Spelling difficulties in English first additional language learners: A study of grade 3 isiZulu home language learners in a primary school in Johannesburg.

SPELLING DIFFICULTIES IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS: A STUDY OF GRADE 3 ISIZULU HOME LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL IN JOHANNESBURG

by

EMLY ZODWA MKHABELA

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Supervisor: Dr H C Kruger-Roux

Co-Supervisors: Prof L van Huyssteen

Dr G WCollins

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E. Z. Mkhabela

Sign

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my children Nomcebo,Lutrick,Nkululeko,Wenziwe,Thando and my mom Thwathwa.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to compare the standard of spelling among Grade 3 English First Additional Language learners who speak isiZulu as theirhome language to the requirements of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (DBE, 2011). The study draws on literature for contextualisation and to determine the CAPS requirements, and uses error analysis of continuous writing samples from learners to determine the variety and frequency of errors made. The list of errors is then studied for evidence of interference from the first language. In the final instance, the study presents the results of semi-structured interviews with Grade 3 EFAL- teachers on what they perceive as their role in spelling instruction, the challenges they encounter and strategies they use for overcoming these challenges.

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CHAPTER 1: PROBLEM STATEMENT AND INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

After the event of democracy in South Africa in 1994, there was a political need to break with the education system that was implemented under Apartheid, and to introduce a new system. In an effort to make a clean break, the government turned to the Australian educational model of Outcomes Based Education (OBE). OBE was engineered by the academic, William Spady, and promised to deliver critically thinking learners (Lombard & Grosser, 2008 561) and a move away from "the more traditional, academic and competitive model of curriculum" (Donnelly, 2007 183).

Unfortunately, just as South Africa was slowly moving in the direction of OBE, Australia started questioning the success of this model (Donnelly, 2007). Although OBE was not introduced uniformly in Australia, some states introduced it as early as the mid-1990s (South Africa was gradually phasing it in in the form of Curriculum 2005 from 1998 to 2005). Parents in Australia were concerned when a study by Westwood in 1994 indicated that spelling standards had dropped dramatically since 1978 (Westwood, 1994, 2008), at a time when the country was moving towards an educational model that placed "greater emphasis on dispositions and attitudes" than it did on subject knowledge as critical part of the curriculum (Westwood, 2008 184).

In spite of the debate that was raging in Australia, and which eventually led to a more structured form of OBE with clearly defined subject content in the country, the South African Department of Education continued with OBE, issuing a new education policy, the Revised National Curriculum Statement, in 2005[1]. When the results of this policy delivered totally unsatisfactory outcomes in the Annual National Assessments of 2010 and 2011, it was replaced by the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) which is being phased in since 2011[2].

[1] Ironically, Spader said about OBE "that it was never implemented [properly] in South Africa. According to [him] what passes for OBE here has no relation to the true principles of OBE"(Taylor, 2008).

[2] Prince and Yeld (2012) state that "the newly introduced annual national assessments for grades one to six — and from this year also grade nine — are showing the pervasive and extensive problems facing our schools. For example, the basic education department's report on last year's assessments indicates that less than a third of all grades six learners perform at a level that indicates even partial achievement of curriculum competencies." In view of the fact that spelling (as a part of orthography) forms part of the literacy component of the ANAs, there is no reason to suspect that spelling has been masteredother than components of the literacy curriculum.

change in policy, CAPS switched to phonics for the teaching of reading and writing (including spelling) in In a dramatic the Foundation Phase. Gone are the hazy guidelines of Curriculum 2005 and the RNCS regarding spelling, where learners were expected to learn how to read and spell without systematic, formal

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instruction. CAPS very clearly outlines which phonics should be covered precisely in what week in both the Home and First Additional Language. In fact, the teaching of phonics in the First Additional Language (FAL) is

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supposed to link up with the teaching of phonics in the Home Language (HL) (Department of Basic Education, 2011). CAPS breezily states that "[i]f they learn phonics in their Home Language, they do not need to learn sound-spelling relationships all over again in English. They only need to apply their knowledge in English and learn those sound-spelling relationships that are different in English" (Department of Basic Education, 2011: 8). The "only" seems to indicate that the Department may be formulating policy from a very simplistic view, not taking into account the complexities of bilingual language acquisition, particularly in children (Blumenfeld & Marian, 2010; Cummins & Swain, 1986; Dijkstra & Van Heuven, 2002; FrançLois Grosjean, 1992; Fran Grosjean, Ccedil, & Ois, 1998; Kaushanskayà, 2011; Manchón, 2012; S. Marian, 2009; V. Marian & Fausey; V. Marian & Spivey, 2003a, 2003b; V. Marian, Spivey, & Hirsch, 2003; Paulston, 1974; Pinter, 2011).

The researcher, as a primary school language teacher, has been implementing changing educational policy for the past twenty years. As such, she has experience of a wide variety of approaches to the teaching of language, HL as well as EFAL. She has a particularly keen interest in spelling as a part of orthography and writing and is keen to establish to what extent a Grade 3 class at her primary school will fare in an exercise that is designed to measure their competency against OBE outcomes.

1.2 Problem statement

The main research problem of this study is to determine how the standard of spelling of a Grade 3 EFAL class compares to the requirements of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS).

In order to answer the above question, the following sub questions will need to be addressed:

1.2.1 What are the CAPS requirements in terms of spelling for Grade 3 EFAL learners?

1.2.2 What does an error analysis of the writing samples of Grade 3 EFAL learners reveal about the types of spelling mistakes they make?

1.2.3 What signs are there of interference in the spelling from learners' Home Language (isiZulu)?

1.2.4 To what extent does the teacher feel she is able to achieve CAPS outcomes, e.g. the linking of EFAL phonics to HL phonics?

1.3 Aim and objectives

The aim of the study is to determine to what extent the standard of spelling of a Grade 3 EFAL class measures up to CAPS requirements.

Objectives of the study include:

1.3.1 Determining what the CAPS requirements in terms of spelling for Grade 3 EFAL learners are;

1.3.2 Conducting an error analysis of the writing samples of Grade 3 EFAL learners to determine the types of spelling mistakes they make;

1.3.3 Looking for evidence of interference in EFAL spelling by learners' Home Language (isiZulu); and

1.3.4 Interviewing the EFAL teacher to determine the extent to which she feels she is able to achieve CAPS outcomes, e.g. the linking of EFAL phonics to HL phonics.

1.4 Summary of spelling in literature

Spelling can be defined as

> 1: the forming of words from letters according to accepted usage **:** orthography.
>
> 2: *a* **:** a sequence of letters composing a word; *b* **:** the way in which a word is spelled(Merriam-Webster.com, 2013).

Gentry (2004: 941) describes spelling as "a form of language […] a symbolic combination of components that form a word". Lingua Links (1995: 13) explains spelling as "the building of words from phonetic sounds according to the correct usage of literacy rules". The researcher associates herself with the definition offered by Lingua Links because of the emphasis this source places on the knowledge understanding and combination of sound letters that form a word.

As far as the place of spelling in the teaching of literacy is concerned, Fawcett (2006: 1) citing studies by Apel, Masterson, and Niessen (2004) and Goswami (1992), states that "[i]n general, spelling has been taught through rote teaching and memorization of a weekly spelling list, with little stress on the importance of teaching patterns". However, she adds that more recent studies, e.g.that ofBear, Invernizzi, Templeton, and Johnston (2004) are emphasising the importance of "spelling as the study of word patterns" (Fawcett, 2006 1).

Spelling is part of what is often referred to as an "encoding" strategy, which, along with "handwriting and design features to create texts for specific purposes"(Department of Education and Training, 2009 9). In a swing back from a more relaxed and less structured approach to spelling in the past, there is a renewed focus on accurate spelling as this (accurate spelling), "punctuation, sentence structure and grammar are essential to making meaning through writing" (Department of Education and Training, 2009 9)Fawcett (2006: 2) groups theories in the so-called broad approach, e.g. Gentry (1982), Gentry (2004) and Ehri (1992) and the narrow approach (Apel, 2004; Apel & Masterson, 2001; Apel et al., 2004; Reece & Treiman, 2001). The broad approach is also referred to in literature as the phonological approach (stage theory), as opposed to the constructivist (cf. Ferreiro, 1990; Ferreiro & Pontecorvo, 1999; Ferreiro, Pontecorvo, & Zucchermaglio, 1996; Tolchinsky & Teberosky, 1998) and statistical learning approaches (Aslin, Saffran, & Newport, 1999; Saffran,

Aslin, & Newport, 1996; Seidenberg, 1997; Zacks & Hasher, 2002). Pollo, Treiman, and Kessler (2008: 3) state that

> the phonological perspective holds that learner's biggest challenge when learning to spell in alphabetic writing systems is understanding the idea that letters represent phonemes (e.g., Liberman, Shankweiler, Fischer & Carter, 1974). Children also need to possess alphabetic knowledge, or knowledge of specific sound-to letter correspondences, but gaining the ability to analyse spoken language into strings of phonemes is a bigger hurdle, in this perspective, than learning specific links between phonemes and letters.

According to Fawcett (2006: 6) the real difference between the broad and the narrow approach is that the latter holds that

> aspects of phonologic, orthographic, and morphologic knowledge, in addition to mental grapheme representations (Apel, 2004), simultaneously interact during all levels of spelling development. Relative to this idea, Reece and Treiman (2001) presented evidence that first grade learners were using phonologic and orthographic knowledge to spell. Thus, Reece and Treiman (2001) argued against stage theory in that multiple aspects of linguistic knowledge interacted simultaneously within and across learners to yield increasingly conventional spellings. Phonologic aspects, therefore, do not act independently of the other components.

Fawcett (2006: 8-11) distinguishes between the following categories of errors in the spelling English L1 speakers in Grades 2, 3 and 4:

> PSE - phonological silent /e/
>
> PSON - phonological - sonorant cluster
>
> OLN - orthographic - letter name
>
> ODI - orthographic – digraph
>
> MINF - morphological – inflection
>
> MHOM - morphological – homonym
>
> MCON - morphological – contraction.

Mpiti (2012) conducted a study on Grade 3 English First Additional Language (EFAL) learners who speak isiXhosa as a first language, and also identified digraphs as one of the major problems. Other problems included learners basing their spelling on their (incorrect) pronunciation, learners writing words as they hear them, a discrepancy between learners' spoken and written language, and learners seemingly struggling to understand the rules of English spelling. Although this was only a small study, it is relevant

to the current study because the subjects are of a similar age and the home languages (isiXhosa and isiZulu) are both Nguni-languages.

1.5 Summary of research design

The study population is Grade 3 EFAL learners ata primary school in Midrand. The school has English as LOLT, but also offers isiZulu, isiXhosa, Xitsonga, Sepedi and Tshivenda. The Electronic Management and Information System (EMIS) of the school indicates feeder areas such as Allandale, Kaalfontein, Ivory Park, Ebony Park, a number ofMidrand suburbs, and surrounding informal settlements. The institution has 44 classrooms, with 2 053 learners. The staff consists of two deputy principals, 56 educators and 17 non-teaching staff. This specific institution was chosen becauseit offers English as second language. The investigator is a teacher at the above mentioned institution and therefore has easy access to collect data for the study.

The study is designed as a case study and makes use of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Since it is a case study, the subjects were identified through purposeful selection, as opposed to sampling(Babbie & Mouton, 2001 287). The reason for the selection of a case study design, is that the overall aim of the study is to provide a description of the extent to which the subjects meet CAPS requirements, based on error analysis of their sample of continuous writing, as well as semi-structured interviews with their EFAL teacher to obtain her views on the issue. Case studies are thus aimed at investigating “a contemporary phenomenon in depth and with its real-life context”, relying on multiple sources for triangulation (Yin, 2009 28).

Although Fawcett (2006) is of the opinion that spelling tests do not provide an accurate measure of the spelling capacity of learners because they often rely on short-term memory, instead of indicating ability, the Department of Basic Education (2011: 16) allows for some spelling tests and dictations, while stating that “correct spelling needs to be evident in children's written work and not only in spelling tests and dictations”.

The results of the spelling test was analysedto determine error categories (phonological, orthographic, or morphological) and then compared to CAPS requirements. According toFawcett (2006: 8-11) phonological spelling errors include the omission of the silent /e/ at the end of a word, orthographic spelling errors include errors related to the use of digraphs, as well as consonant doubling and marking long vowel patterns through the use of silent /e/(Fawcett, 2006 10). Morphological errors relate to inflectional morphological skills, e.g. past tense verbs or past participles, some plural forms, etc.

The Department of Basic Education (2011: 87-89)hasa list of the 300 most used words based on the work of Masterson, Stuart, Dixon, and Lovejoy (2009). However, as the aforementioned study was done in the UK, it is not necessarily a reliable reflection of what the expectancy in South Africa should be. However, vocabulary

used by subjects will be cross-referenced with this list, as it presents the official expectations for Grade 3 EFAL learners.

A semi-structured interview will be conducted with the EFAL teacher to determine the extent to which she feels that CAPS requirements have been achieved, what she perceivesas some of the major obstacles, and how she deals with these in order to achieve the outcomes. The advantage of the semi-structured interview is that it offers an in-depth insider perspective of the phenomenon under investigation. One of the basic principles of this type of interview is to use open-ended questions to elicit as much information from the respondent as possible. The interview will be transcribed and then subjected to contextual analysis.

Findings from the content and contextualised analyses will be compared (triangulated), and eventually synthesised into a coherent whole.

1.6 Ethical considerations

This study will be conducted among a vulnerable population, i.e. young children. Permission to conduct the study will have to be sought from DRIC, FREC and REC within the university. Permission will also need to be obtained from the Department of Basic Education and the principal to conduct such a study in the school. Of utmost importance is to obtain consent from parents, which will take the form of a cover letting explaining the study and an informed consent form which they need to sign. The EFAL teacher will also need to sign an informed consent to indicate her willingness to participate in the study. Both the teacher and parents should be made aware of the fact that participation is voluntary, and that subjects may withdraw at any time without being prejudiced in any way. All participants will be assured of anonymity and confidentiality, as explained in the informed consent. Although there is a potential conflict of interest with the researcher being a teacher at the same school, all parties involved will be reassured that their participation in the study will in no way affect their continued employment or education at the school.

1.7 Significance of the study

This study will add to the body of literature on spelling in South African schools. It is aimed at providing a thorough description of spelling errors in the particular class, and has the capacity to inform teaching practice at the particular school and even in the cluster. Lastly, it could be used as a springboard for future studies on larger samples, even for comparative studies between languages.

1.8 Scope and limitations of the study

This study is aimed at providing a description of spelling within a particular context. The findings can not be extrapolated to other contexts without further study. However, the present study may serve as a springboard for future studies, as indicated in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter adresses the first research questions, namely what the Curricullum and Assessment Policy (CAPS) requirements are for Grade 3 English First Additional Language (EFAL). In addition, this chapter investigates literature relevant to the study and focuses on issues such as the nature and the importance of spelling, including spelling errors, skills related to spelling, developmental stages of spelling, causes of misspelling, the advantages and disadvantages of spelling, and perspectives and techniques used to teach spelling. In the last place, in the absence of major spelling studies for this age and language group in South Africa, the chapter will provide a summary of other studies on spelling that have been done globally.

2.2 Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)2012 standards for Grade 3 EFAL

According to the Department of Education policy (2012) the table below that comprises assessment standards that need to be followed by foundation phase learners in South Africa.

GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3
Copies familiar words and short sentences.	Uses phonic knowledge to begin to spell words.	Spells common words correctly and attempts to spell familiar words using phonics knowledge.
	Spells common words correctly from memory.	Uses punctuation e.g. commas, question marks, exclamation marks and full stop.
	Uses punctuation already taught.	Recognises three- letter consonant blends at the beginning and at the end of words.
	Write sentences from dictation.	

NEEDU (2012:37) states that grade one to three learners should be taught reading and writing spelling concurrently, and these two consist of five main aspects of teaching reading such as phonemic awareness, sight words, phonics, comprehension vocabulary and fluency. The Department of Education states that

learners from foundation phase should have plenty of time dealing with word recognition such as phonics and sight words (DOE, 2008:13). Furthermore it encourages learners to sound the first letter of the word properly in order to build new words with that sound in their minds (DOE, 2008:14).

