

EXPLORING EARLY ENGLISH EXPOSURE AND ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT OF 3 TO 5- YEARS-OLD CHILDREN

By

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A thesis submitted to BRAC Institute of Educational Development in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Early Childhood Development

BRAC Institute of Educational Development
BRAC University
December, 2025

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my own original work while completing degree at BRAC University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Ethics Statement

Title of Thesis Topic: Exploring the English Exposure and Oral Language Development of 3 to 5-year-old children

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1. Source of population: The participants were selected from my social contacts
2. Does the study involve (yes, or no)
 - a) Physical risk to the subjects (no)
 - b) Social risk (no)
 - c) Psychological risk to subjects (no)
 - d) discomfort to subjects (no)
 - e) Invasion of privacy (no)
3. Will subjects be clearly informed about (yes or no)
 - a) Nature and purpose of the study (yes)
 - b) Procedures to be followed (yes)
 - c) Physical risk (n/a)
 - d) Sensitive questions (yes)
 - e) Benefits to be derived (yes)
 - f) Right to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the study (yes)
 - g) Confidential handling of data (yes)
 - h) Compensation and/or treatment where there are risks or privacy is involved (n/a)
4. Will Signed verbal consent form be required (yes or no)
 - a) from study participants (yes)
 - b) from parents or guardian (yes)
 - c) Will precautions be taken to protect anonymity of subjects? (yes)
5. Check documents being submitted herewith to Committee:
 - a) Proposal (yes)
 - b) Consent Form (yes)
 - c) Questionnaire or interview schedule (yes)

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Abstract

This qualitative study examines the impact of early English exposure through home interactions and print and digital media consumption on the oral English development of Bangladeshi children aged 3–5 years. In Bangladesh, disparities in home literacy environments and access to English-language media contribute to notable differences in children’s oral English proficiency. The study aimed to identify the sources, patterns, and quality of English exposure experienced by preschool-aged children in Dhaka and to examine how these factors affect their vocabulary, pronunciation, and conversational fluency. Using a qualitative multiple-case study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with parents, home observations, and informal conversations with children from five families in Dhaka. The analysis was guided by Lenneberg’s Critical Period Hypothesis, Krashen’s Input Hypothesis, and Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory. Findings reveal that interactive and scaffolded home practices are strongly associated with higher levels of oral English proficiency, while low-quality input, such as passive, unmediated media exposure, yields limited oral development outcomes. The study offers practical insights for parents, educators, and policymakers seeking to foster equitable, developmentally appropriate early English-learning environments in Bangladesh.

Keywords: early English exposure; oral language development; home literacy environment; digital media; scaffolding; Krashen; Vygotsky; Critical Period Hypothesis

Dedication

To the loving memory of my dearest father, Kazi Abul Kalam, who would have been the happiest to see all my accomplishments, especially my academic and professional success. He always encouraged me to love *the realm of knowledge* and inspired me to excel in scholarly pursuits. Completing this thesis amidst all adversities would have made him very proud.

Abbu- “*i carry your heart with me* (i carry it in/ my heart) I am never without it” (e. e. cummings)

This accomplishment is dedicated to you.

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List of Acronyms

BIED – BRAC Institute of Educational Development

BRACU – BRAC University

CPH – Critical Period Hypothesis

ECD – Early Childhood Development

EFL – English as a Foreign Language

ESL – English as a Second Language

HLE – Home Literacy Environment

IDI – In-Depth Interview

IRB – Institutional Review Board

L1 – First Language (Bangla)

L2 – Second Language (English)

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

SES – Socioeconomic Status

ZPD – Zone of Proximal Development

Glossary

Age of Onset (AO)

The age at which a child first begins receiving systematic exposure to English. In this thesis, AO is considered important for examining later pronunciation accuracy and fluency.

Bilingual Development

The simultaneous or sequential acquisition of Bangla (L1) and English (L2). This study examines how early English input shapes bilingual oral skills among Bangladeshi children aged 3–7.

Child-Directed Speech

Simplified, exaggerated speech used by adults to communicate with children. It helps children notice sounds, rhythms, and linguistic patterns—important for pronunciation.

Comprehensible Input

English language input that is understandable to young children even if slightly above their current proficiency.

Co-viewing

When parents watch English digital content with children and scaffold learning by explaining words, asking questions, or modeling pronunciation.

Critical Period

A biologically sensitive stage (early childhood) during which language learning—especially pronunciation and phonology—occurs more effortlessly. This thesis investigates English development within this window (ages 3–5).

Digital Media Exposure

Children’s engagement with English YouTube videos, cartoons, mobile applications, or television. The thesis examines how the quality and type of exposure—active vs. passive—relate to oral language skills.

Early English Exposure

Any English input received during early childhood through home, preschool, media, siblings, or peers. This is the central construct of the study.

Fluency

The ability to speak English smoothly, with natural pacing and minimal hesitation. In this study fluency has been assessed through children’s conversational responses and narrative attempts.

Home Literacy Environment (HLE)

The English-related resources and practices available in a child’s home—books, print materials, parental reading, English conversations, and educational routines. SES differences strongly influenced HLE in the findings of this study.

Input Quality

How clear, rich, and interactive the English exposure is. Factors include accent, pacing, interactivity, and whether the adult scaffolds understanding.

Language Scaffolding

Supportive techniques used by parents or teachers to help children understand and produce English. Examples include modeling sentences, expanding children’s utterances, asking guiding questions, and simplifying explanations.

Oral Language Skills

Children's English speaking abilities, including vocabulary, pronunciation accuracy, fluency, and ability to form meaningful sentences. This is a primary outcome variable in your thesis.

Parent–Child Interaction

Any English conversation or shared activity between caregivers and children that contributes to language learning. This study identifies interaction quality as a major predictor of oral development.

Print-Rich Environment

A home or school setting with abundant English books, flashcards, labels, posters, and writing materials. This environment supports vocabulary growth and emergent literacy.

Pronunciation Accuracy

How closely a child's English sounds match standard phonological forms, including vowels, consonants, intonation, and stress. Your study explores how early exposure and media shape pronunciation.

Socioeconomic Status (SES)

A family's level of income, education, and resources. In this thesis, SES strongly influenced access to English books, digital devices, preschool quality, and overall exposure.

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

The gap between what a child can do independently and what they can accomplish with adult guidance. This study uses ZPD to explain why scaffolding enhances early English learning.

Chapter I: Introduction & Background

Introduction

Proficiency in the English language is an essential skill in today's rapidly globalizing world (Graddol, 2006). In Bangladesh, there is a pronounced emphasis on early English exposure due to its perceived value in advancing economic, social, and academic opportunities (Hamid, 2010; Erling et al., 2012).

Many parents in Bangladesh, especially those who live in urban and suburban areas, believe that exposing their children to English at a young age can give them a competitive edge in the academic and professional spheres. They frequently do this by exposing their kids to English-language media and literacy activities at home.

According to Jannat, M. F., Tarannum, N., & Onee, K. A. (2022), with the growing demands of the English language in the globalized world, parents in Bangladesh have become more concerned about English as Foreign Language (EFL) learning by their children during early childhood (ages 2-5). (Jannat et al., 2022). Study says, this increasing trend of early second language exposure, especially during the critical period of language development, can improve pronunciation accuracy, vocabulary acquisition, and overall communicative competence (Lenneberg, 1967; Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

Around the world, parents are increasingly exposing their kids to educational and digital materials including English picture books, foreign board books, puzzles, and English YouTube series or cartoons. Many youngsters between the ages of three and five in Bangladeshi urban and suburban homes are exposed to English informally at home through various educational and digital media. For example, media information, especially YouTube cartoons and rhymes, has a significant impact on how children's fundamental English communication abilities develop, according to the study English as a Foreign Language Learning Process of 2-5 Years Kids in Bangladesh (Jannat, Tarannum & Onee, 2022).

Nevertheless, the ways in which children are first exposed to oral English differ greatly depending on a couple of things, such as- family socioeconomic status, parental education, and access to resources (Sultana, 2018). Various study show that affluent, highly educated families often provide

English-rich environment, engage in shared reading and other interactive literacy activities. These practices are strongly linked with vocabulary growth and oral language skills (Bus et al., 1995; Mol & Bus, 2011; Sultana, 2018).

On the other hand, according to several studies, resource-constrained households mostly depend on passive exposure through television, YouTube, and mobile devices, which offer auditory input but lack reciprocal interaction necessary for productive oral language skills (Tomasello, 2003; Roseberry et al., 2014).

The period between ages 3 and 5 is a particularly sensitive phase for language development, when neural plasticity allows children to acquire pronunciation and oral fluency more naturally (Lenneberg, 1967; Paradis, 2020). Consequently, the quality, quantity, and structure of input during this period can have long-term implications for children's English language proficiency.

This study focuses on three key aspects: (1) the primary sources and patterns of English exposure in Bangladeshi homes, (2) the influence of the age of onset on oral language development, and (3) the role of educational media and home literacy environments in shaping vocabulary, pronunciation, and conversational fluency. By exploring these aspects among 3–5-year-old children in Dhaka, this research seeks to offer a contextually grounded understanding of how early English exposure shapes oral language development during the critical period.

Statement of the Problem

Early childhood is a critical period for language acquisition, during which exposure to English can strongly influence vocabulary development, pronunciation, and fluency. (Lenneberg, 1967; Newport, 1990). Early exposure to English helps develop important oral language skills like vocabulary, pronunciation, and conversational fluency (Birdsong, 2005, Johnson & Newport, 1989).

