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ANALYSIS OF THE SPELLING ERRORS FOUND IN THE
SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADES IN
JUDEA HIGH SCHOOL 1949-1950

BROWN

1950

ANALYSIS OF THE SPELLING ERRORS FOUND IN THE SEVENTH
AND EIGHTH GRADES IN JUDEA HIGH SCHOOL
1949 - 1950

By

Trudie Delphine Rand Brown

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Science

In The

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of

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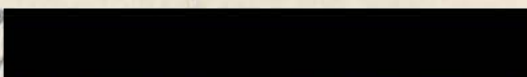
August, 1950

Dedicated

To my parents, paternal grandmother, and husband

APPROVED BY:


Chairman of Advisory Committee


Director of Thesis Research

August, 1950

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T. D. B.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For many years spelling has been taught in isolation from other subjects. The children were fed a measured diet of a certain number of words each day or week, with the hope that they would transfer this learning to the functional field of writing.

Today in the better schools, teachers are recognizing that the primary objective of spelling instruction is to enable the children to express themselves in activities which involve written expression.

Effort has been made to provide practical and usable techniques and methods for teaching spelling without suggesting detailed or dogmatic procedures. To achieve an understanding of the problem of children and to attain greater skill in guiding them in intelligent, resourceful, and happy living, should be the goal of every teacher. This study attempts to chart the way for directing the study of spelling and methods of teaching spelling so that the children may more readily achieve success in spelling. Hunter states:

Every teacher should emphasize correct spelling in the elementary or high school. No teacher should let a misspelled word go without being mentioned or corrected. It should be remembered that unless errors in spelling are corrected, pupils will be handicapped for life. The teacher's responsibility is to show the pupils that correct spelling is an important factor in determining their usefulness in society. The best way to determine the student's spelling ability is to examine written work done by the student when his attention is not directed toward spelling.¹

Statement of the Problem

The following questions are significant in this study which will be handled in the solution of this problem:

1. What are the causes of poor spelling in our schools?
2. Is the basic speller sufficient for the teaching words needed in written work?
3. Should spelling be integrated with other subjects?
4. To what extent does spelling help the child?
5. What methods should be used in teaching children spelling?
6. How much time should be used in teaching spelling?

1. Maude Hunter, "Spelling Suggestion," The Grade Teacher, Vol. 66, (January, 1949), p. 41.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the methods that may be used best to lessen the number of errors found in spelling in the children's written work and recommend methods for the improvement of the teaching of spelling in the Judea School.

This study will attempt to give some practical and profitable classroom aids in the teaching of spelling in the Judea School.

Sources of Data

The materials for this study included misspelled words found in children's spelling. These words were selected from two sources, namely: (1) Spelling lessons from the basic texts, and (2) supplementary lists selected from words misspelled and included in the spelling program, and (3) literature bearing on the content in methods of teaching and analyzing errors in spelling. Materials for this study were secured from spelling papers of fifty-six children in grades seven and eight in the Judea School.

Scope of Study

This study is an analysis of the spelling errors found in the spelling papers collected from fifty-six children in the seventh and eighth grades at regular

intervals during the school year 1949-50 in the Judea School. This study was made in order to analyze such errors and to propose means for improvement of spelling in the Judea School.

Method of Procedure

The data were collected from a study of the seventh and eighth grades of Judea School. Spelling errors were tabulated from 1,560 spelling papers, with a frequency of 1,128 running words.

The seventh and eighth grades were given words on Mondays that had not been studied. The plan for presenting the lesson was: (1) the teacher pronounced the words, (2) the words were then pronounced in unison, (3) words were pronounced individually by the children, and (4) the words were written from dictation. On Tuesday the misspelled words were discussed and studied, giving each member a chance to ask questions and use the words that had been misspelled the day before. Wednesday these misspelled words were written on the blackboard, dividing them into syllables, putting emphasis on unusual words such as "p" having the sound of "f" in the word "orphan". Thursday these words were used in sentences and the establishment of the use of the dictionary was encouraged.

