IMPROVING ENGLISH SPELLINGS OF EFL LEARNERS IN PRIMARY

SCHOOLS

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

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Every day, we need to write in order to complete our tasks, whether we are filling out a form or writing an important letter. These tasks require us to write clearly, correctly and organize information effectively. Whether students are writing by hand or on the computer, many assignments and examinations require them to write short answers or longer essays. As students get older, they are expected to show more sophisticated writing skills and to complete more sophisticated writing tasks.

Employees in many kinds of jobs are required to write on a daily basis. Whatever the task, their ability to do their job well may depend on their ability to write. Many job applicants also must submit a resume and a letter of application when applying for a new job. Writing is frequently the final stage in communication when we want to leave no room for doubt, which is why we write and sign contracts, leases, and treaties when we make important decisions. It's important to remember that writing can be as difficult as a subject to teach and assess as it is to learn. Many students have a trouble in writing with clarity, coherence, organization, and spellings which can discourage them from writing if they feel frustrated. That's where teacher's involvement can make a big difference. Encouraging a child to develop a strong writing skills especially in spelling at a young age and to become a better writer as she/he gets older; can have a lifelong positive impact on her/his writing.

Given this scenario, I focused my research on the strategy that the learners would adopt to learn the English spelling. The question like 'How to improve the English spelling scores of the learners and how to make them aware of their spelling mistakes?' always stroke in my head that lead me to do this action research. Therefore, I have implemented the different tasks, games and techniques for the learners to improve their spelling. Thus, rigorous literature review was done before the field work that showed the way to the strategies for the learners. Qualitative methodological approach was followed focusing on the philosophical considerations. The methodology selected for this study is appropriate because the purpose of the study is to develop confidence in students and the method helps them to learn spelling in interesting and fun way without being frustrated of the spelling scores. Quality standard of the research is addressed to maintain the validity of the study.

The outcomes of the research indicate that teaching and learning spelling have got less priority than other writing parts. Therefore, my research may help to facilitate and guide the English teachers as well as other subject teachers who are facing this type of problem during their teaching and learning process. This research motivates the learners who are careless in spelling but wants to improve for strong writing. The strategies that I used were taken as the good techniques by the learners and interesting way to learn the spelling. Their improvement in the writing spelling with the help of the strategies was seen in English subject well as in other subjects. The marks in examination were also increased. Therefore, the outcome of this action research is positive due to the improvement of spelling of the learners.

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Manju Bajracharya, Degree Candidate   November 28, 2012

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my dear father Mohan Kaji Bajracharya and mother Shova Bajracharya, respected brothers, caring and encouraging friends and my mentor Assoc. Prof. Laxman Gnawali who always encouraged me to excel in my studies and tried to make me feel comfortable taking intolerable burden for me even in difficult situations and always guided me to achieve such success.

DECLARATION

I, hereby, declare that to the best of my knowledge this dissertation is original otherwise acknowledged, no part of it was submitted earlier for the candidature of research degree to any university.

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Manju Bajracharya, Degree Candidate   November 28, 2012

Master of Education in English Language Teaching dissertation titled *Improving English Spellings of EFL learners in Primary Schools* of Manju Bajracharya presented on 28th November 2012.

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter is mainly concerned with introducing the problem of my own experience

of learning English language. The problem statement discusses and describes about

the background of the problem with the help of overarching research question and

subsidiary research questions. It also explains about the purpose of my study with the

significance of the study.

Background

Checking Writing: As a headache

30th April, 2010

As a teacher in the private school, I had to face many problems related to students. A teacher has to teach each and everything to the students but students sometimes create problems knowingly or unknowingly. On 30th April, I was busy in checking the students' writing but suddenly I got headache. The reason of the headache was the writings of the students. I had to cut the words as well as the sentences to write everything in correct way. There was lots of spelling mistakes that was unworkable for me. My leisure time was over as I was busy in correcting those mistakes. So, I went back to my class to teach my students.

My Childhood in Primary School

In my childhood, I used to be a good English learner compared to my classmates. The

teachers used to follow traditional way of teaching where the students used to learn

everything by heart. The same as the case in spelling test that was done in every new

lesson. I used to get good scores but some of my friends used to get low scores. They

were punished by the teachers in different ways. I used to see their faces when they

were having punishment. They used to feel ashamed but the same spelling test and

punishment system used to take place in the beginning of every new lesson. Many questions used to strike my head when I used to see them, like: How can they get low marks every time? What is the reason behind their low marks? Why can't they memorize simple words as well? Are there any other techniques to remember those difficult words? We were small kids that time. Therefore, we used to forget everything after playing and going back home. But those questions used to bother my mind at home as well. Thus, I used to prepare myself well in dictation time. In other words, those punishments used to give me the fear to study for dictation and instructed my mind to memorize the words given by teachers. I had faced spelling problems in the phases of my day to day life which is given briefly below:

Experience in Government School

After completing my primary level, I joined the government school for further study. The numbers of students were huge in a class than my previous school. Therefore, I used to feel little uncomfortable in the beginning days but slowly I adjusted myself in that environment. The teachers used to be friendly and leave us free in our works thus I didn't feel burden in the government school. The teachers used to give us lots of homework and class work but they were not strict about the English spelling. Hence, my English spellings were getting poor due to the negligence of teachers and myself. I used to get confused in simple words as well but that was not a concern of my teachers. Then I reached in tenth grade where I got a chance to study under an excellent English teacher. He used to bring lots of innovative ideas to teach us into the class and I was totally inspired by his way of teaching. Slowly, my attention to English and spelling were back in action but my classmates were having problem in English spellings though. Therefore, still those questions strike my mind and curiously try to search answer of those questions.

My Mistake in Entrance Test

The first step to my college after getting school leaving certificate was memorable for me. Therefore, I moved on to the inquiry for admission in college which was the fun part of my life. Then, I chose one of the colleges to get admitted and co-incidentally the English teacher of that college was my own English teacher in tenth grade. I was really excited and happy to get chance to study under that teacher. He took a small test of mine as entrance test and I scored higher than other colleagues. But also he complained about my spelling mistakes in the test which reminded me of questions I had in my mind. I got confusion in many spellings while giving the test, hence, I totally agreed with my teacher.

Observing My Brother's Child

During my bachelor level, a small child was welcomed as a new member in my home. I took care and observe her while she was growing up younger. Now, she is 5 years old but clever enough than other members in home. She is in pre-primary level and using the same old memorizing technique to learn spellings. She can tell all the spellings from her book which is the result of memorization. But she also makes mistakes while writing in her copy as homework. It clearly shows that her teachers are using the old techniques of memorizing spelling as well as her mother. Her mother tells her to memorize those words to get good score in test and exam. But sometimes, she feels bored and monotonous with this technique and tries to divert her mind by playing games or running away from her mother. She makes excuses to stay at home rather than going school which shows the clear scenario of traditional teaching methodology for the young learners in her school.