In Bangladesh, English holds significant symbolic, educational, and economic value (Hamid, 2010; Hamid & Jahan, 2015). Consequently, many parents are introducing English earlier—often through a combination of home literacy activities and exposure to English-language media such as storybooks, YouTube rhymes, and television cartoons (Jannat et al., 2022). Yet this early exposure is highly unequal across socioeconomic groups. Wealthy, highly educated/informed families can offer interactive home environments, selected media and a language-rich

environment. Thus, children from high-SES households benefit from interactive, “English-rich” environments, where parents engage in shared reading, storytelling, and scaffolding of new vocabulary (Bus et al., 1995; Hoff, 2006). On the other hand, low-income families and less educated/unaware parents often fail to provide appropriate language input and most of the time allow unsupervised, unlimited screen time (Rahman, 2019). Thus, children from low-SES homes are more likely to rely on passive, unmediated media exposure, which, while providing auditory input, does not promote the reciprocal communication necessary for productive oral language development (Tomasello, 2003; Roseberry et al., 2014; Islam, 2023).

In addition, research indicates that over 70% of preschool-aged children in Bangladesh spend more time on screens than is advised each day, and many parents think that screen media may teach their children (Mishu et al., 2023). However, little is known about how this screen-based input affects spoken English proficiency in Bangladesh, particularly with regard to vocabulary expansion, pronunciation accuracy, and fluency.

In spite of extensive research on early exposure of English in global contexts, little is known about the Bangladeshi context. This lack of context-specific, qualitative evidence about how early English exposure across home and media contexts interacts to shape oral language development limits the development of equitable and effective early language education strategies.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to explore how English exposure through home environment and educational media affects the oral language development of children aged 3–5 in Dhaka.

The study seeks to understand how the quantity, quality, and type of input in these environments support or constrain the development of vocabulary, pronunciation, and conversational fluency.

Significance of the study

The study is important from several aspects. It has significant theoretical, practical, and contextual importance, which offers a comprehensive exploration of early oral English language development in the Bangladeshi context. Theoretically, it integrates the Critical Period Hypothesis (Lenneberg, 1967; Johnson & Newport, 1989), Vygotsky’s sociocultural framework and Krashen’s Input

Hypothesis (1982) to examine the interplay between age-sensitive biological factors and comprehensible input and role and nature of active scaffolding.

By applying these frameworks to the Bangladeshi context, where English holds high status but early learning conditions vary widely, the study addresses a critical research gap. Furthermore, it expands the existing literature by investigating home interactions and digital media as essential components of a child's language ecology.

Furthermore, the study will provide practical insights for parents, educators, and policymakers simultaneously. Recent findings in Bangladesh reaffirms that children aged 2–5 frequently acquire basic English vocabulary and pronunciation patterns through YouTube cartoons, songs, and rhymes, though screen content quality and overexposure raise concerns (Jannat et al.2022) In order to create low-anxiety English-rich environments that promote vocabulary development, pronunciation accuracy, and conversational fluency, all essential elements of early communicative competence, the results of this study will give parents additional advice on how to create an interactive home environment and effectively manage digital media use.

Moreover, educators and curriculum developers in Bangladesh will get direction in designing developmentally appropriate activities that enhance meaningful and comprehensible input. They will also get insights to identify context-specific facilitators and barriers to early acquisition of oral English.

Contextually, the study is supposed to highlight the impact of the increased role of digital media in the lives of Dhaka children due to the changed situation in urban Dhaka, where the early exposure to English rhymes, cartoons, and music is common. Research says, due to the availability of high-quality English input at home, some children from more educated families are enjoying greater access to literacy resources and guided interaction (Jahan & Chowdhury, 2023; Sultana, 2021). It will also examine how socioeconomic disparities and unequal access to quality English exposure influence the academic outcomes.

This study aims to bridge the gap between academic theory and practical policy by producing locally grounded evidence, which will identify the factors that collectively ensure better oral language development during the critical period.

Research Questions

1. What are the primary sources and patterns of English exposure among Bangladeshi preschool-aged children?
2. How does the age of onset influence oral language development, specifically in vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency?
3. What role do media and home literacy environments play in shaping oral English proficiency?

Operational Definition

1. Early English Exposure

Here early English exposure refers to the introduction and use of English with children aged 3–5. This includes:

- Home interactions: In this study ‘Home interactions’ refers to all activities parents/ caregivers employ with the child for communication such as- parents’ or caregivers’ having informal English conversation with children, reading English storybooks, or engaging in English-language play activities)
- Digital media exposure: It refers to the amount and diverse types of content that children are exposed to. For example: watching English TV shows/cartoons, rhymes, songs, or educational videos on platforms such as YouTube, television, or mobile apps).

2. Oral Language Development

Oral language development includes three interrelated components here:

- **Vocabulary Development:** It refers to the range of English words a child can understand and use appropriately (both receptive vocabulary and expressive vocabulary)
- **Pronunciation Accuracy:** It refers to the degree of clarity/accuracy in the child's spoken English, following standard pronunciation patterns.
- **Conversational Fluency:** It refers to the child's capability to take part in simple conversations/ or interactive exchanges in English.

These will be assessed qualitatively through informal conversation during observation and analyzed concerning comprehensible input principles.

3. Critical Period

The biologically sensitive time frame for language learning is referred to as the "critical period" in this study. This stage lasts from birth until adolescence, according to Lenneberg (1967), with an emphasis on the preschool years (ages 3–5), when the brain's plasticity enables quick and effortless acquisition of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation (Lenneberg, 1967; Johnson & Newport, 1989).

4. Home Literacy Environment

The home literacy environment refers to the extent and quality of literacy-related activities and resources in the household that provide English input to the child. This includes:

- Availability of English books, board books/ picture books, and educational materials
- Parental reading practices in English
- Storytelling, singing, or games in English.

In this study these will be assessed through parental interviews and observation.

5. Digital Media

Digital media in this context refers to audio-visual information in English that may be seen on computers, cellphones, tablets, or televisions. Parental reports on usage frequency, nature, and monitoring will be used to gauge this.

6. Comprehensible Input

According to Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982), comprehensible input is English language input that is just a little above the child's current proficiency level ($i+1$), delivered in a meaningful and low-anxiety way, such as through interaction with caregivers or educational media that is appropriate for the child's age.

7. Socioeconomic Status (SES)

In this study, SES will be based on the level of schooling of the parents, the household income, and the level of access to English learning materials, such as books, the internet, and digital devices

Chapter II: Literature Review

In an increasingly interconnected and competitive global economy, English proficiency has become a critical determinant of financial stability and career advancement (Hossain et al.), and thus there is a visible rise in the Early English exposure of children through different means. In Bangladesh, English holds a high-status role, due to both its colonial past and its current function as a global “passport” for education and employment (Hamid, 2010; Erling et al., 2012). Particularly in urban centers like Dhaka, parents increasingly consider English language proficiency as a necessity for the growth of children and their subsequent career prospects (Sultana, 2014; Rahman, 2019). However, the means through which preschool-age children are exposed to oral English vary quite noticeably by class, access to resources, and attitudes among families (Sultana, 2018). This is a disparity that poses risks in creating significant inequities in language development outcomes from a very early age.

Research shows that although more wealthy and educated families can invest in English-rich home environments and engaging literacy activities, poor families mostly rely on spontaneous and unstructured exposure, largely from television, YouTube, or mobile phones (Rahman, 2019; Islam, 2023). Information about these initial exposures is especially important because the period between 3 and 5 years of age is a sensitive period for language learning, and the quantity, quality, and structure of input during this time can have a permanent effect on oral skills (Lenneberg, 1967; Paradis, 2020).

This literature review attempts to explore three vital aspects of early English exposure among Bangladeshi children: the primary sources and patterns of exposure, the influence of age of onset on oral language development, and the role of digital media and home literacy environments.

Primary Sources and Patterns of English Exposure in the Home

Proficiency in English is increasingly valued worldwide as a key to economic, social, and academic mobility (Graddol, 2006). In Bangladesh, parents, particularly in urban and semi-urban areas, view early English exposure as a means to ensure their children’s future academic success and global competitiveness (Hamid, 2010; Erling et al., 2012). Therefore, most children are introduced to English from an early age through diverse domestic sources. However, research

shows significant disparity in the quality and patterns of this exposure, which is profoundly mediated by family socioeconomic status (SES) (Rahman, 2019; Sultana, 2018).

For preschool-aged children in Bangladesh, the home environment is the primary site of initial English exposure. Still, there is a difference in the Primary Sources and Patterns of English Exposure among families. Research reveals a clear deviation between high-SES (socioeconomic status) households, which prioritize interactive home literacy activities, and low-SES households, which rely more heavily on passive media exposure (Rahman, 2019; Sultana, 2018).

For affluent, educated urban households, English acquisition is actively facilitated through structured home literacy activities. Parents engage in shared reading of English storybooks, storytelling, and singing rhymes—practices strongly associated with vocabulary growth and phonological awareness (Bus et al., 1995; Mol & Bus, 2011). This parental input plays a foundational role; consistent and rich language use correlates strongly with higher proficiency (De Houwer, 2007). This input is dialogic, involving responsive and meaningful interaction that is critical for oral language development (Hoff, 2006). Furthermore, as Dickinson and Tabors (2001) emphasize, such open-ended discourse is crucial for promoting oral narrative skills.

On the contrary, in resource-constrained households, English exposure occurs predominantly through passive, non-interactive digital media, such as satellite television cartoons and YouTube videos (Islam, 2023). While this provides auditory input, it lacks the reciprocal communication necessary for developing productive oral skills (Tomasello, 2003). Without parental mediation to make the input comprehensible, this exposure is significantly less effective for language acquisition (Roseberry et al., 2014), often resulting in more sporadic and weaker outcomes (De Houwer, 2007).

This clear divergence in exposure patterns—interactive and scaffolded versus passive and unstructured—suggests that children’s early English experiences differ fundamentally depending on socioeconomic status, parental education, and access to resources. This variability, in turn, shapes their oral language development trajectories from a very early age, creating a foundational inequity in language proficiency.