During their last stage of grade one learners should know sounds and pronounce them loud, copy familiar words and master the alphabets in home language so that they link with those of the English First Additional language. Grade two learners will be expected to spell and read familiar words. Therefore grade three learners will be required to master spelling, recognise approximately 200 sight words and master proper punctuation in sentences at the end of the year (DOE, 2008:10).

2.3 Theory of spelling

It is commonly understood that spelling is related to reading. To prove the connection betweenthe two, Apel (2004:68) points out that children who read, learn how to spell words and also to read spelled words. This means that reading and spelling cannot be separated from each other. The two important aspects - reading and spellingare highly correlated. They use the same linguistic resources and have similar development patterns.

Department of Education (2001:25) states that to identify a good reader from a non-reader one needs to test the following skills: reading, writing, spelling and pronunciation. Teaching spelling at school increases knowledge and understanding and improves reading skill(Apel et al., 2004:68).

NEEDU (2012:25) states that spelling extends over the full range of writing, from words to sentences, lengthy paragraphs and books. Furthermore, for the development of higher cognitive functions such as analysis and evaluation, spelling needs to be considered as criticallyimportant. It is imperative to take note that spelling also plays a major role in developing ofvocabulary and the structuring of grammar.

Gentry (2004:57) points out that for learners to master spelling in writing, teachers need to monitor their writing to ensure that spelling rules are transferred properly. Gunning (2013:92) emphasises the instructions that foster skills in spelling. Phonics instruction must be considered as the biggest part of language acquisition. Van Schalkwyk (1992:41) states that it is unfortunate that there are no shortcuts in learning spelling the correct steps always have to be followed: using the dictionary, memorising sounds, pronouncing words properly, spelling words and editing one's spelling carefully.

Spelling has a systematic relationship with the spoken word and is characterised by simple usage of phonemes and letters (Culpeper, 1997:20). Spelling is based on random personal choice and is not easily predicted. According to Fawcett (2006:20) narrative writing is generally considered easier for children to generate because the focus is placed on relationships between people and events. However, spelling can best be improved by following the relationship between sounds and letters.

2.3.1 Definitions of spelling

Spelling has been defined in many ways, both in general and in specialist publications. General definitions include “the process of writing words correctly using the set of letters” (Brown, 1936:2978), “the way in which a word is spelled” (Merriam-Webster.com:1213) and “the manner in which words are spelled” (Macmillan,1996:937), “a tool used in language expression and is usually learned at school” (Department of Education, 2001:25), “spelling is simply learning the correct usage of letters and sequencing to form words” (Bear and Templeton, 1998:239), and Collins (2001:1810) cited by Dignen (2003:214) defines spelling as the arrangement of letters to form a word. Therefore spelling is the act in which words are formed according to specific letters (Hornby, 2006:1418).

Specialist definitions, on the other hand, tend to focus on the coding function of spelling. Hodges (1984) describes spelling as a process of converting oral language to visual form by placing graphic symbols on some writing surface. Spelling is a technique that makes people rectify their mistakes and also makes their lives easier.Lingualinks (1995:13) explains spelling as the building of words from phonetic sounds according to the correct usage of literacy rules.Gentry(2004)states that spelling seems to be an obstacle in the lives of both learners and teachers. Hanna et al. (as quoted by Odisho, 1994) define spelling as the process of converting data or rendering spoken language into written symbols.Culpeper (1997:20) describes spelling as the instrument used to monitor education and even the intelligence of the individual. Richard (2001:14) defines spelling as the knowledge of transcription of how the combination of sounds is done to form words. Tainturier and Rapp (2002:263) define spelling as an area of study where most available evidence is stored in the brain of damaged individuals.Gentry (2004:941) defines spelling as a “form of language ... a symbolic combination of components that form a word”. Nel et al. (2013:106) define spelling as the old method of arranging letters to form a word.

Mufflin (1992:436-442) mentions the following important aspects of spelling:

- Plurals – learning the addition of the last sound.
- Prefixes – learning to add one or more letter or syllable at the beginning of a word.
- Suffix – adding designed suffix at the end of the word.
- Words often confused – learning to follow correct spelling of similar sounding words.
- Sound word – combination of words such as boy and cat.
- Pronunciation – learning to pronounce words properly without omission.
- Syllabication – learning to divide words and spelling.

Dedman (2000:154) quoted by Landsberg et al. (2013:158-9) lists the following components of spelling which assist in spelling words properly:

- Sound – letter relations, e.g. ea in read
- Variation in the sound – letter relation.
- Vowel combination - e.g. oo in book.
- Consonants combination –e.g. sh in sheep.
- Consonants – vowels combination e.g. c in colt.
- Syllabication of words e.g. drink to d – r – i – nk.
- Spelling rules.
- Variation in spelling rules.
- Prefixes and suffixes, e.g. re- in remove, and -ing in reading.
- Punctuation e.g. “Peter, where do you go on Tuesday?”

2.3.2 Perspectives on spelling development

There are two main classifications of spelling stages based on the stages of competency, indicating respectively four and five distinct phases. These stages in various ways attempt to link spelling skills to chronological age and scholastic progression.

2.3.2.1 Traditional classification of spelling stages:

Researchers in this tradition include Read (1971), Henderson (1981), Gentry (1992), Templeton (1991), Ehri (1992) and McQuiter Scott (2007). These researchers seem to have a common understanding of spelling stages, and they present the more traditional view with the emergent, letter name, within-word pattern, syllable juncture and derivational phases respectively:

2.3.2.1.1 Emergent spelling stage

According to Gentry (1988:51) writing at this stage is performed naturally. Learners seem not to understand the relationship between letters and sounds. They randomly write marks and letters or words they have copied somewhere, e.g. around the house. You can hardly read their work. In their writings, one letter represents a word or a specific sound without consideration for morphological rules. They spell coat as cot. However, towards the end of the stage, the learners are able to distinguish drawings from writings, they can write starting from left to right, and they are able to match sounds to letters.

2.3.1.1.2 Letter name spelling stage

In this stage, learners are generally between the ages of five and nine and anywhere between their first and third year of schooling. Learners expand their knowledge of the alphabetic principles and their expression of pronunciation of sounds in spelling. Their writings involve both consonants and vowels to make meaning. At this stage learners are beginning to read and write. They typically also master sight vocabulary of words with one syllable, and involve a number of consonant blends in their spelling e.g. glue or bread. Wyse and Jones (2001: 255) state that at this stage learners develop to follow the principles of writing.

2.3.2.1.3 Within-word pattern stage

Ages of learners in this stage are ranging from 6-12 years. Learners at this stage are from the first grade to the middle grade.They have understanding of spelling in single syllableand increases the knowledge from one sound seeking for double sounds in spelling.NEEDU(2012:38) states that learners have the ability to identify words read and spell corretly. They are practising to write spelling with long vowels pattern and also able to write paragraph,stories and play. NEEDU(2012:77) states that learners at this stage develop their higher cognitive capacity every day.

2.3.2.1.4 Syllable-juncture stage

In this stage, learners' ages vary typically from eight to eighteen, and they are found in any grade fromthe third upwards. Learners are writing words with proper letters and good spelling, using the knowledge they gained in the foundation phase to build words properly. It is often possible for learners at this stage to spell a good number of single-syllable words properly. Learners have some knowledge of breaking down syllable patterns and are also able to read independently. It is important to note that these learners develop knowledge of difficult words by themselves without any interpretation from someone else (Robert and Owens, 2001:370).

2.3.2.1.5 Derivational constancy stage

Learners in this stagecan be any agefrom ten years and older. The spelling of this group is advanced, and they correctly form words on the basis of another. The development of their spelling is progressive and will last for a long time (Robert and Owens, 2001: 383) as they are able to function independently as spellers.

2.3.2.2 Spelling stages according to Bear and Templeton (1998:224-228)

2.3.2.2.1 Prephonemic spelling

This is the first manifestation of literacy and it begins in very young learners around the age of sixteen months when learners start writing randomly. Wyse and Jones (2001:150) point out that learners in this stage are trying to combine actual letters and symbols representing numbers that are difficult to read, and only the writer can explain what they intended. Morrow (2012:259) states that learners communicate

effectively through drawings, while simultaneously developing their literacy knowledge. At this stage learners concentrate only on what they think, say and write.

Joubert et al. (2008:137) indicate three characteristics of learners in this phase, namely relating stories to their peer group, and also retelling stories about the drawings they have drawn; creating their own rhymes; and the absence of associating letters with sounds.

Harrison (2004:40) argues that although learners need not acquire writing as skill *per se*, they are still developing their literacy. Towards the end of this stage children try to make links to sounds by writing segments of words and rereading their writings differently every time. Signs of development at this stage are that learners are able to listen to stories, look at pictures, play with writing aids, scribble, draw and also start linear writing (Bear and Templeton, 1998:225). Furthermore, learners in this stage know that writing starts at the top left and moves from left to right.

2.3.2.2.2 Semi-phonemic developmental stage

The age of learners in this stage varies from four to seven, and they are early beginners. Learners in this stage develop sound symbols, and realise that a link exists between letters and sounds. Jones and Wyse (2001:150) state that they may be starting to match pictures and words, and the first letter of a word can serve as a word. Important signs of development achieved by learners at this stage are the development of sound symbols, using single letters to represent a full word, and the omission of vowels (Jones and Wyse2001:150).

Morrow (2012:258) points out that researchers notice that learners at this stage come to school with knowledge of writing but not knowing how to write or to practise it. Wyse and Jones (2013:141-142) state that at this stage learners begin to have confidence in their knowledge of sounds and combinations of letters.

One of the characteristics of the semi-phonemic stage is invented spelling. Learners have gathered enough evidence to possess some knowledge of the alphabet. Wyse and Jones(2013:141)states that the basic principles that cover invented spelling are focussing on spelling with consonants; the development of reading skills as well as printing and the division of words into syllables; and the tendency to write in spite of the fact that their writing is difficult to read since the sounds are not properly used.

However, with invented spelling young learners often misspell words, because they spell them as they sound (Deham and Lobeck, 2013:110).

2.3.2.2.3 Phonetic spelling stage

During this stage learners tend to represent all major sounds with letters, and there is progression in their writing. Word segmentation and improving spatial positioning are evident. According to Mpiti (2012:28)

spelling at this stage is not standard, but writing is meaningful and can be read and understood by others. Nasal sounds, e.g. 'm' and 'n' are often omitted, words ending with suffix -ed are spelled in three different ways e.g. -ed, - d and -t.

2.3.2.2.4 Transition spelling stage

Learners at this stage become more competent by comparing spelling from the unknown words to words that they know. There is a transition of self-reliance on sounds for representing spelling, to using visual and morphological information. Vowels and consonants are used instead of the letter name strategy, e.g. /el/ instead of / l/ in Elephant (elephant). Learners at this stage may operate in a different way: correct letters might be used but in an incorrect order, e.g. becuase for because and plian for plain.

2.3.3 Important skills in spelling

There are essential basic skills that need to be followed when writing spelling; especially for the isiZulu background learner. In this part, phonemic awareness and its essential elements are defined and discussed in detail.

2.3.3.1 Phonemic awareness

Phonemic awareness has to deal with the whole word, since this is the easiest task for learners to deal with (Marrow 2012:158). It is important for learners first to know phonemics before attempting the phonemes. Harrison (2000:41) supported the view by Wyse and Jones (2001:81) that phonemes are small parts of sounds which form a word. Phonemic awareness has to deal with the rules that assist learners in developing their spelling by applying the segmentation rules (Davenport and Hannas, 2010: 38).

Gramley and Patzed (2004:67) support the view by emphasising that it is importantto divide every linguistic utterance into sound segments, and it suits all levels of learning, especially the foundation phase. Denhem and Lobeck (2013:133) state that phonemic awareness is the most important component of reading that is related to sounds. Cruttenden (2008) states that phonemic awareness is the traditional approach that involves phonemes and also reveals lengthy, systematic structure of speech and constructive segments.

He further goes on to say that the phonological system is also related to the writing skill of spelling.

Heineman (2004:50) states that phonological awareness is guided by the phonological rules of the system. Crystals (1978:21) points out that in order for learners to become good spellers, they need to have both phonological awareness as well as good visual awareness. Furthermore, spelling is the process whereby you need to think carefully and also need awareness of linguistic structure and good visual memory.

Joshi and Aaron (2005:38) support this view by emphasising that spelling skill and its development can increase the vocabulary, and this can improve learners' reading skill. Spencer (1996:55) supports the view of Alexander (2012:100) that it is very difficult for English language teachers to teach phonetics without being

trained. They further state that these studies are all about practicals: for teachers to be effective at schools, training is needed with comprehensive study material.

Phonological awareness is the general usage of knowledge of grapheme-phoneme as well as reading (Hulme and Snowling, 2000:752). It also involves the classification of patterns through a system of phonetics. Most researchers are of the opinion that phonological awareness and phonetics are important (Kenstowics, 1994:136). Robert and Owens (2001:339) refer to phonological awareness as awareness of the different parts of sound that constitute a word.

Snowling et al. (1994) quoted by Robert and Owens (2001:339) states that phonological awareness is the gradual movement from the awareness of larger part division to smaller part division. In addition, evidence from various studies shows that phonological awareness training creates better ideas help in teaching the combination of spelling and reading ability. However, poor readers have been found to perform poorly compared to normal readers on phonological awareness tasks (Geudens et al., 2000:25).2.3.3.2 Visual imagery

It is imperative for learners to consider visual imagery when writing their spelling. Visual imagery assists learners in spelling unfamiliar words correctly for different purposes (Department of Education, 1998:page). It focuses on the retrieval of information from the mind on what words look like and also includes the following:

- Imagine what words look like, particularly those they have seen or learnt on the board.
- Recognise what letters look like and how to write them.
- Identify a rhyming pattern that has two different spellings.

2.4 Spelling errors

Studies on spelling typically make use of error analysis as methodology. Various studies across the globe have identified different types of spelling errors made by learners in English, both as first and as second (additional) language. Only one study by Mpiti focuses on the spelling errors made by isiXhosa learners in grade three.

From the onset, one needs to distinguish between mistakes and errors (Brown, 2007:258). An error is easily recognised and reflects the level of competence of the learner while a mistake can be self-corrected. Hence one letter misspelled in a word can distort the whole meaning of the word (Solati et al. 2007:1). These errors are sometimes considered as general errors and specific errors.

2.4.1 Classification of spelling errors

Waller (1998:2) classified spelling errors made by beginners or skilled spellers who rely most on phonology as follows:

- Pattern errors;
- Phonetically accurate, i.e. the pattern error can be pronounced similar to designed word using grapheme correspondence rules, e.g. van for fan.
- Non-phonetic errors occur when something goes wrong with articulation or the read out process.

Treiman et al. (1994) quoted by Fawcett (2006:8) classify spelling errors as follows:

- Orthographic misspell – These errors occur when learners have problems with doubling of consonants and long vowels pattern with the use of silent one.
- Morphological misspell – Morphological development consists of both inflection and derived forms. Inflectional morphology implicates the original roots of the word but changing agreement, numbers, or possession with the grammatical marker such as past tense (- ed) present tense (- ing) or plurals (- s.)

Gentry (1988:54 -56) identifies five categories of spelling errors:

- Spelling short vowel sounds with an incorrect vowel- Learners spell long vowel sounds with the letter that is found in names e.g. /e/ as /i/ : Pit for Pet.
- Omitting the n/m before consonants – Learners omit letters that represent a nasal sound when these sounds occur in preconsonantal position, e.g. most for monster.
- Omitting the vowel when the syllable has a vowel-like (syllabic) consonant- Learners omit /a/ in a word such as Adm for Adam.

Crystal (2010:223) indicates four kinds of spelling errors:

- Omission e.g. buton for button.
- Addition e.g. hopefull for hopeful.
- Substitution e.g. attandence for attendance
- Inversion e.g. table for tebla

Shankweiler et al. (1996:273-274) cited by Krouse (1988:213) identify five categories of spelling errors:

- Misrepresentation errors e.g. sip for ship.
- Unrelated substitution errors e.g. bot for bit.

- Sequence errors – these errors occur when correct letters of grapheme were substituted incorrectly
- Insertion errors e.g. visiable for visible.
- Omission errors e.g.secetary for secretary.

