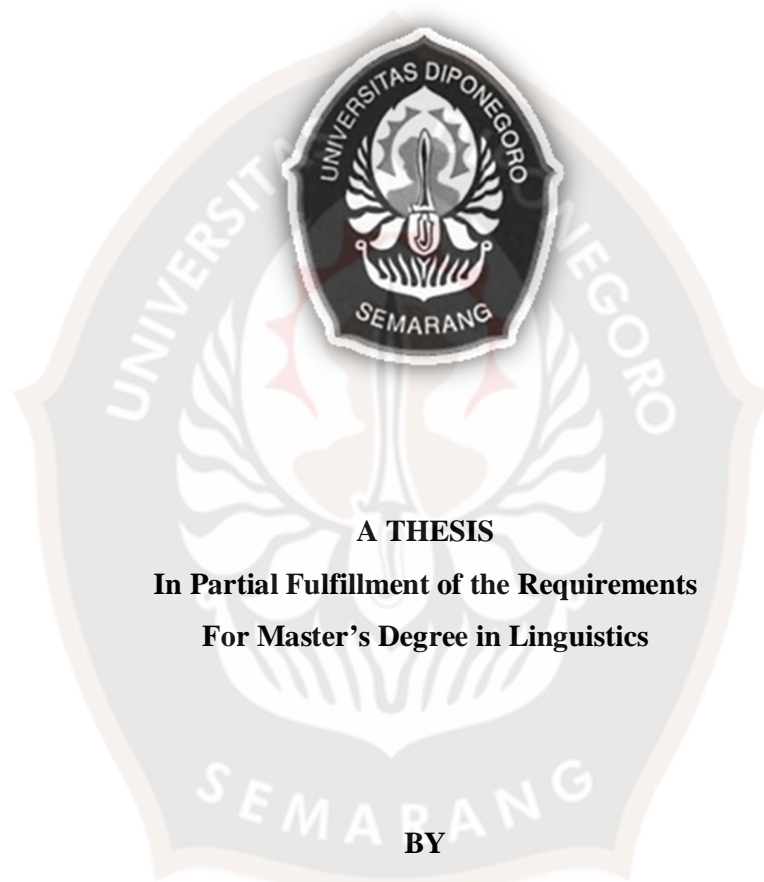


**INTRODUCING ENGLISH READING AND WRITING USING
LETTERLAND PROGRAM TO THE INDONESIAN YOUNG LEARNERS:**

**A Case Study of Reading and Writing Instruction
at Star Kiddy Preschool Semarang**



**A THESIS
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For Master's Degree in Linguistics**


**BY
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**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DIPONEGORO UNIVERSITY SEMARANG
2013**

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VALIDATION

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CERTIFICATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that this thesis, entitled “Introducing English Reading and Writing Using *Letterland* Program to the Indonesian Young Learners: A Case Study of Reading and Writing Instruction at Star Kiddy Preschool Semarang” is original. I am completely responsible for the content of the thesis. Other writers’ opinion or findings included in this thesis are quoted or cited in accordance with the ethical standard.

Semarang, August 2013

Akhris Syafi’i



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“Read in the Name of Allah your Creator. He created man from a clinging organism. Read, and realize that Allah, your Creator is most generous. He taught by the pen (the main instrument of learning and knowledge, the instrument of authorship). He taught man what he did not know.”

(Al Alaq: 1-5)



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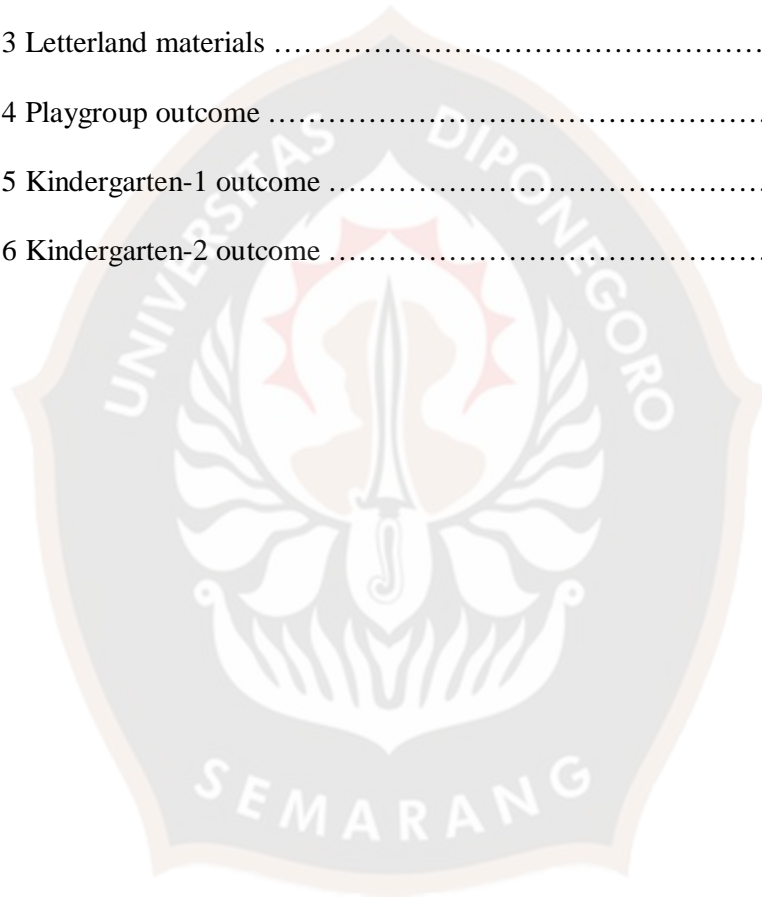
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ABSTRACT

Akhris Syafi'i. 2013. *INTRODUCING ENGLISH READING AND WRITING USING LETTERLAND PROGRAM TO THE INDONESIAN YOUNG LEARNERS: A Case Study of Reading and Writing Instruction at Star Kiddy Preschool Semarang*. Thesis. Linguistics Graduate Program. Diponegoro University. Advisor: Dr. Dwi Anggani Linggar Bharati, M.Pd.

Keyword: Letterland, reading and writing, preschool.

This study investigates the application of Letterland program in introducing English reading and writing to Indonesian young learners at Star Kiddy Preschool Semarang. The aims of this study are to analyze the curriculum used in Letterland program, to identify kinds of materials used, to know the teaching and learning activity in Letterland class and to find out the outcomes of Letterland program in developing early reading and writing skills of the students. This is a case study research. The data were collected through class observation, document gathering and assessment. The writer used descriptive qualitative approach in analyzing the data. The presentation of the research is carried out in informal way to give the detail description and analysis. The findings of the research are as follows: (1) Star Kiddy uses different curriculum from Lyn Wendon curriculum to adjust the Indonesian preschool student's ability, (2) The materials used in Star Kiddy Letterland class are varied and support all teaching and learning but not all of materials are the same as Lyn Wendon materials, (3) The teaching and learning activities in Star Kiddy Letterland class are done in amusing way, through approaches and strategies that are in line with Halimi (2010) theory of children language learning; those are: storytelling, songs and rhymes, games, art and craft, role play, (4) Letterland program in Star Kiddy preschool gives good outcome for Star Kiddy students: Playgroup (74%), Kindergarten-1 (72%), Kindergarten-2 (76%). It shows that Letterland program can be used for Indonesian preschool context in introducing English reading and writing. Furthermore, Star Kiddy Preschool has successfully implemented the two stages of Letterland program in Star Kiddy's Letterland class.

INTISARI

Akhris Syafi'i. 2013. *INTRODUCING ENGLISH READING AND WRITING USING LETTERLAND PROGRAM TO THE INDONESIAN YOUNG LEARNERS: A Case Study of Reading and Writing Instruction at Star Kiddy Preschool Semarang*. Tesis. Magister Linguistik. Universitas Diponegoro. Pembimbing: Dr. Dwi Anggani Linggar Bharati, M.Pd.

Kata Kunci: Letterland, membaca dan menulis, prasekolah.

Penelitian ini menyelidiki penerapan program Letterland dalam mengenalkan baca tulis bahasa Inggris kepada pembelajar pemula Indonesia di Star Kiddy Preschool Semarang. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis kurikulum yang digunakan di program Letterland, mengidentifikasi bahan ajar yang digunakan, mengetahui aktifitas belajar mengajar di kelas Letterland dan untuk menemukan hasil dari program Letterland dalam mengembangkan kemampuan membaca dan menulis para murid. Ini adalah penelitian studi kasus. Data diperoleh melalui observasi kelas, pengumpulan dokumen dan penilaian. Penulis menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dalam menganalisis data. Penyajian penelitian secara informal untuk memberikan deskripsi dan analisis secara terperinci. Temuan dari penelitian ini diantaranya adalah: (1) Star Kiddy menggunakan kurikulum yang berbeda dengan kurikulum Lyn Wendon untuk menyesuaikan kemampuan murid prasekolah di Indonesia, (2) Materi pembelajaran yang digunakan di kelas Letterland Star Kiddy bermacam-macam dan mendukung semua aktifitas belajar mengajar, namun tidak semuanya sama dengan materi Lyn Wendon, (3) Aktifitas belajar mengajar di kelas Letterland Star Kiddy dilakukan dengan cara yang menyenangkan, melalui pendekatan dan strategi yang sejalan dengan teori Halimi (2010) tentang pembelajaran bahasa anak-anak; diantaranya: metode bercerita, lagu dan sajak, permainan, seni dan kerajinan serta bermain peran, (4) Program Letterland di Star Kiddy memberikan hasil yang bagus bagi murid Star Kiddy: Playgroup (74%), Kindergarten-1 (72%), Kindergarten-2 (76%). Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa program Letterland dapat digunakan untuk prasekolah di Indonesia dalam pengenalan awal membaca dan menulis bahasa Inggris. Selanjutnya, Star Kiddy Preschool telah berhasil mengimplementasikan dua tingkatan program Letterland di kelas Letterland Star Kiddy.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study discusses teaching early reading and writing to preschool students using Letterland curriculum at Star Kiddy Preschool Semarang. This chapter is divided into several subsections, namely: Background of the Study, Statements of the Problem, Objectives of the Study, Significance of the Study, Scope of the Study, Definition of the Key Terms, and the Organization of Writing.

A. Background of the Study

Research and practice in English language teaching have identified the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading and writing—as of paramount importance. Not only listening and speaking, reading and writing as the next stages of language development also need to be concerned. The development of children’s reading and writing skills is sometimes not taken into account and concerned seriously by the teachers or researchers, especially in Indonesia.

Learning to read and write is a fundamental right of children in a modern world and informational era. To achieve at school and succeed in the world at large, children need to know how to read and write. Every day our life is full of different sorts of written texts: at home, at school, at the market, on the street, on television, on computer, book, etc. People in their daily lives, including children, are involved in using skills that extend beyond reading

and writing text. Reading can be the pleasurable and imaginative activity for children, which opens windows to all kinds of new worlds for them. Reading and writing are important ways in using language to communicate. A child's reading skill is important for his success in school and life. Therefore, reading and writing take an important part in children's language skill, in addition to listening and speaking skills.

Children start from their early age have already involved in using reading and writing. According to Barton in Cameron (2001: 124), an activity such as story-book reading or writing birthday card in which reading and writing are involved can be described as a 'literacy event'. Children get their first experiences of written language from their participation in literacy events at home or at their environment. In addition, Hoff (2001: 312) states that children in literate cultures not only become speakers and hearers of a language, but also become readers and writers. It means that children also need reading and writing skills, especially in this modern era.

Reading brings together visual information, phonological information and semantic. Those three types of information are used by readers in understanding the text, together with the information about the social uses of the text as discourse. Writing, in addition, requires the mastery of the fine motor skills to form the written shapes and orthographic knowledge of how written symbols are combined to represent words through spelling conventions (Cameron, 2001: 125). Reading and writing are the complex skills that involve many aspects.

Research shows that most children who have poor reading skills in early age will continue to experience difficulties later on (Dewey, 2010: i). Poor reading ability correlates with long-term negative outcomes. Students with poor reading skills in the beginning are likely to have poor skills in the future. Teaching children to read at young age frees them from the potential burden of learning to read in school. In 2003 scientists from Yale University reported the findings of a longitudinal study into the causes of dyslexia. The researchers had detected two types of the reading disability, with the more serious type attributable to the reading pathways of the brain having improperly connected neural circuitry. The reason for this was believed to be an absence of proper stimulation at an early enough age. In other words, early reading instruction would effectively prevent the more serious type of dyslexia (Brillkids, 2009: 15). Some of those researches show the importance of early reading and writing skills. However, the issue of when to teach children to read is still a hotly debated one.

Our National Education Department through Direktorat Jenderal Manajemen Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah, Direktorat Pembinaan Taman Kanak-Kanak dan Sekolah Dasar in UU RI No. 20 Tahun 2003 states that Kindergarten is the formal early year education aimed to help children developing their physic and psychological aspects including moral and religiosity, social, emotional, independent, cognitive, language and art as the base of the next educational level. Developing children's language, as the focus of the topic here, also include in the curriculum of Kindergarten.

Kindergarten is the pre-scholastic and pre-academic education level. It means that Kindergarten doesn't have main responsibility for teaching reading and writing. Recently, however, the fact shows that there is a shifting responsibility, related to the teaching early reading and writing, from elementary school to the Kindergarten. Moreover, some elementary schools today have certain requirements in their entrance test; one of them is that children must be able to read and write. Echoing to Hoff (2001: 312), children in literate cultures not only become speakers and hearers of a language, but also become readers and writers. Responding to the need of that skills, teaching early reading and writing is applied in some Kindergartens now.

Related to that problem, our government through National Education Department states:

“Pada dasarnya, membelajarkan persiapan membaca dan menulis di TK dapat saja dilaksanakan selama dalam batas-batas aturan pengembangan pra-skolastik atau pra-akademik. Pembelajaran persiapan membaca dan menulis di TK hendaknya dapat diberikan secara terpadu dalam program pengembangan kemampuan dasar, dalam hal ini bidang pengembangan berbahasa dan motorik.” (Depdiknas, 2007: 1)

Teaching reading and writing readiness in Kindergarten are allowed as long as in the range of pre-scholastic and pre-academic development. Teaching reading and writing to children also should consider their language and physical motor development. Most importantly, it should be delivered in fun and attractive way because 'learn through play' is the nature of children. The suitable program will support children in developing their early reading and writing skills.

The writer found a phenomenon of teaching early reading and writing to the early year's students. Star Kiddy Preschool of Semarang has implemented a program called Letterland in introducing reading and writing to their students. The writer found that some of Star Kiddy students in the final level of class are able to read and write even in English text. In early age, 5 to 7 years old, they already have the ability to read and write English written text. It is known that English written is so complex with its many rules and even more exceptions, at a child level of interest it is quite challenging. It is a kind of big issue for Indonesian young learners. The writer regards that this phenomenon is an important case to be studied. Therefore, he is interested in discussing further the case of teaching early reading and writing to the preschool students in his research.

The success of teaching early reading and writing cannot be separated from the teaching program supported. The success of teaching and learning depends on good program curriculum. Therefore, the writer is also interested in investigating and analyzing the program and curriculum used by Star Kiddy in introducing reading and writing. Letterland program has been chosen by Star Kiddy in assisting teaching early reading and writing.

Letterland is a program created by Lyn Wendon, a well-known reading specialist from England. It is used by preschools in many countries, including Indonesia. However, in Indonesia there are just a few preschools using this program. Letterland is the most child-friendly, multi-sensory way of teaching children to read and write. The basic mission of Letterland is to

ensure that many young children have fun in learning English especially in reading and writing. Letterland program provides a secure learning environment where children can happily develop cognitive, language and literacy skills which include phonemic awareness, alliteration and symbol/sound links, letter formation, blending and segmenting, word and sentence building, vocabulary and language, imaginative play and creative writing. This program has been successfully used by many preschools in the world.