On Friday following the dictation of the spelling exercises, spelling lists were collected and all misspelled words arranged alphabetically, were tabulated showing frequency of errors both during the pretest and following the study.

Related Studies

L. P. Ayers¹ tabulated the words used in 2,000 short business and professional letters and found that an adult of average spelling ability could spell 2,001 different words.

A study of spelling errors can be used for diagnostic and remedial purposes. According to Reed² most errors are due to lapses, imperfect vision, and false association of words.

The spelling abilities of pupils in elementary schools were tabulated in 1914 by W. F. Jones.³ The school children in Maryland, Illinois, Iowa, and South Dakota, numbering in all, 1,050, wrote 75,000 themes and compositions upon a wide range of topics. These themes averaged about 190 words each and the largest number of errors were found among the higher grades.

1. National Society for the Study of Education, Vol. 86; The Thirty-Eighth Yearbook, Part I, pp. 244-251.

2. H. B. Reed, Psychology of Elementary School Subjects, pp. 242-272.

3. W. F. Jones, "Concrete Investigation of Material of English Spelling," Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 38; p. 53.

In 1927, Davis¹ was interested in spelling and reported a list of seven reasons for spelling errors among children in grades three to six. They were: (1) failure to master the necessary steps in learning to spell a word, (2) poor writing, (3) improper pronunciation, (4) lack of interest, (5) lack of association, (6) need for more spelling time, and (7) pitfalls of pretest.

Mendenhall² found that eighty-five per cent of the most frequent errors are omission and substitution of letters of which 10.5 per cent are phonetic and 4.5 are homonyms.

Wolf and Breed³ contributed a study showing that fifty-two pupils were given spelling syllabication according to that found in a standard dictionary, and these students were given lessons fifteen school days, twenty minutes each day. Then a test was given the class. The average was 50.8. The conclusion shows that students spell better when words are given by syllables than non-division of words. The group's average was 45.9 per cent.

1. G. Davis, Elementary School Subjects, pp. 121-126.

2. J. E. Mendenhall, "An Analysis of Spelling Errors," Teacher's College Records, Vol. 54; pp. 283-284.

3. Wolf and Breed, Modern Methods in High School Teaching, pp. 618-620.

Charters¹ shows in his study that an appeal to generic values cause children to improve in their spelling. Example: avoiding punishment and being scolded or praised for doing what is expected of them. In some instances the spelling bee or a contest between the boys and girls aroused interest in the subject. He concluded that generic value works equally well in any subject.

The results of The Metropolitan Achievement Test² proved that the children who were taught in the experimental school had a higher average than those taught in the conventional school. A test was given to sixty-nine students from each school. The conventional students averaged 28.93 per cent in scores whereas those of the experimental school's average was 4.22 per cent higher than the conventional school's scores in spelling.

McGee⁴ tabulated the spelling errors of children's letters and found that 90 per cent of the words used fell within the first thousand of Thorndike's Word List. His conclusion was that correct spelling resulted from close attention to word construction, sensitivity to slight similarities and differences in word forms, drill on word forms, drill on difficult words, sensing

1. W. W. Charters, Teaching the Common Branches, pp. 10-16.

2. Wayne Wrightstone, Appraisal of Newer Elementary School Practices, pp. 201-205.

3. Paul McGee, Language in the Elementary School, p. 64.

the length of a word, the number of syllables in words, addition of a letter or letters, omission of a letter, substitution of letters, and the transposition of letters in a word.

Definition of Terms

"Basic" means the fundamental or essential quality of a thing.

"Supplementary" is that which is substituted, or sacrificed to obtain a set goal.

"Spelling" may be interpreted as the science of orthography, or the method adapted in forming any particular word.

"Orthography" is the mode or system of correct spelling of a word.¹

"Study-test" is a method used to aid teachers in directing learning activities by locating and analyzing learning difficulties, and, to point out ways to make valid appraisals of success of pupils-teachers efforts.

