Research Article

Intentional learning styles and practices of parents towards their children: Strengthening discipline for language learning

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ABSTRACT

Parental involvement is a critical factor in English language learning, as it extends exposure and practice beyond the classroom, creating a continuous and supportive learning environment. However, limited research examines how Filipino parents intentionally instill discipline to strengthen language learning at home. This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design and purposively selected 18 Filipino parents who actively engaged in their children's English language learning. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, recorded with consent, and analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes. Three core parental practices emerged: (1) Imposing strictness through structured routines, rules, and corrective feedback to ensure accountability; (2) Repetition of language use in daily tasks, stories, and games to enhance fluency and vocabulary retention; and (3) Creating a supportive environment that combined emotional encouragement with consistent guidance. These strategies led to improvements in children's confidence, technical language skills, and frequency of English use in everyday

situations. Findings suggest that discipline-oriented yet supportive parenting fosters both linguistic competence and motivation. Aligning with Vygotsky's social development theory, the study highlights the importance of structured interaction and positive reinforcement in language learning. Intentional parental involvement—balancing firm discipline with emotional support—significantly enhances children's English language acquisition. Educational programs should promote home-based language strategies and school–parent partnerships to strengthen English proficiency.

Keywords: early education; English language learning; learning discipline; parental involvement

1. Introduction

Language learning has become a critical skill in today's interconnected world, where globalization and superdiversity shape communication, education, and employment opportunities. English, as the global lingua franca[1], holds both symbolic and practical value, enabling individuals to participate in global markets, academic discourse, and cross-cultural exchange. In many countries, proficiency in English is perceived not only as an educational asset but also as a form of human capital, linked to greater social mobility and economic opportunity[2].

Within this global context, families play a crucial role in shaping language learning beyond the formal classroom. In the Philippines, where English is both a second language and a key medium of instruction, parental involvement is essential in reinforcing exposure, practice, and motivation at home. Research shows that children's language acquisition is significantly influenced by their immediate environment, particularly the guidance, encouragement, and structured routines provided by parents[3,4]. Policies such as DepEd Order No. 72, s. 2009, institutionalize this role, urging parents to actively monitor their children's academic progress and support both cognitive and moral development.

While numerous studies have examined English language learning in formal education settings[5,6], fewer have explored the home-based strategies parents use to build discipline and sustain language learning. This gap is significant because children often model their behaviors and attitudes after their parents, making the home a powerful site for shaping both linguistic competence and learning habits[7,8]. In particular, little is known about how Filipino parents intentionally design learning activities, establish rules, and create supportive environments that encourage consistent English use.

While this study focuses on English as the global lingua franca, it is important to acknowledge that the journey of language acquisition presents distinct challenges depending on the language in question. For instance, international students learning Russian face significant hurdles related to the language that can affect their social, emotional, and academic adaptation[9]. Language like Russian feature characteristics like rich morphology, complex sound systems, or intricate scripts that require tailored pedagogical strategies distinct from those effective for English [9]. Recognizing these diverse linguistic landscapes underscores the specific focus of this paper on the practices surrounding English language learning in a Filipino context.

This study addresses this gap by exploring the learning styles and intentional practices employed by Filipino parents to instill discipline in their children's English language learning. Despite the growing body of research on English language learning, particularly within formal education, there remains limited empirical evidence on how Filipino parents intentionally structure home-based practices to instill discipline and support sustained language use. Existing studies have largely concentrated on school-based interventions or teacher-led strategies, leaving the informal yet influential sphere of parental involvement underexamined. This study addresses this gap by offering context-specific insights into the strategies Filipino parents employ, thereby contributing new perspectives to the discourse on family language policy and home-based language

learning. By examining these strategies in the home context, the research aims to highlight effective parental approaches that integrate structure, repetition, and emotional support, ultimately contributing to children's confidence, technical language skills, and frequency of English use.

This research is significant because it foregrounds the home as a critical yet underexamined space for language development, offering insights into how parental involvement can complement formal instruction and strengthen discipline as a foundation for sustained learning. The findings can inform culturally relevant parental education programs, guide teachers in building stronger home–school partnerships, and contribute to policy initiatives that recognize and support the active role of families in nurturing English language proficiency.

