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The Impact of Watching English Cartoons on Preschoolers' Language Acquisition and Behavioural Development in Dhaka

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ABSTRACT

Being a critical development period, childhood shapes behaviors and language skills through interaction and observation. These days, the majority of the children spend a notable amount of time watching and enjoying English cartoons in Dhaka City. Watching cartoons has a significant impact on children in the development of their attitudes, actions, and skills. This study investigates the effects of watching English cartoons on preschoolers in Dhaka City. The study uses a triangulation method with a diverse sampling of 40 participants—20 preschoolers and 20 parents—combining questionnaires, semi-structured interviews of parents and children, and observation. To ensure the diversity of the sampling, we adopted convenience sampling and selected respondents from Dhaka City- North and South. The findings show that the impacts of watching English cartoons are both beneficial and concerning; children display impressive linguistic growth in English, particularly in applying lexis and understanding even complex contexts. On the other hand, exposure to violent content raises concerns about hazardous behavior and its imitation. We argue that it is important for parents to maintain national identity, cultural sensitivity, and awareness while letting children watch English cartoons. Parental monitoring is

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also necessary to select content that is in accordance with morals, educational activities, and critical thinking and to improve preschoolers' education quality. We urge researchers to conduct further studies on the area to dive deeper into the facts.

Keywords: Preschoolers; Language Acquisition; Language and Behavior; English Cartoons; Anxieties; Education Quality

1. Introduction

Cartoons have been captivating the minds of our children for ages across the country, especially in today's Dhaka City. Cartoons are a combination of illustrations and visual arts that usually represent characters in a humorous or satirical way. Quizlet^[1] defines a cartoon as "a drawing on paper or another surface, especially one that is humorous, an original full-size drawing created for a fresco or tapestry." According to the Encyclopedia, Cartoons are a kind of expression or communication encompassing various artistic mediums, such as improper films, satirical political drawings, and hilarious captioned illustrations. Their attractive designs and exaggerated characters provide our children with entertainment, amusement, and even education. In this modern era of globalization, innovation, and development, our new generation is remarkably obsessed with digital media since they have been raised in an environment dominated by the massive use of technology. Even 3- or 4-year-old children can access smartphones, iPads, and the internet. Almost all the devices engage children with pleasure, information, and learning. Cartoons, in particular, have been a 'happy experience' for children; watching cartoons is a strong and attractive platform for learning. Even children receive a good amount of English input from watching English cartoons, enabling them to try to communicate with others in English^[2].

Childhood is crucial because children's behavior can easily be shaped in this period. Most parents in Dhaka city allow their children to watch TV so that they can finish their work or relax, but they are often ignorant of the negative effects of continuously watching television^[3]. Children's minds are receptive and can adapt quickly to any new situation^[4]. "Spending a significant amount of time watching cartoon programs allows preschoolers less physical actions, which also limits their interaction with parents, siblings and others" (^[5], cited^[3], p. 1). Moreover, a child's intelligence cannot distinguish between good and bad areas of a cartoon at an early age. According to a Chinese saying, "a child's life is

like a sheet of paper that is imprinted by everyone who goes by" (^[6], para.1). When children spend a notable amount of time watching cartoons, they become subconsciously/unconsciously affected with the characters of the cartoon and their behavior and language^[7]. As preschoolers in Dhaka City invest a good amount of time in enjoying and experiencing cartoons, they learn and develop certain language chunks, behaviors, and skills from the contents and interactions of characters of the watched cartoons.

Watching cartoons can help preschoolers in various ways, even if it has some negative impact. Cartoons can benefit preschoolers' physical, socio-emotional, linguistic, cognitive, and other developmental stages^[8]. They can learn fundamental concepts engagingly and dynamically from educational cartoons that teach colors, shapes, and numbers. Also, they can learn morality, generosity, and compassion from cartoons. Their cognitive abilities, imaginations, and sensory perceptions can also be enhanced by watching cartoons. Sometimes, children may be exposed to violence through cartoons, and they may also be exposed to stereotypes and unsuitable information. Cartoons can also encourage prejudiced ideas in children by promoting stereotypes about gender, race, or culture^[9-11]. Excessive use of cartoon watching can also result in an unhealthy lifestyle, less social engagement, and exposure to improper content^[5].

In an ideal scenario, English cartoons are a pleasant and educational medium that helps children learn the language and establish healthy habits. However, the reality is frequently different, with children who watch excessive cartoons potentially developing passive language acquisition and inadequate behavioral patterns. A balanced approach's implementation involves discussions about the content, increasing the use of language in everyday situations, and integrating interactive activities with educational cartoons. Setting suitable screen time limitations and expanding the range of learning resources like books, games, and interactive experiences can also improve language acquisition and reduce the possibility of negative behaviors carried on by extended cartoon watching. Therefore, we are interested in

investigating the answers to the following research questions: a) Does watching English cartoons help children develop their English language speaking? If yes, how? b) How does watching cartoons impact children's behaviors? and c) To what extent does watching cartoons detach children from their language and culture?