"Test-study" is a procedure employed to recognize, distinguish, or measure any particular skill, knowledge, intelligence, capacities, or aptitudes of an individual or group, or a method of finding the causes of deficiencies in an individual or group.²

1. Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition, (Unabridged)

2. C. C. Schmidt, Teaching and Learning the Common Branches, pp. 287-292.

CHAPTER II

PRESENTATION OF DATA

Explanation of Terms

Spelling lists have been employed in the presentation of the data pertinent to this study.

The spelling lists found in this study were taken from the basic spellers and a supplementary list from themes and other subjects of the seventh and eighth grades.

Misspelled words only were tabulated. There were 560 words given to the seventh and eighth grades, making a total of 1,120 running words given to both grades from September to April of the 1949-1950 school year.

The words misspelled were arranged alphabetically in their correct form. Proper names and dates were omitted.

The Thorndike Word List¹ was used to determine whether the spelling words missed by the seventh and eighth grades were classified as words commonly used in the American classroom having one or more hard spots in spelling.

1. E. L. Thorndike, The Teacher's Word Book, "A List of Spelling Difficulties in Common Words." p. 276.

TABULATION OF WORDS FOUND
IN THIS STUDY

GRADE	SEVENTH		EIGHTH		Total	Word List
	Pretest	Final Test	Pretest	Final Test		
abroad	1	1	0	0	2	
absurd	0	0	2	2	4	
accompany	5	1	0	0	6	x
accordingly	0	0	2	0	2	
acquire	2	0	0	0	2	
activity	2	0	0	0	2	
adjective	0	0	3	0	3	
adjourn	0	0	3	1	4	
administration	0	0	5	3	8	
admiration	0	0	3	1	4	
adorable	0	0	1	1	2	
adverb	0	0	1	0	1	
affectionate	0	0	2	1	3	x
agency	1	1	0	0	2	
aircraft	2	0	0	0	2	
agriculture	8	4	0	0	12	x
aisle	0	0	2	1	3	
ally	3	1	0	0	4	
altogether	1	1	0	0	2	
ambitious	0	0	2	1	3	
ancient	0	0	3	0	3	
announce	0	0	1	0	1	x
announcement	0	0	0	0	0	
annual	1	0	0	0	1	x
anxiety	0	0	5	3	8	
appetite	0	0	6	2	8	
apology	3	1	0	0	4	
apologize	2	1	0	0	3	
approach	1	0	0	0	1	x
argument	0	0	6	3	9	x
arouse	2	0	0	0	2	x
arrival	4	3	0	0	7	
ascend	0	0	2	1	3	
ascertain	4	0	0	0	4	
assigned	0	0	4	1	5	
assistance	0	0	4	3	7	x
attack	3	1	0	0	4	x
attain	2	0	0	0	2	
attitude	0	0	5	1	6	x

GRADE	SEVENTH		EIGHTH		Total	Word List
	Pretest	Final Test	Pretest	Final Test		
audience	0	0	4	3	7	x
automatic	0	0	5	1	6	
await	2	0	0	0	2	
aware	1	1	0	0	2	
awkward	0	0	8	4	12	x
bachelor	0	0	3	1	4	x
ballot	2	0	0	0	2	x
basis	1	0	0	0	1	x
battery	2	1	0	0	3	
becoming	2	0	0	0	2	
behavior	0	0	4	2	6	x
benefit	0	1	0	0	1	x
bonus	4	0	0	0	4	
bracelet	0	0	3	1	4	
bravery	1	0	0	0	1	
breadth	2	0	0	0	2	x
bruise	4	1	0	0	5	x
budget	0	0	5	0	5	
bulletin	0	0	5	2	7	x
bungalow	0	0	3	0	3	
bureau	0	0	5	3	8	x
cafeteria	0	0	4	3	7	
cancel	4	0	0	0	4	x
castle	1	1	0	0	2	
cedar	0	0	2	1	3	x
ceiling	0	0	3	1	4	x
celebration	0	0	3	0	3	x
celery	3	1	0	0	4	
channel	0	0	4	1	5	x
charity	0	0	6	5	11	
chauffeur	0	0	9	4	13	x
chemical	0	0	3	2	5	
clever	3	1	0	0	4	
coarse	4	1	0	0	5	x
comic	2	2	0	0	4	
comical	0	0	2	0	2	
compass	2	1	0	0	3	
competition	0	0	3	9	12	
completely	0	0	4	2	6	
conductor	1	0	0	0	1	
conjunction	0	0	3	1	4	
consist	6	3	0	0	9	
construction	0	0	3	0	3	
contribute	0	0	6	1	7	
council	2	2	0	0	4	x

