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Orthographic Challenges Encountered by Fourth-Grade English Language Learners in a Rural-Based South African Primary School

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ABSTRACT

The significant role of orthographic competence in the mastery of essay writing and reading ability by fourth-grade learners has been overlooked by teachers in the context of English being taught as an additional language. This research focused on assessing the orthographic competence of Grade 4 learners and exploring potential solutions. Using a qualitative approach, 16 Grade 4 learners and three educators were purposefully selected as participants. The study revealed that most Grade 4 learners struggle with orthographic challenges in their written essays, with mistakes falling into five categories: capitalization, substitution, word spacing, addition, and omission. Educators cited the lack of access to a library and inadequate emphasis on phonemes and graphemes in the English language as contributing factors. Additionally, the dominant use of the educators' native language during English lessons and the absence of spelling bee competitions were identified as barriers to orthographic proficiency. It was concluded that learners struggle to correct these mistakes on their own. The implication of this study is that it underscores the practical importance of orthographic competence in essay writing. The study's recommendations, which include implementing frequent dictation activities and emphasizing rules on capitalization, compound words, letters, and syllables, provide practical solutions for addressing orthographic challenges in English education.

Keywords: Capitalization; English as a Second Language; Error; Homophone; Omission; Spelling Mistake; Substitution; Word Division

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1. Introduction

English is widely used as the primary language for learning and teaching in many African countries. However, the urgency of learning to spell and proficiency in English orthography cannot be overstated, especially for learners using English as an Additional Language (FAL) or as a second language (ESL). In countries like South Africa, the learner population includes those classified as English First Additional Language (EFAL) learners from language minority backgrounds.

English is crucial for business and educational purposes across all economic sectors, so there is an immediate and significant need for learners to become proficient in writing in English [1].

The ability to spell correctly is a crucial literacy skill in any language, especially for students learning English as a foreign language after years of instruction [2]. However, educators and researchers often prioritise speaking and reading skills, overlooking the importance of spelling [3]. According to Smith and Loveall et al [4], non-native English speakers often struggle with spelling due to differences between English and their native languages, while other non-native speakers who have languages with similarities to English make fewer spelling errors.

Essentially, the process of learning any language requires a fundamental focus on writing. In spoken language, correctness is not as crucial, but in written communication, the incorrect form of words or even a single misspelled letter can significantly alter the intended meaning. Therefore, using the appropriate English vocabulary and ensuring correct spelling is important [2]. Treiman [5] suggests accurate spelling reflects proficiency, while poor spelling appears unprofessional. Kim et al. [1] further explain that effective spelling is particularly important for second language users due to its social implications, although it receives minimal attention in research.

Conversely, Limited research has been conducted on students' spelling errors, focusing on the challenges encountered by students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) [6]. A study in Saudi Arabia investigated the association between spelling and listening comprehension among EFL students, revealing a 41.5% occurrence of spelling errors, a 49.5% correct response rate in the listening comprehension test, and a 52% accuracy in the decoding test.

Similarly, Ehri [3] examined spelling errors among ESL students and concluded that spelling skills tend to be less proficient, especially with multi-syllabic words. Al-zuoud and Kabilan [7] scrutinized the composition spelling errors of 43 EFL undergraduate Jordanian students, uncovering 228 errors in 43 written papers. These errors were classified and analysed into four types, based on Cook et al's classification (2013) [8]: omission, substitution, insertion, and transposition. In 2015, a study was conducted by Alhaisoni [9] in Ghana involving 122 EFL undergraduate students to investigate the prevalent types of spelling errors in English composition. The findings revealed that omission errors were the most frequent occurrence among students. Most of these errors were attributed to improper use of vowels and pronunciation. The study also highlighted that spelling errors stemmed from disparities between the students' second language and the influences of their first language.

