

# Barriers in English Language Learning of Multicultural Children: Focusing on Children with Filipino Mothers

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Marilou M. Coria & Park, Yunjoo. Barriers in English Language Learning of Multicultural Children: Focusing on Children with Filipino Mothers. *The New Studies of English Language & Literature* 77 (2020): 287-315. The study focuses on the factors that affect the English language learning of the six multicultural children from three families. The birth mother came from the Philippines while the fathers are all Korean men and can only speak their native language. The present study used the qualitative data and has the following result: (1) Critical period of English language learning of multicultural children was vital, especially on their pronunciation and communication skills; (2) Filipino mother's role as an English language input provider during childhood was very effective, but became weaker if not done constantly; (3) financial stability could be one of the reasons why children could not attend academies during middle school or high school that caused them difficulties in learning grammar and English analysis. The results emphasized that Filipino mothers needed to be aware of the advantage they had on steadily teaching their children their native language and also Korean society has the responsibility to support them on this issue. (Korea National Open University)

Key words: multicultural children in South Korea, English as a second language learning, Korean children with Filipino mothers, language input provider

## I. Introduction

The possession of language, perhaps more than any other attribute, distinguishes humans from other animals. We all become “human”

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because we all know at least one language (Fromkin, Rodman, & Hyams, 2007, 3).

According to Brown (2000), second language learning is closely related to one's personality type, is interwoven with second culture learning, and involves interference, the creation of new linguistic systems, and the learning of discourse and communicative functions of language.

Korea has been considered to lack diversity in language and thus it possesses the uniqueness of linguistic homogenization. However, because of marriage-immigrants and migrant-workers from East and South Asia, linguistic diversity including Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese and so on has increased in Korean society (Lee, 2014, 21).

Taking into account the distinct home environment of multicultural children since their mother came from a foreign country, what are the variables that can hinder their English language acquisition and fluency?

The purpose of this research study is to examine the factors affecting the English language learning of six multicultural children whose birth mothers came from the Philippines. The six mothers including the researcher, are considered as the main source of the children's second language in which to be summed up resulted in learning English.

All the mothers are living in Daegu, South Korea. Each of the family has two children wherein most of them are in middle school and high school except for the youngest, who is in elementary grade. During early childhood, all the mothers were able to guide and teach their children the basic learning of English like the alphabet, vocabulary, and listening skills.

Another issue to be tackled in this study is about the experiences the middle and high school children encountered while they were

learning English grammar. There were negative effects that resulted because they weren't able to attend academies that also hindered their communicative fluency. This study raises the following research questions:

1. What are the factors that affect multicultural children's learning of English as a second language?
2. How can the mother's role as a language provider influence in the children's English language learning?
3. How can the children's experiences and struggles while learning English grammar affect on their second language learning?

## **II. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Multicultural Families in South Korea**

The high cost of living and limited job opportunities are driving many young people to reject traditional life paths such as relationships, marriage, and having children. This phenomenon has been coined the 'sampo generation', which translates to 'three give-up' (ABC News, January 29, 2020, 3). According to Korean Statistical Information Service (2018), the marriages of Korean females aged 25 to 29 showed the highest decrease of 3.5% from 2017. Lee and Klein (2017) stated that, less educated Korean men and those with lower socioeconomic occupations were much more likely to marry a woman from Southeast Asia. These Korean men are also mostly in their later age and living in rural areas. There are also growth in the rates of international marriage in urban areas, but it was still much more prevalent in rural areas.

### **2.1.1 International Marriages between South Korean and Filipinos**

The second path for Filipinos to migrate to Korea is for family migration/re-unification (Lee, Asis, Choi, and Park, 2017, 26). According to Korean Statistical Information Service (2018), the total number of Filipino women marriage migrants totaled up to 80,000 by year 2018.

### **2.1.2 Multicultural Children and the Need for Private Academy**

Believing that English is “power and privilege”, Korean society treats English as high-valued symbolic capital. Multicultural students are not the exceptions, if they are to climb this social mobility ladder. Seong (2013) mentioned that “low Socio-Economic Status (SES) exacerbates the problem, limiting the access to quality resources and opportunities” (as cited in Kim, & Kim, 2015, 21). He also stated that “a national survey on English achievement indicated that 42.80% of Multicultural students failed to meet the standard academic level, whereas the percentage of their peers was only 29.42%. The disparity of English achievement increases as the students grow up” (as cited in Kim, & Kim, 2015, 21).