The issue of introducing English reading and writing to preschool students using Letterland, therefore, becomes the important topic in giving contribution to EFL teaching and learning, especially for young learners.

B. Statements of the Problem

Considering the reason for choosing the topic, the problems of the study are formulated by the writer as follows:

1. How is the curriculum used in Letterland program?
2. What materials are used in Letterland program?
3. How are the teaching and learning activities done in the Letterland class?
4. What are the outcomes of the Letterland program in developing children's reading and writing skills?

C. Objectives of the Study

Based on the problems above, the objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To analyze the curriculum used in Letterland program.
2. To identify kinds of materials used in Letterland program.
3. To know the teaching and learning activity in Letterland class.
4. To find out the outcomes of Letterland program in developing early reading and writing skills of the students.

D. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to give a new perspective in teaching early reading and writing to young learners. The writer hopes that the findings of this study are useful for researcher himself, teachers, students, school, parents and education policy maker in Indonesia; i.e.:

1. For researcher

Researcher may use the findings as the consideration for further study, especially in discussing the nature of children early reading and writing skills development.

2. For teachers

Teachers can use the results of this study to review their technique and perception in teaching children. It is also hoped that teachers are able to make or use appropriate program for their students.

3. For students

The findings of this study are expected to be able to give students interesting and fun method in learning reading and writing.

4. For school

School can use the findings of this study to evaluate the program in teaching students to read and write.

5. For parents

The results of the research can be used by parents to give better support to their children in language and literacy learning.

6. For government

This research is useful for the government to evaluate the curriculum and policy related to teaching reading and writing to the kindergarten students. It also provides other point of view of TEYL in Indonesia.

E. Scope of the Study

The focus of this study is on curriculum, materials, class activities and outcomes of Letterland in introducing reading and writing to the Indonesian young learners. Letterland program was selected since it is said that Letterland can help children on the road to successful English reading and writing. (Manson, 1998:7).

Subject of the study is the students of Star Kiddy Preschool Semarang. There are 15 students in the Letterland class program, in the academic year of

2009/2010; Playgroup 5 students (3-4 years old), Kindergarten-1 5 students (4-5 years old) and Kindergarten-2 5 students (5-6 years old).

The research was done in Star Kiddy Preschool located at Jl. Bukit Kopi 11 Bukitsari Semarang. Star Kiddy was selected because it is a bilingual preschool in Semarang and has been implementing Letterland for teaching English, especially in reading and writing. The research was done in April to June 2010.

F. Definition of the Key Terms

Early reading and writing : an early moment of reading and writing when the pupil is ready to learn read and write.

Young learners : children who learn language in early age, between the ages of about 5 years old to 12 years old (Rixon, 1999)

Literacy : skill of able to read and write (Cameron, 2001)

Letterland : a program created by Lyn Wendon in teaching English reading and writing for children.

Curriculum : content to be taught and aims to be realized within school or educational system.

G. The Organization of Writing

The writing of this thesis was organized into five chapters:

Chapter I : INTRODUCTION

This Introduction chapter consists of Background of the Study, Purpose of the Study, Scope of the Study, Research Method, Underlying Theory, Definition of the Key Term, and Organization of the Writing.

Chapter II : REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

It consists of the Previous Study related to the research topic, Underlying Theory, and Hypothesis of the research.

Chapter III : RESEARCH METHOD

In Research Method chapter, the writer discusses several factors related to the obtaining of data and executing the research. Those aspects are Data Presentation—including Type of Study, Object of the Study, Population and Sample, Techniques of Collecting data, Data Analysis, and Finding Presentation.

Chapter IV : RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Chapter IV presents the discussion of analyzing data. It consists of Profile of Star Kiddy, Letterland Program, Letterland Curriculum, Letterland Materials, Letterland Class Activities, Letterland Outcomes in developing early reading and writing.

Chapter V : CONCLUSION

The conclusions and suggestions of the research present in this last chapter.



CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter the writer discusses related literatures, as the theoretical foundation of the research. It consists of the Previous Study related to the research topic and the Related Literatures.

A. Previous Studies

The research related to teaching reading and writing for children have been discussed before by some researchers, some of them are:

1. Byrne and Fielding-Barnsley tried to understand what make children into better readers at early stages of reading development. They executed the research to find out if practice in relating letters and sounds (letter-sound knowledge), along with practice in identifying phonemic sounds in words (phonemic awareness), would make children better readers or not. The researchers wanted to see if their ideas about beginning reading would give students an advantage. The purpose of their study was to evaluate a new program. The program emphasizes recognition of phoneme identity across words (Byrne and Fielding-Barnsley, 1991: 451). They worked with preschool students through long and persistent research start from 1989 until 1993. Byrne and Fielding-Barnsley concluded from this work that children benefit from phoneme-

identification skills (as well as knowledge of letter-sound correspondences) with regard to reading abilities. Moreover, they showed that a six-hour instructional program taught in pre-school has a lasting benefit on abilities needed for fluent reading. At time when so many people are debating the strengths of holistic and natural approaches to reading versus direct instruction in skills that support reading, the long-term efforts of Byrne and Fielding-Barnsley add strong evidence that certain types of direct instruction can benefit children who are learning to read (Grabe and Stoller, 2002: 104).

2. Tan and Nicholson (1997) in a recent study re-examined the role of flashcards. They asked a simple question, would flashcards be effective in building word recognition fluency, oral reading accuracy and reading comprehension. Tan and Nicholson taught 42 below-average-reading children word fluency skills and word recognition in three matched groups: two groups used flashcard training techniques and one group acted as a control, hearing the words and learning them aurally. All group received five 20-minute training session, one per week, based on texts the students were reading that week. All groups were provided with meaning of words. In one experimental group, students were simply shown a word in flashcard and a simple two-word phrase on the back side to reinforce its meaning. In the second group with flashcards,

students were shown words highlighted in longer phrases and sentences on the front side of the flashcards. In both flashcard groups, students practiced saying the words quickly. They then read a random list of the same words until they could say the words correctly at a rate of less than one per second. The control group was not trained to say the words to an expected rate of better than one word per second. For each of the five stories read, all groups of students were also given 12 comprehension questions and were asked to recall the stories through standard prompting techniques.

The results, after training, showed that the flashcard groups performed significantly better than the control group in speed and accuracy naming. Even more important, the flashcard groups performed significantly better on reading comprehension and story recall measures. This study demonstrated that fluency in word recognition, through flashcard practice, improves reading comprehension with below-average readers (Grabe and Stoller, 2002: 118-119).

3. The impact of learning reading before first grade on child's future achievement in reading also has been seriously answered by Durkin's research. From 1958 to 1964, he conducted two longitudinal studies on early reading (defined as the ability to read whole words before first grade). Durkin tested US

schoolchildren's IQs and reading abilities eight times over the course of six years. Writing in 1966, she concluded that:

- a. Early readers maintained or increased their advantage over their nonearly-reading peers between first and seventh grade. That advantage amounted to an average of two grade levels in reading ability.
- b. Early reading had very little to do with IQ, and everything to do with a child's home environment. There was a wide range in IQ among early readers, but the children tended to come from families that were more willing to help them learn to read.
- c. Socio-economic status was irrelevant. Instead, the early readers tended to come from families with parents who took the time to read with their children and who emphasized the value of reading.

(Fitzpatrick, 2009: 8)

4. A longitudinal study, published by professors at Yale University in 2003, has yielded fresh insights into the potential environmental causes of reading disability. What the Yale scientists found was that different types of dyslexia do indeed have different causes. Most interesting of all was the finding that the more severe form of dyslexia—one that is not resolved by adulthood—is produced by environmental rather than genetic factors.

In this study, subjects' reading ability was tested annually from first grade up to the age of 22. Participants in the study fell into one of three categories: those who scored poorly in reading in second and fourth grade, and also as adults; those who scored poorly in elementary school, but had made improvements by adulthood; and those without problems reading at any age.

The scientists used Functional Magnetic Resonance Imagery (fMRI) to track brain activity patterns in the participants during two separate reading tasks. In the case of the subjects who had shown an improvement in reading over the course of their schooling, the fMRI indicated that alternative pathways in the brain were compensating for a disruption in the neural systems for reading. In other words, these individuals had started off with a natural disadvantage in reading, but their brains had learned successful coping strategies.

In the case of the subjects with problems reading both in elementary school and in adulthood, the fMRI indicated that the neural systems were intact, but were not connected properly. While there was nothing to predispose these individuals to reading disability, their brains had not received the types of experiences necessary to produce reading success. These individuals tended to come from disadvantaged backgrounds, or families that did not promote early reading (Fitzpatrick, 2009: 9). The reason for this

was believed to be an absence of proper stimulation at an early enough age. In other words, early reading instruction would effectively prevent the more serious type of dyslexia.

5. Yaverbaum in Internet TESL Journal (2003) reported that, since 1997, she has developed and fine-tuned a complete three-year program that is built around Letterland concept, in Irkutsk Russia. She offers this program to children from age four onwards. Studying for only 60 minutes (2 lessons of 30 minutes each) per week, her students easily remember the sounds and confusing spelling patterns of English words. Each lesson, the children experience success in reading in foreign language. Completing a three-year course, her pupils know about 40 different stories that enable them without a failure to recognize and read in words most of letter combinations: e.g. **ch** (children & school), **sh** (sheep), **th** (thunder & these), **oo** (book), **wh** (which & who), **ph** (photo), **ow** (cow & snow), **all** & **al** (ball & always), etc.

The Letterland concept helps to create an EFL learning environment that is similar to a child's natural language learning environment. Yaverbaum has also observed that Letterland methods are very much in line with a child's natural language learning strategies. This makes her to believe that this is a reason why the method has been so successful and why it should be

recommended for EFL teaching of young children.
(<http://iteslj.org/Articles/Yaverbaum-Pictogram>)

The writer interested in executing further research about teaching English reading and writing to the preschool student. Indonesian children context is interesting to be studied since it has not been investigated yet. The differences between previous studies and writer's study are on curriculum analysis of Letterland program, classroom investigation, review of Letterland materials and outcomes of the Letterland program.

B. Related Literatures

The Underlying Theory consists of related theories used in the research. This theoretical foundation is very important in giving guideline and overview for the research.

1. Theories in Children's Language Learning

a. Piaget

Children always interact with the world around them and solving problems that are presented by environment. The knowledge that results from problem solving is not imitated, but actively constructed by the children.

Piaget (1962) concerns with how young children function in the world that surrounds them and how this influences their mental development. He differentiates two ways in which children development can take place: **assimilation** and **accommodation**.

Assimilation happens when action takes place without any change to the child; accommodation involves the child adjusting to features of the environment in some way (in Cameron, 2001: 3). Assimilation means make new information fit into existing knowledge and understanding. Accommodation is the way in changing existing knowledge to fit the new information. These two adaptive processes, although essentially different, happen together. Assimilation and accommodation are initially adaptive processes of behavior but they become processes of thinking. The simultaneous process of assimilation and accommodation is called adaptation.

Piaget proposes that a child's thinking develops as gradual growth of knowledge and intellectual skills toward a final stage of formal logical thinking. In particular, the Piagetian end-point of development is held to be unavailable to children before they reach 11 years of age or more. The experimental studies used to support Piaget's theories have been criticized for not being sufficiently child-friendly, and for underestimating what children are capable of. Margaret Donaldson and her colleagues have convincingly shown that when appropriate language, objects and tasks are used very young children are capable of many of the ways thinking that Piaget held too advanced for them, including informal, logical thought (Donaldson in Cameron, 2001: 4). These results undermine some of Piaget's theory,

particularly the notion of discrete stages and the idea that children cannot do certain things if they have not yet reached that stage.

An important dimension of children that Piaget neglects is the social. Vygotsky's ideas give a much greater priority to social interaction.

b. Vygotsky

Another theory that gives the child an active role in his/her development is that of the Russian psychologist Vygotsky (1962). The Vygotsky views of development differ from Piaget's in the important he gives to language and to other people in the child's world. While Piaget concentrated on the individual experiences of children and an internal process through which knowledge is actively constructed, Vygotsky described development as a social process. While interacting with others, children create understanding that is shared between them. Thus, active knowledge construction occurs in the social world. Learning through interaction (the interaction hypothesis) was proposed as an alternative learning through repetition and habit formation.

Vygotsky says that children construct his shared understanding in the *zone of proximal development* or the ZPD. The ZPD represents the difference between the children's actual, or achieved developmental level, and her potential development level. The actual

level of development includes knowledge and skills the child has mastered and can do independently. Potential development refers to things the child can do or achieve with the help of someone with a higher skill level. Miller says that this helper is often called 'the more skilled other' and may be either another child or an adult. The more skilled other help the child move forward by supporting or scaffolding his learning process (in Priscilla et.al., 2008: 3).

Vygotsky used the idea of the ZPD to give a new meaning to 'intelligence'. Rather than measuring intelligent by what a child can do alone, Vygotsky suggested that intelligent was better measured by what a child can do with skilled help. Different children at the same point in development will make different uses of the same help from an adult (Cameron, 2001: 6).

Learning to do things and learning to think are both helped by interacting with an adult. Vygotsky saw the child as first doing things in a social context, with other people and language helping in various ways, and gradually shifting away from reliance on others to independent action and thinking (Cameron, 2001: 7).

c. Bruner

According to Bruner (1983) language is the most important tool for cognitive growth. He has investigated how adult use language to mediate the world for children and help them to solve the problems.

Helping or supporting a child in carrying out an activity is called scaffolding (Wood, Bruner and Ross, 1976: 89). Good scaffolding was tuned to the need of the child and adjusted as the child became more competent. Scaffolding has been transferred to the classroom and teacher-pupil talk.

Wood suggests that teachers can scaffold children's learning in various ways:

Table 1: Children's scaffolding

<i>Teachers can help children to</i>	<i>By</i>
attend to what is relevant	suggesting praising the significant providing focusing activities
adopt useful strategies	encouraging rehearsal being explicit about organization
remember the whole task and goals	reminding modeling providing part-whole activities

(from Wood in Cameron, 2001: 9)

Bruner has provided a further useful idea for language teaching in his notion of *format* and *routines*. These are features of events that allow scaffolding to take place. Bruner's most useful example of a routine is of parents reading stories to their children from babyhood. At a later stage, when the five or six year old child is beginning to

read, parents can also use such activity, with the routine and language more advanced. At this stage, the parent may read the story aloud as well as ask questions about the pictures. The child may finish sentences, recalling how story ends from memory of previous reading events. Subsequently, the child may read the story to the parent.

Bruner and Vygotsky are the scholars who posited that learning occur in a socio-cultural context in which adults and primary caregivers support or scaffold young children to higher level of thinking and acting. According to this view, children who experience sensitive, cognitively stimulating home environment early in development are at an advantage in the learning process.

2. Children's Development

The theories of Piaget, Vygotsky and Bruner explain how the children learn. Some child development researches, meanwhile, provide information in various development areas. There are three areas of development particularly important for children's early literacy: language development, cognitive or intellectual development and physical-motor development.

a. Language development

Language development begins early in infancy as babies begin to communicate through cries, grunts, expressions, gestures, sounds and later through words or other alternative methods. The course of

language development and its underlying mechanisms are described separately by Hoff (2009: 2-3) into three domains: phonological development (the sound system), lexical development (the words), and morpho-syntactic development (grammar).

