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The Benefits of Media and Entertainment in Creating Low-Anxiety Learning Environments for Early Language Acquisition: A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

The cognitive development period is at its zenith during one's early childhood, especially in language acquisition. This study aims to inspect the direct benefits of media and entertainment exposure on second language acquisition among young learners by employing Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982). It investigates the notion that media and entertainment used in instructions and low-anxiety activities may lead to better language acquisition of multidisciplinary than that of the traditional counterparts. A literature review of recent publications was conducted to document and attest the Affective Filter hypothesis. The findings show that there are major benefits of the employment of entertainment for informal learning activities in terms of better vocabulary, polished pronunciation, improved sentence structure and comprehension. This emphasises the importance of the use of entertainment as one of the major fundamentals to build the foundation of English proficiency (function over form) among young learners in preparation for the future years of schooling. This research encourages further investigations into the other factors in a holistic manner in influencing early language acquisition trajectories among young children.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the modern area of second language acquisition (SLA), the embedded nature of digital media and entertainment has become the foundation of the revolutionised pedagogical practice designed to be facilitating early language acquisition among young learners. Historically speaking, the implementation of foreign language proficiency was predominantly traditional, teacher-centred and static instructional models. This can be exemplified with rote recitation or presentation of written vocabulary on blackboards, which frequently caused alarmingly high level of cognitive issues such as anxiety, boredom and lack of

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interest among learners (Almawadeh, 2025; Tang, 2023). However, modern language learning theories, mainly those built upon Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982, 1985), theorise that early language acquisition is highly augmented when learners are exposed to highly comprehensible, authentic input combined with low-anxiety surroundings and stimulating environment. These mitigates the discussed cognitive issues and emotional hindrances such as stress, inhibition and fear of failure (Salah Elfeitouri, 2025; Tang, 2023).

Under the hood of the Affective Filter Hypothesis, the current scenario of this field of interest has encountered a paradigm shift toward some particular keywords such as 'amusement exposure' and 'infotainment'. These are approaches that combine information and entertainment to cultivate, cognitively-speaking, engagement, sustainability of attention as well as mitigating learners' affective filters (Amin, 2024; Nusrath Fatima Researcher et al., 2022a). Some research has empirically established that the frequent yet voluntary exposure to audio-visual media such as English cartoons, children's films, YouTube contents, interactive songs and digital games has served as a gold mine of authentic and highly comprehensible input. This vocabulary addition/enhancement, pronunciation, sentence structure and overall language comprehension (Almawadeh, 2025; Pujiani et al., 2022a). By presenting language within this dynamic, culturally vibrant and aligns well with children's humour, digital media and entertainment transforms the language instruction from a passive and rigid into an active, enjoyable and memorable experience (Vijayaratnam et al., 2025).

Though, in spite of the positive potential of entertainment media with all the discussed benefits such as lowers anxiety and improves engagement in class, some issues could not be ignored. To exemplify, some scenarios that involve unguided and unmonitored implementation of digital media which could result in passive viewing without any benefit to be gained, pedagogically speaking. In some more severe cases, this also heightens the risks of exposing children to age-inappropriate content, cultural alienation/racism and inhibits the capability to communicate in verbal-to-verbal interactions. This can hinder pragmatic language development (Sundqvist et al., 2021). Furthermore, this creates a potential critical tension in early childhood education's classrooms, where it is between the theoretical benefits of media-enhanced learning and the practical challenges of selection, adaptation and structuring these potential resources to ensure they cultivate low-anxiety, highly interactive language acquisition process. Despite of all of the expanding body of literature on the benefits of digital media and entertainment in English Language Teaching, several research gaps remain unsolved which prevent the full incorporation of them into a fully comprehensive and holistic early childhood language programs/activities.