## **2.2 Second Language Acquisition Theories**

### **2.2.1 Critical Period Hypothesis**

Marinova-Todd, Marshall, and Snow (2000) stated that “the term critical period for language acquisition as a period of time when learning a language is relatively easy and typically meets with a high degree of success” (as cited in Lee, 2004, 480). The concept of ‘critical period’ is typically associated with those types of behavioral developments that have sudden onsets and offsets, result in all-or-nothing events, depend

on instinct, are unlearned and irreversible, and for which environmental influences such as motivation do not play any role. Eubank and Gregg (1999) mentioned that “the sensitive period would represent a progressive inefficiency of the organism, or a gradually declining effectiveness of the peripheral input after a certain time” (as cited in Lee, 2004, 480).

### **2.2.2 Parental Register**

According to Johnson (2008), the best language providers are the parents and caretakers. It is also considered that parents and caretakers seem to be carrying their secret when interacting with children: (1) Normally they don't follow any syllabus when teaching children unlike in school learning setting, (2) Parents and caretakers also don't make any explanations for the children to understand, (3) They don't also drill and just encourage children to produce a language, (4) Unlike with what teachers often do, caretakers don't correct any errors of grammar made by the learner. As a result, it can be noticed that parents and caretaker talk are mostly message-focused and not form-focused.

## **2.3 Factors for Successful Foreign Language Learning**

### **2.3.1 Age**

Jean Piaget (1972; Piaget & Inhelder, 1969) outlined “the course of intellectual development in a child through various stages: (1) Sensorimotor stage (birth to two), (2) Preoperational stage (ages two to seven), (3) Concrete operational stage (ages seven to eleven), and (4) Formal operational stage (ages eleven to sixteen)” (as cited in Sodnomdarjaa, 2006, 215). Some scholars (Diller, 1971; Walsh & Diller, 1981) stated that “adults can learn a second language better than

the children, but among the others there is an opposite thought about it” (as cited in Sodnomdarjaa, 2006, 215).

### **2.3.2 Aptitude**

Carroll & Sapon (1958) opened “the aptitude concept to empirical investigation and they suggested the significant components were: (1) phonemic coding ability, (2) grammatical sensitivity, (3) inductive learning ability, and (4) rote learning ability” (as cited in Sodnomdarjaa, 2006, 213-29). Skehan (1989) found “three groups of learners: (1) memory-based learner, (2) analytic learner, and (3) even learner” (as cited in Sodnomdarjaa, 2006, 213-29).

### **2.3.3 Motivation**

Motivation is composed of three factors: goals, attitudes, and motives. Goal theory, which is likely to explain the needs such as instrumental and integrative desire, among three motivational components is one of the most significant models used to define motivation. Even though goal theory cannot explain all motivations, goal theory and attitudes are the most significant components to understand language learning motivations (Jang, 2012, 1-26).

## **III. Methodology**

### **3.1 Participants**

There are three multicultural families including the researcher who participated<sup>1</sup> in this research.

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<sup>1</sup> All the names of the participants used are pseudonyms unless otherwise stated.

**Table 1. Summary of the Three Families Profiles**

	Name	Role	Age	Educational Background	Occupation
The Park's Family	Mr. Park	Father	55	High School Graduate	Factory Worker
	Lou	Mother	45	Master's Student	English Instructor
	Sunghyeon	Son	17	High School 1 <sup>st</sup> Year	
	Sungwon	Son	12	Elementary 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	
The Lee's Family	Mr. Lee	Father	56	Middle School Level	Factory Worker
	Riza	Mother	47	College Graduate	Factory Worker
	Jongwoo	Son	19	High School 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	
	Yubin	Daughter	18	High School 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	
The Kang's Family	Mr. Kang	Father	55	High School Graduate	Factory Worker
	Jane	Mother	49	College Graduate	Factory Worker
	Sumi	Daughter	18	High School 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	
	Sooin	Daughter	16	Middle School 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	

### 3.2 Data Collection

#### 3.2.1 Interviews with the Two Filipino Mothers

Riza's first interview was done in her house while Jane was interviewed during aerobic class. Other consecutive interviews were done in the party, coffee shops, park, and restaurants. The formal interviews started from October to December 2019. Continuous informal interviews were made possible by means of chatting on facebook, text messages, and also phone calls.