2. Review of the Related Literature

Language acquisition and behavioral development occur at the early stage of human beings. According to Noam Chomsky^[12], it is evident that the infant has a rich and intricate system of natural structures when it comes to language, a system that is mostly independent of the particular information given to him. On the other hand, Skinner^[13] states, in his Behavioral Learning Theory, that "A child has the ability to learn language from birth, and the language he learns will rely on the verbal behaviors that are encouraged in his surroundings." His behaviorist theory focuses on how the environment shapes children's behaviors and how they acquire language through imitation, repetition, and reinforcement. Children can learn socially acceptable behavior through the experiences of animated characters, which reinforce positive behavior. The cartoon content may also teach children improper language and behavior^[14]. Moreover, according to Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development, children go through several phases of cognitive development. Children begin to identify concepts and objects with language when they reach the preoperational stage, lasting 2 to 7 years^[15]. The nativist theory, attributed to Noam Chomsky, suggests that children have an inbuilt mechanism for language acquisition from birth, allowing them to comprehend and use language. Even with little explicit training, toddlers can quickly pick up the fundamentals of any language because of their natural knowledge^[16]. Children may utilize their natural ability to understand and interpret language in the context of cartoon characters and stories, which helps them improve their comprehension and communication skills^[17]. Social Learning Theory, which Albert Bandura developed, focuses a strong emphasis on modeling and observed learning. Children acquire skills by following the actions of others^[18]. Therefore, English-language cartoons provide an excellent setting for social learning because of their lively characters and captivating stories. Also, watching English cartoons has

the potential, though it has some negative effects, to have a huge impact on children's language acquisition and social and emotional development because they offer a variety of models and possibilities for observation, interaction, and imitation^[19].

Several studies have been conducted regarding children's language acquisition and behavioral development from cartoons. Rai et al.^[20] analyzed the effect of cartoons on changes in children's communication, habits, and behavior. According to the study, cartoons can affect children positively and negatively. Even when preschoolers watch cartoons regularly, it affects their language, behavior, liking, and disliking. The majority of children try to act according to the cartoons and imitate them in their real lives. Mahmood et al.^[21] examined the effects of violent cartoons on children's behavior. The study focuses on how children are exposed to antisocial content and its impact on their behavior. Children discover the content of cartoons as real, and after watching them, they enter a dream universe. Children lack the maturity to filter out the wrong information, so parents may have to guide their children and help them understand how to watch cartoon content appropriately.

Parvin et al.^[22] investigated the effects of cartoon programs on children's growth, intelligence, actions, and activities. The study briefly illustrated the positive and negative influences of cartoon programs. Watching cartoons has too many sound effects on children's physical and emotional well-being; it teaches children about physiotherapy and rehabilitation-related activities; it helps them overcome their fear of therapy and know about tradition, laws, conventions, advantages, health, and mythology. On the other hand, watching too many devices can injure the children's eyesight and create hearing problems because they watch the TV from too close and enjoy the program at high volume. Watching cartoons too much makes them antisocial. They believe in superstitions, such as that they can fly, jump from the top, kill 15 enemies simultaneously, fall from the 10th floor, and be harmless, etc. Alghonaim^[23] explored the effects of watching English cartoons on a young Arabic child. It was a case study of a young Saudi Arabian boy who learned English by watching cartoons. The boy did not have English proficiency when he first began watching cartoons. However, once he began watching English cartoons, he was able to spontaneously and unconsciously adjust his tone, pauses,

and attitudes to the meaning of an English text. When he was eight, his vocabulary reached 4000, adequate for casual conversation in an English-speaking environment. However, the study did not address any area related to cultures and behaviors.

Yousaf et al.^[24] studied the psychological behavior of Pakistani children after watching cartoons and found that children are gradually getting lazier, using the language of the cartoons with their friends and family, and even preferring to watch cartoons rather than engage in outdoor activities. Sharma and Suri^[4] analyzed children who use inappropriate language and exhibit bad behavior; a major reason is the absence of both parents and their lack of monitoring of the children. Akçal et al.^[25] examined how children consider traits including physical appearance, superhuman skills, gender, and the character’s positive and negative emotional states when selecting a favorite character. Awinkeligo et al.^[26] found that, while cartoons might be a valuable tool for children’s verbal development, they may also hurt their conduct. Particularly, those cartoons represent Western cultures, which, in the context of Ghana, may not be socially acceptable. Perween et al.^[27] studied the effect of media on children’s language acquisition in nuclear families in India. Habib and Soliman^[28] showed how cartoon content triggers children’s minds and affects their mental health and thought processes.

The current study is unique from all the reviewed and existing works for several reasons. Firstly, almost no research on watching English cartoons has been found in Dhaka, Bangladesh, which covers preschoolers’ linguistic and behavioral issues. Secondly, being a two-tier independent country- one in 1947 from the British colonizers and the other in 1971 from then West Pakistan- Bangladesh, Dhaka has its rich and traditional cultures. Our study addresses how watching overseas cartoons impacts the long-nurtured and heritage-bearing cultures of the country. Thirdly, societal norms and rituals are also very strong in Dhaka, where around 85% of the population are followers of the same religious community. This research paper explores the deviation in the practice of societal norms and rituals resulting from watching cartoons of different cultures. Finally, the existing studies only discuss the positive and negative sides of the cartoons. However, this paper aims to investigate the influence of watching English cartoons on language acquisition

and behavioral development of preschoolers who have not started their academic education in Dhaka. Therefore, considering its gaps, the study becomes unique in its urge and implication.