1) Phonological development

Babies have the ability to hear and discriminate speech sounds (Aslin, 1998: 147). During the first year, they become better at hearing the contrasts their language uses, and they become insensitive to acoustic differences that are not relevant to their language. The first sounds infants produce are cries and noises that are not speech-like. The major milestones of pre-speech vocal development are the production of canonical syllables (well-formed consonant + vowel combinations), which appear between 6 and 10 months, followed shortly by reduplicated babbling (repetition of syllables). When first words appear, they make use of the same sounds, and they contain the same numbers of sounds and syllables, as the preceding babbling sequences (Fagan in Hoff, 2009: 2). One process that contributes to early phonological development appears to be infants' active effort to produce the sounds they hear. In babbling, infants may be discovering the correspondence between what they do with their vocal apparatus and the sounds that come out. At approximately 18 months, children appear to have achieved a

mental system for representing the sounds of their language and producing them within the constraints of their articulatory abilities. At this point children's production of speech sounds becomes consistent across different words.

2) Lexical development

Infants understand their first word as young as 5 months, produce their first words between 10 and 15 months of age, reach the 50-word milestone in productive vocabularies around 18 months of age, and the 100-word milestone between 20 and 21 months (Pine, 1995: 272-281). After that, vocabulary development proceeds so rapidly. The vocabulary size of an average 6 year old has been estimated at 14.000 words.

The task of word learning recruits multiple mechanisms. Infants make use of statistical learning procedures, tracking the probability that sound appear together, and thereby segmenting the continuous stream of speech into separate words. The capacity to store those speech sound sequences, known as phonological memory, comes into play as entries in the mental lexicon are created (Gathercole, 2006: 513-543). In the task of mapping a newly-encountered word onto its intended referent, children are guided by their abilities to make use of social-based inferencing mechanisms, by their cognitive understandings of the world, and by their prior linguistic knowledge.

3) Morpho-syntactic development

Children begin to put two, then three and more words together into short sentences at approximately 24 months of age. Children's first sentences are combination of content words and are often missing grammatical function words (e.g. articles and prepositions) and word endings (e.g. plural and tense markers). As children gradually master the grammar of their language, they become able to produce increasingly long and grammatically complete utterances. The development of complex sentences usually begins some time before the child's second birthday and is largely complete by age 4. In general, comprehension precedes production.

Responding to children as though their behaviors communicate meaning is important for language and literacy development. By engaging children as communicative partners, adults help them to see themselves as speakers, readers and writers. Evidence of this important process is seen very early in life as children begin to understand that language and communication are social enterprises requiring turn-taking (Jaffe et al in Griffith et al., 2008: 6). This understanding develops over time as the children have repeated experiences in which adult make turn-taking happen. The young children develop the idea that speech has meaning and communicates messages. Children focus their efforts on the sound system of their

own language as their understanding (or receptive language) and production (or expressive language) skills grow. Vocabulary development proceeds somewhat slowly over the toddler period. However, during the preschool years vocabulary growth literally explodes as the child learn about ten new words per day. This rapid increase in vocabulary development is possible because of fast mapping in which children map new words to similar concepts they already understand, allowing them to learn a word after hearing it only once.

There are other several language development theories that are easily understood and can be applied in the classroom. One of them is explained by Reed and Railsback (2003). They divide language development into five stages:

Stage I: The silent/receptive or production stage

This stage can last from 10 hours to six months. Students often have up to 500 “receptive” words (words they can understand but may not be comfortable using) and can understand new words that are made comprehensible to them. This stage often involves a “silent period” during which students may not speak, but can respond using a variety of strategies including pointing to an object, picture, or person; performing an act, such as standing up or closing a door; gesturing or nodding; or responding with a simple “yes” or “no.” Teachers should not force students to speak until they are ready to do so.

Stage II: The early production stage

The early production stage can last an additional six months after the initial stage. Students have usually developed close to 1.000 receptive/active words (that is, words they are able to understand and use). During this stage students can usually speak in one or two word phrases, and can demonstrate comprehension of new material by giving short answers to simple yes/no, either/or, or who/what/where questions.

Stage III: The speech emergent stage

This stage can last up to another year. Students have usually developed approximately 3.000 words and can use short phrases and simple sentences to communicate. Students begin to use dialogue and can ask simple questions, such as “Can I go to the classroom?” and are able to answer simple questions. Students may produce longer sentences, but often with grammatical errors that can interfere with their communication.

Stage IV: The intermediate language proficiency stage

Intermediate proficiency may take up to another year after speech emergence. Students have typically developed close to 6.000 words and are beginning to make complex statements, state opinions, ask for clarification, share their thoughts, and speak at greater length.

Stage V: The advanced language proficiency stage

Gaining advanced proficiency in a second language can typically take from five to seven years. By this stage students have developed some specialized content-area vocabulary and can participate fully in grade-level classroom activities if comparable to that of same-age native speakers.

b. Cognitive or Intellectual Development

Language and cognitive development are tightly connected. Both Piaget and Vygotsky emphasize the importance of the child's ability to use symbols. Miller (in Griffith et al., 2008:8) said that Vygotsky places great importance on the psychological tools children use in their interactions with the world. Vygotsky stated that language is the most important tool a child can use to interact with others, learn about the world, and solve problems.

Oral language is a symbol system that uses a word or phrase to represent an actual object or idea. It is a symbolic tool that enables learning to occur. Written language or print is an even more abstract symbol system than oral language, because it takes oral language and turns it into a second symbol system, that of the specific form of letters.

One of the most important development events for literacy learning is the emergence of symbolic or representational thinking. According to Piaget, symbolic thinking is the ability to use one object to represent another. In the preschool years, symbolic thinking grows

in two important ways. One is elaborate and organized pretend play and the others is the understanding that marks made on paper can represent specific things. Thus, symbolic thinking plays a critical role in the development of both reading and writing as it brings meaning to marks on paper.

c. Physical-motor development

Development of small muscles, or fine motor development and maturation of brain, affect children's ability to manipulate writing tools and to focus their eyes on printed material. At birth, babies wrap their fingers tightly around anything that touches their palm, often as adult's finger. This reflex action quickly fades away around three to four months, allowing for purposeful grasping. Eye-hand coordination remains crude during the first year of life though, so babies often miss object they reach for. While toddlers can use a pincer grasp, their thumb and forefinger, to pick up objects around the end of the first year, crayons are still held in a fist-like grip. In fact, writing remains a challenging task for toddlers as it involves both controlling the writing tool and keeping the paper still. There is wide variability in the age at which children demonstrate a mature pencil grasp. Most children master it toward the end of the preschool years but a few others continue to struggle into elementary school. However, according to Trawick and Smith (in Griffith et al., 2008: 5), by age four eye-hand

coordination is sufficiently developed for easy writing and drawing, although the writing does not like adult writing.

3. The Development of Children's Reading and Writing

Reading ability is determined by language development and writing ability is determined by psycho-motor development (Depdiknas, 2007: 3). Language is the main communication tool for children to express their needs. Generally, children with good language ability can express better idea, feeling and active in social interaction. Language ability is not always shown by reading ability but also vocabulary mastery, comprehension and communicative competence.

Language development of 4-6 years old children:

- 1) able to use pronoun "I" in communication,
- 2) already have knowledge of verb, noun, adjective and adverb,
- 3) present comprehension and understanding of something,
- 4) able to express feeling, thinking and action in simple sentences,
- 5) able to read and express something through picture.

In this stage, a child active in asking something, giving information about something, talking by him/her self or by using toys like doll, robot etc., doodling paper or wall, and telling something fantastic. Children present their 'hidden potency' into 'actual potency' in this stage. It shows that the neuron of their brain function properly. The neurologist believes

that if there is no positive stimulation to that potency, the ‘actual potency’ will become ‘hidden potency still, even cause the death of neuron.

a. Reading development

There are some stages in children’s reading development (Depdiknas, 2007: 4-6):

1) Magical stage

In this stage, child starts using book. Thinking that book is important, he leaf through the book and brings his favorite book everywhere. In this initial stage, parent or teacher should show the importance of reading and read book together with child.

2) Self concept stage

Child regards himself as a reader and involves in reading activity, pretends to read, gives meaning on picture and previous experience with book, uses book language. In this second stage, parent or teacher must give stimulation by reading something in front of their child and involving child in reading activity.

3) Bridging reading stage

In this stage, child aware to the print, recognizes some words and uses those words. Child can retell the written story, know the written words from his favorite song or rhyme, and he/she already know the alphabet. Parent or teacher, in this stage, should intensively read something to the child, present words or

vocabularies in a song or rhyme, and give chance to read frequently.

4) Take-off reader stage

Child starts using three systems (graph phonic, semantic, and syntactic) together. Child start interesting in written text, remembering the print on its context, recognizing and reading some texts around him/her; for example on milk box, tooth paste or billboard. Parent or teacher support and encourage the child to read in every situation and do not force the child to read perfectly.

5) Independent reader stage

In this stage child can read independently. He/she can take the meaning of sign and experience, make prediction of reading materials. Parent or teacher still read book to the child, support the child to correct his/her reading and choose the suitable reading materials for child.

Every child has great potency in reading if there is a positive stimulus from his/her environment. Parent or teachers as the closest partner of children have the important role in creating good literacy environment. They can prepare proper reading materials, toys, flash card or wall frieze that support introducing reading to the child. Their active companion in reading gives children good experience in literacy development. The development of reading also walks together

with writing development. Writing development closely related to children's psycho motor development.

b. Writing development

Writing is the expression of oral to the written form. The early writing starts when children pretend to write on a paper, sand or other media in scribble, until they can imitate the correct form of written text. Some stages in children writing development are as follow:

1) Scribble stage

In this stage children start making signs by using their stationery. They learn written form and how to make it. They make random scribble on a paper or other media. Parent or teacher can give writing materials like pencil, pen, book, paper and crayon. Children, in this stage, regard scribble as writing.

2) Linear repetitive stage

The next step is linear repetitive stage. Children make horizontal or vertical line repetitively and think that words in a long sentence are like a line.

3) Random letter stage

Children learn how to make different forms of shape and regard it as writing. Children also produce line and scribble that are not related to any sounds of words.

4) Letter learning stage

Children start learning and mentioning some letters, especially that form their name.

5) Letter-name writing or phonetic writing

In this stage, children start relating letter with its sound. They can write some letters and combine it into simple word syllable. Children in this stage also transform sound that they hear into written symbol system.

6) Copying from environmental print

Children like to copy some words in poster, book, box of milk, etc. They start writing the word completely as they copy it precisely.

7) Invented spelling stage

Five to six years old children have used the initial consonant in word (for example L for 'love'). They also can use some consonants to represent certain word (for example DNS for 'dinosaurs').

8) Conventional writing

In this stage, children can spell words in proper pronunciation and write as what they hear (Depdiknas, 2007: 6-10).

4. The Nature of Reading and Writing

Essentially, reading and writing are about understanding; that readers will understand texts that they read by constructing a meaning for

themselves, and that writers will try to ensure that their readers are able to understand what they write. Although reading for understanding is more than saying what is written down reading does link to speaking, as written words are decoded into spoken words. From the recent empirical research states that skilled readers do actually process every letter of words on the page; they just do it very quickly. Fluent readers still have available the skill to speak the words of the text to themselves, the 'voice in the head' (Reid, 1990: 91), and use it for difficult texts or texts that need special attention such as poetry. Similarly, writing may involve turning spoken language into written words, but it also involve more than that.

Reading is an interactive process which requires readers to bring meaning to a text in order to get meaning from it. It is therefore important to consider carefully a reader's previous experience of text; this might include their knowledge of languages other than first language. To make sense, a reader needs to draw on a range of grapho-phonetic cues which link the written system of an alphabetic language to the sounds system of the language (phonology) so that readers draw on their aural knowledge to decode the written symbols on the page. Readers also need to draw on syntactic knowledge of the expected patterns in sentence structures of language and the semantic cues which can be drawn from the experience and conceptual development of the reader as he makes sense of the sentence as a whole (Beane, 1998:33).

Given the fact that aural language and reading are closely linked, it is important that children engage in conversations about the texts they read. Children become readers when they hear print read aloud and begin to make connections between speech and written text. This process occurs in the early stages of development when they look at packets of food in the cupboard or go shopping. Knowledge of environmental print is often built on in Kindergarten 1 classrooms where print is often introduced into other activities – often through role play areas (Bearne, 1998:33).

A child's previous experience with writing in their natural environment also influences their progress in school. Bearne, (1998:33) highlights three principles of writing development – the 'functional', 'linguistic' and 'relational'. Children learn very quickly that writing can do things for them and has a function. They are also intrigued by the patterns of language as they learn to write, noticing the shapes and length of words. Therefore, as with reading, teachers need to organize for activities which expand on children's current knowledge and create the conditions in which more explicit instruction will work with the child's developing written system (Bearne, 1998: 76).

Furthermore, Cameroon (2001: 125) gives explanation about reading and writing as: reading brings together visual information from written symbols, phonological information from the sounds those symbols make when spoken, and semantic information from the conventional meanings associated with the words as sounds and symbols. All three

types of information are used in reaching an understanding of the text, together with information about the social uses of the text as discourse. In addition, writing requires mastery of fine motor skills to form the written shapes and orthographic knowledge of how written symbols are combined to represent words through spelling conventions.

The integration of information in reading a text is shown in the chart below:

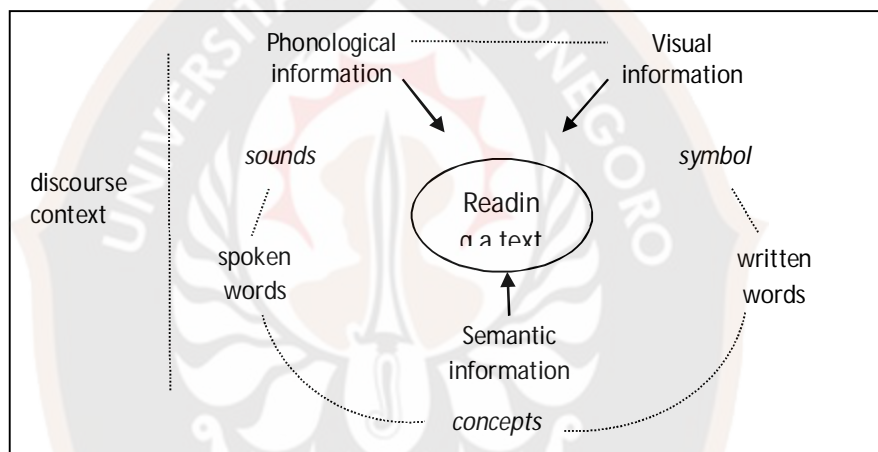


Figure 1: The integration of information in reading a text

5. Reading Stage

According to Mar'at (2005: 80-82) there are two types of reading: **initial reading** and **advance reading**. These two types of reading are also regarded as reading stages by Dardjowidjojo (2005: 300-304).

Initial reading is reading for sound. In initial reading, children study about phoneme then blend some phonemes into syllable or word. There are two ways in phonemic blending:

- 1) By phonological rules.
- 2) By searching in the 'mental dictionary' (bank of word/vocabulary that we have). The phoneme order is matched with one of the word in that 'mental dictionary'. The requirement for learning to read is children have already acquired vocabularies although limited. For example, if children hear the word "ar" they will match to the closest word i.e. "car".

Steps in initial reading:

- a) First step : spelling. For example: c—a—r
- b) Second step : blending
- c) Third step : saying the word (car)

Dardjowidjojo also states that in initial reading children should look at two points: (1) regularity of form, and (2) blending of letters (2005:300).

Children can understand the regularity of form if they mature already in psychological and neurological aspects. In psychological aspects, children should be able to develop their cognitive competence. Through cognitive competence, children can differentiate any kinds of form i.e. circle, square, oval, triangle, line, curve, etc. Cognitive competence is the base of reading ability. Furthermore, associative competence is also one of the requirements in reading. Associative competence is the ability to correlate one thing to the other. Children will

start reading if they realize that their spoken words can be represented by written form. They must have developed the ability to use symbols, until they realize that several sounds in their memory can be represented by symbol system named letter.

From neurological aspect, children only can start reading if their neurobiological part well develops. By age 1, children cannot differentiate straight line and half circle since his brain is still 60% develop. Therefore, children still haven't ability to differentiate symbols or letters at this age.