Masters Level

Kathmandu University is a well known university where I got an opportunity for my master degree. I got co-operative and friendly environment when I entered as a learner in KU. The teachers and my classmates were helpful and friendlier than I thought. But here also I found the same Spelling problem while being with my classmates. My classmates in master degree also commit mistakes while writing in their exercise book as well as my teachers. *Jhon, englsih, comparision* were some examples of silly mistakes. The teachers used to ask excuses like, "computer spoiled my spelling" which is true in my situation as well. Many assignments are done on computer and computer helps to correct those spelling mistakes which started to spoil my spelling knowledge. But still my questions were the same and always disturbed my mind to solve it.

Using Technologies for Communication

Technical devices are being part of my daily life for communication with the people far from me. Sending short text messages in mobile and chatting in internet is being used day by day. Therefore, while sending messages, the English spelling is being spoiled by me same as in chatting. I have to type so fast that abbreviation is being used, silent letters are being invisible and short form are being used like: *Gdnite, tq, mp, u*. I find myself in difficult situation when I have to write the same spellings in my work or assignment. Sometimes, I have to think twice to get the correct spelling of a word. Technologies are helping me but they are also keeping me in a great difficulty especially in English spelling.

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Problem Statement

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English is full of irregularities and orthographic challenges. Poor spelling skills are associated with limited intellectual ability in our society and carry a negative stigma.

Incorrect spelling is known to affect both our writing and reading capabilities. If students do not obtain appropriate spelling at a certain grade level they will start to feel insecure, and the confidence with which they express their thoughts will suffer. Neupane (2008) mentions that spelling mistakes as a problem in teaching writing in his survey research. He presents problem in average point 21/10=2.1. His survey also shows that English spelling mistakes is taken as a problem in Nepali context as well. He also says, "Spelling error reducing is hard because of the difference in alphabets and sound in English Language" (p. 45) which is quiet challenging statement for me. But without trying to solve the problem, it would be wrong to state that it is hard to reduce.

According to my own learning experience, no teacher taught me the ways to learn spelling. The teachers were always busy in testing and correcting the mistakes of the learners. I myself as a teacher spent my teaching following the traditional ways of teaching spellings. But young learners were unaware about their mistakes and errors while writing and speaking English. Nowadays, learners are better than the teachers in the classroom so they expect more and something new from the teachers. The learning technologies like, television, computer etc, they are getting at their home, challenges our traditional ways of teaching system. The teachers have to change their perspective to teach the students and facilitate them in their learning than torturing them like I experienced in my school days. Therefore, the strategies are the ways to learn the spellings in facilitating way where teacher play the role of facilitator and the learners also learn the spelling using their knowledge in guided way.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was the exploration of the ways of the learners to improve their English spelling with the help of different strategies.

Overarching Research Questions

As a learner and teacher of English language, English has become the part of my daily life. I have to teach English language and literature to the learners to make their English perfect. And I also have to learn English to be perfect. But the learners are unconscious about their mistakes and errors while writing and speaking English. Therefore, I conducted my action research on a particular topic to improve the learners writing skill. To focus on a topic, I asked some questions to myself for my further planning. The main research question for action research is:

How can I help the learners to improve the English spellings using different strategies while writing?

Subsidiary Research Questions

In order to support the main research question, I have framed subsidiary questions as follows:

a. What spelling errors do the EFL learners make in their writing?

b. What are the different ways/strategies learners' uses to learn correct spellings?

c. What strategies can help children to overcome spelling problems?

Significance

To start something new, we must understand its importance or significance. Many people have done lots of research on different topics that brought some changes in our society or some ideas to know our society. My research was also done to bring changes in the school society. The way of teaching and learning are still going in traditional path thus, the significance of this research can be seen through various angles.

"When the English tongue we speak

Why is break not rhymed with freak?

Will you tell me why it's true

We say sew but likewise few?

And the maker of the verse,

Cannot rhyme his horse with worse?

Beard is not the same as heard

Cord is different from word.

Cow is cow but low is low

Shoe is never rhymed with foe.

Think of hose, dose, and lose"

Source: www.boingboing.net

Allen (2002) claims, "Modern English is full of inconsistencies" (p. 9). The given poem is one of the examples of inconsistencies that describe the problem in English while pronouncing the words. The same letters or words are also pronounced differently when one letter is changed that creates confusion in writing correct spelling. The learners may be in dilemma when the words are pronounced once and they have to write it accordingly. Their dilemma or confusion somehow leads to spelling mistakes.

Saville-Troike (2010) states, "A foreign language is one not widely used in the learner's immediate social context which might be used for future travel or other cross-cultural communication situations, or studied as a curricular requirement or elective in school, but with no immediate or necessary practical application" (p. 4). We are teaching and learning English language in the context where English is learnt as foreign language. Therefore, teaching English spelling to foreign language learners is very challenging job for a teacher in our country. Even the foreigners take English spelling as a problem because of the rules and patterns with lots of exceptions. Hence,

obviously our EFL learners also face problem in writing the correct spellings of English. My research mainly focused on those learners so the teachers and learners like me may be benefitted with the result. My research may be helpful to the traditional method of teaching spelling so the learners also may be motivated to learn spelling and correct their mistakes without being bored. I hope that my research may bring some changes in teaching and learning English spellings through different strategies.

Many researches have taken place on this topic which gives the importance on English spelling and our daily life. The research that I did may help the people who have some drawbacks in their English spelling writing. My research is significant due to the fact that I conducted it in the Nepalese context where English spelling has not been in the research literature. This research is significant in research field as well because it implemented the ways or strategies of teaching and learning English spelling which would be useful for the learners. Through this research, others can get knowledge on the use of different strategies and games for the language classroom. Thus, my research can be mile stone in research field. Up to now researchers had done research on 'spelling' in other EFL context, but this action research is particularly based on Nepalese context. As I have already mentioned that my research is action research which implemented the ways of learning spelling as group work, peer work and individual activities, for further process other researcher can work on the same topic but they can select some more strategies like phonemic awareness and conduct the research. This research presented the various ways of learning spelling for the future researcher.

Delimitations

The research was limited to bring improvement in the learners' writing in relation to different strategies in English spelling classroom.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I sketched my own experience of teaching and learning spelling which is presented as the background. I also stated about the purpose of this research, problem statement and the questions of the research with the delimitations of the study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses about the literature review. The research done by different people in my topics are been explained in my words to clarify the concept of my research. Thematic review, theoretical review, review of previous research studies and research gap are the parts that are been described here.

Setting Out for the Literature

Literature review played vital role in my research where I got clear concept about my research as well as ideas to conduct my action research. Creswell (2011) elucidates, "A literature review means locating and summarizing the studies about a topic' (p. 29). Correspondingly, Koul (2009) states, "The review of related literature gives the researcher an understanding of the research methodology which refers to the way the study is to be conducted" (p. 166).

For the sake of my research I visited many libraries such as Kathmandu University (KU) in Balkumari, Central Library (TU) in Kirtipur, and Library of Patan Multiple Campus in Patan Dhoka. I went through different books, dissertation, and various national and international journals and articles of different authors which became a big help for my research. Furthermore I surfed the internet to browse relevant articles, journals, research papers, research report, e-copy of books and e-copy of related research reports. While reading the related sources, I gathered following headings: English language in Nepal, Writing in English, Importance of

English spelling in our daily life, spelling errors as negative stigma and Strategies for teaching spelling.

