FINAL PROJECT

EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS' TEACHING PHONICS STRATEGIES AND THEIR REPORTED BELIEFS TO ASSIST PRIOR TO SCHOOL STUDENTS' EMERGENT LITERACY IN ACQUIRING ENGLISH ALPHABETIC KNOWLEDGE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

A Case Study of the Early Years Teachers at Bee Bee Gym Babies and Toddlers School Semarang in the Academic Year of 2018/2019

a final project
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of *Sarjana Pendidikan*
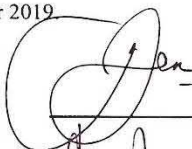in English

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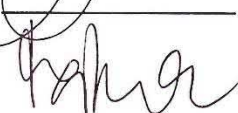
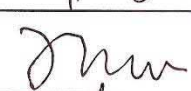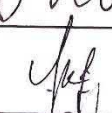**UNIVERSITAS NEGERI SEMARANG**

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APPROVAL

This final project entitled *Early Childhood Teachers' Teaching Phonics Strategies and Their Reported Beliefs to Assist Prior to School Students' Emergent Literacy in Acquiring English Alphabetic Knowledge as a Foreign Language(A Case Study of the Early Years Teachers at Bee Bee Gym Babies and Toddlers School Semarang in the Academic Year of 2018/2019)* has been approved by the board of the examiners of English Department and officially verified by the dean of the faculty of Languages and Arts Universitas Negeri Semarang on 29th December 2019.
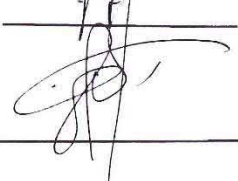
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MOTTO

1. Once, God said:
   Fear not. Indeed, I am with you both; I hear and I see. (Q.S Thaha: 46)

2. Train your attitude as well as you train your mind to see the good in every situation.
   (Nuzulia Nur Farida)

This final project is dedicated to:

My Beloved Parents

My Loving Husband

My Adorable Child

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Semarang, December 10th 2019

Nuzulia Nur Farida

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at (1) discovering the early years teachers' self-reported teaching phonics strategies in practices to teach alphabet knowledge and skills to their prior to school students, and (2) analyzing the teachers' self-reported beliefs in their teaching phonics strategies used to teach alphabet knowledge and skills to their prior to school students. This study used a descriptive qualitative method. The participants of the study were ten non-native talented teachers experienced in teaching phonics to the young learner students.

The instruments of collecting data were questionnaire and interview. The data were obtained by using a direct survey and a semi-structured interview. The direct survey was used to investigate the early childhood teachers' teaching phonics strategies in practices, while to enhance the potential to understand self-reported teachers' beliefs in appropriate early literacy teaching strategies, the researcher did the interview. Based on the findings, dealing with the phonics teaching strategies, the teachers were mostly using either commercial phonics program and play based literacy learning strategies to teach alphabet knowledge and skills to their students within the commercial phonics program over largely focused on their service rather than the play-based literacy learning strategies.

In addition, from the interview, it could be concluded that the teachers believed that play could not be separated in the children's learning process. Both systematic and incidental learning process as well as componental and child-centered views were crucial in the children's acquiring literacy process and should be integrated.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the introduction of the study. It discusses background of the study, reasons for choosing the topic, problems of the study, objectives of the study, significances of the study, limitation of the study, and outline of the report.

1.1 Background of the Study

Teaching foreign languages to young children has been occurred for a long time in many countries (Karimkhanlooei & Seifiniya, 2015: 769). In Indonesia, as well as other many countries, students must learn at least three languages; those are mother language, national or additional language, and foreign language. Over sixty-five years English itself has been taught and used as a foreign language (Marlina, 2012: 41). Abrar, et al. (2018) stated that as a foreign language, English is being made as a compulsory subject in secondary school throughout Indonesia in 1945 soon after the Indonesian Independence Day and formal ELT education began since the early nineties and English has been taught at primary schools students starting in Grade Four as a local curriculum only.

Despite these efforts, most Indonesian students still face the same issues in learning English. Most of the students are far than successful from oral as in and written English (Kam, 2002). Emery (2013) emphasizes some issues related to those problems that occurred because children lack experiences in English and they do not be taught early literacy foundation such as alphabetic principles and how to blend the sounds to form new words. Insufficient preparation for teaching, teachers'

inabilities to deal with challenges that take place in teaching context because of the lack of training, inadequate knowledge, teachers' poor language ability, and teachers whose English is not their subject area hired to teach it are also being the problems related to those issues that has been occurred. Lie (2007: 2) stated that "there has been a tendency in several big cities in Indonesia to teach English starting from the lower grades of primary schools and even from kindergarten to support their students' English literacy skills".

Teaching English as a foreign language to young children are a complex task especially for teaching them to read and write. The contribution of many complex skills and concepts, including phonological and phonemic awareness, the alphabetic principles, a rich vocabulary, as well as comprehension are required for students being able to read fluently (Snow, 2008; National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2009). Consider the description above the alphabetic principle is also being the most valuable aspect of the complexity of literacy skills. Reeb (2011: 5) suggests that "The essential skills of being able to recognize and pronounce letters need to develop early at a young age and should be targeted if the students are not developing at a positive rate."

In order to help students in gaining their literacy knowledge, several instructions needed to introduce to the young children early. The purpose of the instructions itself is to help young learners' students confront and master many challenges of written language as well as to assist them in being a success in their literacy continue to grow. With finding what the proper support would be given to

the student, it is the teacher who may go through many strategies and instructions to provide the necessary experiences to each student (Hall, 2014).

In order to find out the strategies which are used by the early years' teachers to assist their students' emergent literacy in acquiring English alphabet knowledge, the researcher aimed to discover the way teachers were teaching alphabet knowledge to their students. Over the last decade, several types of research conducted in early childhood language and literacy development have examined the students' understandings and skills about the written text which are learned in kindergarten and even from prior to school years to aid students' early literacy knowledge. Prior- to school means students in which they are between the age of 3-4 or before entering kindergarten (NCES, 2018).

Ariati (2018) conducted a related study at one of the innovative bilingual Kindergarten schools in Bali. This study intended to share how to implement Jolly Phonics strategies as an effective strategy for enhancing children's literacy. The study found that the native teacher has been a success in implementing the Jolly Phonics Strategy. Reeb (2011) discovered the ways that kindergarten teachers in Christian schools in West Michigan are teaching phonics in their classrooms, and to determine if kindergarten teachers share a list of common phonics goals for each of their kindergarteners to achieve by the end of kindergarten. The study found that the amount of time spent on phonics instruction in kindergarten classrooms varied greatly and that a variety of instructional practices were being used. The study did find significant agreement regarding the desired outcomes of phonics instruction in kindergarten classrooms.

In prior to school, Karimkhanlooei & Seifiniya (2015) conducted research that focused on teaching alphabet, reading and writing for kids between 3-6 years old as a second language. Therefore, the study was an endeavor to investigate the effectiveness of either one of phonics vs. traditional approaches in the teaching of the alphabet, reading and writing for kids age 3-6 who were learning English as a second language. The result implied that the phonics method can be more effective in teaching English for kids.