### **3.2.2 Interviews with my Two Sons**

The interviews I made to them helped me to find out how they felt to be a bilingual and tried to compare them with the other children. The interviews specifically about the thesis were done at home from August 2018.

### **3.2.3 Interviews with the Four Children**

I first interviewed Sumi on October 2019 in a fast food chain. The interview lasted for almost an hour. I used a questionnaire to guide for my interview and on-site recording of our conversation. I had my next interview on her by visiting in their house on January 2020. The next I interviewed were Jongwoo and Yubin. The interview lasted for about three hours in the restaurant and coffee shop. Their interviews were also conducted on October 2019.

My last interview was with Sooin a few weeks after I interviewed Jongwoo and Yubin. I also asked the four children more questions through phone calls and chatting while writing the thesis from January to August 2020.

### **3.2.4 Parent Questionnaire**

The questionnaire for the two mothers which was composed of 30 questions was filled up at home, coffee shop, and at the aerobic class. It took 20 to 30 minutes to finish answering the questions. The questionnaire was filled up from October 2019. Additional questions were informally asked and filed in memos.

### **3.2.5 Sunghyeon and Sungwon's Observation**

I observed Sunghyeon and Sungwon's English learning including their

pronunciation, reading skill, and communication skill ever since I taught them when they were young. I usually checked their semestral class records, English books, quizzes, and tests.

### **3.2.6 Jongwoo and Yubin's Observation**

Jongwoo and Yubin's observation was mainly conducted in the church. The observation started every Sundays from October 2019 to February 2020.

### **3.2.7 Sumi and Sooin's Observation**

The last children participant, Sumi and Sooin's observation was carried out in their home. It lasted for four months from October 2019 to February 2020. I observed how they interacted with their mother as well as their English communication skills and pronunciation.

## **3.3 Data Analysis**

The three strategies of internal validity or credibility based on Merriam's Qualitative Research (Merriam, 2015, 242) had been used for intensive data analysis: (1) triangulation, (2) observation, and (3) adequate engagement in data collection.

### **3.3.1 Triangulation**

I recorded all the interviews and then transcribed them for the process of constructing categories and themes. The answers from the parents' questionnaires were also transcribed and succeeding inquiries were taken through field notes. The data analysis resulted with the following questions:

1. What are the effects of Filipino mothers' cultural adjustment in English language learning of their children?

I discussed, examined, and analyzed if cultural differences affected the way they taught their children's English language.

2. How did critical period took part in the pronunciation and communication skills of the multicultural children with regards to English language learning?

I talked to the children in English and checked how well were their pronunciation and communication strategies. I examined the interviews and documents I collected as a reference for this question.

3. What was the role of the Filipino mothers as a primary language provider of their children's English language?

I made some questions to the mothers to clarify some issues regarding early English language learning. I also examined their responses from the transcripts if they made some connections and similarities.

4. Was the financial situation of the family contributed as a reason for the children not to be able to attend academy that resulted them to have difficulties in grammar?

I made a home-visit to check how well was the home environment and way of life of each family. I directly confirmed from the mothers regarding their economic status satisfaction.

### 3.3.2 Observation

Children participants' observation was conducted in the church and in the their house. The field notes taken were also use as the basis for

the analysis.

### 3.3.3 Adequate Engagement in data collection

Consecutive interviews with the participant most especially Filipino mothers for at least twice a week within six months made them completely aware on what was the topic was really about. The transcript of the interviews was examined to check for saturation.

## IV. The Park's Family

I, the first participant, live in Korea for almost 20 years. I met my husband while working in a company. My husband is a workaholic and I became fully responsible for my children's learning.

My first son, Sunghyeon, experienced the hardships I had with my marriage life and continuously adjustment with Korean culture. I had to work and study that caused him to be a sick baby.

Our marriage relationship as well as economic situation became more bearable when I was pregnant with Sungwon. As a result, Sungwon seemed to be gifted with a good health and personality.

Table 2. Summary of the Park Family

Name	Role	Age	Educational Background	Occupation
Mr. Park	Father	55	High School Graduate	Factory Worker
Lou	Mother	45	Master's Student	English Instructor
Sunghyeon	Son	17	High School 1 <sup>st</sup> Year	
Sungwon	Son	12	Elementary 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	

## **4.1 Lou's Story**

### **4.1.1 Culture Shock**

I never realized how hard it would be to have a job which was completely different from my major since I graduated with an Engineering major in one of the universities in Manila, Philippines. Language, food, culture, and working environment were my best enemies during the time I first came to Korea.