3. Methods

We adopted a mixed-method approach to collect authentic and unbiased data to ensure the credibility of the study. We collected quantitative data through a questionnaire and qualitative data through semi-structured interviews and observation.

We adopted a questionnaire survey to receive quick responses and objective data. The **Figure 1** is a graphical representation of how we collected quantitative data. To obtain subjective and elaborate data, we conducted in-depth interviews with semi-structured questions. To get authentic data about behavioral development and language acquisition, we observed the behaviors and language application of the respondent preschoolers.

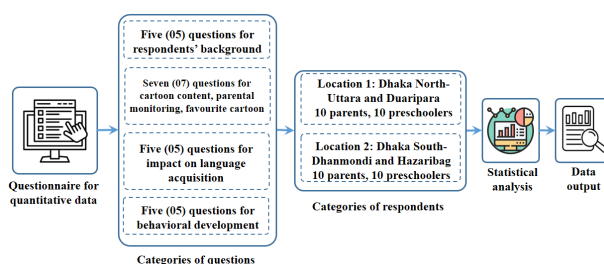


Figure 1. Questionnaire Survey for collecting quantitative data.

The **Figures 2** and **3** demonstrate the overall scenario of collecting qualitative data. We ensured the reliability of the data by triangulating these three tools- questionnaire survey, in-depth interview and observation.

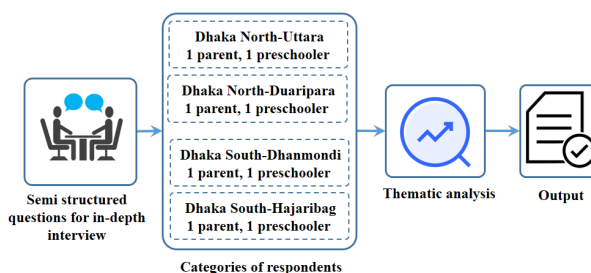


Figure 2. In-depth interviews with semi-structured questions for qualitative data.

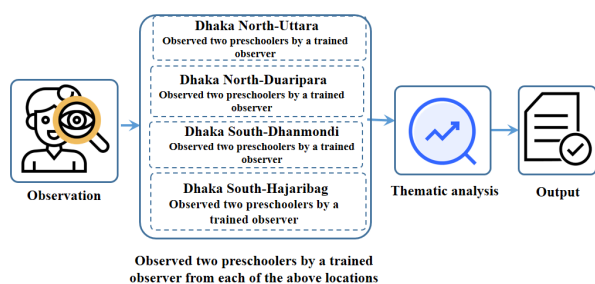


Figure 3. Observation for qualitative data.

3.1. Participants

As Dhaka city is divided into Dhaka North and Dhaka South, we selected two areas from Dhaka North and two from Dhaka South. For the authenticity and reliability of the data, we chose *Uttara* and *Dhanmondi*, respectively, from the North and the South, where respondents were generally educated and aristocratic. Also, we selected *Duaripara* and *Hajaribag*, respectively, from the North and the South, where respondents had comparatively poor academic and economic backgrounds. Through convenience sampling, we collected data from 40 respondents- 20 were parents and 20 were preschoolers. Since we collected data from four representative areas -*Uttara*, *Duaripara*, *Dhanmondi*, and *Hajaribag*- of both parts of Dhaka, we selected 10 participants from each area. From each area, we selected five parents, of which 3 were mothers, and 2 were fathers; the number of mothers is more than that of fathers because preschoolers spend most of their time with their mothers. The parents' age range was 30–40. Moreover, we randomly selected 5 preschoolers from each area, irrespective of boys and girls whose ages ranged from 3–5. For in-depth interviews, we selected 4 parents and 4 preschoolers according to our convenience from the above-mentioned four areas of Dhaka City. Our four trained observers observed 8 preschool respondents from the four selected areas of Dhaka (two from each area) for two months. All the children-respondents can access television and smartphones with an internet connection at home and watch English cartoons. Parents were especially those who were fathers and mothers whose children were respondents.

3.2. Data Collection

We used a questionnaire to collect quantitative data from parents. To maintain the validity of the questionnaire,

we structured and adapted it from Mahbub^[29] and Sultana^[2]. The questionnaire contains 22 questions, and the first five were regarding the respondents' background information. The remaining 17 were open-ended questions; 6 were 5-point Likert-Scale, 3 were dichotomous, and 8 were general open-ended questions. Among the 17 questions, 7 were to collect data about the contents of cartoons, parental monitoring, duration of watching cartoons, favorite cartoons, etc.; 5 were about the impacts of watching cartoons on children's language, and the remaining five were about its impacts on behavioral development. For in-depth interviews, 15 semi-structured questions were developed for parents, and 9 semi-structured questions were prepared for preschoolers. We trained four observers to observe the behavioral and language development of the selected preschoolers from the four specific areas of Dhaka North City and Dhaka South City. To determine the sampling unit, we followed convenience and purposeful sampling methods.