To begin, while detailed studies have documented the positive outcomes of media tools such as movies or cartoons on localised primary school cohorts in very specific geographical environments such as Jordan, Libya and Bangladesh (Almawadeh, 2025; Salah Elfeitouri, 2025; Vijayaratnam et al., 2025), there is still a distinct lack of systematic synthesis which examine the modalities of varied digital media contents (cartoons, YouTube videos, digital games and music) collectively function to mitigate language learning anxiety during the critical period of early childhood (Gürsoy, 2011; Tang, 2023). Secondly, though previous research has emphasised on specific involvements, such as digital game-based vocabulary learning (Nusrath Fatima Researcher et al., 2022b) or movie-based pedagogical approach (Pavithra & Gandhimathi, 2024), there is a lingering disregard of the broader multi-modal 'media and entertainment' ecosystem and its specific role in creating low-anxiety, low-stress environments made-to-order to the cognitive and affective requirements of learners under the age of six (Gürsoy, 2011; Tang, 2023).

Thirdly, the current scenes in this area of interest highlight a noticeable discrepancy in the development of solid theoretical and conceptual frameworks that can be the reference crux for curriculum creators and instructors in migrating from passive media implementation to active, communicative and socially aligned interaction (Pujiani et al., 2022a; Vijayaratnam et al., 2025). Researchers highlighted that mainstream media consumption or digital media exposure alone could not guarantee humanly possible language acquisition, or rather, is the interactive turn-taking and active adult guidance (known as joint media engagement), that support learners' comprehension and close in the gap between active and passive reception and active verbal output (Salah Elfeitouri, 2025). As a consequence, without a comprehensive systematic review that

combines existing empirical data on both the language achievements and affective effects of guided media and entertainment, instructors only possess evidence-based strategies/procedures to create low-anxiety pedagogical spaces that effectively harness the true potential of media and entertainment for early language acquisition.

To solve these serious gaps in the existing literature on the field of interest, this study aims to present a systematic literature review which has the objective to investigate the current effectiveness of media and entertainment exposures in cultivating low-anxiety learning environments for early language acquisition for young learners. Specifically speaking, this research is guided by two primary research objectives: 1) to systematically identify, screen and synthesize empirical research from past decade by investigating the function of media and entertainment in mitigating young learners' affective filters and anxiety in the classroom; 2) to categorise and evaluate the effectiveness of different media sub-modalities that includes cartoons, movies, digital games and interactive songs in enhancing early vocabulary acquisition and oral fluency. The prominent significance of this study is profound for university instructors, preschool teachers and curriculum planners by establishing a rigorous mixture of empirical data. This review provides concrete and realistically actionable guidance for instructors to selectively choose the culturally appropriate, safe media and entertainment and educational objectives and thus mitigating the passive the teacher-centred approach.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The emotional and psychological dimension of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in early childhood education heavily facilitated by the affective conditional of the young learner. It is a notion theoretically embedded in Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (Harashchuk, 2024). The aforementioned early childhood education signifies a significant and critical milestone for language development which is characterised by high neurobiological plasticity and an innate Language Acquisition Device (LAD) that enables a subconscious and natural language acquisition (Elfeitouri, 2025; Harashchuk, 2024). According to Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982), second language acquisition is optimised when young learners are exposed to comprehensible input (denoted as $i+1$) in a low anxiety, scaffolding and enjoyable surroundings (Bhanu, 2023). Negative affective variables such as classroom anxiety, lack of self-esteem, stress and low motivation will raise emotional filter. The filter can act as a hindering psychological barrier that blocks the aforementioned comprehensible input. On the other hand, when young learners are exposed to the target language in a voluntary, interest-adjacent and emotionally secure contexts or environment, their affective filter is drastically lowered which enables language acquisition to occur naturally, spontaneously and more effective.