2. Literature Review

The growing academic and social interest in understanding how language-related decisions are made within the household has led to significant research expansion[10,11]. Spolsky[12] identifies three essential dimensions of language policy: language practices, beliefs, and management strategies. Curdt-Christiansen[13] later added a fourth component, the family language management and planning. This refers to both intentional and unintentional parental involvement and efforts in creating appropriate linguistic environments and contexts that support language learning and literacy development. The current study examines how families implement a distinct sociolinguistic practice through the creation of English immersion contexts at home, despite English not being the parents' native language.

Language learning among children is a developmental process through which they gradually acquire the ability to comprehend and utilize language[14]. A comparative study between four- and five-year-old children revealed that the older child possessed a more extensive vocabulary and demonstrated superior language fluency. The advanced verbal abilities of a five-year-old were attributed to greater exposure to linguistic input over time, resulting in clearer pronunciation and more refined language use[15]. In other context, observations of two toddlers of the same age but different genders indicated that the male child, who engaged more frequently with his parents, exhibited stronger verbal skills[16].

Furthermore, caregiver involvement, particularly through strategies that promote early literacy, was shown to enhance language acquisition. For example, the use of storybooks and storytelling, even among parents with limited literacy skills, contributed positively to children's expressive vocabulary development[17]. Similarly, the application of various vocabulary learning techniques, such as repetition, elaboration, and interactive strategies, can build motivation and persistence in acquiring a second or foreign language[18].

Multilingual families often make explicit decisions about which languages their children should acquire, influencing linguistic development and shaping their language practices. However, Hollebeke, Struys and Agirdag[19] noted that much of the existing research on this field centers on linguistic outcomes, with limited attention given to the economic or cognitive impacts on children. Hence, this paper examined how home language practices contribute to the formation of children's attitudes toward language learning. Hence, this paper looked at how language practices at home develop children's attitudes, particularly discipline, towards language learning.

Learning discipline covers a fundamental behavioral attribute that significantly influences students' academic achievement. According to Arifin et al.[8], the attainment of favorable learning outcomes is not solely attributed to cognitive capacity or intelligence, but also to the presence of strict and consistent discipline, both at the institutional level and within the individual's personal learning practices, along with appropriate behavioral conduct. Even individuals endowed with exceptional intellectual capabilities may

struggle to achieve their full potential in the absence of a disciplined approach to learning[20,21]. Hence, building a disciplined learning attitude among students is essential, as it directly contributes to their academic success and mastery of learning materials.

Arifin et al.[8] identify external influences, particularly those rooted in the environment where students are exposed. These include the familial context, such as parental educational practices, the quality of interpersonal relationships within the household, the home atmosphere, socio-economic conditions, and the broader cultural milieu[7, 22,23]. Children who receive consistent support and attention from their parents are more likely to be motivated and active participants in their learning process[7]. Conversely, a lack of parental engagement or a home environment that fails to reinforce academic discipline may lead to suboptimal academic outcomes, including poor performance and, in some cases, academic failure.

Family language policy is recognized for its potential to support language maintenance and foster benefits such as enhanced career prospects, stronger family cohesion, cultural understanding, and cognitive development[24]. Families who succeed in preserving a home language are often those who articulate clear language rules and deliberately expose their children to the language and associated cultural practices.

However, despite the growing interest in family language policy worldwide, there is still limited understanding of how Filipino families enact language learning practices at home, particularly with respect to the teaching of the English language. Most existing literature focuses on formal education settings[5,6], leaving a gap in knowledge about parental roles and strategies in informal learning contexts. Hence, this paper seeks to explore the specific home-based practices Filipino parents use to promote English language learning among their children, with particular emphasis on how discipline is cultivated as an essential component of language acquisition and academic success.

2.1. Objectives

This paper explored the language practices of Filipino parents in teaching the English language at home. This paper identified effective practices that could build children's motivation and discipline towards learning a secondary language. Below are the specific objectives of this study.

1. To explore the specific learning styles and intentional practices employed by parents in building discipline and language acquisition in their children.

2. To examine how parental involvement and disciplinary strategies influence the development of language learning habits and motivation among children.