Children will start reading when they have acquired phonological system of the language. Children start to read only if they have already gotten certain requirements to talk. Another requirement is the semantic ability; children should understand the meaning of what they read.

The next type in reading is advance reading. This stage emphasizes on the understanding of meaning in reading written texts. Reader's attention is not in the letter's form regularity anymore, but in understanding the meaning.

Reading, in this stage, is defined as a process to analyze the input in written form to produce the understanding of meaning, as the output (Ram and Moorman, 1999: 1). From several researches, it is found that there is a direct transformation from the written form to the meaning in reading because of the guidance of human concept.

6. Approaches in Teaching Reading and Writing to Children

Learning to read and write can begin from text level, from sentence level, from word level or from letter level. Each starting point has produced approaches to teaching reading that can be used in the foreign language classroom. Cameron (2001: 143-150) discusses some approaches in teaching reading and writing. Those approaches are:

a. Emergent literacy

Emergent literacy describes the phenomenon in which children seem to learn to read without any teaching, gradually and through exposure to text and to reading (Hall in Cameron 2001: 145). When children read some interesting and appropriate books, some will begin to work out for themselves the patterns and regularities that link spoken and written text. This process is called as emergent literacy. However, the ideas of emergent literacy have been seen as rather dangerous. The main problem is that it works only for some children; most children need more structured help with the multiple and non natural skills of literacy. Furthermore, a child needs lots of time individually with a skilled adult and plentiful supply of good quality story books, conditions that are not always available in school classroom.

However, the emergent literacy has had a useful impact on reading ideas. It reminds us to put the learner first because each child has to build up literacy skills from their own experience with texts. It

also has produced useful evidence about how children find entry points into the complexity of reading. Another impacts of emergent literacy are it reinforces the importance of children understanding what they read and it has highlighted some of the qualities of good books for children and how school text books are often less interesting and well produced. As a result of the attention to the quality of children's reading book commercial publishers have developed better quality story books that work alongside more structured and artificial texts with controlled vocabulary.

Some points in emergent literacy are useful to note because they suggest ways into reading for young children that can be adapted for classroom contexts. Emergent readers often begin to know by heart sentences from favorite books and will say them along with the adult reader. This speaking with the text is not really reading but it can be the start of learning to read. They then begin to pick out known words from text and to spot letters, linking the shapes with the sounds. The child's learning starts from having a meaning for a whole text and moving to attend to words and letters.

Emergent literacy ideas then have potential for foreign language literacy. The features of emergent literacy that are most relevant for foreign language teaching are:

- 1) children choose the books they want to hear and read,

- 2) children are motivated by choice and by quality of the writing they encounter,
- 3) children often choose to read same book many times and this is valuable learning experience,
- 4) meaning comes first because the child understands the story as a whole,
- 5) from this overall meaning, attention moves to whole words and letters, beginning with initial consonants then final consonants then vowels in the middle,
- 6) the link between reading and oral skills is very strong because children adopt and play with the language of the story,
- 7) parents can be involved with their children's language learning through reading aloud with them.

b. Language Experience approaches

The Language Experience approach starts children reading and writing at sentence level and its key feature is the child's use of his or her own experience as the topic of texts. It has been widely used with children in Britain for first language literacy and with South African children in both their first and second languages. Children compose sentences, with their teacher initially, from a set of word cards. The sentence is something the child wants to say: e.g. "*I went to the doctor yesterday*". They physically move the word cards, choosing them and

placing a full stop card at the end. The sentence is then read back to the teacher and child copies it down in her or his book, which pushes attention to the formation of letters. Gradually, a child builds up collection of words that are known and moves to making several sentences. Once the sight of vocabulary is established, small books are introduced.

As a way of starting reading, this method has some nice features which can be adopted in foreign language classrooms:

- 1) the child's ideas are used to compose the reading text,
- 2) child and teacher together compose the sentences,
- 3) the child's learning moves from a meaningful idea unit (the sentence as a mini-text) to whole words to letters,
- 4) words have a physical reality, as well as meaning, for the child as they are moved and put together,
- 5) punctuation is present from the start as part of the physical reality of sentences: spaces between words and full stops,
- 6) the integration of writing and reading helps the child see how texts are composed and understood right from the start.

Language experience work can be done as a whole class, as well as individually, if the teacher asks for sentences from children and writes them on the board to build up a text. The process of joint writing presents an opportunity for talking with the children about the words, punctuation, spelling, or text organization, which can help

children's metalinguistic knowledge and push them to notice certain features of written English. While Language experience approach starts children reading and writing through meaningful word and sentence-level work, there will also need to be a focus on letter-sound relationships.

c. Whole words approach

This approach starts from word level, with children looking at single words on cards (called flash card, because they are sometimes shown very quickly to the children or flashed in front of their eyes) to encourage rapid whole word recognition. The child practices saying the word when he sees the card and once the first five or six words are mastered move on to the next set. Once the child has about 15 words very simple books are introduced that only use the known words. The child then reads the books at that level to the teacher, one or two pages a day, and practices alone.

The flashcard method for learning whole words can take a child to quite a high level as beginner reader but after 50 words, it is not efficient or even possible to remember each word as a separate whole. To progress, the method relies on the child generalizing and finding pattern and regularities in the words being learnt, i.e. the child needs to use information about letters and sounds as well. Many others though need focused help with the sounds of letters and how letters go together to make words.

The features of whole words methods that are relevant for foreign language contexts include:

- 1) children get practice at first recognition of whole words through use of flashcard,
- 2) children get a good sense of achievement and motivation by being able to read a whole book quite early,
- 3) the sight vocabulary can provide a resource that the child can use to work out how letters combine into syllables.

d. Phonics

Phonics teaching focuses on letter-sound relations, building literacy skills from the bottom-up. The usual way involves showing children the sounds of the different letters in the alphabet, then how letters can be combined. A recent approach suggests children will find it more natural to start from sounds and learn which letters make them, since they are moving from experience with the spoken language to new world of written letters and words.

Phonics teaching works if it directs children's attention to letter-sound level features of English and helps children make the mental connections between letters and sounds. It can be dry, boring and demotivating if done in isolation, so it is probably preferable to incorporate five or ten minutes of concentrated phonics work inside other activities. Phonics work can be integrated into story reading,

class joint writing, sentence writing activities, song and rhymes when vocabulary is being presented or recycled and in stages of oral tasks.

Consonants in English are easier to notice and thus to learn than vowels. They can be grouped for teaching in various ways: by the way the shape is formed in writing, by the hard/soft sound they make, by frequency and usefulness. It is usual to start with single consonants that occur as onsets in syllables or in single syllable words, drawing children's attention to them, identifying their name and sound, playing games with them such as spotting them in books, practicing writing the letter shape so that sounds, reading and writing reinforce each other. It is important in phonics teaching to make activities meaningful for children and to make connections with what they already know. Thus, using words the children know by sight as the context for work on letters and sounds is likely to be more meaningful than abstract and unconnected chanting of letter names and shapes. For example, if the letter and sound {, /b/} is to be taught, then children can be shown objects such as *a ball*, *a blue balloon* and *a big basket*, and the written words for each. They then have a meaningful context for the letter and sound. They can look at the words and spot the letter shape; they can listen and hear the sound. The teaching brings the shape and sound together for the children so that they make the mental connection.

Phonics teaching can move to consonants that occur at the end of words and then to vowels. The English vowel system is notoriously complicated; five vowel letters can produce different vowel sounds: long vowel sounds, short vowel sounds, and diphthongs that combine two vowel sounds, as in <boy>. The sound a vowel makes is partly determined by the letters that surround it and its position in a word and some letters are silent. In deciding what to teach explicitly, short vowel sounds are fairly consistent and thus a good place to start, e.g. the sounds in *hat/pet/sit/hop/run*. The Magic-e rule can then expand these sounds; this rule says that an <-e> on the end of a single syllable word affects the vowel sound, which then ‘says its own name’: *hate/pete/site/hope/June*. This rule is a good example of a useful phonics rule because it is quite simple and true often enough to make it worth learning (although some exceptions do occur in frequently used words, such as *come*). Many other rules are so complex and have so many exceptions that they may not be worth trying to teach explicitly. Long vowel sounds in open syllables, such as *me, go*, can be taught next. Then, work on rimes can extend reading and writing skills e.g. *-ite, -eat, -ike*.

Generally, there are two different models in reading process which can be used as the foundation of teaching reading: bottom-up and top-down models (Dardjowidjojo, 2005: 305-309, Carrol, 1999: 306).

a. Bottom-up

In bottom-up view, the representation of phonology from each word is gathered by using the grapheme-phoneme connection rules. In other words, the blending or combination of some letter-sounds will form a word, phrase, clause, sentence, and so on.

The bottom-up model assumes that the words recognition depends on the information on printed words, not on their context. Therefore, in reading process the bottom-up model has three stages:

- 1) sensory stage, where the visual features are decoded;
- 2) recognition stage, where word representation is accessed;
- 3) interpretive stage, to access the meaning.

b. Top-down

Top-down process does not involve phonology but directly from orthography to the meaning. This model assumes that context can directly influence our perception about words that we see. Any kinds of letter shapes, missed-spelling words and the unclear words still can be understood from their context.

As a result of the metalinguistic problems, children often find the difficulties to identify printed words. One strategy for overcoming this problem is to encourage children to use the sentence context to help figure out the meaning. For instance, if a child is stuck on the last word of a sentence, the child may be asked to figure out a likely ending to the sentence by generating possible words. Once a set of words is constructed, the child can return to the troublesome item with

greater semantic support, and it may now be possible for the child to recognize the word throughout a combination of semantic and orthographic cues (spelling).

However, successful reading requires a mix of top-down and bottom-up process. The recent studies show that both of those models have important role in reading process (Adam 1990; Nicholson 1991; Vellutino 1991, in Gleason and Ratner 1998: 424). The ability to identify words automatically, an asset in reading, enables readers to devote resources to higher-level processes, thereby promoting comprehension (Carrol, 1999: 307).

7. Materials and Activities in Children's Language Teaching

Teaching young learners requires that teachers create a learning environment that supports and addresses their needs and characteristics. Children are natural learners because they are curious about the world around them. They are learn by doing and like to have in the process. Children learn most efficiently when all of their senses (sight, touch, taste, smell, hearing) are engaged and when they are allowed to experiment. Children should be challenged to discover and experiment with new information by doing things, by relating what they are doing to real life, and by drawing conclusion (Costa and Kallick in Halimi et al., 2010: 1).

Some of approaches and activities in children language teaching proposed by Halimi et al. that are in line with children needs and characteristics are:

a. Storytelling

Children naturally enjoy listening to or telling stories. Besides the enjoyment they provide, stories can help children to develop their language skills. Teachers can read from story books or retell or create stories, all of which enrich the interactive language environment in the classroom.

Story telling has several benefits in teaching English skill to children, namely:

- 1) As they listen to stories, students begin to develop mastery in rhythm and structure of the language.
- 2) Telling or reading stories to children increases their curiosity about the topics and helps develop their love for reading.
- 3) Through listening to the stories, students develop their vocabulary and grammar knowledge, which improves their fluency in verbal expression and writing.
- 4) Stories teach children to listen and concentrate and promote their thinking, oral language proficiency, and reading and writing abilities.
- 5) Storytelling makes the language come alive through pictures, gestures and the intonation the teacher uses.

There are some steps that will enable teachers to successfully use storytelling in the language classroom:

- 1) The teacher decides whether to read, retell or create a story.
- 2) The teacher should adjust his/her own language to that of the students.
- 3) Set the scene before beginning the story by showing pictures of the main characters.
- 4) Read or tell the story clearly with appropriate intonation (not monotonous) by showing pictures.
- 5) Accompany the reading with appropriate gestures to make it clearer. Let students follow the actions and gestures.
- 6) Read and tell the story many times or let students retell it.

b. Role-play

Many believe that in teaching foreign language to young learners, role play or drama is a very useful and efficient method that promotes language learning. Gavin Bolton (as quoted in Halimi et al., 2010: 52) stated that “drama is a unique tool, vital for language development” as it simulates reality, develops ideas, and involves emotions, feelings and self-expressions. In other words, when the students play, act out stories, imitate other people, experiment with social roles, and pretend to be someone else, they are expanding their language skills and learning to express themselves.

Role play and drama are valuable techniques for second or foreign language teaching. Some benefits young learners may gain from role playing are as follows:

- 1) Drama and role play provide young language learners opportunities to practice and use their English in real conversations.
- 2) The conversational use of language in an ESL play script promotes fluency.
- 3) Drama and role play help children become clear and confident speakers.
- 4) When the children are acting out or watching other students' performances, they have to listen to the lines, see the actions, observe the stage properties, create movements and use expressions. These activities address young learners' different learning styles.
- 5) Drama and role play are ideal for children in classrooms with various language levels. Children whose language skills are still very limited can be given fewer lines. They can communicate using nonverbal cues such as body movements and facial expressions. On the other hand, those who are more advanced can have more lines and use more verbal language.

c. Song and rhyme

Singing and reciting rhymes are activities that children of all ages enjoy because they naturally love to repeat songs and rhymes over and over again. Children can quickly learn jingles and songs. The use of children's songs and rhymes in the classroom is not a new concept as many teachers have been practicing this teaching method for years.

Songs and rhymes provide language input, which is an essential element of language acquisition (Krashen and Terrell, 1983). Rhymes are particularly effective for practicing the rhythm and intonation of English. Becoming familiar with rhyming sounds helps students learn to recognize the different spelling of similar sounds. Most rhymes are repetitive and children enjoy repeating them again and again. This repetition makes it easy for them to memorize the rhymes.

Songs and rhymes are not only fun, but they also help students learn a language in a more effective and enjoyable way. Some of the benefits of including songs and rhymes in lessons are that they:

1) Create a fun atmosphere

Since children naturally love singing, the use of songs makes learning enjoyable. Children quickly learn new words and phrases through the repetition that songs provide.

2) Develop phonological awareness

Phonological awareness is the ability to hear and manipulate the separate sounds within words independent of the words' meanings. This ability is directly linked to later reading ability, making this a vital area of instruction for preschool educators. Being able to hear the separate sounds in words gives children an ability to "sound out" unfamiliar words when reading as well as to connect the separate sounds to letters for spelling.

3) Include visual, auditory, and kinesthetic activities

One of the main principles of teaching is to include a balance of Visual, Auditory and Kinesthetic activities. By using songs in the classroom, these three types of learning are reinforced. Students practice listening, observing, and hands-on learning as they move along with the simple rhythm and choreography that songs provide.

4) Provide good listening comprehension practice

Songs can provide good listening comprehension practice through the lyrics, particularly those that tell a story. Comprehension activities can include vocabulary exercises, filling in the blanks or choosing the correct word from pairs of rhymes, and discussing the song's message after listening.

5) Reinforce grammar and language patterns

Although songs tend to neglect grammatical rules for the sake of rhythm or rhyme, there are many songs with good language patterns which can be used in the classroom. When students listen and sing a song several times, they will remember the language patterns.

6) Introduce the culture of the target language

Songs can address culture, vocabulary, listening, grammar, and other language skills in just a few verses. Bringing songs into the classroom is an effective way to introduce these elements.

d. Games

Playing games is an important and natural part of growing and learning. Children like playing games, and they can learn a lot from them. Through games, they can learn things in a fun way. As they enjoy the activities of a game, the children will not be afraid to learn English and will likely use it as a natural part of the game (Paul, 2003). The language of games is useful and meaningful. When children are laughing, smiling, surprised, etc., the content of a game is obviously meaningful to them. The children experience the meaning of language as they listen, read, speak, and write.