Historically-speaking, early language instruction as a second or foreign language has heavily relied on traditional, teacher-centred and rigorous grammatical drill methods. For example, copying static vocabulary from blackboards which commonly induces cognitive issues such as mental fatigue, boredom and very high communicative anxiety among young learners (Mendez et al., 2025). To counter these issues and limitations, modern and revised language instruction has witnessed a distinct transition toward 'amusement exposure' and 'infotainment', which combine educational concepts with media and entertainment (Wang, 2020). Furthermore, embedding multimedia tools such as educational yet fun cartoons, children's movies or songs and educational games can provide more language contexts and linguistic input that transforms the classroom from being rigid, rigorous and high-anxiety into a 'playground class' (Ghazy et al., 2021; Pujiani et al., 2022b; Vijayaratnam et al., 2025). By integrating English vocabularies with entertaining, dynamic and appealing narratives/concept, these digital instruction approach can sustain and maintain young learners' short attention spans, eliminate classroom anxiety and cultivating positive and comfortable attitudes toward L2 communication (Almawadeh, 2025; Amelia, 2016; Mendez et al., 2025)

The psychological mechanism which underlies this media-infused and low-anxiety learning is very compatible with Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) notion behind the Flow State. It describes a condition of deep cognitive absorption and focused enjoyment where a young learner's skills are seamlessly balanced against the challenge of the workload of the activities (Tang, 2023). As for digital game-based learning

(GBL) and collaborative digital platforms, young learners commonly and frequently enter a state of ‘flow’ because these situations/environments offer immediate sensory feedback, repetitive autonomous practice and a high degree of user control (Li, 2007; Tang, 2023). The immersion aligns well with Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) which suggests that allowing young learners the much-needed autonomy to choose their preferred media and entertainment materials (YouTube videos, songs or cartoons of choice) augments their intrinsic motivation, cognitive persistence and emotional investment in the language (Li, 2007; Widiantari & Dewi, 2023). In this self-controlled and regulated game-based settings, the instructional focus is often subliminal and less visible which creates a ‘safe environment’ for the young learners to play and practice English language elements without any fear and anxiety as well as acquiring new vocabulary indirectly (Li, 2007; Tang, 2023).

From a cognitive processing perspective, the success of the low-anxiety exposure of media and entertainment is also explained via Richard Mayer’s Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (2001), also known as CTM. It theorises that the human brain possesses separate visual and auditory processing conduits and that combining synchronised verbal and visual inputs produces meaningfully deeper comprehension than presenting them individually or in isolation (Mendez et al., 2025). Educational use of media and entertainment tactically manifests on this dual-channel processing by pairing animated physical actions with corresponding verbal descriptors, background songs and subtle text (Amin, 2024; Mendez et al., 2025). This multimodal harmonisation mitigates the inessential cognitive load on working memory which also act as a vital cognitive scaffolding. This is also known as Vygotsky Zone of Proximal Development (1978) where it makes abstract and foreign terms highly concrete and accessible (McLeod, 2024). As a consequence, young learners can intuitively associate verbal words with visual objectification/context, allowing them to decode meaning and build strong linguistic representations without experiencing cognitive overload or stress (Amin, 2024; Mendez et al., 2025).

Empirical evidence synthesised across global contexts highlights the meaningful impacts of early media and entertainment exposures on the acquisition of vocabulary and comprehension from listening. To exemplify, in Taiwan, Tang (2020) has established that young learners learn autonomously via the use of tablets for driving games which yielded significant vocabulary gains (average post-test scores soaring to 84.87% from 7.24%). This dramatically outperformed traditional flashcard instruction groups in the same study. This result is also supported by Saputra et al.’s (2021) systematic review of 30 studies, which confirmed that Game-Based Learning effectively and meaningfully cultivates vocabulary learning while mitigating anxiety. Alternatively, In Libya, Elfeitouri (2025) conducted a longitudinal case study of a young learner (2 years old) who was exposed to daily educational cartoons. The study demonstrated that the young learner acquired advanced expressive vocabularies (words such as ‘diagnosis’, ‘check-up’ and ‘feel better’) and developed a native-like American accent and intonation; which were entirely absent prior the study. Additionally, meta-analytic findings by Chow et al. (2022) which involved 4,401 subjects has established a solid positive correlation between young learners’ English receptive vocabulary and both home digital learning resources and direct parental instructional involvement. In accumulation to lexical growth, guided media exposure gives a transformative and meaningful effect on oral fluency, speaking proficiency and mitigation of anxiety in communicating.