In the context of South Africa, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) replaced the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) in January 2012. This change established a comprehensive National Curriculum and Assessment Policy for all subjects. Notably, CAPS no longer uses the term learning outcomes and Assessment Standards and learning areas are now referred to as subjects. In the case of English FAL, internal assessment is conducted in the intermediate phase, involving daily monitoring of learners' progress through observation, written exercises, oral activities, written tests, and other forms of assessment. Informal assessments offer feedback to the learners and inform teaching planning but do not need to be documented under language structures, conventions, punctuation, spelling, and other language conventions, as these are addressed within the context of creative writing. The teacher is responsible for later editing and correcting mistakes in learners' grammar, spelling, and punctuation, presenting tidy, legible final versions.

Learners in South Africa are expected to start learning English as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) in Grade 4. At this stage, learners of Indigenous languages start to fall behind, and the gap between them and the learners who speak English as their L1 starts to widen. Thus, their orthographic challenges would be influenced by their first language spoken and written systems. For this reason, the groups selected for this study comprised learners who learn

to read and write in an L2 and have had sufficient exposure to literacy in an L2 context. This means that although they are learning English, it is not the primary language at home. Therefore, this study sought to examine and analyse orthographic competence among fourth-grade learners of English FAL.

1.1. Purpose of the Study

This study assessed and analysed the orthographic proficiency of Grade 4 English FAL learners.

1.2. Research Questions

- What is the extent of orthographic proficiency demonstrated by Grade 4 students in a rural primary school?
- What are the predominant orthographic challenges encountered by Grade 4 students in a rural primary school?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Framework

The contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) was founded on the principles of structuralism and behaviorism, which gained significant traction during the 1950s and 1960s.

Originally formulated by Fries in 1945, Contrastive Analysis was further developed by Robert Lado in 1957. CA entails the comparison of linguistic structures between two or more languages to elucidate the most challenging disparities language learners encounter. The principal objective of CAH is to juxtapose the phonological systems, morphological systems, syntax, and lexical meanings of multiple languages.

The impetus for Contrastive Analysis (CA) stemmed from enhancing the teaching methods for second language (L2) learners. Lado (1985, 15) posits that "educators who compare foreign language learners with native language learners will gain insights into their difficulties and can design more effective teaching methods."

According to CA, errors in L2 learning stem from disparities between the learners' first language (L1) and the second language (L2). CAH holds that these distinctions can be leveraged to anticipate potential errors.

The researcher's application of this theory in the study arose from the linguistic challenges encountered by L2 learners, given the variations in phonological systems, syntax, and lexical meanings across languages. At the fourth-grade level in rural public schools, students acquire a second language with a spelling system different from their native language, leading to frequent spelling errors. Consequently, using Contrastive Analysis, we aim to discern the specific points of divergence contributing to the difficulties experienced by language learners by contrasting their native language with English and identifying the rules that do not apply in the English language.

2.2. Orthographic Challenges

Most people living in South Africa are speakers of Indigenous languages and English is often not spoken in these communities, nor is it seen in the environment. Many of these rural areas are still ill-equipped and under-resourced. An issue often reported is the lack of adequately trained teachers in the Foundation Phase (Grades 1–3). Moreover, an orthographic error occurs when a word is misspelled. Since English has many odd spellings, everyone makes the occasional orthographic error.

Kim et al.[1] report that this type of error is observed among students when they write in a learning space. Consequently, a lack of understanding between graphemes and phonemes often leads to orthographic errors. In addition, the student may write 'skool' instead of school or 'kik' instead of kick'.

2.3. Orthographic Mistakes versus Errors

There are two prevalent viewpoints concerning the distinction between errors and mistakes. According to one perspective, mistakes are a broad overarching category encompassing errors, while the opposing viewpoint posits the inverse. Loveall et al.[4], an advocate of the latter stance, delineates "errors" from two vantage points: psycholinguistics, pertaining to the speech of native speakers, and applied linguistics, relating to English Language Teaching (ELT).