Thematic Review

In this section I present the review on the books and journals that relate to the issues of spellings in the EFL classrooms.

Writing in English

Like English language, writing English has also been part of our life. Every day, we need to write to complete our tasks, whether we are filling out a form or writing an important letter. The students need writing tasks more for assignments and exams. As students get older, they will be expected to show more sophisticated writing skills and to complete more sophisticated tasks through their writing. Employees in many kinds of jobs are depended on their ability to write on a daily basis. People find writing a helpful way to express feelings than by speaking.

Yan (2005) states, "Writing is an essential but difficult skill for EFL students to accomplish" (p. 19). It is important to remember that writing English can be as difficult as subject to teach and assess as it is to learn. If the writing is not clear, correct and organized, the meaning will not be conveyed to the readers. Many students have trouble in writing English with clarity, coherence, organization, and spelling that can discourage them from writing if they feel frustrated. That's the problematic situation of English writing. Therefore, I had chosen writing part to apply my action. The learner's writing can be easily assessed than the reading or listening skill so it became helpful skill for my research.

Writing part is divided into different sections but spelling plays an important part of writing. The person who has less knowledge of the English language may also point out in the spelling in the writing. My brother hardly has some knowledge in

English language but he easily points out the mistakes in his daughter's writing. Writing is visual form so the spellings are easily seen than other language skills.

Importance of English Spelling

> ***Funny mistakes by the learners,***
>
> *Waiter, Could you bring me some **kidnaps**, please*
>
> *When I got home, I had a **massage** on the answering machine.*
>
> *Feel free to contact me if you **cause** any problems.*
>
> *Excuse me. Is this the last **shit** for today?*
>
> *I think that education in Ukraine is **bed**.*

Source: www.eclecticenglish.com

The above lines are the examples of the mistakes committed by the learners. The sentences are looking funny due to the wrong selection of words. The sound of words seemed similar but the spellings are wrong which create problem to convey correct message. Somehow this poem also presented the importance of correct spelling.

Warda (2005) stated that English is full of irregularities, and orthographic challenges. It is also known as funny language due to its many factors like spelling. The spelling and the pronunciation differ in some cases. In the context of Nepal, the learners get confused in spelling and pronunciation. Allen (2002) claims, "A piece of writing fails if the reader is constantly put off by bad spelling" (p. 9). Even the native learners have spelling problem while writing in a paper. The Nepalese students learn English as a foreign language only in school and home environment is not compatible with school. At home they do their homework in English and rest things in Nepali so they don't have practice to use English. This creates problem in their English writing and its spelling. English spellings became important part in my research.

Spelling Errors as a Negative Stigma

According to website www.yourdictionary.com, "Spelling errors are divided into two categories: plausible and implausible. Implausible errors follow no particular pattern; they may simply be due to a mistyped word or a random guess on the part of the students. A high percentage of implausible errors mean that the student is probably using words that are very unfamiliar and outside of his/her vocabulary comfort zone."

According to Warda (2005) poor spelling skills or spelling errors are associated with limited intellectual ability in our society and carry a negative stigma. Spelling errors affect both our writing capabilities and academic performance and grades will be affected too. English spellings look easy but in writing it's different or difficult than reading. In Nepali language, we write exactly whatever is said but in English language writing and reading differ in some cases. Thus, proficiency in English spelling is important for our daily life as well. The students learn English language only in school, therefore, its teacher's job to make it easy. If students don't obtain appropriate spelling and vocabulary skills at a certain grade level they will start to feel insecure, and they will suffer. The research that I conducted aided the learners in learning correct spelling.

Strategies for Teaching Spelling

Errors and mistakes are the problems in teaching and learning tasks whereas strategies for those mistakes help the teacher and learners for their good performance. While playing the role of teacher and learner, I have to handle spelling mistakes in both situations. Therefore, my research is also based on the strategies for the spelling mistakes and the strategies for those mistakes somehow work as tools to improve the spelling. While consulting different books and internet browsing, I found lots of

strategies. But among them I chose few selected strategies for the EFL learners and some strategies were discovered during the research.

Darson (2005, as cited in Meriem, 2009) points out that there are nine key ways to improve spelling,

1. Learn the rules and regular forms before tackling the exceptions and irregularities

2. Concentrate on the words you use most often i.e., frequent words.

3. Make a spelling booth.

4. Check your work carefully in order to look for your mistakes and to improve your weak points.

5. Use memory aids/ mnemonic: it is a word, phrase, rhyme that aids you to remember that "I" is before "e" except after "c" which explain the spelling of *believe*, *relief* and *siege* with *ie* and *ceiling*, *receiving* and *deceit* with *ei.*

6. Use word-families as a spelling aid. The existence of "silent letters" in English may cause troubles for foreign students because those letters are written but not pronounced such as the /w/ of wrote.

7. Break words into parts, many students make mistakes in spelling plainly because they do not look closely enough (if at all) at the structure of the words they are writing. Breaking words up into their component parts will often help student avoid spelling errors.

8. Take an interest in word-origins/ etymology of words: Sometimes you may think that etymology of words is of no concern to you because your ultimate purpose it to spell correctly but looking at the origins of words in your

dictionary simultaneously with checking their spellings often makes it clear why it is spelled like this and you surely will remember how to spell it.

9. Lastly, practice is the core aim of spelling. It is not enough just to check your spelling when you happen to be writing something. By practicing spelling everyday students will be better in Written Expression module. Because in spelling, as in so many other skills, practice does make perfect (p. 54).

The above nine keys became helpful tools for my research. Time and again I used them during the research and after research.

Similarly, Allen (2002) also mentions some strategies for spelling. Using a dictionary (p. 11) is the strategy where dictionary is used as the primary source to check and improve spelling. The correct spelling with meaning is given in dictionary so it is a source of knowledge in improving spelling. Another strategy is using mnemonics (p. 18) to improve spelling. The learners use different imaginary lines to remember the spelling of a word, for example, an Island is a land in water (Island corresponds to Island). Then, the recognizing syllables and breaking long words into elements (p. 34) is another strategy which is useful to learn long words. The long words take as a problem to write and read by the learners. Therefore, this strategy became one of the solutions for their problem, for example, pri-va-ti-za-tion, cir-cum-stance etc. Some letters are silent (p. 48) which is the problem in writing spelling, for example, g in word like gnome. Keeping in mind and underlining those words could help the learners to identify those words and improve their writing. The next strategy was the method called using look spell cover write check method (p. 17).

Study the word and say it loud, pronouncing its parts carefully and getting a picture of

the whole word in your mind. It is important to study the word and not just glance at

it.

Look at the correct spelling and spell the word out loud, for example aggressive:

⇩

A-G-G-R-E-S-S-I-V-E

Always make sure you are starting with the correct spelling

⇩

Cover it up

⇩

Write it down from memory, spell it out loud again as you write it

⇩

Check the word you have against the correct version to make sure you have got it

right

(if not, start again)

Source: Allen (2002, p. 17)

The above chart explains the way of this method. The learners who are good in memorizing would be benefitted with it. Allen (2002) states, "Most mistakes occur because people aren't even aware that there is a problem" (p. 16). This is a type of concentration practice where improvement of wrong words is focused.