GRADE	SEVENTH		EIGHTH		Total	Word List
	Pretest	Final Text	Pretest	Final Test		
courteous	0	0	9	3	12	x
criticism	0	0	2	5	7	x
curiosity	0	0	5	3	8	x
cylinder	0	0	6	3	9	x
declare	2	1	0	0	3	
decrease	5	1	0	0	6	
definition	0	0	7	3	10	x
delicious	0	0	7	4	11	x
despise	0	0	5	6	11	
discipline	0	0	7	6	13	
discharge	2	1	0	0	3	
discontinue	0	0	6	2	8	
discount	1	0	0	0	1	
disturb	4	3	0	0	7	
doubt	2	1	0	0	3	x
economy	0	0	5	2	7	
enable	2	0	0	0	2	
enjoyable	2	1	0	0	3	
entitle	0	0	8	4	12	
equipment	0	0	7	1	8	x
equipped	0	0	3	1	4	
eternal	3	0	0	0	3	
evaporate	2	0	0	0	2	
evidence	0	0	3	2	5	x
evil	0	0	3	1	4	
exception	0	0	1	0	1	
excitement	2	1	0	0	3	
experience	0	0	6	2	8	
experiment	0	0	5	1	6	
expire	1	0	0	0	1	
extreme	0	0	1	0	1	
facilities	0	0	3	0	3	
fatal	2	0	0	0	2	
faucet	0	0	1	0	1	
favorable	1	0	0	0	1	
feminine	0	0	5	3	8	
finally	0	0	2	0	2	x
financially	0	0	2	2	4	x
freight	1	0	0	0	1	
gallery	0	0	6	2	8	x

GRADE	SEVENTH		EIGHTH		Total	Word List
	Pretest	Final Test	Pretest	Final Test		
grateful	4	1	0	0	5	x
gradually	0	0	4	1	5	
graduate	0	0	2	2	4	
gratitude	0	0	2	1	3	x
genius	0	0	5	3	8	
happiness	3	2	0	0	5	
harmony	0	0	5	0	1	x
headquarter	1	0	0	0	1	x
hence	2	0	0	0	2	
hoarse	1	1	0	0	2	x
humble	0	0	1	1	2	
identify	0	0	4	2	6	
imagination	0	0	2	0	2	
inability	0	0	3	1	4	
inclined	1	0	0	0	1	
indicate	3	2	0	0	5	x
indifferent	3	1	0	0	4	
informal	1	0	0	0	1	
irrigate	0	0	7	2	9	
insurance	0	0	5	1	6	x
insured	2	0	0	0	2	
intelligence	0	0	8	2	10	x
intense	2	0	0	0	2	
interjection	0	0	6	1	7	
introduce	0	0	4	3	7	
invalid	0	0	7	1	8	x
inventory	0	0	4	0	4	
investigate	2	1	0	0	3	x
jewelry	0	0	9	2	11	
letter	2	0	0	0	2	x
lieutenant	0	0	10	4	14	x
machinery	0	0	4	2	6	
maintain	3	0	0	0	3	x
maximum	0	0	2	1	3	
mental	1	1	0	0	2	
merit	3	1	0	0	4	x
microphone	0	0	5	0	5	
midst	0	0	2	0	2	
minor	5	0	0	0	5	
mirror	1	0	0	0	1	x
minimum	0	0	6	2	8	