Influence of Age of Onset on Oral Language Development

Early childhood, generally defined as the period from birth to around age eight, is widely acknowledged as a critical window for language acquisition and cognitive growth due to heightened neural plasticity and rapid brain development (Kuhl, 2014; Werker & Hensch, 2015). The Critical Period Hypothesis (Lenneberg, 1967) posits that the ability to acquire language—particularly pronunciation and oral fluency—declines after early childhood, making the timing of exposure a decisive factor in language learning outcomes. Several researchers have confirmed that initiating second-language exposure early increases the likelihood of achieving near-native pronunciation, phonological accuracy, and robust oral communication skills (Birdsong, 2005; Paradis, 2020). Johnson and Newport (1989) further demonstrated that age of onset is a stronger predictor of ultimate proficiency than the mere length of exposure, highlighting the importance of an early start for long-term success in oral fluency.

In the Bangladeshi context, this principle has particular relevance. English is introduced from early grades in most schools, and increasingly in preschool programs, with the aim of capitalizing on this critical period. Studies indicate that children enrolled in English-medium preschools or exposed to English through enriched home literacy environments demonstrate stronger pronunciation and oral skills than peers with later or more limited exposure (Ferdous et al., 2024). Similarly, Jannat et al. (2022) found that children aged 2–5 who regularly engaged with English songs, rhymes, and caregiver interactions developed receptive vocabulary and basic oral patterns earlier than children with minimal exposure, suggesting that early input significantly supports phonological development.

Nevertheless, researchers caution that early exposure alone does not guarantee superior outcomes. The quality of linguistic input and opportunities for meaningful interaction are essential mediating factors. Nishat (2019) reported that many Bangla-medium schools rely heavily on grammar-translation approaches, limiting students' opportunities for oral practice despite an early start. Chowdhury (2023) also observed that infrastructural and pedagogical limitations in public primary schools restrict children's ability to engage in interactive oral communication, reducing the potential benefits of early onset. These findings suggest that while early exposure is advantageous, its benefits are maximized only when paired with interactive, communicative teaching practices and rich language environments.

Taken together, these studies suggest that Bangladeshi children who begin learning English between ages 3–5 are neurologically primed to acquire stronger oral language skills, but outcomes vary. This study will explore whether early starters in Dhaka also show superior outcomes in vocabulary acquisition, phonological accuracy, and conversational fluency.

The Role of Digital Media and Home Literacy Environments

In Bangladesh, how a child is first exposed to English almost entirely depends on their home life. What this looks like differs dramatically between rich and poor families (Rahman, 2019; Sultana, 2018).

In highly educated, affluent, urban Bangladeshi households, the Home Literacy Environment (HLE) is deliberately anglicized and resource-rich. These families actively cultivate what Hamid and colleagues (2019) term an "English-rich ecology." These families ensure a significant investment in physical English learning materials, such as providing children with imported board books, vocabulary picture books, storybooks, alphabet charts, and educational toys (Rahman, 2019). Moreover, High-SES parents often engage in English conversation, dialogic reading, and explicit vocabulary teaching, effectively acting as scaffolders within their child's Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978). This aligns with global findings on the superiority of interactive, responsive communication for language acquisition (Hoff, 2006; Romeo et al., 2018). In most cases, the use of digital technology in these homes is typically complementary and guided; parents curate educational apps like Khan Academy Kids or YouTube Kids and co-view with their children to explain and elaborate on the content (Takeuchi & Stevens, 2011).

On the other hand, in low-SES households, the HLE for English is almost entirely defined by passive, unmediated digital exposure. Here, often the digital media is the most accessible and the only source of English input (Sultan et al., 2019; Islam, 2023). Children are primarily exposed to English through: Cartoon channels (e.g., Cartoon Network, Pogo) via satellite TV, YouTube videos of nursery rhymes, cartoon clips, and unintentional ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response) content that algorithmically autoplay. Or Mobile games that may not be explicitly educational.

This exposure is mostly passive and unmediated. As Sultana (2018) states, devices often function as a "digital babysitter," as parents frequently lack the time, language proficiency, or pedagogical knowledge to co-view and scaffold learning.

The central issue is that this input is non-contingent; it cannot respond to a child's cues or provide interactive feedback (Tomasello, 2003). Consequently, such passive video consumption is largely ineffective for language acquisition without social interaction (Roseberry et al., 2014). In practice, this often results in "receptive familiarity," where children may comprehend some vocabulary but fail to develop the productive grammatical and narrative skills necessary for fluency (De Houwer, 2007; Rahman, 2019).

However, in places like Dhaka, where English learning is still developing and inconsistent, it's crucial to examine how different exposures, influenced by socioeconomic and parent/caregiver factors and home environment, affect early English oral development. This study specifically targets that gap through a detailed qualitative exploration of children aged 3 to 5 within media and home settings. The literature robustly confirms that the Home Literacy Environment (HLE) is one of the primary determinants of early English exposure for Bangladeshi children, with dramatic disparities between socioeconomic classes.

While the existing research establishes the importance of interactive input, significant gaps remain. First, there is a lack of integrated studies, particularly in contexts like Dhaka, that examine how home-based and media-based exposures interact to influence learning. Second, the analysis of how socioeconomic disparities directly impact the quality of exposure—not just its presence—is insufficient. It is therefore crucial to examine how these different exposures, shaped by socioeconomic status, parental factors, and the home environment, collectively affect early oral English development.

This study precisely seeks to fill that gap by examining how children aged 3 to 5 in Dhaka encounter English in their home and media environments, and how these experiences shape their vocabulary, pronunciation, and conversational fluency.

This decision to concentrate on a smaller age group, rather than the full range from birth to eight years, is a practical one driven by time limitations. Nevertheless, it still offers valuable insights into early oral language development.

Chapter III: Methodology

Research Approach: Qualitative approach (a multiple case study approach)

This study employs a qualitative research design with a multiple case study approach to explore children's exposure to English across two primary contexts: home and media. A qualitative design was considered appropriate for this study because Qualitative research is well-suited for examining social phenomena in natural settings and understanding the meanings participants ascribe to their experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Malterud (2001) states, qualitative research involves the systematic collection, organization, and interpretation of textual materials derived from talk and observation to understand social phenomena as experienced by individuals in their everyday contexts. The study has been designed in way that integrates observations, In-depth Interviews, and informal conversation with children to provide a comprehensive understanding of the nature and quality of early English exposure and its influence on oral language development during the critical period.

Research Site:

The study was conducted in five homes from three residential areas of Dhaka city—Dhanmondi, Mirpur, and Uttara. These areas represent diverse socioeconomic and educational backgrounds, providing a rich context in which to explore variations in children's English exposure.

All interviews, informal conversations, and home observations were conducted in-person. The researcher went to the participants' own homes to collect all primary data by conducting face-to-face interviews and informal conversations with children, as this setting allowed the researcher to observe the natural literacy environment and everyday interactions relevant to the study.

Research Participants: Inclusion Criteria-

Children aged 3-5 years old

Families reporting exposure to English through home interactions and/or digital media

Willingness of parents to participate in interviews and observations

Participants:

Participants	Number
Children (for informal conversation)	5
Father (for In-depth Interviews)	2
Mother (for In-depth Interviews)	3
Home (for Non-participant observation)	5

Participant Selection Procedure:

Purposive sampling:

This study covered 5 parents and 5 children from Dhaka, Bangladesh as population as this was the group of interest to the researcher. In this study non-probability sampling technique ‘purposive sampling’ was used. Because, the objective of this study was very specific and to attain that specific objective, also, clear criteria of the sample was needed; for example, parents were selected purposively as sample who have children aged 1-5 years and live in Dhaka city of Bangladesh.

Data Collection Method and Tool**Overview of the Method**

Data collection involved three qualitative methods:

1. In-depth interviews with parents
2. Informal conversations with children
3. Non-participant home observations

These multiple methods allowed for triangulation, reinforcing the credibility and validity of findings. Data were collected over several weeks, with each family visited once.

In-Depth Interview (IDI)

According to Johnson and Christensen (2012), in-depth interviews (IDIs) allow researchers to collect rich, personalized accounts through open-ended questioning. The IDI method was used in this study to obtain detailed information about parents' perceptions, practices, and beliefs regarding their children's exposure to English and oral language development.

A total of five IDIs were conducted—one with each parent of 3-5 years old children. Each interview lasted approximately 35–40 minutes and was conducted in person at the participants' homes. The semi-structured format allowed exploration of emergent themes while maintaining consistency across cases. Questions covered several areas relevant to the research questions, including the age of onset of English exposure, types and frequency of English-related activities, home literacy environment, and parental participation during media or reading activities. Interviews were recorded in written form (with consent) and later transcribed and translated for analysis.

Informal Conversation

Informal conversation serves as a child-friendly method to capture authentic, natural speech and to provide insights into the children's oral English proficiency. As Swain and King (2022) and Swain and Spire (2020) suggest, informal conversations allow researchers to collect naturalistic data in everyday contexts and are particularly effective for young children who may feel less comfortable in formal interview settings.

In this study, informal, play-based conversations lasting approximately 20–30 minutes were conducted with each of the five children. The sessions included a variety of child-centered games and tasks—such as naming objects, storytelling, color identification, and role-play—designed to assess vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency in a relaxed manner. The flexible nature of this method facilitated rapport building, reduced anxiety, and encouraged spontaneous language use. Notes were taken during and after each session.

Home Observation

Each family was visited once for a home observation session lasting approximately 40–50 minutes. The observation checklist focused on visible indicators of an English-rich environment—such as books, picture books, board books, posters, digital media, and parental involvement during reading or screen time. Field notes captured both verbal and non-verbal behaviors, including gestures, engagement patterns, and communicative attempts.

A single 40–50 minute observation was conducted in each household to understand the literacy environment. The researcher used a structured observation checklist to document:

- Availability and type of English books and materials
- Digital media use (YouTube, TV, apps)
- Parent–child interactions during media or reading activities
- Home routines incorporating English
- Non-verbal cues such as gestures, engagement, and responsiveness

Creswell (2012) defines observation as the process of collecting first-hand, contextual data through systematic noting of behaviors and environmental features. In this study, the researcher used non-participant observation, following Gay et al. (2015), which allowed for discreet recording of natural interactions without influencing participants' behavior. All these observations provided direct insights into the children's English exposure environments, including parent–child interactions, availability of literacy materials, and media engagement.

