

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**ANALYSIS OF SPELLING ERRORS IN THE WRITING OF PROSO D/A JHS
TWO PUPILS**



**A Thesis in the Department of Applied Linguistics, Faculty of Foreign
Languages Education and Communication, submitted to the School of Graduate
Studies, in partial fulfilment**

**of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Education
(Teaching English as a Second Language)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

SEPTEMBER, 2019

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Anthony Gyabeng, declare that this thesis with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted either in part or whole for any other degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE.....

DATE.....

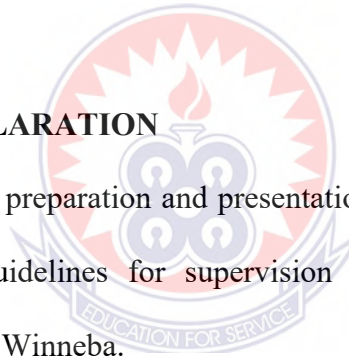
SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR CHARLOTTE FOFO LOMOTEY

SIGNATURE.....

DATE.....



DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late father Mr. Anthony Kwame Gyabeng and my caring mother Mrs Helena Sor Gyabeng. This work is also dedicated to all teachers and students of Proso D/A JHS.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Glory belongs to the Most-High God for bringing me this far in my academic pursuit. I am also grateful to my supervisor Dr. Charlotte Fofu Lomotey for the care, patience and the commitment she showed in supervising this work to the very end. My sincere thanks also go to Miss Dorcas Harrison of Proso D/A Basic School for helping me in diverse ways in this course. I am not forgetting my siblings Francis, Ruth, Peter, Louis, Bernard, Christian and Christiana for their encouragement. Finally, I would like to thank all lecturers of Department of Applied Linguistics for their guidance throughout this course.



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ABSTRACT

This study investigated spelling errors committed by pupils of Proso D/A JHS in the Juabeso District and are learning English language (L2) as a core subject. The study examined written works (essays and class exercises) of 40 pupils who were in form two(2). The rationale for using the form two pupils was that they would soon progress to form three and prepare for external and also final examination and this is to find the extent of their early preparation and seriousness towards learning the English language. The study revealed the pupils committed six types of spelling errors in their writing. These are letter omission, letter addition/insertion, letter substitution, letter transposition, multiple letters errors and apostrophe errors. The findings showed that letter substitution spelling errors was the most frequent type of errors the pupils committed while apostrophe errors occurred the least. The study also revealed the causes and effects of spelling errors which have implications on all stakeholders of education especially pupils and teachers. This study of spelling errors will help teachers to devise strategies that will improve learners' spelling abilities. The study recommends the need for future research into the area to help improve learners written communication skills.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

English language is the most widely acceptable and interactive language used in schools of Ghana. This makes students who proficiently express themselves in the language being admired by teachers as well as parents. In our local settings, parents always give reverence to their children's ability to speak good English without also giving attention to their ability to do similarly well when it comes to writing. From upper primary to the university level, English is used as a medium of instruction. English is very significant in the education system of Ghana because it is seen as a standard measuring tool for learners' progress as they climb the education ladder. Before one moves from the Basic school to the Senior High School, it is compulsory for every candidate who writes the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) not to fail English language. English language also plays a pivotal role in the chance of senior high school graduates gaining admission into the tertiary institutions especially those that are state owned.

Apart from the Ghanaian languages that are studied in schools, examinations of the rest of the subjects are written in the English language. As examinations in Ghanaian schools as well as in most parts of the world are not oral but written, learners' ability to produce the right spelling must be an issue of greater concern because a student could be very good at speech in the English language and be denied or frustrated materializing his or her dreams and potentials if such a learner is quite weak in spelling or orthography. Morgan (2017) notes that it would be a mistake to tell young people that spelling does not matter in this industry, or in this occupation, because those basic skills are real gateway to other roles or the development of other

skills. This statement adds substance to the need to take spelling seriously. Young people need to be able to read and write to a reasonable standard, and that usually involves having pretty decent spelling skills. Reading, writing and spelling help learners in the first place to develop good levels of literacy. Without that, they will not be able to complete school assignments satisfactorily as well as examinations. For one to get good grades in exams, spelling can never be compromised, especially towards the end of one's school life. This makes spelling as important as being able to read and write. If a learner has the ability to spell words correctly, it adds so much to one's career opportunities.

This is because application forms would be filled and being able to complete forms correctly and writing decent resumes is vital in the effort to create good impression. Cicero (cited in Palmerston, 1989) believes that writing is essential for the development of good oratory: long and great practice in writing lead to good oratory skills. This implies the important role spelling plays in the development of one's speaking skills. Dadzie and Bosiwah (2015) reported that the Chief Examiner's Reports on the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) from 2001 to 2010 singled out poor spelling as a major cause of the poor performance of candidates in examinations. This was realized when a research was conducted on spelling errors among junior high school students in the Cape Coast metropolis. Students in private schools were a bit better than their colleagues in the public schools. This makes it a pressing national issue as English language is the medium of instruction in our schools and also an effective communication tool in Ghana. The problem of spelling seems ubiquitous at almost all levels of learning but when poor spelling is uncorrected for many students, they carry it along to the world of work. This means a significant number of adults have problem of poor spelling. For instance, it was once reported

that between 21 and 23 percent of American adults (over 40 million people) used to function at the lowest level of spelling (The American Literacy Council 1992). Surveys of this kind show how important spelling should be considered and be taken serious at the early stages of our lives.

The pupils of Proso D/A JHS Two pupils have very serious problems in spelling. The researcher deems it appropriate to make thorough analysis of the spelling errors committed by these pupils with the motive to identify the types of spelling errors committed by the pupils, the frequencies at which they occur as well as their main causes. Pupils' spelling habits have adverse effects on their ability and the rate of learning other subjects. Poor reading and understanding would be exhibited if a student does not have a good spelling skill. Also, students would not win the admiration of teachers and examiners when they produce essays with many errors. To make learners of English language as Second/Foreign language (L2) make people have good impressions about them, facilitate good skills of communication and improve their academic and entrepreneurial endeavors, good spelling must be given serious attention as early as possible by both teachers and learners of English language.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The main objective of the teaching and learning of English in schools is to develop listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in learners. Writing with accuracy in spelling improves the quality of the overall texts. Cook (1999) said unlike native speakers, students may not know the actual system of English, and will appear to use the wrong letter. Writing well and correctly is a challenge for both native and non-native learners of a language. Unfortunately, a significant number of pupils of Proso D/A JHS in the Juabeso District of the Western-North Region of Ghana do not

make it to the Senior High School due to poor performance in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) English language per the analysis made by the school as well as the district. These failures are attributed to some types of errors candidates committed in their writing which include spelling errors. It is for this reason that the researcher decided to undertake a research on the topic " Analysis of spelling errors " to investigate the types of spelling errors that pupils of Proso D/A JHS commit in their writings. The researcher has taught English at the Junior High School level for over seven years and therefore has in-depth knowledge in students' difficulties in spelling.

The school used for the study is Proso D/A JHS, the school in which the researcher teaches English. The school is regarded as one of the elite public schools in the Juabeso District. However, a check on the pupils' exercises and examination papers indicates that majority of the pupils commit a lot of spelling errors and mistakes in the process of learning English. They constantly commit letter omission errors, letter addition/insertion errors, letter substitution errors, letter transposition errors, multiple letters and apostrophe errors. Most of the mistakes are corrected as they progress while the errors continue to have adverse effects on their performance both in classwork and examinations. The spelling errors among the pupils have become so problematic for teachers that more time is needed to read and make meaning out of what most pupils write. This problem does not only affect their performance, especially in the BECE, but also has a long term effect on their career development. Spelling errors, considered under mechanical accuracy, have been identified as a major cause of poor performance of students in English at both the JHS and SHS levels as marks are deducted for such errors. These errors are most of the times seen as mistakes by most teachers of English.

The research therefore seeks to investigate these spelling errors the pupils of Proso D/A JHS commit, their types and the causes of the errors so that some remedies may be suggested to minimize them. It is believed that learning a second or foreign language is a gradual process, during which errors are made in all levels. Errors play a significant role in learning a second or foreign language. From these, teachers can assess the level of mastery of language among their students and also discover what they still need to learn, unlearn or relearn. It is important for teachers to take note of the errors that their students commit because they would have the opportunity to understand the various processes through which these errors are caused. In order to better investigate the errors that students commit, teachers and researchers examine the types of errors that the learners commit and identify the frequency at which these errors appear in the writing of students.

1.3 Objectives

The study seeks to achieve the following objectives by the end of the study:

1. Investigate types of spelling errors committed by Proso D/A JHS Two pupils.
2. Examine the causes of spelling errors in the writing of the pupils.

1.4 Research questions

The study is guided by the following questions:

1. What types of spelling errors do pupils of Proso D/AJHS Two commit?
2. What are the causes of these spelling errors?

1.5 Significance of the study

This study is very significant to the teaching and learning of English. This study will let teachers understand the problems students have when it comes to learning English. It also provides teachers with information on the types of spelling errors the students commit and their areas of difficulties for the right action to be

taken. It will help teachers to have an insight into the types of spelling errors students commit in writing. Both JHS and SHS teachers will find this study very helpful to improve upon the spelling abilities of students so as to improve their performance in English language. Based on this study, teachers can also device new and improved strategies in solving students' spelling problems. Additionally, students can correct their own spellings if they are made aware of their spelling errors by getting in touch with this study. Both teachers and learners will be informed on the causes of spelling errors. The syllabi of both the JHS and SHS do not allot periods for spelling learning. This study will therefore inform curriculum planners and syllabus designers on the need to include spelling in the curricula and the syllabi.

1.6 Organization of the study

The rest of the thesis is organized as follows: Chapter 2 presents the literature review. The chapter reviews the various definitions and categories of errors as well as spelling errors. It reviews some related studies on spelling errors. Chapter 3 presents the methodology of the study. The population, research design, and data collection instruments are catered for by this chapter. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study and the discussions of the results. These include the categorization of the types of spelling errors found in pupils' essays and the causes of the errors. Chapter 5, which is the last chapter, summarizes the study. It further presents discussions on the implications of the study and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the contribution of other research works on errors including spelling errors in the writing of pupils. Errors and mistakes will be briefly discussed. The chapter is organized as follows: The concept of errors, errors and mistakes, and types of errors. Others are spelling, errors in spelling, causes spelling errors, approaches to the analysis of errors, and analysis of related studies.

2.1 The concept of errors

Merriam Webster defines error as an act or condition of ignorant or imprudent deviation from a code of behaviour. In some usages, an error is synonymous with a mistake. An error could also result in failure or in a deviation from the intended performance or behaviour. In applied linguistics, an error is an unintended deviation from the immanent rules of a language variety made by a second language learner. Errors result from a lot of factors including the learner's lack of knowledge of the correct rules of the target language. A significant distinction between error and mistake is generally made from a linguistic point of view. Error is seen to be systematic while mistake is unsystematic and usually results from speech performance. Corder in the 1960s probably established himself as the first to point out that errors have some importance as one learns an unfamiliar language. Soon after, the study and analysis of errors of second language learners took a prominent place in applied linguistics. For instance, Brown held the view that the process of second language learning is not very different from learning a first language. James and Richards and others have also made significant impact in the field of language studies. Several approaches (discussed later) of language teaching and learning have come

about of which the Error Analysis (EA) approach is gaining prominence within the field of applied linguistics.

2.2 Errors and mistakes

Errors and mistakes have been synonymously used many times by a lot of people including lexicographers. But when it comes to language teaching and learning, errors and mistakes have clear cut differences. They have compelled the researcher to provide briefly some distinctions between errors and mistakes because this study is about spelling errors in the writing of pupils. According to Corder (1967 cited in Karra, 2006), mistakes are unsystematic errors; and systematic ones as ‘errors: Mistakes mostly occur in one’s native language and are not significant to the process of language learning. Systematic ones mostly occur in second language acquisition. Errors are systematic deviations from the norm or set of norms. This usually cannot be self-corrected but a mistake can be corrected by the maker if pointed out to him or if he realizes it. A ‘mistake’ (in performance) refers to a performance error. In this regard, it is the learner’s failure to utilize a known system correctly. Whiles an ‘error’ (in competence) is a noticeable deviation from the grammar of a native language (Brown 1980, p. 134). The basic distinction between a mistake and an error is based on the concept of corrigibility. If the learner is able to self-correct after using an incorrect expression or utterance, then it is a mistake. On the other hand, when the learner produces an unintentionally unacceptable utterance and unable to self-correct, then he or she has committed an error (James, 1998, p. 78).