Mitton (1996:43) identifies six types of spelling errors:

- Real-word errors e.g. forth for fourth.
- Wrong-word errors entail spelling errors on short vowels and familiar words, e.g. to for too.
- Wrong-form-of-word, inflection, apostrophe errors occur when wrong form of word has been used in cases like present tense verbs instead of past tense, e.g. walk for walked.
- Word division errors occur when two real words are incorrectly divided e.g. alot for a lot.
- Simple errors occur mainly when the first letter has been omitted from a word e.g. now for ow.
- Homophones - e.g. becides for besides.

Richards (2001:24) identifies nine categories of spelling errors:

- Deficits in phonological processing - same sound for different letter combinations e.g. joi for joy.
- Same letter combination with different sound e.g. cof for cough.
- Same letter with different sounds e.g. ‘a’ as in cat.
- Complexity of internal structure of a word resulting in omission e.g. wen for when.
- Confusing letter sound and names e.g. parti for party.
- Visual memory e.g. yor for your.
- Visual sequencing e.g. gril for girl.
- Auditory discrimination e.g. fum for thumb.
- Reversal e.g. hab for had.

Bestgen and Granger (2011:4-5) list eight types of spelling errors detected in writtenEnglish:

- Omission of letters e.g. tough for though.
- Addition of a letter e.g. coake for coke.
- Single letter instead of double letters e.g. hapy for happy.
- Double letters instead of a single letter e.g. Catts for cats.

- Substitution of one letter e.g. kase for case.
- Interchange of two adjacent letters e.g. itle for lite.
- Error involving an apostrophe e.g. Im for I'm.
- Erroneous splitting of words e.g. air – time for airtime.
- Two or more errors of the same type or of different types e.g. payed for paid.

2.4.2 Causes of misspelling

The main aim of the study is to examine and predict the possible ways of misspelling by learners. Tomic (2012:340) states that learners who experience multilingualism (e.g. as a result of parents who speak different languages, or where the home language differs from the school language) suffer from incorrect spelling. learners with different language capabilities often struggle to spell words properly.

Learners who are second language speakers of English have extreme barriers in spelling (Sebba, 2012:343). Moreover, the English spelling rules are not designed for foreign learners, but specifically formulated for first language speakers. Code-switching and the accent may also be barriers to correct spelling.

Overtone affects the effectiveness of spelling by changing the whole meaning of the word, especially to English second language users. Cooks (2007) cited by Solati et al. (2007:2) states that limitation of teaching hours and exposure to English language in the classroom result in poor spelling.

Peer-editing entails a strong grammatical foundation that needs to be formed in the process of language learning Seifoo (2007). At the other end of the spectrum Sebba (2012) supports the view of Ryan (2011:2) that misspelling of words is caused mainly by adolescent text messages. Shortening of e-mails through internet and text messages that use only three letters to transcribe standard spelling and constructed homophony results in misspelling (Ryan 2011:2).

Connelly et al. (2012:296) state that learnersmisspell words because of the production of short bursts of writing and because they do not cognitively revise online while writing. They further state that compared to slow handwriting, in fast online writing less effort is devoted to spelling and translating their ideas.

Bosman and Van Orden (1990:2) point out that it has been noted that reading and spelling should be taught simultaneously to avoid spelling errors. Frith (1979) quoted by Bosman (1990:2) claims that spelling is phonologically mediated, but reading occurs mainly by eye and spelling by ear. It is therefore clear that spelling and reading are not phonologically mediated because learners who attempt to write cannot read their invented spelling.

Dockrell and Connelley (2007) state their view that production of longer sentences results in grammatical errors. They argue that limitation of construction of sentences to form paragraphs encourages learners to practice spelling and also increases the level of competency in spelling.

Poor visual and auditory memory, as well as poor motor skills, is generally the main cause of poor spelling (Nel et al. 2013:107). Moreover, the frustration that learners encounter in identifying and recognising words when attempting to read might influence their poor performance in spelling. However, it goes without saying that poor sounding and lack of knowledge and understanding of sounding will result in poor spelling.

2.5 Learning theory and perspectives on spelling development

Most researchers have studied the stages of spelling development and they seem to share a common understanding of how learners develop. School beginners, as they begin to write, develop a unique spelling called invented spelling, based on their knowledge of phonology (Tompkins, 2013:1). Learners' spelling development takes place in stages. This theory serves as a basis for the construction of spelling activities and the development of instructional materials for teaching spelling.

2.5.1 Phonological perspective

Robert and Owens (2012:340) state that in the phonological perspective learners are only concerned with the systematic development of rules that control and direct sounds. Moreover, at this stage learners have the ability to apply knowledge of letter sounds, including the knowledge of patterns. Phonological perspective describes the development of learner's spelling, storytelling, and recalling information as the ability to acquire knowledge more in their first writing than the knowledge they get in their early reading. Therefore it is imperative for learners to develop one skill with the other.

According to Nunes, Bryant and Bindand (1977) and Treiman (1993), as cited by Azimi-Bolourian (2008:4), recent work on spelling development in English First Language children shows that they mingle their phonological and morphological knowledge (spoken language), and their orthographic knowledge (written language) in order to spell. Fasold and Connor-Linton (2006:38) state that phonology goes hand in hand with phonetics since the hearing, production and understanding of sound patterns cannot be separated from one other.

Connor-Linton and Fosold (2006:49) cited by Wade-Woolley and Siegel (1997:73) state that impaired individuals will have difficulty in dealing with the breaking down of phonological components, which is supported by evidence that they are unable to apply grapheme to phoneme in the process of changing spelling.

Crystal (1987:21) supports the view by saying that to be a good speller one needs to acquire phonological skills. Learners in their early age need to acquire three basic skills, i.e. phonology, orthography and

morphology in their spelling (Mc Quirter and Scott, 2007:2). Goswam, Ziegle and Richardson (2005:3) state that throughout adult spelling, consistency in the phonological process seems to affect spelling patterns across other languages. Iosad (2008:10) supports the view that liquid consonants have logical induction on the actual pattern of language.

McClelland (1981:294) states that many authors such as Bybee (2001) and Humbert (2001) are arguing for the approach that the use of phonology in language reflects the general principles of perceiving knowledge. Furthermore, language is just the reflection of the general ways that restrict linguistic communication through phonology. However, the communication system of phonological characteristics in human languages is not clearly utilised.

Samuels (2011:212) argues the point that the segmentation of words into smaller parts may be explained differently and more efficiently by establishing three phonological operations that will assist learners in spelling words. Phonological studies have shown that spoken language is one of the constituents of phonological development (Guedens, 2000:32).

2.5.2 Constructive perspective

In this perspective of spelling learners are actively creating meaning and knowledge through their experience (Perkin, 1991:20). To support this view, Can (2009:61) states that learners are born and raised through the development of knowledge and seek information themselves. It is evident that learners' knowledge is built fromwhat they know further on to what they don't know.

Pollo et, al (2008:10) describe the constructive perspective as one that has the minimum quantity of letters, e.g. learners are more likely to accept the sequence BD as a word than BCD. Furthermore this occurredeven if they had not had an idea of sequencing before. Children undergo certain stages of development, and those stages are carefully further evaluated by different researchers (Can, 2009:61).

Gray (2007:1) states that constructive learning is a subset of cognitive learning theory, and not a true alternative. Overall cognitive theory deals with the relationship between individuals and the environment. It assumes that teaching fosters critical thinking and creates and motivates independent learners.

According to Dew (1966) knowing is not a process of registration or presentation, but a process of intervention; knowledge does not point to an external independent and objective reality but is always involved in the action. This position supports the view that learners are not empty vessels to be filled with knowledge, but dynamic organisms seeking meaning (Can, 2009:62).

Eroglu (2001:2) describes constructive theory as the knowledge that learners grasp and produce according to the way they perceive it. The constructive approach is about learning by not teaching; the role of the teacher

is merely to facilitate the program. Schifter (1996:4) states that for learners to construct knowledge and meaning, they need to work at their own level of ability and implement strategies of reading and writing.

Eroglu (2001:2) supports the view of implementing learners' abilities and strategies to construct meaning. Teachers and learners should interpret and construct the hidden knowledge by asking each other questions. As an example one participant's ideas can make another individual grasp quickly what s/he had produced by connecting what they had previously acquired with the current information.

However, their belief was that knowledge and experience was the basis of creating new meaning.

2.5.3 Statistical learning perspective

Statistical learning theory is the third theory in the study of spelling development. Constructivist and statistical perspective have in common the idea that young learners formulate and have a tentative explanation of the composition of writing before the knowledge and understanding that letters are represented by phonemes (Pollo et al., 2008:12).

Redington and Charter (1998:152) state that while learners identify some words appropriately through their speech, they also possessunits which are either parts of the syllables and sequencing of words formulated through the use of lexical items. This shows that learners are finding their own ways of bringing solutions towards the problem of segmentation.

According to Bates, Bretherton and Snyder (1998) as quoted by Redington and Charter (1998:152) the infant's tendency to cover segments prior to vocabulary speed has been observed to vary between learners and to correlate with aspects of their speech style. Furthermore, both adults and infants were able to exploit additional prosodic cues in order to improve their performance. Moreover, statistical relationships between sounds and speech help young learners and adults to segment words(Pollo et al., 2008:15).

Jusczyk, Culter and Redanz (1993) assume that learners are able to segment the input into syllables before the metrical segmentation strategy can be applied. (Pollo et al., 2008:14)state that: in most literate societies learners come across words in magazines, on TV, in street names and so on. However their early spelling may be influenced by the knowledge that they gain through the material that they come across.

2.6 Localised studies on spelling errors

The following section provides an overview of studies on spelling errors in English. According to Protopapas, Fakou, Drakopoulou, Skaloumbakas, and Mouzaki (2013:616)

> Systematic spelling failures arethought to reveal aspects of the cognitive mechanisms of spelling and learning to spell. Moreover, spelling errors may be strongly dependent on the language-specific orthographic system and on the individual level of competence(Protopapas et al., 2013:616).

It commences with studies in Anglophone countries (the United States and Britain), followed by studies in non-Anglophone or multilingual countries (including South Africa), and studies among learners with special needs.

2.6.1 American studies on spelling

Treiman et al. (1994) quoted by Fawcett (2006:8) mention two types of misspelling:

Phonologically based errors - Learners misspell words due to lack of alphabetic knowledge and errors occur in phonological violation and letter name spelling e.g. esy for easy and lefit for elephant.

Misspelling containing flaps – learners confuse sounds phonetically, e.g. /d/as/t/in cidy for city. These errors occur because of the nature of voice flaps pronunciation.

Bear and Templeton (1998:224) identify three spelling errors among learners of English as First Additional language:

The alphabetical layer matches letters and sounds, e.g. miace for mice.

Vowel diagraphs - these errors occur when the second sound silent vowel is omitted due to poor pronunciation, e.g. ran for rain or rep for reap.

Ryan (2010:4-6) identifies eight different kinds of spelling errors in Standard English:

Homophony and homograph -These kinds of spelling by polyvalence of English spelling for example the spelling unit /th/ can represent three phonemes in words such as thigh, thy and thyme. It even happens in words which are pronounced the same, but differ in spelling, words such as meet for meat.

Constructed homophones in names - Errors only occurring frequently in names, e.g. Outkast for Outcast.

Capitalisation - It has been identified as a basic form of writing to distinguish proper nouns from common nouns withcapital letters e.g. the channel for The Channel and the new town for The New Town.

Padding-It is common that learners add or change the suffix /e/ in common words like surnames, names and names of places to make it visible in words such as Browne for Brown, Foxx for Fox and Ladd for Lad.

Licensed and unlicensed-These occurs mostly on orthographic variation where nonstandard spelling is said to be licensed due to the differences against English standard spelling. The unlicensed variation completely changed the original meaning of the word to suit their social additional meaning that is against the phonological correspondence of letters that gives the original meaning. It representsthe relationship between the spelling and the practiceof a certain group of community members. They construct homophones in words e.g. Kris has to be spelled as Chris, woz for was and luv for love.

Studying constructed homophony- It is imperative to study the distinction between constructed homophony and standard spelling in order to provide enough evidence in their form and formation. Constructed homophones only occur frequently in names such as Outkast for Outcast.

Puns and blends -These are homophones constructed and developed to include such information to words such as booty - bootylicious. Non-standard spelling has one phonological form. It is formed by constructed homophones, but they differ from puns. Puns seem to have two phonological mappings which are not constructed homophones but constructed homographs in words such as E-Motion.

Modelling /f/- Learners tend to default by omitting the last /f/ in words, such as girafe for giraffe.

Modelling /t/- This error occurs in words that are in the past tense e.g. stashet for stashed.

Checked vowels/f/gh/-Constructed homophones, e.g. tuff for tough.

Overlapping graphemes - e.g. bed for bedd

2.6.2 British studies on spelling

Wade-Woolley and Siegel (1997:393) detected eight errors in EFAL:

Word reading- These errors occur when learners are administering a word.

Phoneme deletion - Learners remove the first consonant from the word, e.g. ink for sink.

Non word reading- Learners read monosyllabic pseudo words similar, but not identical to the spelling pseudo words.

Pseudo word repetition - Learners have the inability to perceive and repeat sounds ranging from consonants to vowels, and to three syllables.

Oral close- Learners commit errors by completing sentences with a word creating systematic and syntactic well-formed sentences.

Syntactic judgment-Most errors were detected by listening to the sentences and judging whether they are syntactically well-formed or syntactically ill-formed.

Working memory- Errors were identified by listening to the sentences and filling in the missing final word.

Lexical access- Most learners were assessedby facing an array of simple pictures and learners were required to name the pictures quickly and accurately.

Fawcett (2006:8-11) identifies the following types of spelling errors among primary school learners:

Phonological silent /e/-learners at this stage increase knowledge of the alphabet and errors occur in

phonological violation and letter name in words such as elifant for elephant.

Phonological – sonar cluster

Orthographic – diagraph Orthographic – letter name

Morphological – homonym

Morphological – contraction

2.6.3 Studies on Dutch learners

Fayol et al. (1997:8) mention four kinds of spelling errors among Dutch learners of English:

The onset of one syllable – learners write str for street.

Bi – directionally consistent – learners write ust for lust.

Lexical decision task – learners write hi for Hi.

Word spelling – the words are pronounced the same with different meaningand spelling.

2.6.4 Studies on Persian ESL learners

Solati et al. (2007) identifies spelling errors from the writing of Persian learners:

Deletion –In this learners are committing errors by deleting letters that were not supposed to be deleted from words e.g.oft-n for often.

Addition spelling errors-Learners tend to commit errors by adding unnecessaryvowels that distort the meaning and the spelling of the words e.g. eschool for school or berown for brown.

Substitution spelling errors - is when learners write a word by substituting the first letter with the other, e.g. dey for day.

Transposition spelling errors - Learners are swapping the vowels in a word, such as recieve for receive or feild for field.

Solati et al. (2007) also detect five patterns of errors in word dictation:

Written yet unpronounced letters in English orthography - with this kind of error learners are omitting the unpronounced sounds in their writing, e.g. wei for weight and ho for who.

Homophones confusion - Homophones are those words which sound the same but differ in spelling. Learners write words such as write for right or lite for light.

Letters in English conveying different sounds - In this type of error, learners convey appropriate sounds with

the wrong letters, e.g. enouf for enough.

Sounds present in L2, but absent in L1 - Learners are replacing the letters of L1 with letters and patterns of L2 sounds, e.g. tree for three and flover for flower.

Sound distinctions present in L2 but not in L1 - Sound distinction of L2 and L1, e.g. rid for read.

2.6.5 Studies on Chinese learners

Bao-Qing et al. (1986:40) identified the following types of spelling errors:

Non word target -These errors occur mainly where learners intend to give real words as response.

Sequence of phonemes differing in tone -These errors were determined by administering repetition of stimulant with different tone and adding unnecessary consonants.

Mixing-up consonant blends when spelling affricates - Learners in these errors confuse affricate /dr/ and /ch/, e.g. jargon for dragon.

Using T and D to render past tense form - Learners spell words the way they hear them in the past tense, e.g. lookt for looked.

