develops naturally through meaningful communication, in contrast to formal language learning which involves more conscious and structured instruction. The theory emphasizes several key principles, including the importance of comprehensible input, the existence of a natural order of language acquisition, and the influence of affective factors such as motivation and anxiety, which can either facilitate or hinder language development. In early language acquisition contexts, providing rich communicative environments and supportive learning conditions is essential to promote effective language development. Overall, SLA highlights the interaction between learner characteristics and environmental factors, underscoring that successful language acquisition depends on both meaningful exposure and appropriate instructional support.

Ecological Systems Theory

To support the broader context of language development in children, this study adopts Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory as a grand theory. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), child development is influenced by multiple environmental systems, and the microsystem, which includes the home and immediate family, has the most direct impact. This framework justifies why the home and particularly parents' behaviors, language use, and routines should be central in analyzing a child's language growth. In the context of English language exposure, it reinforces the idea that early experiences within the family can shape a child's readiness and confidence in acquiring a second language.

METHOD

Design and Samples

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method to explore how parents introduce English to their children at home. It was chosen to allow the researcher understood in-depth the forms of exposure, frequency, sources, and challenges experienced by parents when engaging in English-related activities with their children. Through this approach, the researcher can gather rich and detailed responses such as obtaining the explanation of the forms of exposure, the intentions of activities, the sources of learning materials, and the obstacles which faced by parents when having English practices with their children. The subjects of this research are parents of young children aged 4 to 6 years old who have been exposed

to English at home. It was chosen because this period represents a critical stage in language development.

Conti-Ramsden, G., Durkin, K. (2012) said that during the preschool years, children rapidly expand their vocabulary and develop more complex linguistic abilities. Research also shows that phonological short-term memory, which plays an important role in language acquisition, can be reliably assessed in children aged four years and above. Furthermore, early phonological processing difficulties observed in younger children have been found to predict language problems around the age of four to five. Therefore, the preschool period provides an important opportunity to observe children's language development and the potential influence of environmental factors such as home language exposure. These children may still be attending or have recently completed early childhood education (TK/PAUD). According to Tamis-LeMonda (2019) in the Child & Family Blog, preschool alone cannot help children catch up after a poor start at home, which emphasizes the importance of home-based language experiences from an early age. Therefore, this study places the family setting as the primary context in which language exposure occurs, particularly through the actions and attitudes of parents in introducing English.

Instruments and Procedures

The research instrument used was a structured online questionnaire created using Google Forms. This questionnaire consisted of 10 questions designed to gather data regarding the forms, frequency, confidence level, perceived effects, and challenges of English exposure at home. These questions are constructed in multiple formats, including multiple-choice, checkbox, and open-ended types. The questionnaire items were developed based on the concept of the Home Literacy Environment (HLE) proposed by Niklas & Schneider (2017) which emphasizes the role of parental interaction, learning materials, and home activities in supporting early language development. These theoretical concepts guided the construction of the questions so that the collected data could represent how English exposure occurs in the home environment. The questionnaire was reviewed before distribution to ensure clarity, neutrality, and alignment with the research questions.

The data in this study were collected using a structured online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The form was shared through messaging apps, targeting parents of children aged 3 to 6 years old. The data collection period was conducted from July 7 to July 14, 2025. The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions written in Bahasa Indonesia to ensure that participants could easily understand and respond to them, combining multiple-choice, checkbox, and open-ended formats. The questionnaire was designed to explore several aspects of home-based English exposure, including children's demographic background, parental involvement in introducing English, the forms and frequency of English-related activities at home, the sources of learning materials, parents' confidence in using English, their perceptions of children's progress, and the challenges they encountered.

The questions addressed several aspects of the phenomenon. The first section collected demographic information about the child, including age and early childhood education experience. The next section explored parental practices in providing English exposure, such as who usually introduced English to the child, the forms of exposure, and the frequency of English-related activities at home. Additional items examined the sources of English learning materials and parents' confidence in using English when interacting with their children. The final section focused on parents' perceptions of the outcomes of English exposure and the challenges they encountered. Parents were asked to indicate whether they observed progress in their child's English development and to describe the progress and difficulties they experienced through open-ended responses. Before the questionnaire was distributed, participants were informed that their responses would be kept confidential and used strictly for academic purposes. Participation was voluntary, and consent was implied through the act of completing the form.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the online questionnaire were analyzed using a qualitative descriptive approach supported by simple descriptive statistics. This combination enabled the researcher to identify patterns of English exposure at home while also interpreting parents' perceptions and experiences. The analysis was directed toward answering the two research questions: (1) what forms of English exposure are provided at home, and (2) how parents perceive the impact of English exposure and the challenges they experience.