2.3 Types of errors

Learning a second language is not an easy task. As errors are considered part of learning, many errors are committed by non-natives of a language compared with

L1 speakers of the language. Errors learners commit can be grouped into various types. These include:

2.3.1 Grammatical Errors

Grammatical error is a term used in prescriptive grammar to describe an instance of faulty or controversial usage such as a misplaced modifier or an inappropriate tense (Garner, 2012). It is also called usage error. Grammatical error forms to be considered in this study are agreement errors, tense errors, singular-plural errors, prepositional errors and article errors.

2.3.1.1 Agreement errors

Agreement is the correspondence of a verb with its subject in person and number, and of a pronoun with its antecedent in person, number and gender. Grammatical agreement is also called concord errors. Any kind of violation of this rule is an agreement error.

a) *Subject-verb agreement*: The correspondence of a verb with its subject in person (first, second or third) and number (singular or plural). The principle of subject-verb agreement applies to finite verbs in the simple present tense and, in a limited way, to the past forms of the verb to 'be'(was and were). Example, the subject-verb agreement rule is violated. 'Most of the boys in my class is good at mathematics' instead of 'Most of the boys in my class are good at mathematics' (Sorenson, 2010).

b) *Noun- pronoun agreement*: This is the correspondence of a pronoun with its antecedent in number (singular or plural), person (first, second, third), and gender (masculine, feminine or neuter) (Sorenson 2010). Traditionally, one of the basic principles of noun-pronoun agreement is that a singular pronoun refers to a singular noun while a plural pronoun refers to a plural noun but it sometimes become complicated and exceptional when the pronoun is indefinite. Example, 'Johnson did

not come to school yesterday because she was sick' instead of 'Johnson did not come to school because he was sick'

2.3.1.2 Tense errors

Tense refers to the way a verb is formed to communicate when an action or occurrence takes place. Tense error occurs when you use the wrong verb tense. The verb tense makes the reader (receiver) aware of when the action expressed in the sentence is taking place-in the past, the present or the future. There must be consistency between when the action occurred and the type of verb used. The following instance may add substantiate the point. 'I went to the shop and I meet Mary.' 'Went' is a past tense verb.'Meet' is a present tense verb. This is inconsistency in the verb because the verbs express different times mean while the two actions occurred at the same time. The correct one should be 'I went to the shop and I met Mary.'

2.3.1.3 Singular-plural errors

Singular and plural phenomenon exists in English like in many languages. In English, only count nouns actually have plural forms. Count nouns represent items that exist in separated units you can count such as tables, cars, pupils, etc. Non-count nouns represent items existing as a mass such as powders, grains and liquids (sand, rice, water, etc.) or concepts (e.g. honesty, patience, love, economics). In addition, unlike a singular count noun that must have at least 'a/an' as a determiner like (This is an orange. This is a book), plural count nouns can appear without a determiner like (I like mangoes). When singular and plural rules are flouted or not followed accordingly, then we can say that singular-plural error(s) has/have been committed. Example, 'The mens advised the students to use the internet to study' instead of ' The men advised the students to use the internet to study'.

2.3.1.3 Article errors

There are some basic rules with regard to the use of articles in English. In English, a singular common noun (e.g. boy, teacher, tree) must have an article. In a plural common noun can be used with or without an article. Also, the definite article 'the' is used with superlative adjectives and a proper noun does not normally take no article. However, these basic rules regarding the use of articles are overlooked. Using the model of Samatle (2001), article errors are grouped into three. These are missing articles, wrong article use and redundant article errors.

a. *Missing articles*: These errors occur when the articles that are supposed to be used are left out in the utterance or in the sentence. Example, *All students were made to sweep the compound very well instead of (All the students were made to sweep the compound very well).

b. *Wrong article use*: In this category, an article is used but used wrongly. That is, inappropriate article is used. Example, *In my community a farmers, teachers and priests are highly respected instead of (In my community the farmers, teachers and priests are highly respected.)

c. *Redundant article use*: This is when an article is used when it is not necessary or needed. This implies that an article is not to be used. Example, *Children die of the malaria instead of (Children die of malaria)

2.3.1.4 Prepositional errors

A preposition tells a reader when and where something occurred. A preposition introduces a prepositional phrase in a sentence. It most of the time co-occur with the noun phrase. It must be noted that not all constructions require prepositions. Some require them but others do not. Using Samatle's (2001) model,

preposition errors occur under missing preposition, wrong use preposition and redundant preposition.

a. *Missing preposition*: This is where preposition is not used but in actual sense it must be used. Example, 'The students did not listen her advice' instead of (The students did not listen to her advice.)

b. *Wrong use of preposition*: This is where the preposition used in the utterance is not the right one to be used. Example, 'This computer is different of the rest' instead of (This computer is different from the rest)

c. *Redundant use*: This is where a preposition is used when it is not needed. Example, 'Citizens must to benefit from the taxes they pay' instead of Citizens must benefit from the taxes they pay.)

2.3.2 Lexical errors

According to Hernandez (2011), lexical errors are mistakes at the word level, and they include, for example, choosing the wrong word for the meaning the writer wants to express. For example, 'I made my homework' instead of 'I did my homework'. In view of Llach (2015:109), "when inappropriate lexical choices are made this can lead directly to misunderstanding of the message, or at least to an increase in the burden of interpreting the text". Lexical errors can be categorized into:

2.3.2.1 Lexical errors due to homophone problem

Homophones are words that have different spellings but have the same pronunciation. These words contribute to lexical errors as a result of poor pronunciation. Students may find it difficult to pronounce such words to bring about subtle difference. Example, 'My father nose the manager of the bank' instead of 'My father knows the manager of the bank'.

2.3.2.2 Semantic lexical errors

This category of lexical errors occurs as a result of confusion in the mind of a person (learner) on the appropriate lexical item(word) to use. In this case, the words are not homophones; they are different in terms of pronunciation, meaning or form. Example, ' Many applicants attended the interview but little are recruited for the job' instead of 'Many applicants attended the interview but few are recruited for the job'.

2.3.3 Punctuation errors

Punctuation errors occur as a result of wrong use of punctuation marks.They usually result from use of wrong punctuation marks, missing punctuations and wrong use of capital letters and their absence (where lower case letters are used in upper case situations).

a. *Wrong use and absence of period/full stop*: Example, 'Most of the prefects signed up for two events and I was very jealous and I wished I were a prefect' instead of 'Most of the prefects signed up for two events. I was very jealous and I wished I were a prefect.'

b. *Wrong use of commas (,)*: Example, 'Hopefully our team would receive an award for the impressive performance.' instead of ' Hopefully, our team would receive an award for the impressive performance.' Also 'Kofi Kojo and I went to the beach.' instead of 'Kofi, Kojo and I went to the beach.'

c. *Wrong use of capital letters or absence of capital letters*:

i) **Capitalizing (proper nouns)**: Proper nouns always begin with capital letters. Proper nouns include names of persons, places (countries, towns,villages, etc),days of the week,months of the year,oceans, specific events, etc.When capital letters are not appropriately used with regard to proper nouns, punctuation error of capitalizing

occurs. Example, 'We visited the jubilee house last year' instead of 'We visited the Jubilee House last year.'

ii) **Capitalizing letter parts:** When writing letters, the rule of English stipulates that we should capitalize the first letters of salutation the first word of the subscription among others. Going contrary to these constitutes capitalizing errors. Examples include 'Dear sir' instead of 'Dear Sir', 'Yours Faithfully' instead of 'Yours faithfully', etc.

2.3.4 Spelling Errors (orthographical errors)

Spelling is the learner's ability to write a word correctly (Yasin & Subhi, 2015). The study of learners' spelling errors provides an opportunity to understand and facilitate in their spelling difficulty. Spelling error occurs when there comes a deviation in the acceptable form of writing a word. Spelling errors seem to be ubiquitous especially among second language learners. As teachers of English as a second language, spelling errors committed by our students must also be paid attention because good spelling is an indication of progress in the target language. Spelling errors committed by students are influenced by so many factors including how speakers pronounce words, the influence of the learner's L1 on the L2, how the second language is taught by teachers and lack of coordination in the pronunciation and orthography of the target language. Spelling errors have been categorized into various types by different experts of linguistics. Cook, (1999) categorized spelling errors into: Omission, substitution, insertion and transposition. These classifications are briefly explained below. Detailed explanation would be provided under the subheading of types of spelling errors.

- a. *Omission letter spelling error*: This spelling error occurs when a letter is omitted in a word. The letter could be a consonant or a vowel. Example, 'mokey' instead of 'monkey' and 'beaty' instead of 'beauty'.
- b. *Substitution letter spelling error*: This is where the wrong letter is used instead of the correct one. This letter could be a consonant or a vowel. Example, 'finanse' instead of 'finance' and 'fowl' instead of 'foul'.
- c. *Insertion letter spelling error(s)*: These spelling errors occur where needless letter(s) are either added or inserted in the spelt words. Both consonant and or vowel letters could be inserted. For example, 'allways' instead of 'always' and 'boyes' instead of 'boys'.
- d. *Transposition letter spelling errors*: In this type of errors, two consecutive letters are changed in a word. This can be subdivided into consonant transposition, vowel transposition and consonant-vowel transposition. For example, 'straighth' instead of 'straight', 'decieve' instead of 'deceive' and 'strat' instead of 'start'.

2.4 Summary

This section reviews literature in relation to the study. This research is on spelling errors but the concept of error in general had been dealt with by giving brief background of error studies in the field of applied linguistics. The distinction between error and mistake was also looked at and it was established that errors are unintended systematic deviations from correct rules and mistakes are unsystematic deviations from immanent rules and are often exhibited in speech performance. Again, types of errors were considered. Grammatical, lexical, punctuation and spelling errors (orthographic errors) were identified as the major types of errors. Subsequent headings of this literature would deal with spelling errors and types, causes, approaches to error analysis and related studies on orthographic errors.

2.5 Spelling

The British – American online Dictionary of English defines spelling as the act, practice, ability, or subject of forming words with letters, or of reading the letters of words. Wikipedia, the encyclopedia: “Spelling is the combination of alphabetic letters to form a written word”. It is a linguistic process of correct writing with the necessary letters and diacritics present in a comprehensible, usually standardized order. Merriam – Webster: Spelling is the forming of words from letters according to accepted usage. Cambridge Dictionary of English: Forming words with the correct letters in the correct order. Spelling encodes speech and reading decodes writing (Perfetti, 1997). Perfetti (1997) defined spelling as “the encoding of linguistic forms into written forms” The researcher also sees spelling as an indispensable component in language learning when formal education is in consideration.

As a result of this, spelling in the writing of learners must be given special attention in order to benefit the learners and the society at large. Good spelling has a lot of importance as given as follows:

Good spelling aids pupils in developing writing. Poor spelling can hamper fast acquisition of concepts because learners spend a lot of time on correct spelling of words neglecting or getting little time for other areas such as content and expression. But when a learner is good at spelling, one gets enough time for the learning of other aspects. This manifests in the area for this study as pupils who are not good at spelling mostly copy from their friends after they (the good spellers) have completed their work.

Graham (2007) and Cahill (2010) argue that spelling is of great importance in examinations especially in respect of composition. In examinations where composition components are included, much attention is paid to spelling because it

shows the examiner how intelligent the person is. Spelling is a tool for measuring the actual competence of the learner as examinations are mostly in written form not oral. So even a fluent student who cannot write what he or she speaks fluently would be adversely affected in examinations.

Aside this, learning to spell well is helpful because it influences students to write well. Remember, a learner who struggles over a word's spelling can interrupt his thoughts flow. This can discourage the learner from developing interest in other subjects while the opposite happens when good at spelling. Good spelling gives good impression about learners. Writing helps many people to get the information about things as well as people they have not met. So if your spelling is good, obviously, the reader will get to know the actual information you want to put across. By so doing the reader will get the impression about your capabilities. The same way, if the spelling of your words is bad, the meaning of those words change and communication would not be complete and the impression that would be created will also be bad hence good spelling is what must be greatly emphasized.

Peters (1985) realized that in the 1960s most school teachers thought that spelling occurred incidentally when children wrote about their interest. This means that it was caught not taught. Later, it came to light that some learners could not catch and upon the importance of writing, teachers now resort to courses on the teaching of spelling. Good spelling motivates learners to put in more effort and enhances self-esteem. Students who are good at spelling and able to prove this in writing increase the affection teachers have for them and this gives them the joy to put in much effort as they are already on track to success. They also feel accepted by teachers since teachers would not reprimand them as they sometimes rebuke learners who are not

good at spelling especially in their writing. Being good at spelling not only helps one to learn faster but also prepares one enough for the world of work in the future.