Integration of Methods

Using these three complementary tools—in-depth interviews, informal conversations, and home observations—enabled the researcher to triangulate data sources across perspectives (parent and child) and contexts (home literacy and media environments). This methodological integration enhanced the trustworthiness, validity, and depth of the findings, in line with qualitative case study principles.

Tools

The data collection tools have been designed in direct alignment with the study's research questions. The tools included an In-Depth Interview (IDI) Guide for parents, an Informal Conversation Guide for children, and a Home Observation Checklist. The Researcher carefully developed each instrument to explore children's English exposure patterns, caregiver mediation, and the contextual factors influencing oral language development within Bangladeshi households.

Prior to data collection, all instruments were piloted with one family similar to the study participants to assess the clarity, relevance, and comprehensibility of the questions. The pilot testing helped identify ambiguous or redundant items, which were refined to ensure that all questions were age-appropriate, contextually relevant, and culturally sensitive.

Following the pilot phase, the tools were reviewed by academic experts from the researcher's supervisory committee. Their feedback guided further revisions to enhance the validity, reliability, and linguistic appropriateness of the instruments. The final versions were therefore field-tested, ethically sound, and methodologically consistent with the objectives of the study.

Data Collection Procedure Details

Data were collected through in-person interactions conducted by the researcher to ensure authentic engagement and an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences. Establishing rapport with each family was prioritized to create a trusting and comfortable environment conducive to open communication.

Data were gathered from three sources for each of the 5 families:

1. An In-Depth Interview (IDI) with one parent or caregiver (three mothers and two fathers),
2. An Informal Conversation with one child (aged 3–5 years), and
3. A Home Visit for observation of the literacy and media environment.

Each interview was conducted in Bangla or English, depending on the participant's preference.

Informal conversations were held individually with each child in a relaxed, play-based setting. These sessions lasted approximately 20–30 minutes and incorporated simple conversational prompts, naming tasks, storytelling, and color or object identification.

Home visits were conducted once for each family, lasting 40–60 minutes. During these visits, the researcher used the observation checklist to record data about the physical and linguistic environment, including the presence of English-language materials (books, toys, posters, media) and parent–child interaction patterns during shared reading or screen time. Observations focused on both verbal and non-verbal behaviors, such as parental feedback, gestures, and turn-taking during communication.

Prior to each data collection activity, informed consent was obtained from all parents, and verbal assent was secured from the children. Participants were informed about the study’s purpose, voluntary nature, and confidentiality procedures. Parents and children could choose whether the conversation or observation took place privately or in the presence of family members.

All data were recorded through written notes, field notes, and reflective memos, with participants’ consent. This triangulated, multi-method approach strengthened the trustworthiness, depth, and validity of the findings, consistent with qualitative case study methodology.

Research Questions	Technique	Participants
1. What are the primary sources and patterns of English exposure among Bangladeshi preschool-aged children?	IDI, Observations	Parents
2. How does the age of onset influence oral language development, specifically in vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency?	Informal conversation & IDI	Children & Parents
3. What roles do media and home literacy environments play in shaping oral English proficiency?	IDI and Observations Through Home Literacy Environment Checklist	Parents

Data Management and Analysis Plan

According to Cresswell (2012), qualitative data analysis involves understanding text and visuals to answer research questions. All qualitative data—observation notes, interview transcripts, and recordings—will be systematically organized and managed. Thematic analysis will be applied to identify and interpret recurring themes through the following steps:

1. Transcribing collected data and categorizing them by method (Informal Conversation, IDI, Observation).
2. Reviewing categorized data and field notes repeatedly, highlighting content directly related to the research questions.
3. Identifying emerging themes and issues.
4. Integrating the researcher's reflections with the data, noting interpretations separately.
5. Summarizing main points under each theme, including direct citations from transcripts and selected observation descriptions to support findings.

Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) will be employed to identify recurring patterns and themes related to English exposure and oral language development. The process involves familiarization, coding, theme generation, and interpretation. Child speech samples will be transcribed and analyzed for lexical diversity, phonological accuracy, and fluency markers.

Trustworthiness:

Credibility will be ensured through triangulation of multiple sources and methods. Triangulation will involve multiple data sources (children, parents/ caregivers) and diverse methods (Informal Conversation, IDI, and Observation). All data collection tools will be developed in alignment with the research questions and reviewed by BRAC IED faculty experts. Following development, the

tools will be field-tested, and necessary revisions will be made. The entire process will be conducted under expert faculty supervision.

Ethical Considerations:

Ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the BRAC Institute of Educational Development. Full informed consent was secured from each parent, and verbal assents were obtained from children. All data were anonymized to protect participant confidentiality.

Timeline of the Study

The study was carried out over a period of several months and followed a structured sequence of activities according to the guideline. The initial phase involved selecting the research topic, reviewing existing literature, and developing the research proposal, which took place during July and August. After presenting the proposal in an Advanced Seminar and receiving approval from BRAC University, the data collection tools, including piloting and final revisions, were developed throughout August. The following month, September, was dedicated to completing Data collection procedure. Thematic analysis was done using thematic analysis techniques such as, organizing, transcribing, and analyzing the collected data throughout October.

Finally, the draft report was written, revised as per the Supervisor's feedback and rewritten during November. The edited, completed thesis was submitted in December.

S	Content	Jul	August 2025				September 2025				October 2025				November 2025			December 2025		
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1	Selecting Research Topic																			
2	Reviewing related literature																			

3	Developing Research Proposal																			
4	Approval from BRACU																			
5	Developing Tools (including field testing and finalization)																			
6	Collecting Data																			
7	Analyzing Data																			
8	Writing Draft Report																			
9	Submitting Final Report & Dissertation																			

Limitations of the Study

This study had several limitations:

First, the small sample size narrows the scope for external validity. Although such a size is suitable for qualitative case study research, a five-case sample limits the generalizability of the findings.

Second, only in-depth interviews (IDIs), informal conversations with children, and home observations were conducted for this study. Including a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) could have provided an additional perspective and enriched the data.

Third, much of the information was obtained from parental reports, which may have been influenced by selective memory, or personal bias, potentially affecting the accuracy of the data.

Fourth, the home observations were limited to short, one-time visits; therefore, the findings may not fully capture natural variations in children's daily routines, language behaviors, or parent-child interactions over time.

Finally, the children's oral English performance during informal conversations may have fluctuated depending on their mood, comfort level, or familiarity with the researcher on the day of data collection, which could have influenced the consistency of the language samples obtained.

Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable and context-specific insights into early English exposure and oral language development among Bangladeshi preschoolers.

Chapter 4: Results & Discussion

Results

This chapter covers two sections. This first section presents the responses and the findings derived from a combination of in-depth interviews (IDIs) with parents, observations of children's home environments, and informal conversations with five Bangladeshi preschool-aged children in Dhaka.

The goal of this chapter is to provide a brief overview of the participants' experiences and practices regarding early English exposure and its influence on oral language development.

Taking into account the responses of the parents, the children's language samples, the observational notes, and the researcher's reflections, the examined data have been comprehensively discussed to examine how the quantity, quality, and context of English exposure shape children's vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency across diverse socioeconomic and literacy environments in the following section.

Based on the data and knowledge gathered from the study, a conclusion and recommendations will be made to wrap up the discussions.

Findings

The results from the five IDIs, five informal conversations, and five home observations were combined, reviewed, and analyzed in relation to the main research questions. Using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis framework, three overarching themes and 11 subthemes were identified from coded data collected across five cases in Dhaka.

In the following paragraphs Research findings have been provided under the headings of several themes and subthemes. Pseudonyms have been used in the findings and discussion sections for ethical consideration.

Demographic Information:

A total of five child participants and their parents participated in this qualitative study. The children, comprising three girls and two boys, were aged between 3 years 5 months and 5 years 4 years. The families were residents of diverse socioeconomic areas in Dhaka, including Dhanmondi, Mirpur, and Uttara. Overall, the sample reflects high socio-economic and educational diversity, ranging from a parent with postgraduate qualifications and university teaching experience (Participant A) to a mother with no formal primary education (Participant B) and occupations including a university lecturer, corporate professionals, a homemaker, and a domestic worker.

The age of first English exposure for the children was remarkably early, reported between 4 to 12 months, though the nature and quality of this exposure varied significantly. This variation provided a rich comparative context for examining how home literacy environments, digital media practices, and parental scaffolding shape early English oral language development among Bangladeshi children aged 3–5 years.

Theme 1: Primary Sources and Patterns of English Exposure

The study intended to identify the primary sources and patterns of English exposure among Bangladeshi preschool-aged children. Therefore, the first theme aims to explore how children are

introduced to English and the nature of this exposure within their home environments. This theme was further divided into several sub-themes to investigate the age of onset, types of activities, parental interaction, and socioeconomic influence.

Sub Theme 1.1: Age of Exposure to English

Data from all five cases revealed that children's exposure to English happened very early in life, typically between 4 and 12 months of age. Parents reported using English nursery rhymes, lullabies, and simple words during feeding, play, or initial screen media exposure.

For instance, Participant A (Yaseer's mother) stated,

"Probably we started watching rhymes together or I was talking to him in English. He was 4-5 months I guess. I used to sing 'Twinkle twinkle' and other English songs a lot. Actually I started singing nursery rhymes very early." (IDI-1, 14.09.25)

Participant C, Tirtha's father mentioned,

"My daughter got the opportunity to listen to English from a very early age. Her mother is an English Teacher who used to speak in English with the child from the very beginning." (IDI-3, 18.09. 25)

Similarly, Participant D (Ramisa's mother) reported,

"I used to sing nursery rhymes to her. I used to let her watch Cocomelon while feeding her since she was 6 months old." (IDI-4, 18.09.25)

Only Participant B , Zahid's mother reported slightly late exposure. She mentioned,

"My son started watching English cartoons when he was 1 year old. My firstborn daughter (10 years old) started showing him rhymes while feeding." (IDI-2, 16.09. 25)

Although early exposure was common, the frequency and consistency of English input varied widely across socioeconomic and educational backgrounds.