3.3. Data Analysis

Data derived from the questionnaire, in-depth interview, and observation were analyzed at several levels to obtain answers to the research questions. The questionnaire data were analyzed statistically and presented numerically. The in-depth interview and observation data were analyzed thematically and presented descriptively.

3.4. Ethical Issues

We valued all the respondents' rights and shared the data collection and analysis processes with them. We also briefed them on how we will use the study's findings. Our observers observed the preschooler respondents in a very natural setting and did not share any points with anyone outside. We gave participants complete freedom to withdraw his or her participation from the research at any phase.

4. Findings

We carefully analyzed both qualitative and quantitative data to obtain authentic information. The questionnaire was a self-administered survey for educated parents, and the researchers administered it when parents were less educated and reluctant to complete it themselves. We physically

shared the hard copy of the questionnaire with the mothers and asked them if they were able to fill it out; if not, we asked respondents the questions in Bangla and put tick marks according to their responses. The following is the data analysis of the survey questionnaire.

4.1. Data Analysis of the Questionnaire Survey

Question 1: How much time does your preschooler child spend in watching English cartoons in a day?

The duration children spend every day watching English cartoons is shown here. Half of the participants state that children remain engaged in this pastime for one to two hours daily. Furthermore, 20% of parents report that their children watch for over five hours, indicating notable involvement in cartoons. Furthermore, 15% of the mothers believe that their children spend 30 minutes to an hour, 5% think that it is two to three hours, and 10% consider that it is three to four hours. This distribution highlights a variety of patterns in children's daily cartoon consumption.

Question 2: How much time does your preschooler child spend in outdoor activities daily?

The finding here shows the time children spend on outside activities every day. Remarkably, 45% of the respondents replied that their children do not play outside, indicating an alarming increase in sedentary behavior. Yousaf et al.^[24] found psychological changes in children after watching cartoons. They even find that children become lazier than before and are more interested in watching cartoons rather than engaging in outdoor activities. Besides, 20% of the participants think that their children play outside for 1 to 2 hours, indicating moderate physical activity. For 10% of the mothers, their children spend 2 to 3 hours; for 25%, it is 30 minutes to 1 hour. The results indicate an alarming condition of the children who spend either no or very little time playing outdoor games and activities.

Question 3: What is the choice of your child about the content of cartoon shows?

The answer illustrates children's preferences for cartoon content; it reveals distinctive gender-based choices. Notably, 38% of boys like fighting cartoons, whereas only 2% of the girls choose the same content. On the other hand, girls are more interested in the friendly content genres than boys;

38% of the girls like to watch cartoons with friendly content, whereas only 2% of the boys like it. However, 7.5% of the viewers of both sexes are interested in shows with an adventurous theme. Surprisingly, 100% of the boys are interested in watching war-appealing cartoons, while no girls express their preference for this.

Question 4: Does your preschooler child want to fight like his/her cartoon heroes?

The reply reveals the imitating tendency of the children and the extent to which preschoolers want to imitate their cartoon heroes. It shows that 50% of the children like to fight like cartoon heroes. Rai et al.^[20] also found in their study that watching cartoons affects not only children's language but also their behavior, eating habits, liking, and disliking; even children love to act like the heroes and heroines of the cartoons they watch. On the other hand, 30% of them strongly disagree with following their cartoon heroes and fighting like their heroes.

Question 5: How do you manage the content of the English cartoons your child watches?

The finding outlines how parents manage their children's English cartoon content. Significantly, 90% of the children select cartoons on their own. On the other hand, 10% of the parents choose the cartoons that their children watch. None of the respondents replied that they and their children chose the cartoon content together.

Question 6: Do you monitor your child while he/she watches cartoons?

The answer exposes parental monitoring of their children's cartoon-watching habits. Ten percent of the mothers/respondents agree that they are always aware of their children's cartoon consumption. The findings also reveal that 20 percent of the parents monitor frequently and 45 percent occasionally their children's cartoon watching. Notably, 25 percent of mothers believe that they hardly ever check what cartoons their children are watching.

Question 7: They try to copy or mimic their favorite cartoon characters.

The answer shows the frequency with which children attempt to imitate their favorite cartoon characters. Significantly, 75% of children show this behavior very often, 15%

occasionally imitate their favorite characters, whereas 10% do this practice very rarely. Most of the children are behaviorally influenced by their favorite cartoon characters, in fact, by the environment where they spend their time. Skinner^[13] also argues that the environment shapes children’s behaviors and language skills through reinforcement and repetition.