2.6. Errors in spelling

According to the Collins Dictionary of English, spelling errors is an error in the conventionally accepted form of spelling a word. It is a deviation in the acceptable form of writing a word. Spelling error occurs when the right form of a word is altered. Various types of spelling errors have been proposed by linguists. Cook (1999) categorized spelling errors into: Omission, substitution, insertion and transposition.

2.6.1. Letter omission spelling errors

Letter omission errors are spelling errors where letter(s) are spelt out from a word. As stated in the literature review, Dadzie and Bosiwah (2015, p. 49) describe letter omission errors as “a spelling error type that has to do with exclusion of letters from words spelled”. In addition, Jayousi (2011, p. 46) in analyzing spelling errors, stated that, “omission, includes errors caused by omitting one letter or more, as omitting the e in the word *friend* (frind)”. Bahloul (2007) also describes letter omission as consonant simplification in a study of spelling errors among Arab students where omission of consonant letters was the most frequent. Bahloul described consonant simplification as a situation where two adjacent consonants in a word are simplified by omitting one letter. Letter omission spelling errors are subdivided into consonant letter omission and vowel letter omission.

2.6.1.1 Consonant omission

This is the omission of a letter which represents a consonant from a word. The examples below show the omission of consonants in students' writing: *Presure'* instead of 'pressure'. Word was used in the sentence “Many people commit suicide as a result of family presure”. Instead of “Many people commit suicide as a result of

family pressure”. 'Acident' instead of 'Accident'. Word was used in the sentence 'The accident occurred at the market square' instead of ' The accident occurred at the market square'.

2.6.1.2 Vowel omission errors

This is the omission of a letter representing a vowel from words. Examples are; 'Succeded' instead of 'succeeded', as in "Moses died and Joshua succeded him” instead of 'Moses died and Joshua succeeded him'. 'Apper' instead of 'appear'. Example Children believe the story that ghosts apper at night alone" instead of "Children believe the story that ghosts appear at night alone".

2.6.2 Letter addition/insertion errors

This type of spelling errors is where needless letter(s) are either added to or inserted in the spelt words. This is in line with Ahmed (2018, p 22), which states that insertion errors mainly appear because of the addition of extra letters in a word. Cook (1997), cited in Kusuran (2016) also described these type of errors as “spelling errors where additional letter is included in spelling words. Dadzie & Bosiwah, (2015), states that, most learners in their trial and error testing, tend to add certain letters, which are not required in the spelling words. Four sub errors namely, consonant additions, consonant insertions, vowel additions and vowel insertions were identified in the letter omission/ insertion category. These are discussed below;

2.6.2.1. Consonant addition

This is where consonant is added to the beginning or end of the word. Below are examples are:

Agreet instead of ‘agree’, as in "My father didn't agreeet with me I told him I wanted to stay away from home" instead of " My father didn't agree with me whenI told him I

wanted to stay away from home". *Childrens* instead of 'children', as in "Childrens like toys" instead of " Children like toys"

2.6.2.2 Consonant insertion

This is where consonants were inserted in the words. The following are examples;

Allways instead of 'always', as in "The politicians allways make juicy promises but they don't fulfil them" instead of "The politicians always make juicy promises but they don't fulfil them" *writting* instead of 'writing', as in "My reason for *writting* to you this letter is to inform you about my wedding " instead of " My reason for writing to you this letter is to inform you about my wedding ”.

2.6.2.3 Vowel addition errors

This type error is a situation where a vowel is unnecessarily added to the end of a word. For instance, '*Younge*' instead of 'young'. For example, "Many *younge* female graduates do not get jobs to do and they end up in prostitution" instead of "Many young female graduates do not get jobs to do and they end up in prostitution"

2.6.2.4 Vowel insertion errors

This type of error occurs when a letter representing a vowel is inserted in a word. For example, '*employment*' for employment, as in "The ban on *employment* in public institutions has been lifted ". Instead of "The ban on employment in public institutions has been lifted.

2.6.3 Letter substitution errors

This is the type of errors where a letter or letters are substituted for another in spelling words. Jayousi (2011) also asserts that Substitution includes errors caused by substituting a letter or more for another. Additionally, Allaith (2009, p41) describe

letter substitution as replacement of letters, example *p* for *b* in Arabic. According to Cook (1997), these errors are divided into either substitution of single letter, or as grapheme of multiple related changes. Example, 'altar' instead of 'author'. Substitution spelling errors can be subdivided into the following depending on the situation encountered; consonant substitution errors, vowel substitution errors, lowercase-uppercase substitution errors and uppercase-lowercase substitution errors.

2.6.3.1 Consonant substitution errors

In this type of error, a consonant letter is substituted for another. Below are some examples, '*Acsepted*' for 'accepted'. For example; "I think this suggestion will be *acsepted* to help improve sanitation in the district" instead of "I think this suggestion will be accepted to help improve sanitation in the district ". 'Match' instead of 'March', For example, 'Dorcas celebrates her birthday in match every year' instead of 'Dorcas celebrates her birthday in March every year'.

2.6.3.2. Vowel substitution errors

Vowel substitution is a situation where a letter representing a vowel is substituted or replaced with another. Below are some examples. 'Niglected' instead of 'neglected', as in "The poor is usually niglected in society" instead of 'The poor is usually neglected in society'.

Thinked instead of thanked, as in "I *thinked* my parents when they bought me a new bag" instead of "I thanked my parents when they bought me a new bag"

2.6.3.3 Lowercase-uppercase substitution errors

These errors occur when lowercase letters are wrongly replaced with uppercase letters in a word(s). Example, "Called' instead of 'called' as in " The secretary went and Called her boss when the business partners arrived at the office "

instead of "The secretary went and called her boss when the business partners arrived at the office".

2.6.3.4 Uppercase-lowercase substitution errors

These errors occur when uppercase letters are substituted with lowercase letters. Example, 'Israelites' instead of 'Israelites' as in " God did so many wonders in the sight of the Israelites and they all believed Him " instead of " God did so many wonders in the sight of the Israelites and they all believed Him "

2.6.4 Letters transposition errors

In this type of errors, two consecutive letters change place in a word. Corder (1967) termed these errors as ' ordering errors' while Jayousi (2011) refers to them as *disordering* errors. To Jayousi, this type of errors “refers to disordering some letters in a way, such as writing *sea* as *sae*. Bancha (2013, p. 7) refers to letters transposition errors as letter reversal errors which is in line with Bahloul (2007) which refers to letters transposition as metathesis in which the position of two letters are reversed. Letter transposition errors can be subdivided into consonants transposition, vowels transposition and consonant- vowel transposition.

2.6.4.1 Consonant transposition

Consonant transposition is where two letters that represent consonant sounds change positions. Examples are below; *Strat* /strat/ an electronic guitar, instead of start /sta:t/ as in” People that drop out of school *strat* the work of armed robbery”. This is a spelling error involving letter transposition which, if not well checked, maybe mistaken for *wrong word use*. The letters [ar] represented by the sound /a:/, was transposed as [ra] which is realize as /ra/.

2.6.4.2 Vowel Transposition errors

This is a type of spelling errors where two vowel letters exchange position. The following are some example, Fiathful instead of faithful /faɪθ.fəl/, as in “Yours faithful”. This error is as a result of the transposition of the letters [a] and [i] which forms the diphthong /ai/ to /ia/ which doesn’t exist in English language. Another similar error committed by the students include; fiar instead of fair /fɛ:/, in “The police is not fiar to the people”. *Vioce* instead of voice /vɔɪs/, as in “I was crying but my father didn’t hear my *vioce*”. From the example, the letters [i] and [o] have changed position, disordering the letters of the word. The diphthong /ɔi/ is being changed to /io/, which does not confirm to the diphthong structure of English.

2.6.4.3 Consonant/ Vowel transposition

This is where two letters, representing a consonant and a vowel exchange positions in a word. Examples are *Brithday* instead of birthday. For example, “The most memorable day in my life is my *brithday*”. In this word, there inversion of the letters [i] and [r] as [ri] which pronounced /ri/ as rit instead [ir] pronounced as /ɜ:/ as in birth. *Frist* instead of first, as in That was my frist day to go to super market to shop”.

2.7 Causes of spelling errors

There are several causes of spelling errors in English. Some of them are due to the internal structure of English Language, some are social and personal, some are auditory and visual, some are Pedagogic and others considered as miscellaneous factors.

2.7.1 Lack of coordination between pronunciation and spelling

The English language is exceptional when it comes to pronunciation – spelling coordination. The major cause of orthographic errors in English is the dichotomy

between the phoneme and the grapheme. In a perfect language, every simple sound would be expressed by a distinct character and no character would have more than one sound. But the English Language is extremely irregular in these respects (Webster 1958). English does not always use one letter to spell the same sound. Moreover, it does not always use the same letters to spell the same sound. Example ‘ /ʌ/’ can be found in words with letters ‘u’ or ‘o’ or ‘oo’ or ‘ou’ as in ‘cut’, ‘son’, ‘blood’ and ‘tough’ respectively. Also, ‘/u/’ can be found in words with letters ‘u’ or ‘oo’ or ‘ou’ as in ‘pull’, ‘book’ and ‘could’ respectively (Boateng & Lartey 2013, p. 1). These irregularities sometimes mislead pupils in word spelling. Bebout (1985) “Because of the complex sound symbol relationships in English, the field of English spelling error-analysis is a rich one”

2.7.2 Problem of silent letters

Silent letters cause great problems for learners when spelling words. Silent letters appear in spelling but do not have any pronunciation impact on words of modern English. In this regard, spelling the word wrongly by relying on pronunciation is highly anticipated. Silent letters can appear at the ‘beginning’, ‘middle’ and ‘ending’ of words but those that appear at the beginning seem to cause the worst difficulties if words have not been seen before. Words like psychology, psalm, knees, know, Island, and a lot more have misleading clues to their spelling as a result of the presence of their silent letters.

2.7.3 Interference of Homonyms

Shaugnessy (1979) states that homonyms are a source of many orthographic errors, especially to second language (L2) learners of English. When two or more lexemes have phonetic and orthographic identities, they are called homonyms. For example,

bank – river side

bank – Financial institution

As these words have the formal identity of spelling and pronunciation, they are both homophones as well as homographs.

Lead /*led*/ - metal

Lead /*li:d*/ - present tense of 'led'

The two words have orthographic identity only. Hence they are homographs.

See /*si:/* - to look or to watch

Sea /*si:/* - water body

Both words have the phonetic identity and hence they are called homophones. The terminological relationship between homonymy and homograph is not very clear. The English language is rich in homonyms because it has derived several words from several other languages. Many changes have also taken place in pronunciation of English that have far outrun its spelling. The learners sometimes become confuse of the word and its corresponding meaning in their writing hence leading to spelling errors.

2.7.4 Interference of Native Language (L1)

Native language interference can never be left out when dealing with factors that contribute to poor spelling in the writing of second language learners of English. This influence occurs when learners substitute spelling of words of the target language with words that sound similar in the native language to cover their uncertainties.

2.7.5 Similarities in the uppercase and lowercase of some letters of the English alphabet

The English alphabets are twenty-six and not less than fourteen of these alphabets have their uppercase and lowercase closely identical. Examples include ‘Cc’, ‘Ff’, ‘Oo’, ‘Vv’, ‘Ll’ and ‘Ww’. These similarities sometimes deceive learners to write uppercase letters in their writings where they are not needed and vice versa. Wang (1991) opines that in learning an English word, the learners have to rote memorize the spelling; its letters and their arrangements”. As memorizing is generally denounced in modern day learning, instances like the above is obviously a cause of spelling errors.

2.7.6 Inadequacy of spelling rules

If the rules guiding the correct ways of doing something are not conversantly known, it affects adversely the perfection of that undertaking. In this case, if spelling rules are not adequately taught to learners and adequately learnt by the learners, they will commit spelling errors. And with regards to the numerous rules and exceptions of the English language, the panacea to spelling errors is unlikely to be adequate orthographic rules.

2.7.7 Poor pronunciation by teachers

Poor pronunciation undoubtedly has influence on the spelling abilities of second language learners. The sounds of letters of a word provide the major clue to its spelling except in the cases of silent letters and few others so if the right pronunciation is not made by teachers of English as second language, learners are likely to give wrong orthography. Example, 'correct /ke'rekt/' can be written as 'collect /ke'lɛkt' and 'pleasure /plɛʒə/' taken for 'pressure /prɛʃe(r)/' if the right pronunciation is not made.