Playing games allows students to explore and become familiar with words and phrases. Among the many specific benefits of using games to teach English are the following:

- 1) Games help the teacher create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful.
 - 2) Games help the teacher build better class relationships and encourage class participation.
 - 3) Games provide language practice, review, and consolidation in the various skills - speaking, writing, listening and reading.
 - 4) Through games, children experiment, discover, and interact with others.
 - 5) Games encourage the creative and spontaneous use of language and promote real communication.
 - 6) Games are enjoyable and challenging but not threatening. They are a nice break from the normal routine of the language class.
 - 7) Games promote healthy competition and help students overcome shyness about using the language.
- e. Art and craft

Children learn effortlessly when they are doing things that they enjoy. Most children love to draw and make things. Including activities that involve arts and crafts can enhance children's interest and proficiency in learning English. Using arts and crafts to teach English enables the teacher to address the learning styles of every

student. In addition, children benefit from participating in arts and crafts activities as they:

- 1) learn meaning in a real context when they associate language directly with objects, actions and experience,
- 2) get used to listening to or reading instructions,
- 3) receive and give praise and encouragement,
- 4) describe, evaluate, and express feelings and ideas,
- 5) have something to display in class or to take home.

8. Creating a Literate Environment in the Classroom

The language classroom is one place where children will be exposed to environmental print in the foreign language, so it is helpful to make the most of the opportunities offered by the classroom environment. There are some materials and activities that can be used in supporting literate environment in classroom, some of them are:

a. Labels

Labeling the children's coat hooks, trays and desk with their names will create a good literate environment in the classroom. Bilingual or foreign language labels can be put on furniture and objects around the class and school, and will familiarize children with written forms. Children should be encouraged to look at the labels and talk about what's on them.

b. Posters

Colorful posters that include quite a lot of text can be an on-going interest for children, as they gradually recognize more and more of the words. A rhyme that they are learning could be used for this but notice that this is presenting children with the written words after they have encountered them orally.

Advertising posters can be fun, for example advertisement about healthy eating, teeth cleaning or borrowing library books. Making posters for younger pupils would be a good writing activity for older children in the school.

c. Messages

Using written language for communication boosts children's motivation and shows them some of the uses of writing. An English message board at school may have simple message, like *Put your bag here; Don't forget your crayons on Friday, etc.*

A post box in the classroom can encourage children to write and send letters to each other can the teacher.

d. Reading aloud

Reading aloud to young children by the teacher (or other adult) has an enormous range of benefits. It can be done in several ways:

- 1) Teacher reads aloud, children just listen and perhaps look at pictures
- 2) Teacher uses a big book, i.e. a large book with large enough print so that all children can see

3) Each child uses a text.

From listening and watching an adult read aloud, children can see how books are handled, how texts encode words and idea, how words and sentences are set out on a page. Affectively, reading aloud can motivate children to want to read themselves.

Teacher should ensure that children understand the overall meaning of what they hear and most of the individual vocabulary items in the text. Understanding can be supported by the use of pictures that show characters and action, and by talking about the text in advance and giving enough of the meaning, so that children have a basic they can build on as they listen (Cameron, 2001: 140-142).

9. Skills of Early Reading

Research has identified five early reading skills that are all essential. They are:

- a. Phonemic awareness : Being able to hear, identify, and play with individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words.
- b. Phonics : Being able to connect the letters of written language with the sounds of spoken language.
- c. Vocabulary : The words kids need to know to communicate effectively.

- d. Reading comprehension : Being able to understand and get meaning from what has been read.
- e. Fluency (*oral reading*) : Being able to read text accurately and quickly.

(www.med.umich.edu/yourchild/topics/readingc.htm#ref1)

Furthermore, the National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) identifies the conventional literacy skills as the abilities of decoding, reading comprehension, spelling and writing. Bell and Westberg (2009: 7) has determined the precursor skills of literacy with instructional evidence, namely:

- a. Alphabet knowledge : the recognition of letters as distinct symbol that have specific names and specific sounds associated with them.
- b. Phonological awareness : the ability to hear and manipulate the separate sounds within words.
- c. Oral language : refers to the ability to produce and comprehend spoken language.

Literacy is only one part of early childhood development, but often it's the barometer for the other areas of development. The goal for language and literacy instruction is for teachers to integrate the early literacy skills into instructional approaches that are appropriate and

engaging for young children and that are explicit and intensive enough to offer a strong foundation for children's later reading success. Although these skills individually are important in leading to positive conventional literacy outcomes, a combination of them provides the greatest success to later reading and writing.

10. Letterland

Letterland has been being used for several years by preschools all over the world. This program provides fun activities in literacy and English learning especially for young learners. The origin, purposes and types of Letterland program are discussed below:

a. What Is Letterland?

Letterland is a child-friendly, multi-modal system for teaching children to read, write and spell. It is the most multi-sensory way of teaching children to read and write. It is used by many leading preschools in many parts of the world. The secret of its worldwide success lies in its pictogram characters, set in a delightful place called Letterland.

Letterland is created by the England educator Lyn Wendon who considered that literacy skills, especially in reading, writing and spelling, are the foundation of child's every other future attainment. To explain the complexities of written English, with its many rules and even more exceptions, at a child's level of interest, is quite

challenging. She had chosen to explain it in a language of childhood to reach children of all abilities. A whole series of little stories from a secret place where letter live, called Letterland, makes it easy for children to understand how the alphabet is constructed (Manson, 1998: 4).

Through storytelling, the characters in Letterland talk about the sounds they make, and why their sounds vary in different context. It provides fun & creative ways to help children learn how to read, write & spell with confidence. By combining phonics teaching with storytelling, Letterland provides the perfect way to teach letter shape and sound recognition, and to establish correct letter formation, while at the same time engendering a delight in language and learning. Used in preschool and nurseries, Letterland lays the foundation for reading, and ideally prepares children for the Literacy Hour when they reach Primary School (Wendon, 2003: 5).

Letterland is called a fully multi-sensory program since:

- 1) Letterland pictograms provide strong visual mnemonics for letter behavior,
- 2) auditory learning is stimulated by song, rhyme, alliteration and storytelling,
- 3) kinesthetic learners benefit from action songs, role play and crafts,

- 4) children interact with the Letterland characters, activating intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships.

b. Letterland goal and objective

The goal of the Letterland Literacy Program is to provide a “realistic parallel world” bridging the gap for abstract print. This program provides a secure learning environment where children can happily develop cognitive, language and literacy skills which include:

- 1) Phonemic Awareness
- 2) Alliteration & Symbol/Sound Links
- 3) Letter Formation
- 4) Blending & Segmenting
- 5) Word & Sentence Building
- 6) Vocabulary & Language
- 7) Imaginative Play & Creative Writing

(Wendon, 2004: 4)

c. Letterland programs

There are three levels of program in Letterland, namely:

- 1) Early Years

Early Years program provides a unique multi-sensory experience of the alphabet, developing listening and speaking

skills while laying a solid foundation for literacy. Early Years teaches children to:

- a) recognize capital and lower case of letter shape
- b) form letters correctly
- c) link letter sounds to their shapes
- d) sort of reversals

2) Program One

Program One leads children quickly into confident word building and early reading, teaching:

- a) aA to zZ, short and long vowels
- b) word building
- c) the long vowel and “silent –e” principle
- d) first essential digraphs and word endings
- e) blending skills

3) Program Two

The alphabet knowledge which children have gained from learning about the Letterland characters in Program One leads them directly and logically to the spelling patterns. Program Two teaches children to:

- a) all major letter patterns in the English language
- b) advanced word building, basic punctuation and handwriting.

11. Dynamic Program Curriculum

In its broadest sense, a curriculum is the nexus of educational decisions, activities, and outcomes in a particular setting. As such, it is affected by explicit and implicit social expectations, educational and institutional policies and norms, teacher's beliefs and understandings, and learner's needs and goals. It is not a set of documents or a textbook, although classroom activities may be guided, governed, or hindered by such documents. Rather it is a dynamic system. This system can be conceptualized as three interrelated process: planning, enacting (i.e. teaching and learning), and evaluating.

Planning processes include:

- a. analyzing the needs of learners, the expectations of the institution and other stakeholders, and the availability of resources
- b. deciding on the learning aims or goals and the steps needed to achieve them, and organizing them in a principled way
- c. translating the aims and steps into materials and activities

Teaching and learning processes include:

- a. using the materials and doing the activities in the classroom
- b. adjusting them according to learner's needs, abilities, and interests
- c. learning with, about, and from each other

Evaluation processes include:

- a. assessing learners' progress toward and achievement of the aims
- b. adjusting the aims in response to learners' abilities and needs
- c. gathering information about the effectiveness of the aims, organization, materials, and activities, and using this information in planning and teaching.

Graves and Lopriore (2009: v-vi)

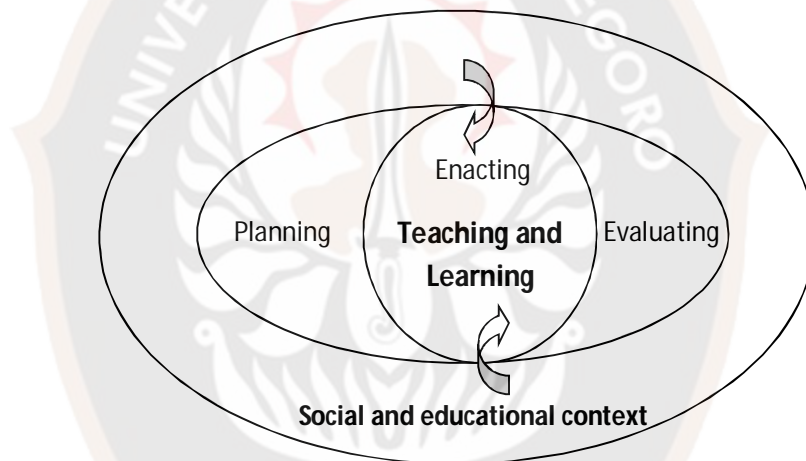


Figure 2: The three interrelated processes of planning, enacting and evaluating

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS

In Research Method chapter, the writer discusses several factors related to the obtaining of data and executing the research. Those aspects are Data Presentation—including Type of Study, Object of the Study, Population and Sample, Techniques of Collecting data—Data Analysis, and Finding Presentation.

D. Data Presentation

This Data Presentation consists of numerous aspects used by the writer in presenting the data, namely:

1. Type of study

The writer uses a case study research in his study. The case study is frequently designed to illustrate and observe the characteristics of an individual unit: a child, a clique, a class, a school or a community (Cohen et al., 2007: 253). The purpose of such observation, according to Cohen and Manion (in Nunan, 2007: 77), is to probe deeply and to analyze the intensity of the multifarious phenomena. There are several types of case study; one of them has been developed by Stenhouse (1983). He divides the case study into four types: *neo-ethnographic*, *evaluative*, *multi-site and action*. The first type is the *neo-ethnographic*, which is the in-depth investigation of a single case by a participant observer. Next, the

evaluative, which is an investigation carried out in order to evaluate policy or practice. The third is *multi-site*, in which a study carried out by several researchers on more than one site. The final type of case study identified by Stenhouse is *teacher research*; where the investigation is carried out by classroom practitioner in his or her professional context (in Nunan, 2007: 79).

The writer reveals a phenomenal case, that is, teaching early reading and writing to EFL preschool students in Star Kiddy Semarang through Letterland program. He argues that it is an important case since: first, teaching reading and writing in preschool becomes trend recently. Second, teaching reading in early age is crucial topic and still debatable. Third, teaching children needs special treatment and different technique from teaching adult. Fourth, the context of this case is EFL class of Indonesian preschool students, in which English is their foreign language. Fifth, Letterland is a new program used in Indonesia and just a few preschools in Indonesia use this program, although it has been being used for years in many countries.

A case study was selected because it is strong in reality, the results are more easily understood by a wide audience, intelligible, catch unique features that may otherwise be lost in larger scale data.

2. Object of the study

The research is proposed to analyze the Letterland curriculum, investigate Letterland materials, discuss the class activity and find out the outcomes of the program. The objects of the research, therefore, are Letterland curriculum and materials, the students and class of Letterland. The class and students here refer to the Letterland class and students of Star Kiddy Preschool Semarang in 2009/2010 academic year. The research was conducted in Star Kiddy Preschool, since this school implements Letterland program in Semarang.

Letterland was chosen because this program is well-known in assisting children build their reading and writing readiness, particularly in EFL learning in many countries. Furthermore, Letterland is a new program implemented in Indonesia. It enters to Indonesia approximately less than a decade. The using of Letterland in Indonesia hasn't been discussed yet in a study.

3. Population and sample

Population is all subjects intended to be investigated. Sudjana (1986: 5) defines population as the total number of all values, as the result of counting or measuring, both quantitative and qualitative, about certain characteristics of all members of a group.

Population of this research is the students of Star Kiddy Preschool of Semarang in 2009/2010 academic year with the total number of 15

students; Playgroup 5 students, Kindergarten-1 5 students and Kindergarten-2 5 students. The total population is small because Star Kiddy has “Small Class Concept” to maximize the result of teaching and learning. Another aim of Small Class Concept is teacher able to give extra attention and care to it students.

The writer, subsequently, had chosen the sample of the research. According to Arikunto (1993:107) sample is a part of population which will be investigated. If the subjects are less than 100, it is better to take all the subjects of the population. Therefore, the writer used all of the population as the sample of this research. In this research the subject being used is 15 students.

4. Technique of collecting data

The writer took the data from April 2010 to June 2010 at Star Kiddy Preschool of Semarang, Jl. Bukit Kopi 11 Bukitsari Semarang. There are several ways in collecting data of this research, namely:

a. Classroom observation

Classroom observation was used to gather data from naturally occurring class situations. Through observation the researcher could look at what is taking place in the class directly. The aims of observation were to know the implementation of Letterland curriculum in the classroom, to know the class activities, to reveal the method of

teaching reading and writing for early year students in Letterland class of Star Kiddy Semarang.

The researcher used participant observational studies (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007: 404), where the researcher stayed with the participants for a substantial period of time, recording what was happening, while taking a role in class situation. Morrison (1993: 88) argues that by being immersed in a particular context over time not only will the salient features of the situation emerge and present themselves but a more holistic view will be gathered of the interrelationships of factors.

By staying in a situation over a certain period the researcher was also able to see how events evolve over time, catching the dynamic situations, the students and teachers, contexts, resources, activities, etc. The classroom observation was supported by some of record keeping.

According to Nunan (2007: 82-83), the basic single case study involves four stages or phases and is known as an ABAB design. The first A phase begins with observations which are carried out in order to establish a baseline against which future behavior can be evaluated. In the second phase the researcher intervenes in some way. In the next phase, the treatment is withdrawn, and the conditions which existed during phase A are restored. The researcher now wants to know whether the behavior will remain at the lower level predicted by the

intervention phase. In the final phase, the intervention is restored, and the individual's behavior is observed once more.

b. Document gathering

The second technique used by the writer in collecting data was document gathering. Document gathering is collection of sets of documents (interpreted broadly) that are relevant to the research questions (Grabe and Stoller, 2002: 166). Writer used this technique to collect the Letterland curriculum, syllabus and lesson plan, materials of Letterland used in supporting teaching and learning, books, student works or projects, etc. The documents, then, were analyzed by writer to answer the research questions.

c. Assessment

In order to measure the outcome of Letterland program in developing reading and writing in early age, the researcher used Letterland Assessment Outcome:

- 1) Early Years Stage (Playgroup): by using Fast Track Pupil Record Sheet (Record the outcomes of student ability to say Letterland character names, letter sounds in response to plain letter and sort words according to initial sound).
- 2) Program One (Kindergarten-1): by using Alliterative Words Grid (Read the words on the Letterland Vocabulary Cards).
- 3) Program One (Kindergarten-2): Reading Sentences (Student reads five simple sentences given by researcher).