Alternatively, in Jordan, Almadadneh (2025) explored the effect of cartoon-based instruction on Year 4 EFL learners through a 12-week program. It yielded the result of significantly higher score in post-test oral fluency (mean score of 6.74) compared to the traditional control group (mean score of 2.14). It also highlighted distinct improvements in the speed of articulation, lexical recall and sentence creation. This productivity in proficiency is further cultivated due to the young learners’ high motivation to mirror their favourite cartoon characters’ pronunciation which leads to spontaneous gains in English phonological accuracy (Vijayarathnam et al., 2025). Furthermore, studies indicate that anxiety in communication is significantly reduced by collaborative digital games that foster immediate verbal interactions or through vlogging activities. These provide a comfortable and remote groundwork process which positively lessens anxiety in speaking among young learners (Amin, 2024).

Though, a critical agreement in the empirical literature is that solitary exposure of media and entertainment is highly limited and can obstruct development, emphasising that optimal pedagogical benefit only transpires through social mediation. In a seminal Swedish study that implemented Language Environment Analysis (LENA) recordings of 2-year-old learners, Sundqvist et al. (2021) discovered that solitary consumption of entertainment on televisions was negatively correlated with the development of vocabulary and grammar. It is instead; vocabulary, grammar and pragmatic competence were strongly and positively related/linked with turn-taking in conversations as well as Joint Media Engagement or co-consumption. In this process, parents or instructors actively co-view, discuss and scaffold young learners with the language used in the entertainment material (Sundqvist et al., 2021). Parental ‘technoference’ or digital distractions during routines was also undesirably related to linguistic growth. Hence, while media and entertainment tools are very effective in the reduction of affective filter, early childhood instructors as well as parents must establish a strict and transparent boundaries in terms of screen-time and content selections paired with non-violent digital resources with constant scaffolding, co-viewing and conversational turn-taking which are to ensure long-term communicative development and sustainability (Elfeitouri, 2025; Sundqvist et al., 2021; Vijayaratnam et al., 2025).

3. METHOD

This study endeavours to examine the degree of English language acquisition among young learners in the engagement in structured activities that involve media and entertainment. The research also aims to address the cognitive issues caused traditional and conventional instruction methods that consist of high anxiety level among young learners, passive rote memorisation and mental fatigue. This is done by presenting viable and high-efficacy alternatives (Ghazy et al., 2021; Pavithra & Gandhimathi, 2024; Siddiqui, 2022). By replacing passive and teacher-centred with dynamic, interactive and play-based activities, the pedagogical framework created through categorisation of past studies aim to increase academic and general awareness of these alternative approaches which are arguably more suitable in English language acquisition among young learners.

To systematically lower the young learners’ affective filters, the study categorised three primary entertainment modalities integrated in the instructional design, namely educational cartoons, children’s songs and interactive games (Almawadeh, 2025; Mendez et al., 2025; Tang, 2023). To methodically evaluate Krashen’s Affective Filter Hypothesis, a systematic review of literature published between 2020 and 2025 was implemented. This bibliographic documentation was conducted by exploring and selecting specific databases which consist of Scopus and Web of Science (WoS). This specifically targeted documents possession and analysis was calculated and established to fulfil the following research question:

- (i) How beneficial is the elements of media and entertainment (educational cartoons, children’s songs and interactive games) in lowering young learners’ affective filters for English language acquisition?

In this process of systematically reviewing the current literature, the researchers employed the checklist that of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020). This is to standardise the findings holistically and ensure the discussions to be all-inclusive. The checklist that of PRISMA 2020’s consists of four comprehensive stages namely Stage 1 (identification), Stage 2 (screening), Stage 3 (eligibility) and Stage 4 (inclusion).

Stage 1: Identification

Examination on the most recent research articles on Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) database had been conducted by the researchers. Exemplifications of the highlighted prominent keywords consist of “digital entertainment, English language acquisition, young learners, kindergarten students, informal activities, cartoons and songs”, in which they were employed to find the relevant articles.