2.7.8 The use of social media

The use of mobile phones has helped a lot in making life easier. Searching for information online and making business transactions are just a few of the benefits. However, this social media usage has in one way or the other corrupted the spelling abilities of most users including learners of English. Whatsapp chats are usually done in 'shortened languages' (short cut). This phenomenon has found its way into the academic writings of users especially Ghanaians. For example, 'tanx' is acceptable in Ghanaian social media sphere instead of the correct form 'thanks or thank you', 'bcos' instead of 'because' and many more. Markwei and Appiah (2016) confirm that one negative effect of social media participation on students is poor grammar and spelling.

2.8 Approaches to the analysis of errors: Error Analysis

Before the rise of Error Analysis approach, Contrastive Analysis had taken the lead with regards to approach used in dealing and conceptualizing learners' errors in the 1950s, this approach had often gone hand in hand with concept of L1 interference and precisely the interlingual effect (Anefnaf, 2017), it claimed that main cause of errors in second language learning process is the native language (L1). Fang and Xue-mel (2007) pointed out that contrastive analysis hypothesis claimed that the principal barrier to second language acquisition is the interference of the first language system with the second language system and that a scientific, structural comparison of the two languages in question would enable people to predict and describe which problems are and which are not.

According to Richard et al. (2002), Error Analysis as a branch of linguistics developed in the 1960s that argued that the L1 was not the main and the only source of errors committed by the learners of second language. Hashim (1999) adds that the language effect is more complex and these errors can be caused even by the target

language itself and by the applied communicative strategies as well as the second language instruction types and quality. The main aim of Error Analysis is to identify strategies which learners use in learning language in terms of both teaching and learning approaches, to try to identify the causes of learners' errors, that is investigating the motives behind committing such errors as the first attempt to eradicate them and to obtain information on common difficulties in language learning, as an aid to teaching or in the preparation of teaching materials (Richard et al 2002). Error Analysis does not only see the learner's Linguistic background and L1 interference as the cause of interlingual error which is most committed by learners when Target Language rules are misused. This brings to mind two causes of errors being within the Target language (intralingual) and between the L1 and the L2 (interlingual).

2.9 Related studies

This section looks at studies conducted in the area of spelling errors in other countries. Cook (1992) examined the extent to which L2 user's knowledge of sound/letter rules and of individual visual items reflects their different L1 systems of spelling and pronunciation. Hence, the researcher compared adult L2 learners and adult and children native speakers. Results revealed that, on average, a fifteen-year-old native speaker's spelling errors are similar in number to those of an adult L2 learner. The researcher concluded that spelling is so important due to its "social overtones". In the Canadian context, Figueredo and Varnhagen (2004) compared the difference in spelling errors and correction among Canadian students. The participants of the study included 16 males and 37 females. The researchers used two essays written by the university students and participants were given to read those essays to identify spelling errors. Next, the researchers classified the spelling errors into three

types: phonological, orthographic, and morphological. Results revealed that the participants made more phonological errors compared to orthographic and morphological errors.

In Singapore, Dixon et al (2010) examined the first language (L1) influence on 285 bilingual children's spelling performance in their second language (L2). In general, results showed a statistically significant effect of L1 on conventional spelling but not on phonological spelling, controlling for reading proficiency. That is, the Chinese (morphosyllabic) group not only scored higher than the Malay (alphabetic) and Tamil (syllabic) groups overall, but also made more real-word substitution and transposition errors. In another study, He and Wang (2009) investigated spelling errors among two Chinese EFL beginner young learners for 14 months. Results showed that spelling errors occurred as a result of using 10 name-based letters and 20 sound-based letters. Additionally, errors occur with EFL writers who cannot grasp the complexity of vowels and consonants in the English spelling system.

In addition, Al-Jabri (2006) investigated the spelling errors of 114 Omani fifth-grade students in two rural schools in Oman. Data were collected from spelling tests on 10 words. Results revealed that the most frequent errors committed were errors of omission and substitution, while the errors of transposition and insertion were less frequent. Recently, Alhaisoni et al (2015) examined the types of spelling errors in English composition on 122 EFL undergraduate students at the University of Ha'il in Saudi Arabia. Data were collected through writing tasks of 53 males and 69 females in the preparatory year. The findings indicated that omission errors are considered the highest among students. And the majority of spelling errors are centralized around wrong use of vowels and pronunciation. The findings indicated

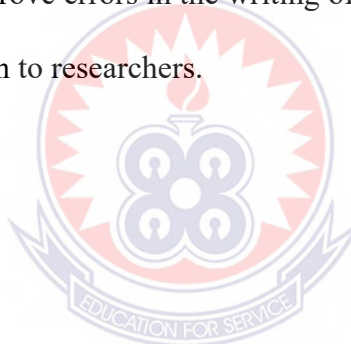
that spelling errors occur as a result of anomalies existing in L2 as well as L1 interference.

Smith and Swan (2001) indicated that spelling errors are noticeable among Arab students as the existence of linguistic differences in both languages English and Arabic while spelling errors are found to be less among other non-Arabic students as their languages share more similarities with English. The studies related to Arab spelling errors are few and the majority of these studies focus on the spelling difficulties which Arab students face in learning EFL (Al-Jarf, 2005). Al-Jarf, (2005) conducted a study in Saudi Arabia to investigate the correlation between spelling and listening comprehension among students. The findings indicated that EFL students' percentage of spelling errors found to be 41.5% of the words with 49.5% correct responses to the questions in the listening comprehension test and with 52% correct answers on the decoding test. Fender (2008) also conducted another study to find the spelling errors among Arabs and non-Arab ESL students. The results revealed that Arab students spelling skills tend to be less success with most spelling difficulties in general and multi-syllabic words. (Al-zuoud and Kabilan (2013) examined the composition spelling errors of 43 EFL undergraduate Jordanian students. 228 errors were resulted from 43 written papers and then categorised and analyzed into four types according to Cook's classification (1999): omission, substitution, insertion, and transposition. The findings revealed that the majority of students committed substitution and omission spelling errors.

2.10 Conclusion

It can be deduced from the literature that errors have been part of the teaching and learning process for a very long time of which spelling errors are of no exception. The literature has shown different types and classifications of errors in general as well

as types of spelling errors in particular. It has been revealed that so many factors account for the spelling errors students commit in their writing and utterances. These include poor pronunciation of sounds of the English alphabets, lack of coordination between pronunciation and orthography of the English language, the inability of learners to distinguish between letters and sounds in words, social media usage by students and attitudes of learners. The literature also showed related studies on spelling errors in other countries which reveal that spelling errors occur everywhere learners are introduced to the learning of second languages. The errors committed by these learners vary due to different conditions and environment under which the learning take place. In conclusion, it could be deduced from the literature that enough has not been done to improve errors in the writing of language learners of Ghana even though is of great concern to researchers.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the procedure or process that the researcher used to come out with the valid conclusion. It consists of the research design, population of the study, the sampling technique, sample size, data collection strategies, data collection protocol, data analysis and data presentation.

3.1 Research design

The design employed in this research work is qualitative. The study involves Proso D/A JHS Form Two Pupils in the Western North Region of Ghana: precisely in the Juaboso District. The study seeks to analyze spelling errors in the writing of the pupils and the causes of these spelling errors.

3.2 Population

The study was conducted in Proso D/A JHS. The pupils' population is about two hundred. The gender distribution of this population is quite even. This study would consider only the pupils of the Junior High School Two (Form Two) and is made up of Sixty (60). Thirty-two (32) being girls and Twenty-eight (28) boys. This class was purposively selected because this is the class the researcher has been teaching for over five years now. This helped the researcher to obtain adequate data on the topic under study.

3.3 Sampling sample size

The sampling techniques the researcher employed to get the participants were random sampling technique and purposive. The random sampling technique was used to select the forty (40) out of sixty (60) pupils. The researcher cut sixty pieces of

papers bearing the inscriptions 'yes' or 'no'. Forty (40) of the papers bore the inscription 'yes' and twenty (20) bore 'no'. The papers were put into a box and all pupils were allowed to choose randomly from it. Those who picked 'yes' were selected for the study. On the other hand, two (2) teachers, (Social Studies and RME teachers of the class) were purposively selected. This is because the subjects they teach involve a lot of notes writing so some of their works (assignments) given to the pupils could be added to the English works the researcher used for better analysis of the spelling errors committed by the pupils. In all, forty-two (42) participants were selected made up of twenty-two (22) girls, eighteen (18) boys and two (2) teachers. The sample size used was forty (40) pupils and two (2) teachers. The pupils were made up of twenty-two (22) girls and eighteen (18) boys. The sample size represented about sixty-seven percent (67%) of the total JHS Two population.

3.4 Data collection strategies

The researcher used three data collection strategies for this study. The instruments used were: documents (classroom activities), observations and interviews. These instruments have been explained as follows:

3.4.1 Documents (classroom activities)

Document is an information about an event or phenomenon which people have prepared (Tuchman, 1999). They are written accounts to describe or explain phenomena. They provide historical and contextual dimensions to observation and interview, it sometimes holds the key to secret information which observation and interviews cannot unlock (Patton, 2002). Examples of documents include textbooks, curriculum, timetable and works done by students. The researcher used works done by students (pupils) because it enabled me to obtain the actual written works of the pupils for analysis and helped the researcher do the analysis with greater attention at his own

convenience. To avoid subjecting participants (pupils) to ridicule by people who would get hold of this study, names and date of the documents (pupils works) were removed and serial numbers were used instead. The researcher considered the following written works of pupils:

1. English compositions, Grammar Exercises and Reading Exercises.
2. Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education (RME) written notes and exercises as well as assignments.

3.4.2 Observations

Observation is the primary data collecting technique on non-verbal behaviour. It involves getting to the field to interact with participants, organization, etc to collect data based on their behaviours. It is often referred to as field work because it takes place in the field (Creswell, 2009). In this study, the researcher decided to observe the teaching methods of the two participant teachers and also observe pupils' behaviours towards the learning of spellings of words during the teaching and learning process to ascertain the fact about some causes of spelling errors especially the teacher and learner induced causes such as inadequate spelling rules, poor pronunciation and absentmindedness on the part of pupils during lessons. The researcher did the observation after the consensus of the teachers concerned.

3.4.3 Interviews

Interviews are powerful conversations with subjects to obtain information to answer a question or questions. An interview represents a direct attempt by the researcher to obtain reliable and valid measures of characteristics, behaviours and attitudes in the form of verbal response from one or more responses. There are three types of interview which are structured interview, semi-structured interview and unstructured interview. But in this study, the semi-structured interview was used. This

was used because the researcher created room for specification of issues and areas to be covered in an outline form and also to adjust the level of language when the need be. The semi-structured interview yielded comprehensive data and information from the respondents.

3.5 Data collection protocol

The headmaster of Proso D/A JHS was contacted for permission to conduct the research in the school and particularly the pupils of JHS Two to be the participants. The headmaster was told the purpose of the study and he agreed with the researcher to carry on the study. The two theory oriented subject teachers (social studies and RME teachers) were also consulted and they agreed to support the study whenever due. The purpose of the study was not omitted when the two teachers were contacted. Students whose documents were used were made to agree wholeheartedly.

3.6 Data Analysis

The Error Analysis (EA) approach was used to analyze the spelling errors in the essays as well as other written documents of the pupils of Proso D/A JHS Two. Error Analysis is a technique for identifying, classifying and systematically interpreting the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a foreign language based on linguistic principles and procedures (Crystal, 1987). The categories of errors proposed by Cook (1999) were used in the analysis. These were letter omission, letter addition, letter substitution and letter transposition spelling errors. Other of errors identified by the researcher in the writings of pupils were categorized into multiple and apostrophe errors. Pupils were given serial numbers in place of their names and their errors, according to the categories, were tabulated to obtain their frequencies. To be convinced by what scholars have proposed as some causes of these spelling errors, the researcher interviewed the pupils and the two teacher participants and analyzed

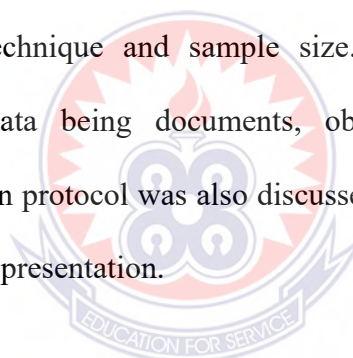
their responses. These interviews analyses would confirm some observations the researcher made concerning teaching methods and learning behaviours of teachers and pupils respectively.