Adding prefixes and suffixes (p. 43) is another way to improve the spelling.

Some common suffixes	Some common prefixes
-able, -ible = able to be (eatable, edible)	Ante- = before (anteroom)
-al used to make adjectives (magical)	Anti- = against (antifreeze)

-ance, -ence used to make nouns (appearance, existence)	Co- = with (cooperate)
-en used to make verbs (blacken, happen)	De- = away (de-ice)
-er, -or, -ar = someone who does (builder, actor, peddler)	Dis- = not (disinclined)
-er, -est = more, most (bigger, biggest)	Ex- = former (ex-president)
-ess = female (lioness)	In- = not (insane): also written as il- (illegal), im- (impossible), ir- (irregular)
-ful = full, full of (cupful, beautiful)	Mis- = wrong (misbehave)
-ish = rather (largish)	Non- = not (non-smoking)
-hood, -ity, -ment, -ness used to make mouns (brotherhood, scarcity, merriment, firmness)	Pre- = before (prehistoric)
-ize, used to make verbs (privatize)	Pro- = forward (proceed)
-less = lacking (careless)	Pro- = in favour of (pro-life)
-ly used to make adverbs (largely)	Re- = again (recharge)
-ous used to make adjectives (industrious)	Trans- = across (transatlantic)
-tion used to make nouns (abbreviation)	Un- = not (unhappy)
-y used to make adjectives (noisy, muddy)	

Source: Allen (2002, p. 43)

The above chart of Allen is a helpful tool to teach prefixes and suffixes in my research. Adding of prefixes and suffixes affect the spelling so the learners must have understand this strategy for their correct spelling. Their spelling would be improved if they had the knowledge of prefixes and suffixes.

Talking about other strategies that I used in my research was based on the English textbook. Many strategies are found in our daily used textbooks but somehow we avoid them and teach it as regular exercise work. But, I included them to see their

effect on the learners. Picturing words is one of the strategies that I found in grammar text book. The combination of picture and words are given to visualize long or difficult words. The learners have to add picture and words to make a word. Similarly, compound words is the strategy where two different words are added to make new words which gives meaning the clear meaning of a long word that are usually difficult to understand.

Arty spelling is the strategy that helps the learners focus in each and every letters. The other sources like newspaper and magazines are used with the help of glue and scissor. The learners are involved in cutting and pasting job of the letters in their exercise copy. They need to find letters according to their words and paste it. To improve the spelling we must understand the meaning of the words therefore, antonyms and synonyms is another strategy which is helpful to explore the meaning of the words. The learners directly understand the words if the similar words or opposite words that are given to them. Similarly, while going through some more strategies were found and used which are briefly explained in chapter four. The strategies like word scramble, word puzzles, sketching images, were added later while reflecting and revising my plan during my research.

After implementing the strategies, some of the games were used in the class to check the strategies. Wright, Betteridge and Buckby (2010) describe game as "an activity which is entertaining and engaging, often challenging, and an activity in which the learners play and interact with others" (p. 1). Many games were played by the learners which was a type of test for them in spelling. The first game was searching words initiated with the alphabets a to z and next was searching words that ended with a to z. The learners had to search words according to their groups. This game was not mentioned in any book but discovered by me during one of the

workshop that I attended. I involved the learners in this game which I found quiet interesting. Thus, I let them play this game to make them aware with the words and its spellings. Then, with the help of theme given to them, they were involved in another game to find words from newspaper. I used this strategy during my school days as well which was helpful tool for me to improve my spelling.

Mime game was another strategy, used as the team work game. The learners were involved in spell out the words after they guessed the correct word from one of the member of their team. That member was not allowed to speak but he/she could use the gesture to express the word. The next game was a parcel game. The learners were involved in passing parcel until they hear the music. If the music stops, the parcel holder has to pick a piece of paper and spell that word. I used some more games in my research which were played during my school and college days like bingo game, numbering alphabets game, and hangman where as some games were suggested by my colleagues like matching words with meaning game, and running dictation. The brief explanation of strategies with pictures, samples are given in chapter four including appendices.

Theoretical Review

As a researcher, I was aware that theoretical part must be kept in mind to specify or clarify the purpose. In this research I considered two constructive theoretical referents: active learning principle and learning by doing principle. These are subsequently discussed in the following section.

Active Learning Principle

Felder and Brent (2003) explain, "Active learning is anything course-related that all students in a class session are called upon to do other than simply watching, listening and taking notes" (p. 2). In other words, active learning in a class takes place when

the teacher asks a question, pose a problem, or issue some other type of challenges let the students work individually or in small groups to come up with a response, give them sometimes to do it, stop them and call on one or more individuals or groups to share their responses. The learners will be involved in the learning activity than staying passive in the class.

Prince (2004) states in his research that active learning suggests to avoid making lecturing the only thing the teachers do in the class. If a lecture or recitation is necessary then a few minutes or 30 seconds is enough to awake the learners. This principle is necessary for my research which is learner centered rather than teacher centered. Active learning also talks about focus on learning 'process' rather than on learning 'products'. The traditional way of learning English spelling is teacher centered which makes learning difficult and monotonous. My research was learner centered; hence, the learners actively participated in the activities during the research. A few minutes was enough for me to aware them about the activities. Such activities ensure that learning is a "two-way street"

The learners were motivated and became active participants from passive recipients. The learners were allowed to assess their own role in the learning process and that process changed their empty mind to dynamic views. The strategies which I followed in my research changed their views of learning spelling only through memorization. As a result, I followed this principle to change the rote learning system of learners.

Learning by Doing Principle

Learning by doing is somehow similar to active learning. The process suggested by Felder and Brent (2003) is same like in active learning. The learners will actively participate in learning and they will learn something by doing. This principle also

focuses on the learner centered teaching rather than teacher centered. According to Felder and Brent (2003), "In this principle, practice is important to try something new, by seeing how well or poorly it works, by reflecting on how to do it differently, then trying it again and seeing if it works better" (p. 282) . Constant practice is vital for this principle like in my research. The strategies or activities that I conducted were practiced in the classroom. The learners actively participated and practiced constantly for the success of the research.

I played the role of guide or facilitator rather than traditional teacher in the classroom to facilitate the learners in learning spellings. The learners got my guidance in every steps but not everywhere. The learners tried to learn themselves rather than listening and memorizing the spelling. They improved their spelling themselves by involving in the learning. The practice took place according to their need of learning.

Review of Previous Research Studies

The above sections dealt with the theoretical reviews related with the proposed study. In this section, I have tried to present various research studies that were consistent with my research questions and purpose. Therefore, I have specifically included the discussions and findings related to English spelling around the world. Five of these studies are discussed briefly:

The research done by HajAli (2008) entitled 'The use of whiteboard technique to improve spelling test scores for grade three students'. She used whiteboard which is a usual material of our classroom. She is a grade teacher who firstly used traditional method to make students memorize the words but the result was unsatisfactory. Then, she used the whiteboard as a tool to follow systematic strategy. She made the students learn the meaning of the words, break the words into parts or syllables, relate it to other similar words , use spelling hints such as you hear with your ear, set a wall

words and the students use the copy check write method to study the spelling list .