The steps of prominence of this review included the assortment of the related articles through a holistic search and implementation of addition and exclusion factors in the process of selection prior to the analysis.

These steps were employed to determine the value of the past research in accordance to the relevance to the research question and the impact of the findings.

Stage 2: Screening

This stage involved examining and excluding identical articles from Scopus and Web of Science (WoS). Subsequently, the selected papers were appraised to measure if they meet the addition/exclusion factors.

Stage 3: Eligibility

This phase focused on choosing the filtered articles that concerned the research question which involved the use of digital entertainment in informal learning activities that aid English language acquisition for young learners. The inclusion criteria for the article selection consisted of: (a) the article was published between 2020 to 2025, (b) the article was published on English language acquisition for young learners, and (c) the article was related to the use of digital entertainment as the medium/platform of instruction via fun activities for young children.

Stage 4: Exclusion

In this stage, excluded articles that did not meet the criteria were discarded. Some of the irrelevance of the excluded papers consisted of the studies targeted languages aside from English, different demography and contexts.

3.1 Charting the Process of Selection

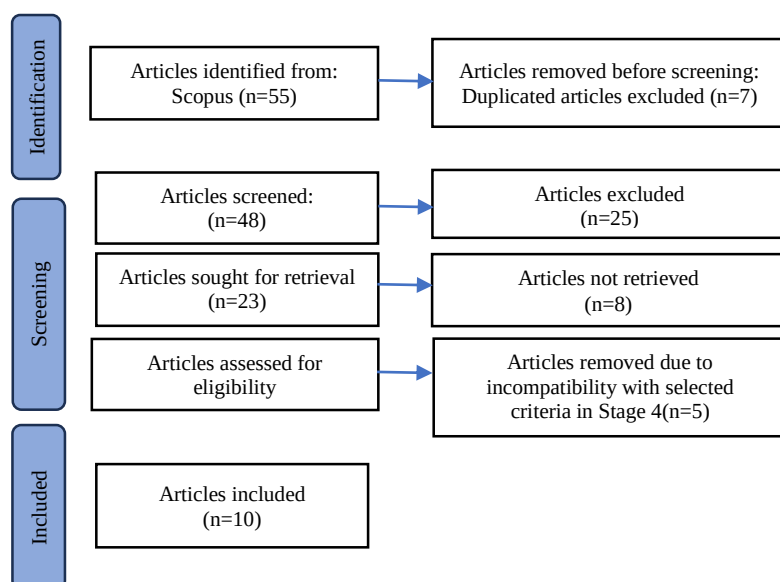


Fig. 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram

4. FINDING & DISCUSSION

The research endeavours to review the current literature in regards to the benefits of media and entertainment in creating low-anxiety learning environments for early language acquisition. The authors chose various articles that emphasis on different approaches in terms of the use of media and entertainment in the effort to inculcate English language acquisition among young learners. The articles are presented below:

Table 1. Finding and Discussion of Selected Articles

Authors	Purpose	Methodology	Key Highlights	Results
Tang (2020)	To examine the differences in terms of the effectiveness between using Game-Based Learning (GBL) and traditional approach on young learners' vocabulary addition.	A quantitative design via experimental approach was conducted in this research on young learners. (n=38)	The study commenced using flash-cards and car-driving games in lessons which were informal in nature. This was to monitor the extent of vocabulary addition compared to the traditional lessons. Additionally, this procedure was implemented with variables in mind, such as interest and anxiety level among young learners.	The pre-test and post-test results of English vocabulary rate/level in the study were profoundly different, 7.24% and 84.87% respectively. The variables such as interest and anxiety level among the learners were greatly improved by employing thrilling elements in the lesson.
Alfi, Livia, Rezki & Hanna (2021)	To measure the effectiveness of digital game-based activities on language acquisition among young learners.	The methodology of this research was that of qualitative where content analysis was conducted that consisted of 85 articles from different databases. Relevant studies were chosen to be reviewed. (n=30)	The study conducted to review the implementation trend of digital game-based activities in recent studies and its effectiveness in English language acquisition. The variables were the type of environment, level of interest and literacy improvement.	The studies have proved that the trend of implementing digital game-based activities for young children surged due to its benefits such as lowering anxiety, entertaining and stimulating learners' interest to finish the pronunciation tasks given.
Tri, Windy & Neila (2022)	To find out the effectiveness of animated cartoons as online platform for English language learning among young children.	The methodology of the research was qualitative with a descriptive approach. It involved learners from a kindergarten whom were chosen based on cluster random sampling. (n=25)	The learners were exposed to animated cartoons to mitigate learning anxiety and provide a low-stress environment. This was done to expose children to vocabulary and pronunciation via an alternative learning approach.	The learners were keener on learning and interested in following the lesson. This informal approach improved learners' language comprehension span, interest and concretise abstract ideas.
Syeda & Samir (2022)	To measure the effect of the implementation of infotainment in the process of facilitating language acquisition.	The study employed mixed method research design where the use of questionnaires and interviews were used on participants. (n=40)	The implementation of videos, podcasts and online games in learning activities was established to monitor any improvements on vocabulary acquisition, listening skills, reading comprehension and speaking proficiency.	The participants have agreed on the effectiveness of infotainment on the targeted components where the infotainment provided more contexts on how to write the language. Infotainment provided real-world information and language usage.

Ida, Ni & Luh (2023)	To measure the effectiveness of establishing YouTube as the alternative learning media for autonomous learning for young children.	The methodology of this study was that of the qualitative approach where systematic literature review was conducted on relevant articles. (n=45)	The articles chosen discussed the benefits of wide-ranging videos on YouTube that could be tailored by each autonomous learners to be exposed of the language based on their interests.	There were a few notable benefits of implementing YouTube as the alternative learning media for autonomous young learners such as great language experience, interaction and pronunciation practices. These lower anxiety level in a conducive environment.
Rashid (2024)	To measure the improvement of reading skills by the use of songs in learning activities among kindergarten students.	The methodology employed is that of the quantitative approach that consisted of pre-test and post-test on six-year-olds in a kindergarten. (n=15)	After the pre-test to measure initial proficiency, the kindergarten learners were required to sing various English songs in learning activities for a few weeks and the post-test was conducted to measure improvement of their reading skills.	The results of the pre and post-tests conducted showed an improvement in reading skills among the learners in terms of word recognition, pronunciation and vocabulary addition.
Nasrullah & Saifuddin (2024)	To measure the effectiveness of amusement exposures such as cartoons, songs and animations for language acquisition on young ESL learners.	The methodology involved qualitative design, where a systematic literature review was conducted. Some of recent and suitable articles were chosen to be reviewed. (n=30)	The articles chosen were holistic in terms of the English component covered by the exposure of amusement. The amusement mitigated anxiety and created a fun and conducive informal learning environment by using music and cartoons.	There were a few benefits on language components based on the exposure of amusement on the learners' language comprehension and reduced their stress. Hence, more effective language acquisition via informal learning.
Phawani et al. (2025)	To examine the influence and effects of watching cartoons on young learners' English acquisition/improvement.	The methodology employed for this study is mixed method, by using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews for preschoolers and their parents. Preschoolers (n=20) Parents (n=20)	The respondents were chosen based on their less fortunate socioeconomic background and the children were exposed to near-extensive amount of cartoon exposure at home and school to examine the improvement of general English acquisition and cognitive development.	Cartoons have a noteworthy effect on preschoolers' language acquisition and cognitive development. The preschoolers have the ability and confidence to express themselves, form sentences and recognise shapes and colours.
Nofah (2025)	To examine the effect of cartoons on young children's oral fluency in autonomous activities	The methodology involved a quantitative approach via quasi-experimental design were implemented on young learners of Grade 4 EFL classes. (n=42)	The researcher compared the traditional and implementation of cartoons approaches on two different groups of students. The latter involved fluency skills in the form of listening, speaking and reading activities.	The post-test results showed significant differences between the two approaches, where the use of cartoons greatly aided the development of speaking fluency for young learners.