2.4. Role of Errors in English Language Teaching

According to experts, preventing errors is vital as they are perceived as a negative reflection of a learner's perfor-

mance. Proponents of the Audio-lingual method underscore the significance of averting learner errors. Conversely, adherents of contemporary language teaching methods like Communicative Language Teaching regard errors as a fundamental aspect of the learning process, indicative of genuine progress and endeavor on the part of the learner[2]. Treiman[5] also posits that errors provide valuable insights into how learners structure their knowledge to produce language at a given moment.

2.5. Previous Studies on Spelling Mistakes and Errors

The marked scripts of students showed six primary types of errors: addition, omission, inversion, substitution, pronunciation errors, and miscellaneous. The analysis documented these error patterns and examined their frequency in diverse types of schools and identified the five most common errors in the essays. Additionally, the analysis discussed potential factors that may influence the occurrence of these errors.

2.5.1. Inversion

In her study, Ehri[3] discusses students' misspelling of the word 'foreign,' attributing it to carelessness. However, our research team disagrees with this interpretation, positing that such errors could stem from ignorance rather than simple carelessness on the part of the student. This viewpoint is supported by the findings of Powell et al.[10]. Additionally, it was observed that inconsistencies between US English and British English spelling conventions contribute to such misspellings, as illustrated by the example of 'anemia' in AmE and 'anemia' in BrE.

2.5.2. Addition and Substitution

Language acquisition is conceptualised as a process of hypothesis testing, as postulated by Chomsky (1959).[11] Learners often include unnecessary letters or substitute required ones within words during their learning endeavors. The documents analysed in our study manifested 344 spelling errors, classified into four distinct categories: omission, insertion, substitution, and transposition. Specifically, there were 182 omission errors, constituting 53% of the total, and insertion errors, accounting for 24%. Additionally, there were 62 substitution errors, comprising 18% of the total, and 16 transposition errors, representing 5% of the total. The

preponderance of errors (77%) pertained to the omission and insertion categories. Insertion errors primarily stemmed from a deficient grasp of the correlation between spoken and written language and erroneous pronunciation. Conversely, omission errors arose from students omitting certain letters due to an inadequate knowledge of correct spelling. The table below provides examples of these spelling errors.

2.6. Causes for the Spelling Errors

2.6.1. Carelessness Errors

Second language learners have lower motivation to learn a new language. This lack of motivation can lead them to find classroom materials dull, resulting in insufficient attention. Consequently, this lack of enthusiasm hampers their efforts to effectively utilise the language, reducing their likelihood of attaining proficiency[4]. It is also important to note that native language speakers can make careless errors.

2.6.2. False Concepts Hypothesized

Mastern and Apel[12] explain that many students misunderstand the target language due to poor teaching methods and misconceptions. Specifically, in the context of spelling errors and mistakes in English, learners struggle to grasp the main concepts in their written work.

2.6.3. Ignorance of Rule Restrictions

Ehri[3] explains that ignorance of rule restrictions involves using rules in inappropriate situations. Pasquarella[6] asserts that an error of this nature involves the inappropriate transfer and application of a mastered rule. I heard the applause, clapped my hands and climbed up with both ears. Most of these spelling errors are due to the influence of the native language in Indigenous languages.

Powell et al[10] study showed that LoLT learners do not perform as well as their English L1 counterparts in dictation tasks. The study also discovered a correlation between a learner's spelling ability and reading comprehension. It is evident that if learners struggle with spelling, they will also face challenges with reading and writing. This will have a significant impact on their academic progression and overall performance. However, there is evidence that once orthographic skills are taught and learned, they can positively affect a learner's reading ability, creating a ripple effect on other areas of academic performance. The performance of

these learners in English is essential as it has been a language of learning and teaching since Grade 4. Research has shown that a child's first language has a significant role to play in their second language acquisition and that positive transfer from a first language can occur with literacy skills, in particular reading [2]. With most of these learners being African language speakers, it is predictable that they would transfer what they know about English to English literacy skills.