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the quantitative data from the closed-ended questionnaire items in the form of frequencies and percentages, following Creswell (2014), in order to identify patterns in parents' responses. For the first research question, demographic information and responses related to parental practices were analyzed to describe the participants' characteristics and the forms of English exposure provided at home, including who introduced English, the types and frequency of activities, and the sources of learning materials. For the second research question, responses concerning parents' confidence and their perceptions of children's progress were also summarized quantitatively to show overall response patterns.

The responses from the open-ended questionnaire items were analyzed using thematic analysis following Creswell's qualitative data analysis procedures. First, all responses were organized and reviewed repeatedly to gain a general understanding of the data and identify initial ideas emerging from parents' statements. The researcher then conducted coding by marking meaningful segments of text and labeling them with descriptive terms that represented key ideas. Similar codes were grouped into broader categories, which were later organized into themes reflecting parents' observations of children's English development and the challenges they experienced when introducing English at home. To strengthen the interpretation of the findings, the identified themes were compared across responses

to identify recurring tendencies and similarities among participants. These patterns were then interpreted in relation to the theoretical frameworks discussed in the literature review, particularly studies on home literacy environments and family interaction in early language development.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This part presents the result and discussion based on the results of the questionnaire distributed to 18 parents of young children aged 4 to 6. The findings are organized based on the ten questionnaire items, grouped according to the two research questions: (1) the forms of English exposure at home, and (2) parents' perceptions of its impact and the challenges they face.

Forms of English Language Exposure Data

The first research question explored how parents introduce English to their young children at home. The results indicate that English exposure in the home environment occurs through a variety of activities and media sources.

Demographic Overview

Table 1. Age of Children (Question 1)

Age of Child	Number of Parents	Percentage
4 years old	8	44%
5 years old	6	33%
6 years old	4	22%
Total	18	100%

Table 1 shows the age distribution of the children involved in the study. Most children were four years old (44%), followed by five-year-olds (33%) and six-year-olds (22%). This confirms that the study successfully targeted children within the early childhood period, which is widely recognized as a sensitive stage for language acquisition. This confirms that the study successfully targeted the intended population: early childhood learners in the age of early language sensitivity.

Table 2. Kindergarten / Early Education Experience (Question 2)

Response	Number of Parents	Percentage
Currently attending TK/PAUD	11	61%
Previously attended	5	28%
Never attended	2	11%
Total	18	100%

Regarding educational background, Table 2 shows that the majority of children (61%) were currently attending kindergarten or PAUD, while 28% had previously attended and 11% had never attended early education. Although many children had some formal educational experience, the present study focuses specifically on the home environment as a source of English exposure. Majority of children had at least some formal exposure to early education, although this study focuses more on home-based language input.

Parental Involvement in English Exposure

Table 3. Who Introduces English at Home (Question 3)

Person	Number of Parents	Percentage
Both parents	10	56%
Mother	6	33%
Father	2	11%
Total	18	100%

Table 3 shows that English exposure at home is mostly introduced collaboratively by both parents (56%). However, when only one parent is responsible, mothers appear to play a more dominant role (33%) compared to fathers (11%). This finding reflects the important role of parents in shaping the home literacy environment, where everyday interactions between parents and children become opportunities for language exposure.

Types of English Exposure Activities

Table 4. Forms of English Exposure at Home (Question 4)

Type of Activity	Percentage
Watching English videos (YouTube / cartoons)	94%
Singing English songs	88%
Reading English storybooks	66%
Using English in conversation	55%
Playing games in English	38%

The results reveal that parents use multiple forms of English exposure. As presented in Table 4, the most common activity is watching English videos (94%), followed by singing English songs (88%), reading English storybooks (66%), using simple English conversations (55%), and playing games in English (38%). These findings indicate that parents tend to use multimodal language exposure, combining visual, auditory, and textual input. Video-based content appears to be the most accessible medium, likely because it requires less preparation and can easily attract children's attention.

*Frequency of English Activities**Table 5. Frequency of English Activities at Home (Question 5)*

Frequency	Number of Parents	Percentage
Every day	8	44%
3–4 times per week	6	33%
1–2 times per week	3	17%
Rarely	1	6%
Total	18	100%

The frequency of English exposure activities also demonstrates relatively active engagement from parents. As shown in Table 5, 44% of parents reported engaging in English-related activities with their children every day, while 33% did so three to four times per week. Only one participant reported rarely conducting English activities. This suggests that English exposure in many households occurs on a regular basis, although it is typically integrated into informal daily routines rather than structured learning sessions.