Question 8: In what ways do you think watching English cartoons has developed their language skills? (You can select multiple answers, if necessary)

The result outlines the diverse impacts of watching English cartoons on children’s language skills. Cartoons significantly improve verbal articulation, as seen by the overwhelming 100% of respondents who report noticeable improvements in pronunciation. Furthermore, 45% attribute exposure to cartoons to improving vocabulary, 35% of respondents attribute cartoons to helping children comprehend sentence structure, and an equal number highlight the cartoon’s contribution to improving listening comprehension. Amazingly, 60% of parents say their children’s confidence in speaking skills increases after watching English cartoons. Sharma et al.^[4], Awinkeligo et al.^[26], Perween et al.^[27], and Alghonaim^[23] also find that watching English cartoons significantly develops children’s articulation, vocabulary, and, above all, English speaking skills.

Question 9: Do you think that cartoons are helpful for children to learn the English language?

The answer depicts parent’s perspectives regarding the roles of cartoons in helping their children learn English. 55% of the respondents think cartoons are beneficial because children copy their actions, behaviors, and ways of articulation, leading to developing English language skills. Furthermore, 45% agree that cartoons positively impact higher levels of activity and engagement. Parvin et al.^[22] and Rai et al.^[20] emphasize that cartoons are beneficial and supportive tools to develop children’s language, habits, actions, and activities.

Question 10: Based on your observations, how does watching English cartoons influence your preschooler’s behavior?

The result here reveals parental views about how watching English cartoons affects preschooler’s behavior. Notably, 25% of respondents feel that there have been favorable behavioral consequences. Surprisingly, none of the responses

mention a negative influence, indicating no negative repercussions of watching cartoons. 75% of the parents remain neutral regarding this question.

Question 11: The exposure to cartoons from different cultures can lead to detachment from one’s own cultural values and traditions.

The finding shows perspectives on the potential impact of exposure to cartoons from diverse cultures on one’s connection to their cultural values and traditions. Significantly, 60% of respondents (25% strongly agree and 35% agree) express concern. This significant proportion of respondents thinks such exposure could cause a disconnection from their culture. Awinkeligo et al.^[26] argue that watching cartoons of overseas cultures negatively affects children’s conduct and customs. According to them, cartoons representing Western cultures may bring some changes in the practices of their children, which may not be socially acceptable in the context of Ghana. 30% of respondents, on the other hand, reject this idea; they rather claim that watching cartoons from different cultural backgrounds does not always weaken ties to one’s own culture.

Question 12: The exposure to watching English cartoons detaches children from their own language.

The reply reveals opinions regarding the potential impact of watching English cartoons on children’s detachment from their native language. Notably, 55% of respondents (20% strongly agree and 35% agree) express concern; they believe that watching English-language cartoons may cause them to disconnect from their native tongue. On the other hand, 30% of the respondents disagree with this point.

In response to the question, “*What are the favorite cartoons of your children?*” the mother-respondents have come up with the following names.

The **Table 1** shows the cartoons that children generally love to watch. These cartoon names have become common in the responses of all the mother-respondents.

Table 1. Children’s Favorite Cartoons.

Names of the Cartoons	
Miraculous	Tom and Jerry
Nastya	Oko Lele
Diana and Roma	Cocomelon
Masha and the Bear	Monster School
Info bells	Wolfoo

4.2. Semi-Structured Interview with Parents

Q) Do the children use any English words in their conversation that they learn from cartoons? If so, what are those?

As per the parent’s statement, their children often use the following vocabulary from cartoons in their communication.

The findings in **Table 2** demonstrate how children learn language and behavior from their surroundings. It goes with Skinner’s Behavioral Learning Theory which shows that children shape their behaviors and acquire language through imitation, repetition, and reinforcement.

Table 2. Vocabulary Children Learnt From Cartoons.

List of Vocabulary Children Apply in Their Real Life		
Okay	Bye-Bye	Doll
Oh! Yes	See You	Bat
No	Open	Fish
Sorry	Close	Chicken
Mommy	Play	Stop
Papa	Dog	Monkey
Thank You	Cat	Tiger
Welcome	Car	Apple
Bat	Hungry	Come On
Ball	Cake	Shut Up
Water	Pizza	Mickey Mouse
Good	Burger	Give Me
Dirty	Chicken Fry	It’s Mine
Surprise	Butterfly	What Happen
Happy	Ladybug	Like This
Sad	Xylophone	Arbi is Good

The children also utter the English alphabet, identify different shapes and colors, name vegetables and fruits, and classify different occupations and insects. Alghonaim’s^[23] study also shows how watching English cartoons can increase the vocabulary of a young Arabic child. In his case study, the Saudi Arabian boy learned 4000 vocabulary words by watching English cartoons when he was eight.

Q) Are they able to produce ready-made sentences/chunks in English that they learn from cartoons? What are those?

The parents think their children could also construct ready-made sentences or chunks during conversations, which they picked up from cartoons. The respondents mention the following chunks.

Children who watch cartoons regularly learn the behav-

iors of the cartoon characters, pick words the cartoon use and even learn ready-made sentences/chunks. The **Table 3** proves how children learn chunks and use these ready-made short sentences in their daily life.

Table 3. Phrases Children Learnt From Cartoons.