## **4.2 Sunghyeon's English Language Learning Story**

My eldest son, Sunghyeon, is 17 years old and now in high school first year. Sunghyeon was always a sick baby, but he is a smart boy.

### **4.2.1 Mom's Language Touch**

I started teaching my first son English, as his second language, while he was learning the Korean language. Most probably at the age of two. I read to him the English alphabet, picture books, and short story books. I put alphabet and vocabulary posters on the wall. I also let him listen to nursery rhymes using cassette tapes or CDs. I bought lots of animation videos like Thomas and Friends and Dora the explorer.

Unfortunately, I didn't teach my children my heritage language. The reason for this was I based it on my own experience. I had the idea that they can learn Tagalog fluently if they stay in my country. Another reason was, I valued the importance of learning English with regards to education and academic aspects.

### **4.2.2 Memory of Learning English in School**

When I interviewed Sunghyeon, he said he didn't have many

memories of learning English while he was in elementary grade.

“엄마, 초등학교에서 영어 배웠을 때 내가 기억나는 것이 6학년 때야. 쉽고 게임도 했으니까 재미있었다. 원어민 선생님도 나를 많이 칭찬했고 만날때마다 영어로 이야기 했다. 원어민 선생님이랑 배우는 게 제일 재미있었다!”

“Mom, I only remembered learning English in elementary school when I was in sixth grade. My native teacher always praised me and I talked to her in English whenever I met her. Learning with my native teacher was the most fun!” (Sunghyeon, August 2019)

He said he liked the way he learned English especially with his native teacher.

#### 4.2.3 I Hate Grammar

My two sons never attended English academy even until now. Sunghyeon blamed me because grammar was very difficult for him ever since he was in middle school. He said he should have attended academy since then.

“문법은 너무 어렵다. 영어 듣기, 말하기, 읽기 다 괜찮은데 학원을 안 가면 문법은 제대로 못 배운다. 모든 문법 규칙은 매우 어렵다. 불규칙 동사는 어렵고 관계 대명사도 어렵다. 그것들이 진짜 헷갈린다. 나 영어 좋은 점수 받을 수 있을지 모르겠다!”

“Grammar is very difficult. English listening, speaking, and reading are all easy, but I can’t learn grammar without attending academy. All the grammar rules are very difficult. Irregular verbs are difficult and also relative pronouns. Those are really confusing. I’m not sure if I can get a good grade!” (Sunghyeon, June 2017)

I feel sorry whenever I think that my son wants to attend academy but I never send him.

#### 4.2.4 It's not too Late for his Pronunciation

My goal is not to teach Sunghyeon grammar, but for him to have a proper English pronunciation. I know this was the result of not continuously practicing either speaking or reading. Sungwon, my second son, was able to have a good English accent through everyday speaking and reading books.

### 4.3 Sungwon's English Language Learning Story

#### 4.3.1 Mother's Role and Critical Period

I started teaching Sungwon the English language almost just the same way with my eldest son. I taught him at the age of two. I read him books particularly before he slept. He enjoyed learning English more because he was together with his brother.

“어린이집에서 영어 배우기는 쉽고 재미있다. 노래도 하고 친구들이랑 게임하니까 좋다. 엄마랑 형도 같이 배우는 게 재미있어.”

“English learning in the kindergarten is easy and fun. I sing and play together with my friends that's why it's nice to do. It's also fun to learn with mom and big brother.” (Sungwon, December 2015)

I didn't formally teach Sungwon the English language. I just talked to him in everyday routine. Are you hungry? Where is your brother? The book is in the room. I didn't even teach him vocabularies. If he really needs to know the meaning in Korean language, I tell him. But if possible, I really avoided to use it.

#### 4.3.2 In School

While I was interviewing Sungwon, I asked him not to talk in Korean language because he is normally free to talk either in English or Korean

language at home. Sungwon said he remembered when he was in third grade and he learned words, alphabet, and also had quiz.

“I can remember when I first learned English at school. I was in third grade. My native teacher said I’m good in English. She is also good in Korean. Sometimes she also talks to us in Korean.” (Sungwon, August 2019)

He said he never had difficulties learning the four skills of English. But above all the skills, his favorite is speaking.

## V. The Lee’s Family

Riza, the first mother who participated in the interview came to Korea on year 2000, the same year with me.