3.7 Data presentation

The researcher presented his data using bar charts based on the percentages of the errors committed. The interviews were presented in a narrative form so that the causes of the research problem would be well understood.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter is called methodology. It is about the procedure the researcher used to conduct the research. It started with the research design, followed by population, sampling technique and sample size. The data collection strategies employed to collect data being documents, observation and interviews were discussed. Data collection protocol was also discussed and the chapter ended with the analysis of data and data presentation.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results obtained from the data collected. The chapter also discusses the types of spelling errors Junior High School students commit in their essay writing. Ninety (90) pupils' essay scripts were collected and used for this study. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section presents the analysis of the various types of spelling errors that occurred in the pupils' essays. These errors include letter omission errors, letter addition/insertion errors, letter substitution errors, letters transposition errors, multiple errors and apostrophe errors. The findings indicate that letter substitution errors occurred most frequent, while apostrophe errors were the least occurrences in the pupils' work followed by letter transposition spelling errors. The second discusses the causes of these spelling errors in the pupils' work based on the findings.

Based on the results of the study, it was realized that several factors are responsible for the errors in learners' writings. On letter omission errors, the findings showed that the way students pronounce words wrongly played a major role in their misspellings. The students were also ignorant of the English spelling rules as well as the problem of silent letters. On letter addition/insertion errors, it was realized that pupils doubled letters unnecessarily, and could not differentiate between letters and sounds. This was due to ignorance of English spelling rule, overgeneralization and false analogy. Also, the major cause of substitution errors was attributed to lack of phonological awareness, lack of pronunciation-orthography coordination of the English language, little knowledge on spelling rules among others. Letter transposition errors were realized to be caused by ignorance of the structure of

diphthongs, inconsistency of the English orthography as well as carelessness on the part of students (pupils). It was further realized that the students committed multiple letter errors which was caused by memorization of spelling rather than the use of phonics. Also, social media influence and other attitudes of pupils (miscellaneous factors) featured in this category. Finally omission of or misuse of apostrophe which were also seen in the essays were attributed to students' lack knowledge of the correct use of the apostrophe. The analyzed data have been represented in simple percentages and bar chart. These are further explained with examples in their various sections.

4.1 Categories of spelling errors

This study discovered six categories of spelling errors which are omission, addition/insertion, substitution, transposition, multiple and apostrophe errors. These are discussed in the following section:

4.1.1 Letter omission spelling errors

Letter omission errors are spelling errors where letter(s) are spelt out from a word. As stated in the literature review, Dadzie and Bosiwah (2015, p.49) describe letter omission errors as “a spelling error type that has to do with exclusion of letters from words spelled”. In addition, Jayousi (2011, p. 46) in analyzing spelling errors, states that “omission includes errors caused by omitting one letter or more, as in for instance, omitting the e in the word *friend* (frind)”. Bahloul (2007) also describes letter omission as consonant simplification in a study of spelling errors among Arab students where omission of consonant letters was the most frequent. Bahloul sees consonant simplification as a situation where two adjacent consonants in a word are simplified by omitting one letter. From the spelling errors gathered, the pupils committed 60 letter omission errors. The following are some examples of omission

errors which occurred in the essays, with examples of words used in sentences. The letter can be a consonant or vowel.

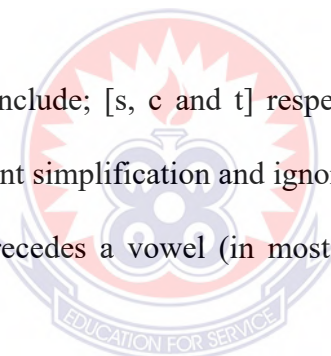
4.1.1.1 Consonant omission

This is the omission of a letter which represents a consonant from a word. The examples below show the omission of consonants in pupils' writing:

1. Many people commit suicide as a result of family pressure
2. The acident occurred at the market square
3. In the attemp' to dodge, the vehicle runs into a ditch and in most cases runs into an oncoming vehicle'

The above examples show the omissions of letters which represent consonants in the words.

The omitted consonants include; [s, c and t] respectively. The causes of the errors were attributed to consonant simplification and ignorance of the English spelling rules that when a consonant precedes a vowel (in most cases), the consonant should be doubled.



4.1.2 Vowel omission

This is the omission of a letter representing a vowel from words. For example,

1. Moses died and Joshua succeded him
2. Children believe the story that ghosts apper at night alone
3. After the meeting, the visit drove to the *airpot*.
4. Some Ghanaian pastors are fund of exploiting their church members,

Based on the example, it was realized that the students omitted the following letters; [e,a,r,o] which represent vowel in the misspelled words. The letter [r] is a vowel because it represents /ɔ/ in the word 'airport'. It was realized that the omission of the vowels was due to the absence of phonological process at the early stage of learners.

There is omission of the letter [r] in the word. The results also indicated that 60 letter omission, made up of 42 consonants and 28 vowels occurred in the students' essays. A summary of the letter omission is shown in Table 4.1.1 and Figure 4.1.1 respectively

Table 4.1.1. Letter omission errors

Type of error	Frequency	Percentage
Consonant omission	42	70
Vowel omission	28	30
Total	60	100

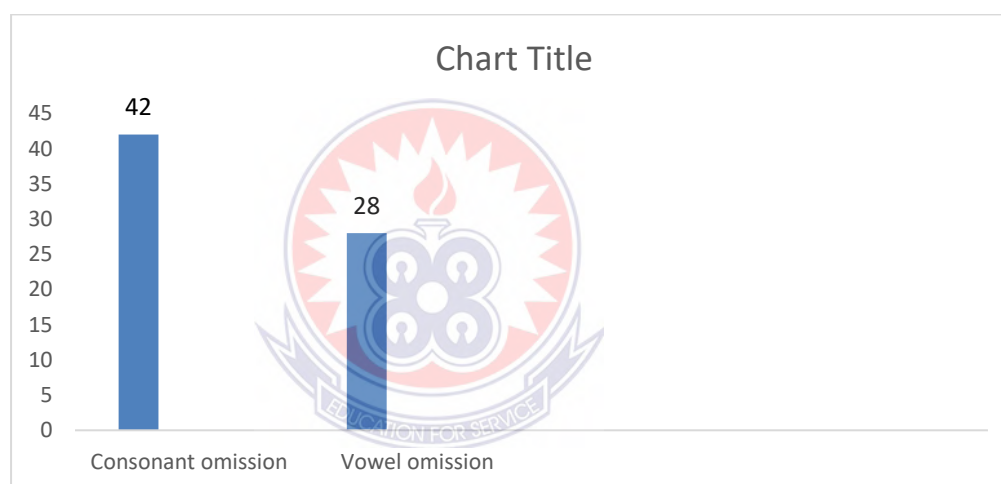


Figure 4.1.1. Letter omission errors

Figure 4.1.1 shows that the students omitted 42 consonants as compared to vowels which are 28. As explained, this is due to lack of phonological knowledge. Other related studies also show that letter omission errors are the second most frequent in students' written works, and this is a serious problem. For example, Kelman & Apel (2004), Bathley & Dilhah (2007), and Dada (2015) indicate that letter omission errors were the most frequent errors students commit. In this study though it is not the most frequent error committed by the pupils, it is relatively high.

4.1.2. Letter addition/insertion errors

This type of spelling errors is where needless letter(s) are either added to or inserted in the spelt words. This is in line with Ahmed (2018, p 22), who states that insertion errors mainly appear because of the addition of extra letters in a word. Cook (1999), cited in Kusuran (2016), also describes this type of error as spelling errors where additional letter is included in spelling words. Dadzie & Bosiwah (2015) states that most learners in their trial and error testing, tend to add certain letters, which are not required in the spelling words. Four sub-errors namely, consonant additions, consonant insertions, vowel additions and vowel insertions were identified in the letter omission/ insertion category. These are discussed as follows:

4.2.1 Consonant addition

This is where consonant is added to the beginning or end of the word. The following are examples:

1. My father didn't agreeet with me I told him I wanted to stay away from home
2. Childrens like toys

The two examples above show the addition of [t] in *agreeet*, and [s] in *childrens*. The added letters represent consonant sounds. These errors were attributed to overgeneralization of rules of the past tense and the plural marker -s.

4.2.2. Consonant insertion

This is where consonants were inserted in the words. The following are examples:

1. The politicians allways make juicy promises but they don't fulfil them.
2. My reason for *writting* to you this letter is to inform you about my wedding
3. Good sanitation makes you look strong, healthy and active. It allows someone to go (attend) to occassion.

From the example the students inserted the letters [l, t, and s] in words respectively. The insertion of [l] in ‘*always*’ was because always contains the words *all* and *ways*. *Always* and *almost* are compound words, but unlike other compound words where the two are put together without deleting any letter, the compounding of *all* + *ways* is done by deleting the lateral // to avoid unnecessary stress of the word. The insertion of another letter 's' in the word 'occasion' was not necessary. Therefore, the pupils committed this error due to lack of knowledge of the English language spelling systems also their little exposure to the correct spellings of the words.

4.2.3. Vowel addition errors

This type error is a situation where a vowel is unnecessarily added to the end of a word. Examples include the following;

1. Many younge female graduates do not get jobs to do and they end up in prostitution
2. Mr. Chairman, some drivers drive under alcohole influence

The two examples show the letter [e] which represent vowel /e/. This type of errors were not frequent in students’ writing.

4.2.4 Vowel insertion errors

This type of error occurs when a letter representing a vowel is inserted in a word. For example,

1. The ban on employment in public institutions has been lifted
2. At all stages, some rituals are performed secreatly.

In the first sentence, the letter [e] which represents a vowel was inserted in the word ‘*employment*’, whereas ‘*secretly*’ in the second sentence was inserted the letter [a] another vowel/a/ to create a diphthong/ia/ instead of a monophthongs /i:/. It was realized that the students pronounce the word the way they spelt it. These errors

occurred due to lack of phonological awareness both on the part of teachers and students. *Childrens* instead of children, as in this a morphological error where the plural morpheme {-s} is added to the word *children* to make it plural. The word *children* is already in the plural form of *child* + -s and so need another {-s}. The findings also revealed that 44 addition/ insertion errors occurred in the pupils' essays. The following were observed to be some causes of letter addition spelling errors:

Al Jayousi (2011) asserts that addition errors are caused by lack of knowledge of spelling rules, as in the case of *allways* (always) and *almost* (almost) where the 'all' and 'ways' were compounded without deleting the [l]; and *writting* (writing) which resulted from ignorance of spelling rules. The main cause of letter insertion errors is the lack knowledge of the relationship between the spoken and written language, and faulty pronunciation. The inconsistency of the English spelling system is another cause of letter addition error. The table below shows summary letter addition/insertion errors. The summary of the errors is presented in Table 4.1.2 and Figure 4.1.2 respectively.

Table 4.1.2. A summary of addition/insertion errors

Error type	Frequency	Percentage
Consonant addition	8	18
Consonant insertion	12	27
Vowel addition	9	21
Vowel insertion	15	34
Total	44	100

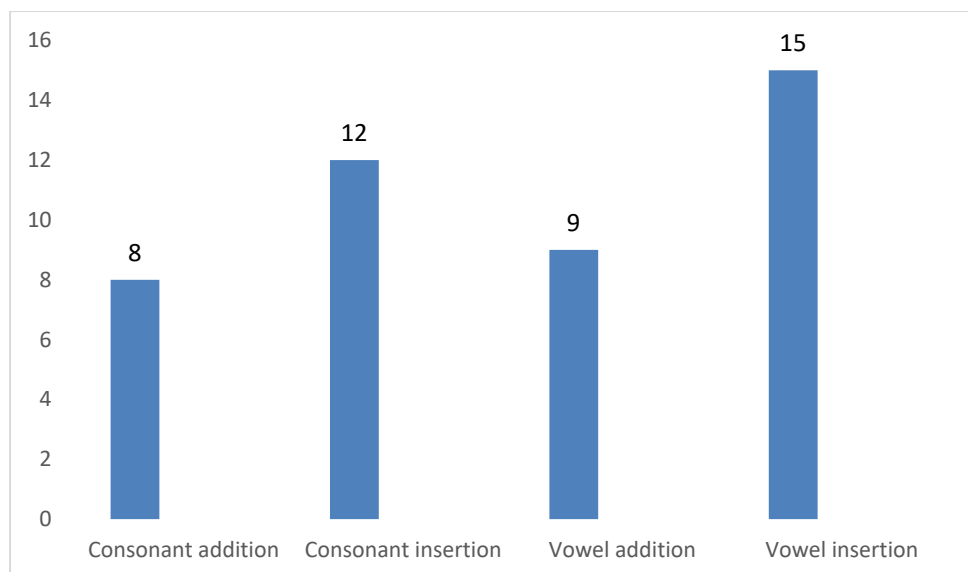


Figure 4.2. A chart Showing the Frequencies of types of Addition/ insertion errors.

The data in the Figure 4.1.2 show that the students inserted more letters than they added. It also shows that they inserted more consonants as compared to vowels.