List of Phrases Children Apply in Their Real Life		
I’m hungry	What is this	I want to eat rice
I’m tired	Go to washroom	I want juice
I’m waiting	Don’t disturb me	Want to go to seabeach
My name is Naista	I want food	Let’s go outside
How are you	Granny will come	Don’t touch it
I’m fine	I love you	I don’t know
I’m busy	I’m a good girl	

Q) Can you please mention any specific examples of how your child learns from cartoons and implements them in real life?

In response to this question, one respondent says, “Everything he watches in cartoons, he wants to mimic in real life. Another respondent says, “He wants to fight like the cartoon”. Actually, children fantasize that the cartoons are real. For example, one child woke up and exclaimed, “Today Nastya came and gave me chocolates.” They make the cartoon figures seem perfect. They want to imitate cartoon character’s eating habits, such as using a spoon, and they want to dress and eat like cartoons—that is, they want to eat burgers, pizza, pancakes, popcorn, and other such foods. They also desire to jump from any height and fly like Superman. They also attempt to imitate the cartoon character’s dancing moves. Some girls want to be represented as princesses.

Q) Have you noticed any changes in their behavior after watching English cartoons? If yes, what are those changes?

As per the parents of the children, there are certain advantages to cartoons. For instance, sometimes children can recognize what poses a risk to them, like avoiding knives and fire. Cartoons teach them about the dangers of those things. They now understand that doing nice things would make them get rewards and recognition from others, which is another alteration in their moral values. If they perform something wrong, they will be misinterpreted and taken into custody by the police. Also, children seem to become wiser and more attentive. Through cartoons, they also learn how to express their feelings, such as anger, happiness, sadness, and even tears. For instance, one youngster cries because his

favorite character dies in a particular episode. They want to eat in the same way as cartoon characters do; therefore, when they see their favorite character eating spinach, they want to eat it, too. They wish to dress like the cartoon characters and learn dancing and singing from them. They want a room that is organized. They enjoy receiving and giving gifts. They know how to show love to their parents. The parents also said that watching cartoons has caused some modifications in their children's moral views. For instance, they threatened to call the police and make an arrest if they saw someone behaving inappropriately. They can also distinguish between positive and negative work and the consequences of negative work. They also know the fairy will surprise them if they share the food or toy with their friends. Some children do not like to waste food, water, or other materials. Some children learn honesty from the animation and do not lie to anyone.

The parents of the children claim that cartoons might also have a negative aspect. For instance, some cartoons contain violent and aggressive content. As a result, they become more arrogant and violent, breaking things in their anger. They adopt the fighting and arguing behaviors they watch in cartoons and apply them to their friends and family. For example, they want to jump like Spiderman since they see he can jump, which is risky. They also have the wrong belief that superheroes are unable to feel pain and injuries. They saw that Superman was shot in the eye, but he was not dead. Therefore, they think they have the superpower, they can do whatever they want, and they can protect them in any situation. Islamic parents are concerned that their children learn anti-Islamic culture. They fantasize about the cartoon in their real world. Their desire to talk like cartoon characters and imitate the characters affects their authentic conversation. Sometimes, they become so involved with the screens that they stop interacting with others. This is the reason why children have speech delays. They become more absent-minded.

Q) Do you think cartoons nowadays are mature and obscene enough to be shown to children?

Many parents believe that since cartoons teach children English vocabulary, they are sophisticated enough. Parents have reported that their children frequently use words or phrases that they would not likely use with them or whose meaning is unknown to the parents. They consequently pick up those words from the cartoons, which will help them to

succeed in the modern world. The cartoons also teach them valuable life lessons, such as how to share, love others, distinguish between good and bad things, and maintain a balanced diet. Some parents said that if we told them to do that, they would disagree with us, but if they watch the exact things the cartoons do, they willingly do that work. Therefore, it is beneficial for them.

Some parents believe that few cartoons are offensive enough to be shown to children since they feature violent and fighting themes like Oggy, which has a negative psychological impact on the children. Children desire to use weapons and fire like Ben 10, which is dangerous for them because the cartoons urge them to do so. Additionally, certain children use inappropriate terminology, such as loser and idiot.

Q) Have you noticed your child showing interest in other cultures than their own after watching cartoons? If yes, please provide an example.

Many parents claim that they have observed their children displaying curiosity in different cultures, such as wanting to dress like cartoon characters, which may or may not be acceptable in our society. They attempt to imitate the eating habits of cartoon characters, such as consuming pancakes, popcorn, pizza, burgers, and French fries instead of traditional Bangla food. They aspire to act and talk like cartoon characters. According to one of the parents, a Muslim child wants to celebrate Christmas. He noticed that the cartoon characters were celebrating Christmas. Thus, they are becoming more and more interested in different cultures.

4.3. Semi-Structure Interview with Children

Q) Which one you prefer most- watching cartoons at home or playing with friends?

Most of the children said they wanted to watch cartoons the most, and some wanted to play with their friends. This sort of tendency is a matter of great concern as it increases the passiveness of our children. Limiting outdoor activities and social interaction may impede the development of social systems in children's brains^[30]. "Their brains are shaped by the early experiences of empathy, social engagement, problem-solving, and imaginative play, but media consumes more of their leisure time and limits their social interaction and play" (^[5], p.7, cited in^[3]).