3. Context and Methods for This Study

3.1. Research Design

The approach used in this study is primarily a mixed method, which includes document analysis. According to Kim et al. [1] descriptive research design focuses on accurately describing the characteristics of the participants, elements, or groups. Descriptive research allows for observation in natural settings.

3.2. Participants of This Study

The research comprised 16 Grade 4 learners of English FAL, both male (6) and female (10) between the ages of 10–12, selected via purposive sampling from a rural primary school in Limpopo, South Africa. In addition, three teachers participated in the study. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants meeting specific criteria.

3.3. Data Collection Methods

Data was collected through document analysis and interviews. The document analysis entailed the examination of Grade 4 EFAL learners' English essay scripts at a rural-based Primary School. These documents, being pre-produced texts not authored by the researcher, are readily accessible and contain valuable information. The researchers scrutinized these essays to acquire data about orthographic competence. Furthermore, interviews were conducted with three selected Grade 4 English FAL teachers at the same rural-based Primary School. The interview questions were formulated to be objective and to minimise travel and subsistence costs. The anonymity of the respondents was ensured through the non-disclosure of their names.

3.4. Data Analysis Technique

The study is dedicated to analysing the various types of spelling mistakes and errors made by Grade 4 English FAL learners at a rural Primary School. Multiple analytical procedures were employed to scrutinise the data, including:

- Detailed analysis of the output to identify mistakes and errors.
- Categorisation and analysis of the mistakes and errors present in the writing samples.
- Enumeration of the frequency of such spelling errors.

The researchers meticulously examined the essays utilised in this study to identify spelling errors. These errors were then classified into types, and based on this classification, the researchers calculated the frequency of the errors. Each participant's errors were diligently recorded, even if they recurred. The data were analysed employing tabulation, and the students' essay scripts underwent thorough error analysis.

3.5. Ethical Considerations

This study followed all ethical concerns regarding the participants being observed.to ensure compliance with the conditions. This could be unpleasant and intimidating for the participants, who may have felt exposed to or embarrassed. However, the researcher minimised these effects by always acting sensitively and tactfully. Ethical requirements for conducting research were strictly followed throughout the study. The researcher had a moral obligation to protect the rights of the participants and obtained ethical clearance from the institutional Ethics Board (Reference: SHSS/20/BAHELT). The teachers provided their informed consent, indicating their willingness to participate in the study.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1. Primary Language

The participants all spoke Tshivenda as their first language and were in the process of learning English FAL. This means they are expected to have spelling and grammar challenges and differences in vocabulary compared to their native South African languages.

4.2. Orthographic Competence Challenges in Learners' Essay Composition

This research carefully examined the data gathered from essays written by Grade 4 students. As a result, the researchers could pinpoint and categorise distinct spelling mistakes and errors in the students' writing assignments. After being given a choice of essay topics, 16 Grade 4 students drafted essays, and the study notes their spelling mistakes and errors. The following list details the spelling mistakes and errors in the students' essays.

4.2.1. Capitalization

The **Table 1** indicates the spelling mistakes and errors attributable to capitalisation. These are the words that must be capitalised in a sentence.

Table 1. Learners capitalization of words.

Initial Letter Not Capitalized	Correct Capitalized
i	I
james	James
adam	Adam

Table 1 illustrates the difficulties learners face with capitalisation in their written English, particularly when it comes to unnecessary or incorrect capitalisation of words. In English FAL in South Africa, learners' orthographic competence refers to their ability to spell words correctly and use the appropriate written forms in English. Learners 2 and 4 made spelling mistakes related to capitalisation, such as "james" and "adam" for L2 and "i" for L4. This tendency to capitalise nouns unnecessarily may stem from the belief that all English nouns should be capitalised in any position within a sentence, leading to errors where some words are not capitalised when they should be.