E. Data Analysis

In this study, the researcher applied descriptive qualitative approach in analyzing the data. The qualitative approach was used to unfold the curriculum, and materials of Letterland used in teaching and learning at Star Kiddy Semarang. It is also descriptive in the sense that this study is intended to describe the Letterland class activities in building reading and writing readiness for Star Kiddy students and also to reveal the outcomes of Letterland program.

There are six steps executed by researcher in analyzing the data. First, the researcher explained the profile of Star Kiddy Preschool Semarang and the reason why Star Kiddy start teaching early reading and writing to its students and why the Letterland program was chosen. Second, the researcher discussed the Letterland deeply about its history, philosophy, approach, method, and technique in providing the guideline for teaching early reading and writing. Third, he analyzed the curriculum of Letterland and compared it with Star Kiddy Letterland curriculum. Fourth, the investigation of materials used in Star Kiddy Letterland. Fifth, the researcher analyzed the class activities of Letterland program in building reading and writing readiness refer to Halimi (2010) theory. Finally, sixth, the researcher tried to find out the outcomes of Letterland program in developing early reading and writing for preschool students using Letterland Assessment Outcome.

Outcome indicators:

The Letterland program gives success outcome if students, at least, get score 70 and minimally 85% of the students get the score 70.

Scoring criteria:

- - 50 : Failed
- 51- 59 : Poor
- 60 – 69 : Fair
- 70 – 79 : Good
- 80 – 100 : Very Good/Excellent

F. Finding Presentation

There are two ways in presenting the research finding: formal and informal way. The formal way uses some formulas and symbols in presenting the result, whereas the informal way doesn't need such formula or symbol. The informal way needs words and sentences in explaining the research finding (Sudaryanto, 1993: 155-156). The writer of this study used an informal way in presenting his research results to give the details description and analyzes.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter the writer discusses the analysis of data. It consist of Profile of Star Kiddy, Teaching writing and reading with Letterland, the analysis of Letterland curriculum in Star Kiddy, Letterland material analysis, class activity analysis and the outcomes of Letterland program.

A. Star Kiddy and Its Letterland Program

There is an increasing trend in early childhood education in Indonesia, today. Parents are more aware of the importance of early education for their children. Studying at preschool, especially Playgroup and Kindergarten, becomes a common choice for the first step of children education. Our government also has suggested that children should be given proper early education at preschool before they enter primary school.

Providing a good and suitable program for young learners in preschool is very essential, since preschool is the 'stepping stone' or foundation of childhood education. Some of preschools offer their best education program in order to give best education result. One of them is Star Kiddy Preschool.

Star Kiddy is one of the international preschool in Semarang. It located on Jl. Bukit Kopi 11 Bukitsari Semarang. This school not only facilitates Indonesian students but also foreign students. Since it was opened in 2007, Star Kiddy has been implementing Letterland program as the special program

for developing literacy skill and improving children's language development. Letterland is used as the additional program of government's curriculum.

Star Kiddy takes Letterland into its program since there is a need in our society that literacy skill is the important issue today. Parents are becoming increasingly interested in how their children learn to read and write in early age. It is believed that literacy skills are the foundation of a child's every other attainment. Furthermore, developing reading and writing skill in young age will help children's success at school and their daily life communication.

To explain the complexities of written text, at a child's level of interest is quite challenging. It is a big effort for children to master print, complicated letters and words. There is a lot of difficult information for them to learn. However, children learning with Letterland are more fortunate. Letterland bring the plain alphabets into attractive and fun characters. Through its interesting stories, all the difficult information about written language is possible to be taught easily. Those stories entertain children as they carry home the information. Letterland makes the job of mastering letters and words a pleasure.

There are some reasons why Star Kiddy uses Letterland for its language development and literacy program:

1. Letterland is a fun method of teaching reading and writing for children. It uses fun stories, music, actions, movement, songs, art, craft, games, role-play, rhyme, social interaction and many others

interesting activities for children to learn. It entertains children and no boring rules in it, so children enjoy learning with Letterland.

2. Letterland makes children easy and enjoy learning written language. It based on phonics instruction. Phonics instruction is a way of teaching reading that stresses the acquisition of letter-sound correspondences and their use in reading and spelling. The primary focus is to help beginning readers understand how letters are linked to sounds (phonemes) to form letter-sound correspondences and spelling patterns and to help them learn how to apply this knowledge in their reading.
3. Letterland teaching methodology involves all aspects of a child's intelligence. It believes that learning to read and spell is a process that works best when all aspects of a child's intelligence are involved. Letterland teaching addresses each of these key areas: verbal/linguistic, logical/analytical, visual/spatial, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmical, interpersonal/intrapersonal.
4. Letterland is suitable for ESL learners. Although Letterland program was made in England, however, these rich and fun materials can be applied to ESL learners in many countries, including Indonesia.

B. Letterland Program

Letterland is a program for teaching reading, writing and spelling to 3-8 year olds through phonics-based approach. It is an English Phonetics program which uses a multi-sensory approach to introduce letter sounds to children and develop the strong foundation needed to make capable and confident readers. In this program, the plain letters are transformed into child-friendly pictogram characters and they all live in an imaginary place called “Letterland”. It uses simple stories which explain the full range of dry phonics facts so that children are motivated to listen, to think and to learn. These stories explain letter sounds & shapes, allowing children to progress quickly to word building, reading and writing.

Children often begin to show an interest in letters and words at the pre-school stage. Many parents are keen to encourage this curiosity, but sometimes they get problems in it. How do they explain, for example, that letters make different sounds, what should they call the letters and how should they pronounce and write them correctly? However, Letterland will excite a child’s imagination and provides practical help with every aspect of reading and writing.

In the Letterland system, each letter has become a friendly pictogram (picture-coded) character. The pictogram design forms an integral part of the letter and each one has a name and personality of its own. For example the letter ‘a’ is picture-coded to become **Annie Apple**. Because the round apple is placed right inside the round ‘a’ shape, the picture clue and the letter shape

become fixed together in a child's mind. The letter's sound is always on the child's lips when starting to say its Letterland name: **Annie Apple**, “[a]...” The picture coding helps the child to latch on the letter shape and distinguish it from a similar letter (for the complete Letterland characters, see the appendix).

Letterland is based on important phonic principles. This means that it builds on the sound of each letter; the actual sound it makes in a word. Character names like **Annie Apple**, **Bouncy Ben** and **Clever Cat** are more effective than ‘**aee**, **bee**, **cee**’ because the sound is always at the start of the name. Similarly, by using character names instead of the alphabet names, Letterland enables a child to talk about any letter without risk of confusion. A child can easily confuse the letter ‘ess’ with ‘cee’, but when he/she talk about Sammy Snake and Clever Cat, he/she will always know exactly which letter he/she mean.

The English language is complex and contradictory. No sooner have we learnt a letter sound, than it turns up in different words making a completely different sound. Many letters behave in unpredictable way all the time, especially the vowels: **a**, **e**, **i**, **o** and **u**. In Letterland, the explanations are given by simple stories about what happens when particular letter get together. The stories provide reasons why letters sometimes change their sounds. By translating the full range of dry phonic facts into engaging stories, children are motivated to listen, to think and to learn. These stories explain

letter shapes and sounds and quickly develop into word building, reading and writing. Therefore, reading a plain word is more fun and easy for children.

C. Curriculum Analysis

In this curriculum analysis, the writer investigates the curriculum used by Star Kiddy Preschool Semarang based on Lyn Wendon's curriculum (2003). These are the findings of the observation and document gathering:

1. The program level of Letterland.

The program levels of Letterland are divided into three stages, namely:

a. Early Years (age 3-5)

The Letterland Early Years teaching level provides children with a solid foundation for learning to read, write and spell. It find out about all characters and helps the young children to learn the alphabet sounds and shapes, also to develop their phonics skills in a fun way. The Early Years level provide a unique multi-sensory experience of the alphabet, developing listening and speaking skill while laying a solid foundation for literacy. The Early Years level teaches children to:

- 1) recognize lower case and capital letter shapes,
- 2) form letters correctly,
- 3) link letter sounds to their shapes, and
- 4) sort out reversal.

b. Program One/Primary (age 4-7)

The Letterland Program One/Primary teaching level covers essential spelling patterns for all 44 sounds of the English language and includes a wide range of interactive teaching resources. Letterland teaches phonics through child-friendly stories, increasing the rate at which children learn to read, write and spell. Program One/Primary level leads children quickly into confident word building and early reading.

It teaches:

- 1) short and long vowels
- 2) word building
- 3) the long vowel/silent **e** principle
- 4) first essential digraphs and word endings
- 5) blending skill.

c. Program Two/Advanced (age 6-8)

The Program Two/Advanced teaching level introduces children to more phonemes, irregular vowels, digraphs and trigraphs, complex spelling patterns and their exceptions. Further phonics stories about the Letterland characters explain the remaining irregular spelling combinations which are not covered in previous levels. The alphabet knowledge which children have gained from learning about the Letterland characters in Program One leads them directly and logically to the spelling patterns. Program Two/Advanced level teaches children:

- 1) all major letter patterns in the English language,
- 2) advanced word building, basic punctuation and handwriting.

However, Star Kiddy Preschool does not implement all those levels of Letterland program. Star Kiddy only applies two levels of Letterland program, namely, the Early Years and Program One/Primary level. The descriptions of those levels in Star Kiddy class are:

- a. Playgroup (age 3-4) : applies Early Years level.
- b. Kindergarten-1 (age 4-5) : applies Program One level (A).
- c. Kindergarten-2 (age 5-6) : applies Program One level (B).

The reasons of Star Kiddy in applying only two levels of Letterland program are based on these considerations: the age of students in Star Kiddy Preschool are from 3 to 6 years old, the student's background and ability, the limited material for Program Two/Advanced level in Star Kiddy, the teacher's Letterland certification and time allotment of curriculum.

2. Teaching scope and activity.

The teaching scope and activity of teaching and learning in each level of Letterland program are:

a. Early Years

The scope of teaching in the Early Years level includes:

- 1) Letterland who's who **a-z**
- 2) Letter sounds & shapes **a-z**

- 3) Capital shapes **A-Z**
- 4) Long vowels **a, e, i, o, u**

Some activities of teaching and learning in the Early Years level are:

- 1) Actions for each letter
- 2) Songs & rhymes
- 3) Activities for each letter
- 4) Handwriting
- 5) Speaking & listening
- 6) Vocabulary development
- 7) Alliterative words
- 8) Phonemic awareness

b. Program One/Primary

The teaching scopes in Program One/Primary of Letterland program include:

- 1) Fast track: **a-z, A-Z.**
- 2) Word building: **a, e, i, o, u, ch, sh, -ng, -ff, -ll, -ss.**
- 3) Consonant blends: **bl, sl, br, cr, pr, tr, sc, sk, sp, spr, squ, str, shr, thr.**
- 4) Long vowels: **a-e, ai, ay, ee, ea, i-e, ie, y, igh, o-e, oa, ow, u-e, oo, ew.**
- 5) More digraphs & trigraphs: **ar, or, ow, ou, oy, oi, er, ur, ir, oo, aw, air, ear.**

The teaching and learning activities in this level consist of:

- 1) Fast track **a-z**
- 2) Blending
- 3) Segmenting
- 4) Long vowels
- 5) Digraphs and trigraphs
- 6) High frequency words

c. Program Two/Advanced

The scopes of teaching in Program Two/Advanced of Letterland program are:

- 1) **a** (America/half)
- 2) **able/ible** (suffixes)
- 3) **all/al** (all/always)
- 4) **are** (scare)
- 5) **al/el** (musical/angel)
- 6) **ce/ci/cy** (soft c stories)
- 7) **ch** (school)
- 8) **dge** (bridge)
- 9) **ea** (head)
- 10) **ear** (bear)
- 11) **ed/ing** (magic sounds)
- 12) **e** (silent),
- 13) **e** (they)
- 14) **ei** (receive/ height/eight)

15) **en/est** (magic endings)

16) **er** (sometimes magic)

17) **ere** (here/there)

18) **full/ful** (useful)

19) **ge/gi/gy** (soft g stories)

20) **gh** (brought/ laugh)

21) **ie** (lie/fi eld)

22) **kn** (knee)

23) **le** (table), **ly** (lovely)

24) **less/ness**

25) **mb/mn** (thumb/ autumn)

26) **o** (love/ one/who)

27) **ous** (famous)

28) **ph** (photograph)

29) **que** (antique)

30) **tion** (action)

31) **wh** (when/who)

32) **wr** (write)

33) **y to i** (cry/cries)

34) **y** (very/ bicycle)

The activities of teaching and learning in this Program Two/Advanced

include some aspects, i.e.:

1) Word building

- 2) Irregular vowels
- 3) More digraphs and trigraphs
- 4) Advanced spelling patterns

In Star Kiddy, Uppercase letters and long vowels are introduced in Program One. Furthermore, the advanced spelling patterns are discussed in the end of Program One/Primary because Star Kiddy does not have Program Two/Advanced level.

3. Session

The class session in Lyn Wendon Letterland program is one session per material (60 minutes/session). Star Kiddy Letterland program, however, is divided into four terms per year (12 week/term), and there is one session in a week (2 hours).

4. Types of class.

Letterland program can be applied in a course or school class. Star Kiddy applies the Letterland program in school class only.

5. Teaching resources.

Letterland program has a lot of teaching resources and materials which are designed for children based on the age and level. Those resources and materials are very helpful for teacher and student.

a. Early Years teaching resources.

The Early Years teaching resource is designed specifically for nursery and pre-school teachers. Each teaching resource has been carefully selected to help even the youngest children learn the alphabet sounds

and shapes, and develop their phonics skills. Those teaching resources are: Early Years Handbook, Early Years Handbook CD, ABC book, Living ABC Software, A–Z Copymasters, Early Years Handwriting Copymasters, Big Picture Code Cards, Alphabet Songs CD, Handwriting Songs CD and Alphabet Frieze.

b. Program One/Primary teaching resources.

Program One/Primary teaching resources is designed for teaching children to read, write and spell confidently. The wide range of teaching resources will help teacher cover the alphabet and essential spelling patterns for all 44 sounds of the English language. The teaching resources of the Program One/Primary level consist of: Letterland Teacher's Guide, Class Train Frieze, Action Tricks Poster, Picture Code Cards, Vocabulary Cards, Alphabet Songs CD, Handwriting Songs CD, ABC Book, Beyond ABC Book, Far Beyond ABC Book, Blends & Digraphs Songs CD, Living Code Cards Software, Blends & Digraphs Copymasters and Word Bank Copymasters.

c. Program Two/Advanced teaching resources.

Program Two/Advanced teaching resources contain materials needed for systematic teaching of phonics, spelling and word structure, including syllable types and advanced spelling. It consist of: Advanced Teacher's Guide, Beyond ABC & Far Beyond ABC,

Advanced Copymasters, Advanced Picture Code Cards and Advanced Songs CD.

From the findings above, the writer found some differences between curriculum used in Lyn Wendon Letterland program and Letterland curriculum applied in Star Kiddy Preschool. Those differences are:

Table 2: The differences of Lyn Wendon and Star Kiddy curriculum

NO	Point of differences	Lyn Wendon Letterland Curriculum	Star Kiddy Letterland Curriculum
1.	Program stages	There are three program stages: Early Years, Primary/Program One, Advanced/Program Two	Only use two program stages: Early Years, Program One
2.	Span of the age	3 to 8 years old	3 to 6 years old
3.	Application	Applied in courses or school class	Applied in school class
4.	Session	One session per material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Divided into 4 terms/year (12 weeks/term). - One session a week (2 hours/session)
5.	Teaching scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uppercase letters and Long vowels are introduced in Early Years Program - Advanced spelling patterns are completely discussed in Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uppercase letters and long vowels are introduced in Program One - Advanced spelling patterns are discussed in the end of Program One/Primary

		Two/Advanced Program	
6.	Teaching resources	- The resources are vary and complete	- Star Kiddy's teaching resources are not as complete as Lyn Wendon resources

Those differences appear since Star Kiddy adjusts Letterland curriculum based on student capability, ages, language learning background, time management and the resources. However, most of all, Star Kiddy curriculum fulfills the same point stated in Letterland curriculum.