4.1.3 Letter substitution errors

This is the type of errors where a letter or letters are substituted for another in spelling words. Jayousi (2011) also asserts that substitution includes errors caused by substituting a letter or more for another. Additionally, Allaith (2009, p41) describe letter substitution as replacement of letters, example *p* for *b* in Arabic. According to Cook (1997), these errors are divided into either substitution of single letter, or as grapheme of multiple related changes. Example, *thort* instead of *thought*. The findings of this study indicate that the students committed 85 substitution errors in their essays making it the most frequent occurred errors. Also, this study discovered four subdivisions under this category of spelling errors. These were consonant substitution, vowel substitution, lowercase-uppercase substitution and uppercase-lowercase substitution errors. The following are examples of some occurrences in pupils writings.

4.1.3.1 Consonant substitution errors

In this type of error, a consonant letter is substituted for another. Below are some examples:

1. I think this suggestion will be *acsepted* to help improve sanitation in the district
2. Dorcas celebrates her birthday in *match* every year

From the results, it was realized that the students substituted, for example, [s] for [c], and [t] for [r]. [s] in place of [c] is due to ignorance of English spelling rules while the [t] for [r] is as result of the homophonic relationship between the words 'match' and 'March'. All the letters substituted here represent consonants. Eleven (18) Consonant substitution errors were seen be have occurred in the essays.

4.3.2 Vowel substitution errors

Vowel substitution is a situation where a representing a vowel is substituted or replaced with another. Below are some examples.

The poor is usually niglected in society

I thinked my parents when they bought me a new bag

The patient was given two pints of blad to survive

Here the letter [oo] was substituted with [a].

The error was made because the students spelled the word based on its pronunciation which is also inconsistent in relation to English orthography.

The students committed this error because they translated the way they pronounce it into writing.

Another cause is lack of phonological awareness. This has to do with the difference between letter and its sound, which the students lack knowledge of. They therefore spelled the word as they hear and pronounce it.

4.1.3.1 Lowercase-uppercase substitution errors

These errors occur when lowercase letters are wrongly replaced with uppercase letters in a word(s).

1. The secretary went and Called her boss when the business partners arrived at the office
2. This error occurred (16) times from the data collected.

4.1.3.2 Uppercase-lowercase substitution errors

These errors occur when uppercase letters are substituted with lowercase letters. Example,

God did so many wonders in the sight of the Israelites and they all believed Him

This error occurred (28) times in the writings of the pupils. These two errors were mostly committed with letters that are so identical in both the lowercase and uppercase. The similarities and lack of mastery of either letters by pupils confuse them to exchange the letters for each other. Poor understanding and usage of punctuation marks especially the comma and capital letters also led to these errors as pupils mostly continue sentences with the capital letter after commas.

From the analysis, it was realized that most of the letters the students substituted- [i] for [e], [i] for [a], and [a] for [oo] represent vowels sounds. The only consonant substitution was [s] in place of [c]. This shows that the errors committed were as a result of lack of phonological awareness because the students lacked the ability to manipulate the sound of the target language. The students also failed to apply some spelling rules in their spellings. The findings also show that the students wrote 'blood'/blʌd/ as 'blad'/blad/ and had it wrong due to the irregularities between pronunciation and orthography of the English language. Also, uppercase letters and lowercase letters were interchanged. This confirms Wang's (1991) assertion in the

literature that in learning an English word, learners sometimes have to rote memorize the spelling; its letters and their arrangements. The summary of letter substitution errors are shown in Table 4.1.3 and Figure 4.1.3.

Table 4.1.3. Letter substitution errors

Type of error	Frequency	Percentage
Consonant substitution errors	18	21
Vowel substitution errors	23	27
Lowercase-uppercase substitution errors	16	19
Uppercase-lowercase substitution errors	28	33
Total	85	100

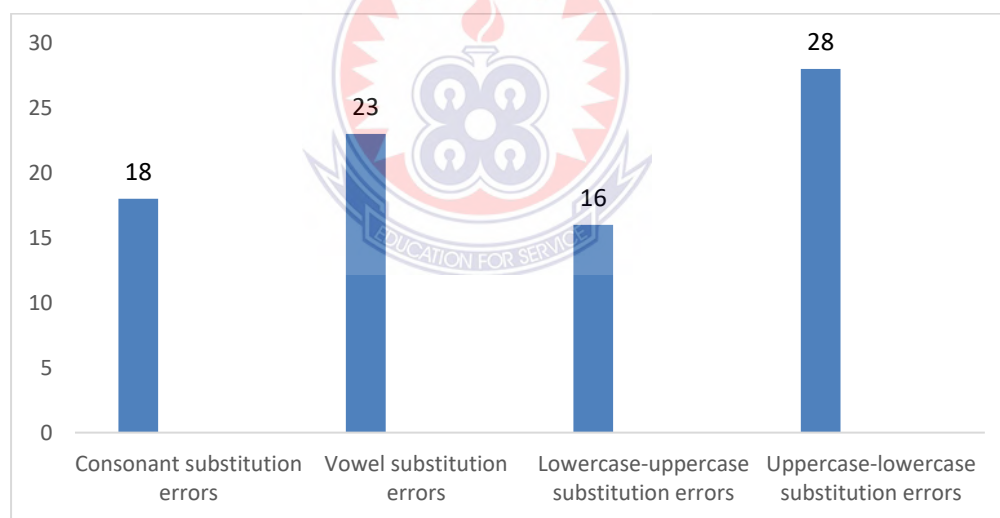


Figure 4.1.3. Letter substitution errors

The chart indicates that the students substituted more vowels than consonants in their essays and more uppercase letters were also replaced with lowercase letters. This was attributed to lack of Phonological Awareness. It was realized that the inconsistency of the English orthography accounted for these errors.

4.1.4 Letter transposition errors

In this type of errors, two consecutive letters change place in a word. Jayousi (2011) refers to them as *disordering* errors. To Jayousi, this type of errors refers to disordering some letters in a way, such as writing *sea* as *sae*. Banacha (2013, p. 7) refers to letters transposition errors as letter reversal errors which is in line with Bahloul (2007) which refers to letters transposition as metathesis in which the position of two letters are reversed. This study looks at consonants transposition, vowels transposition and consonant- vowel transposition. The following are examples of letters transposition errors that occurred in the students' scripts:

4.4.1 Consonant transposition

Consonant transposition is where two letters that represent consonant sounds change positions. Examples are as follows:

People that drop out of school *strat* the work of armed robbery

This is a spelling error involving letter transposition which, if not well checked, maybe mistaken for *wrong word use*. The letters *[ar]* represented by the sound /a:/, was transposed as *[ra]* which is realize as /ra/. This error was committed because of students' confusion of the elements of the word.

4.4.2 Vowel transposition errors

This is a type of spelling errors where two vowel letters exchange position. The following are some example,

Yours faithful

This error is as a result of the transposition of the letters [a] and [i] which forms the diphthong /ai/ to /ia/ which doesn't exist in English language. Another similar error committed by the students include;

1. The police is not fiar to the people.

Corporal punishment makes it possible for one to obey school rules and regulations.

2. Like, if the person is late to school, because of the punishment he/she may receive, he/she may not come to school late again

3. I was crying but my father didn't hear my *vioce*

From the example, the letters [i] and [o] have changed position, disordering the letters of the word. The diphthong /ɔi/ is being changed to /iɔ/, which does not conform to the diphthong structure of English. This error is as a result of how students hear or perceives the word. The error was also committed due to lack of phonological awareness as students lacked the idea of the structure of English diphthongs (Asma, 2017).

4.4 3 Consonant/ vowel transposition

This is where two letters, representing a consonant and a vowel exchange positions in a word. Examples are below;

1. The most memorable day in my life is my *brithday*.

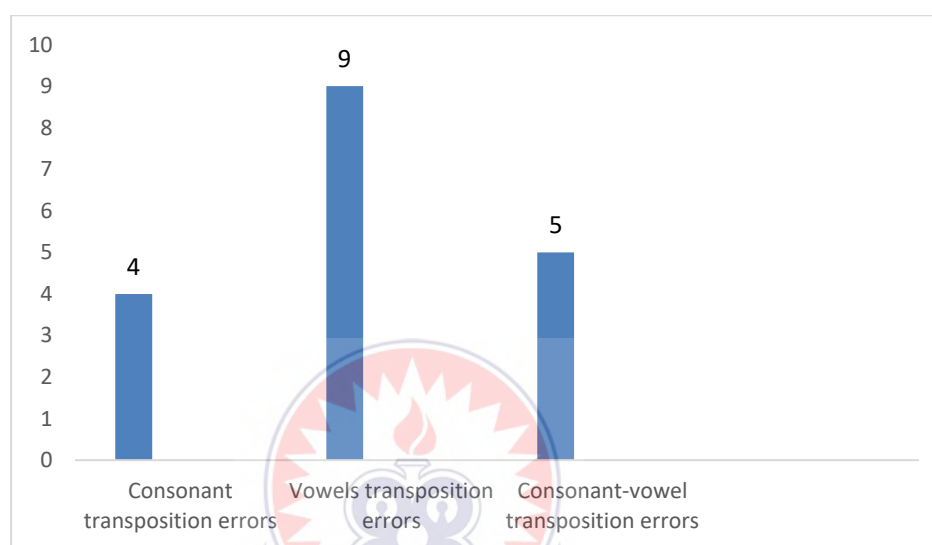
In this word, there inversion of the letters [i] and [r] as [ri] which pronounced /ɪi/ as rit instead [ir] pronounced as /ɜ:/ as in birth

2. That was my frist day to go to super market to shop for me”.

From the results, the most frequent transposed letters are [e] and [i] which could be a matter of carelessness, it was realized that the transposition of [a] and [i] has to do with wrong pronunciation influencing the student's spellings. This is because when some of the pupils were asked to pronounce some of the misspelled words, they pronounced the words like they have misspelled them. Example, fiath/fiaθ/ instead of faith/feiθ/. Table 4.1.4 and Figure 4.1.4 presents a summary of transposition errors:

Table 4.1.4. Transposition errors

Type of error	Frequency	Percentage
Consonants Transposition error	4	22
Vowels Transposition errors	9	50
Consonant-Vowel Transposition errors	5	28
Total	18	100

*Figure 4.1.4: Showing bar chart types of transposition errors*

Based on the analysis, transposition errors occurred 18 times of which vowel transposition took half of it. Consonant-vowel transposition errors were the second with 5 occurrences, whereas consonant transposition showed the least with 4 occurrences. Even though the occurrence of this type of errors is minimal as compared to omission and substitution, they have serious effect on both oral and written words. However, transposition errors could be attributed to students' carelessness. It was also observed that students pronounced these words wrongly which result into wrong spellings.

4.1.5 Multiple letter errors

Multiple letters errors are types of spelling errors that contain two or more types of other errors. Ahmed (2017) categorized multiple letters errors as “Other” which he explained that “when an erroneous word cannot be classified under one particular given category or it has more than one type of spelling mistake in it such as 'onwas' for 'onwards' or 'weather' for 'whether' as the latter contains both omission and addition/insertion spelling error in it. This type of errors also refers to these type errors as miscellaneous errors. According to them, this type of errors captures all other words, which in no way resembles the word spelled. The analysis of these errors is done base on the number of errors a misspelled word contains. Examples of these types of errors found in this study a:

4.1.5.1 Words containing two types of errors

This is a multiple error where two types of spelling errors occur in a written word. For example;

1. Practising parallel culture is a waist of time

The sentence contains both letter addition/insertion [i] and letter omission [e] errors

4.5.2 Words containing three types of errors

These are types of errors where one word contain three types of errors. This type of errors contains a mixture of letters which in most cases do not represent a specific sound. For example,

2. The contractor has the ortonity to demolish the old structures
3. Building idastires will create jobs for the youth in the country omission

of letter [n], substitution of letter [a] instead of letter [u] and the transposition of letters [ir] instead of [ri].*merdison (medicine), *force (falls), etc.

This type of error occurred because the students apply their own knowledge and perceptions in spelling the word. This is also due to lack of phonological awareness.