Beliefs have often been considered important because of their relation to practice. Therefore, Campbell, Torr, & Cologon (2012) conducted research that aimed to analyze strategies used that were being the most preferred in teaching the alphabet to the prior to school students and their reported reasons. This study surveyed 283 early childhood staff in Sydney, Australia and found that commercial phonics programs include *Jolly Phonics, Letterland, Ants, Apples and the ABCs* were being used in 36% of the early childhood settings surveyed.

Campbell, Torr, & Cologon (2014) in his further study conducted research that aimed to determine the reasons and the teachers' beliefs in commercial phonics programs as their preferred programs with children aged five and under. The study found that their reasons were pragmatic rather than pedagogical. Further analysis found that the teachers were unable to articulate what phonics and phonological awareness are and how they are learned in early childhood.

Campbell (2018) another previous study given the importance placed on phonics in early literacy learning and the debates over the role that teacher beliefs play in the types of code-related literacy children encounter, the purpose of this

two-phase mixed-methods study was to investigate the relationship between teachers' reported play–literacy beliefs, their phonics practices, and the reasons behind their decisions not to use commercial phonics programs in the prior-to-school years. This study found there was a correlation related to teachers' play-based, child-centered literacy beliefs, their reported holistic early literacy phonics practices, and their decisions not to use commercial phonics programs.

Based in the previous studies above, it can be seen that there are debates provoking passions and arguments among researchers, parents, and educators who have reported different beliefs and opinions about strategies supporting pre-schoolers' alphabetic knowledge whether it should be through explicit phonics instruction or play-based literacy learning strategies. All of the studies mentioned above aimed to discover strategies supported by prior-to school teachers to aid students' English literacy knowledge as a second language. Little is known about prior-to school teachers' beliefs about children's English print literacy development, particularly in Indonesia in which English is still used as a foreign language. Educators make constant decisions in their classrooms regarding practice, and their beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, and priorities both shape these decisions and are related to their classroom behaviors. It is important for university and college educators to consider, from the perspective of preschool teachers, what is needed to improve the quality of their studies, particularly with regards to early literacy education.

Therefore, in this study, the researcher aims to determine the phonics strategies chosen by the teachers to teach alphabetic principles to their pre-schoolers

students in one of innovative bilingual babies and toddlers school in Semarang and to analyse the teachers' beliefs in their decision of preferring those strategies to teach alphabet to their students to assist them in their emergent literacy in acquiring English alphabet knowledge as a foundation of English literacy continue to grow.

1.2 Reasons for Choosing the Topic

An observation in innovative bilingual preschools in Semarang had been done before the research starting to conduct the study. The researcher observed the children's learning literacy process as well as how teachers at this center were teaching literacy to their preschoolers' students. When the researcher did the observation, the researcher was curious about the teachers' teaching phonics strategies to help their young learners students acquire English alphabet knowledge in which English is as their foreign language. On the process of observation, the researcher asked whether the teachers were teaching using commercial phonics program or play-based literacy learning strategies to teach alphabet knowledge and skills to their their students Then, the researcher also asked what reasons of the teachers at this center were using those strategies to teach alphabet knowledge and skills to their prior-to school students. Then, the result of the questions and the implied views in teaching phonics to the young learners' students became consideration of the research's motivation to conduct the study.

The observation proved that in this center, the students were mostly feeling enjoy when the teachers engaged them in a different variety of learning process especially in learning literacy. Dancing, singing and moving were the loveliest part in the children's learning process. Whereas the problems seemed needed to be faced

by the teachers were the teachers' ability to keep their young learners being focused into the materials delivered by the teachers. Children would lose focus in their learning literacy process because they seemed not likely to be taught systematically and highly initiated by the teachers. Children in their learning process, needed to be engaged in a fun and enjoyable learning process whereas the children would not feel boring when they were in a learning situation. Therefore, the reasons for choosing the topic of this study can be stated as follows:

This school was selected because based on the writer's preliminary study, it was found that teachers at this center had a unique teaching phonics strategy, interesting program that was being applied to young learner students in the learning of alphabet knowledge and skills. Young learners' students are students that is seemed too difficult to be engaged systematically in their learning process. However, it is obligation for the teachers and the school to teach their students various knowledge and skills to develop their students' further learning success.

Considered to the different passion and arguments amongst researchers, parents, and teachers over the theoretical orientations of early literacy instructions especially in developing proper strategies of teaching the alphabet to the students in prior-to school. Therefore, the writer aimed to discover the ways prior-to school teachers at this centre are teaching the alphabet to their students and to analyse what motivates early years teachers working with those strategies to find out beliefs in each strategy related to early literacy teaching. This study furthermore aimed to determine if the teaching alphabetic strategies engaged by prior-to school teachers are aligned with their beliefs in appropriate early literacy teaching.

1.3 Research Question

Based on the background of the study above, the problems of this research are:

1. What are the teaching strategies chosen by the teachers to teach the English alphabet as a foreign language for their pre-schooler students?

2. How are the teachers' beliefs towards the teaching phonics strategies considered as the appropriate teaching phonics for young learners in acquiring English alphabet knowledge as a foreign language?

1.4 The Objectives of the Study

Therefore, looking at those several questions are being addressed above. This study, furthermore, aims:

1. to determine the strategies chosen by the teachers to develop alphabetic knowledge to their students;

2. to analyse the teacher's beliefs in their decisions of using the strategy to teach alphabet knowledge their students to support their literacy continue to grow;

1.5 Significance of the Study

To answer first objective of the study that finding out the strategies of teaching phonics to the young learners adapted by the early year's teachers. The results of the research are useful for the teachers, students, and researcher. This study may be theoretically, pedagogically and practically significant. The significance of the study is presented as follow:

Theoretically, the results of this study are expected to provide information about research-based best practices theories and principles of teaching alphabetic

strategies for prior-to school students in the age of three to five. I expect that the information of the study may be able to be guide reference for both teachers and those who want to be a teacher to improve and develop proper foundations teaching alphabetic learning process to the prior-to school students, besides for the other researchers to carry out any similar research in contact with it. Practically, this study which is related to teaching alphabetic practices is expected to be a source for English preschool teachers to create the best teaching and learning the alphabetic process for their early year's students. Moreover, the significance of this study for the readers is that it could enlarge their knowledge regarding English especially teaching English for young learners. Pedagogically, the results of the study may profit to the prior-to school students to learn alphabetic skills effective, efficient, simple and in contextual experiences and these could make them more interesting in learning. On the other hand, the results of the study may also be able to inspire the prior-to school English teachers to provide the best strategies based on theories and researches. They should be capable to design the strategies to improve their approaches in teaching phonics to their students especially for teaching alphabetic knowledge and skills to their students. Moreover, it may profit to college educators or universities to consider what is needed to improve the quality of their studies, particularly with regards to early literacy education.