Mr. Lee, Riza’s husband came from a very conservative family. His hometown is in North Gyeongsang province.

Table 3. Summary of the Lee Family

Name	Role	Age	Educational Background	Occupation
Mr. Lee	Father	56	Middle School Level	Factory Worker
Riza	Mother	47	College Graduate	Factory Worker
Jongwoo	Son	19	High School 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	
Yubin	Daughter	18	High School 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	

### 5.1 Riza’s Story

Riza used to be a high school teacher in the Philippines before she

came to Korea. She amazingly knows five languages which are Tagalog, English, Korean, Cebuano, and Ilonggo.

### **5.1.1 Foreign Language was not Allowed**

At the beginning of their marriage, she lived together with her brother-in-law for almost six years. She tried her best to teach her children despite her struggles.

“Magkasama sila Jongwoo at Yubin noong unang turuan ko sila ng English. Apat na taon si Jongwoo tapos tatlong taon si Yubin. Gumamit ako ng mga flashcards. Tinuruan ko din sila ng alphabet. Nagdikit ako ng mga poster na English sa dingding. Tinuruan ko din silang magsulat. Bumili ako ng libro na mayrong tularan para magsulat. Tinuruan ko din sila ng pambatang kanta. Napansin ko si Jongwoo interesadong interesado siyang matuto pero si Yubin parang hirap siya.”

“Jongwoo and Yubin were together when I first taught them English. Jongwoo was four and Yubin was three years old. I used flashcards. I also taught them the alphabet. I put English posters on the wall. I also taught them how to write. I bought books that had pattern for writing. I also taught them nursery rhymes. I noticed that Jongwoo was interested to learn, but Yubin seemed to be struggling.” (Riza, December 2019)

But the problem was her brother-in-law told her not to teach them English since they were not yet good in Korean.

### **5.1.2 Financial Satisfaction**

Her brother-in-law also didn't let Jongwoo go to kindergarten because he said it was expensive. Since then, Riza aimed to work.

“Hindi kaya ng asawa ko kung siya lang ang magtatrabaho kaya gustuhin ko man na alagaan lang ang mga anak ko, hindi puwede kasi hindi talaga kakasya ang kinikita lang niya. Simula noong magtrabaho ako, naging bahala na ang mga anak ko na magdesisyon sa pag-aaral nila kasi nga busy na ako sa trabaho.”

“My husband cannot work alone by himself so even though I only want to take care of my children, it’s impossible because his salary is really not enough. Ever since I started to work, my children had to decide on their studying because I am busy with my work.” (Riza, October 2019)

She said she was very tired because she also had to do household chores when she came home from work. It was almost impossible for her to ask her children how’s their day in school.

## 5.2 Jongwoo’s English Language Learning Story

### 5.2.1 It’s More Fun to Learn at Home

Learning English was fun and easy for him when he was young and doing it together with his mother and sister.

“중학교 때부터 영어 문법이 너무 어려웠어요. 초등학교 때는 재미있었는데 중학교 때부터는 문법 때문에 힘들었어요. 제가 영어 단어 외우기는 괜찮은데, 영어 문법이란 해석이 진짜 어려웠어요.”

“When I started middle school, English grammar was very difficult. It was fun when I was in elementary grade, but it was hard for me when I went to middle school because of grammar. Memorizing English words were okay for me but not grammar and interpretation.” (Jongwoo, October 2019)

Jongwoo said he liked the teaching method in elementary grade.

### 5.2.2 Mom's Interaction

Even when Jongwoo went to middle school, he valued learning English through interaction with his mother.

“엄마랑 영어로 자주 대화할 수 있으면 좋을 것 같아요. 발음 연습도 되고 연습을 안 하면 영어를 자꾸 잊어버려요. 그런데 어쩔 수 없이 엄마가 바빠서 할 수가 없어요.”

“It will be better if I can always practice English conversation with my mother. It's good for practicing pronunciation and if I don't practice, I keep forgetting English. But I have no choice since my mother is always busy.” (Jongwoo, October 2019)

When he went let's say to downtown and met a foreigner who would ask him questions in English, he became embarrassed if he couldn't make a reply. But if he constantly had practice speaking English at home, it would be much easier for him to communicate with foreign people.

## 5.3 Yubin's English Language Learning Story

### 5.3.1 Her Score Flung Because of Grammar

Just like her brother, Yubin had the same experience when she started to learn English grammar.