Sub Theme 1.2: Types and Frequency of English-Related Activities

All children participated in English-related activities, but the frequency and depth varied significantly by family background. Children from upper- and middle-income families and highly educated and aware parents engaged in structured, daily activities combining reading, conversation, and storytelling.

Participant A described a rich routine:

“I usually have conversations with him every day 2/3 times and we read every day. We also watch English cartoons/ programs. We have reading times in the morning and evening. I explain meanings and translate words. Now he tries to read alone.” (IDI-1, 14.09.25)

Participant C, Tirtha’s father said,

“Tirtha gets the opportunity of having English conversations several time a day. Sometimes with her cousins and sometimes with her elder sister. She also spends a lot of time glued to the screen. She watches English stories/ rhymes/ programs in YouTube- 3 hours every day.”(IDI-3, 18.09. 25)

In contrast, children from less educated or working-class households encountered English mostly through passive digital exposure. Participant B (Zahid’s mother) reported,

“He watches rhymes on YouTube for two or three hours every day, sometimes with his sister, sometimes alone.” (IDI-2, 16.09.25)

Sub Theme 1.3: Parental and Caregiver Interaction Patterns

Parental interaction emerged as a decisive differentiator. In homes with high parental English proficiency, interactions were interactive and scaffolded.

Participant A explained her mediating role:

“In the beginning it was always co-viewing. Now he watches on his own mostly. I used to explain/translate word meanings extensively before. He used to ask a lot of questions. Now sometimes we watch and discuss.” (IDI-1, 14.09.25)

On the other hand, parents with limited English proficiency depended heavily on passive media, offering minimal verbal feedback. Participant D mentioned,

“I don't have the time and energy to explain/ translate after all day's work... So most of the time she watches on her own.” (IDI-4, 18.09.25)

Sub Theme 1.4: Socioeconomic Influence on Exposure

Socioeconomic conditions shaped both access to materials and the quality of engagement. Families from upper- and middle-income groups (e.g., Ruhana, Tirtha, and Yaseer) owned extensive English collections—books, imported board books, picture dictionaries, coloring books in English, puzzles, posters, and educational toys—creating print-rich and visually stimulating environments.

Participant E (Ruhana's father) noted,

“We have a plenty of English books (100+) in our home... We frequently buy and read books together.” (IDI-5, 25.09.25)

Similarly, Participant A, Yaseer's mother, a university lecturer, explained,

“We have at least 50 books that are in English in our home. We also have Puzzles, 4/5 toys (with English instructions). We read every day several times.” (IDI-1, 14.09. 25)

On the contrary, Participant B (Zahid's mother) stated,

“We have just 3 English books at our home... I cannot read the books to the child. Sometimes my elder daughter tries to read a little/ point at the pictures.” (IDI-2, 16.09.25)

Theme 2: Correlation between Age of Onset, Quality of Interaction, and Oral Language Development

Addressing the second research question, this theme explores how the age of first exposure interacts with the quality of interaction to influence oral language outcomes. The findings revealed that active scaffolding was a stronger predictor of proficiency than the age of onset alone.

Sub Theme 2.1: Vocabulary Development

Children who received daily, high-quality, scaffolded input demonstrated advanced and contextually appropriate vocabulary use. For example, when asked about his favorite cartoon, Yaseer replied spontaneously:

“Sonic the Hedgehog. I like it. He is funny. He run fast. And I like Amy. Sonic's friend.”
(Informal conversation, 14.09.25)

Tirtha also could reply using better vocabulary. She said,

“My favorite cartoon is ‘Bluey’. He is a puppy. He is funny. I love his sister Bingo. They are very cute.” (Informal conversation-3, 18.09. 25)

On the other hand, children who experienced early exposure but lacked adequate good-quality adult scaffolding showed limited vocabulary and struggled to use their receptive knowledge in spontaneous contexts. Zahid, for example, was introduced to English when he was 1 year old, yet his expressive vocabulary remained restricted because of the absence of consistent parental mediation. When the researcher asked him to repeat some words after her, he replied,

“Mane Kii?(What does that mean?)/ parina (I can’t).”(Informal conversation-2, 16.09.25)

Sub Theme 2.2: Late or Limited Exposure and Slower Development

Children who experienced late or low-quality English exposure demonstrated slower vocabulary growth, weak pronunciation, and limited expressive language skills. The effects of late exposure, coupled with the absence of caregiver translation and contextual support, were particularly evident in Zahid’s home environment, which hindered his ability to attain age-appropriate oral English proficiency. He frequently relied on Bangla and often requested translations for unfamiliar English words. While he could identify a few familiar words from rhymes, he struggled to construct or repeat complete sentences accurately. Informal conversations further revealed that Zahid had difficulty following English instructions and remained dependent on Bangla for effective communication. Zahid’s case is a classic example of how delayed exposure and the absence of parental interaction may lead to slower development.

Sub Theme 2.3: Pronunciation and Phonological Accuracy

Observation notes and parental reports indicated that regular listening to high-quality English input improved pronunciation. Participant E (Ruhana's father) observed,

"My daughter now can speak fluently almost like a native speaker of English." (IDI-5, 25.09.25)

Conversely, children with passive exposure demonstrated inconsistent articulation and unclear sound production. Participant B, Zahid's mother narrated the same experience. It is also evident from the field notes of the home observation.

"Due to passive and limited English exposure, the child cannot speak English at all. He could recognize very few familiar words from songs but could not use them communicatively. There is a clear lack of adult scaffolding and English-rich home environment which perhaps resulted in limited comprehension and no oral English development." (Home observation field note/ IDI-2, 16.09. 25)

Sub Theme 2.4: Conversational Fluency

Conversational fluency was thoroughly linked to the level of interactive exposure. Children from English-rich homes could sustain age-appropriate conversations and participate enthusiastically in imaginative play.

Participant C (Tirtha's father) recalled,

"During screen time she keeps talking—asking, answering, and sometimes translating for her cousin." (IDI-3, 18.09.25)

On the contrary, children like Ramisa and Zahid displayed limited turn-taking skills and difficulty maintaining extended dialogue.

Theme 3: The Role of Media and Home Literacy Environments in Shaping Oral English Proficiency

This theme corresponds to the third research question and investigates how digital media and home literacy environments influence children's oral proficiency.

Sub Theme 3.1: Digital Media Usage and Parental Mediation

Screen media served as a major input source for all children. However, language gains were strongly dependent on parental mediation.

Children from high-SES homes who engaged in co-viewing, discussing, and explanation demonstrated better comprehension and expressive fluency.

In contrast, children who mostly watched alone displayed weaker outcomes. Their parents' limited time and linguistic competence restricted opportunities for meaning negotiation, rendering exposure largely passive.

Subtheme 3.2: Home Literacy Practices

Active home literacy practices such as shared reading, singing songs, and story discussions were crucial in strengthening vocabulary and pronunciation.

Clear contrasts were visible across cases: Participant E, Ruhana's father said,

"We have a plenty of English books (100+) in our home. Some of the books are imported storybooks or picture board books. We frequently buy and read books together. Every night, we read English storybooks together. When she doesn't understand a word, I tell her in Bangla and then again in English." (IDI-5, 25.09. 25)

Participant C, Tirtha's father mentioned,

"We have a lot of English books (30+) in our home. But she is not a great fan of reading. She prefers watching good quality English programs. But her mother sometimes tries to read stories to her. Her elder sister shows her picture dictionary sometimes. That's how she become familiar with new words and new ideas." (IDI-3, 18.09. 25)

In contrast, Participant E (Ramisa's mother) admitted having "*maybe 4 or 5 books,*" which were seldom read together.

Children raised in print-rich, interactive literacy environments displayed advanced lexical range and syntactic complexity, while those with limited materials showed only basic comprehension.

Subtheme 3.3: Interactional Scaffolding during Media and Reading

Children achieved the greatest benefit when parents employed interactional scaffolding—explaining meanings, prompting repetition, or asking and answering questions during shared activities.

Participant E, Ruhana's father said,

"When she doesn't understand anything, I help her to understand it. I translate, explain, and sometimes we sing together." (IDI-5, 25.09. 25)

Such engagement transformed passive input into active learning, enabling children to internalize vocabulary, improve pronunciation, and practice conversational patterns.

Observation data confirmed that Tirtha and Yaseer frequently repeated new words, asked clarifying questions, and used English spontaneously following co-reading sessions.

In contrast, Ramisa and Zahid showed low-proficiency in Oral English throughout the home observation and informal conversation period as they received little or no scaffolding during Media and Reading. When the researcher asked Ramisa "Can you talk with me like we are playing family?", she replied,

"Na. ami bujhi na.(I don't understand)" (Informal conversation, 18.09. 25)

It seemed from the IDIs, observations, and informal conversations that while early exposure is a common pattern, the effectiveness of this exposure is extremely mediated by the quality of social interaction, parental scaffolding, and the richness of the home literacy environment. Disparities in socioeconomic resources and parental capacity were the key factors creating divergent trajectories in oral English development among the children.

Summary of Observed Proficiency Differences (Oral Language Samples)

Child (Pseudonyms)	Scaffolding Level	Communicative Fluency (Researcher Reflection)	Direct Evidence of Fluency/Vocabulary	Direct Evidence of Pronunciation/Clarity
Yaseer	High (Daily conversation, Co-viewing)	"spontaneous and contextually appropriate"	"He run fast. And I like Amy". Answered 2/3 questions in role- play.	"Pronunciation is quite good". "tries to imitate accents now".
Ruhana	Highest (100+ books, Daily co- reading)	"communicate fluently" , "developed tremendously"	Initiates role-play: "Okay. Let's go to school, baby. Take your bag". "I go to school. I played. It was fun".	"almost native-like accent". Pronunciation clarity: "Very good".
Tirtha	High (Scaffolding by mother/sister)	"uses English spontaneously and appropriately"	Uses expressive language: "She has looo..ng hair. She is Rapunzel. This is witch. She is bad". Initiates play: "Let's play hide and seek".	Pronunciation clarity: "Very good" , "clear and age-appropriate".