Mendez et al. (2025)	To measure the usefulness of audiovisual media on the addition of English vocabulary among young children,	A qualitative research design was conducted on participants via a non-experimental descriptive approach. (n=25)	The study employed audiovisual media elements in lessons, such as music and videos, in order to document the interaction and level of interest among the participants in their natural context. This is to monitor their general participation compared to traditional lesson approach.	The use of music and videos in lessons yielded a significant level of participation among the young learners due to their joyful nature, whereby they indirectly learn new vocabularies and improved pronunciations. This is due to the interest level that affected their learning effectiveness.
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From the analysis above, there are 10 studies which adhered to the established criteria were selected in the Inclusion Step based on the PRISMA Flow Diagram. The articles were selected and grouped based on the current research's concern, which is the benefits of employing media and entertainment to aid the English language acquisition in early childhood education for young learners. The table above conveys the general overviews of the selected articles which include the authors, research aims, methodologies (a mix of quantitative, qualitative and mixed), key highlights and the impacts. Originated from various countries all over the world, this compilation provides general picture of the benefits of employing digital media and entertainment in early childhood education on young learners' English language acquisition.

As mentioned above, the current research has detailed some of the prominent areas in which the use of cartoons, songs, infotainment and video platforms as informal teaching and learning activities can benefit. The areas of concern in English language acquisition consist of vocabulary addition/enhancement, pronunciation, sentence structure and overall language comprehension. These components can be directly influenced by the young learners' level of interest and the stress and anxiety level of the learning environment (classroom environment, teacher's approaches etc.) The freedom to interact, explore and engage in conversation that aligns with their interest, which can be seen when children sing along to their favourite songs, can indirectly make them closer to the desired English language acquisition (Sundqvist et al., 2021).

As of the discussion above, the current research aims to explore the benefits of media and entertainment on young learners' vocabulary, pronunciation, sentence structure and language comprehension. Vocabulary is arguably the most important basis needed for young learners to acquire the language. In accordance to Tang (2020), the researcher claims that vocabulary is the first step towards a more complex usage of English language. This is critical in building the reading repertoire among children in terms of word recognition and various contextual meanings of words. By employing Game-Based Learning (GBL) in teachers' instructional approach, it has been proved vocabulary addition can be autonomously and seemingly unconsciously happen when children enjoy singing, pronouncing words in the games and engaging in games.

The relationship between interest/low anxiety level and language acquisition can be directly influence each other. Apart from that, the research also mentions that the long-term retention of the vocabularies can be sustained due to the recognition of the words with visual clues if encountered in the future. Mendez et al. (2025) and Rashid (2024) also supported this notion in their research, whereby incorporating music videos and singing session in informal learning activities can captivate the young learners by memorising the fascinating shapes, movement and any other unique-to-the-children visuals that accompanied the songs. The combinations of components such as language and motor skills, which the latter are prominent in early childhood education, can also aid in the retention of newly found words from the entertainment-aided activities.

Interestingly, this can also be applied to pronunciation as well, where pronunciation can also be improved by the implementation of media and entertainment (Ida, Ni & Luh, 2023). The study indicates that YouTube can be used in the classroom in a variety of ways, such as asking students to comment on a

specific video or to provide details, discuss, engage in discussion, as well as provide answers. Moreover, digital learning materials also provide students with a dependable prospect to intermingle in class, express opinions, and keep improving their pronunciation. Alfi, Livia, Rezki & Hanna (2021) also mentioned in their studies that digital learning materials, similar to YouTube, can also expose different ways of pronouncing words in accordance to different regional accents. Nofah (2025) also concluded that cartoons and animations can aid students to speak the language in different tones and styles in accordance to different emotions and intentions.