“저는 문법은 다 어려워요. 아마 오빠는 규칙 몇 개만 어려울텐데 저는 다 어려워요. 저는 불규칙 동사부터 어려워요. 나머지도 다 어려워요. 독해도 너무 어려워요.”

“All grammar rules are difficult for me. Maybe for my brother, only some are difficult, but for me all are difficult. Irregular verbs are the first to be difficult. While the rest are all difficult, too. Reading is also very difficult.” (Yubin, October 2019)

She started to think that English was difficult because of grammar. Learning at home was comfortable but not when it comes to the educational purpose like in a school setting.

“집에선 웬지 공부하기가 편해요. 초등학교까지 영어는 재미있었는데 중학교 때부터 힘들고 재미없게 되었어요. 문법이 너무 어려워서 점수는 20%까지 떨어졌어요. 저는 문법 때문에 영어 공부는 이미 포기했어요.”  
“Studying at home seems to be comfortable. English in elementary school was fun, but during middle school, it was hard and became boring. Grammar was so difficult that my score fell up to 20%. I already gave up English because of grammar.” (Yubin, October 2019)

Yubin’s English performance was good when she was in elementary but not when she was in middle school.

### 5.3.2 Academy is not Necessary

Most of her friends studied in English in academy but she insisted that she didn’t like to attend anymore.

“엄마는 일했을 때부터 저희가 알아서 하기 때문에 공부를 억지로 시키지 않아요. 학원 다니는 것도 마찬가지로요. 저는 그냥 집에서 복습하고 문제집만 있어도 돼요.”  
“When my mother started to work, she didn’t force us when it comes to studying. We decided for ourselves. And that includes attending the academy. I just want to review at home or having workbook is already enough.” (Yubin, October 2019)

Above all her responses, learning English was important for Yubin because she said in the future, if she wanted to travel to another country, she had to speak in English since it is a global language.

## VI. The Kang's Family

Jane met her husband, Mr. Kang through the Unification church. Mr. Kang went to the Philippines and Jane's friend who was a member of the church introduced him to her.

**Table 4. Summary of the Kang Family**

Name	Role	Age	Educational Background	Occupation
Mr. Kang	Father	55	High School Graduate	Factory Worker
Jane	Mother	49	College Graduate	Factory Worker
Sumi	Daughter	18	High School 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	
Sooin	Daughter	16	Middle School 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	

### 6.1 Jane's Story

#### 6.1.1 The Way I Teach my Children

She stated that one of the main adjustment that she encountered when she came to Korea was language since she used to live with her mother-in-law before she passed away.

“Noong maliliit pa ang mga anak ko tinuruan ko sila ng Tagalog saka English. Kung anong mahawakan nila sinasabi ko sa Tagalog saka English. Si Sumi kinakausap ko siya sa Tagalog noong maliit pa siya. Hindi din naman kasi ako masyadong magaling sa English. Pero noong nagtrabaho na ako, hindi ko na sila maturuan kasi pagod na ako pagkagaling sa trabaho.”

“When my children were young, I tried to teach them Tagalog and English. Whatever they held in their hands, I would say in Tagalog and English. I talked to Sumi in Tagalog when she was a child. I

am not that good at English. But when I started to work, I couldn't teach them anymore because I was already tired from work." (Jane, October 2019)

Jane also said that her children could have more opportunity to learn English if they could go to another country.

### **6.1.2 I'm Trying to Help them**

Her husband's salary was not that small but still she wanted to help him for the future of their children and her own necessities.

"Kung sapat na ang pag-aaral ng English sa school bakit kailangan pa ng mga estudyante na mag-aral sa academy? Kapag hindi pumasok sa academy ang mga anak ko, parang mapag-iivanan naman sila. Kahit mahal ang bayad walang magagawa kundi papasukin sila sa academy.

"If studying English in school is enough, why students have to attend the academy? I feel like my children will be left behind if they don't attend the academy. I have no choice but to send them even though it's very expensive." (Jane, October 2019)

She wanted to help her daughter to improve their pronunciation, but she couldn't do anymore because she had no more time.

## **6.2 Sumi's English Language Learning Story**

Sumi is in second year high school in Daegu Health High School. It is a special-education school where she is now taking nursing.

### **6.2.1 My Mother's Heritage Language**

Sumi remembered learning with her mother even at a very young age.

She said it was fun and interesting.