Ramisa	Low (Time-constrained, watches alone)	"has attained some level of proficiency , but can not use English spontaneously and appropriately" "Engages in turn-taking/conversation-Not yet"	Limited to simple phrases: "Go Tirana's". Failed role-play: "No. ami bujhi na (I don't understand)".	Pronunciation clarity: "Appropriate for her age" (limited use).
Zahid	Zero (Capacity-constrained, No conversation)	"cannot speak English at all"	Reverts to Bangla (Golap ful, biman). Failed repetition: "Mane Kii? (What does that mean?)".	Pronunciation clarity: "No".

Discussion

This qualitative study was conducted to explore how early English exposure through home interactions and digital media influences the oral language development of children aged 3 to 5 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The study also aimed to examine the patterns of exposure and the role of parental scaffolding in shaping vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. The findings of the study offer critical insights into the contextual factors that create significant disparities in English proficiency from a very young age. Through home observations, parental interviews and informal conversations with the child participants, the study reveals how the quality of the home literacy environment mediates the effectiveness of early exposure.

Theme 1: Primary Sources, Patterns of Exposure, and Their Influence on Oral Development

Sub Theme 1.1: Age of Exposure and the Critical Period

The participants unanimously reported introducing English to their children within the first year of life, aligning with Lenneberg's (1967) Critical Period Hypothesis, which posits an optimal neurological window for language acquisition. This finding is consistent with global trends where parents, recognizing the value of English, initiate early exposure (Graddol, 2006; Hamid, 2010), and specifically mirrors the Bangladeshi context described by Jannat et al. (2022), who found parents increasingly concerned with early English exposure.

These early-starter cases with active interaction in the present study show that early English input promotes better pronunciation and vocabulary, consistent with Lenneberg's notion of critical period sensitivity. However, this study reveals a critical nuance confirming that while an early English exposure is a somewhat common pattern among both affluent and low-income families in urban Dhaka, it is not a sufficient condition for proficiency as mentioned in Johnson & Newport's (1989) finding that age of onset alone is insufficient.

Children like Zahid, despite being exposed at one year of age, showed minimal oral skills, indicating that biological readiness must be activated through social and interactive means.

Sub Theme 1.2: Types and Frequency of English-Related Activities

The study found that while all children were introduced to English, the kind of activities varied greatly depending on their families' backgrounds. This findings of significant disparities in English activities based on family background, strongly confirms Sultana's (2018) research on socioeconomic disparities in Bangladesh. In educated, upper-class or middle-class families, children experienced a rich mix of English activities. Their days included interactive conversations, shared reading, and watching English media together. As Participant A described, this involved designated reading times where meanings were explained. This aligns with Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory; these parents were providing persistent social interaction, turning language learning into a collaborative activity. This rich, interactive input is what Krashen's Input Hypothesis would classify as "comprehensible input"—language the child can understand and learn from because it's supported by context and interaction.

In contrast, children from less educated, working-class homes, like Zahid, encountered English mostly through passive screen time. They watched YouTube for hours, often alone receiving unscaffolded input. While this provides auditory input, it lacks the crucial element of social interaction. This finding directly supports Bus et al.'s (1995) and Mol & Bus' (2011) research linking interactive literacy activities with vocabulary growth. On the other hand, children from low-SES homes encountered English mostly through passive screen time, reflecting Rahman's (2019) and Islam's (2023) findings about digital media dependency in resource-constrained Bangladeshi households.

Sub Theme 1.3: Parental and Caregiver Interaction Patterns

In the present study, all five cases here reinforce the fundamental role of a more knowledgeable individual—typically a parent or caregiver—who facilitates the child's engagement with the linguistic environment and supports meaning-making through guided interaction.

Parental interaction was not just important, but the main factor that set apart how effective English exposure was. In families where parents had strong English proficiency, like Yaseer's and Ruhana's, parents acted as guides and supporters. Participant A described moving from simply watching and translating with her child to having more discussion-based interactions, which follows Vygotsky's idea of working within the child's Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978).

The results of this study intensely align with Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) and Vygotskian perspectives on literacy as a socially mediated process. Vygotsky claimed that children's cognitive and literacy development emerges mostly through social interaction and mediation within the *Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)* with more knowledgeable others (Vygotsky, 1978).

High-proficiency children—Ruhana, Tirtha, and Yaseer—benefited from regular caregiver mediation. Their parents vigorously delivered explanations, translations, and feedback during shared reading and screen time, transforming exposure into opportunities for genuine dialogue.

This finding supports research by scholars like Tomasello (2003), who emphasize that language is learned through reciprocal communication. The key difference, therefore, is not just how often children hear or watch English media, but how they have it—through interactive, scaffolded activities or through passive, one-way consumption.

By contrast, in homes such as Zahid's and Ramisa's, parents' limited English and time meant children got little of this dynamic support. The language input was not responsive or adapted to the child's needs, offering little chance for feedback or practice (Tomasello, 2003). This split between homes shows that parents as interactive partners influence oral language development more than just having English content present. Without active help, even early and frequent exposure gives limited results in expressive skills.

Sub Theme 1.4: Socioeconomic Influence on Exposure

The socioeconomic status of the families played a deterministic influence, not only on the availability of resources but, more importantly, on the very ecology of the English learning environment. In this study the high-SES households nurtured an "English-rich ecology," characterized by an abundance of physical materials and English-rich interactions. For example, Ruhana's parents bought over 100 books for Ruhana and Yaseer's highly educated mother arranged 50 books and educational toys for Yaseer. This print-rich environment, as described by Participant E and Participant A, provides persistent visual and tactile stimulation for these children, fostering print awareness and making English an integrated part of their daily life. This aligns with studies that link the availability of books and educational resources in the home to early literacy success (Mol & Bus, 2011).

On the contrary, the environment in low-SES homes was defined by scarcity of print materials and passivity of digital media consumption. For instance, Zahid's household had only three books and no capacity for parental reading which represents a context where English is a distant, audio-only

phenomenon stemming from a screen. This disparity goes beyond mere material possession; it produces a fundamental inequity in the quality of linguistic engagement, where children from wealthy and educated backgrounds benefit from a multi-sensory, resource-rich environment. At the same time, children from underprivileged backgrounds are left with a single, inert channel of exposure. This finding strongly illustrates how socioeconomic disparities and inequalities lead to very different developmental pathways in children's early oral English proficiency.

Theme 2: Correlation between Age of Onset, Quality of Interaction, and Oral Language Development

This theme directly addresses the study's second research question, revealing a critical nuance in early language acquisition. While the Critical Period Hypothesis (Lenneberg, 1967) suggests an advantage for early exposure, our findings indicate that the quality of interaction is a more powerful predictor of oral proficiency than the age of onset alone. Active scaffolding emerged as the decisive element that unlocks the potential of early exposure.

Sub Theme 2.1: Vocabulary Development

The stark contrast in vocabulary use between children like Yaseer and Tirtha versus Zahid underscores the principle of comprehensible input (Krashen, 1985).

Yaseer's and Tirtha's ability to spontaneously produce complex sentences about their favorite cartoons ("He is funny. He runs fast." / "They are very cute.") demonstrates how scaffolded input—where parents explain and discuss—is internalized into an active lexicon. Conversely, Zahid's response, "Mane Kii?/ parina," illustrates that without a caregiver to mediate and make language understandable, exposure remains ineffective. His receptive knowledge did not translate to expressive use, highlighting that vocabulary growth is not automatic but is socially mediated (Vygotsky, 1978).

The findings also uphold Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985): exposure leads to acquisition only when the input is comprehensible, contextual, and emotionally engaging. Krashen's Input Hypothesis emphasizes that language acquisition depends on "comprehensible input"—language that is understandable yet slightly beyond the learner's current level. The case studies show that children who received collaborative and guided exposure beyond their current level—where parents explained, translated, discussed, or repeated—demonstrated better understanding and active use of English.

Sub Theme 2.2: Late or Limited Exposure and Slower Development

Zahid's case is a classic example of how delayed and low-quality exposure creates a significant developmental lag. His reliance on Bangla and inability to form sentences, despite recognizing words from rhymes, shows that input must be both early and interactive to be fully effective. This supports the Critical Period Hypothesis by demonstrating that a late start, especially when coupled with a lack of scaffolding, makes it exceedingly difficult to achieve age-appropriate proficiency. The absence of parental translation and contextual support meant the English input failed to become comprehensible, leaving him unable to progress beyond a few isolated words.

Sub Theme 2.3: Pronunciation and Phonological Accuracy

The present data in the above-mentioned cases clearly indicates that pronunciation accuracy is a product of high-quality auditory input combined with parental interactions and social feedback. Ruhana's "native-like" fluency, as reported by her father, stems from regular engagement with clear models and interactive correction. This aligns with the biological sensitivity of the critical period for phonology. In contrast, Zahid's unclear sound production from passive exposure confirms that the brain needs more than just hearing sounds; it needs interactive engagement to practice and refine articulation, a process central to Vygotsky's (1978) view of learning through social interaction.

Sub Theme 2.4: Conversational Fluency

Fluency was directly tied to opportunities for interactive practice.

Yaseer's constant "asking, answering, and translating" during screen time provided him with essential practice in turn-taking and dialogue management. This active exchange is the foundation of conversational skills. Meanwhile, Ramisa and Zahid, who did not have the opportunities of these interactive exchanges, displayed limited or no fluency. This finding strongly supports the notion that language is a tool for social communication, mastered through use within a supportive social context, as per Sociocultural Theory.