To answer second objective of the research that is aimed to explore the teachers' beliefs and views about early learning literacy process especially for children who have English as their foreign language in which children in this case need to struggle more in the process of acquiring English language. Theoretically,

this study is expected to enrich English teachers for young learners' comprehension about characteristics of young learners, how they are being taught, and how the curriculum and children's' learning process are. Practically, this study is expected to provide significance for the teachers since they have found deep understanding that what factors can influence the young learners in their learning process. Pedagogically, the result of this study gives the English young learners teachers more attention in some factors that can improve children's learning process especially in the process of acquiring English as their emergent language.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

The range of the study is teaching the English alphabet to the pre-schoolers. Therefore, the data is limited to early childhood teachers' strategies and reported beliefs in strategies. The term early childhood, in this case, refers to preschool situations.

1.7 Definition of the Key Terms

1) Early Childhood Education

Ojala, in his book (1993: 14) defines early childhood education as an inter-active process in the sphere of life at home, day care and preschool that is purposefully aimed at an all-encompassing personality development in the age from 0 to 6 years.

Lewis (2019) defines early childhood education is a term that refers to educational programs and strategies toward children from birth to the age of eight. This time period is widely considered the most vulnerable and crucial stage of a person's life and often focuses on guiding children to learn

through play. The term early childhood in this case commonly refers to preschool or infant/childcare programs.

Early Childhood Education Report (2014) defines the term early childhood education (ECE) refers to programs for young children based on an explicit curriculum delivered by qualified staff and designed to support children's development and learning.

Early childhood education means the study of the education of children from about two to seven years of age (Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionaires & Thesaurus, 2019).

Based on the definition above, it can be concluded that early childhood education is the education program designed to educate children from 0 to 8 years.

2) **Belief**

Senior (2006: 12) in her study took the position of using the term belief in relation to teachers as it is referring to the "personal conviction about language teaching and learning that teachers are able and willing to express".

A traditional philosopher, Green (1971), proposes that a belief as a proposition is held by an individual, and is accepted as something true without needing to be proved.

According to Basturkhman, et al (2004: 244) in their study define teachers' beliefs as "statements teachers made about their ideas, thoughts,

and knowledge that are expressed as evaluations of what 'should be done', 'should be the case', and 'is preferable'.

Belief (in something/somebody) is a strong feeling that something or someone exists or is true; confidence that something or someone is good or right. (Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, 2015).

Thus, it can be concluded that beliefs considered important related to their function that can shape a person's decision or motivate person what he or she should be done.

3) Phonics Strategies

Morrow & Tracey (1997) in their book define phonics strategies is a method that is used to teach people to read by decoding and correlating sound with letters in an alphabetic writing system.

Moreover, Stahl (2004: 35), using language borrowed from Durkin, defines phonics strategies as "any approach in which the teacher does or says something to help children learn how to decode words".

Cecil (2011), furthermore, describes phonics strategies is strategies used to teach the association of speech sounds with printed symbols (Cecil, 2011)

Phonics instruction also describes as a method of teaching people to read based on the sounds that letters represent (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionaries, 2015).

From the description above, it can be concluded that phonics instruction is a necessary component of reading instruction, but not sufficient to teach children to read.

4) Emergent Literacy Skills

Roberts, et. al (2005) defines the term of emergent literacy skills is the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are necessary for the development of reading and writing – are important for later reading success.

Rohde (2015) defines emergent literacy skills as skills that a person need to have these skills early at very young age to success their further reading skills, these skills known as Emergent Literacy (EL), include the knowledge and abilities related to the alphabet, phonological awareness, symbolic representation, and communication.

Farral (2017: 5) defines the emergent literacy is "…the reading and writing behaviors that precede and develop into conventional literacy".

Emergent has meaning that is starting to exist or become know (Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary, 2015)

Based on the definitions described above, it can be concluded that emergent literacy skills is the skills that a person need to have when he or she starts to learn reading and writing.

1.7 Outline of the Report

This study is organized within five chapters as follows:

Chapter I deals with the introduction of the study. It introduces the significant subject matter of the study. It consists of the background of the study whereby it discusses the brief explanation about the implementation of English as

a subject school in which English is being taught and used as a foreign langauge starting from 1945 in secondary school throughout Indonesia and in the early nineties formal ELT has been taught at primary school starting in grade four, Despite these efforts, learning English is still being challenge that is faced by the Indonesian students in oral as in ad written English, Thus, there has been tendency for several big cities in Indonesia to teach English early starting from the young age and consider the impostance of learning English early. However, there are various skills that the students needed in order to be success in their literacy learning process especially in their reading and writing skills. Teachers as a reflective practitioners should confront those difficulties issues in the reading and writing teaching process through introducing the basic knowledges of learning English skills early to their students.

Consider to the description above, this study aimed to determine strategies chosen by the early year's teachers at one of innovative bilingual school in Semarang to teach phonics to their students and analyze the early years teachers reported beliefs in an appropriate early litearcy teaching strategies for the young learners. With finding what strategies chosen by the teachers, the researcher expect that the information of the study may be able to be guide for both teachers and those who want to be a teacher to improve and develop proper foundation of learning early litrarcy especially in learning English. Thus, this study is limited to the early years teachers' teaching phonics straegies and the arly years teachers reported beliefs in an appropriate early learning litearcy strategies.

Chapter II reveals a review of the related literature. In this chapter, especially in the review of the previous study, the writer quoted some journals related to the topic about several factors that influence unsuccess English lesson curriculum in Indonesia, teachers' views in early literacy for later academic success, role of phonics in the literacy acquisition, the effect of early literacy development, teaching phonics strategies, the role of integrated learning literacy approach, and novelty of the research. An expert declared some challenges encountered while learning and teaching English are included shortage of teachers' training, crowded class, lack of vocabularies, lack of English exposure, limited resources accessibility, and linguistic problems. Consider to those several problems, several solutions have been given to confront those problems. One of them included reforming the learning English attitude. Here, it is emphasized the teaching and learning English early starting form the lower grade and introduced the basic English knowledge to the young learner students.

Furthermore, this research discusses review of theoretical studies such as phonics instruction that is a method or instruction used to teach teach people to read by decoding and correlating sound with letters in an alphabetic writing system, commercial phonics program in which phonics program commercially produced as teaching phonics materials to assist the teachers in teaching phonics, alphabet knowledge instruction practices, alphabet knowledge, characteristics of young learners whereby young learner students in this term are students who are difficult to be engaged in a systematically teaching phonics approaches , contrasting beliefs in early literacy teaching Strategies between holistic amd componential views, play-

based Literacy Learning Strategies for Young learners, and general concept of writing which talks about the theories drawn on by the researcher in this study. In this study, the researcher used the teaching phonics strategies by Morrow & Tracey (1997) and teachers' reported beliefs in appropriate early literacy teaching phonics strategies based on Snow (2006).

Chapter III discusses the research design. This chapter deals with research design which talks about the method of research investigatin. The researcher in this study conducted two-phase mixed method research design thaat was used to obtain the teachers teaching phonics strategies chosen by the early year's teachers and the early years teachers' reported beliefs in appropriate early literacy teaching phonics strategies for theyoung learners' students. Questionnaire that consists of five-point likert scale, open-ended section, question requiring short answers, demographic data were used to obtain the data form the first question in this research. While the interview guide is used to obtain the data form the second question in this research.