2.6.6 Studies on Japanese learners

Wydell and Butterwort (1999:290) identified three types of spelling errors done by Japanese:

Non-word repetition phoneme addition - these errors occur by adding unnecessaryconsonants, e.g. tumphent for trumpet.

Phoneme deletion- e.g. perpelisteronk for perpisteronk.

Phoneme substitution-occurs by substituting phonemes e.g.voltuntarily-voluntarily

2.6.7 Studies on Kenyan ESL learners

Nyamasyo as cited by Naderi (1997) identifies four broad categories of spelling:

Substitution of one letter for another e.g. /s/ for/c/ in selebrate for celebrate or /i/ for /e/ in intertain for entertain.

Addition of letters in a word, e.g. relligion for religion.

Omission of letters in a word e.g. exess for excess.

Incorrect internal punctuation, including commas, full stops and small letters for nouns.

2.6.8 ESL learners in South Africa

Lansberg et al. (2013:171) mention six types of spelling errors committed by ESL learners in South Africa:

Phonological errors – Learners know the word but confuse the short vowel sound e.g. sur for sir.

Syntactic errors – The words are not logically arranged e.g. like not – dislike.

Grammatical errors – Omission error and the infinitive, e.g. in Mom speaks (to) son.

Incorrect preposition e.g. the dog is in (under) the car.

Tense error e.g. they has went to school.

Transfer error –Which (what) is the way.

Difficulty using punctuation marks (capital letters and full stops).

2.6.9 Studies on IsiXhosa learners grade 3

Mpiti (2012:8-11) mentions different types of errors committed by isiXhosa learners:

Borrowing of words from isiXhosa to English - Such errors occur when learners borrow words from isiXhosa to English. It also results in learners committing orthographic errors, e.g. in irula for ruler.

Complication of English as a language by itself - English has got a large vocabulary of borrowed words from other languages, which contributes to many spelling errors.

Standardised spelling test- These errors occur because teachers focus only on the performance of learners in standardised spelling tests, not concentrating on instruction given according to their needs.

Inability to understand sounds of language system - These errors occur because of learners' inability to work with sounds, e.g. reversing beginnings of words, substituting similar letters, adding and omitting letters.

Early training in phonemic awareness – These errors occur when isiXhosa learners develop phonemic and phonological awareness in isiXhosa and convert it into English.

2.6.10 Studies on spelling among learners with special needs

Figueredo (2006:875-876) identified the following types of spelling errors done by grade 1-3 ELSN learners in Spanish.

Phonological and SSC influence – These errors occur due to the pronunciation of /z/ as /s/ e.g. prize for price.

SSC influence representation /a/ as/e/ e.g. merker for marker.

Phonological and SSC influence – These errors occur due to improper pronunciation of /b/ resulting in /v/ e.g. cavinet for cabinet.

Phonological and SSC influence e.g. use of /es/ to represent /s/.

Phonological influence – Pronunciation of /i/ as /e/ e.g. spet for spit.

Phonological influence – Pronunciation of/ee/ as/u/ e.g. butroot for beetroot.

Dockrell and Connelly (2009:48) identify spelling errors done by British learners with Specific language impairment:

Written utterance containing grammatical errors.

Verb composite errors.

Omission of plural millections.

Over use of conjunctions.

Morphological errors.

2.7 The spelling bee

2.7.1 Origin

The spelling bee is an American phenomenon. One of the earliest descriptions of this is Walker (1941:495):

> We resort to many expedients in order to maintain the arbitrary character of English spelling. We ask that our learners be drilled endlessly in school, we do homage to "the dictionary" as an arbiter of linguistic matters, and we cast a supercilious smile that cuts deep upon anyone who deviates from conventional orthography. Also among these mechanisms for maintaining our spelling is the spelling bee […] (Walker, 1941:495).

The spelling method is aimed at improving spelling accuracy and expanding vocabulary has also gained in popularity in other New World countries, such as Australia (DEC 2014). However, it has not generally been accepted as a way of promoting spelling accuracy in Britain, partly because there seems to be more homogeneity in American than in British pronunciation in spite of the cultural diversity in the US (Riddles, 2005).

2.7.2 Scientifically proven benefits of the spelling bee

Spelling bees (particularly in the age of reality television) undoubtedly heighten the profile of spelling and participants hone their spelling skills through the intense preparation required. However, researcher on spelling indicates that apart from these spelling-related benefits there is no proof that spelling improves the general standard of spelling among a population. What has been proven by research on spelling bees is that participants, who are successful, share certain personality traits (Duckworth, Kirby, Tsukayama, Berstein, & Ericsson, 2011). The results of this study indicate that those participants with perseverance and who are also autonomous learners (labelled as "grittier" by the study) are ultimately more successful in spelling bees, and that performance in spelling bees can be used an indication of these personality traits (Duckworth, Kirby, Tsukayama, Berstein, & Ericsson, 2011).

2.7.3 The Department of Basic Education (2014) Spelling Bee

Recently, however, the spelling bee was introduced to the South African language teaching scene. The reasons for the introduction of the spelling bee as cited as follows:

- Spelling Bee South Africa is part of a broader comprehensive strategy to address poor performance in languages and numeracy, taking into considering the Annual National Assessments (ANA) results which showed poor learner comprehension and performance, not only in Language, but in other subjects such as Numeracy/Mathematics.
- Spelling Bee supports learning to read and contributes to learners' ability to competently read and write.
- Spelling Bee is aimed at promoting a love for reading, writing and spelling in the intermediate phase— grades 4-6 learners.
- Spelling Bee aims to stimulate learners' interest in language learning and other subjects, and produce champion spellers, avid readers and writers (http://www.sabceducation.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1339:relationship-between-anas-and-spelling-bee&catid=39:media-releases&Itemid=84).

Whereas the spelling bee has certainly lifted the profile of spelling in schools, it would seem as if the DBE credit the spelling with much more than there is actually proof of. Ultimately, those learners who participate will benefit, and those who do not, will not. The DBE Spelling Bee can therefore at best be seen as an additional measure to address the poor spelling competencies pointed out by the ANA results. It is also unfortunate that the official word list for the 2014 DBE Spelling Bee, contained a misspelling ("meercat", instead of "meerkat") DBE (2014).

2.8 Conclusion

In the first place, this chapter adressed the first research sub-question, namely what the CAPS requirements are for spelling in Grade 3 EFAL. Furthermore, this chapter deals with important concepts related to spelling, as well as studies on spelling globally, e.g. important skills linked to spelling, the development stages of spelling, common errors of spelling, importance of spelling and the three perspectives of spelling. With regard to the important skill of writing, spelling is divided into two parts: phonemic awareness dealing with the full word and visual imagery assisting learners to spell unfamiliar words through the retrieval of information from the mind. During the development stages of spelling, learners undergo a variety of performance according to their ages. However, each stage is represented by its name regarding their spelling competency. The main perspectives in development stages are phonological, constructive and statistical.

Spelling is related to reading and helps to provide the foundation for literacy, the importance of this skill for the scholastic development of learners cannot be overstated and warrants careful attention.

The next chapter provides a detailed overview of the research methodology followed in this study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a detailed drscription of the research methodology followed to address the remainder of the research sub-questions, the first having already been adressed through a literature study in the previous chapter.

The following objectives still need to be addressed:

3.1.2 Conducting an error analysis of the writing samples of Grade 3 EFAL learners to determine the types of spelling mistakes they make;

3.1.3 Identifying possible examples of interference in EFAL spelling by learners' Home Language (isiZulu); and

3.1.4 Interviewing Grade 3 EFAL teachers to determine the extent to which they feel they are able to achieve CAPS outcomes, e.g. the linking of EFAL phonics to HL phonics.

Thischapter will describe the following aspects of the methodology: theoretical background and research design, participants, instruments, procedures and data analysis.

3.2 Theoretical framework

3.2.1 Current approaches to research

Ontology is the study of being: this has to do with the study of reality (Willis, 2000:10). Epistemology, on the other hand, involves the study of knowledge, its scope and origin (Willis, 2000:8).A number of approaches are possible in both ontology and epistemology. According to Creswell (2003:23)

> One preliminary consideration before designing a proposal is to identify a framework for the study. Three approaches to research are […] quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research. They contain philosophical assumptions about knowledge claims, strategies of inquiry, and specific research methods. When philosophy, strategies, and methods are combined, they provide different frameworks for conducting research.

Creswell (2003:6) identifies four main research paradigms for current scientific enquiry with their main characteristics as follows:

- Post positivism is determinist and reductionistandrelies on empirical observation and measurement, as well as theory verification;
- Constructivism seeks to understand and identify multiple participant meanings, and focusses on social and historical construction and theory generation;
- Advocacy/Participatory research is political in nature, collaborative and empowerment and change-oriented; while
- Pragmatism focusses on consequences of actions, is pluralistic and problem- and real-world practice oriented.

In view of the real-world educational focus of this study, the researcher has opted for pragmatism as the basic approach.

3.2.2 Pragmatism

In this approach to truth and research, it is the consequences of findings that matter, not some abstract, irrelevant truth which is of no consequence. In this way, Pragmatism is goal-directed (Creswell 2003:12).

Because of its practical nature, Pragmatism is directed at particular problems which are encountered in various real-life situations Cherryholmes (1992). In this way, it is characteristic for this approach to be problem-centred. Pragmatism is an approach which attempts to solve practical problems rather than formulating abstract or esoteric truth (Scheffler, 1974: ix). It is for this reason that the researcher is in many ways left to her own devices when choosing methods: the choice will depend on the specific aim of the study concerned (Creswell 2003:12).

In pragmatism, there is room for a variety of truths. There is not only one single truth, but rather a plurality of truths: Pragmatism is pluralistic (Tashakkori &Teddies, 1998;Patton, 1990). In this way, Pragmatism is more flexible than other approaches which conceive of truth in singular terms. The truth of a scientific study will depend on the particular aim at which it is directed (Murphy, 1990).

An important concept in Pragmatism is the connection between thinking and reality: reality cannot be separated from the way we think about it(Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:14). In this way, mind and reality are not separate according to Pragmatism. This approach understands truth and reality in terms of the underlying aims of the research(Corbin & Strauss, 2008:303). For example, the aim of this study is to find ways of improving learners' spelling.

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004:17)cite a number of important contributions made to scientific inquiry by Pragmatism. Some of the more relevant contributions to this study are that Pragmatism:

- Aids in finding a middle ground between philosophical dogmatisms;

- Promotes a high regard for the reality of and influence of the inner world of human experience; and
- Endorses a strong and practical empiricism as the path to determine what works(Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:17).

Within the context of this study, these contributions are particularly important since it will encourage the investigation of various philosophical paradigms in addressing the research problem. It also links up with the researcher's interest in the psychological factors of the education context, both in terms of educators and learners. Lastly, it is seen as the effective route for arriving at solid, workable and empirically sound conclusions. This does not mean that the researcher is unaware of criticism that has been levelled at Pragmatism in the past, e.g. researchers from a transformative-emancipatory framework have suggested that pragmatic researchers sometimes fail to provide a satisfactory answer to the question "for whom is a pragmatic solution useful?" (Mertens, 2003,in Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004:17)). The researcher is fully aware of these criticisms but feels that Pragmatism has shown itself over the past century to be a reliable way of approaching problems in the social sciences.

For the purpose of this study, Pragmatism has the advantage that various methods can readily be combined, i.e. Pragmatism enables the researcher to make use of mixed methods. More specifically, qualitative and quantitative methods can and will be used in this study.

3.2.3 Mixed methods

In the approach of mixed methods, the use of exclusively qualitative or quantitative methods is avoided (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004:18). As mixed methods implies the use of both, the researcher must have a clear conception of qualitative and quantitative methods.

The major characteristics of quantitative research include the following:

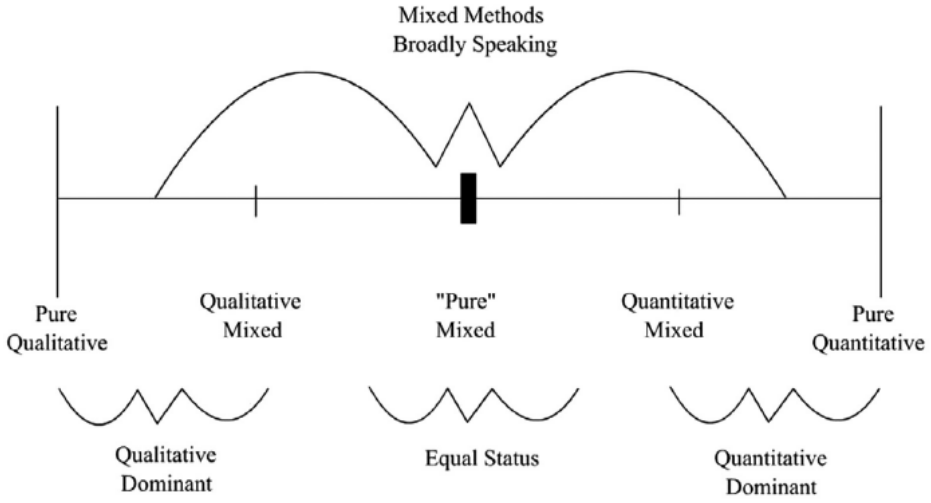
- an emphasis on deductive procedures,
- the testing of theories and hypotheses,
- prediction,
- data collection and statistical analysis(Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:18).

On the other hand, qualitative research focusses on discovery which leads to theories and hypotheses and also qualitative analysis.

Deduction, as used in quantitative research, has to do with the application of general, logical reasoning in the research process. Empirical observation is used for the purpose of testing hypotheses and theories. Empirical observation is also used to test predictions based on hypotheses. The collection of data and the statistical analysis thereof involves numerically based procedures (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004:11).

Mixed methods is the combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2007:113). They present the continuum on which the three paradigms appear as follows:

Figure 1
Graphic of the Three Major Research Paradigms, Including Subtypes of Mixed Methods Research



(Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2007:124)

In terms of this graphic, research paradigms can be either purely qualitative, purely quantitative or "pure" mixed, if they have equal qualitative and quantitative elements. However, studies on other points of the continuum may be qualitative mixed or predominantly qualitative, or quantitative mixed or predominantly quantitative. In the case of the present study, it is predominantly qualitative as there are elements of quantitative research, but these are out numbered by qualitative methods of data collection and analysis.

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004:14) are convinced that mixed methods bring to educational research a richness that can not be attained by using either quantitative or qualitative methodologies:

> [We] contend that epistemological and methodological pluralism should be promoted in educational research so that researchers are informed about epistemological and methodological possibilities and, ultimately, so that we are able to conduct more effective research (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004:14).

Having settled on a methodology for addressing the research questions of the study, the next section will deal with specific research methods that will be employed, as Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, and Hanson (2003:5) state that methodology is the link between study outcomes and research methods employed.

3.2.4 Contrastive analysis, error analysis and interlanguage

Contrastive analysis (CA) refers to a comparison between different languages in terms of structures and other characteristics (Sridhar 1980:9). Such a comparison between languages then made it possible for the language teacher to point out to learners the specific difficulties in learning that language as well as pitfalls to be avoided (Spolsky 1979:251). CA has its roots in behaviourism and the belief that language learning is largely the acquisition of a set of correct language-related habits, as proposed by Skinner (2014).

However, with the arrival of Chomsky (1956) and transformational grammar and universals, one of the underpinnings of earlier CA was removed (Spolsky, 1979:253). At the same time, the emphasis on actual speech (performance in Chomskyan terms) confronted linguists with examples of language that were full of errors. Until then, language teachers had regarded errors as of no particular importance, annoying and distracting "about which the teacher should make as little fuss as possible"(Corder, 1967:162). However, Corder (1967:169) changed this by proposing that systematically studying learners' errors (error analysis – EA), language teachers can learn more about the inbuilt syllabus of the learner and at which stage they are in acquiring the particular language. Thus, the learners' innate strategies will "dictate our practice and determine our syllabus", rather than us imposing on them how we think they ought to learn the language(Corder, 1967:169). As such, errors became much more significant than mere mistakes which had to be eradicated as quickly as possible (Spolsky 1979:253).