Q) Can you tell me the names of some of your favorite cartoons?

They said their favorite cartoons are Miraculous, Nastya, Diana and Roma, Masha and the Bear, Info Bells, Tom and Jerry, Oko Lele, Cocomelon, Monster School, and Wolfoo.

Q) Can you tell me something about your favorite cartoons?

According to children, their favorite cartoons are superheroes to them. They said, “The hero of the cartoons is strong and powerful. They can save them from any danger and fight with the enemy. They will always win over their enemy. They want to be like the cartoon. They want to be powerful and dress themselves like the cartoon hero”.

Q) Can you say some dialogue that the cartoon character uses?

One of the children says, “I’m Nastya; I want to go to the beach.” Others say, “Don’t disturb me.” Another one says, “I am hungry.” Another one says, “Granny will come.” Nadia can learn better because she mostly watches the English versions of Dora the Explorer and Go Diego Go

Q) Do you want to become like him/her (mentioned cartoon character)?

They reply, “Yes, I want to be strong like him”. “I want to fight like him”. “I want to dress like him.” Oyero and Opeyemi^[30] rightly say that children want to act and behave what they learn by watching cartoons and socializing with friends and family accordingly.

4.4. Results of the Observation of Various Cartoons

Miraculous: The animated series Tales of Ladybug & Cat Noir is a powerhouse of action, humor, romance, and superhero themes. Its dynamic plot and engaging characters play a significant role in children’s language acquisition. The show’s conversational discourse, variety of vocabulary, and expressions benefit their acquisition of the English language. Moreover, the show frequently includes moral lessons encouraging perseverance, empathy, and teamwork.

Nastya: While ‘Nastya’ offers an entertaining medium for language exposure, it’s important for children to watch

it under their parent’s supervision. The show covers a wide range of imaginative and informative subjects and can help children learn English by introducing them to vocabulary and discussion. However, the effect on behavior could differ. Even though the content usually upholds moral principles, parental guidance is crucial to ensure a healthy and educational viewing experience.

Diana and Roma: “Diana and Roma” shows videos of siblings participating in creative and educational activities. By exposing children to spoken language, vocabulary, and simple expressions in an interesting setting, the channel can positively impact their English language acquisition.

Masha and the Bear: “Masha and the Bear” portrays the adventures of a lively and mischievous girl named Masha and her bear friend. The show is entertaining for children because it blends storytelling, humor, and life lessons. On a positive note, it can help children learn the language by exposing them to basic words and phrases. Along with teaching moral lessons, the program promotes virtues like cooperation and kindness.

Info bells: The cartoons cover a wide range of subjects to offer both educational and enjoyable content. Info Bells positively impact children’s English language learning by introducing vocabulary and concepts through a visually appealing essential layout. The emphasis on education could promote good deeds, curiosity, and a love of learning.

Tom and Jerry: A cat named Tom and a mouse named Jerry have a comic rivalry in the beloved animation series “Tom and Jerry.” The program, well-known for its slapstick humor and sparse conversation, mainly focuses on physical comedy and visual puns. Even though the humor may not be directly related to learning English, children worldwide can still find it entertaining. It can have a complex effect on a child’s behavior. One might claim that exaggerated comedic violence is harmless entertainment that makes people laugh and enjoy themselves. Nonetheless, some research indicates that exposing children to this kind of cartoon violence could make them less sensitive to aggression.

Oko Lele: “Oko Lele” tells the story of human-like creatures that live in a beautiful woodland. The program blends adventure, humor, and ethical lessons. Despite being mostly written in Croatian, it can still benefit English language learners by exposing them to dynamic storytelling and richly contextualized imagery.

Cocomelon: The show is both enjoyable and educational for children because it includes original music, nursery rhymes, and educational content. By introducing vocabulary, simple phrases, and rhythmic language patterns to young learners, “Cocomelon” can have a positive impact on their acquisition of the English language. Furthermore, the content highlights social skills, healthy attitudes, and educational ideas, all of which have a favorable impact on children’s conduct and development.

Monster School Usually shows famous monsters enrolling in a school where they engage in humorous and dangerous actions. Despite being made largely for pleasure, the series’ exposure to dialogue, expressions, and storytelling can help children learn English more effectively. Since humor and fantasy are the main themes, parents should help children distinguish between fictional and real-life behavior.

Wolfoo: The cartoon series Wolfoo centers on Wolfoo, a charming and intelligent wolf cub who goes on numerous adventures with his friends and family. The series can introduce children to basic vocabulary, language structures, and social interactions, which can have a favorable impact on their learning of the English language. Furthermore, moral lessons are frequently incorporated into the series, encouraging virtues like kindness, cooperation, and sharing.