GRADE	SEVENTH		EIGHTH		Total	Word List
	Pretest	Final Test	Pretest	Final Test		
moisture	0	0	2	1	3	x
mortgage	0	0	9	5	14	x
musician	4	2	0	0	6	x
mystery	0	0	2	2	4	
nervous	0	0	7	3	10	
nonsense	1	0	0	0	1	
noun	0	0	1	0	1	
occur	4	2	0	0	6	
original	0	0	4	2	6	
parachute	0	0	8	4	12	
paragraph	0	0	3	1	4	
pardon	0	0	5	2	7	
partial	0	0	4	3	7	
payable	1	0	0	0	1	
performance	0	0	8	4	12	
practical	0	0	3	1	4	
political	2	0	0	0	2	
politics	5	1	0	0	6	
possession	4	2	0	0	6	
preposition	0	0	4	1	5	
presume	4	3	0	0	7	
prior	1	0	0	0	1	
pronoun	0	0	1	0	1	
procession	0	0	4	0	4	
proposition	0	0	4	2	6	
prosperous	0	0	8	3	11	
protest	2	1	0	0	3	
pulse	2	1	0	0	3	
quote	2	0	0	0	2	
readily	1	0	0	0	1	
rebel	2	1	0	0	3	
receive	4	1	0	0	5	
remedy	0	0	3	1	4	
remit	1	1	0	0	2	
remittance	0	0	3	1	4	
replace	3	2	0	0	5	
republican	0	0	6	0	6	
resident	1	1	0	0	2	
respectable	0	0	5	2	7	
response	3	1	0	0	4	
restrain	0	0	5	4	9	
reverse	0	0	3	1	4	
revenue	3	2	0	0	5	

GRADE	SEVENTH		EIGHTH		Total	Word List
	Pretest	Final Test	Pretest	Final Test		
review	3	2	0	0	5	
ridiculous	0	0	4	2	6	
salesman	5	5	0	0	10	
salute	4	1	0	0	5	
schedule	0	0	6	2	8	x
scholarship	2	0	0	0	2	
seize	1	1	0	0	2	
shortage	2	0	0	0	2	
signature	0	0	2	0	2	
society	3	2	0	0	5	
specific	3	1	0	0	4	
style	0	0	1	0	1	
suburb	0	0	5	2	7	
surrender	0	0	5	4	9	
syllable	0	0	6	3	9	
synonym	0	0	5	3	8	
tackle	1	1	0	0	2	
temptation	4	0	0	0	4	
theory	0	0	4	1	5	
thermometer	0	0	7	2	9	
tiresome	3	1	0	0	4	
tractor	2	1	0	0	3	
transferred	0	0	6	2	8	
treasurer	2	0	0	0	2	
treatment	2	1	0	0	3	
tremble	0	0	3	0	3	
trial	0	0	7	2	9	
urgent	3	2	0	0	5	
vacancy	0	0	4	0	4	
valued	3	0	0	0	3	
venture	2	1	0	0	3	
villian	4	2	0	0	6	
volunteer	0	0	2	0	2	
welfare	0	0	2	0	2	
we're	0	0	1	0	1	
wholesale	2	0	0	0	2	
yolk	0	0	2	0	2	

The "x" in the last column of the tabulated word list in this study was taken from Thorndike's ten thousand words which are found to occur most widely in communication.

The list of words found in this study included words used in the pretest, final test, and the total number of times each word was misspelled in the seventh and eighth grades of the Judea High School.

A total of 109 words were misspelled by the seventh grade in the study, and 143 words were misspelled by the eighth grade, making a total of 252 misspelled words for both grades.

The study showed that 303 errors were made by the seventh grade, and 458 errors were made by the eighth grade students in the pretest, making a total of 761 words.

A total of 163 words were misspelled by the seventh grade in the final test, whereas 204 words were misspelled by the eighth grade in the final test. Therefore, a total of 367 words were misspelled by both groups in the final test as compared with 761 words misspelled in the pretest. The difference was found to be 394 words misspelled between the pretest and the final test period.

The words misspelled by both grades in the pretest and final test made a total of 1,128 running words of the 252 different words in this study.

It will be seen by Table I, page 18 that the two best spellers in the seventh grade missed from two to eight words, and the two poorest students missed an average of fifty-three words in the pretest during the study. The two best spellers in the eighth grade missed an average of 17 words, and the two poorest spellers missed an average of 55 words.