According to Spolsky (1979:254) Corder advocated the study of the second language learner's "transitional competence" as it would reveal systematic errors arising not from interference. At the same time (Selinker, 1972) formulated the notion of interlanguage (linked to Corder's "transitional competence") as the in-between language competency of a second language learner which is governed by its own rule. Sridhar (1980:30) describes the importance of the term interlanguage (IL) as follows:

(1) it captures the indeterminate status of the learner's system between his native language and the T1;
(2) it represents the "atypical rapidity" with which the learner's language changes, or its instability;

(3) focussing on the term "language," it explicitly recognises the rule-governed, systematic nature of the learner's performance and its adequacy as a functional communicative system (from the learner's point of view, at least).

These three concepts (contrastive analysis, error analysis, and interlanguage) profoundly changed the way in which language teaching was conceptualised and remain important notions to this day.

3.3 Research setting

This study was conducted at a primary school in Midrand, a part of Johannesburg East. The study focuses on the Grade 3 EFAL learners and their teachers. The school offers a variety of Home languages such as isiZulu,

Sepedi, isiXhosa, Xitsonga and Tshivenda. The school starts from grade R until grade 7.The school building has 44 classrooms, an administration block, a library and a computer center that is equipped with 40 computers and 40 iPads.

There are 56 teachers, two deputy principals, 17 non-teaching staff and a principal. The school is over-enrolled with 2053 learners. The computers are insufficient for this number of learners, and therefore only the intermediate and general phases have access to the computers. For Home Language lessons, such as Sepedi and isiZulu, the classes are overcrowded and the ratio is 60:1 (learners:teacher). This hampers effective learning and teaching.

For the Home Languages Tshivenda and Xitsonga there are multi-grade classes because learner numbers for these languages are quite low. The school has enough furniture to accommodate both teachers and learners. Most learners go to school on foot and 5% use public transport (taxis). Some learners walk a distance of more than 5 km to reach the school. Due to the long distances from home learners arrive late and very often the first and the second periods are affected by this.

In spite of the high rate of unemployment among parents no learner will go home with an empty stomach, since the school has a feeding scheme that caters for everyone in the school. Most of the parents are illiterate and cannot assist their learners with their homework. The high number of immigrants in the community also means that learners suffer because their parents do not understand the vernaculars, let alone be able to guide learners with their writing (including spelling).

The pupil:teacher ratio and teacher qualifications also have a negative impact on learning. Most teachers are qualified to teach secondary level but they are assigned to teach primary level. Some teachers are trained to teach Life Orientation, but they teach EFAL. Having teachers who are not trained to teach languages teach a language, also impacts negatively on language skills (e.g. spelling). Teachers in the intermediate and general phases have been trained for CAPS. Foundation phase teachers have not yet been instructed in CAPS, although, as an underperforming school, they have been trained under the Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategy (GPLMS).

3.4 Population and sample

Most learners are admitted to Grade 1 without having attended the reception year. Some of the learners may have attended crèches, but many (especially immigrant children) have never attended any form of educational facility. The school does have a programme to assist learners with doing their homework, but the program is not effective because parents do not encourage their children to take part in the programme and are not in favour of learners having an extended school day. In terms of CAPS policy requirements, EFAL has eight 35 minute periods, compared to fourteen 35 minute periods for the Home Language.

The population of this study is all isiZulu-speaking learners in Grade 3 at the particular school, i.e. 80 learners. For the purpose of this study, non-probability convenience sampling was used by collecting writing samples from one of the two classes, i.e. 40 students. However, due to the fact that some learners were absent on the day that the writing sample was collected, the final sample consisted of 38 learners. According to Babbie (1990:17) the advantage of non-probability sampling is that it is a convenient way for researchers to assemble a sample with little or no cost and/or for those research studies that do not require representativeness of the population.

Figure 3.1 indicates the gender distribution of the learners with 17 (45%) male and 21 (55%) female.

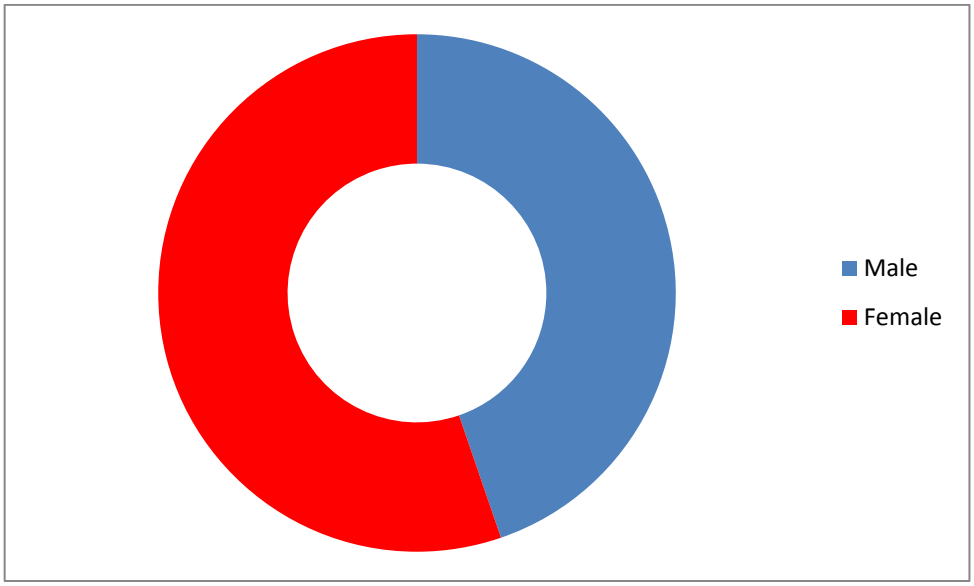


Figure 3.1 Gender distribution of learners in sample group.

In terms of age, learners ranged from eight to nine years. Of the 38 learners, four are repeating the grade. There are no learners with disabilities in the sample.

3.5 Instruments

Instruments are the sets of tools which are used to collect data for the study (Vermeulen, 1998:45).This includes the set of questions used in the interviews for teachers as well as the test questions for learners. Semi-structured questions are the scheduled line of inquiry (Maree, 2012:89). It allows participants to answer a set of predetermined questions, while allowing probing and clarification of answers. All instruments were approved by a panel of experts from the Departmental Committee for Research and Innovation, as well as the Tshwane University of Technology Senate Research Ethics Committee (See Appendix A).

3.5.1 Writing sample

Learners were tested through written samples of two paragraphs about the topic “My classroom” (see Appendix D) considering the CAPS and EFAL requirements. This was done because a simple spelling test would not have yielded enough data for analysis. A spelling by nature is restrictive and results are often deceptive as learners rely on short-term memory to perpare for the test (Fawcett, 2006).

3.5.2 Semi-structured interviews

In a semi-structured interview the researcher must listen attentively to the responses from the respondents in order to identify the new emerging line of inquiry which the researcher should follow up. The researcher should take care not to get side-tracked but to stayin line with the inquiry. Semi-structured interviews lie between open-ended and structured interviews (Maree, 2008:87). They allow the researcher to steer the interview in a specific direction, while allowing the respondent the freedom to add to the line of inquiry.

For the purpose of this study, an interview schedule was designed and submitted for departmental, faculty and Senate Research Ethics Committee approval (see Appendix E). The schedules focus on the different kinds of spelling errors of Grade 3 isiZulu HL learners in EFAL. Three Grade 3 EFAL educators were interviewed.

3.5.3 Validity and reliability

Validity can be described as the process of connection between the amount of data made and actual quality of observed data. Moreover validity can be referred to as something you can rely on, trust, confirm and which has applicability (Golafshani, 2003). In simple terms, validity means that you are testing what you are purporting to be testing, in this case spelling. The researcher regards the writing samples collected from learners as valid, as they provided ample evidence of types of spelling errors that have been observed in the writing of Grade 3 isiZulu learners in EFAL. In view of the fact that the writing samples also confirm classes of spelling errors that have been observed among Grade 3 isiZulu HL learners in the past, the instrument can also be regarded as reliable, i.e. it will yield the same results in repeat tests.

3.6 Data collection methods

Consent forms were issued by the researcher to learners to ask permission from the parents to have their children participate in the research, and to teachers for participation in the semi-structured interviews.

The researcher administered the test during one day to the learners. The test started at 9h30, immediately after the short break during which learners had their usual breakfast (feeding scheme) and went to the toilet (so as not to disrupt the smooth running of the test).

Learners were instructed to write two paragraphs on the topic, My Classroom, including their daily experiences and activities at school. Each learner was given a lined A4 paper to write on, also indicating the

date and their names. The researcher and two other teachers formed the rating panel for assessing the writing and identifying spelling errors according to the categories. All teachers are Grade 3 teachers teaching isiZulu and EFAL. The errors were listed on an Excel spreadsheet, which was then used to determine the categories of and frequency with which errors occur (results presented in Chapter 4).

The semi-structured interviews were administered after school, from 13h30 to14h30 so as not to interrupt classes. It also meant that the interviews could be conducted in a relatively quiet environment, since learners would all have gone home by then. The interviews were conducted on different days in order not to put too much pressure on either the researcher or the teachers. A tape recorder was used to record the interviews.

In addition, the researcher used a pen and paper to record the responses from the participants. Before the interview was started, participants were asked a few general questions to put them at ease in the situation.

3.7 Data analysis methods

Data analysis is the process of gathering and creating meaning out of the data, through reduction and interpreting what the respondents have said (Henning 2004:101). This important section of the study is the ultimate, main aim of the study. It is here that the researcher interprets the results of the study. The results are considered in detail and the information they provide is made clear.

In this study, the performance of the learners will be compared to the standard set by CAPS. The assessment scale provided by CAPS is explained and the performance of the learners is statistically measured in terms of the CAPS criteria. The figurers of the test findings will be converted to percentages to provide a clearer picture of the performance standard. As stated in 3.4, all spelling errors identified by the panel of raters were recordedin categories on an Excel spreadsheet. Categories presenting similar types of errors were then grouped together to form classes of errors.

Similarly the results of the semi-structured interviews needed to be interpreted so that conclusions could be drawn from the responses of the teachers who were interviewed. In analysing the results from the semi-structured interviews, the researchers identified categories and arranged the various responses according to themes (see Chapter 4).

3.8 Ethical considerations

No participants were remunerated for participation. Participation was voluntary and the participants (or their parents, in the case of the Grade 3 learners) all signed an informed consent in which their rights were explained to them (see Appendix B for the parental informed consent and Appendix C for the teacher informed consent). The research design and instruments received full approval from the TUT Senate Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix A) and was conducted according to the institutional guidelines for ethical research.

3.9 Conclusion

The current chapter provided the theoretical background and methodology for the present study, as methodological choices are made based on the research paradigm embraced by the researcher. The chapter also provided a detailed description of the study population and sample, as well as the instruments used for data collection and methods of data analysis.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data collected and the findings obtained through the analysis of the data in the present study aimed at determining the extent to which the standard of spelling of a Grade 3 EFAL class with isiZulu as HL measures up to CAPS requirements. As the first objective (CAPS spelling requirements for Grade 3 EFAL learners) has already been dealt with in Chapter 2, this chapter will deal with the findings of the error analysis on the writing samples of Grade 3 EFAL learners to determine the types of spelling mistakes they make, possible evidence of interference in EFAL spelling by learners' Home Language (isiZulu), and findings from the semi-structured interviews with EFAL teachers to determine the extent to which they feel they are able to achieve CAPS outcomes.

4.2 Classes of spellings errors

Figure 4.2.1 illustrates the various classes of spelling errors that were identified. Six classes of errors were identified, namely non-phonemic errors, commonly confused vowels, vowel grapheme-phoneme correspondence, phonemic-related, L1-interference and the consonant grapheme-phoneme correspondence

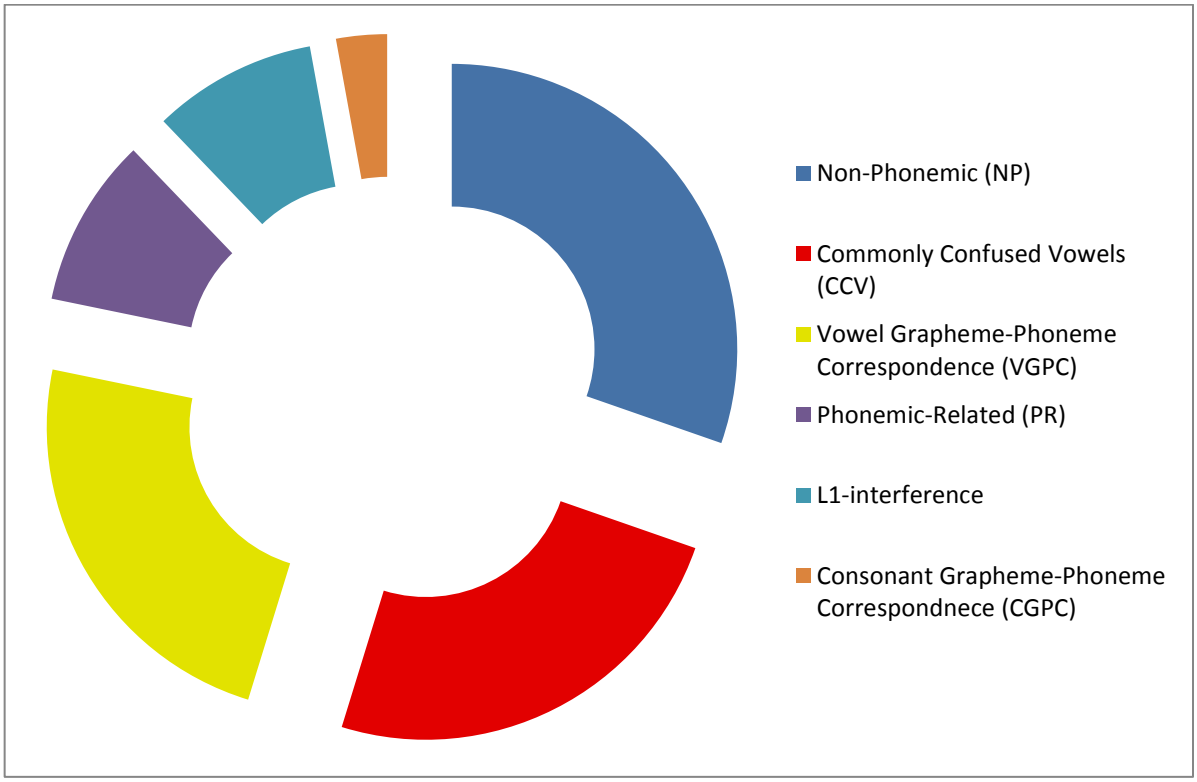
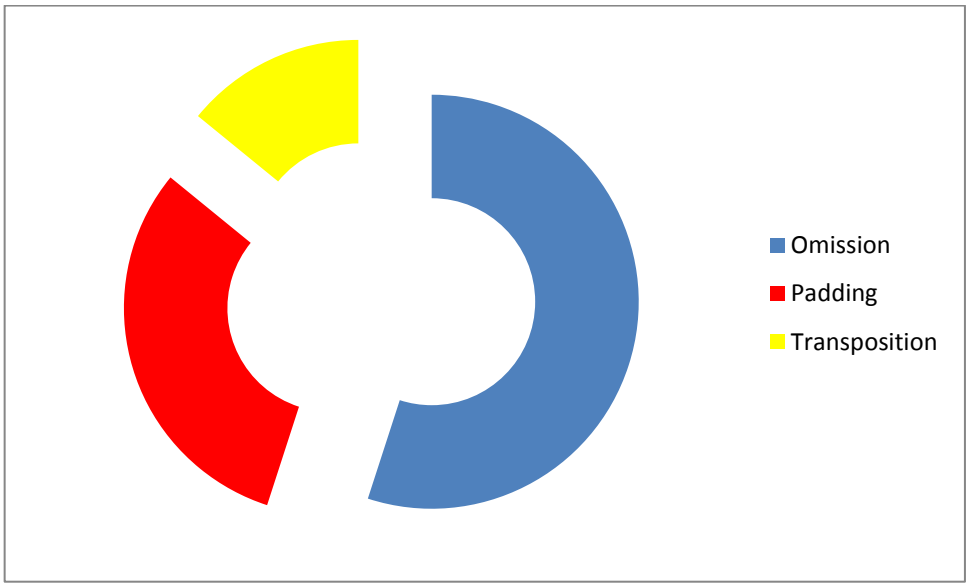


Figure 4.2.1 Classes of spellings errors

The graph indicates that non-phonemic errors were most prevalent at411(30%),commonly confused vowels 331(24%), vowel grapheme-phoneme correspondence 318(23%), phonemic related 130(10%), L1 interference 126(9%),andconsonant Grapheme-phoneme correspondence 39(3%) (CGPC).