After this, the white board was divided into five parts and each part was named with the group name as well as the students also worked in five groups. One member from each group should compete with the others by writing the dictation on the board. This spelling competition was done five times in the class during English period so that all the students could participate. The winner group was the one who got the most correct spellings, and next, the students were dictated the words to write in their spelling notebooks. She also claimed that although the results showed that using of the white board beside regular spelling instructions had a positive effect on students' scores, there are some factors that should be considered, the size of the sample is small (11 students) and the positive results could have been attributed to other factors.

Similarly, research that I studied was done by teachers group named as P1 teachers (2008), who were involved in action research project entitled, 'To find out the effect of spelling games in helping P1 pupils improve in spelling performance'. They kept 30 students in control group and 209 students in experimental group. Control group had got traditional method of learning like, getting spelling list, read and spell words, rote learning which is boring and laborious to some pupils. But the experimental group got chance to make learning of spelling interesting through games -play and fun. Various games that involve spelling like unscramble words, hangman, missing letters, and spelling bees were introduced to this group and that was done twice a week. The experimental group showed an improvement in spelling scores after spelling strategies. The students in the control group with no intervention also showed an improvement in the spelling scores. This research found out that various strategies are effective in helping poor spellers learn spelling by playing word games, with phonic skills, look –say –spell technique, visual, writing, song etc.

The third research that I went through was done by Groff (1996) that is named as 'Recent spelling research and simplified spelling' where he had done empirical research on traditional spelling and how the school children spell. He explained his research in many sub topics but among them I chose only one that is 'A massive study of spelling errors' which was done by Cramer and Cipielwski. When I went through the article I found that they analyzed 55 types of spelling errors in 18,599 children's compositions written on topics of the children's choice in 256 classrooms in all 50 states of the USA. A total of 1,584,758 written words were examined. These investigators contend that the English language is not the chaotic beast of mythology. It is often made out to be on the contrary, it is systematic and reasonably predictable in the conventional way it is spelt. However, they agreed that conventional "spelling knowledge has been shown to be much more than the ability to match letter to sound". They presented four features in conventional English spelling that they feel make it reasonably predictable. These are as a. the predictable way affixes are spelt; b. the fact that two words related in meaning may have similar spellings although they are pronounced differently, eg, *signal/sign*; c. regular consonant letter-sound matches; d. spelling patterns within words. Their simplified spelling movement has made a strong case that too many spellings of words are not controlled by these four influences. But also they showed the need for a highly systematic procedure for spelling all speech sounds.

The fourth research that I went through was done by Young (2005) entitled 'Developmental stage theory of spelling: analysis of consistency across four spelling-related activities'. The participants of his research were six children (Matt, Kathryn, Mina, Max, India and Eric) attending a government school on Sydney's North Shore. In order to identify appropriate participants, he conducted his research in an entire

year by using the Ganske Developmental Spelling Analysis-A Qualitative Measure

for Assessment and Instruction--Screening Inventory. Preliterate, Early Letter-Name,

Letter-Name, Within-Word Pattern, Syllable Juncture and Derivational Constancy are

the developmental stages mentioned by Young. His findings suggested that the

developmental stage theory of spelling has sufficient flexibility and detail to describe

children's spelling performance accurately and meaningfully. He also suggested that

greater emphasis needs to be placed on carefully assessing each child to determine

their current developmental stage of spelling. Error analysis has been a key approach

for determining spelling performance and is an extremely useful measure. The results

of this study would suggest, however, that we should also take note of correct

spellings made by children above their expected level of development. Child's

personal strategy plays vital role into their spelling program to build upon the child's

emerging skills. Once the developmental stage of each child has been carefully

established, children can be grouped accordingly. In other words, children were found

to spell within their identified spelling stage, therefore, greater investment needs to be

made to identify current level of performance and then to program accordingly.

The fifth research that I studied was done by Meriem (2009) and his topic was

'Teaching and learning vocabulary through spelling strategy'. The participants were

45 first year students of English (group six) at Mentouri University, Constantine,

during the academic year 2008-2009 from different regions and belong to the same

age group, that is, from eighteen to twenty. His research work aimed at evaluating the

importance of the introduction of spelling as a vocabulary strategy for students in

teaching of English as a foreign language at university, and how that could be a

beneficial tool as input for the acquisition of new vocabulary, then a helpful means to

produce a correct writing. To attain such aim, he administered a pre-test and a post-

test. The former was intended to determine the pre-instructional knowledge of the graphic form of words, whereas the latter was aimed at finding out whether the spelling strategy implemented during instruction was effective in enhancing the subjects' ability to write with less spelling mistakes. He used the strategies of Darson which is mentioned in thematic part. The test was interposed by two sequential lessons. Meriem (2009) says that the results of his innovative investigation had confirmed the hypothesis which states that if we train students to pay a careful attention to form of words, this would help them to spell and write correctly. The learners under investigation proved to have learnt most of the vocabulary items of the proposed text.

After studying these researches I got some knowledge about the research on spelling and its benefit for teachers and learners. All the researches are based on learning centered than the teacher centered or the traditional way of learning. English spelling is difficult and confusing for second language learner as well as for native learners. The research that I had gone through had presented the significance of this research.

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Research Gap

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The first research that was done by HajAli was interesting but not relevant in our context. She had only 11 students in a class which is not possible in my context. The minimum size in my school context was 35 which was the problematic thing. The second research was done by the group of teacher but I was the only one teacher and researcher in my research. But their continuous way of research inspired me a lot to observe the different students using different strategies. The third research by Groff's simplifying spelling movement gave me some ideas about the steps to follow while observing the learners. The fourth research by Young presented some developmental

stages and its effects in the learners. He researched on the very young children but my target learners were not young as his. However, the stages that he presented were a big help for me in many ways. The fifth research by Meriem introduced some strategies to learn spelling which was the perfect match to my research. He researched on the university level students but my target learners were in school level. However his aim is to investigate the value of training students in the use of spelling strategy that would yield a nice paper that is not decorated by the teacher's comments became one of the inspirational part for my research.

The researches that I presented above were all related to English spelling that gave me some idea about conducting my own research. And I also came to know that learning English spelling would be boring and monotonous if we follow the traditional way of teaching. Nowadays, learners are more interested in playing games and watching TV than memorizing spellings. Therefore, it is the teacher's job to make learning interesting and fun. English spelling can be taught using different strategies which would break the monotony of the learners and makes learning easy. Even the large number of the class would be smoothly handled by the teachers. I did action research to improve the learners' spelling which is not being done in Nepalese context till now with large number of the learners. Due to this reason I got an inspiration to write my dissertation on it.

Chapter Summary

This chapter dealt with the review of various published literature, dissertation, articles and internet browsed articles. It further discussed the ideas of different writers about the improving English spelling through different strategies. At last, there was the research gap that I found to carry on my research study.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This part deals with the methodology which was being used to conduct my research. Philosophical consideration, research design, research methodology, data collection tools quality standards and ethical issues are described briefly in this part.