It may be seen that the 260 words given to the eight children in the pretest showed a decrease in errors in spelling from 171 to 89 at the conclusion of the study.

The importance of spelling as a fundamental subject of the curriculum has been used as the means of clarifying word meanings and thus promoting ability in expression. The selection of words that should be learned by the end of the school period, and the determination of the words most appropriate to the needs and development of the children are fundamental.

It may be seen from this study that many words of high frequency of errors in this list are found in the Thorndike List. Words of high frequency of errors such as chauffeur, courteous, delicious, criticism, equipment, gallery, intelligent, mortgage, and parachute

are used largely by adults. Therefore, words that children need to learn should be determined by: (1) the frequency with which the words are used, (2) the commonness with which the words are used by everyone, regardless to locality, sex, educational level or occupation, (3) the spread of the word's usage in different writings, (4) the degree of cruciality possessed by the words, and the severity of the penalty attached to their misspelling, (5) the permanency of the use of the words, (6) the quality of writing in which the words appear, and (7) the persistent difficulty of the words.¹

Table I

Grade	Child	Pretest Errors	Percentage of Errors	Errors After Study	Percentage of Errors
7	A	8	1.4	5	.8
7	B	2	.35	1	.17
7	C	53	9.2	19	3.3
7	D	53	9.2	20	3.5
8	E	23	4.1	1	.17
8	F	1	1.9	1	.17
8	G	57	9.8	36	5.3
8	H	53	9.2	6	.9

1. Thomas George Foran, The Psychology and Teaching of Spelling, pp. 108-137.

CHAPTER III

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN TEACHING SPELLING

Spelling as a basal subject should be given special emphasis beginning with the first grade throughout life. It should be emphasized in every subject at all times, for it holds an important place in society and business and it is considered so important that poor spelling is severely penalized by society. The schools are charged with the responsibility of teaching students to spell with a high degree of accuracy.

It is felt that definite objectives be set up for the teaching of spelling. These objectives may include:

1. To teach the child to love to spell.
2. To motivate an interest in spelling.
3. To teach the child the value of being a good speller.
4. To teach the child to learn to spell new words to the best advantage.
5. To give the student a desire to spell correctly.
6. To teach the student the meaning and usage of words to be spelled.
7. To develop the ability to use the dictionary.

8. To develop the habit of correct pronunciation.
9. To develop a "spelling consciousness" - that is, the ability to recognize instantly whether a word is spelled correctly.

It has been found from experience that by applying these objectives the results have improved. These objectives serve as stimuli in motivating interest in spelling. The sources of interest are to be sought in the methods by which the subject is taught and in the success attained. Motivation must be an immediate appeal and interest to the mainspring of action. The incentives used must stimulate learning at the time learning is taking place.

A type of motivation that is often proposed and encouraged is the development of feelings of the need in those who are learning. Children have many interests, such as curiosity, the desire to excel, to compete with others, to avoid unpleasantness such as failure to achieve success and recognition.

The type of motivation used should provide for individual differences. It should be some sensible form of activity and of interesting competition, and it should produce a definite goal. Self competition is a desirable goal for anyone.

Every child has three basic personal needs - the need for security, the need for recognition, and the need for satisfactory achievement.

Phonics

Phonics has helped the student of Judea High School to improve in their spelling.

A few years ago it was not the custom to teach phonetics. In fact, many teachers dared not do so for fear of being labeled old-fashioned. But phonetics, like styles in dress, come and go.

Almost always when a subject has been so widely tabooed, it is sure to return and take its place in the educational scheme of things as a finer, more intelligent and more worthwhile aid. The old type of phonics was taught as a science in itself. It included various schemes and devices.

Today, teachers are asking for definite helps whereby they may make use of phonics as one of the important aids in the teaching of spelling. Generally three steps are recognized in the teaching of phonics:

1. The ability to see similarities and differences in words.
2. The ability to hear similarities and differences in words.

3. The ability to analyze words and divide them properly into syllables.¹

These phonetic rules are being used in our school, especially in the seventh and eighth grades and slight improvement has been indicated as may be seen in the word list begun on page 10.