3. Methods

3.1. Research design

This paper, employing a qualitative descriptive research design, explored the practices of Filipino parents in strengthening children's discipline towards English language learning. Exploratory studies often investigate novel phenomena and develop understanding about underexplored areas of inquiry[25,22]. This method generally utilizes purposeful and systematic procedures to identify meaningful patterns within the data, which then helps in supporting the organized examination of sociocultural and psychological factors[26, 27]. While certain scholars raise concerns about its rigor and reliability, current academic discussions emphasize its vital contribution to enhancing the depth of understanding and ensuring the systematic gathering of qualitative evidence[28,29]. One of the principal strengths of exploratory research lies in its flexibility that allows changes considering the emerging data[30]. For exploratory studies, this is an essential attribute when investigating topics that remain relatively underexplored in scholarly literature[23]. This design

was selected to capture the authentic ways in which Filipino parents intentionally cultivate discipline in their children's English language learning, allowing themes to emerge directly from participants' narratives while maintaining a clear connection to their lived realities. This paper addressed one important question in English language learning: how Filipino parents involve in English language learning at home? It emphasized how to build discipline towards learning the second language.

3.2. Participants and sampling

Exploratory research typically uses deliberately selected, limited group of participants to facilitate a comprehensive investigation of key elements and their relations[22]. Rather than pursuing broad statistical representativeness, this method emphasizes the insights of a targeted population whose viewpoints are considered vital to understanding a phenomenon[31,32]. The sample size remains flexible, primarily guided by the participants' ability to contribute meaningful data[33]. Purposive sampling is widely used in selecting the participants for qualitative inquiries[34], in which participants are intentionally selected through a systematic identification process[35]. For the present investigation, online purposive sampling was conducted[36], utilizing Google Forms to administer open-ended questions and gather initial data used to select participants for the interview. The inclusion criteria required that participants: (1) be Filipino nationals, (2) have adapted practices to teach English at home, (3) actively engage in their child's early language development, (4) reside in an urban or semi-urban area with access to educational resources, and (5) have at least one child enrolled in a primary education institution where English is part of the curriculum. Out of 65 who responded to online screening, only 18 participants met all criteria and were selected to be interviewed, ensuring that all participants had first-hand knowledge relevant to the study objectives.

3.3. Instrumentation

A semi-structured interview guide was systematically developed to direct the data collection process. The design of the protocol adhered to the process proposed by Kallio et al.[37], which involved key stages such as identifying prerequisites, exploration of existing literature, drafting initial questions, conducting a pilot test, and revising the instrument based on expert input. Probing questions were embedded within the protocol to elicit statements beyond superficial answers, emphasizing participants' viewpoints, values, and lived realities[38,39]. The interview guide was reviewed by subject-matter experts to ensure clarity, cultural appropriateness, and alignment with the research objectives, thereby enhancing the trustworthiness of the findings[40]. In addition, pilot testing was implemented to assess the clarity, pertinence, and capacity of the questions to generate meaningful data[41]. Feedback obtained from both subject-matter experts and test participants informed the final adjustments to the interview tool (see **Table 1**). The semi-structured instrument enabled an in-depth exploration of emerging themes while providing flexibility for clarification and supplementary questioning[42].

Table 1. Final interview guide questions

Objectives	Interview Questions
To explore the specific learning styles and intentional practices employed by parents in building discipline and language acquisition in their children.	1. Can you describe the strategies or methods you use to help your child learn and improve their language skills at home? 2. How do you identify and adapt to your child's preferred way of learning, especially when it comes to language activities? 3. In what ways do you intentionally create a disciplined environment that supports consistent language learning at home?
To examine how parental involvement and disciplinary strategies influence the development of language learning habits and motivation among children.	1. How do you stay involved in your child's language learning progress, and what role do you play in their daily learning routines? 2. Can you share how your approach to discipline has affected your child's motivation or attitude toward language learning? 3. What challenges have you faced in maintaining your child's interest and discipline in language learning, and how have you addressed them?

3.4. Data collection

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather participants' lived experiences through a structured but flexible method that enabled the examination of their behaviors, perspectives, and narratives[43]. Given the exploratory nature of this study, guided interviews were employed to maintain rigor while encouraging organic discourse that brought forth deeper insights[44]. The process started with the development of research objectives, the formulation of thematic questions, and an extensive review of relevant literature to establish an analytical framework[37,39]. Potential participants were identified using online purposive sampling. The same inclusion criteria as stated in Section 4.2 were applied, ensuring participant suitability and relevance to the study focus. From the initial pool of 65 respondents screened through an online form, 18 participants who met all criteria were selected for interviews. The chosen participants were informed, and individual interview sessions were subsequently arranged. The interviews followed a structured protocol such as informed consent, adherence to ethical standards, confidentiality, and systematic inquiry[45]. During the interview process, a conducive environment was created to encourage open expression, including the use of the participants' preferred language to minimize linguistic barriers, and ensuring that participants felt respected, comfortable, and free from judgment. Probing strategies were utilized to uncover implicit meanings and deepen the richness of participants' responses[46]. With participants' consent, the sessions were recorded using secure mobile devices, and key themes and initial findings were organized and documented in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for further analysis.