For the first task in the process of the collecting the data, the researcher delivered the questionnaire to the ten early years teachers as the participants of the study. This instrument was used to collect information on the teachers' teaching alphabet strategies that they were being chosen o teach alphabetic principles to their young learner students. The second step was the researcher conducted the interview session. The ten early years teachers were recruited investigating teaching phonics strategies they used and their reported beliefs. After the data have been collected, then the data was being analyzed using descriptive analysis SPSS 16.00 and the data interview was being transcripted to be analyzed to determine the theme based

on the word repetition of Ryan and Bernard (2003). In order to examine the credibility of the result of the research, the researcher used tringulation technique to check the validity of the result of the research comparing to the other research results. In this research, the researcher used a triangualtion with sources and methods. The result of the study would be triangulated with the teachers' responses by doing an interview. The interview wiould be about the phonics teaching-learning process considered to their students' needs and interests. It also contained about their experience in their previous education college relating to the tendency of teaching phonics as an emergent literacy for Indonesian young learners who are learning English as a foreign language. Furthermore, in this study the researcher used two phase mixed method of the research that was through quantitave and qualitative analysis to validate the findings of each research design that has been used.

Chapter IV explains the results of the analysis. It contains the findings of analysis and discussion. After the data were being analyzed, The findings of results showed that the early years teachers at this center were preferred to use both explicit systematic teaching phonics strategies and the play-based literacy learning within the mean score of explicit systematic teaching phonics were higher than other strategies. The evidences showed that the mean score of the commercial phonics program used was 3.10 and the play-based litearcy learning strategies was 3.08. Motivations were also being analyzed in this study that shape the early years teachers in their decision of adapting those strategies in order to gain in-depth inside the early year's teachers' beliefs in apropriate early litearcy teaching. The result

showed that the early years teachers' beliefs in commercial phonics program used was 3.00 and felt within the range scale criterion of "unsure". Further analysis showed that teachers at this center could not declare what phonics, phonemic and phonological awareness and how systematic explicit teaching phonics could contribute to their students' later litearcy continue to grow.

Based on the results analysis above, it can be concluded that teachers at this center might use explicit systematic teaching phonics instruction without any foundation knowledge about phonics. The evidence also showed that there was external factor that shape their decision in following this strategy that was the higher management decision. consist of the questionnaire, interview, and document analysis. Early years teachers beliefs based on the analysis result of the data interview is contradicted to the previous study conducted by Champbell (2015) found that early years teachers who were adapting systematic explicit teaching phonics strategies reported strong beliefs against explicit systematic teaching phoncis which could encourage childrens' self-esteem in their literacy learning process.

The last chapter, chapter V, this chapter presents the conclusions and suggestions. Through the research findings that have been discussed before, it is concluded that early years teachers at this center were highly preference on commercial phonics program as their main learning resources in teaching phonics to their prior-to school students, then, playing activities followed. Athough teachers were following a more structured approach to teach phonics, including a

commercial phonics program, they adapt the program when they considered it appropriate and relevant for children to do so.

Beliefs on the appropriate early litearcy teaching also lead to the thematic analysis pattern. Teachers at this center believed that playing was a central tendency of children's development and it could not be separated in the teaching curriculum and every child learning process. Broadly speaking, they argued that phonics teaching needed to be responsive to individual children. However, there was no strong evidence reported by early years teachers at this center, claimed that systematically explicit teaching phonics might support further children's literacy development and gave opportunities for their students' literacy to continue to grow. Further analysis of the result of this study also found that early literacy teachers at this center were not able to articulate what phonics, phonemics, and phonological awareness and how it would support children's later literacy development.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents review of related literature which discusses the ideas and theories underlying the subject of the research as a result of library activities. It consists of previous studies, theoretical background, and framework of the present research.

2.1 Review of the Previous Studies

The first study comes from Ariati, et al. (2018). She presented a qualitative study which was conducted at Dyatmika Kindergarten; Denpasar Bali Indonesia This study is intended to share the techniques of how to implement the Jolly Phonics strategy for teaching and developing children's English literacy. The findings demonstrate that the native teacher had implemented the 5 skills in Jolly Phonics successfully, the 5 skills namely (1) learning the letter sounds, (2) learning letter formation, (3) blending- for reading, (4) identifying sounds in words-for writing and (5) tricky words, through several variety of fun and enjoyable techniques relating children's sight, sound and kinaesthetic means. Moreover, teachers at Dyatmika Kindergarten in implementing Jolly Phonics have been following the principles of effective literacy instruction states by Roskos, Christie & Richgels, in which the teacher successfully involving the children in a rich conversation through story reading, and shared reading activities. In this case, the skills in Jolly Phonics

are attractively taught and creatively developed by the teachers based on children's needs and situation, so children could easily engage with it.

The study conducted in Kindergarten Christian School in West Michigan, Reeb, (2011) discover the ways that kindergarten teachers are teaching phonics in their classrooms, and to determine if kindergarten teachers share a list of common phonics goals for each of their kindergarteners to achieve by the end of kindergarten. The study found that the amount of time spent on phonics instruction in the kindergarten classrooms varied greatly and that a variety of instructional practices were being used. The study did find significant agreement regarding the desired outcomes of phonics instruction in the kindergarten classrooms.

The next study was followed by Karimkhanlooei & Seifiniya (2015) which was an aim to investigate the effectiveness of phonics vs. traditional approaches used by the teachers in the teaching of the alphabet, reading and writing for kids between 3-6 years old who were learning English as a second language. The kids were taught for eight terms. The course covered the skills of the alphabet, reading, and writing. The analysis of the results following the administration of a standardized test and the final achievement scores showed a significant difference between students in two groups. The results showed that the phonics method can be more effective in teaching English for kids.

Another study also derives from Parreñ, (2016). This is an endeavor to compare the Kindergarten 2 students' achievement before and after the use of English Phonics online games in Phonics class and to find out their perceptions towards such games. A pretest-posttest experiment was conducted in a group to

determine if there was a significant difference in the students' English Phonics achievement before and after involving English Phonics online games in Phonics class. Analyses showed that Kindergarten 2 students' English Phonics achievement was very good before involving online games, and it increased to excellent after the use of online games. Results showed that all Kindergarten 2 students had positive perceptions towards the use of online games in English Phonics because the games were enjoyable and fun in helping them learn how to spell and read and the games also provided colorful featured animations, attractive common objects, and interactive game/challenge components. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the use of online games in English Phonics is recommended in teaching and learning English Phonics, especially for young learners.

Campbell, et al. (2014), conducted a study to investigate the purpose of early childhood teachers who employ and choose commercial phonics program (such as Letterland, Ants in the Apple and Jolly Phonics) which is Commercial Phonics Programs described often employ a synthetic phonics approach that is such approach being. The reason why early childhood teachers employ and choose to use such programs teaching the alphabet with children aged five and under was infrequently known. The result showed that the teachers declared that phonics were beneficial for children's self-esteem especially in reading and writing skills. Unfortunately, further analysis found that the teachers who employ Commercial Phonics Program were unable to articulate what phonics and phonological awareness are and how they are learned in early childhood.