The findings of this study support 'Ehri' [3] discussion of capitalisation in standard English writing of nouns. The three English nouns that should always be capitalised in any position within a sentence represent the names of people and places. However, learners sometimes fail to write them in capital letters due to incomplete application of this rule in their language competence and the haphazard use of these words in their writing. This is further supported by the findings of the study conducted by [2], who reported on related challenges of not capitalising some letters in a word while other words are wrongly capitalised, such as proper pronouns

and so forth in their written work. Most English words are capitalised wrongly in various positions in a sentence, which could result from overgeneralisation of rules concerning the capitalisation of the names of people and places in the English language.

4.2.2. Word Spacing

The **Table 2** indicates the spelling mistakes and errors attributable to word spacing. These are compound words that are sub-divided by the participants.

Table 2. Learners word spacing.

Wrong Word Spacing	Correct Version
Break fast	Breakfast
Chalk board	Chalkboard
Grand mother	Grandmother
Foot ball	Football
Any body	Anybody
Him self	Himself
Home made	Homemade

In **Table 2**, the essays written by students demonstrate the difficulties with word spacing. Learners 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 all made spelling mistakes and errors related to the spacing of words. For example, Learner 3 wrote "break fast" and "grand mother", while Learner 4 wrote "foot ball", and Learner 5 wrote "any body". Learner 6 wrote "him self" and Learner 7 wrote "home made". These examples show that learners struggle to understand compound words and often separate them based on their origins and lexical categories, leading to issues with word spacing.

This study is consistent with Zitha and Lambani [13] concerning the division of compound words. Learners often struggle to grasp the standard formation of compound words in English. Consequently, they tend to split the words into two, leading to a loss of meaning, as the words no longer combine to convey a message effectively. Treiman [5] also highlighted learners' challenges in understanding word space, particularly deciding whether to separate or unite two words. The issue of word space is widespread among learners from different educational backgrounds, primarily due to limited exposure to English during the initial stages of language acquisition, resulting in insufficient focus on these words in the classroom.

4.2.3. Omission

The **Table 3** indicates the spelling mistakes and errors attributable to omission. These are letter omissions in the

English words.

Table 3. Leaners' omission of letters.

Letter Omitted	Correct Spelling
Chiken	Chicken
Knowlege	Knowledge
Wich	Which
Unfortunatly	Unfortunately
Govement	Government
Enviroment	Environment
Suprise	Surprise

Table 3 displays the spelling errors made by learners. Specifically, Learners 8, 9, 10, and 11 made errors of omission, such as L8 writing "chiken" and "knowlege", L9 writing "wich" and "unfortunatly", L10 writing "govement" and "enviroment", and L11 writing "suprise". These mistakes typically occur because learners tend to leave out letters in English words based on their spoken words, which may not always match the correct spelling. This discrepancy between spoken and written language often results in errors of omission.

This study's findings align with Fender's[14] research concerning the phenomenon of letter omission in written language. Omission errors, characterised by the unintentional exclusion of a letter within a word, are often attributed to the silent nature of certain letters during oral expression. For instance, the oversight of including the letter "n" before the 'm' in words such as environment and government is a prevalent issue. Al-Zuoud[7] further noted the persistence of this challenge among fifth-grade learners navigating the acquisition of English language proficiency, particularly in the context of writing.

The complexity of spelling errors arising from omitting double letters in words is noteworthy. Examples include misspellings "opportunity" as opportunity," or "necessary" as 'necessary' with just one "s," present an intricate and seemingly unavoidable challenges. These errors can be attributed to the influence of silent letters on English word pronunciation, adding a layer of complexity to the learning process.

4.2.4. Substitution

The **Table 4** indicates the spelling mistakes and errors attributable to substitution. These are letters substituted in English words.