3.5. Data analysis

Reflexive thematic analysis was employed to examine qualitative data from individual interviews, aiming to uncover dominant themes and recurring patterns that encapsulate the participants' lived experiences. This analytical approach involves systematic organization, categorization, and interpretation of textual data, offering a structured yet adaptable framework for deriving meaning directly from participant narratives[47,48]. Its flexibility renders it particularly appropriate for exploratory research, as it permits themes to emerge organically without being constrained by predetermined theoretical models[49,50]. Braun and Clarke[51] introduced the method for reflexive thematic analysis (see **Figure 1**), which in this study involved: (1) familiarization with the data through repeated reading of transcripts; (2) generation of initial codes; (3) grouping of codes into potential themes; (4) reviewing and refining themes; (5) defining and naming themes; and (6) producing the final synthesis. Reflexivity was fundamental to this process, prompting researchers to engage critically with the data and reflect on their own positionality, not as a limitation but as a means of enriching depth[52,53]. In addition, an inductive method was adopted to mitigate researcher bias, ensuring that the themes remained grounded in participants' viewpoints[54,55]. These methods allowed themes to surface naturally, preserving the authenticity of participant narratives and yielding rich, context-sensitive interpretations[56].
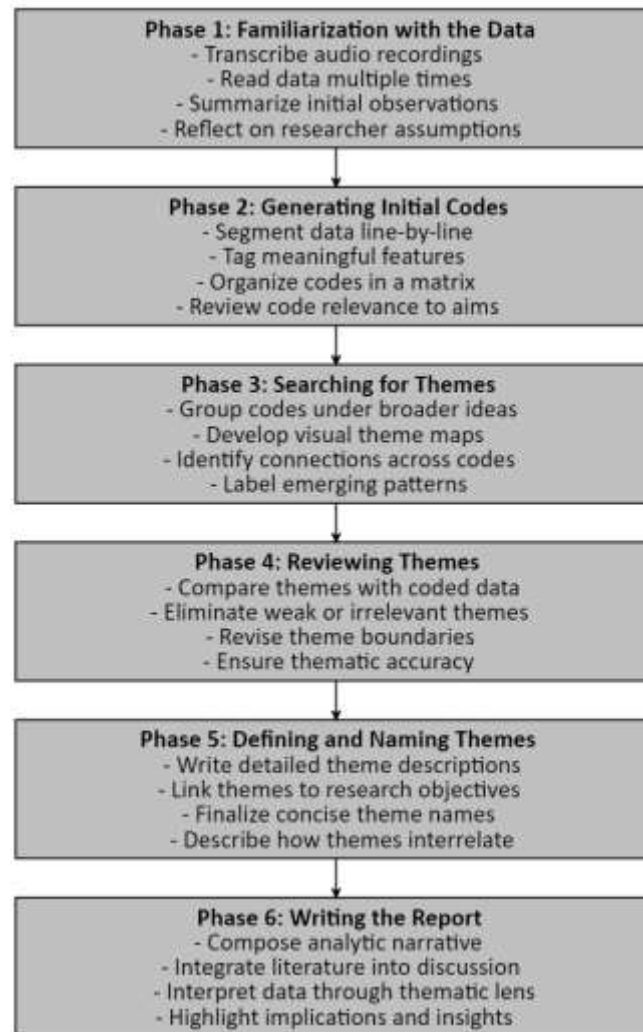
Phase 1: Familiarization with the Data
- Transcribe audio recordings
- Read data multiple times
- Summarize initial observations
- Reflect on researcher assumptions

Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes
- Segment data line-by-line
- Tag meaningful features
- Organize codes in a matrix
- Review code relevance to aims

Phase 3: Searching for Themes
- Group codes under broader ideas
- Develop visual theme maps
- Identify connections across codes
- Label emerging patterns

Phase 4: Reviewing Themes
- Compare themes with coded data
- Eliminate weak or irrelevant themes
- Revise theme boundaries
- Ensure thematic accuracy

Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes
- Write detailed theme descriptions
- Link themes to research objectives
- Finalize concise theme names
- Describe how themes interrelate

Phase 6: Writing the Report
- Compose analytic narrative
- Integrate literature into discussion
- Interpret data through thematic lens
- Highlight implications and insights

Figure 1. Workflow of reflexive thematic analysis

4. Results

Objective 1. To explore the specific learning styles and intentional practices employed by parents in building discipline and language acquisition in their children.