4.2.1 Non-phonemic errors

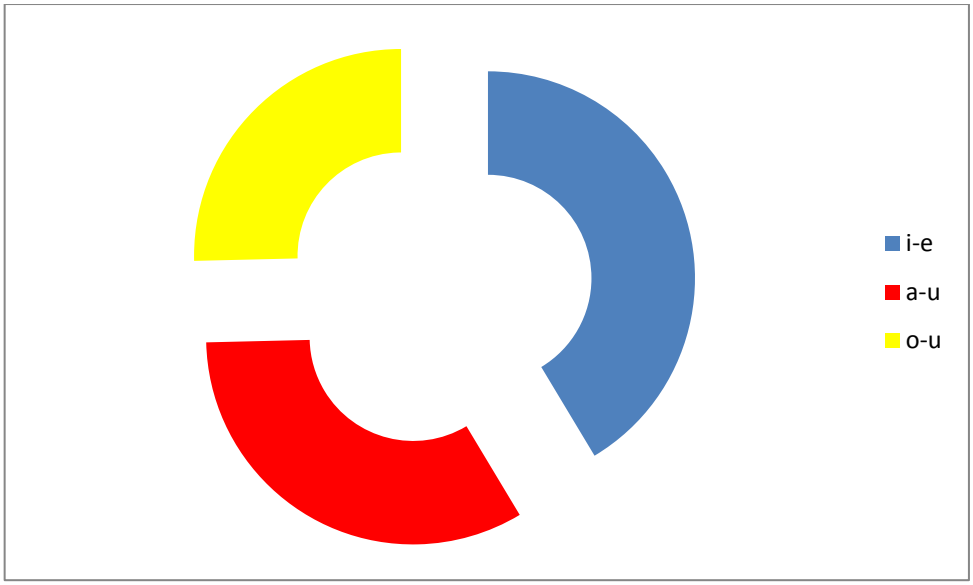
Figure 4.2.2 represents the various classes of spelling errors that were identified under Non-Phonemic namely omission, padding and transposition.



The graph illustrates that omission errors were most dominant at226(55%), under the Non-Phonemic errors.It was evident in the learners' written samplesthat most of their writings were riddled with either vowel- or letter omission.It resulted in words loosing its meaning and incorrect spelling e.g. school>schol.Padding is the second type of error,where the error level was at 127(31%).Learners at this stage were adding unneccersary letters in the middle or at the end of the words that led to incorrect spelling.Examples of such errors were table>tabble/board>boord.Transposition, the third category of spelling errors under the Non-Phonemic category and had the smallest percentage of errorswith 58(14%). Examples weresuch as board >baord/recieve>receive.

4.2.2 Commonly confused vowels

Figure 4.2.3 represents the three various spelling errors identified under the commonly confused vowels such as i-e,a-u and o-u.



The graph indicates that the commonly confused vowels i-e spelling errors were most prevalent at 137(41%).The study reveals that learners confused the vowel/i/ with/e/ mostly due to their articulation of the alphabet compared to those of phonics sounds in their EFAL.It was evident from the written samples that the confusion between the two vowels leads to wrong spelling. A word such as with was spelt weth.They confused the vowels /a/with/u/due to the isiZulu Home Language interference in EFAL with a percentage of 110(33%). The pronunciation of both letters/a/ and /u/ in HOL and FAL sound the same.The inter-connection of the two vowels by learners led to spelling errors. An example of this is umbrella for ambrella. Lastly there was the confusion of the vowel /o/ with/u/ in their writings, at a percentage of 84(25%).These errors occurred in words such as row for rou.

4.2.3 Problems with grapheme-phoneme correspondence

Figure 4.2.4 represents the various errors identified under the grapheme-phoneme correspondence (VGPC) such as,/oi/,/ue/,/oa/,/ee/,/ou/,/ae/,CC/ie/,/ar/,/air/,and/er/.

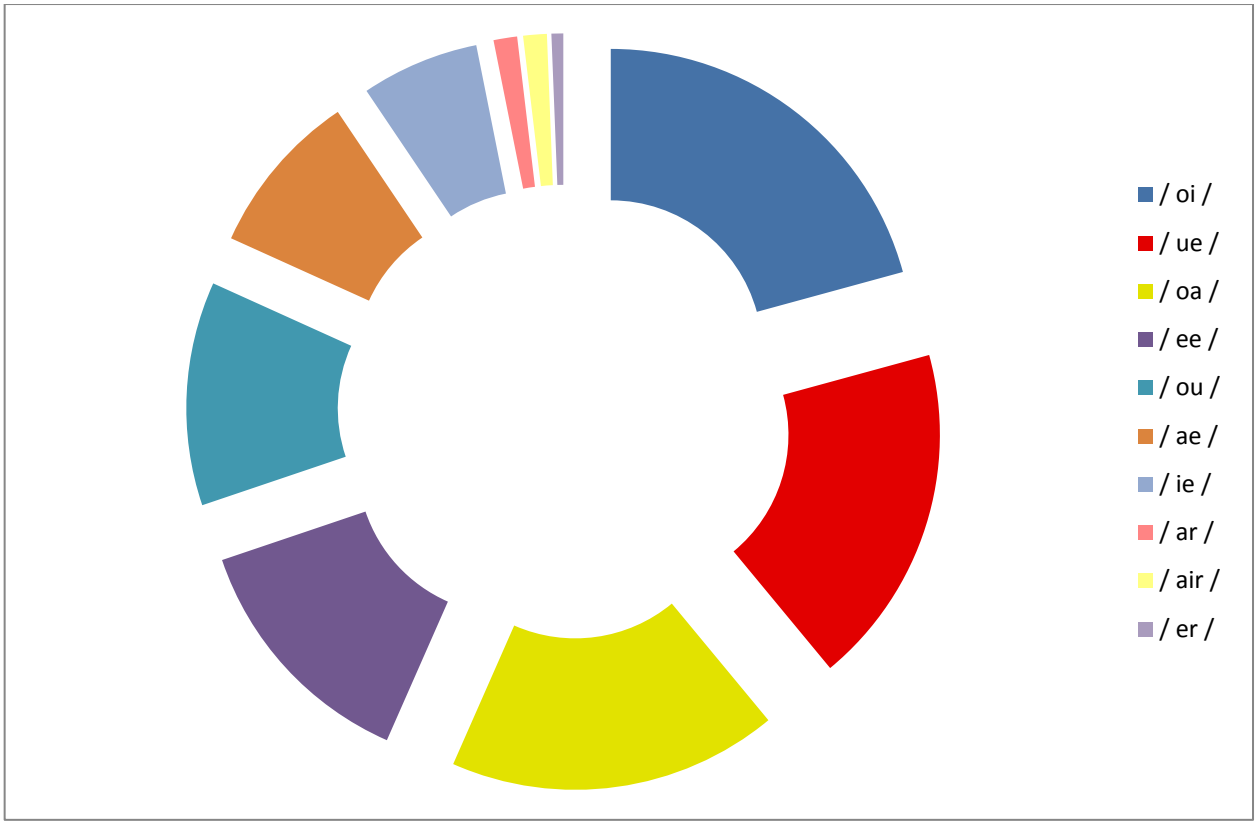
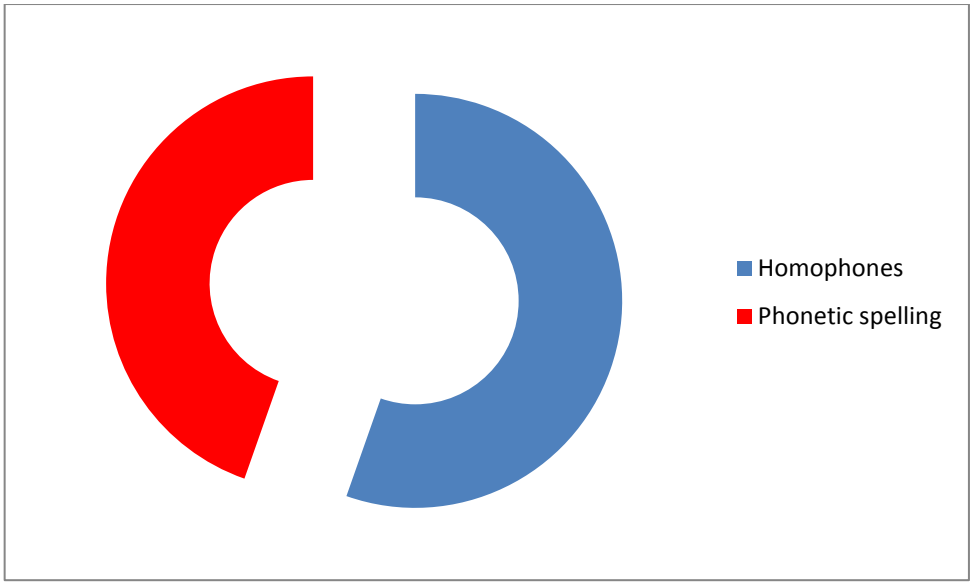


Figure 4.4 The graph indicates that the grapheme-phoneme correspondence of/oi/ was commonly used in learners' writing at66(21%).These errors occurred mainly due toHome Language interference.Learners write words as they hear them e.g. boy>boi, as is evident from their samples.Of all errors occurred under the grapheme-phoneme correspondance was the influence of learners Home Language.The phoneme /ue/ as an error presentedat 58(18%).Examples taken from learners' work were you>yue.These errors occurred due to their incorrect pronunciation.The phoneme/oa/wasrepresented at 50(18%)in the graph representation.It was not common in the learners writing,but there were errors related to it in words such as ward>woad.Then there was the /ee/ where words like way were spelled wyee,at 42(13%). The /ou/was incorrectly used in words such as old for ouldat 38 (12%)..Confusion between /i/and /ae/ when pronounced in isiZulu was at a percentage of 28(9%). Errors relating to /ie/ were at 20(6%) and occurred in words such as buy>baie.These errors can be ascribed to the influence of the Afrikaans Language.Whereas/ar/ was at 4(1%),errors was commited due to the confusion of the vowel/u/with /ar/ which waspartiallyused to sound the same ,but differ due to the spelling rules of EFAL.Meanwhile/air/ and/er/ was the least on the graph were/ air/ was at 4 (1%),and/ er/ at 2(1%).Examples of words were urn>airn andairbrick for erbricks.

4.2.4 Phonemic-related errors

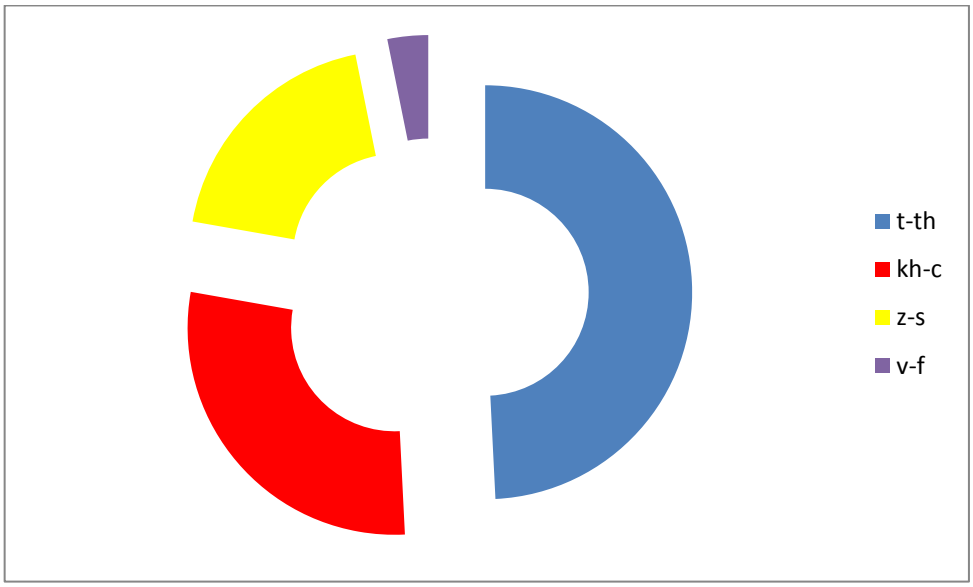
Figure 4.5 illustrates the various classes of spelling errors that were identified under Phonemic-Related (PR) which consists ofhomophones and phonetic spelling.



4.2.5 The graph indicates that under Phonemic-Related, homophones were most prevalent at72(55%).These errorsoccurred mostly because learners were not focused on the meaning of the words and the spelling but rather on words that sound the same.Examples were light for lite and back for bag. Looking at these errors, it is evident that learners suffer from alack of phonetic foundation.Where Phonetic spelling was measured at 58(45%), errors were based on the symbols of words that represent different meanings.

4.2.5 Grapheme-phoneme correspondence

Figure 4.6 illustrates the various classes of spelling errors that were identified under ConsonantGrapheme-Phoneme Correspondence such as t-th,kh-c,z-s and v-f.



The graph indicates that ConsonantGrapheme-Phoneme correspondence t-th errors were measured at 62(49%).These errors occurred in learners' samples because of the isiZulu Home Language interference.They wrote EFAL words in isiZulu.Examples were found in words such asteacher>uthisha or tin>ithini.Where

thekh-c errors came in at 36(29%), all errors noted under Vowel Grapheme-Phoneme can be ascribed to the learners' HomeLanguage interference. Learners wrote words the way the hear them for example curtain >ikhetheni.24(19%)learners pronounced words with /s/ as /z/ for example words>wordz. This occurred mostly in plurals. Lastly, errors such as foot >voot were measured at 4 (3%).

4.3 Results of the semi-structured interviews

4.3.1 CAPS requirements in terms of spelling

During the interviews teacher 1 mentioned that by the end of the third year in foundation phase learners should be able to reach the stipulated outcome,meaning that they should be able to read, spell and write words properly. She also mentioned that learners acquire spelling and reading skills through drilling phonics, and said that the walls of the classroom must be print rich so that learners could busythemselves withreading. She went on to say all the charts in class should be clear and visible. The writings on the charts should vary from vowels, alphabets, to phonics words. For example, grade 3 isiZulu learners are required to read and spell words that begin with three consonants blends in words such as Shrink and Christmas. Thissupports what Van Schalkwyk (1992:41) states: it is unfortunate that there are no shortcuts in learning spelling.The correct steps always have to be followed: using the dictionary, memorising sounds, pronouncing words properly, spelling words and editing one's spelling carefully.

Teacher 2 said that learners should create their own dictionaries, complete close procedures e.g. fill in the missing words. Moreover learners should rectify their own mistakes. It is interesting to know that both teachers' responses were from the CAPS document, and that they know it and implement in their classes. (Pollo et.al, 2008:14) state that in most literate societies children came across words in Magazines, TV, street names and so on. However their early spelling is influenced by the knowledge that they acquire through the material that learners come across in their classrooms.

4.3.2 Identification of spelling errors

In the interviews teachers reported that spelling errors were identified through marking the written paragraphs, spelling test and pronunciation of words when speaking. NEEDU (2012:25) states that spelling extends over an entire range of writing, from words to sentences, lengthy paragraphs and books.

Itis evident to the researcher from the responses she received from the teachers and also from the samples of learners, that most categories of spelling errors have been identified through the marking of written paragraphs.

4.3.3 The difficulties experienced by learners in EFAL spelling

During the interview the teachers mentioned that learners encounter difficulties in spelling, the reason being that learners write words as they hear them. The researcher also noticed this from the learners' written

samples, e.g. Son > Sun. In English the meaning of the word has diverged from the original one. These words are called homophonesthe words sound the same but the spelling and meaning differ. To add tothat Mpiti (2012) states that other problems included learners basing their spelling on their (incorrect) pronunciation, learners writing words as they hear them, a discrepancy between learners' spoken and written language, and learners seemingly struggling to understand the rules of English.