Meanwhile study conducted by Campbell (2018), this study therefore sought to explore this further by, first, investigating the reported beliefs of early childhood teachers who do not support explicit systematic synthetic phonics teaching methods, and second, exploring the reasons behind their decisions not to use commercial phonics programmes with children in the prior-to-school years. Given the benefit of play orientated learning in prior-to-school years, this study contributes to the discussion by investigating the beliefs of early childhood teachers who subscribe to the play- generated code-related literacy curriculum model: phonics taught through social-pedagogical play-based experiences, over narrow-focused scripted phonics instruction and commercial phonics program use.

Based on the previous studies above, it can be seen that there are debates provoking passions and arguments among researchers, parents, and educators who have reported different beliefs and opinions about strategies supporting pre-schoolers' alphabetic knowledge whether it should be through explicit phonics instruction or play-based literacy learning strategies. All of the studies mentioned above aimed to discover strategies supported by prior-to school teachers to aid students' English literacy knowledge as a second language. Little is known about prior-to school teachers' beliefs about children's English print literacy development, particularly in Indonesia in which English is still used as a foreign language. Educators make constant decisions in their classrooms regarding practice, and their beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, and priorities both shape these decisions and are related to their classroom behaviors. It is important for university and college educators to consider, from the perspective of preschool teachers, what is needed to

improve the quality of their studies, particularly with regards to early literacy education.

This study is different from the previous studies have been mentioned before because all of the studies mentioned above aimed to discover strategies supported by prior-to school teachers to aid students' English literacy knowledge as a second language. Little is known about prior-to school teachers' beliefs about children's English print literacy development, particularly in Indonesia in which English is still used as a foreign language.

Therefore, in this study the researcher aims to determine the strategies used by the teachers in one of innovative bilingual babies and toddlers school in Semarang in which English is used as a foreign language both the teachers and the students and to analyse the teachers' beliefs in their decision of preferring those strategies and to analyse the teachers' beliefs in their decision of preferring those strategies to teach alphabet to their students to assist them in their emergent literacy in acquiring English alphabet knowledge as a foundation of English literacy continue to grow. Furthermore, the research conducted two phase nixed-method research design to obtain the result of the findings that is the teachers' teaching phonics strategies and the teachers reported beliefs. Beside those two different aspects, this research also sought to explore the correlation between the early years teachers' teaching phonics strategies in their practice and the early years teachers' teaching phonics strategies based on the teachers' beliefs.

2.2 Theoretical Background

Alphabetic principles and strategies play an important role in helping prior-to school students build their letter knowledge and skills in preparation for their English literacy continue to grow. In this section, the researcher presents several concepts that support this study. This theory examines concepts related to: (1). Phonics Instruction (2) Commercial Phonics Program (3) Alphabet Knowledge Instruction Practices (4) Alphabet Knowledge (5) Characteristics of Young Learners (6) Contrasting Beliefs in Early Literacy Teaching Strategies and (7) Play-based Literacy Learning Strategies for Young learners.

First, the definition of what phonics and phonics instruction includes will be explained and the way it is used to impact the students' learning will be explored. The goal of phonics instruction will demonstrate how the program ties into the alphabetic principle to increase literacy ability. Different methods and strategies of phonics instruction that have been used to contribute to letter-sound connections will be explained.

2.2.1 Phonics and Phonics Instruction

Morrow & Tracey (1997) defined phonics is a method that is used to teach people to read by decoding and correlating sound with letters in an alphabetic writing system. In the early years, synthetic phonics is being focused on teaching reading where words are broken up into the smallest units of sound (phonemes). However, Phonics instruction describes the way of teaching phonics method that teaches the relationship between sounds and the letters that represent the sounds.

Phajane (2014: 478) argues that "The goal of phonics instruction is to make children understand that there is a systematic and predictable relationship between written letters and spoken sounds". In his research, Ehri, Nunes, Stahl, & Willows (2001) concluded scientific research that exists nowadays supported that phonics is an effective approach for teaching learners to read at the word level. (Ehri et al., 2001) argued strongly that phonics is an effective way to teach children the alphabetic code, building their skills in decoding new words. Phajane (2014: 477) declared that "By learning how to decode the alphabetic early, children can quickly free up mental energy they had used for word analysis and devote this mental effort to meaning, leading to stronger comprehension earlier in elementary school". Thus, she concluded, phonics instruction is a necessary component of reading instruction, but not sufficient to teach children to read.

Stahl (2004: 35) using language borrowed from Durkin, defines phonics as "any approach in which the teacher does or says something to help children learn how to decode words". There are several approaches to teach phonics that have been designed to follow the rules of systematic phonics prospected through a broad lens. These can be classified as synthetic, analytic, embedded, analogy, phonics through spelling phonics approaches(de Graaff et al., 2009). (Johnston & Joyce Watson, 2015) stated that "The synthetic approaches begin with learning letter-sound relationships and blending them to create words". Though, the analytic approach is an approach in which children analyze sounds in words that they start with a word and take it apart.

Currently, in phonics instruction, there are three different forms of instruction. The first form of instruction is explicit instruction. "Explicit instruction is the systematic sequential presentation of phonics skills is using isolated, direct instruction strategies" (Morrow & Tracey, 1997: 646). Often in working with explicit instruction, teachers use worksheets to assess a student's phonetic knowledge. Explicit phonics instruction, instructing young children aged three to five years are grouped to recite, chant and review phonemes and graphemes in a group. Direct teaching and adult initiated are the specific methods of explicit phonics instruction. The second form of instruction is contextual instruction. Contextual instruction includes learning within meaningful or functional contexts (Morrow, L., & Tracey, 1997). In contextual instruction, teachers use activities like a morning message, a storybook, a language chart or a text in which an element of phonics is pointed out. The last approach to phonics instruction is the combined approach. The combined approach is phonics instruction in which both explicit and contextual instructions are used (Morrow & Tracey, 1997).

Phonics instruction is being more effective when it begins and starts to be taught in kindergarten or first grade. Besides, systematic instruction must be designed appropriately, attractively and taught carefully to be effective with young learners. It includes teaching letter shapes and names, phonemic awareness, and all major letter-sound relationships. It should ensure that all children learn these skills (Armbuster, et.al, 2006). As instruction proceeds, children should be taught to use this knowledge to read and write words.

2.2.2 Commercial Phonics program

Campbell, et, al. (2012: 1) said that "Commercial phonics programs (e.g. Jolly Phonics, Letterland, Ants, Apple and the ABCs) nowadays are being widely used in the early years of school". Many early childhood teachers are currently using more explicit methods of teaching literacy to children under five, including commercial phonics programs such as Letterland, Jolly Phonics, and Ants in Apple. These programs claim profit to explicit a systematic explicit approach considered to be a preferred method to teach alphabetic code breaking-skills. These methods are usually employed by commercial phonics programs. This specific method of teaching phonics, which is direct, adult initiated and programmed for large-group learning (Campbell, et, al. 2012: 2). Such programs also typically include a range of products, including flashcards, books, videos and DVDs, teacher instruction and parent manuals, newsletters, magazines, and websites. Many phonics programs are heavily promoted internationally.