Eye Halve a Spelling Chequer	*I have a Spelling Checker*
Eye halve a spelling chequer	*I have a spelling checker*
It came with my pea sea	*It came with my PC*
It plainly marques four my revue	*It plainly marks for my review*
Miss steaks eye kin knot sea.	*Mistakes I cannot see.*
Eye strike a quay and type a word	*I strike a key and type a word*
And weight four it two say	*And wait for it to say*
Weather eye am wrong oar write	*Whether I am wrong or right*
It shows me strait a weigh.	*It shows me straight away.*
As soon as a mist ache is maid	*As soon as a mistake is made*
It nose bee fore two long	*It knows before too long*
And eye can put the error rite	*And I can put the error right*
Its really ever wrong.	*It's rarely ever wrong.*
Eye have run this poem threw it	*I have run this poem through it*
I am shore your pleased two no	*I am sure you're pleased to know*
Its letter perfect in it's weigh	*It's letter perfect in its way*
My chequer tolled me sew.	*My checker told me so.*

Source: www.waylink-english.co.uk

The above poem looks different but they actually represent a single poem.

First poem is full of spelling mistakes where as second one is the corrected form.

Spelling is crucial in writing whether it is poem or paragraph. A reader cannot understand the writing until the writer has written it in correct spelling.

Philosophical Considerations

A philosophical consideration, as a tool, provides us the fundamental beliefs about the world, encourages and delves a deeper understanding of the nature of the inquiry. As a researcher in the field it gives the ideas to connect with the society so he/she moves accordingly. It is very useful in any kind of research to determine the appropriate methodology design and tools because selection of appropriate research design and the whole methodology process are greatly affected by philosophical views of research. It gives a map to research design and methodology part. Giving this scenario I would like to move onto ontology, epistemology and axiology part which are given below:

Ontology

Sage Dictionary (2009) defines ontology as the metaphysical study of the nature of being and existence and similarly, Richards (2003) states it as nature of our beliefs about reality. According to Oxford English Dictionary (2005), Ontology means 'a branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of existence'. It is a way of being or reality and reality nowadays has multiple assumptions. People have different perspectives upon the reality. In a research, the question like, what is real and reality? is being asked time and again. A reality for my research was multiple realities for my participants or learners. When I moved back to childhood, I still remember events where I used to think spellings were easy for me. But the same reality was different for my classmates who used to take spelling as boring or monotonous task.

Therefore, the reality of my research was multiple than I imagined at the beginning of the research. Some learners took spelling as easy task and they used to

say that it's a child play where as some learners found it tough and they ignored it. But all the learners actively participated in my research and enhanced their knowledge of spellings. But their realities towards the strategies were also various which were still now set in my mind. While used one of the strategies called mnemonics, one of the peer could not complete their task and made sad faces because they found it hard than other peer groups. Therefore, the reality here seemed different than I thought. I was also taking that strategy easy one but they changed my perspectives that even easy task may be harder for someone else.

Epistemology

Sage Dictionary (2009) defines epistemology as 'the philosophical theory of knowledge'. The word 'epistemology' has its roots in ancient Greek word '*episteme'* which means 'knowledge or science'. For the ancient Greeks like Plato and Aristotle, the truth was unwavering absoluteness. The quest to seek knowledge was the search for the final answer. Likewise, Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2005) defines Epistemology as the part of philosophy that deals with knowledge. The knowledge that we gain in our daily life can be the part of our study. People gain knowledge in every bit of moment even while sleeping as well.

According to Sage Dictionary (2009) the following three questions are basic to epistemology. What is knowing? What is the known? What is knowledge? the meaning and application of 'knowledge', as a history of philosophy suggests, has always been (and still is) dynamic, diverse, and 'at bottom' diffuse. Same like reality, knowledge can differ from person to person. The knowledge that I have got on spelling made easy to score high in spelling test but difficult for my classmates.

Thus, I made some epistemological considerations, firstly, taking the stance that every individual has a different perspective, secondly, knowledge was

constructed through negotiation between individuals, and thirdly, this constructed knowledge was utilized to empower the research participants. In other words my strategies helped the learners improve their knowledge to be aware of their writing mistakes and correct it by themselves. Their awareness towards their mistakes showed some positive effect of my research towards their knowledge.

Axiology

Sage Dictionary (2009) defines axiology as the term used to cover the philosophy of values. It was introduced a century ago by the French philosopher Paul Lapie and derived from the Greek *axios,* corresponding to the Latin *valere,* meaning 'to be strong' or 'to be worthy'. In other words it asks such questions like, "What is the worthiness of what I am trying to do? Is it so important that it will empower the powerless? What do I value?"

> *I try to do right*
>
> *but it turns into disaster*
>
> *I try to do good*
>
> *but it turns into bad*
>
> *I try to simplify*
>
> *but it turns into complex*
>
> *I try to write correctly*
>
> *but it turns into incorrect one.*

The above poem reflects upon my own experience and situation of learning. It presents that when I do not value anything that turns everything into wrong. Axiology is also known as value theory that focuses on the value of matters such as human life, knowledge, wisdom, freedom, love, justice, self fulfillment, and well-being. As same as reality and knowledge, value differs from person to person. The value of English

language and spelling is seen in our daily life. The written works in our daily life are being occupied by English language. People prefer English language rather than Nepali, so the value of English is in pick nowadays. I was hoping that my research may bring some changes in our teaching and learning so that the learners would not be discouraged to learn English spelling. The teachers in the school were also benefitted by my research where the learners' mistakes were corrected by their peers and oneself. Day by day learners were valuing the spellings in their writings as my research study became worthwhile in learners' life. They took spelling mistakes seriously and started to work hard to improve during their writing. Their serious concerned towards spelling mistakes was the change in their knowledge which was the visible part to value the spelling in my research. My research worked as the power to powerless learners. They were able to correct their spelling mistakes themselves and point out some mistakes in the textbook as well.

Research Approach: Qualitative

Sidhu (2005) states, "Research is an endless quest of knowledge or unending search for truth. It brings to light new knowledge or corrects previous errors and misconceptions and adds in an orderly way to the existing body of knowledge. The knowledge obtained by research is scientific and objectives…" (p. 1).The word "Research" sounds little monotonous and lengthy process at the beginning of the research but the importance of writing thesis makes it compulsory to concentrate on it. He also further says, "The goal of all research is progress and good life" (p. 3). From this statement we can understand that research is knowledge for our daily life which needs to be updated according to the time.

Creswell (2011) says, "Research designs are plans and the procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data

collection and analysis…………the selection of research design is also based on the nature of the research problem…….." (p. 3). According to his book three types of designs are advanced: qualitative, quantitative and mixed approaches. My research design is based on qualitative approach.

Anderson and Arsenaut (1998) defines, "Qualitative research is a form of inquiry that explores phenomena in their natural settings and uses multi methods to interpret, understand, explain and bring meaning to them" (p. 119). It tries to explore the attitude, behaviors and experiences through some tools like interview, observation that helped me to get into the depth of real world. Hancock (2002) defines, "Research which attempts to increase our understanding of why things are the way they are in our social world and why people act the ways they do is qualitative research" (as cited in Budha, 2011, p. 56).