“제가 어렸을 때 엄마는 타갈로그를 가르쳐줬어요. 엄마는 영어를 잘하지 못해서 타갈로그를 가르쳐줬어요. 엄마가 타갈로그로 말할 때도 저는 이해를 해요. 어쩌면 엄마가 계속 가르쳐 준다면 타갈로그를 아주 잘 할 수 있을 것 같아요. 하지만 엄마는 더 이상 시간이 없기 때문에, 저는 유창할 수 없어요. 만약 엄마가 타갈로그를 읽고 쓰는 것도 가르쳐 준다면, 저도 잘 할 수 있을 것 같아요.”

“When I was young, my mother used to teach me Tagalog. She was not very good in English that’s why she taught me Tagalog. Even now when she talks in Tagalog I can understand it. Maybe if my mother continuously taught me, I could be very good in Tagalog. But since she has no time anymore, I can’t be very fluent. If ever she also taught me reading and writing Tagalog, I could be good on it, too.” (Sumi, October 2019)

I asked her if she wasn’t confused when her mother mixed speaking Tagalog and Korean. She said it was fine because she heard of it ever since she was very young.

“타갈로그를 배운 것은 잘한 일이지만 영어 발음에도 좋지 않은 영향을 미쳤어요. 제 영어 억양은 타갈로그 억양과 거의 비슷해졌어요. 엄마가 타갈로그로 말하는 것을 항상 들었기 때문에 영어 발음에도 영향을 미치는 것 같았어요.”

“It was a good thing that I learned Tagalog, but it also had a bad effect on my English pronunciation. My English accent became almost like Tagalog accent. Maybe because I always listened to my mother spoke in Tagalog, it seemed that it also had an effect on my English pronunciation.” (Sumi, October 2019)

Sumi wished she could practice speaking English but there wasn’t many chances.

## 6.2.2 How I Learned English

Sumi also experienced hardship in learning English grammar.

“중학교 때 영어는 문법 때문에 너무 어려웠어요. 단수와 복수명사, 과거 시제 동사, 불규칙 동사와 헷갈렸어요. 모든 문법 규칙은 어려워요. 아마도 다른 학생들에게는 단수명사와 복수명사가 쉽지만 저에게는 그렇지 않아요. 만약 제가 학원에 다니지 않는다면, 저의 영어 점수는 확실히 낮을 거예요.”

“English in middle school was too difficult because of grammar. I was confused with singular and plural nouns, past tense verbs, and irregular verbs. All grammar rules are difficult. Maybe for others, singular and plural nouns are easy, but not for me. If I didn’t attend the academy, my English score would be surely low.” (Sumi, October 2019)

She was able to get a good score through attending academy.

## 6.2.3 Korea’s Education System

Just like Jongwoo, Sumi commented about the Korea’s education system. She had no choice but to go to academy so she would not be left behind.

## 6.3 Sooin’s English Language Learning Story

### 6.3.1 English is Important

Sooin stated that she also enjoyed learning with her mother although it wasn’t that long time.

“엄마가 저와 언니 타갈로그를 가르쳤던 기억이 나요. 하지만 저는 영어를 더 많이 배운 것 같아요. 또한, 제가 영어를 좀 더 일찍 배웠더라면 훨씬 더 좋았을 텐데요. 어렸을 때 영어를 많이 배웠다면 더 유창할 수 있었을 지도 몰라요.”

“I remember when my mother taught me and my elder sister Tagalog. But I think I learned English more. Also, it would be much better if I had learned English earlier. Maybe if I learned English a lot when I was a child, I could be more fluent.” (Soojin, November 2019)

She complained that she couldn't practice English speaking well because there wasn't much chance to do so.

### 6.3.2 Practice Makes Perfect

Soojin even wished that her mother and father could talk to her in English more because it could help her to be fluent.

### 6.3.3 Grammar is Difficult

Soojin's determination to learn English and courage to persuade her parents to send her to academy helped her to cope grammar difficulties, have good pronunciation, and communication skills.

“중학교 1학년 때 문법 때문에 영어가 어려웠어요. 그래서 저는 정말로 저를 영어학원에 보내라고 엄마를 설득했어요. 저는 그것이 효과가 있다고 생각해요. 학원을 계속 다녔기 때문에 거의 모든 문법 규칙이 저에게 쉬워졌어요.”