The teachers illustrated with another example how confusing vowels can make a word totally meaningless, when the word say is spelled as sey. In a word like bun > bhan it shows that learners lack the basic Phonics sound system of English and relyon incorrectvowels that apparently sound the same. It is interesting to note that the teachers mentioned that in their experience it is a bigger hurdle to analyse written language into string phonemes than learning specific phonemes and letters.To support that Gentry (2004:57) points out that for learners to master spelling correctly, teachers need to monitor their writing to ensure that spelling rules are transferred properly.

4.3.4 Alleviation of spelling errors

Teacher 1 mentioned that to alleviate spelling errors among Grade 3 isiZulu learners, they need to practise reading and writing simultaneously, since the same method is used to teach both. Teacher 2 mentioned that teachers need to be developed continuouslyinthe teaching of spelling in EFAL. The development can happen among the teachers themselves or by district officials.

The researcher's foundings from the two teachers has indicated that teachers themselves are not confidentaboutteaching spelling in English First Additional Language. The researcher further asked the teacher why she said that teachers need to be further developed inteaching spelling. She responded that most of the teachers are not trained to teach foundation phase, but rathersecondary phase. This is supported by Protopapas et.al (2013:16)whensaying that spelling errors may be strongly dependant on the language specific orthographic system and on the individual level of competency.

4.3.5 Strategies to address spelling problems

Duringthe teachers' interviews the researcher noticed that there were similarities in the strategies used to address spelling problems. They mentioned that learners should be encouraged to speak English in class, when playing with friends and at home with parents. Learners should be given enough time to have intensive reading in class through independent reading and shared reading. Moreover they mentioned that a list of phonics words should be given to drill and identify the sound pattern in those words. The researcher noticed that teachers even used the traditional way of memorising words called event spelling in words such as beautiful and because. On this issue Apel, Masterson and Niessen (2004) and Goswanai (1992) state that in general, spelling has been taught through note teaching and memorisation of weekly spelling lists, with

little stress on the importance of teaching patterns. The researcher notes with interest that teachers are following the CAPS document in implementing strategies to address spelling.

4.3.6 Teachers achieving CAPS (Linking of EFAL Phonics to Home Language phonics)

According to the response the researcher receivedfrom one of the teachers, it is difficult to link EFAL phonics with Home Language phonics because as the teacher herself is not an English First Language speaker, she might not pronounce words correctly or even confuse the vowels.

She also mentioned that from her experience in teaching, she notedthat all CAPS requirements hadbeen dealt with. This includes drilling of phonics, identification of phonics words in a passage, creating own dictionaries, syllables and linking of EFAL phonics with isiZulu Home Language. Moreover she mentioned that learners should read comprehension and answer questions, as well as write paragraphs to add to that. The DOE (2008:10) has stipulated that grade two learners will be expected to spell and read familiar words. Grade three learners will be required to master, recognise approximately 200 sight words and master proper punctuation in sentences bythe end of the year.

4.3.7 Changes experienced since the introduction of CAPS

The literature discussed in chapter 2 revealed that CAPS clearly outlines which phonicsshould be covered in what week in both the Home and First Additional language. The literature is in line with the response from the teacher.She statedthat the quality of teaching and learning has improved since the introduction of CAPS. Topic areclearly described in the content area. The content provides details on what the teacher ought to teach when introducing phonics in both langages.

She also mentioned that all assessment tasksare clearly visible in the CAPS document,and assessment tasks are set out e.g. even if the learner cannot write, he/she can retellthe story orally. To support these DOE (2008:1 3) states that learners from foundation phase should have enough time dealing with word recognition such as phonics and sight words.

4.4 Presenting data through written samples

Two themes emerged from

(i) Types of spelling errors

(ii) Interference of Home Language (IsiZulu) to EFAL spelling.

4.5.1 Types of spelling errors

During the interviews teachers managed to list the spelling errors done by isiZulu Grade 3 learners in EFAL. These included vowel omission, confusion of letters and padding. Protopapas et.al (2013:616) states that systematic spelling failures are thought to reveal aspects of the cognitive mechanisms of spelling and

learning to spell. Moreover spelling errors may be strongly dependent on the language specific orthographic system and on the individual level of competence.

The researcher also managed to identify spelling errors in the learners' written samples. Errors such as omission of letters in the words Charts > Chats/ board > bord. Padding occurred where they added more letters that should be in the middle or end of the word. Examples of padding are board > boord / chair >charr. The test also showed that learners confuse vowels such as i – e in word such as Sit > Set / a – u e.g. Sun > San, o – u e.g. Son > Sun.

The confusion of letters often changes the initial meaning of the word and produces a different word. From the teachers' interviews and the learners' written samples it is evident that learners lack the basics of phonics in their spelling. Most of the words that were incorrectly spelledin their written task, were written the way the learners heard or the way words were sounded. The Department of Education states that learners from foundation phase should have plenty of time dealing with word recognition such as phonics and sight words (DOE 2008:13), and if this is the case in the classroom most of these errors can be eliminated.

Furthermore she identified errors such as the grapheme – phoneme correspondence e.g. sheep > shiep, road > roud. A word such as light werespelt as lite. These werecategorised under the errorHomophones. During their written task they wrote words that sound the same but have different meanings and are spelled differently. Under their written samples learners wrote the word teacher as theacher and the error was identified under the vowel grapheme – phoneme error. This further illustrates that leaners replace singleconsonants with double consonants.

It is significant to note that most errors that occurred in the written samples of the learners can be ascribed to the fact that they are multilingual and thereforethey tend to mix different languages in EFAL spelling.

4.5.2 Interference of Home Language (IsiZulu) withEFAL spelling

Based on the written samples of the learners the researcher noticed that learners rely mostly on their Home Language (isiZulu) kin their spelling.A large numberof their writings were basicallya translation fromisiZulu to EFAL. An example is the word Cabinet which was written as Khabethi. This kind of error is categorisedunder the Vowels Grapheme-Phoneme errors. To support that Sebba (2012:343)found that children who are second language speakers of English have extreme barriers in spelling. Learners pronounced or sound the letter C as Kh taken from isiZulu, since these nearly sound the same. The word two was written as thu, andteacher written as thisha. The researcher noticed that most errors committed by learners indicated that they have difficulties in applyingEnglish First Additional Language rules and in steadtheyrely on their home language rules. Gentry (2004:57) found that learners should master spelling in writing and thatteachers need

to monitor their writing to ensure that spelling rules are transferred properly. It was evident to the researcherthat some teachers are not trained to teach English

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter the researcher analysed the findings obtained from the learners'writing samples and the semi-structured interviews conducted with Grade 3 EFAL teachers. Although some of the findings agree with previous research on Grade 3 EFAL learners from a Nguni language background, the most noticeable difference is that the most frequent error in this study was a non-phonemic spelling error, omission. . The next chapter will deal with conclusions from the findings and recommendations For addressing some of the most pressing problems.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents conclusions based on the findings presented in chapters 2 and 4. In the light of the conclusions, certain recommendations will be made to address spelling problems among Grade 3 EFAL learners who are isiZulu home language speakers. The chapter will conclude by indicating the limitations of the study and avenues for further research:

5.2 Conclusions

5.2.1 CAPS outcomes and literature review (Chapter 2):

- According to CAPS, Grade 3 EFAL learners should be able to spell common words correctly using their knowledge of phonics, while also recognising three-letter consonant blends at the beginning and end of words (2.2).
- Spelling is a form of coding, where graphic symbols are used to convert oral language into written language according specific rules and conventions (2.3.1).
- As spelling is a skill that is acquired over time, various models identify increasingly complex phases in spelling development (2.3.2).
- Two skills that are central to spelling are phonemic awareness and the ability to recognise visual imagery (2.3.3).
- Various classifications of spelling errors indicate the systematic nature of these errors and the information that can be gleaned from this regarding the spelling development of the learner (2.4.1).
- Multilingual children, and specifically speakers of English as a second language, often struggle with spelling (2.4.2).
- Learning theory of spelling development can be divided into phonological, constructive and statistical learning perspective (2.5).
- Localised studies on spelling in non-English speaking countries indicate interference by the mother tongue (2.6).
- A study on the English spelling of Grade 3 isiXhosa learners, indicate that in addition to borrowing isiXhosa words into their English writing, learners mostly make phonemic errors due to an inability to understand the sounds of English (2.6.9).

- Although spelling bees may raise the profile of spelling and benefit dedicated participants (2.7.1), they have not been shown to improve the general level of spelling of a population (2.7.2).
- The spelling bee introduced by DBE in 2014 supposedly forms part the intervention to improve literacy inadequacies highlighted by the 2011 ANAs, although it is unlikely that a spelling bee with limited participation will have a widespread effect on the spelling competency of learners (2.7.3).

5.2.2 Spelling presented in writing sample (Chapter 4):

- The biggest category of spelling errors was non-phonemic errors, followed by commonly confused vowels and problems with grapheme-phoneme correspondence (4.2). This is contrary to what was expected, as the previous study on Grade 3 EFAL learners indicated that the most frequent errors were phonemic due to the inability of learners to understand the sound of English (2.6.9). This is surprising as both the study described in 2.6.9 and the present study deal with learners who are home language speakers of an Nguni language.
- Non-phonemic errors are errors that cannot be explained as having been heard wrongly, i.e. omission, padding and transposition (4.2.1). The biggest error group here was omission, where learners seem to use a type of shorthand, e.g. schol for school (4.2.1).
- The vowels learners confused most often are “e” and “i” (4.2.2), which is not surprising given the non-phonetic spelling of English and the wide range of sounds (often overlapping) that can be presented by these letters.
- The biggest problem with grapheme-phoneme correspondence was with learners substituting “oi” for “oy”, as in “boy” (4.2.3). This may be attributed to interference from the home language, where the sound /ɔi/ is written as “oi” in isiZulu.
- The most frequent phonemic error that occurred, is where students misheard a sound and consequently misspelt it, such as “back” for “bag” (4.2.4). Failure to distinguish between these sounds may be linked to incorrect pronunciation.
- Consonant grapheme-phoneme errors occurred, with the most frequent error using “th” instead of “t” (4.2.5). Again, this could be attributed to interference from the home language, as “th” in isiZulu is pronounced /t/.

5.2.3 Teachers’ perceptions on the teaching of spelling to Grade 3 isiZulu EFAL learners:

- The most commonly perceived spelling errors by Grade 3 EFAL teachers to isiZulu Home Language learners are omission,transposition, padding, confusion of letters (4.3.1).
- Teachers become aware of these spelling errors through learners’ writing (4.3.2).

- Teachers ascribed these problems to not learners not getting enough practice, no parental involvement, lack of commitment from learners, overcrowding, family matters, emotional problems such as bullying, lack of basic foundation i.e. teaching of vowels, consonants and phonics misunderstanding, and special learning needs (4.3.3).
- Teachers suggest the following remedies: learners need to practise reading and writing simultaneously, words division (syllables), teacher development in the area of spelling intruction (4.3.4).
- All respondents indicated that learners from and isiZulu background should be encouraged to read English to improve their spelling (4.3.5), and that weekly spelling tests should be introduced. Although reading is a recognised activity for the improvement of spelling, Fawcett (2006) deems spelling tests to be unreliable as a measure of spelling proficiency (2.3).
- Respondents cited the following CAPS outcomes: learners should be able to read, spell and write properly, should create their own personal dictionary, complete the cloze procedures and rectify their own mistakes (4.3.6).
- Respondents indicated thatthey are able to teach successfully with regard to CAPS' focus on the long vowels in words such as cheese/sneeze (ommission was the main non-phonemic error – 4.1) and the vowel pattern e.g. walking and jumping (4.3.7).
- Respondents that if spelling problems are not addressed, it may impact negatively on learners' self-esteem, creating a vicious cycle (4.3.7).
- Respondentsagreed that the introduction of CAPS improved the quality of teaching and learning, improved details on what teachers ought to teach, clearly describes topic (the content area) and presents preparations in a user friendly format (4.3.7).

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Creating awareness of differences between mono- and bilingual language processing

Teachers of additional languages should be made aware of the differences in language processing between mono- and bilingual brains. This not only impacts on reaction times, but also on vocabulary size and often leads to interference from the first language, especially when the second language is still in an emergent phase.

5.3.2 Rethinking spelling interventions at national level

Although the DBE Spelling Bee may raise awareness of the importance of spelling, it is clearly not everything it is touted to be and will certainly not improve the general level of spelling among learners. The DBE should

investigate other strategies for improving spelling, such as making more interesting reading materials to schools for reading corners. Above all, it should develop a strategy that creates autonomous learners who are able to improve their spelling skills on a lifelong basis.

5.3.3 Language-specific spelling interventions

Teachers of EFAL should be made aware of the specific ways in which a particular home language impacts on English spelling, in order to develop language specific interventions in their classes.

5.4. Limitations

This study could have benefited from an attitudinal survey to gauge learners' perception of the importance of spelling. This is important, because unless learners understand the value of proper spelling, they are unlikely to be motivated to improve their spelling.

Although this study focussed on learners from an isiZulu background, the study could be adapted for learners from other home language backgrounds in the same or other grades, at which stage an attitudinal component can be included.

5.5 Avenues for further research

5.5.1 Interference by home language on the spelling of EFAL learners

Clearly more research is required in South Africa on spelling in an EFAL context. To date, no studies have been done in any of the Sotho languages. The results of such studies could help develop language specific interventions for EFAL teachers.

5.5.2 The impact of the annual DBE Spelling Bee on standard of spelling in the Annual National Assessment

In view of the fact that the DBE Spelling Bee has as its main aim to improve the standard of spelling observed in the Annual National Assessment, research should be conducted to measure the effectiveness of this intervention, failing which other interventions should be designed.

5.5.3 Learner-centred spelling interventions for lifelong learning

As long as learners do not become autonomous spellers who continue to improve their spelling skills, there will not be a lasting improvement in the standard of spelling. However, research is required into the most efficient ways of engaging learners in their development of spelling skills.

5.5.4 A taxonomy of EFAL errors by language

In view of the fact that this study, contrary to Mpiti (2012) finds that omission is the most frequently made spelling error, future research should revisit the topic to determine which errors are made most frequently in EFAL classes, and with what frequency?

5.6 Conclusion

This study investigated the CAPS spelling requirements for Grade 3 EFAL learners and through error analysis identified the main categories of errors made by learners from and isiZulu background. The study indicated evidence of interference in the English spelling by the first language.

In addition, the study contains views of Grade 3 EFAL teachers on what they see as their role in spelling instruction, the problems they encounter and strategies they implement to improve spelling standards in their classes. It is clear that these teachers view the renewed emphasis of CAPS on spelling instruction as a step in the right direction, and that they favour learner-autonomous strategies such as reading.

Whereas this study confirms the prevalence of phonemic errors identified by Mpiti (2012) in a study on Grade 3 EFAL learners from an isiXhosa background, it also differs by identifying omission as the most frequent error made by Grade 3 isiZulu learners in English. Further research is required to determine which errors are indeed most prevalent and to develop interventions specifically aimed at these errors.