Similarly, Creswell (2011) says, "The process of this research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general theme and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data" (p. 4). The questions that emerged in the mind of researcher gives the beginning to the research and the field gives the data that is being analyzed and interpreted to give meaning out of it.

Richards (2003) introduces seven core traditions in qualitative research and they are ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenology, case study, life history, and action research and conversation analysis. As a researcher it is important to choose one tradition to follow to give a path to our research. Among those seven core traditions, I chose action research as a tradition to follow that provided me a way to my research.

Research Methodology: Action Research

Taylor (2000) claims that Action research was based on some earlier ideas in the

1940's and 1950's, developed by Kurt Lewin and his colleagues as a collection of

problem-solving cycles for improving organizations. This term "action" captured the

notion of a disciplined inquiry in the context of focusing efforts to improve the quality

of an organization and its performance. Even today, the idea of action research is

taken as a powerful tool for improving the practice of any given educational setting. I

also realized its power of ideas while doing my research which brought change in my

learners and my teaching as well as the learning style.

   Similarly, Cohen et al (2007) defines action research as a small-scale

intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects

of such an intervention. To do action research is to plan, act, observe and reflect more

carefully, more systematically, and more rigorously than one usually does in everyday

life. Action research is not only simply problem-solving method but also the process

involves that problem identification. It is motivated by a quest to improve and

understand the world by changing it and learning how to improve it from the effects

of the changes made. The change that is produced is not a comprehensive one, as

Cohen.et al (2007) say, "It is a part of a broader agenda of changing education,

changing schooling and changing society" (p. 300). The key idea here is to empower

the learners through my research.

   McNiff and Whitehead (2006) say, "Action research is a form of enquiry that

enables practitioners everywhere to investigate and evaluate their work. They ask,

'What am I doing? What do I need to improve? How do I improve it?'Their accounts

of practice show how they are trying to improve their own learning, and influence the

learning of others" (p. 7). A constant look is necessary in action research which makes

researcher alert in his/her research. While working in my research I kept updating myself with the help of learners and their performances. To fulfill the aim of my research, I kept asking those three questions to myself. The works I was doing seemed unsuccessful one time and sometimes it was a huge success so I was improving myself than to stick in my research plan.

Therefore, it is not surprising that the method that I used in my research is action research. The problem area that has been identified is how to improve the spelling of learning of private school in English language. The intervention identified through different strategies and a positive change indicated that such integration might be helpful.

Action Research Process

Ferrance (2000) has presented a model of the circle nature of the typical action research process. According to the cycle of circle, it is divided into five steps: identify the problem, gather data, interpret data, act on evidence, and evaluate results and next steps.

Figure 1. Action Research Process
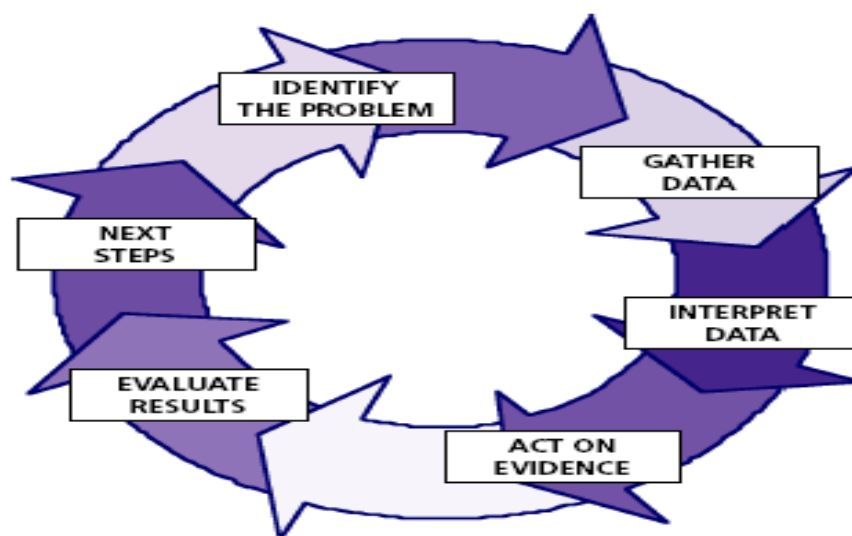
Source: Ferrance (2000, p. 9)

Ferrance (2000) has proposed this model for researcher which helps to give outline figure to the research. The short descriptions of those steps are discussed below and brief discussion with the evidence is discussed in chapter four.

Identify the Problem

As a learner and teacher, I had many questions related to teaching and learning. Those questions were the guide lines for my research because without a question we can't conduct the research. Ferrance (2000) says that there are some criteria for the questioning in action research and they are as the question should be a higher-order question, not a yes/no, be stated in common language, avoiding jargon, be concise, be meaningful, not already have an answer. In the beginning stage I asked a question to myself for the action research but I was in dilemma whether the question or issue in my mind will be appropriate in my research field or not? But when I discussed the issue with the teachers and learners I found it appropriate for my research study. I found the spelling mistakes in learners' writing which verified my problem statement.

Gather Data

After identifying the problem, my second step was the collection of data that is an important step in deciding what action needs to be taken. The multiple sources of data were used to understand the happenings in the classroom. There are many vehicles for collection of data but I used only tools such as, interview, classroom observation, reflective journal and learners' written samples to conduct this research. These tools helped me to improve myself and my strategies during my research.

Interpret Data

After collecting data, I analyzed and identified major themes depending upon my research question. The classroom data, individual data, or subgroup data were analyzed without the use of statistics or technical assistance. Some other data, such as

opinions, attitudes, were being summarized. Data that are not quantifiable were reviewed holistically and important elements or themes were noted.

Act on Evidence

With the help of the information from the data collection and review of current literature, I designed a plan of action that allowed me to study the change. To improve the English spelling of the participants, I used different strategies to break their monotony. Ferrance (2000) says, "While the new technique was being implemented, continued to document and collected data on performance" (p. 12). The main action took place in this part so I continuously documented their work as well as mine.

Evaluate Results

The action parts were assessed to know the effects of the intervention to determine when improvement has occurred. The data clearly provided supporting evidence where there is improvement. I changed the actions to elicit better results when the data was not clear.

Next Step

After the completion of the action research, I identified additional questions raised by the data and planned for additional improvements, revisions, and next step.

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Action Phases

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As I have already mentioned above that my research is an action research where I was involved directly in my research process. Given below was my plan in different phases so that I could carry on the research study easily.

Phase I (Reconnaissance Phase)

While studying in degree level I got chance to do dissertation, therefore, I selected one of the private school in Lalitpur area. I took permission from principal of the school to carry out my research. I got the chance to do action research on young

learners who were in fifth grade. Firstly, I tried to find out the problem area of the students. Therefore, I analyzed my students' exercise books where I found lots of errors and mistakes in English. After identifying the problem area of the learners the journey of research started.

Phase II (Reflective and Planning Phase)

After finding out the problem of the students, I planned for my research with the help of my mentor and information gathered by internet. I studied some articles and researches related to my problem to gather ideas about conducting the research. My research was of 35 days, so I planned some activities related to the problem. Those activities were the strategies for the learners.