*Sources of English Learning Materials**Table 6. Sources of English Learning Materials (Question 6)*

Source	Percentage
YouTube	83%
Books	66%
Mobile apps	33%
Television	28%
Source	Percentage

Parents obtain English materials from various sources. Table 6 indicates that YouTube is the most commonly used source (83%), followed by books (66%), mobile applications (33%), and television (28%). The dominance of YouTube suggests that digital media has become a practical tool for parents when introducing English to young children. The combination of audiovisual input, music, and storytelling likely makes this medium particularly appealing for early learners. Overall, the findings reveal a clear pattern: English exposure at home tends to occur through digital media, songs, and storytelling activities, supported by parental interaction.

Parents' Perceptions of Its Impact and the Challenges They Face.

The second research question examined how parents perceive the impact of English exposure on their children's development and the challenges they face in implementing such exposure.

Parents' Confidence in Using English

Table 7. Parents' Confidence in Using English (Question 7)

Confidence Level	Number of Parents
Very confident	1
Confident	4
Neutral	7
Not confident	5
Very not confident	1
Total	18

Table 7 shows that most parents reported moderate or low confidence when using English with their children. Only five parents expressed high confidence, while the majority rated themselves as neutral or not confident. This finding suggests that although parents are motivated to introduce English at home, many feel limited by their own language abilities.

Perceived Progress in Children's English Development

Table 8. Parents' Perception of Child's Progress (Question 8)

Response	Number of Parents	Percentage
Yes	14	78%
Not sure	3	17%
No	1	5%
Total	18	100%

Despite these confidence limitations, most parents reported observing positive developments in their children's English abilities. As presented in Table 8, 78% of parents believed their children had shown some progress in understanding or using English. This indicates that parents perceive home-based English exposure as beneficial, even when it occurs informally.

Indicators of Language Development

Table 9. Observed Indicators of Children's English Progress (Question 9)

Indicator	Description
Vocabulary growth	Children can name animals, colors, and everyday objects
Pronunciation mimicry	Children repeat words heard from songs or videos

Passive understanding	Children respond to simple instructions
Interest and motivation	Children voluntarily choose English content

Thematic analysis of parents' open-ended responses revealed four main indicators of children's progress, namely vocabulary growth, such as recognizing animals, colors, and common objects; pronunciation mimicry, in which children imitate words heard from songs or videos; passive comprehension, including the ability to respond to simple English instructions; and interest and motivation, reflected in children voluntarily choosing English-language content. These patterns suggest that children's early English development is primarily observable through recognition and imitation rather than through complex language production.

Challenges Faced by Parents

Table 10. Challenges Faced by Parents (Question 10)

Challenge	Description
Limited English ability	Parents lack confidence in speaking English
Time constraints	Parents are busy or tired after work
Child's lack of interest	Children prefer Indonesian
Lack of structured materials	Parents do not know which books or videos are best

Parents also reported several challenges when introducing English at home. Thematic analysis showed that the main difficulties included parents' limited English proficiency, lack of time due to work or household responsibilities, children's fluctuating interest in English activities, and uncertainty about selecting appropriate learning materials. These challenges indicate that while parents are generally supportive of early English exposure, practical constraints may limit the consistency and quality of these activities.

The findings of this study reveal that English exposure in the home environment is predominantly delivered through multimodal and informal activities, with a strong reliance on digital media. As indicated in Table 4, the most common forms of exposure include watching English videos (94%), singing songs (88%), and reading storybooks (66%), while Table 6 shows that YouTube is the primary source of learning materials (83%). This pattern reflects a contemporary form of the Home Literacy Environment (HLE), where literacy practices are no longer limited to traditional print-based activities but increasingly incorporate digital and audiovisual resources. In line with HLE theory (Niklas & Schneider, 2013), these findings suggest that children's language development is shaped not only by the availability of materials but also by the diversity and frequency of literacy-related interactions embedded in daily routines. This extends previous studies (Li & Kong, 2024; Mak

et al., 2023) by demonstrating that in EFL contexts, digital media has become a central component of home-based language exposure.

Furthermore, the findings highlight that parental involvement plays a crucial role in mediating children's access to and engagement with English input. As shown in Table 3, English exposure is primarily introduced by both parents (56%), indicating that language learning at home is often a shared responsibility. However, the effectiveness of this exposure appears to depend not merely on its presence, but on the quality of interaction between parents and children. This aligns with Tamis-LeMonda (2019), who emphasizes that language acquisition in early childhood is facilitated through emotionally engaging and interactive experiences. In the present study, activities such as shared reading, singing together, and co-viewing videos provide not only linguistic input but also emotional support, which enhances children's motivation and attention during language learning.

