

Grade 3 teachers' strategies to help English second language learners overcome interlingual spelling errors

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By

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Abstract

Spelling is one of the most important components of writing at single-word level and is regarded as a vital part of written communication. Also spelling is seen as an important tool in writing. Without the ability to spell as a broader aspect of writing, a person could not be called literate in the conventional sense of the word. Although the spelling is so important, learners in the foundation phase especially in grade three commit interlingual spelling errors. This means that at this stage learners transfer patterns of the mother tongue to the second language. By so doing that they write English words as the way they are pronounced in their mother tongue. Hence this study investigated grade three teachers' strategies to help English second language learners overcome interlingual spelling errors.

In exploring these strategies this study adopted a qualitative approach in order to ensure reliability and validity of the study. The data gathering instruments used included semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and document analysis. One primary school in Mdantsane a township in East London District was purposively selected to form the context of the study. The medium of instruction in this school is isiXhosa in the foundation phase and English is taught as a subject. Two teachers and their classes participated in this study.

The findings of the study revealed that different factors contribute to interlingual spelling errors. These factors are status of the parent (they were illiterate), pronunciation, language borrowing and language transfer. It is also revealed that teachers have a limited number of strategies to teach learners overcome interlingual spelling errors instead they use strategies to teach spelling generally.

Keywords

- Interlingual
- Spelling errors
- Teacher's strategies
- Grade 3

Acknowledgements

Conducting this study was a long journey full of ups and downs. This means that it was not an easy task to finish it as I have gone through challenges and obstacles, and each time I felt despondent, there were wonderful people who were sent by God to cheer me up. I gained my strength from some very special people that God has surrounded me with. I wish to express my appreciation to all who have assisted me in the completion of this study. Their form of assistance differed, some assisted me in the form of prayers, and others encouraged me when I was discouraged and about to despair. First of all I would like to acknowledge the Almighty who gave me courage, guidance and inspiration, wisdom and mental strength to conduct this study. Without Your strength and abundant provision, this thesis would never been possible.

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To my family especially my baby girl Sinesipho Kelewu whom I was unable to assist her with school work but she was always by my side, sorry *ntombi* for ignoring you. To my son Aphiwe

I say thank you *bhuti* for your understanding. My journey was possible because of your support.

Declaration

I hereby declare that *Grade 3 teachers 'strategies to help second language learners overcome interlingual spelling errors* is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. This research has not been previously submitted for any degree at this or any other university.

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Nomfusi G. Rululu

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Date

Dedication

This study is dedicated to my late father Zachariah, Manayi Rululu and his elder brother Barnabas, Jejane, Nasewu Rululu whom were my role models and early life mentors.

Thank you for your love, guidance and the skills of life you gave me. Pity you left before you see me prosper.

ACRONYMS

ABET	Adult Based Education and Training
ACE	Advance certificate in Education
CSTL	Care and Support for Teaching and Learning
DoE	Department of Education
EFAL	English First Additional Language
F	Female
FAL	First Additional Language
FDE	Further Diploma in Education
HAC	Health Advisory Committee
JPTD	Junior Primary Teachers Diploma
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
LiA	Literacy in Action
LOLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
MT	Mother Tongue
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPDE	National Professional Diploma in Education
OLSET	Open Learning Systems Education Trust
SGB	School Governing Body
THRASS	Teaching Handwriting Reading and Spelling Skills
TA	Teacher A
TB	Teacher B

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