Theme 3: The Role of Media and Home Literacy Environments in Shaping Oral English Proficiency

Sub Theme 3.1: Digital Media Usage and Parental Mediation

It is evident from all 5 cases that media exposure played a major role in all children's experiences, but the outcomes were immensely different depending on whether the media was scaffolded. The study confirms that digital media is a tool whose value is significantly determined by parental mediation. In high-SES homes, co-viewing and discussion transformed YouTube into a source of comprehensible input and interactive learning. For high-proficiency children like Yaseer, Tirtha, and Ruhana, digital content such as Peppa Pig, Sesame Street, and print media picture books was embedded within a highly supportive literacy environment. Parents co-viewed, explained meanings, translated vocabulary, and engaged in conversations during and after viewing sessions. For instance, during observation of Yaseer, his mother actively discussed the content, asked questions, and confirmed comprehension.

In contrast, for children who watched alone, the same media was a passive activity with minimal linguistic benefit. This underscores that the device itself is less important than the human interaction surrounding it.

Subtheme 3.2: Home Literacy Practices

The inequality in home literacy environments was a major differentiator. The "print-rich" environments of Ruhana, Yaseer and Tirtha, filled with books, board books, posters, picture dictionaries, provided continuous, tangible exposure to English, supporting vocabulary and syntactic development. The routine of shared reading, as described by Yaseer's mother and Ruhana's father, is a powerful form of structured, scaffolded input. In contrast, the scarcity of books in Ramisa's and Zahid's homes severely limited their opportunities for this type of learning.

Subtheme 3.3: Interactional Scaffolding during Media and Reading

The most critical finding is that the interaction around activities—not the activities themselves—drives learning. When parents translated, explained, and sang along, they provided essential scaffolding, turning passive input into active learning. This allowed children like Tirtha and Yaseer to internalize and use new language. The absence of this support for Ramisa and Zahid resulted in their inability to comprehend or use English communicatively, as seen in Ramisa's response, "ami bujhi na."

This chapter presented a synthesized interpretation of the findings aligned with the three research questions, drawing on sociocultural theory, Input Theory, and Critical Period Theory.

Overall, the results indicate that although early childhood provides optimal biological conditions for language learning, children's oral English development depends heavily on the quality of social interaction, parental scaffolding, and literacy-rich home practices.

Integrated Theoretical Interpretation (Vygotsky, Critical Period Theory, Input Theory)

The integrated analysis reveals that children's oral English development emerges from the interaction of neurobiological sensitivity, sociocultural mediation, and scaffolded literacy input. Vygotsky's sociocultural framework explains why children who received consistent guided interaction made the most enhanced progress, while Krashen's input model illustrates how parental education, household routines, and media-use structures shaped the quality—not merely the existence—of linguistic input.

Critical Period Theory accounts for the children’s heightened neural receptivity to phonological and lexical acquisition. However, the contrasting outcomes observed in the cases demonstrate that biological readiness must be activated through robust social support. Input Theory finally explains the mechanism by which parental mediation transforms raw exposure into comprehensible, developmentally appropriate input that drives expressive language growth. Without such mediation, early exposure remained passive and primarily receptive.

Recommendations

Here are some recommendations based on the findings and theoretical insights:

Strengthen Home-Based Language Scaffolding

Parents and caregivers should be encouraged to co-view media, engage in interactive reading, and have regular English conversations with children. Even small actions—such as explaining vocabulary, asking questions, or rephrasing content—can transform passive exposure into active language learning.

Ensure Access to Print-Rich Home Environments

Initiatives should be taken to support families—particularly those from lower-SES households—in obtaining affordable English picture books, board books, and visual dictionaries. Community libraries, NGOs, and government programs play an essential role in addressing resource gaps.

Promote Guided Digital Media Practices

Parents should understand the value of mediation techniques during digital media use. They can receive training to establish purposeful media routines, such as co-viewing, pausing to clarify meanings, and extending digital content through discussion or play. Unsupervised digital exposure should be reduced, as it mainly supports receptive rather than expressive language skills.

Enhance Parental Awareness of Early Language Windows

Awareness programs should be prioritized to inform parents about the Critical Period for language learning and to emphasize the importance of early, high-quality input. Parents and caregivers should also have access to workshops and training sessions, as well as social media campaigns that highlight the role of rich English exposure during early childhood.

Provide Targeted Support for Low-Literacy Caregivers

Caregivers with limited English proficiency should be offered simple, practical strategies for mediation, including bilingual book-sharing, picture description, gesture-supported communication, and participation in parent-training workshops.

Recommendations for Policy and National Initiatives

Promote Equitable Access to Early English Resources

Government agencies and NGOs should support low-income families by subsidizing storybooks, audio materials, and child-friendly English apps.

Develop National Guidelines for Early Childhood Media Use

Policymakers should create evidence-based guidelines on co-viewing, screen-time limits, and appropriate content selection for children aged 3–5.

Encourage Public Libraries and Community Learning Corners

Community-based literacy spaces can help reduce SES-related disparities by providing free access to storybooks, literacy activities, and supervised digital resources.

Conclusion

This study makes a significant contribution by reinforcing a sociocultural understanding of oral English development in early childhood. The findings suggest that in resource-variable, Bangla-dominant contexts, such as Dhaka, productive oral language development is shaped not only by early exposure or age of onset, but also by the quality of resources and the presence of premeditated, scaffolded interaction within children's immediate environments. The data illustrate that the "critical period" for acquisition is most effectively realized and leveraged by high-quality, scaffolded interactions, which serve as a crucial gateway to communicative competence, supporting stronger outcomes in vocabulary development, pronunciation accuracy, and conversational fluency among Bangladeshi preschool-aged children.

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Appendix A.

Research Tools

Research Title: Exploring the English Exposure and Oral Language Development of 3 to 5-year-old children

Research Objectives:

The tools are designed to collect data to find clear insights for each of the following research questions:

1. What are the primary sources and patterns of English exposure among Bangladeshi preschool-aged children?
2. How does the age of onset influence oral language development, specifically in vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency?
3. What role do media and home literacy environments play in shaping oral English proficiency?

RQ1 (Sources & Patterns): It will be primarily addressed through the Parent IDI and the Observation Checklist.

RQ2 (Age of Onset & Influence): It will be addressed by cross-referencing parent-reported data on onset (IDI) with the child's actual performance (Observation & Informal Conversation).

RQ3 (Digital Media & Home Environment): addressed in all three tools: the IDI (parent beliefs and practices), the Observation (direct evidence of use and interaction), and the Conversation (resulting oral proficiency).

Tool 1: In-Depth Interview (IDI) Guideline (for Parents/Caregivers)

Demographics:

Parent's age, education, occupation

Child's age

Age of first English exposure

I. Warm-Up (5 minutes)

Brief introduction, consent, thanks

II. Sources & Patterns of Exposure (10 minutes)

1. How and when your child was first exposed to English?
2. Could you please make a list of all regular English activities and their frequency/duration?
3. Who usually interacts with them in English?

III. Media & Home Literacy Environment (10 minutes)

4. What English media does your child watch/use? How often? Alone or with you?
5. What do you do together during screen time? (e.g., explain, sing along)
6. How many English books/toys do you have at home? How often do you read together?
7. How do you help when your child struggles with an English word?

IV. Perceptions of Development (5 mins)

8. What English words or phrases has your child picked up earliest?
9. Have you noticed any effects of early English exposure?

Tool 2: Observation Guideline

Child Information

- **Name of Child Observed:**
- **Age:**
- **Gender:**
- **Settings:**
- **Date:**
- **Place:**
- **Observation Time:**

Environment & Input Sources:

1. English materials present (books, toys, screens)
2. Type of media/content being viewed (if any)
3. Adult involvement (co-viewing, reading, playing)

Child's Oral English (Checklist Style):

1. Uses English words spontaneously
2. Understands simple English questions/commands
3. Attempts songs/phrases from media
4. Pronunciation clarity
5. Engages in turn-taking/conversation

Tool 3: Informal Conversation Guidelines (Child Language Sample)

Purpose: To elicit natural speech samples from children (ages 3–5) for qualitative assessment.

1. Exploring a Child's Exposure to and Use of English

- a) What's your favorite cartoon? Can you tell me about it?"
- b) Can you name these pictures for me? (Show dog, rose, apple, airplane etc.).
- c) Can you name the colors?/ What color is it?

2. Exploring the development of Vocabulary, Pronunciation, and Fluency:

- a) Can you repeat after me? (Words/sentences like -please, thank you, I want milk, sun, give me the banana). Note: Listen for pronunciation/fluency/vocabulary patterns.
- b) Can you talk with me like we are playing family? (Role-play: pretend to do something/ have lunch together, ask/answer simple questions).
- c) Can you tell me about your friends? (What do you like to do with them? Do you talk in Bangla, English, or both?)

3. Storytelling and Expressive Language:

- a) Can you describe what is happening in this picture story book? (Encourage short sentences).
- b) Can you tell me what you did today? (Look for spontaneous use of English words).

Appendix B: Sample Transcript 1

Participant A , Yaseer's mother

(IDI-1, 14.09. 25)

Tool 1: In-Depth Interview (IDI) Guideline (for Parents/Caregivers)

Demographics:

Parent's age- Nafisa Huq (NH)

Education- BA (Hons) in English, MA in ELT

Occupation- University Teaching

Child's age-5 years 4 months

Age of first English exposure- 4-5 months

Name of the Interviewer: Kazi Tahmina (KT)

I. Warm-Up (5 minutes)

Done(Brief introduction, consent, thanks)

II. Patterns of exposure:

KT: 1. How and when your child was first exposed to English?

NH: Probably we started watching rhymes together or I was talking to him in English. He was 4-5 months I guess. I used to sing 'Twinkle twinkle' and other English songs a lot. Actually I started singing nursery rhymes very early.

KT: 2. Could you please share the types of activities done in English regularly?/ How frequently are these activities done?

NH: English conversations

Watching English cartoons/ programs/ rhymes

Reading English books together

Learning new English words

Everyday, 2/3 times. I usually have conversations with him and we read every day. We also watch English cartoons/ programs.

KT: 3. Who usually interacts with them in English?

NH: Me (mother, most of the time), father occasionally.