The observed indicators of children's development further support the principles of early second language acquisition (SLA). As summarized in Table 9, children's progress is primarily reflected in vocabulary recognition, pronunciation imitation, passive comprehension, and increased interest in English content. These findings are consistent with Moon (2011), who argues that young learners acquire language through repeated exposure and meaningful interaction rather than formal instruction. The dominance of receptive and imitative skills suggests that children in this study are in the early stages of SLA, where comprehension and phonological awareness develop prior to productive language use. This also supports Paradis (2019), who highlights that second language acquisition is a gradual process, with different linguistic domains developing at varying rates depending on the quality and consistency of input.

An important insight emerging from this study is the distinction between the quantity and quality of language exposure. While the data indicate relatively high frequency of English activities (44% of parents reported daily exposure, as shown in Table 5), the effectiveness of such exposure appears to depend on how it is delivered. This finding resonates with Paradis and Kirova (2014), who argue that the richness of the language environment may be more influential than the amount of exposure alone. In this study, children demonstrated more noticeable progress when parents were actively involved in the learning process, rather than when exposure occurred passively through media consumption. Therefore, the results suggest that interactive and meaningful engagement is a key factor in maximizing the benefits of home-based language exposure.

Despite the generally positive perceptions of children's progress (78% of parents reported improvement, as shown in Table 8), the study also reveals significant constraints within the home learning environment. Table 7 indicates that most parents reported moderate to low confidence in using English, which may limit their ability to provide consistent and high-quality input. In addition, challenges such as time constraints, children's fluctuating interest, and uncertainty in selecting

appropriate materials (Table 10) further affect the implementation of English exposure at home. These findings are consistent with previous research (Li & Kong, 2024), which highlights that parental beliefs and confidence play a critical role in shaping the HLE. However, this study extends the literature by demonstrating that even when parents hold positive beliefs about early English learning, practical limitations can constrain how these beliefs are translated into actual practices.

From a broader theoretical perspective, these findings can be understood through Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, particularly the role of the microsystem in influencing child development. The home environment, as the most immediate and influential context, serves as the primary setting where children encounter English through everyday interactions. The interplay between parental beliefs, available resources, and daily routines creates a dynamic system that either supports or constrains early second language acquisition. In EFL contexts such as Indonesia, where exposure to English outside the home may be limited, the family environment becomes especially critical in providing initial language input.

Overall, this study demonstrates that early English exposure at home is not merely determined by how often children encounter the language, but by a complex interaction between the home literacy environment, parental engagement, and the nature of language input. While digital media offers accessible and engaging opportunities for exposure, its effectiveness is significantly enhanced when combined with active parental involvement. These findings contribute to the growing body of research on early second language acquisition by highlighting the need to consider both environmental and interactional factors in understanding how young children develop language skills in EFL contexts.

The findings of this study have several implications for different stakeholders. For parents, the results suggest that even simple and informal activities such as singing songs, reading storybooks, or watching English videos together can contribute to children's early English development. For educators and schools, the findings highlight the importance of supporting parents by providing guidance on selecting appropriate English learning materials and strategies for home-based language exposure. For policymakers and early childhood programs, the results indicate the need to strengthen collaboration between schools and families in promoting early English exposure, particularly in EFL contexts.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. The sample size was relatively small, involving only 18 parents, which limits the generalizability of the findings. In addition, the study relied on parental perceptions rather than direct observation of children's language abilities, so the reported progress may reflect subjective interpretations rather than objective measures of language development. Future research could expand the sample size, include observational data or language assessments, and explore how different types of English exposure influence children's actual language outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights that home-based English exposure plays a significant role in supporting young children's early language development in an EFL context. The findings demonstrate that parents commonly provide English exposure through informal, multimodal activities such as videos, songs, storytelling, and simple conversations, which are integrated into daily routines. These forms of exposure contribute to early indicators of language development, including vocabulary recognition, pronunciation imitation, and increased interest in English. The results reinforce the theoretical perspectives of Home Literacy Environment (HLE), early second language acquisition, and Ecological Systems Theory, emphasizing that meaningful interaction and consistent exposure within the family environment are key factors in early language learning. The main theoretical contribution of this study lies in extending the application of HLE and early second language acquisition theories to a home-based EFL context, showing that not only the presence of exposure but also the form and interactional nature of that exposure influence children's early language development. Practically, this study highlights the crucial role of parents as facilitators of early English learning and suggests that even simple, informal activities can be effective when consistently applied.

However, the study also reveals practical challenges faced by parents, including limited English proficiency, time constraints, and uncertainty in selecting appropriate learning materials. These findings indicate the need for greater support for parents in providing effective home-based English exposure. For future research, it is recommended to involve a larger and more diverse sample to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Further studies should also incorporate direct assessments of children's language abilities to complement parental perceptions. In addition, future research could explore the effectiveness of different types of home-based English exposure, particularly the role of digital media and parent-child interaction patterns, in influencing children's language outcomes in various EFL contexts.

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