In Commercial Phonics Programs, these programs have often been criticized by some researchers, teachers, and parents based on several grounds. The first is these programs seem only tend to concentrate on a narrow skill base of the relationship between letters and sounds in a predetermined sequence and are not able to engage in the varied learning needs of an individual child. Second is these programs often employ highly structured, teacher-initiated approaches that rely on skills-drill and memorization that are questionable in terms of pedagogical appropriateness for preschool-aged children. The last these programs often require teachers to follow a set scripted of teaching phonics that is undermining teachers'

professional development knowledge and skills to provide differentiated learning for their students (Champbell, 2015).

2.2.3 Alphabet Knowledge Instruction Practices

Jones, et, al. (2013: 1) conveys that "Alphabet Knowledge Instruction emphasizes identifying the letter name and sound, recognizing the letter in the text, and producing the letterform, through flexible, distributed cycles of review based on factors that influence the acquisition of alphabet knowledge". Recent research on alphabet knowledge has been offered practical implications for increased effectiveness of teaching letter names, sounds, and forms to young children or students struggling with this important literacy skill.

(Education Review Office (ERO), 2011) supports teaching alphabet knowledge towards early year's students by encouraging teachers to provide letter instruction in enjoyable ways. Some best instructional practices suggested in teaching letters and sounds to young children are teaching them through song, teachers-children shared reading alphabet books regularly, hanging alphabet charts in the classroom, focus on letters that have special meaning to the students such as letters in their name, name of fruit and animals, involving students in letter games and word games identifying the letters and sounds, and keeping plastic, dough, magnetic, tile, or wooden letters available for children to manipulate.

2.2.4 Alphabetic Knowledge

Mason (1984) as cited in Pearson, R. Barr, M.L. Kamil, defines alphabetic knowledge as knowledge of the names, sounds, and symbols of the letters of the alphabet or alphabetic knowledge are essential for learning to read and write.

Another opinion derives from Idaho Commission for Libraries (2009: 1) conveys that alphabetic knowledge (letter knowledge) is knowing that the same letter can look different, that letters have names and are related to sounds. Consider those opinions above, it can be concluded that letter-name and letter-sound knowledge is a subskill of alphabetic knowledge which has a similar meaning to letter knowledge. When educators discuss the importance of children possessing knowledge of letters of the alphabet, they are often discussing a variety of skills. Some may only mean that learning alphabet knowledge students will learn to recognize and name the letters of the alphabet. Others will also include learning how to write the letters as part of this skill, while others will include matching sounds to letters as a component of letter knowledge (Catherine E. Snow, 2008).

Strauss & Altwerger (2007) describe alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness as essential building blocks of early literacy acquisition. When students have been acquiring letter-name and letter-sound knowledge they are starting to understand the alphabetic principle which will lead to reading and writing acquisition. (Reeb, 2011) supports the importance of developing the essential skills of the alphabetic principle through recent research they have. They found that there is a correlation between a delay in the foundation of literacy skills and the ability for students to acquire letter-sound knowledge.

2.2.5. Characteristics of Very Young Learners

Very young learners are active people. They create their learning engaging with their environment and they are active in their learning process by exploring immediate settings (Education Review Office (ERO), 2011). Children acquire

knowledge through interaction with other people or social interaction (Reeb, 2011). Working within, an adult needed to be model guides and helps children reach their optimum capacity to solve problems with assistance. As an active person who has a lot of energy but minimum concentration, it is better to engage them in physical activities within a concrete environment. As Scott and Ytreberg., (1990) declare that the immediate world around them always prevails and it is their hands and eyes and ears that they use to understand this world. Furthermore, if children create their visuals and realia, they will probably engage and interested in the activities and take more responsibility for the materials (Karimkhanlooei & Seifiniya, 2015). According to Piaget's theory of cognitive development, preschoolers are in the preoperational stage of intelligence so learning can be boosted by helping them experience with concrete materials such as objects, pictures, stories, and videos

Therefore, it is the teachers' obligation to provide a variety of experiences and a set of activities without getting them bored. As the children are a creative and active person, it is better to make use of their imagination and energy based on students' interests such as in games, songs, drawing pictures or puzzle-like activities. Uysal & Yavuz, (2015: p.20) added that "Young learners are easily distracted and have very short attention spans; therefore, it is better to keep in mind that 5- and 10-minutes activities are best to engage them in learning". According to Karimkhanlooei & Seifiniya, (2015), there should be various activities having a balance needs among them.

It is suggested that each task given to the children should focus on different skills while using individual, pair work, group work or whole class activities

alternately. It is also enlightened to let children learn from each other by integrating pupil- pupil interaction into the activities in addition to teacher-pupil interaction. Lastly, Scott and Ytreberg (1990) point out the balance between quiet and noisy activities to create both a peaceful and dynamic learning environment.

2.2.6 Contrasting Beliefs in Appropriate Early Literacy Teaching Strategies

Teachers' beliefs are important for understanding and improving the educational process. Xu, (2012: 1) stated that "Beliefs closely guide language teachers to adapt their teaching strategies, influence their general well-being, and shape language learners' learning environment, their motivation and their language achievement and ability". As a reflective practitioner, teachers, if they want to be effective in whatever approach they decided to take, they are expected to act consistently following their beliefs. However, there is always a discrepancy happened between what the teachers' beliefs and what they act and affecting students to miss understanding of the information given (Marion Williams, et.al., 1997).

Furthermore, to determine teachers' beliefs on a type of instruction, it is needed to know the teachers' motivation in their decision of adapting those strategies. There is an evident proof that correlates between teachers' motivation and their beliefs determining action. "Traditionally, motivation was measured as a personality characteristic, meaning that it was equated with relatively stable beliefs that are important reasons for action" (Boekaerts, 2001).

Two other dimensions that define contrasting beliefs about early literacy teaching based on Snow (2006), are componential and holistic. Early childhood

teachers who believe in a componential view consider early literacy as achieved through skills-based instruction and explicit guidance on a specific component of the reading process. This componential view defines reading environmental print is not as valued as in holistic view and does not regard engaging shared-reading book, play-based engagement with print materials such as dough, magnetic letters as necessary as a robust predictor of later reading success. However, by contrast, some early childhood teachers who favor a holistic view consider early literacy to be social, community-based, naturally defined beyond the classroom and respecting to meaning-making. This view often values phonics as best taught through rhyme, singing and shared reading. Furthermore, the holistic view often valued explicit teaching phonics rejects focus on individual skills and downplays the necessity of explicit formal instruction.

Meanwhile, research over this year has given evidence that effective early literacy development occurs when there is a balance between componential code-breaking, academic instruction, together with holistic child-centered views focused instruction within culturally mediated learning environments (Campbell, 2018). This view supporting early literacy involves both systematic teaching and a child-centered approach blended to create a comprehensive early literacy model. Some researches in Australia nowadays has also revealed over-extension of and narrow-focused phonics literacy practices occurring in prior-to-school settings, over holistic child-centered practices. This includes the use of commercial phonics programs with children aged five years and younger (Campbell et al., 2012; Education Review Office (ERO), 2011).