According to Gill Elliot & Nat Johnson, (2008), “These errors form the most serious type of spelling errors and have most effect upon appearance of the word”. However, the problem of this type of errors is beyond the effects of the appearance of the word. The misspelling of some of these words was so serious that a lot of time was used in getting their meanings, even in context. Example, **ortority*(*authority*) and **idastires*' (*industries*). These errors are as a result of lack of phonetic knowledge and so this study agrees with Elliot and Johnson’s (2008) description of multiple errors that, “these are referred to as extreme phonetic errors”. Table 4.1.5 and Figure 4.1.5 illustrate the frequencies of multiple error types of misspelled words:

Table 4.1.5. Multiple errors

Type of error	Frequency	Percentage
Two errors	5	19
Three (other) errors	22	81
Total	27	100

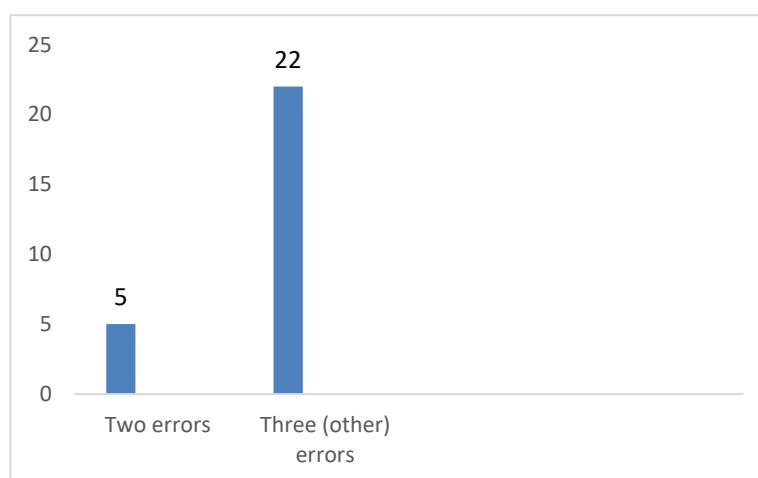


Figure 4.1.5. Multiple letter errors

From the chart, it was realized that the students spelled words which contained two types and three (other types) of errors respectively. This shows that misspelled words which contained three or other different types of errors occurred most in pupils' writings. Multiple errors were seen to have serious effects on pupils' writing since they are difficult to read. These errors were attributed to wrong teaching and poor attitude to learning spelling.

4.1.6 Omission/ wrong use of apostrophe

The apostrophe (‘), or character is a punctuation mark, and sometimes a diacritical mark in language, (Quirk et al, 1985). An apostrophe is used to indicate possession, example, *Hammurabi's code*, and to mark omitted letters in contractions, example, *it's* is a contraction for *it is*. According to Stephen (2014), apostrophe helps clarify meaning and its omission (in the possessive form) can lead to confusion over who possesses what. Possessive is probably the area where most cases of apostrophe misuse occur. In this study, the students used both omission of letter in contraction and possessive forms of the apostrophe, but wrongly. Below are the types apostrophe used with some examples:

4.1.6.1 Contraction form

Contracted words are short words made by putting two words together. Letters are omitted in the contraction and replaced by apostrophe at where the omitted letter would have been. However, learners either omit the apostrophe or misplace it. The examples show contraction form errors:

1. Its my mother who made me enjoy my birthday.

The contraction form of it is is it's, but in using the form here, the apostrophe was omitted resulting in the its.

2. The police said if we *do 'not* pay any money he will not open him.

The contraction form of “do not” is “don’t”, not “do’not”. Therefore, there was misuse of the apostrophe.

3. We *didn’t* see even one person in the forest.

Here the contraction form of did not was misspelled ‘*di’dnt*’, misplacing the apostrophe.

4. *lets* learn from my story and always obey our parents.

The contraction form of ‘let us’ is *let’s*; therefore, there was omission of the apostrophe, resulting in the misspelled word “*lets*”.

4.1.6.2 Misuse of apostrophe

Sometimes, learners of L2 misuse the apostrophe in situations where it is not needed. Example of this is the use of the apostrophe in verbs to indicate the 3rd person singular. For example,

1. My uncle always *send’s* me to the super market and buys many things for me
2. The armed robbers run away before the *police comes* to check what has happen

Comes is a verb in the present tense indicating the third person singular. Therefore, the apostrophe in ‘*come’s*’ is being misused.

4.1.6.3 Possessive form

The possessive form is used to show that something belongs to someone by putting apostrophe between the noun and -s. learners unfortunately sometimes become confuse as to where to put the apostrophe as shown:

1. The priest will go to *Asante house* to eat and Christian mothers will go to *Felicia house* to eat. Here both the apostrophe and the possessive marker -s are omitted, making the names *Abugri* and *Felicia* are adjectives modifying the house, like *block house*, or *jubilee house*.

2. I saw childrens cars in the supermarket

The problem here has to do with omission of the apostrophe resulting in the misspelling of *children* as *childrens*. ‘*Children*’ is already in the plural form and so does not need the plural marker *-s*. This therefore agrees with Stephen (2014), that the omission of the apostrophe can lead to confusion over who possesses what. The results show that the students committed 8 apostrophe errors in their writing. Table 4.1.5 and Figure 4.1.6 show the summary of apostrophe errors:

Table 4.1.6. Apostrophe errors

Type of apostrophe error	Frequency	Percentage
Contraction forms	4	33
Misuse of apostrophe	2	17
Possessives forms	6	50
Total	12	100

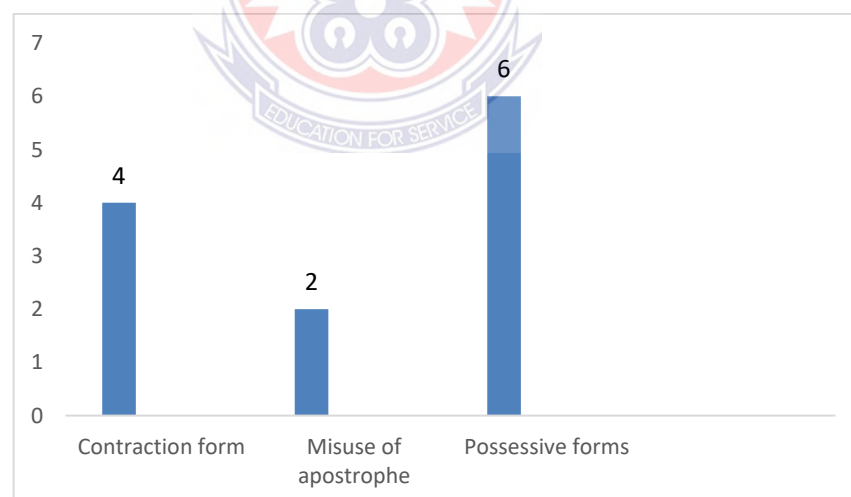


Figure 4.1.6. Apostrophe errors

The chart shows that the students have problem with the contraction form of the apostrophe since it is the most frequent errors indicated in the chart. This was attributed to false analogy and incomplete rule acquired by students. So far six major

types of spelling errors were identified and discussed in this study. The sub-types were also discussed with examples. Tables and bar charts were provided to illustrate the occurrences of each error in the students' essays. Table 4.1.7 and Figure 4.1.7 summarize the types of spelling errors in the students' writing.

Table 4.1.7. Types of spelling errors

Error type	Frequency	Percentage
Letter omission	60	24
Letter addition/insertion	44	18
Letter substitution	85	35
Letter transposition	18	7
Multiple errors	27	11
Apostrophe	12	5
Total	246	100

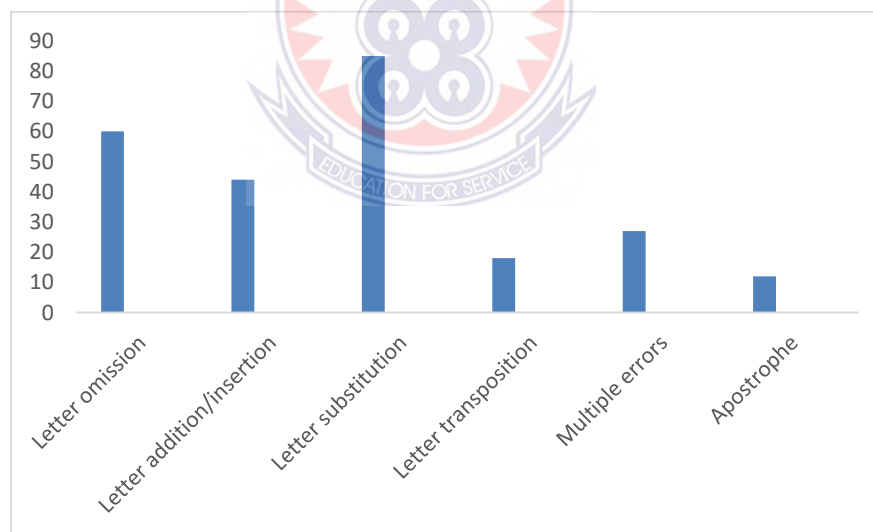


Figure 4.1.7. Types of spelling errors

The chart shows that substitution errors were the most frequent errors in the students' writing, with apostrophe errors being the least occurrences followed by transposition spelling errors. This study investigated spelling errors in the written

works of JHS students, using Proso D/A JHS form two pupils as sample. The findings revealed six types of spelling errors. These included letter omission, addition substitution, transposition, multiple errors and apostrophe errors. The findings also indicated that letter substitution errors were the most frequent errors with eighty-five (85) occurrences in pupils' written works, followed by letter omission errors, and with apostrophe errors being the least occurring errors with seven (12) occurrences. The findings also showed that about 65% of the spelling problems are due to lack of phonological awareness, while other causes accounted for 35%.

The results also revealed that some words changed as a result of letter omission, substitution, addition or transposition. Examples include *fund* for *found*, *thinked* for *thanked*, *weather* for *whether*, *author* for *altar* among others. This study considered these as spelling errors and not wrong word use as named in some research studies. This because the context in which the words were used shows that the students knew the words they were using but the words were misspelled. For example, "another *case* of armed robbery is lack of employment", instead of "Another *cause* of armed robbery is lack of employment". '*Cause*' was misspelled as '*case*' by error of omission, the letter [u] was omitted from the word. There were however wrong word use errors, which is not the objective of this study.

4.2 Causes of spelling errors

The literature on this study reviewed some cause of errors generally, where various researchers indicated the cause of errors from their point of views and findings in the course of their studies. For instead, Shekhzadeh & Gheichi (2011) the causes of interlingual errors are transfer of phonology, morphology, grammatical, lexical, semantics and stylistic elements of the learner's mother tongue to the target language. Touchie (2012) also identified causes of errors as simplification,

overgeneralization, hypercorrection, faulty teaching, fossilization and avoidance. Another instead is Chittima Kaweera (2013), which categorized causes of intralingual errors as false analogy, misanalysis, incomplete rule application, exploiting redundancy, overlooking co-occurrence restrictions, hypercorrection and overgeneralization. The findings of this study show that the spelling errors committed by the students were as a result of the following;

4.2.1 Lack of phonological awareness

Phonological awareness refers to the ability to segment and manipulate the sounds of oral language, (pre-kpages.com). Therefore, any deficit or inability by the learner to segment and manipulate the sounds of the language is due to Lack of phonological Awareness. According to the phonological deficit theory, the level of phonological consistency of a language determines not only the reading speed but also the amount and types of reading and spelling errors made by the learner, (Luciana Cidrim and Francisco Madeiro, 2017). Lack of phonological awareness was seen to be the major of causes of learners' spelling errors. The findings from the data and observation show that the most the students cannot identify and pronounce most of the sounds of English as a second language. The effect of this is that about 85% of the JHS student cannot put sound letters together accurately to form words. They however depend on memory, and Al-Zuoud & Kabilan (2013) explained, they use the wrong letters and make spelling errors.

4.2.2 .Lack of phonology knowledge by teachers

Most teachers, especially in the Juaboso District lack, or do not have sufficient knowledge in phonetics and phonology. This makes it difficult for the teachers themselves to pronounce sound and words correctly. This means that teachers lack phonetics and phonology to teach the sounds and help learners spell words correctly.

4.2.3 *Inconsistency of the English spelling rules or orthography*

Spelling is the art of putting letters together to words. Each letter is a symbol representing one or two sounds. In a perfect alphabet, every letter would be a phonetic symbol representing one sound and one only, and each sound would have its appropriate symbol (Umera-Okeke, 2008, p 64). However, according to Umera-Okeke, that is not case in English spellings. In the English language, one letter can represent two sounds, or one sound represented by two or more letters. There are rules guiding how the letters, which represent the sounds, are put together to form words correctly. These rules indicate, for example, when to omit a letter and when to double a letter. However, these rules are inconsistent. For example, the letter [u] which is supposed represent the sound /u/, is realized -/u/ as in put /put, /ʌ/ as in just /dʒʌst/, /ɛ/ as in burn /bɛ:n/ and birth /bɛ:θ/. With the examples above, a learner can write *burth* /bɛ:θ/ instead of *birth* /bɛ:θ/. This inconsistency problem make learners spell word like ‘Fanta’ as *funter* and ‘above’ as *abave*. Touchie (2012) refers this problem as intralingual source of errors, which are due to the difficulty of second/target language.