Theme 1: Impose Strictness

Parents believe that consistent and strict guidance is necessary for children to develop good study habits, respectful communication, and a sense of responsibility in using language correctly. The use of strictness is not framed as 'to punish', but rather as parenting practice to create structure and accountability in the learning process of their child.

> "Being firm with my child helps instill responsibility and proper use of language."

For example, a fixed schedule reduced distractions and created an expectation that studying and language learning were non-negotiable parts of daily life. This intentional structure trains the child to manage their time effectively while reinforcing consistent exposure to language.

> "I make sure my child follows a fixed schedule for studying and language learning every day."

> "We have house rules about screen time, especially when it affects their
> language development."

Similarly, they prioritized politeness and correctness, suggesting that language learning is not just about vocabulary but also about manners and context. The clarity of these rules reflects an intentional disciplinary approach to developing language etiquette.

> "Rules at home are clearly set, especially when it comes to using polite and
> proper language."

In some instances, parents had a corrective disciplinary approach to language errors, linking mistakes with appropriate consequences. This strategy was rooted in the belief that children could better retain correct usage when accountability was emphasized. Consequences were likely designed to be educational rather than punitive, serving as reminders to pay attention and take responsibility for their communication.

> "If my child uses incorrect words repeatedly, I impose consequences to help
> them learn discipline."

> "I do not tolerate interruptions or improper speech during conversations at
> home."

Parents believed that instilling discipline through firmness, routine, and rules helped create an environment where children could internalize proper language use and respectful communication. Many parents treated language learning not just as an academic task but as a life skill embedded in manners, etiquette, and responsibility. Their approach aimed to build respect, responsibility, and accuracy in their child's use of language through clearly established boundaries and expectations.

Theme 2: Repetition of Language Use

Parents recognized that repetition not only aided in memorization but also improved pronunciation, grammar, and fluency over time. The consistent exposure to familiar words, phrases, and expressions during daily interactions helped create a language-rich environment that supported natural learning. Repetition was not limited to passive recall but involved active engagement through speech, games, stories, and dialogue, making it both structured and meaningful.

For example, parents viewed everyday routines as ideal opportunities to reinforce specific language elements repeatedly. This repetition helped the child internalize the meaning and proper usage of these words and phrases without the need for formal instruction. The parent believed that when language was tied to real-life situations and repeated frequently, the child developed a stronger and more practical understanding of it.

> "I often repeat important phrases or vocabulary with my child during daily
> routines."

> "We practice the same greetings and polite expressions until they become
> natural to my child."

Furthermore, they acknowledged the cognitive benefits of repetition in vocabulary acquisition. Repeating new words across different contexts helped the child remember their meanings and apply them correctly in sentences. This process also allowed for natural correction of mispronunciations or misuses as the child heard and practiced the words more often. The parent saw repetition not just as rote learning but as a strategy for deepening understanding and building language fluency.

> "Consistent repetition helps my child remember and correctly use new words."

"We regularly review past lessons to reinforce language skills."

Flashcards and games provided a multisensory experience that made repetition engaging and memorable for the child. They believed that interactive repetition improved vocabulary retention by transforming learning into a dynamic activity rather than a passive task. This method also allowed the parent to track progress and adjust difficulty based on the child's responses.

"I use flashcards and repetitive games to help with vocabulary retention."

Some used repetition through storytelling to build the child's expressive and narrative language skills. Retelling required the child to recall key vocabulary, sequence events, and articulate thoughts using familiar structures. The frequent retelling of stories helped strengthen memory, sentence construction, and the use of descriptive language. They saw this as a way for the child to take ownership of language and apply it creatively.

"I encourage my child to retell stories or events in their own words as often as possible."

"Every day, I ask my child to describe their activities using complete sentences."

Theme 3: Supportive Environment

Rather than relying solely on correction or structured techniques, parents focused on building their children's self-esteem, motivation, and willingness to communicate by showing empathy, encouragement, and responsiveness. A supportive environment allows children to make mistakes without fear, engage in conversations freely, and view learning as an enjoyable and meaningful experience.