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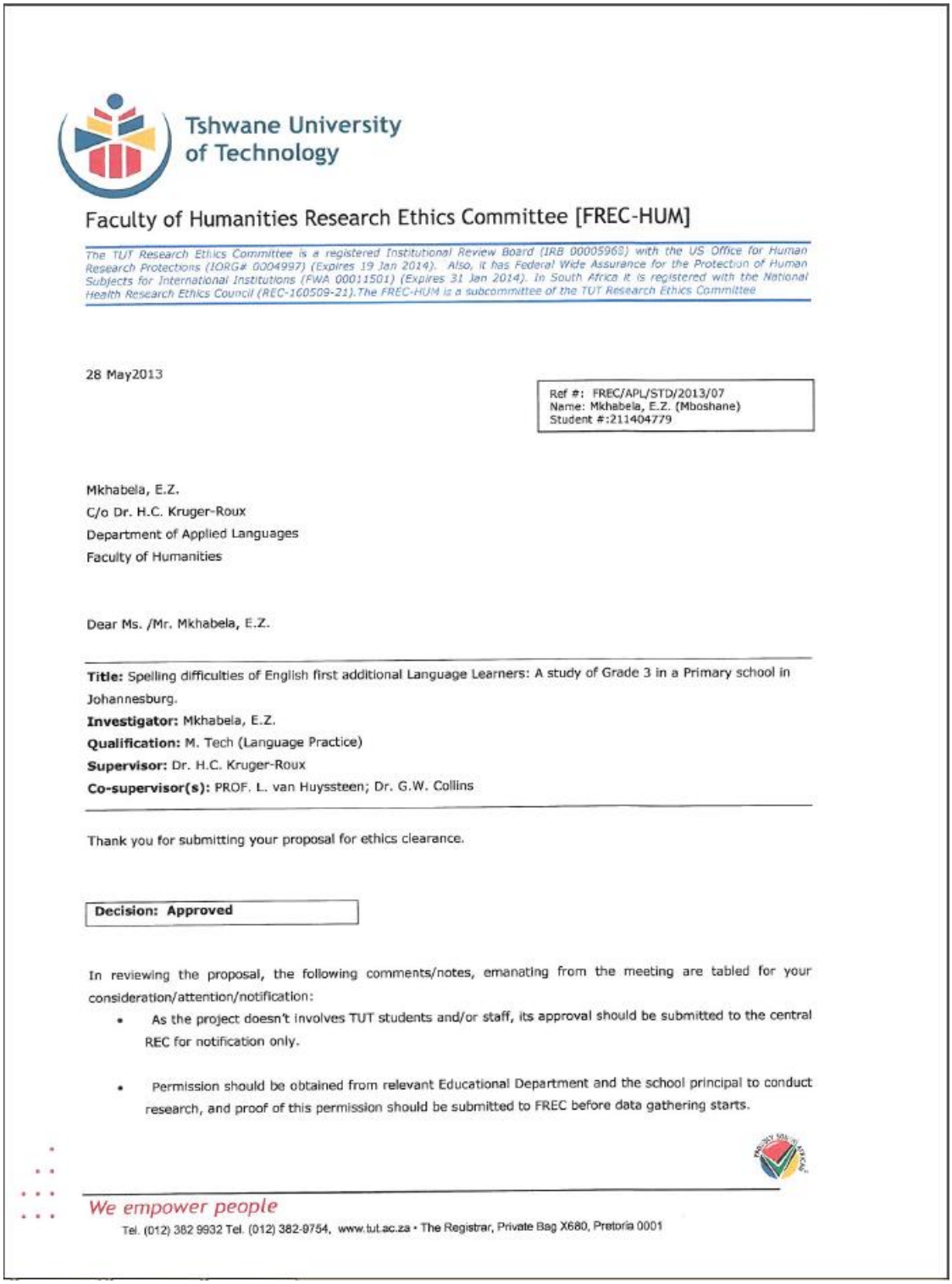
I

APPENDIX A

Ethical approval from TUT Senate Reasearch Ethics Committee



Tshwane University of Technology

Faculty of Humanities Research Ethics Committee [FREC-HUM]

The TUT Research Ethics Committee is a registered Institutional Review Board (IRB 00005968) with the US Office for Human Research Protections (IORG# 0004997) (Expires 19 Jan 2014). Also, it has Federal Wide Assurance for the Protection of Human Subjects for International Institutions (FWA 00011501) (Expires 31 Jan 2014). In South Africa it is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council (REC-160509-21).The FREC-HUM is a subcommittee of the TUT Research Ethics Committee

28 May2013

Ref #: FREC/APL/STD/2013/07
Name: Mkhabela, E.Z. (Mboshane)
Student #:211404779

Mkhabela, E.Z.
C/o Dr. H.C. Kruger-Roux
Department of Applied Languages
Faculty of Humanities

Dear Ms. /Mr. Mkhabela, E.Z.

Title: Spelling difficulties of English first additional Language Learners: A study of Grade 3 in a Primary school in Johannesburg.
Investigator: Mkhabela, E.Z.
Qualification: M. Tech (Language Practice)
Supervisor: Dr. H.C. Kruger-Roux
Co-supervisor(s): PROF. L. van Huyssteen; Dr. G.W. Collins

Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethics clearance.

Decision: Approved

In reviewing the proposal, the following comments/notes, emanating from the meeting are tabled for your consideration/attention/notification:

- As the project doesn't involves TUT students and/or staff, its approval should be submitted to the central REC for notification only.
- Permission should be obtained from relevant Educational Department and the school principal to conduct research, and proof of this permission should be submitted to FREC before data gathering starts.

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- Enquiries cannot be referred to Dr. Hoffman (Chair of REC), but rather to the Chair of FREC as the project has been approved by FREC and not REC.

- **The application be approved.**

The Faculty of Humanities Research Ethics Committee reviewed the documents at its meeting on 28 May 2013. The study is provisionally **approved**.

The Committee wishes you well with your research endeavours.

Signature

Chair / Deputy-Chair
Faculty Research Ethics Committee
[Ref#: FREC/APL/STD/2013/07]

cc Dr H.C. Kruger-Roux;
Prof. L. van Huyssteen;
Dr. G.W. Collins

APPENDIX B

Informed consent: Parents

Tshwane University of Technology

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FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LANGUAGES

INFORMATION LEAFLET AND RESEARCH SUBJECT CONSENT FORM (PARENT)

PROJECT TITLE: SPELLING DIFFICULTIES IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS: A STUDY OF GRADE 3 LEARNERS IN PRIMARRY SCHOOL IN JOHANNESBURG

PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR : MS E.Z MKHABELA

STUDY LEADER : DR H.C KRUGER-ROUX

CO-STUDY LEADERS : PROF .L. VAN HUYSSTEEN

: DR G.W COLLINS

Dear Parent,

Your child is invited to participate in a research study that forms part of my formal M Tech studies. The information in this leaflet explains to you what will be expected of your child, should you agree to participate.

WHAT IS THE STUDY ALL ABOUT?

This research study is about determining to what extent the spelling of Grade 3 English First Additional Language (EFAL) learners satisfies the requirements of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). In this case learners will be required to write a short passage on “My bedroom” in English. These passages will be analyzed to determine what types of errors are commonly made in English by Grade 3s, as well as the frequency with which these errors occur and what the possible causes of these errors may be.

I have been an EFAL teacher for fifteen years and would like to improve my understanding of spelling errors in classes that I teach. I would also like to help other teachers improve their understanding of the problem and the way in which they address it.

The findings of the research will promote a better understanding and greater knowledge of spelling errors among Grade 3s in the EFAL class. The outcomes of the study will therefore be helpful to improve teaching methods and learning rather than transferring the blame for spelling errors to learners.

WHAT WILL YOUR CHILD BE REQUIRED TO DO IN THE STUDY?

The participants will be requested to write a short passage on “My bedroom” in English. This activity will take place in one of your child’s regular English lessons at school. It will be a once-off thing with no expenses.

If you agree for your child to take part in this study, you will be required to do the following:

- To sign this consent form
- To inform your child that you have signed the form and of what they can expect.

ARE THERE ANY CONDITIONS THAT MAY EXCLUDE YOUR CHILD FROM THE STUDY?

No. All Grade 3 EFAL learners from an isiZulu background are eligible for participation in the study.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS THAT MAY COME FROM THE STUDY?

The benefit of allowing your child to participate in this study is that your child will make a contribution to the improvement and development of spelling strategies, teaching approaches and learning materials.

WILL YOU RECEIVE ANY FINANCIAL COMPENSATION OR INCENTIVE FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY?

Please note that neither you nor your child will be paid to participate in the study.

WHAT ARE YOUR CHILD’S RIGHTS AS PARTICIPANT IN THIS STUDY?

Your child’s participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw your child at any stage without any penalty that will disadvantage him/her in future.

HOW WILL CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONIMITY BE ENSURED IN THE STUDY?

All the data gathered during the study will be handled confidentially. That means your child’s data will be coded, and not be linked to his/her name. Only the researcher and the supervisor of the study have access to it. The information obtained during the study will only be used for the study and not for academic matters.

IS THE RESEARCHER QUALIFIED TO CARRY OUT THE STUDY?

The researcher is a qualified teacher in the department of languages, therefore capable to do language research.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

Yes, the Faculty of Higher Degrees committee and the Research Ethics committee of the Tshwane University of Technology have approved the formal study proposal.

WHO CAN BE CONTACTED FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING THE STUDY?

The primary investigator, MS E.Z. Mkhabela, can be contacted during school hours at Tel: (011) 261-7182, or on her cellular phone at 0827708235. The study leader, Dr. H.C. Kruger-Roux, can be contacted during office hours at Tel: (012) 382-9849. Should you have any questions regarding the ethical aspects of the study, you can contact the chairperson of the TUT Research committee, Dr. W.A. Hoffmann, during office hours at Tel: (012) 382-6465/46, E-mail hoffmanna@tut.ac.za.

DECLARATION: OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The researcher is a teacher at the school where the research is being conducted. However the

learners are hereby assured that their participation (or non-participation) in this research study will not in any way disadvantage them or be held against them.

A FINAL WORD

Your co-operation and participation in the study will be greatly appreciated. Please sign the informed consent below if you agree to participate in the study. In such a case, you will receive a copy of the signed informed consent from the researcher.

PARENTAL INFORMED CONSENT

(Applicable when participants are younger than 18 years old)

I hereby confirm that I have been adequately informed by the researcher about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of the study. I have also received, read and understood the above written information. I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my child, will be anonymously processed into a research report. I understand that his/her participation is voluntary and that he/she may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw his/her assent and participation in the study. He/she has had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and I, of my own free will, declare that my child can participate in the above-mentioned study.

Research participant's name: _____ (Please print)

Research participant's parent/guardian's name:_____(Please print)

Research participant's parent/guardian's signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's name: _____ (Please print)

Researcher's signature: _____

Date: _____

CHILD ASSENT FORM

(Applicable when participants are younger than 18 years old)

I, …… (Print full name), understand that my parent(s)/guardian(s) has given permission (said it is okay) for me to take part in the research project. I am taking part because I want to and not because I'm forced to do so. I have been assured that I can stop at any time I want to without getting into any trouble (nothing bad will happen to me and nobody will be mad at me if I want to stop). Also, I can always ask the researcher any question about the study.

_____

Signature/Name

APPENDIX C

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FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LANGUAGES

INFORMATION LEAFLET AND RESEARCH SUBJECT CONSENT FORM (TEACHER)

PROJECT TITLE: SPELLING DIFFICULTIES IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS: A STUDY OF GRADE 3 LEARNERS IN PRIMARRY SCHOOL IN JOHANNESBURG

PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR : MS E.Z MKHABELA

STUDY LEADER : DR H.C. KRUGER-ROUX

CO-STUDY LEADERS : PROF L. VAN HUYSSTEEN

: DR G.W COLLINS

Dear Research Participant

You are invited to participate in a research study that forms part of my formal M Tech studies. The information in this leaflet explains to you what will be expected from you, should you agree to participate.

WHAT IS THE STUDY ALL ABOUT?

This research study is about determining to what extent the spelling of Grade 3 English First Additional Language (EFAL) learners satisfies the requirements of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS).In this case learners are expected to know and be able to use phonics in both EFAL and their Home Language (HL). You, as an EFAL teacher, will have a particular insight into this, and we are very interested in obtaining your perceptions and opinions about the level of spelling among Grade 3 EFAL learners.

I have been an EFAL teacher for fifteen years and would like to improve my understanding of spelling errors in classes that I teach. I would also like to help other teachers improve their understanding of the problem and the way in which they address it.

The findings of the research will promote a better understanding and greater knowledge of spelling errors among Grade 3s in the EFAL class. The outcomes of the study will therefore be helpful to improve teaching methods and learning rather than transferring the blame for spelling errors to learners.

WHAT WILL YOU REQUIRED TO DO IN THE STUDY?

The participants will be requested to participate in an interview regarding their experience of

teaching spelling to Grade 3s in EFAL. The interview will take place on the school premises. The interview will last for 30-60 minutes, and it will be safe and convenient without any distractions. It will be a once-off with no expenses, since the interview will be at the school.

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be required to do the following:

- To sign this consent form
- To participate an interview.

ARE THERE ANY CONDITIONS THAT MAY EXLUDE YOU FROM THE STUDY?

No. All Grade 3 EFAL teachers with learners from an isiZulu background are eligible for participation in the study.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS THAT MAY COME FROM THE STUDY?

The benefit of participating in this study is that you will make a contribution to the improvement and development of spelling strategies, teaching approaches and learning materials for EFAL.

WILL YOU RECEIVE ANY FINANCIAL COMPENSATION OR INCENTIVE FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY?

Please note that you will not be paid to participate in the study.

WHAT ARE YOUR RIGHTS AS PARTICIPANT IN THIS STUDY?

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any stage without any penalty that will disadvantage you in future.

HOW WILL CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANOMITY ENSURED IN THE STUDY?

All the data gathered during the study will be handled confidentially. That means your data will be coded, and not be linked to your name. Only the researcher and the supervisor of the study have access to it. The information obtained during the study will only be used for the study and not for employment related matters.

IS THE RESEARCHER QUALIFIED TO CARRY OUT THE STUDY?

The researcher is a qualified teacher in the department of languages, therefore capable to do language research.

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Yes, the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee and the Research Ethics committee of the Tshwane University of Technology have approved the formal study proposal.

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The primary investigator, Ms E.Z. Mkhabela, can be contacted during school hours at Tel: (011) 261-7182, or on her cellular phone at 0827708235. The study leader, Dr. H.C. Kruger-Roux, can be contacted during office hours at Tel: (012) 382-9849. Should you have any questions regarding the ethical aspects of the study, you can contact the chairperson of the TUT Research committee, Dr. W.A. Hoffmann, during office hours at Tel: (012) 382-6465/46, E-mail hoffmanna@tut.ac.za.

DECLARATION: OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The researcher is a teacher at the school where the research is being conducted. However teachers are hereby assured that their participation (or non-participation) in this research study will not in

any way disadvantage them or be held against them.

A FINAL WORD

Your co-operation and participation in the study will be greatly appreciated. Please sign the informed consent below if you agree to participate in the study. In such a case, you will receive a copy of the signed informed consent from the researcher.

TEACHER INFORMED CONSENT

I hereby confirm that I have been adequately informed by the researcher about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of the study. I have also received, read and understood the above written information. I am aware that the results of the study will be anonymously processed into a research report.I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study. I had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and of my own free will declare myself prepared to participate in the study.

Research participant's name: _____(Please print)

Research participant's signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's name: _____(Please print)

Researcher's signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX D

Research instrument: Stimulus for continuous writing

The researcher started by arraging learners according to mixed genders and also according to their different level of abilities.The reseacher administered the A4 lined papers and pens, in order for them to write on.Just before they commerce with their writing ground, rules were clearly stated that learners should not disrupt others by moving up and down. The researcher asked them to copy the date and the topic to their papers.The topic was clearly explained and learnerswere instructed to followspelling rules in their writing to avoid unneccessary mistakes.They were instructed to insert all punctuation marks in their writings.Learners were notified about the starting time ,finishing time and the length of ten sentenceswas required from them.

APPENDIX E

Research instrument: Interview schedule semi-structured interview

Standard of Spelling in English First Additional Language among Grade 3learners in a primary school in Johannesburg

Main questions	Additional questions	Clarifying questions
How does the standard of spelling of Grade 3 EFAL class compare to the requirements of CAPS? **OR** **How do you rate the standard of Grade 3 EFAL spelling to CAPS requirements?**	• **What type of spelling mistakes are detected amongGrade 3 EFAL learners from an isiZulu background?** • **How did you identify those spelling errors?** • **What makes these learners experience difficulties in EFAL spelling?** • **What can be done to alleviate spelling problems?** • **What strategies do you use or do you think could be used to address spelling problems among Grade 3 EFAL learners from an isiZulu background?** • **In your opinion, what are the CAPS requirements for EFAL for Grade 3 learners?** • **To what extent do you feel you are able to achieve CAPS outcomes e.g. linking of EFAL phonics to (HL) phonics?** • **In what way(s) do these problems**	• **Could you expand a little on that?** • **Please substantiate your answer.**
In your experience what are the problems that Grade 3 learners are experience with spelling in the EFAL class?		

	impact negatively on learners? • **What changes have you experienced since the intervention of CAPS was in place?** •	