Moreover, other studies show that a literacy-rich play-based environment that included a blended, or comprehensive approach together with quality literacy resources and intentional teachers facilitation can provide ideal opportunities for children to further develop and practice alphabetic knowledge (C.E Snow, 2006). No two children are the same and phonics teaching needs to be responsive to individual children. Synthetic phonics, analytic phonics, skill-based and child-centered approach all play a part in the early year's classroom. It is a responsive and knowledgeable teacher who can ensure that every opportunity to develop children's code-related skills is met (MacNair., et al, 2006).

2.2.7 Play-based Literacy in Prior-to School

Play is a fundamental and central mechanism for early childhood development learning (Mielonen, Alissa Marie & Paterson, 2009). Play, together with learning occupies a central place in early childhood contexts. Literacy learning that is integrated with a play activity allows children to explore and create meaning. Play can also support children's brain development and grow up their imagination (Shayne B. Piasta, 2010). However, the defining relationship between play and teaching curriculum for young learners' students are both complex tasks. The play and curriculum literacy are often being questioned due to several different opinions from researchers.

Johnston (2014) has categorized different models of play and curriculums in early childhood including the curriculum-generated code play model, and the play-generated code curriculum model. In the curriculum-generated play model, the teacher provides opportunities for children to play activities under literacy curricular goals whereby 'the curriculum and its educational objectives lead and the

play follows'. By contrast, in the play-generated curriculum model, literacy learning occurs out of children's playing. Play is the curriculum, whereby teachers guide and direct play to attain children specific outcomes.

Snow (2006) defines a positive relationship between language and literacy rich-play environments and children's reading-writing skills happen when adult teachers facilitate appropriate literacy materials for children in contextual meanings. In other words, it can be seen as a cultural and natural product growing up in a literacy environment without explicit teaching phonics easy to acquire when motivation and opportunities for practice are available.

2.3. Framework of the Present Study

This study focuses on the teachers' beliefs and practices of teaching alphabet strategies to assist pre-schoolers' emergent literacy in acquiring alphabet knowledge. This study, therefore, aims to discover the ways preschool teachers teaching alphabet knowledge towards their students as well as to discover several strategies conducted by the teachers. The teachers' beliefs in those strategies are required as well so as there can be found what the most appropriate strategies applied based on the teachers' perception whether it is aligned to the research-based best practices. Besides, further theoretical will be provided in this session to explain that there are benefits and correlations between early years students' literation and strategies provided by the teachers in a setting classroom despite students' social interaction and experiences. This study furthermore considers the characteristic of young children, emphasizes that young children needed to be exposed in emergent literacy acquisition through natural settings and lacks formal teaching structure rather than to teach them through phonics instruction especially in acquiring

alphabet knowledge. Alphabet knowledge is already known as one of the essential and important components of emergent literacy (Bonnie Armbruster, 2006).

Later emergent literacy research conveys that literacy often focuses on oral language development and interaction (Kucer, (2009); Larson, & Marsh, (2007); and Catherine E. Snow, (2008)). Literacy is a tool that people can use to communicate with each other. As widely definition of literacy provided, it is difficult to explain it in one definition, so it is wise to pull information from several authors to define acquiring literacy processes and phonics teaching strategies which is the reason I draw on Catherine E. Snow, (2008) and Morrow, L., & Tracey, (1997) .

Such sociocultural perspectives draw on Kucer (2009), "A literate person needs to be able to effectively, efficiently, and simultaneously control the linguistic, cognitive, sociocultural, and developmental dimensions" (Kucer 2009: 5). These four literacy dimensions are correlated in each other within all the people's literacy experiences while they are participating in a literate society. Literacy skills that children have are always being developed whenever they are in a new environment or society situation that they have not been in before.

An expert has been discussing the way children are exposed to literacy and how children discover a new form of language that they eventually gain from social interactions and strategies they have used. Catherine E. Snow, (2006: 4) declares that "Children's development of literacy grows out of their experiences, and the views and attitudes towards literacy that they encounter as they interact with social groups. It is explicitly defined that children are immersed in different environments

and social situations that encourage learning and understanding new language around them to be able to communicate their desires and needs effectively. These behaviors and ways of children communicating are often learned from two different social or environmental situations that children are usually being encountered. These two different environments are in the home and school situations. As children are active participants, they are actively investigating the ways that they can interact with others. Such in preschool situations that children are encountered; in this setting, they begin to understand how language works, what language is appropriate and how to respond to others say. In this manner, sociocultural theory derives from Kucer (2009) as well as Snow (2006) help us to understand the ways children are exposed to literacy and the how children learn, interact and communicate is through social interactions in a different social situation from one another, parents, friend, obviously teachers.

Based on the reasons above it can be concluded that some language is learned while some are acquired. For children to have alphabet knowledge they should have the letters, their names, and sounds around them as well as to be taught directly. "Acquisition involves acquiring information subconsciously by being exposed to models and by participating in the process of trial and error and learning involves gaining information consciously through the direct teaching from another individual" (Snow, 2006: 5). Snow (2006) underlines that acquisition through social interactions and learning is important and children need to be exposed both. He explains the need for children and the balanced of them to be exposed in literacy through socialization and learning can be different at different stages and in
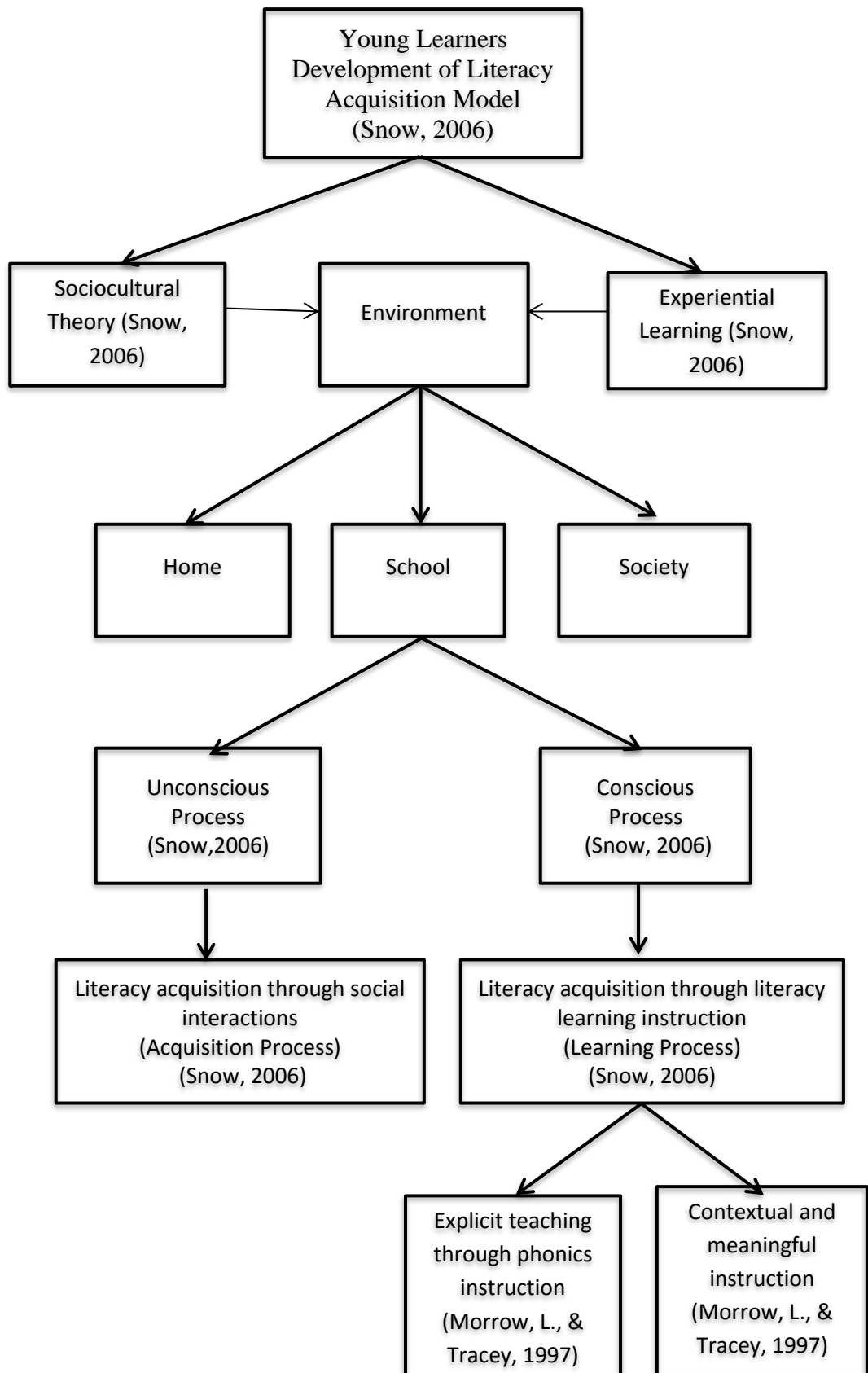
different cases. When children are toddlers, they need to be exposed more to different environments. While, as children get older, learning of language through teaching should be emphasized and increased so that they can improve the literacy skills they have been acquired. (Reeb, 2011: 8) added that "There are many different environments as well as life experiences that will help students learn their letters and sounds without directly being taught. When acquisition does not give the student the level of achievement necessary for the success of letter and sound mastery, direct teaching using strategies then becomes necessary".