Most parents believed that it was important to communicate that making an effort and actively participating were just as valuable as achieving perfect results. This approach allowed the child to build self-confidence and reduced the anxiety commonly associated with language errors. When children felt encouraged, they were more likely to continue practicing and improving their skills over time. Active listening also modeled proper conversational behavior, such as turn-taking and respectful attention, which are essential aspects of language use.

"I always praise my child for trying to speak or read, even if they make mistakes."

"At home, we encourage open conversations, so my child feels confident in expressing themselves."

"I listen actively when my child speaks to make them feel that their words are valued."

In addition, affirmation in this context served as a motivational tool that reinforced the child's sense of accomplishment. This type of positive feedback helped the child associate language learning with emotional reward and parental approval. The parents recognized that emotional affirmation could be just as powerful as academic correction in shaping behavior and performance.

"I often affirm my child's efforts by telling them how proud I am of their progress."

Instead of reacting with frustration or harsh correction, the parent chose to respond with patience, ensuring that the child felt safe to make and learn from mistakes. This support helped reduce language

anxiety and built resilience in the child's learning journey. They think that patience, especially in challenging moments, was critical for long-term success and positive language associations.

> "When my child struggles with pronunciation or grammar, I help them patiently."

> "We create a positive space where learning language is seen as fun, not stressful."

Some believed that immersion in a text-rich and stimulating setting helped reinforce vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension skills. This intentional investment in materials showed that support extended beyond emotional encouragement to include concrete learning aids.

> "I make sure that our home has books and educational materials to support language learning."

Objective 2. To examine how parental involvement and disciplinary strategies influence the development of language learning habits and motivation among children.

Theme 1: Confidence

Confidence was cultivated through encouragement, emotional support, and the deliberate avoidance of punitive correction, allowing children to speak without fear of failure. When children felt safe, affirmed, and supported in their learning environment, they became more willing to express themselves, make mistakes, and grow from them. As a result, motivation increased, and language learning evolved from a task of performance into a process of exploration and self-expression.

> "Over time, I noticed that my child has become much more comfortable speaking in front of others."

Some parents observed that the child gradually overcame shyness and reluctance when engaging in conversations with others, particularly in public or group settings. This comfort with speaking indicated a boost in self-assurance and an internal shift from fear of judgment to trust in one's own ability.

> "Before, they used to hesitate and even whisper their answers, afraid of making mistakes. But after I started affirming their efforts and giving them space to speak freely at home, they now volunteer more often in class and are not afraid to speak up even if their grammar isn't perfect."

Through consistent affirmation and by allowing space for open, mistake-friendly communication, the parent helped the child build courage and autonomy in language expression. The shift from hesitation to active participation revealed that confidence was not innate but developed through supportive strategies and repeated practice. The child's willingness to engage, even imperfectly, showed that motivation and growth were fostered more by encouragement than by correction alone.

> "They now approach language tasks with a sense of pride rather than fear."

> "Instead of shutting down when they don't know how to say something, they now try to work around it, use similar words, or ask for help."

Parents noted that the child's confidence extended beyond vocabulary or grammar, it also involved a mindset of growth and self-worth. This belief system allowed the child to approach language learning with optimism and curiosity rather than fear of failure. Encouragement helped instill the idea that improvement was always possible, making learning a hopeful and empowering journey.

"Their confidence isn't just about using words. It's about believing they have the ability to improve and be understood."

"They now face language challenges with a more positive and resilient attitude."

Theme 2: Strengthen Technical Skills

Parents observed that consistent practice, correction, and reinforcement of rules helped their children become more precise and mindful in both spoken and written communication. Disciplinary strategies such as reviewing work, providing structured feedback, and setting language-related expectations helped children internalize the technical components of language use. Over time, these strategies resulted in children exhibiting more control and accuracy in their expression, as they developed habits of editing, organizing thoughts, and self-monitoring.

"I started noticing that my child is now able to construct longer, more complete sentences when speaking, even if they're just telling a story about their day.

Some parents observed that, unlike before, the child now displayed an active awareness of verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, and sentence structure while speaking or writing. The habit of self-correction indicated that the child no longer relied solely on external feedback but had begun to internalize linguistic standards. This development was made possible through consistent parental correction delivered in a non-punitive and constructive manner.

"What's different now is that they pay attention to grammar more consciously, and they even self-correct sometimes."