In terms of sentence structure, or what makes a sentence complete, it can also be exposed via entertainment and digital learning materials. Based on the study, Syeda & Samir (2022) determined that the command of written English would be advanced via the exposure of infotainment or any related entertainment contents. To exemplify, verbal dialogues in videos or lyrics in songs can give a much-needed overview of a simple English sentence that the young learners can emulate. According to Nasrullah & Saifuddin (2024), this can be done alternatively easier compared to traditional teaching of parts of what makes a sentence. Not unlike that of Ni & Luh (2023), imitating and emulating the verbal dialogues and lyrics can gradually instil concepts of creating simple sentences in written forms. Repeating the same favourite lines can contextually help the young learners to form their own sentences without leaning towards grammatical dos and don'ts. This will alleviate anxiety and provide space to let the learners pace their writing progress autonomously.

A similarly interesting psychological conclusion would be from Phawani et al. (2025), where their research emphasizes on the cognitive confidence among young learners from the exposure of entertainment and media. The research establishes that the ability to express themselves verbally, form sentences by recognizing shapes, objects and colours can be improved. The potential of cartoons, within the context of the research from Tri, Windy & Neila (2022), can be instructional where young learners can integrate vocabulary in the process of creating sentences and comprehend easy to lower-intermediate level of concepts in communication. Through trial and error, young learners have the liberty to experiment with sentences without worrying about grammatical rules and continue to correct themselves in accordance to the monitor hypothesis. Though this is mainly beneficial, it is highlighted that the authors also emphasised the risks of influenced behaviours that can jeopardise young learners' manners.

5. CONCLUSION

The research question that pertains to the implementation of media and entertainment as instructional tools to yields benefits that comprise of the improvement on young learners' language acquisition has been established by the finding. The key finding of this study establishes that integrating audiovisual media, songs and interactive games results significant and meaningful improvements in terms of young learners' vocabulary repertoire, pronunciation, sentence structure and overall language comprehension. Hypothetically, this is reinforced by Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML), which theorizes that dual-channel auditory and visual stimuli enhance cognitive and semantic processing and information recalling in long-term memory. This aligns well with Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis which it explains that highly engaging, entertaining digital instructions reduce classroom anxiety and stress. This, ultimately, reduces classroom anxiety and stress and enables young learners to acquire complex language chunks and structures subconsciously.

However, it should be noted that the assimilation of digital entertainment elements in teaching and learning in early childhood education comes with risks towards the young learners' behaviour and cognition. Phawani et al. (2025) state that parents and educators should be monitoring the contents consumed by the young learners constantly to mitigate the risks such as swear words, violence and borderline macabre inclinations. This would overshadow the discussed benefits as other behavioural hazards would be jeopardizing the approach. This also poses challenges to the educators, as they need to control the setting of their teaching and learning approach that assimilated this way. To be specific, they should 'guide' instead of giving full autonomy to the students to choose the contents. This would ensure

the indirect acquisition of the language would be unexploited. Cultural sensitivity and national identity would also be necessary for teachers to strike out a balance of global influence and local values.

Instead of replacing, parents and educators should add more cultural instances for the young learners to be globally aware but locally rooted in their national values. The educational values of English entertainment and digital contents can be implemented without any unwanted collateral influence in their behaviour and identity. Future research could be done to deeply explore the risks from a longitudinal implementation of entertainment and digital learning materials to document more niche benefits on language acquisition such as listening skills and fluency (speed and accuracy) in reading and speaking as well as the behaviours influenced the approach.

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7. CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors agree that this research was conducted in the absence of any self-benefits, commercial or financial conflicts and declare the absence of conflicting interests with the funders.

8. AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Muhammad Syakiriin Mohd Izan: carried out the research, wrote and revised the article. **Evanna Devi Seyapalan** and **Siti Noor Aisyah Hasnan:** provided the data analysis and interpretation of the results. **Nur Aina Mohd Izan:** provided the methodology and revised the literature review.

9. DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI AND AI-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES

This manuscript was developed with the assistance of Gemini for the purpose of revising language and possession of sources. The tool/service supported the author(s) in reviewing and refining the content, and the authors assume full responsibility for the final version submitted for publication.

10. DATA AVAILABILITY/SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

The datasets used and/or analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

11. ETHICS STATEMENT

Not applicable.

12. REFERENCES

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