“When I was in middle school first year, English was difficult because of grammar. That's why I really convinced my mother to send me to English academy. I think it works. Since I continuously attended the academy, almost all the grammar rules become easy for me.” (Subin, June 2020)

She said it was hard, but she needed to learn English because if she works in the future, English is a prerequisite.

## VII. Discussion

The two stages of multiple case study, within-case analysis and the cross-case analysis were applied to build a general explanation of the organized case study database. There were three themes occurred by means of content analysis.

### 7.1 Critical Period of English Language Learning

Each of the children in the three families were able to start L2 learning at a young age but not all these multicultural children were able to achieve a flawless accent.

I taught both of my children at the early age of two. The teaching technique or method that I used was also similar. The only difference was the language I used when I taught them. When Sunghyeon was my only son, I talked to him using two languages. When I taught him the Korean language, I used the same language. I also used the Korean language in everyday life. When my second son Sungwon was born. I wasn't able to give much attention in Sunghyeon's English learning especially on pronunciation.

Sungwon my youngest son, on the other hand, was able to achieve a good accent of English. His continuous listening and interacting in English helped him to have a good pronunciation and communication skills.

Jongwoo and Yubin also learned English at a very young age. Even when Jongwoo was very young, his mother said that he was already interested in learning English while Yubin, his younger sister didn't really enjoy learning. This positive attitude that Jongwoo showed contributed for him to have good pronunciation and communication skills.

The sudden change of English learning environment in middle school created a negative effect on Yubin's English acquisition. Her mother already expected that, since she noticed Yubin wasn't really interested in learning English.

Sumi's English learning seemed to be on and off. She could have the chance to acquire both Tagalog and English fluency if both were taught to her in a consistent, proper, and active way. Sooin's attending in academy from first year middle school up to the present helped her to have good pronunciation and other English skills.

## **7.2 Filipino Mother's Role as an English Language Input Provider**

The less-anxiety environment and security that Sunghyeon felt while he was learning at home made him learned the language without difficulty. The lesson that I'd learn from my eldest son will hopefully not happen to Sungwon if I will keep focusing on his English language learning.

Jongwoo revealed his interest in learning language ever since he was a child. Yubin on the contrary valued the importance of learning with her family. She felt safe and interested when her mother taught her.

## **7.3 Financial Stability**

Sunghyeon had to feel the difficulty of learning grammar since I didn't send him to the academy right away. The result was, not only his grammar ability was affected, but also his pronunciation and communication skills.

Riza had the strongest reason for working. Jongwoo went to nursery school at the late age because his uncle complained about high expenses if he went early. The effect was Jongwoo and Yubin had to be fully

responsible on their own learning.

Jane complained that having your own house wasn't enough to be able to support her children's education expenses. Jane was also able to teach English language to her two daughters Sumi and Sooin when they were young. Soon as Sumi became school grader, Jane already started to work part-time in a factory.

### **VIII. Conclusion**

The way the six children started learning English as their second language had similarities like their age, by means of mother talk, and including teaching materials and visual aids like story books, posters, and nursery rhymes. As a result, it is important that Filipino mothers take the advantage of teaching their children at a very young age. This part of the conclusion can be very applicable and useful for Filipino mothers who are newcomers to Korea. Since when their children are still young, they (mothers) have the great chance and time to teach their children before they reach the school age and at the same time, during this period, Filipino mothers still don't go to work because they have to take care of their children. From this research study, it can presuppose that Filipino mothers not only serve as an effective English language input provider but simultaneously, our effort to teach our children can have a crucial effect on their pronunciation and communication skills as they grow up.

As the children continued to grow and would soon go to middle and high school, we mothers also started to be concerned if the family's financial status could handle the upcoming educational expenses. This caused us to work and not able to guide and focus on our children's English language learning. The good basis for English language learning that we employed while our children was young went down slowly and

weaker.

All the children participant except for my youngest son Sungwon had the dilemma of English learning because of grammar. Middle school seemed to be the time when they made a reverse evaluation regarding English learning from easy to complex subject. They sensed that they had to follow what the other students were doing so they could get a good score and that was by means of going to the academy.

The scope of this research study has some limitations. The mother participants' educational attainment were all college/university graduate. Another limitation can be since the participants are living in the city of Daegu, the case of family living in another city or in rural areas can have different situations and circumstances.

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논문접수일: 2020. 9. 19 / 수정완료일: 2020. 11. 22 / 게재확정일: 2020. 11. 25