"They've developed a habit of thinking before speaking, which has strengthened their overall communication skills."

Similarly, their children had learned to approach writing not just as a way to express ideas but as a skill requiring structure, accuracy, and proper mechanics. This change emerged from different pratices, such as reviewing written work, giving feedback, and encouraging drafts. Parents attributed this behavioral shift to the structured and supportive practices they consistently reinforced at home.

"One thing I've really seen change is how careful my child has become when writing."

"They used to write very short answers with lots of errors, but now they check their spelling, structure their thoughts better, and ask questions about punctuation."

"The awareness of technical accuracy is something I believe came from our constant practice and reminders."

Theme 3: Improve Frequency of Language Use

Parents reported that the more they integrated language into routines, conversations, and even play, the more their children initiated and engaged in communication independently. The improvement in frequency reflected both increased comfort with the language and a greater sense of motivation to use it, suggesting that language learning became embedded in the child's everyday behavior.

"Lately, I've noticed that they are using the language more naturally and voluntarily, even when not required."

Parents no longer needed to prompt or require the child to speak in the target language, as it had become a natural part of their self-expression. This voluntary use indicated that language was no longer tied to a

specific task but was now a preferred medium for communication in daily life. They attributed this development to the continuous exposure and reinforcement of the language through meaningful engagement at home.

> "For example, they started narrating what they're doing during chores or asking questions using English, without being prompted."

> "I think this came from our repeated practice and the habit of incorporating language into everyday situations."

The child no longer waited to be addressed but took the lead in starting conversations, indicating higher comfort, curiosity, and confidence in using the language. The parents likely encouraged open dialogue at home, making it a safe space for the child to explore thoughts and practice speaking without fear.

> "One of the biggest changes I observed was how often my child now initiates conversations."

The parents also observed that the child was not only initiating conversations but also bringing in language acquired from other contexts, such as media and literature. This showed that the child had developed the habit of language transfer using learned words in new, meaningful ways.

> "Before, they were very passive and would only respond when asked, but now they ask questions, share stories, and even use words they've picked up from books or shows."

> "The frequency of their language use has increased not because we forced it, but because we created more chances for them to use it meaningfully."

It is important to note that these findings pertain specifically to parental practices in English language learning within the Filipino context and may not be directly generalizable to the acquisition of other languages.

5. Discussion

Families today face considerable pressure to secure their children's material, educational, and social well-being within the context of an increasingly globalized, neoliberal society, wherein education serves the demands of an economic system that prioritizes the development of competent human capital through strategic investment.

This study explored the practices of Filipino parents in instilling discipline towards the English language learning. The findings revealed that parents adopted strictness, repetitive engagement and the building of a supportive environment to enhance their children's discipline and language acquisition. These practices led to improvements in children's confidence, technical language skills, and the frequency of language use.

Vygotsky's social development theory emphasizes that knowledge is constructed through social interactions and shaped by cultural contexts[57]. In line with Vygotsky's emphasis on social interaction as a cornerstone of learning, the findings show that Filipino parents actively create a social context for English acquisition through structured routines and supportive engagement. However, it is crucial to recognize that while these pedagogical strategies are effective for English in this specific family context, they may need to be adapted for languages with greater structural, social, or cultural complexities. The effectiveness of learning models often depends on strategies that are tailored to the specific language and the learner's environment[9]. This intentional parental involvement, which balances firm discipline with emotional support,

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plays a significant role in enhancing children's English language acquisition. Within this theoretical lens, parental involvement is seen as a critical factor in facilitating children's learning and overall educational growth[58]. As active contributors, parents are drivers of child's cognitive development by participating in purposeful and meaningful exchanges that support the learning process[59]. In this study, Filipino parents showed proactiveness in taking part in their children's development towards English language learning. They demonstrated intentional involvement by creating structured learning routines, incorporating English into daily conversations, and providing access to language-rich materials such as books, educational games, and media. Their efforts reflected not only a desire to enhance their children's academic success but also an awareness of English as a tool for future social mobility and global competitiveness.

For example, Filipino parents engaged their children in meaningful and natural day-to-day interaction to boost their skills in English language use. Vygotsky[57] asserted that learning is inherently a social process, rooted in continuous interactions between individuals and their environments. He proposed that cognitive development arises through dynamic exchanges with others, particularly in the context of culturally meaningful activities. For children, knowledge is acquired through active engagement and communication with both people and their surroundings[60]. A parent believed that notable changes in language use can be linked to *"...repeated practice and the habit of incorporating language into everyday situations."* Such routines not only reinforce vocabulary and sentence structure but also help children build confidence in using the language naturally. Likewise, when language is embedded in daily tasks, it becomes more functional and relevant to the child, promoting sustained interest, strong language discipline and deeper retention.