Table 4 shows that learners are facing orthography challenges when it comes to substituting letters in certain words. Specifically, learners 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 have been making spelling mistakes and errors related to substitution. For example, learner 12 wrote "frends" instead of "friends" and omitted a letter in "together" Learner 13 had trouble with "heat" and "teachar," while learner 14 wrote "stady" instead of "study" and "sista" instead of "sister." Learner 15 mistook "boll" for "ball" and "gowing" for "going," and struggled with "lepaz" instead of "leopard" and "occur." It appears that learners are substituting letters because of the similarities in vowel sounds present in their vernacular languages. Additionally, the confusion may be due to the pronunciation of vowels in these words.

Table 4. Learners' letter substitution.

Letter Substituted	Correct Spelling
Frends	Friends
Togetha	Together
Heat	Hit
Teachar	Teacher
Boll	Ball
Sista	Sister
Lepaz	Leopards
Stady	Study

Powell et al.[10] research supports the findings of this study regarding letter substitution in English words. Learners often encounter confusion with vowels when crafting essays due to the similarity of sounds to those in their native language. Similarly, this study's findings are consistent with Mastern and Apel[12] observation that students unknowingly make mistakes by substituting sounds stemming from the inability to recognise the syllables and sounds in a word. This highlights the challenges non-native speakers face in their English writing. Vowel sounds are perceived in terms of phonological processes rather than at the orthographic level in the English language. Consequently, certain words experience vowel substitutions where the inability to recognise differences in phonetic transcription and spelling plays a significant role.

4.2.5. Addition

The **Table 5** indicates the spelling mistakes and errors attributable to the addition of sound. The following are examples of such sound additions.

Table 5 provides a visual representation of the difficulties learners experience with spelling, particularly the tendency to add extra letters to words without noticing. Learners 1 and 5, for example, made spelling mistakes because they added extra letters to words. For instance, learner 1 spelled "after" as "afetar," while learner 5 spelled "going" as "gowing." This can be attributed to the influence of their native language, where vowels typically follow consonants. In the second language, however, some consonants do not have accompanying vowels. This contributes to learners inadvertently adding letters to words.

Table 5. Learners' addition of letters.

Letter Added	Correct Spelling
Afetar	After
Gowing	Going
Somethime	Sometime
Untili	Until
Discus	Discuss
Acros	Across
Occurr	Occur

The findings of this study are consistent with Pasquarella et al.[6] regarding orthographic errors, which revealed that learners often added letters to English words due to the overgeneralisation of word forms. One common mistake involves words such as 'occur,' 'occurring,' and 'occurred'. These words naturally change in terms of the base form and typically have two "c"s and one "r," but when adding "-ing" or "-ed," they require doubling the "r." Words with multiple pairs of double letters are often difficult to spell, and both English learners and native speakers tend to omit some letters. Similarly, Khosa and Zitha[15] reported similar challenges with orthographic competence among university students, noting that adding letters seemed inevitable in their academic writing. L2 learners often struggle with the correct spelling of these words.

4.3. Analysis of Interview Responses

The researcher selected three male and female educators from a rural based primary school as participants. This was done to ensure the representation of all population sectors and to investigate potential differences in performance and exposure between rural and urban learners. The educators were interviewed regarding factors contributing to spelling errors and learner essay mistakes. They responded to a questionnaire that included four questions about the causes of spelling mistakes and errors made by Grade 4 FAL learners at a rural primary school.

Educator 1 recommended providing learners with additional reading activities to improve their spelling. Educator 2 suggested that learners use dictionaries to familiarise themselves with correct English spelling. Educator 3 proposed teaching all subjects in English, except for Tshivenda, since it is a native language. Additionally, learners should undergo reading assessments.

4.4. Factors Perpetuating the Orthographic Errors in Learner's Essay

Learners do not read regularly and widely due to a lack of access to libraries in this community. Thus, learners cannot read properly. In addition, the learners fail to spell English words correctly. In addition, teachers do not adhere to the language of learning and teaching during English lessons. Nonetheless, the learners do not know how to correct their own spelling errors due to the predominance of the native language in teaching.