Consider to different beliefs and views toward children' acquiring literacy process, furthermore, Snow (2006) in their report defines two dimensions contrasting views of early literacy. One describes that learning the language is learning consciously in which one is a model to guides, teach, explains and analyses the content through teaching. The learning of language can be done through explicit teaching of skills such as phonics instruction. Other dimension conveys that acquisition is the subconscious process that is exposed through natural settings and lacks a formal teaching structure. This is a description that realizes that children acquire literacy skills through observing natural environments and more on experimental activities and discussion.

Acquisition and learning are both needed for one who wants to become proficient later in their literacy continue to grow and successful members of society. Therefore, it is essentials for children in the emergent literacy stage to be given special attention and opportunities to both acquire and learn these important skills. Also, it is imperatives for preschool teachers who act like an adult and model in a pre-school setting to provide their early years' students several appropriate

strategies based on students' needs and interests. It is also important for teachers to find out what the students have acquired through life experiences and learning strategies that they have been provided to prepare them to get into the next level and their later success in literacy continues to grow. This research will question what teachers can do to support the acquisition and learning of early year's students in the emergent literacy stage especially in the skills and knowledge of alphabet principles to prepare them in their later literacy activities.

The framework of the study is represented in the scheme below:

Young Learners
Development of Literacy
Acquisition Model
(Snow, 2006)

Sociocultural
Theory (Snow,
2006)

Environment

Experiential
Learning (Snow,
2006)

Home

School

Society

Unconscious
Process
(Snow,2006)

Conscious
Process
(Snow, 2006)

Literacy acquisition through social
interactions
(Acquisition Process)
(Snow, 2006)

Literacy acquisition through literacy
learning instruction
(Learning Process)
(Snow, 2006)

Explicit teaching
through phonics
instruction
(Morrow, L., &
Tracey, 1997)

Contextual and
meaningful
instruction
(Morrow, L., &
Tracey, 1997)

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter shows the conclusions and some suggestions for this final project. The conclusions show the result of the final project, which has been discussed in the previous section. Moreover, the suggestions addressed for the teachers and the English Education College, also for other researchers.

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the early years teachers' teaching phonics strategies and their reported beliefs to assist prior to school' emergent literacy in acquiring English alphabet knowledge as a foreign language, there are several conclusions that can be drawn. The first objective conducted was investigating the teaching phonics strategies used by the early years teachers at one of innovative bilingual preschool in Semarang to teach alphabet knowledge and skills to their young learners students. According to the above finding, it denotes that early years teachers' strategies in teaching alphabetic knowledge implementing curriculum-generated code play model defined by Johnson. This model of teaching phonics follows theorists in Morrow and Tracey that support early literacy teaching through systematic-explicit teaching phonics that is embedded in authentic, contextual and meaningful experiences for children over-focused on commercial phonics programs as a strategy to teach phonics to the young learners' students. Through the research findings that have been discussed before, it is concluded that early years teachers at this center are highly preference on Commercial Phonics Program as the main

learning resources in teaching phonics to their prior-to school students, then playing activities follows. Although teachers were following a more structured approach to teach phonics, including a commercial phonics program, they adapt the program when they considered it appropriate and relevant for children to do so.

Beliefs on the appropriate early literacy teaching also lead to the thematic analysis pattern. Teachers at this center believed that playing was a central tendency of children's development and it could not be separated in the teaching curriculum and every child learning process. Broadly speaking, they argued that phonics teaching needs to be responsive to individual children. However, there was no strong evidence reported by early years teachers at this center, claimed that systematically explicit teaching phonics may support further children's literacy development and give opportunities for their students' literacy to continue to grow. Further analysis of the result of this study also found that early literacy teachers at this center were not able to articulate what phonics, phonemics, and phonological awareness is and how it will support children's later literacy development.

5.2 Suggestions

Based on the conclusion above, the researcher would like to offer some suggestions related to the teaching phonics strategies and students' early literacy development.

For English teachers. They should be mastered basic knowledge of teaching English considered to several aspects include reading and writing. Thus, phonics knowledge and skills are crucial things to be mastered and promoted early to the students. Thus, English Teachers need to understand the importance of alphabet

knowledge, phonemic and phonological awareness, and be able to adjust their literacy program to support individual children's learning.

For the English University of Education College, giving the large body evidence of supporting children's emergent literacy development, there, knowledge about phonics and how to be practised it in literacy teaching should be promoted early to the college students and start to begin to prioritise basic literacy skills such as cracking alphabetic code and letter-sounds knowledge.

For other researchers, it is important to note the small number of respondents participated in this study. It is acknowledged that the use of standardized open-ended interview may have limited to the flexibility of responses of the participants. Thus, the interviewees may employ across a mix of different types of bilingual prior-to school services in Semarang include different staffs and qualifications which could affect what teachers' value in English early literacy education.

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