Since this method has been used the majority of the members of the classes have made an average of 70 per cent above. It helped the dull, or slow children more than it did the children who were fair spellers. It seemed to help the slow child to gain confidence in himself.

Phonics helped the children to understand words with similar pronunciation or the position of letters, such as cride for cried, form for from, thought for through, prixon for prison, purchest for purchased, injoy for enjoy, and fraze for phrase.

In teaching spelling initial attention to the correct form of words is very essential. It may be a good idea to impress upon the mind of the upper grade pupils that the business colleges will not graduate a student who cannot spell correctly.

One of the most important duties of the teacher in teaching spelling is to develop in the child's mind a

1. Florence Piper Tuttle, "Have We Still Use for Phonics?", The Grade Teacher, Vol. 41 (January, 1949) p. 26.

clear, strong image of the thing signified. We all know that children differ widely in their power of visualizing words. On account of this, it often happens that a less brilliant child can master the mechanics, and spell more accurately than some of his fellow students who are more accomplished in other directions.

Many educators believe that the important factor, then, is not so much the general intelligence of the child as the manner in which he reads and makes memory pictures of his spelling words.

Every teacher realizes that each child must be treated according to his needs. To do individual work successfully the classes should be divided into groups according to their level of ability and aptitudes. This of course necessitates more planning on the part of teacher, who must discover the child's capacity for learning.¹

A very effective approach to making pupils spelling conscious is to have the pupils write correctly in their spelling notebooks all words which they misspell, and keep them handy for further study and concentration, in their spare time. It helps the child to call attention to words he has misspelled when they are mentioned

1. M. Wilfrid, "Motivating Our Spelling Classes", The Grade Teacher, Vol. 66 (December, 1948) p. 59.

in a conversation, used in a letter or found in his reading material. This helps him to see the improvement of the words because of frequent usages.

After this procedure has been used for sometime, a child may speak out in class and say, "We had that word in spelling," or he may say, "I missed that word in spelling, but I know how to spell it now." It shows the teacher's interest, and appreciation or tact if she will stop the discussion and say, "We want you to prove you have learned to spell."

If he spells it correctly, the teacher should compliment him. In most cases, there will be several other children who want to spell the word. There are occasions when another child will say, "I have learned to spell a word that I missed in spelling." It may happen that the reading or English class turns to a spelling class.

Spelling is not a content subject within itself. It is a tool to be used in written expression. The criterion of spelling success can only be how correctly the pupils spell words when he writes in his other subjects rather than the number of words that he gets correct on his spelling list. Thus, it seems evident that the most important words for a spelling lesson should be those that the pupil will need to express himself in his everyday writing. Therefore, the mental

ability, personality attitudes and locality have a determining factor in the spelling word list.

Any week's stereotyped list of spelling words will include many that will be unused only in the weekly spelling test. Yet, the children spend their time studying this week's list, and go right on in their written work missing needed words such as: could, does, which, been, group, and many other important words.

The rural child will need to spell in his daily life the words like silo, whereas the urban child will need to spell the familiar word avenue. However, any word should be spelled when the occasion arises as in a unit, or any type of written work.

From the third grade up, the children should acquire the habit of looking up in the dictionary all words about which they are in doubt. When the children become word conscious half the battle is won.

When the children are writing on a special subject, the teacher should write the unfamiliar words in the subject on the blackboard; or if she finds that a number of the students have trouble with the same familiar words they should be written on the blackboard.¹

For an example, it was difficult to get the eighth grade class to learn to spell the word jewelry; this

1. C. Y. Morris, "Get the Dictionary Habit", School Life Magazine, Vol. 34, (March, 1949), p. 6.

method was used until the majority of the class learned to spell it.