III. Media & Home Literacy Environment:

KT: 4. What English media does your child watch/use? How often? Alone or with you?

NH: Both visual and print media. He watches TV/ You tube shows for about 1 hour a day. Sometimes he plays games on phone (where the instructions are in English).

We read every day.

KT: 5. What do you do together during screen time?

NH: In the beginning it was always co-viewing. Now he watches on his own mostly. I used to explain/translate word meanings extensively before. He used to ask a lot of questions. Now sometimes we watch and discuss.

KT: 6. How many English books/toys do you have at home? How often do you read together?

NH: Plenty. At least 50 books are in English. We also have Puzzles , 4/5 toys(with English instructions).

We read every day several times. We have a designated time (at morning and in the evening) for reading/ playing activities. Previously I used to read to him and explain. Now he tries to read alone sometimes, though not very successfully, but he asks questions.

KT: 7. How do you help when your child struggles with an English word?

NH: I explain, translate/ use it in a sentence.

IV. Perceptions of Development:

KT:8. What English words or phrases has your child picked earlier? (vocabulary development)

NH: Yes, No, Dad, Mom, Sorry

KT: 9. Do you notice any changes in your child's pronunciation (e.g., clearer sounds, accent features) since they started English exposure? (pronunciation)

NH: It's clearer and better now. He also tries to imitate accents now.

KT:10. Is the child fluent in easy, age-appropriate conversations?(fluency)

NH:Yes, I think so. He is quite fluent in spoken English.

KT: 11. Have you noticed any effects of early English exposure?

NH: Obviously. He has got better pronunciation and enriched vocabulary. He can use English words/ sentences spontaneously. He understands school instructions clearly too.

Tool 2: Observation Guideline

Child Information

- Name of Child Observed: Mashroor
- Age: 5 years 4 months
- Gender: Male
- Settings: Home environment (During evening reading session and later during TV time)
- Date: September 14, 2025
- Place: Mohammadpur, Dhaka
- Observation Time: 40 minutes

Environment & Input Sources:

1. English materials present (books, toys, screens): There were two bookshelves with 50 English books. There were some puzzles, toys and posters. It seemed like an English-rich environment.

2. Type of media/content being viewed (if any):

Reading 'Avery Hungry Caterpillar' together

Watching *Peppa Pig* episode on YouTube Kids. The child was co-viewing with mother.

3. Adult involvement (co-viewing, reading, playing)

The mother was present in both sessions- Reading and Watching TV.

Child's Oral English (Checklist Style):

1. Uses English words spontaneously- Yes
2. Understands simple English questions/commands-Yes
3. Attempts songs/phrases from media-Yes
4. Pronounces clearly-Yes
5. Engages in turn-taking/conversation-Yes

Observation summary: Mashroor's English use is better than many of his peers. He has the capability of having simple conversation and turn-taking which seemed age-appropriate. His home environment appeared to be English-rich.

Tool 3: Informal Conversation Guidelines (Child Language Sample)

Purpose: To elicit natural speech samples from children for qualitative assessment.

1. Exploring a Child's Exposure to and Use of English

KT: a) What's your favorite cartoon? Can you tell me about it?

Mashroor: Sonic the Hedgehog. I like it. He is funny. He run fast. And I like Amy. Sonic's friend.

KT: b) Can you name these pictures for me? (Show dog, rose, apple, airplane etc.).

Masroor: Yes. That's a dog. This is umbrella. A flower.

KT: c) Can you name the colors?/ What color is it?

Masroor: Yes. This is Blue. That's red. That's white. And this is purple.

KT: Do you go to school?

Masroor: Yes, every day.

KT: Do you like school?

Masroor: Very much. I have friends.

Researcher's Comment: mashroor's oral English development is remarkable. HIS English use is spontaneous and contextually appropriate.

2. Exploring the development of Vocabulary, Pronunciation, and Fluency:

KT: a) Can you repeat after me? Give me the banana.

Masroor: Give me the banana.

KT: Can you do what I say? Open the window please.

Masroor: Sure(he ran and opened the window).

KT: Say, 'Are you okay?'

Masroor: Are you okay?

KT: Good.

Masroor: Thank you.

KT: You are welcome, baba!

KT: b) Can you talk with me like we are playing family? (Role-play: pretend to do something/ have lunch together, ask/answer simple questions).

Mashroor is not much familiar with pretend play. Yet he could answer and ask 2/3 questions.

KT: c) Can you tell me about your friends? (What do you like to do with them?)

Masroor:I have 5 friends. 2 girlfriends. I like anaya very much. She is pretty.

KT: Do you talk in Bangla, English, or both?

Masroor: Sometimes English, sometimes Bangla.

Researcher's comment: Mashroor could repeat almost everything clearly. His pronunciation is quite good. Fluency and vocabulary patterns are impressive.

3. Storytelling and Expressive Language:

KT: a) Can you describe what is happening in this picture story book?

Masroor: They are playing. The boy is laughing. I like the picture.

KT: b) Can you tell me what you did today?

Masroor: I went to school. My friend come. We played a lot.

Researcher's comment: Mashroor could use English words spontaneously and quite fluently.

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Appendix C: Sample Transcript 2

Participant B , Zahid's mother

(IDI-2, 16.09. 25)

Tool 1: In-Depth Interview (IDI) Guideline (for Parents/Caregivers)

Demographics:

Parent's name: Jannat Begum(JB)

Parent's age: 30

Education: Did not complete Primary level

Occupation: House help

Child's name: Zihad

Child's age: 5 years

Age of first English exposure: 1 year

I. Warm-Up (5 minutes)

Done (Brief introduction, consent, thanks)

II. Sources & Patterns of Exposure (10 minutes)

KT: 1. How and when your child was first exposed to English?

JB : My son started watching English cartoons when he was 1 year old. My firstborn daughter (10 years old) started showing him rhymes while feeding.

KT: 2. Could you please make a list of all regular English activities and their frequency / duration?

JB : Watching English stories/ rhymes/ programs on YouTube. –Everyday, 2/3 hours
Reading books regularly- No

Conversation in English- No

KT: 3. Who usually interacts with them in English?

JB : None.

III. Media & Home Literacy Environment (10 minutes)

KT: 4. What English media does your child watch/use? How often? Alone or with you?

JB : You Tube. Sometimes he watches alone and sometimes with his sister for 2/3 hours everyday.

KT: 5. What do you do together during screen time? (e.g., explain, sing along)

JB: When he does not understand anything, I cannot help him to understand it. I myself do not know English. So it's not possible to explain or translate. Sometimes his elder sister tries to translate ½ words as she is a student of class IV. She knows the meaning of some words.

KT: 6. How many English books/toys do you have at home? How often do you read together?

JB : We have just 3 English books at our home. 2 was given by my employer. I cannot read the books to the child. Sometimes my elder daughter tries to read a little/ point at the pictures.

KT: 7. How do you help when your child struggles with an English word?

JB: Most of the time, I cannot help. Sometimes my daughter explains simple words.

IV. Perceptions of Development (5 mins)

KT: 8. What English words or phrases has your child picked up earliest?

JB: Yes, No, Apple, Ball etc.

KT: 9. Have you noticed any effects of early English exposure?

JB:Yes, My son did not get the opportunity to practice with anyone. He only watches some English programs sometimes. I don't think he can speak English.

Tool 2: Observation Guideline

Child Information

- **Name of Child Observed:Zihad**
- **Age: 5 years**
- **Gender: Male**
- **Settings: Home (One bedroom cum living room)**
- **Date: 16 September, 2025**
- **Place: Mohammadpur**
- **Observation Time: 30 minutes**

Environment & Input Sources:

1. English materials present (books, toys, screens): 3 English books, no toys, YouTube on TV
2. Type of media/content being viewed (if any): Tom & Jerry, Cocomelon
3. Adult involvement (co-viewing, reading, playing): No adult engagement

Child's Oral English (Checklist Style):

1. Uses English words spontaneously-No
2. Understands simple English questions/commands- Not much
3. Attempts songs/phrases from media- Can only repeat some words
4. Pronunciation clarity- No
5. Engages in turn-taking/conversation-No

Comment: Due to passive and limited English exposure, the child cannot speak English at all. He could recognize very few familiar words from songs but could not use them communicatively. There is a clear lack of adult scaffolding and English-rich home environment which perhaps resulted in limited comprehension and no/less oral English development.

Tool 3: Informal Conversation Guidelines (Child Language Sample)

Purpose: To elicit natural speech samples from children (ages 3–5) for qualitative assessment.

1. Exploring a Child's Exposure to and Use of English

KT: a) What's your favorite cartoon? Can you tell me about it?"

Zihad: Tom & Jerry. In Bangla -moja lage

KT: b) Can you name these pictures for me? (Show dog, rose, apple, airplane etc.).

Zihad: Apple, Dog, Golap ful, biman(In Bangla)

KT: c) Can you name the colors?/ What color is it?

Zihad: Red, Blue, Green...Janina(In Bangla)

2. Exploring the development of Vocabulary, Pronunciation, and Fluency:

KT: a) Can you repeat after me? (Words/sentences like -please, thank you, I want milk, sun, give me the banana).

Zihad: Mane Kii?(What does that mean?)

KT: amar sathe bolo. 'Thank you'

Zihad: Thank you.

KT: I want milk.

Zihad: smiles-parina (I can't).

KT: b) Can you talk with me like we are playing family?

Zihad: I don't understand. (In Bangla)

KT: c) Can you tell me about your friends? What do you like to do with them? Do you talk in Bangla, English, or both?

Zihad: No.

3. Storytelling and Expressive Language:

KT: a) Can you describe what is happening in this picture story book? (Encourage short sentences).

Zihad: Baby play.

KT: b) Can you tell me what you did today? (Look for spontaneous use of English words).

Zihad: Smiles only.

Observer's Comment: The child demonstrates difficulty in pronouncing words correctly and in following instructions. He has a very limited vocabulary. He has not yet developed the ability to communicate/ speak in English.