The writer also found other important findings in curriculum analysis, those are:

1. Teaching order.

The lesson is not taught in alphabet series from 'a' to 'z', but it is divided into four terms with Letterland own order, namely:

- c, a, d, h, m, t, s
- i, n, y, g, o, f
- p, k, e, l, v, w, j
- b, u, q, r, x, y, z

The reasons of arranging the letter into this order are:

- a. It keeps potentially confusing shapes apart (like b/d, p/q, m/n/u, s/z).
- b. It will encourage student curiosity about the story of each letter.

- c. This teaching order makes possible to blend and segment a large number of decodable words after the sixth letter, and then to steadily increase the number of words children can sound out and spell.

2. Reading direction

Letterland pictogram characters like to look or move in the Reading Direction (face to the right). The Reading Direction is an orientation cue built into each Letterland pictogram. It will help children to avoid the common problem of reversing similarly shaped letters, such as **b** and **d**, **p** and **q**, and to orientate all the other letters correctly.

3. Teaching tricks and strategies

The lessons in Letterland are also taught using some tricks and strategies, those are:

a. The sounds trick

The sound trick is used in discovering any letter sound, just start to say a Letterlanders' name. For example, Harry Hat Man says 'h..., h..., h...' in words.

b. The capital letter trick

The objectives of capital letter trick are to learn when capital letters are used and to learn capital letter shapes. Each Letterlanders has a special way of turning their letter into a capital (see appendix).

c. The action trick

The action trick helps develop multi-sensory memory cues for each letter sound, associate an action with each sound. For example, for Harry Hatman's sound, children breathe on their hand in front of their mouth.

d. The alliteration trick

The alliteration trick assists with phonemic awareness of initial sounds, teacher establishes a link between what the character likes or does. For example, Harry Hat Man likes to eat hamburgers and honey and to go horse riding, hang gliding and play hockey.

e. The roller-coaster trick

The roller-coaster trick helps blend individual sounds into words use the multisensory trick of drawing roller-coaster curve to blend the sounds together into a word.

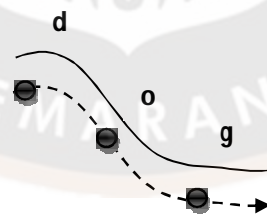


Figure 3: The roller-coaster trick

f. The slow-speak trick

The slow-speak trick segments words into individual sounds, in order to aid spelling, slow-speak words, emphasizing every sound (hhh.....aaa.....tt).

g. The rhyming words trick

The rhyming words trick helps children learn to spell and read by analogy using already known spelling patterns. For example, I am happy saying ‘a’ in at, in bat, in cat, in hat.

h. The character name’s trick

Once a character’s name familiar, deductions about some spelling patterns become easier. By analogy, children can think of other words that follow the same spelling pattern—hat, cat, mat, sat or man, can, tan, span.

D. Letterland Materials

In supporting teaching and learning of Letterland, various materials are used. Those materials are:

Table 3: Letterland materials

No	Materials	Letterland	Star Kiddy
1.	Teacher’s Guide Book <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Early Years Handbook- Teacher’s Guide- Advanced Teacher’s Guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓✓✗
2.	ABC Books <ul style="list-style-type: none">- ABC Book- Beyond ABC- Far Beyond ABC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓✓✗
3.	Software <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Living ABC Software- Living Code Cards Software	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓✗

4.	Picture Code Cards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Big Picture Code Cards - Picture Code Cards (straight) - Vocabulary Cards - Advanced picture code cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
5.	Workbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early Years Workbook 1-4 - Early Years Word Books - Workbook 1-4 - Word Books (pack of 10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✗ ✓ ✗
6.	Copy masters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A-Z copy masters - Early Years Handwriting copy masters - Blend & Digraphs copy masters - Word Bank copy masters - Sentence copy masters - Advanced copy masters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✗ ✓
7.	CD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early Years Handbook CD - Alphabet Songs CD - Handwriting Songs CD - Blends & Digraphs Songs CD - Advanced Song CD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
8.	Classroom Wall Frieze <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alphabet Frieze 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓

	- Class Train Frieze	✓	✓
9.	Posters		
	- Alphabet Posters	✓	✓
	- Action Tricks Posters	✓	✓
10.	Additional resources		
	- Make-a-Story Card Games	✓	✗
	- Adventure Posters	✓	✓
	- Merit Stickers	✓	✗
	- Alphabet Stickers	✓	✓
	- Alphabet Desk Strips	✓	✗

Note: ✓ = yes, ✗ = no

Discussion:

1. Teacher's Guide

Teacher's Guide is a guidebook dedicated to the teachers who handle Letterland class. It consists of steps that give the teacher a fable-like story to explain all the fact of letter shape, orientation and sound. It full of practical ideas, activities and suggestions for role play to reinforce letter shape and sound recognition. It also becomes guidance on the use of all teacher or classroom resources: Frieze, Songs, Word Books, Word/Sentence Flashcards and Storybooks.

In Star Kiddy, this Teacher Guide's book is very essential material because teachers use it as the guidelines of how to teach and handle the class. This book gives clear explanation about step by step process in Letterland teaching and learning.

2. ABC Book

The Letterland ABC Book is an illustrated alphabet storybook used for presenting each character. This book has a double-page spread for every Letterland character. On the left side is text of the story and on the right side is the picture of Letterland character. It consists of scenes of stories to bring the world of Letterland characters to life. This book is very good to develop children's phonemic awareness and language development.

3. Software

This software features all alphabet characters in bright, interactive scenes. Animations, sound effects, songs and stories bring the Letterland alphabet to life making learning fun and motivating. Children of all abilities can use it to find out more about the **a-z** sounds and shapes. There are age-appropriate activities to help develop letter shape and sound recognition, short and long vowel sound differentiation and simple word building skills.

4. Picture Code Cards

Picture Code Cards are double-sided cards used for introducing the a-z characters. It is also used for finger tracing, word building, role-play, phonemic awareness and language development activities. These cards featuring all the phonemes and spelling patterns in the Teacher's Guide.

There are 70 code cards in a package, full color on one side and plain letters with story summary and sample words on reverse. One for

every letter of the alphabet, plus **sh, ch, th, -ng, -ve, ff, ll, ck**, double consonant and final consonant blends.

5. Workbook

The workbook gives pre-schoolers numerous opportunities to practice and develop their handwriting skills and to associate letter shapes with sounds.

6. Copy masters

Covers all digraphs and trigraphs. Summarizes each story (recall route) for each new sound. Space for adding new words that children find in their reading books. Provide examples of picture-coding.

7. Songs in CD/cassette

The alphabet songs are invaluable for getting correct a-z sounds into children heads. These songs are very fun and effective for pronunciation model. These songs are available on both cassette and CD. Teacher can find its lyrics in Teacher Guide's book and use it as shared reading texts.

The Hand Writing Songs provide a memorable way of learning how to form all 26 a-z letter shapes, by associating them with the body parts of the Letterlanders. The Hand Writing Songs use language and concepts that the children already have, promoting learning by association. Its Lyrics are also available on Teacher's Guide. Meanwhile, the Blends and Digraphs song feature most of the remaining phonemes and spelling patterns (after a-z).

8. Wall frieze

Wall frieze is a big poster of alphabetical order displayed on the wall. It is useful for finger tracing and linking upper and lower case letter shapes.

9. Posters

The posters provide visual aid to develop children skills. They act as conceptual organizers and remind children at a glance of important phonics facts and alphabet characters.

10. Additional resources

The additional resources materials assist the teacher and students in teaching and learning in Letterland.

Not all of Letterland materials are used by Star Kiddy. It's caused by some factors: program stage, materials substitution, cost and the availability stock of Letterland store in Singapore. It is better for Star Kiddy to use the complete materials needed.

E. Letterland Class Activities

Letterland is a fun method of teaching reading and writing for children. It uses fun stories, music, actions, movement, songs, art, craft, games, role-play, rhyme, social interaction and many others interesting activities for children to learn.

All of that activities and steps of teaching are guided in Teacher's Guide book. Therefore, teacher can implement step by step teaching process

easily because it has been standardized in Teacher's Guide book. Star Kiddy teachers also use that teaching steps. The following steps are:

1. Children enter the class, sing Letterland theme song and action tricks.
2. Teacher introduces the lesson topic using picture in the ABC Book. Deliver the lesson by using story and script in that book.
3. To see what letterlanders looks like in words, teacher shows the plain letter side of her Picture Code Card (PCC).
4. Then teacher uses sound trick to discover the sound from the start of her name, for example: Clever Cat, "c.." (whisper 'c' sound). The reinforce letter sound, teacher uses action trick.
5. Sing letterland alphabet song (e.g. Clever Cat Alphabet Song). Teacher shows the picture side of PCC when she sing the name of letterlander and turns to the plain letter every time she sing its sound. Teacher may like to write up the lyrics to use as a shared reading text.
6. Teacher uses some objects she has prepared (for example Clever Cat, "c" objects: crayons, cupboard, clock, cups, cake, etc.) and labels for high-frequency words (e.g. can, come, cat, congratulation! clever! etc.)
7. Prepare for assessment outcome. To help children develop the link between the plain letter and the letter sound, teacher asks for the letter sound in response to the plain letter side of PCC.

8. Playing game. Teacher chooses a game from the Activity Bank.
9. Stroking the letter by singing Handwriting Song and follow up with a handwriting activity in workbooks or copymasters.
10. Continue with additional activities: role play, art and craft, small talk, sing and reciting rhyme, coloring, quiz, etc.

From the class activities above it can be seen that Letterland activities in line with Halimi (2010) and Cameroon (2001) theories about approaches and activities in children language teaching. Those approaches and activities are:

1. Storytelling

Children naturally enjoy listening to stories. Stories also can help children to develop their language skills. It can enrich the interactive language environment in the classroom.

Letterland lessons are delivered through stories. Most of the books, CD and posters contain interesting stories for children. Therefore, children are fun in teaching and learning process in the class.

2. Song and rhyme

Children can quickly learn through rhymes and songs. They naturally love to repeat songs and rhymes over and over again. Songs and rhymes provide language input, which is an essential element of language acquisition. Songs and rhymes are not only fun, but they also help students learn a language in a more effective and enjoyable way.

Letterland also uses songs and rhymes as main activities. There are some CDs, cassettes and software contain fun songs and rhymes, such as: Alphabet Songs, Handwriting Songs, Blends & Digraphs Songs, Advanced Songs and Living ABC Software.

3. Game

Children like playing games, and they can learn a lot from them. Through games, they can learn things in a fun way. As they enjoy the activities of a game, the children will not be afraid to learn English and will likely use it as a natural part of the game. The language of games is useful and meaningful. When children are laughing, smiling, surprised, etc., the content of a game is obviously meaningful to them. The children experience the meaning of language as they listen, read, speak, and write.

Letterland provides a lot of games and fun activities in Activity bank, such as: Listen and Jump Game, Action Game, Alliterative Story Sentences, Human Sound Machine, Knock Knock, Letterland Jingles, Letter Sounds Train Game, Sound Box, Sound Pops, Sort it Out, Tray/Hoop Game, Who Likes..?, Who's Missing?, Letter Hunt, Ring the Words, Vowels-Go-Round, Short Vowels Bingo and Full Circle Game.

4. Art and craft

Children learn effortlessly when they are doing things that they enjoy. Including activities that involve arts and crafts can enhance

children's interest and proficiency in learning English. Children enjoy some art and craft activities in Letterland class.

5. Role play

Role play provides young language learners opportunities to practice and use their English in real conversations. The conversational use of language in an play script promotes fluency. When the children are acting out or watching other students' performances, they have to listen to the lines, see the actions, observe the stage properties, create movements and use expressions. These activities address young learners' different learning styles. Students can practice this role play in Letterland Mini Concert held in the end of term.

F. Letterland Outcomes

In order to know the effectiveness of Letterland program implemented in Star Kiddy Preschool, the writer assess the outcomes through Letterland Assessment Outcome. These are the results of assessment:

1. Early Years Stage (Playgroup)

By using Letterland Fast Track Pupil Record Sheet, researcher recorded the outcomes of student ability to say Letterland character names, letter sounds in response to plain letter and sort words according to initial sound. The score results are:

Table 4: Playgroup outcome

NO.	NAME	SCORE	NOTE
1.	Vinska	85	Very good
2.	Kaka	75	Good
3.	Emelie	60	Fair
4.	Rafa	80	Very good
5.	Satya	70	Good
Total Score		370	

The average score: $370/5 = 74$

Percentage score: $370/500 \times 100\% = 74\%$

The result shows that through Letterland Fast Track Pupil Record Sheet assessment, Letterland gives **good** (74%) outcome result for Star Kiddy Playgroup students.

2. Program One (Kindergarten-1)

By using Letterland Alliterative Words Grid. Students read the words and match the image on the Letterland Vocabulary Cards. The results are:

Table 5: Kindergarten-1 outcome

NO.	NAME	SCORE	NOTE
1.	Andra	80	Very good
2.	Keefa	60	Fair
3.	Mayl	70	Good

4.	Amara	70	Good
5.	Jasmine	80	Very good
Total score		360	

The average score: $360/5 = 72$

Percentage score: $360/500 \times 100\% = 72\%$

The result shows that through Letterland Alliterative Words Grid assessment, Letterland gives **good** (72%) outcome result for Star Kiddy Kindergarten-1 students.

3. Program One (Kindergarten-2)

Researcher gives 5 simple sentences contain high-frequency words in Letterland and student read it. The results are:

Table 6: Kindergarten-2 outcome

NO.	NAME	SCORE	NOTE
1.	Adelia	80	Very good
2.	Shafa	70	Good
3.	Dhorthy	60	Fair
4.	Saskia	90	Very good
5.	Khansa	80	Very good
Total score		380	

The average score: $380/5 = 76$

Percentage score: $380/500 \times 100\% = 76\%$

The result shows that through Reading simple sentences assessment, Letterland gives **good** (76%) outcome result for Star Kiddy Kindergarten-2 students.

Discussion:

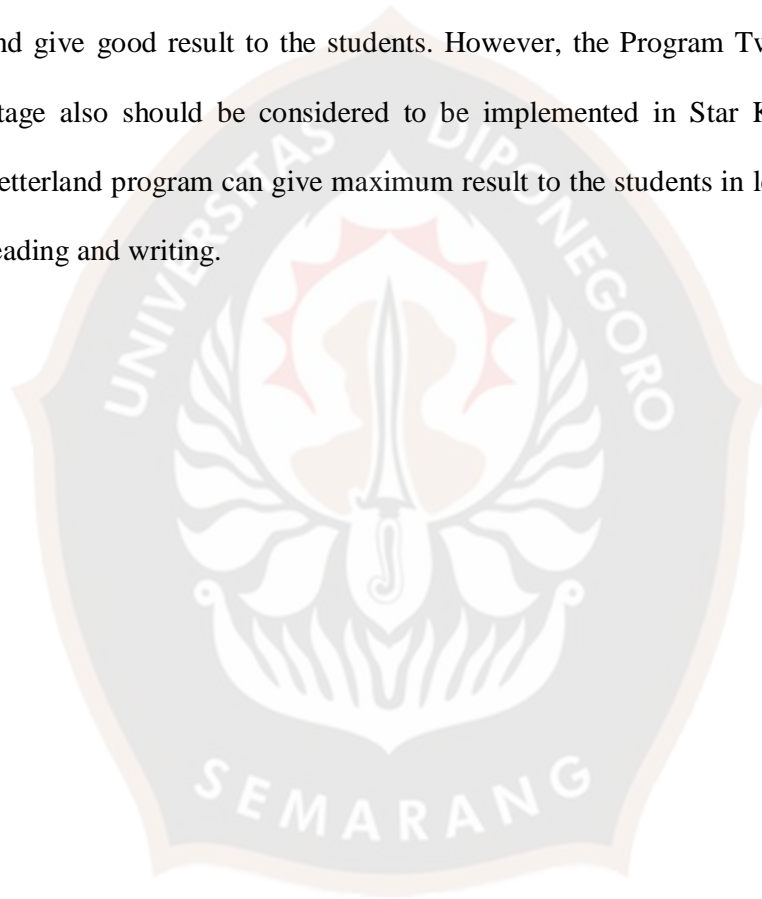
Based on the results, it can be concluded that Early Years Stage of Letterland program can be applied in Playgroup class of Star Kiddy Preschool since the result shows good outcome with the average score of 74 (good). Students able to say Letterland character names, letter sounds in response to plain letter and sort words according to initial sound. Furthermore, students enjoy with the learning process given by the teacher. They remember the lessons which are delivered through storytelling, songs, games and workbooks. It means that Early Years Stage of Letterland program is suitable for Playgroup student in Star Kiddy Preschool.