Recent Trends in Teaching Spelling

In reviewing the research and the recent literature on the teaching of spelling, it is evident that the recent development are in these directions:¹

1. There is a tendency to omit the teaching of spelling rules. In the light of evidence, it is recommended that the teaching of rules be abandoned until it can be shown that the time spent in teaching them is more profitable than the amount of time used in teaching the word directly.
2. There is some evidence that the syllabication of words may be valuable, especially with young children.
3. In teaching the meaning of words, the sentence dictation method is superior to the column dictation method.
4. There should be no strict adherence to one list of words for all of a given age or grade.
5. Considerable reliance is placed upon the child's own developing ability to effect spelling improvement.

1. Fay Adams, Educating America's Children, p. 367.

6. Repetition is still considered important, but repetition requirements are varied to suit individual needs.
7. More significance is attached to all of the spelling a child does under all circumstances than to performance in column spelling.
8. Spelling lessons are more individual; they are adapted to:
 - a. The intelligence of the child
 - b. The maturity of the child
 - c. The needs of the child

With the accurate appliance of the objectives, suggestions, rules, experiences and ideas given above, future implications for improvement in teaching spelling will develop to the extent that students will learn to love spelling, and do an excellent job of it as they did back in the "Old Blue Back Speller Days".

Remedial Teaching

Remedial teaching should be based on a careful diagnosis of needs and abilities.

Four of the most important factors in learning are: ability, method, experience, and effort. Therefore, it is an essential that the teacher know the individual differences of her pupils in order to get the best results in her classes.¹

1. National Society for the Study of Education (The Thirty-Eighth Year Book), p. 150.

Children may fail to learn to spell for any of a number of reasons. The task proves to be a hard one, because of the unphonetic character of the English language. Some causes lie within the nature and experience of particular children, since among those of equal intelligence there is usually a considerable variation in ability to spell. Some of the trouble undoubtedly comes from mere immaturity in verbal skills. Once a child gets started wrong he is likely to develop an emotional blocking that will prevent him from learning to spell, even after he has outgrown his original immaturity. Defects of hearing, speech, or vision are especially important as causes of poor spelling. Inattention, instability, inefficient habits of work, and general immaturity may operate as causes because they prevent a child from getting clear pictures of words.

After a teacher has checked a pupil's vision, hearing, and speech, she must find out what kinds of errors he makes before she can hope to give him a type of remedial training that will be appropriate. For her analysis, she may dictate words from a standard spelling scale or from the pupil's speller.

It is not always possible to find out why a child makes the errors he does, but at least the teacher can

discover which ones he makes, and she can often find the reason by observing him at work or by asking him enough questions.

A child who has been exposed to a given method of teaching for many years and has not learned to spell a reasonable number of words is obviously in need of a new method or new technique of spelling.¹

1. Luella Cole, The Elementary School Subjects, pp. 304-310.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary

The findings prove that in order to improve in spelling every teacher should indirectly become a spelling teacher. The children should be taught to know the value of being a good speller.

The pretest method of teaching spelling was used in the seventh and eighth grades classes of Judea High School. There were 560 words given to each grade during the period from September 1949, to April 1950. A total of 303 running words were misspelled by the seventh grade in the pretest with 252 different words used and 458 running words were misspelled by the eighth grade. A total of 761 words were misspelled during the study.

The study showed that 163 words were misspelled in the seventh grade, and 204 words were misspelled by the eighth grade, making a total of 367 words misspelled in the final test for both grades. There was a difference of 394 words between the pretest and the final test period.

The words misspelled by both grades in the pretest and final test made a total of 1,128 running words of

the 252 different words misspelled in the study.

It has been pointed out that improvement in spelling involves correct spelling habits and procedures, through the use of phonetics, the dictionary habit, becoming spelling conscious, the syllabication of words, and the use of words in sentences. Improvement then must provide for a spelling consciousness and interest on the part of the learner. The need for words has an important part in the learning of the words.

The basal text should consist of words that represent the present and permanent needs of the children.

Conclusion

Spelling holds an important place in the social and business worlds. It is considered so important that poor spelling is severely penalized by society. The schools are charged with the responsibility of teaching students to spell with a high degree of accuracy; therefore, the spelling program should get more attention from the teachers.

The basal spelling list for the elementary school should consist largely of words that represent both present and permanent needs to provide for those pupils leaving school at the close of the eighth grade.

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