4.5. Results of the Observation of Children

While we observe the language acquisition and behavior of the children, we notice that they use some English words in their conversation. When we ask them, how are you? They say, I am fine, and you? So they understand what the researcher is asking in English and respond to the researcher in English. They automatically learn those responses from cartoons. When we ask them about their favorite color, they also understand the message and respond with an answer. The most interesting part is that we notice that their pronunciation and accent are similar to the pronunciation and accent of cartoons. The preschoolers can produce the exact pronunciation. They learn the English alphabet, color names, and alphabet using cartoon words. However, some of them did not know the Bangla alphabet. One of the children was crying because his favorite character died in an episode. So they are very fond of cartoons and fantasize about them in real life. They learn to express their emotions

from the cartoon. They understand that the fairy will give them surprises if they do good work. The child also learns some behaviors from the cartoon; for example, they want to jump and fight like the cartoon hero, be powerful, dress, and eat like them. The observer observes that boys usually like fights, wars, or adventurous cartoons, whereas girls like friendly cartoons.

5. Discussion

The results of this study highlight several significant phenomena regarding the effects of watching English cartoons on preschoolers in Dhaka City. Forty-five children do not play outside; this increase in sedentary behavior raises questions regarding the possible impact on social and physical development. Screen time must be balanced with outside activities for preschoolers’ overall well-being. A noteworthy area is that cartoon preference varies by sex; while girls prefer friendly cartoons, boys prefer fighting cartoons. Understanding these differences can help content creators create inclusive and diverse content that appeals to the unique interests of both sexes, resulting in a more balanced watching experience. It was found that 75% of children frequently mimic their favorite cartoon characters; it illustrates how powerful behavioral influences cartoons have. However, it demands that children need guidance from their guardians while watching cartoons. Positively, the study emphasizes how watching English-language cartoons can support language learning and cognitive growth. Improvements in pronunciation (100%) and vocabulary enrichment (45%), together with improvements in listening (35%), and sentence structure understanding (35%), indicate that preschoolers’ exposure to English cartoons can be beneficial to their second language development.

Cartoons have a significant effect on preschoolers’ language acquisition and cognitive development. It has been well demonstrated by their abilities to help people express themselves, form sentences, and recognize shapes, colors, and objects. On the other hand, parents become concerned when they witness their children trying to imitate dangerous behaviors or aggressive activities they have learned from cartoons. Children imitate the positive and possibly harmful actions shown in cartoons, blurring the barriers between reality and fiction. Parents observe positive changes in moral

values, attributing these modifications to the ethical values taught by cartoons. These changes include sharing, understanding consequences, and refraining from harmful activities. However, there is a noticeable drawback, especially when children mimic violent actions and show a lack of comprehension of pain and injury due to films featuring superheroes. Cultural concern is a major issue because some children show interest in traditions and festivals from other cultures and religions, creating an embarrassing situation for their family and culture. This tendency towards other cultures and religions is due to the dynamic influence of watching English cartoons, which bears the testimony of conflict between cultural preservation and global adaptation.

We recommended some areas for watching English cartoons that may mitigate their negative aspects and encourage children to watch more healthily. Firstly, to balance the sedentary behavior linked with excessively watching cartoons, it is crucial to promote outside activities actively. Content creators are encouraged to create a diverse range of cartoons that accommodate the diverse tastes of both sexes. Parents must have an education about the value of actively directing and supervising their children's cartoon selections. Parents can ensure their children have a happy and enriching cartoon experience while watching by attending workshops and seminars that offer practical ways to supervise and engage their children. The watching experience can be improved by having resources on age-appropriate content, time limitations, and having conversations about the topic. To help toddlers distinguish between fictional content and real-life activities, it is essential that they be encouraged to develop critical thinking skills.

Cultural and linguistic awareness is required. Parents and content providers should be aware of the possible effects of English cartoons on intercultural and linguistic relationships. Promoting exposure to many cultures while preserving a bond with one's native tongue can help balance linguistic and cultural development. For example, children can watch the "Mena English" cartoon to learn the English language in their own culture. It is possible to create language learning programs that balance learning English with maintaining one's native tongue by utilizing cartoons as an educational tool.

6. Conclusions

To sum up, this paper suggests that watching cartoons has various effects, some of which are beneficial, and others may be causes of concern. Cartoons can potentially be instructional tools because preschoolers can integrate English vocabulary, compose sentences, and comprehend complicated concepts. Though cartoons are effective educational tools and supportive of cognitive development, exposure to violent content can encourage imitation of harmful behavior, which may have negative consequences. The research findings suggest that parental supervision and content development of cartoons with critical thinking, educational activities, and positive values are very important. Moreover, it is essential to mitigate potential negative consequences, especially about violent content. Cultural sensitivity and awareness should be incorporated to strike a balance between the preservation of national identity and global influences. The educational value of English cartoons can be enhanced while avoiding unwanted consequences with an integrated approach as proposed in the study.

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Validation, M.K.A. and Z.B.A.; formal analysis, M.K.A., M.G.M. and S.K.R.; writing—original draft preparation, M.K.A., M.G.M. and P.V.; writing—review and editing, M.G.M., S.K.R. and M.M.; supervision, M.K.A., Z.B.A. and P.V. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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