The same result also can be seen in Program One of Letterland program applied in Kindergarten-1 of Star Kiddy Preschool. Although the average score is less than Playgroup class, 72, it still shows good result. Students read the words and matched the image on the Letterland Vocabulary Cards. They did it very well. Only one student got the fair point.

The Program One of Letterland program in Kindergarten-2 also shows good result, with average score 76. Students read the simple sentences given

by researcher. They can read the simple English sentences correctly although with slow reading. It means that the Program One of Letterland program in Kindergarten-2 is applied successfully.

It can be concluded that the two stages of Letterland program, Early Years and Program One, implemented in Star Kiddy Preschool run effectively and give good result to the students. However, the Program Two/Advanced Stage also should be considered to be implemented in Star Kiddy so the Letterland program can give maximum result to the students in learning early reading and writing.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter concludes the study about Introducing English Reading and Writing Using *Letterland* Program to The Indonesian Young Learners: A Case Study of Reading And Writing Instruction at Star Kiddy Preschool Semarang. First, the writer presents conclusions drawn from the discussions and findings. The second is the presentation and discussion of several recommendations.

A. CONCLUSION

The writer draws some conclusion relate to the research. Based on findings and discussions of the research data, the conclusions are drawn as follows:

1. There are some differences between Lyn Wendon Letterland program and Star Kiddy Letterland curriculum. Those differences appear since Star Kiddy adjusts Letterland curriculum based on student capability, ages, language learning background and time management. However, most of all, Star Kiddy curriculum fulfills the same point stated in Letterland curriculum. Some tricks and strategies are also used to make learning Letterland easier.
2. Letterland materials used by Star Kiddy are not as complete as Lyn Wendon Letterland program. It's caused by some factors: Star Kiddy's Letterland program stage, materials substitution, cost and the availability stock in Letterland Singapore store.

3. The teaching and learning activities in Star Kiddy Letterland class are done in fun way, through approaches and strategies that are in line with Halimi (2010) theory. Those activities are: storytelling, songs and rhymes, games, art and craft, role play. Those are very effective for children language learning.
4. Although Star Kiddy uses, slightly, different curriculum and doesn't use complete Letterland material the results show that Letterland program in Star Kiddy preschool gives good outcome for Star Kiddy students. Therefore, it can be implemented to the other preschool in Indonesia.

It shows that Letterland program can be used in Indonesian preschool context in introducing early English reading and writing. Furthermore, Star Kiddy Preschool has successfully implemented the two stages of Letterland program in Star Kiddy's Letterland class.

B. SUGGESTIONS

After finishing this thesis the writer proposes some suggestions, as follows:

1. In order to get maximum outcome, Star Kiddy should use same curriculum and three program stages of Letterland. Star Kiddy should use complete Letterland material, so it can help teacher and student in teaching and learning activity. Teachers have to understand the content of Teacher's Guide, therefore, there is no confusion in the class anymore.

2. Government can use the principles and techniques used by Letterland program in pre-reading and writing curriculum, since preschool students are enjoy using this program.
3. Suggestion for further research, the researchers can assess the outcome of Letterland deeply, so it can be useful for program improvement in early reading and writing.

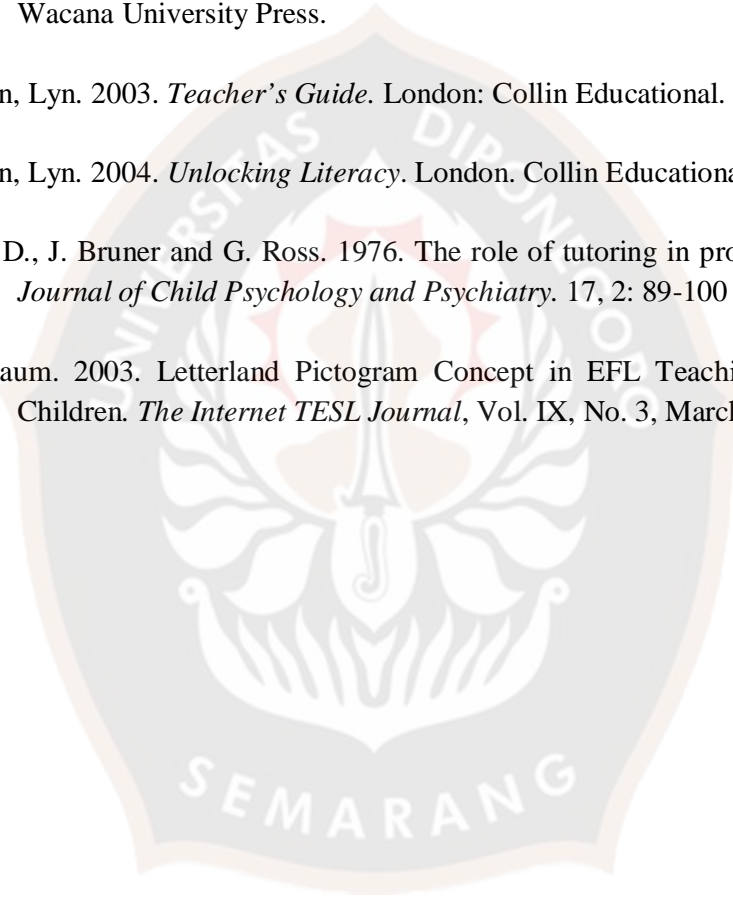


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APPENDICES

1. Lyn Wendon Letterland curriculum

Program	Description	Age	Overview	Teaching Scope
Early Years	The Letterland Early Years teaching level provides children with a solid foundation for learning to read, write and spell. Finding out about all characters, helps even the youngest children to learn the alphabet sounds & shapes, and to develop their phonics skills in a fun way.	3-5 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actions for each letter - Songs & rhymes - Activities for each letter - Handwriting - Speaking & listening - Vocabulary development - Alliterative words - Phonemic awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letterland who's who a-z - Letter sounds & shapes a-z - Capital shapes A-Z - Long vowels a, e, i, o, u
Primary/Program One	The Letterland Primary teaching level covers essential spelling patterns for all 44 sounds of the English language and includes a wide range of interactive teaching resources. Letterland teaches phonics through child-friendly stories, increasing the	4-6 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fast track a-z - Blending - Segmenting - Long vowels - Digraphs and trigraphs - High frequency words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fast track: a-z, A-Z - Word building: a, e, i, o, u, ch, sh, -ng, -ng, -ff, -ll, -ss - Consonant blends: bl, sl, br, cr, pr, tr, sc, sk, sp, spr, squ, str, shr, thr - Long vowels: a-e, ai, ay, ee, ea, i-e, ie, y, igh, o-e, oa, ow, u-e, oo, ew

	rate at which children learn to read, write and spell.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More digraphs & trigraphs: ar, or, ow, ou, oy, oi, er, ur, ir, oo, aw, air, ear
Advanced/ Program Two	The Advanced teaching level introduces children to more phonemes, irregular vowels, digraphs and trigraphs, complex spelling patterns and their exceptions. Further phonics stories about the Letterland characters explain the remaining irregular spelling combinations not covered in previous levels.	5-8 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Word building - Irregular vowels - More digraphs and trigraphs - Advanced spelling patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a (America/half) - able/ible (suffixes) - all/al (all/always) - are (scare) - al/el (musical/angel) - ce/ci/cy (soft c stories) - ch (school) - dge (bridge) - ea (head) - ear (bear) - ed/ing (magic sounds) - e (silent), - e (they) - ei (receive/height/eight) - en/est (magic endings) - er (sometimes magic) - ere (here/there) - full/ful (useful) - ge/gi/gy (soft g stories) - gh (brought/laugh) - ie (lie/field)

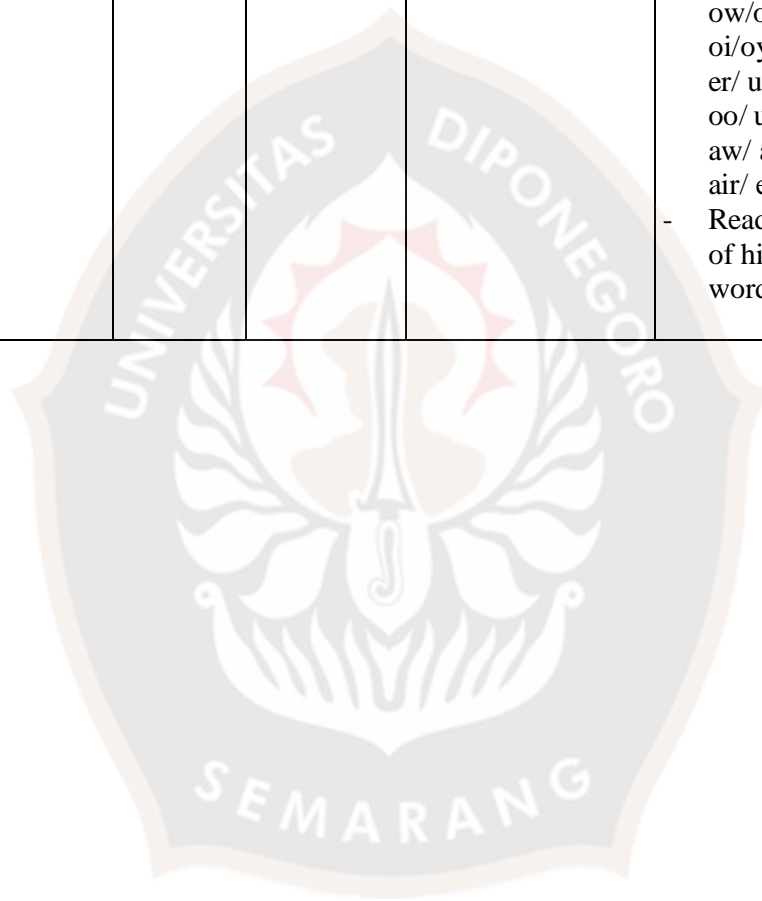
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - kn (knee) - le (table), ly (lovely) - less/ness - mb/mn (thumb/autumn) - o (love/one/who) - ous (famous) - ph (photograph) - que (antique) - tion (action) - wh (when/who) - wr (write) - y to i (cry/cries) - y (very/bicycle)
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2. Star Kiddy's Letterland curriculum

Class	LL Program	Session	Objectives	Teaching scope
Playgroup (3-4 years old)	Early Years	4 terms (12 weeks each term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognize lower case letter shape - Form letters correctly - Link letter sounds to their shapes 	<p>Term 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - c, a, d, h, m, t, s <p>Term 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - i, n, y, g, o, f <p>Term 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - p, k, e, l, v, w, j <p>Term 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - b, u, q, r, x, y, z
K-1 (4-5 years old)	Program One (A)	4 terms (12 weeks each term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revise all letter sounds and shapes - Match uppercase and 	<p>Term 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a-z review <p>Term 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uppercase (A-Z)

			<p>lowercase letters (Aa-Zz)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce vowel letters - Say letter sounds in response to plain letters. - Write letter in response to sound. - Introduce the concept of blending and segmenting - Word building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vowel letters and sounds (a, e, i, o, u) <p>Term 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blending CVC/ CCVC/ CVCC - Segmenting CVC/ CCVC/ CVCC <p>Term 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Word building - Read high-frequency words
K-2 (5-6 years old)	Program One (B)	4 terms (12 weeks each term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blend and segment words with long vowel/silent final e - Introduce consonant blend - Learning digraphs and trigraphs concept - To know other spelling patterns in English 	<p>Term 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The silent magic e concept - Long a: a-e, ai and ay - Long e: e-e, ee and ea - Long i: i-e, ie, y and igh - Long o: o-e, oa and ow - Long u: u-e, oo, ew and ue <p>Term 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consonant blends: bl, cl, fl, gl, pl, sl, br, cr, dr, fr, gr, pr, tr <p>Term 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consonant blends: sc, sk, sp, st, sm, sn, sw, scr, spl,

				<p>spr, squ, str, shr, thr</p> <p>Term 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digraphs, trigraphs and advanced spelling patterns: ar/ or/ oor/ our ow/ou oi/oy er/ ur/ ir oo/ u aw/ au air/ ear - Read a selection of high-frequency words
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	increasing the rate at which children learn to read, write and spell.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - u-e, oo, ew - More digraphs & trigraphs: ar, or, ow, ou, oy, oi, er, ur, ir, oo, aw, air, ear
Advanced/ Program Two	The Advanced teaching level introduces children to more phonemes, irregular vowels, digraphs and trigraphs, complex spelling patterns and their exceptions. Further phonics stories about the Letterland characters explain the remaining irregular spelling combinations not covered in previous levels.	5-8 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Word building - Irregular vowels - More digraphs and trigraphs - Advanced spelling patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a (America/half) - able/ible (suffixes) - all/al (all/always) - are (scare) - al/el (musical/angel) - ce/ci/cy (soft c stories) - ch (school) - dge (bridge) - ea (head) - ear (bear) - ed/ing (magic sounds) - e (silent), - e (they) - ei (receive/height/eight) - en/est (magic endings) - er (sometimes magic) - ere (here/there) - full/ful (useful) - ge/gi/gy (soft g stories) - gh (brought/

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				Term 4: - b, u, q, r, x, y, z
K-1 (4-5 years old)	Program One (A)	4 terms (12 weeks each term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revise all letter sounds and shapes - Match uppercase and lowercase letters (Aa-Zz) - Introduce vowel letters - Say letter sounds in response to plain letters. - Write letter in response to sound. - Introduce the concept of blending and segmenting - Word building 	Term 1: - a-z review Term 2 - Uppercase (A-Z) - Vowel letters and sounds (a, e, i, o, u) Term 3 - Blending CVC/ CCVC/ CVCC - Segmenting CVC/ CCVC/ CVCC Term 4 - Word building - Read high-frequency words
K-2 (5-6 years old)	Program One (B)	4 terms (12 weeks each term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blend and segment words with long vowel/silent final e - Introduce consonant blend - Learning 	Term 1: - The silent magic e concept - Long a: a-e, ai and ay - Long e: e-e, ee and ea - Long i: i-e, ie, y and igh - Long o: o-e, oa and ow

			<p>digraphs and trigraphs concept</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To know other spelling patterns in English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long u: u-e, oo, ew and ue <p>Term 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consonant blends: bl, cl, fl, gl, pl, sl, br, cr, dr, fr, gr, pr, tr <p>Term 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consonant blends: sc, sk, sp, st, sm, sn, sw, scr, spl, spr, squ, str, shr, thr <p>Term 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digraphs, trigraphs and advanced spelling patterns: ar/ or/ oor/ our ow/ou oi/oy er/ ur/ ir oo/ u aw/ au air/ ear - Read a selection of high-frequency words
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