Another reason is that educators do not conduct dictation assessments. The types of orthographic mistakes and errors obtained from the learners' written essays were identified, interpreted, and presented to answer the research questions. The distinct types of errors, such as addition, omission, word space, capitalisation, and substitution, were encountered as they manifested themselves in the various analysed essays.

The research on orthographic mistakes and errors based on the researchers' investigation appears minimal in the literature, which tends to be profitable on the aspects of orthographic competence. Therefore, this study may contribute toward a better understanding of types of orthographic mistakes and errors produced by the Grade 4 English FAL learners at a rural-based Primary School in their written discourse. This research focused on spelling mistakes and errors only at the expense of other errors that learners may commit during essay writing and spoken discourse.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, it has been determined that fourth-grade students learning English as a First Additional Language en-

counter difficulties with spelling in their written assignments. This research aimed to investigate and analyse the spelling abilities of Grade 4 English FAL students. The primary results of this study demonstrated that spelling errors are a typical feature of students' written work, including issues such as adding or omitting letters, improper capitalization, incorrect word spacing, and word choice errors. It is important to note that while English has forty- four distinct sounds, only twenty-six letters represent them.

The complexity of English spelling can make it challenging, even for those who have grasped the basic phonetic sounds. This difficulty is compounded by the non-phonetic and irregular spellings found in the language. The research discussed in this work will offer insight into spelling problems and provide strategies for improving proficiency in orthography. The study also provides a fresh perspective on challenges non-native English speakers face, including teachers and learners. It identifies overgeneralisation, incomplete rule application, and insufficient learning as the primary causes of orthographic errors.

According to the results, this study represents an initial effort to gain a deeper comprehension of the obstacles that must be addressed in the acquisition of English by students. Enhancing robust skills in spelling and writing that empower students to communicate effectively in written form, comprehend written materials, and exhibit their grasp of the language. This investigation has limitations due to certain factors, such as time constraints on the part of the researcher and the timing of the study in relation to the academic calendar.

In contrast, the English language is considered to be one of the most difficult to master in terms of spelling, mainly due to the historical changes in word pronunciations, the presence of silent letters, the abundance of homonyms, the complex rules for adding prefixes and suffixes, creating plural forms, and hyphenating words, and the incorporation of words from various other languages. On top of these challenges, the variations in spelling between British English and American English add another layer of complexity, making it a challenging task even for experienced language users. Even resolute learners frequently encounter difficulties stemming from these inherent complexities of the language.

6. Implications and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher suggests implementing specific strategies to address orthographic challenges among non-native speakers. These learners require targeted interventions to help them achieve proficiency in English spelling. Educators should have a solid understanding of English language concepts and receive training in instructing in English. Educating English teachers about methods for assisting learners in breaking habits that result in spelling errors is essential. Additionally, future research on error analysis should encompass various language errors. Remedial work on spelling errors is advised to reduce the high percentage of orthographic mistakes. Learners are encouraged to use dictionaries to familiarise themselves with the correct meanings of words and to prevent unnecessary spelling errors.

Assist students in visualising individual syllables and combining them to form complete words. Incorporate crossword and Scrabble-style games to enhance spelling skills and expand vocabulary. Use both internal and external incentives to promote successful spelling. Engage in regular dictation exercises to train students to discern individual letters and syllables through listening. To address the remaining issues, developing new and innovative strategies to overcome challenges is recommended. Additionally, it is advised to explore further and enhance educators' pedagogical knowledge in this area. Future research should investigate the effectiveness of spelling bees and dictation activities in rectifying spelling errors among non-native English speakers. Consequently, it is recommended that similar studies be conducted with students in other grades at the elementary school level.

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Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement

The data analysed for this study are available upon request.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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