4.2.4 *Advertisements with deviant spelling*

Present day learners spend considerable time and energy in viewing the television and listening to radio programmes. Not only do they not have enough time for reading books where actual spelling of words are used but also deviant spelling of familiar words are greatly exposed to them. Example, time ‘can be spelt tyme, tumolo for tomorrow ‘and many more. Signboards also communicate these deviant spelling to learners in some instances. Learners sometimes exhibit these in their writing essays which contribute to their poor spelling as they may be misguided by these advertisements. These advertisements can sometimes phonetically befitting but orthographically misleading. Example when quality is written *kwaliti*’ though the

actual pronunciation for quis /kw/. This contributed to the commitment of substitution and multiple errors by the pupils.

4.2.5 Use of wrong approach and materials in teaching

Language teaching is an interesting but complex one. It is one of the subjects that requires different types of approaches, teaching learning materials, and conscious efforts to teach it effectively. All the four skills of the language are supposed to be taught. Unfortunately, this is not happening in our schools, especially at JHS level. In the process of collecting data for this study, it was observed that the teachers of English at the JHS concentrate much on comprehension, grammar and writing. Pronunciation and spelling are not often taught.

4.3.6 Problem with silent letters

Silent letters cause great problems for learners when spelling words. Silent letters appear in spelling but do not have any pronunciation impact on words of modern English. In this regard, spelling the word wrongly by relying on pronunciation is highly anticipated. Silent letters can appear at the beginning, middle 'and ending' of words but those that appear at the beginning seem to cause the worst difficulties if words have not been seen before. Words like psychology, psalm, knees, know, Island, and a lot more have misleading clues to their spelling as a result of the presence of their silent letters. This accounted for most of the omission errors the pupils committed.

4.3.7 Interference of homonyms

Shaugnessy (1979) states that homonyms are a source of many orthographic errors, especially to second language (L2) learners of English. When two or more lexemes have phonetic and orthographic identities, they are called homonyms. For example,

bank – river side

bank – Financial institution

As these words have the formal identity of spelling and pronunciation, they are both homophones as well as homographs.

Lead /led/ - metal

Lead /li:d/ - present tense of 'led'

The two words have orthographic identity only. Hence they are homographs.

See /si:/ - to look or to watch

Sea /si:/ - water body

Both words have the phonetic identity and hence they are called homophones. The terminological relationship between homonymy and homograph is not very clear. The English language is rich in homonyms because it has derived several words from several other languages. Many changes have also taken place in pronunciation of English that have far outrun its spelling. The learners sometimes become confuse of the word and its corresponding meaning in their writing hence leading to spelling errors. Homonyms contributed to pupils committing multiple errors in their writings such as 'force', 'ortority' and 'waist' instead of 'falls', 'authority' and 'waste' respectively.

4.3.8 Other causes of spelling errors

Lack of interest, absentmindedness and low intelligence on the part of learners contribute to their poor and error-ridden spellings. Frequent absences from school, carelessness in some pupils and general backwardness in studies also have a role to play in spelling errors in learners' writing in the English language. Poor methods of teaching and inadequate use of chalkboard or marker board are factors as some instructors speak grandiloquently without writing the words on the board for learners

to get the actual spelling of these terminologies since some words are phonetically and orthographically unidentical. Example /ɔi:/ - 'awe'. Poor health conditions on the part of the learner also some circumstances add up to spelling errors in the writing of learners especially those of the English language.

To ascertain the impact of these miscellaneous causes of spelling errors, the researcher employed observation and interview as instruments to achieve that and were used respectively as follows:

4.2.9 Interview

The researcher interviewed the forty (40) pupils and the two teachers (RME and Social Studies teachers) with the motive to reliably confirm the significant causes as well as the school atmosphere and its influence in relation to spelling errors in the writings of pupils of Proso D/A JHS Two. The interview was made up of sixteen (16) questions. Twelve questions for pupils and four for the two teachers.

Responses to questions

1. Do you have dictation books(s)?

Response(s)	No. of Pupils/Respondents
Often	-
Not at all	35
We used to have	5

2. How often do you learn spelling in the school?

Responses	No. of Pupils/Respondents
Often	-
Once a while	14
Not at all	26

3. Do your teachers complain about your poor spelling of words regularly?

Response	No. of Respondents
Yes	32
No	4
At times	4

4. Do you have dictation periods on your school timetable?

Responses	No. of Respondents
Yes	-
No	40
I don't think so	-

5. Do you go through your exercise and notebooks to find spelling errors?

Responses	No. of Respondents
Yes	10
No	22
At times	8



6. Where do you learn the spelling of words from mostly?

Responses	No. of Respondents
In school	24
At home when watching TV	3
In town: on billboards	13

7. How often do your parents or guardians check on you to learn in the home?

Response	No. of Respondents
Very often	2
Sometimes	10
Not at all	28

8. What words do you normally spell wrongly?

Responses	No. of Respondents
Words seen or learnt before	6
New words	34

9. What guideline (s) do you use in spelling unfamiliar words?

Responses	No. of Respondents
Compare the sounds with familiar words	33
Just write what comes to mind	7

10. How often do you consult teachers on things you don't understand after coming across them?

Responses	No. of Respondents
Most of the time	5
At times	15
Not at all	20



11. When are we to use uppercase (capital) letters?

- Expected Responses:
1. Beginning sentences
 2. When writing headings
 3. Beginning proper nouns

No. of Expected Responses given by Respondents	
One Response	22
Two Responses	10
Three Responses	4
Four Responses	4

12. Which of the letters of the English alphabets sometimes cause you to spell wrongly?

Responses	No. of Respondents
- Letters with the same symbol for both upper and lowercase	15
- Letters with different symbols for upper and lowercase	5
- Similarity of sounds	20

Questions to teachers

1. How do you judge the performance of pupils in terms of spelling?

Responses: Good – But needs little improvement

Bad – Need serious improvement

2. Do you have allotted time to drill pupils on spelling during lessons?

Responses: No

3. What do you think are the causes of pupils poor spellings?

Responses:- Teachers overlook spelling when teaching

- Teachers do not monitor pupils' spellings to put them on their toes.

- Students do not practice spelling on their own whether in school or at

home

4. What do you suggest should be done to improve pupils spelling performance?

Responses:

- Spelling bees should be encouraged in school

- Inform parents to ensure pupils learn at home

- Effects of poor spelling be given to pupils

- Encourage pupils to practise spelling frequently on their own

The responses from the pupil- interviewees showed clearly that spelling activities are not given any proper attention at Proso D/A JHS and the pupils too are not serious about the learning of spelling on their own both at school and at home. This conclusion was made because most respondents responded in the negative when it comes to factors that contribute to good spelling.

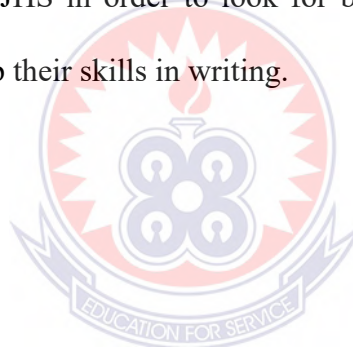
Their responses also showed that parents and guardians do not give much attention to their wards studies and this phenomenon could be transferred to other aspects of pupils lives such as the provision of their educational needs like books, pens and money for food and transport. The responses from the teacher-interviewees confirmed most of the responses provided by the pupils such as no time allotted for spelling teaching and learning and per the causes and suggestions given, the researcher realized that spelling at Proso D/A JHS must be given the necessary emphases by teachers and pupils in general.

4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, the findings of the study were discussed. The chapter discussed the types of spelling errors Proso D/A JHS pupils learning English as a second language commit in their essays. The mixed method of collecting and analyzing data was effectively used in this study to collect and analyze the spelling errors. The types of spelling errors identified were discussed with examples. These errors were omission, addition, substitution, transposition, multiple and apostrophe spelling errors. The chapter also discussed the effects of spelling errors on students writing. Both short and long-term effects were discussed. These included the effect of the errors from their exams performance to their career development. The last issue discussed in this chapter is the causes of students' spelling errors. Five causes of spelling errors were identified and discussed. They include lack of phonological

awareness, teachers lacking knowledge in phonetics and phonology, inconsistency in English spelling rules, and use of wrong approach and materials in teaching English language especially spelling.

Spelling is an important aspect of the teaching and learning of English as a second language. The objective of this study was to do analysis of the types of spelling errors pupils commit in their essay writings, and so this chapter focused on the findings of the data and discussion of results. The discussion indicated that learners at the JHS level commit a lot of spelling errors, which affect the meaning and content of their essays. The findings and discussion on this important study might not be sufficient due to limited resources but is a step in investigating students' spelling errors using Proso D/A JHS in order to look for best strategies to help in students spellings so as to develop their skills in writing.



CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study. It discusses the summary of findings, the role of spelling errors in English language teaching and learning as well as the implications of the findings. The chapter further discusses suggestions for future research. The aim of the chapter is to provide brief answers to the research questions posed:

1. What types of spelling errors do pupils of Proso D/A JHS Two commit?
2. What are the causes of these spelling errors?

5.1 Summary of findings

This study investigates the spelling errors in the writing of the pupils of Proso D/A JHS Two in the Juabeso District of the Western-North Region of Ghana. The objectives were to find the types of spelling errors the pupils commit in their writing and the causes of the errors. The findings revealed that the pupils committed 246 errors of several categories. Letter omission errors were committed 60 times constituting 24%, letter addition/insertion occurred 44 times constituting 18% of the errors, letter substitution were committed 85 times making 35% and letter transposition 18 times making 7%. Multiple letter errors had a fair share for appearing 27 times making up 11% and apostrophe errors accounted for 5% of the errors for occurring 12 times.

5.3 The role of spelling errors in the teaching and learning of English

Errors play very crucial role in language teaching and learning process. Errors in themselves are not bad; rather, they are important part in the process of language

learning (Jabeen, 2015). They occur because the correct form is not known. Therefore, analyzing errors enables the teacher to know where problems of students lie so that solutions could be provided. In addition, errors help English language teachers know what goes wrong in the student's spellings, trace the causes and take steps to correct them. When students are taught for example, spelling rules without taking care of exceptions, they can wrongly apply one rule in another situation. This is known as false analogy and it needs to be checked and corrected. Errors also serve as important tools for learners. Learners can sometimes look for solutions to correct their own errors if they are made aware of the types of errors they commit. Example, learners can use the dictionary or other sources to correct some errors, and this would be in their memory forever. The analysis of learners' errors, in this instance spelling errors, gives teachers an idea about learners' weaknesses and guide them to concentrate on those areas.

5.4 Pedagogical implications

This study has pedagogical implications which are very important for the effective teaching and learning of spelling and the English language in general, especially in the Juabeso District. The study of learners' spelling errors provides the opportunity to understand and facilitate in the learner's difficulties. The study informs all stakeholders in education in the district about the level of writing difficulties of JHS students for some measures to be put in place to remedy the situation. The study informs curriculum and syllabus planners to identify the deficiencies in the English syllabus and expand its content since most teachers at the Basic level solely rely of the syllabus to teach.

The difference between spelling mistake and spelling errors are highlighted. This calls on both teachers of English and examiners to reflect on the way essays of

students are marked because a mistake does not constitute lack of knowledge. This study has revealed that the inability of some students to adequately develop their essays is not a matter of lack knowledge on the content, but the inability to spell the words correctly hence the need for teachers of English in Proso D/A JHS and in the whole district should employ effective strategies to deal with spelling and help learners to enrich their vocabulary content.

5.5 Suggestions for future studies

This is an academic study, and also have limitations in relation to time and financial constraints. Based on these constraints, the researcher chose a small sample and limited content area for the investigation. The researcher therefore recommends further studies to be conducted on the following. A study on learners' spelling errors based on environmental factors in the whole of Juabeso District. Students in schools at various communities in the district face different environmental factors so it is essential to investigate these errors taking into consideration their environmental factors. A study into the socioeconomic background of students and its influence on the learning English language could also be conducted.

5.6 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate and evaluate English spelling errors committed by the pupils of Proso D/A JHS Two in the Juabeso District. Findings revealed that not all misspelled words that occur in pupils' essays and exercises are spelling errors. Students commit spelling mistakes just as they commit spelling errors. It is only when students fail to correct the mistakes that they can be considered errors. Students at the JHS commit spelling errors in their written work. Spelling errors have effects on students' performance and writing skills. Errors play a very important role in the process of language teaching and learning. Finally, students' spelling errors are

due to certain causes. Some of these causes are lack of phonological awareness, lack of coordination between pronunciation and spelling (orthography) of the English language, the problem of silent letters, interference of homonyms and advertisements with deviant spelling.



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APPENDIXES