Importantly, a supportive home environment is essential for maximizing children's learning potential. Mokal and Ahmad[61] noted that children thrive best under authoritative parenting styles, characterized by warmth with structure, rather than under authoritarian approaches marked by verbal hostility or psychological control. Positive parent-child interactions could help in building motivation, discipline, and academic persistence[62,63]. Creating a nurturing yet structured environment enables children to feel secure, supported, and more invested in their own learning[64]. In language learning at home, being strict is most effective when paired with encouragement and emotional safety, allowing children to take risks in using the language without fear of punishment. One parent emphasized that *"[being] firm with my child helps instill responsibility and proper use of language."* Parents who set clear expectations, while still affirming effort and progress, help build linguistic competence, language confidence and discipline.

Furthermore, positive discipline emphasizes children's need for belonging and encourages parents to guide behavior through mutual respect, empathy, and structure[61]. It reframes misbehavior as a response to discouragement or mistaken beliefs about how to gain acceptance, and promotes techniques like encouragement, democratic family meetings, and experiential learning to build connection and responsibility[65]. This approach aligns closely with authoritative parenting, particularly in showing warmth, setting clear expectations, and promoting emotional growth[66,67]. Authoritative caregivers tend to be highly responsive and provide both abundant learning materials and emotional encouragement, which in turn builds stronger learning motivation in children and enhances their academic achievement[67]. Parents maintained structured routines such as fixed study schedules and screen time limitations, while ensuring these rules were implemented with care, not harshness. For example, requiring daily language practice was seen as non-negotiable, yet done to build consistency rather than control. They engaged in shared reading, story retelling, and dialogue that were both instructive and emotionally nurturing, which are hallmarks of an authoritative approach that integrates guidance, encouragement, and autonomy for English language learning.

The findings had implications to how parental involvement influence English language learning and improve students' language confidence. This study emphasized the need for educational programs and policy frameworks that acknowledge and reinforce the role of families in facilitating language acquisition. Teachers and school systems could benefit from encouraging partnerships with parents by offering workshops on effective home language strategies rooted in positive discipline and authoritative parenting.

In addition, government and community organizations might develop culturally responsive parenting resources that help families incorporate structured yet empathetic approaches to learning at home. The findings advocate for a holistic educational ecosystem in which home environments are intentionally cultivated to reinforce school learning, particularly in developing English language proficiency as a tool for future academic and socioeconomic success.

6. Conclusion

This study examined the specific learning styles and intentional practices employed by Filipino parents to cultivate discipline in their children's English language learning, as well as the influence of these practices on the development of language learning habits and motivation. The findings identified three primary approaches: the imposition of structured discipline through clearly defined rules and routines, the reinforcement of language skills through consistent repetition in daily activities, and the creation of a supportive home environment that integrates firmness with encouragement. Collectively, these strategies contributed to marked improvements in children's confidence, technical language proficiency, and frequency of English use.

The results affirm that parental involvement is not a peripheral aspect of language education but a foundational element in shaping children's linguistic competence, study habits, and motivation. By embedding English in everyday interactions, modeling appropriate language use, and providing consistent guidance, parents transform the home into an extension of the learning environment, thereby reinforcing and complementing formal instruction.

The principal implication of this research is that intentional, balanced parental strategies—combining discipline with emotional support—can sustain and enhance language development beyond the classroom. For educators, the findings underscore the value of fostering collaborative partnerships with parents to reinforce school-based learning. For policymakers, the study offers evidence to inform the design of culturally responsive programs and resources that strengthen home-based language learning practices. Ultimately, fostering discipline in language acquisition entails not rigid enforcement, but the deliberate cultivation of structured, supportive, and motivating conditions in which children can achieve both linguistic and academic growth.

Future research may build on this study by examining how similar parental strategies function in the learning of other languages, or by comparing home-based practices across different cultural and linguistic contexts. Longitudinal studies could also explore how the discipline-oriented yet supportive approaches identified here influence language proficiency over time. Additionally, quantitative investigations may complement these qualitative findings by measuring the extent to which specific parental practices predict language learning outcomes.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest

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