Phase III (Implementation and Monitoring Phase)

Then, the real action research started from third phase. I implemented those planned activities in the classroom for the learners according to my day wise plan. The learners were young ones. Therefore, I clearly instructed them first for their activities and demonstrated for them as well if necessary. They followed my instruction and did the activities accordingly. I also monitored each and every learners during their activities and work. The fun and exciting activities motivated them to learn English spelling without hesitation and boredom.

Phase IV (Evaluation and Reflection Phase)

Everyday's activities and the work of the learners were kept as a record. I evaluated those activities and works, and provided them feedbacks. The students wrote and shared their own feeling as reflective journals after doing each work. I also wrote the reflective journal about my experiences after the activities. The learners' reflective journals helped and guided me to move on my next step of research.

Data Collection Techniques and Process

Koul (2009) states, "Data collection is essentially an important part of the research process so that the inferences, hypothesis or generalizations tentatively held may be identified as valid, verified as correct, or rejected as untenable" (p. 205). In any research data collection tools give a clear view to researcher towards his/her research. Similarly, Action research also has several different tools to collect and analyze data but I chose few tools which helped me to get clear vision before and after my research. Interview, classroom observation, reflective journals and the learners' written samples were the tools that I used during my research. They are illustrated as following:

Figure 2. Data Collection Tools
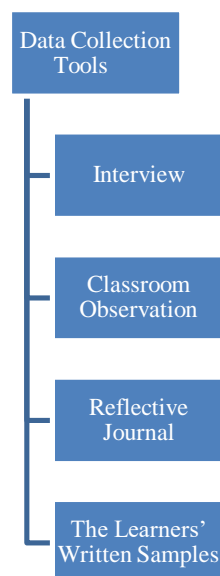
Source: My Process

Interviews

Rose and Grosvenor (2001) claim, "Interviews have the potential to yield valuable insights into people's life experience, attitude, opinions and aspiration" (p. 112). Similarly, Sidhu (2005) says, "The interview is a conversation carried out with the

definite purpose of obtaining certain information by means for the spoken word" (p. 145). Therefore, I took interview with the learners how they were feeling, what would be helpful for them for their further study and took their opinions towards spelling and got some information of the learners own strategies for learning spelling.

After using this tool, I got some vision towards the success of my research. They were primary kids. Thus, they felt little awkward in the beginning but slowly they opened up with their ideas which became fruitful for my research. Then, I chose two brilliant, two mediocre and two poor learners to verify my research questions. Their interview gave me few innovative ideas to move on with my research. Not only that I took their interview after completing my action research as well. In the beginning I found that they were in the need of help. But after completion of research, they looked quite happy and a type of enlightenment was seen. They looked confident and empowered. Their concern towards my research and their improvement made me feel glad.

Classroom Observation

Rose and Grosvenor (2001) say, " Observation is a very direct method which provides researcher with the close contact with the subject, behaviors or events being studied thereby enabling a real life picture to be achieved" (p. 30). One of the tools of data collection was classroom observation of the learners. I collected the data by observing the learners' performance. It was not necessary to interview someone to collect something each and every time. Hence, I observed the learners' active participation and the work during the activities. Sidhu (2005) says, "Observation is recognized as the most direct means of studying people when one is interested in their overt behavior" (p. 158). During observation, their behavior and their involvement in the activities made me realize the story about my research. During the activities their

excitement encouraged me to participate with them and so did I during games. Success of the research may be measured by the improvement of the learners' written work but while observing I felt a kind of improvement in myself. Their gradual improvement and their interest towards their work as well as spelling were clearly been observed. They seemed more attentive than earlier classes and became quick after each strategy. Classroom observation became one of the effective tools to gather information in my research study.

Reflective Journals

Creswell (2011) says, "During the research, the investigator may collect qualitative documents. Theses may be public documents (e.g. newspaper, minutes of meeting, official report) or private documents (e.g. personal journals and diaries, letters, e-mails)" (p. 181). Reflective journal comes under private document which became one of the sources of the evidence. After each activity, I collected their reflection and also prepared my own reflection. What I should do to develop my proficiency or what learners told me to do of questions answers were collected from this tool. Even the success and failure of the strategies was visible with the help of the reflective journal. Their likes and dislikes in the journal towards the strategies used provided me a confidence to move on and improve my plans to empower them. This tool became a huge help for my research and for the learners. Through their journal I noticed their improvement in writing and thinking power as well. They started to think critically which let them analyze their performance themselves.

The Learners' Written Samples

According to the aim of the action, I had to find problem in their writing and then implement the strategies to empower them. To find the problem the learners' written sample became a tool to verify my problem statement. Their first written draft showed

the spelling mistakes and I moved on with my plan to teach strategies. Similarly, I collected their written samples after each and every activities which helped me to move on with my further plan effectively. The samples were evaluated by me or themselves. Those written samples were kept as a record for their improvement. After completion of my research, I again collected final draft of their written samples. The first draft and final draft were compared to check their improvement in writing and their daily activities. The written samples were also the data to give vision for their change.

Data Sources

There are two ways of collecting data in the research. They are primary and secondary sources of data. I used primary sources in my research. Primary sources of data are based on original data sources. The primary sources of data consist of mainly interviews recording, learners' classroom performances, reflective journal and writing samples of the learners.

Location of My Research

I did my action research in a local school located at Lalitpur, where the teachers have been teaching English language as a foreign language. Here is a very short introduction of the school.

Mrs. P1 established the school in 2039 BS and nowadays Mrs. P2 is appointed as active principal. In the beginning stage, this school was named as Marigold school and later on changed into Aster Academy. The school was established to educate the local children especially to Newar community. Most of the local people follow the farming as the main occupation and these people were targeted in the early stage.

The motto of the school is "Knowledge is Power" which sounds ambitious line. The objective of this school is making each and every child educated so that they

will be imparted with power of education and make them self confident, self disciplined and self reliant.

The classrooms are spacious and well built with limited size of 30 or 35 pupils. The teachers are well qualified and use good teaching materials in their works. Beside this, the school has a library with huge reference books and course books that are needed for the teachers and students. To facilitate the learners for practical classes, the school has separate science laboratories. Even there is a computer lab to update the students with the new technologies.

The school provides good facility for extracurricular activities. Every Tuesday and Friday zero hour is provided to the students where they take part in different activities like dance, yoga, scout, basketball, badminton, chess, table tennis, karate and so on. On those two days, the learners take part in physical activities which is also needed for overall development of a child.

Being a part of English medium school, the teachers and the learners both emphasized to use correct English in spoken and written form. The school has prescribed many textbooks subjected as English I and II but still the written outcomes of the students are only satisfactory. The teachers are instructed to teach in English language and the students' exercise copy must be checked everyday, but also the red marks in the exercise copy is not lessen. This also gave me a feeling to do this research in their writing especially in spelling which is being checked and rechecked. Therefore, I decided to do my research in fifth grade to make students aware of their spelling mistakes and teach some strategies to improve their spelling themselves and shared my findings to the other English teachers of the school so that they will change their way of teaching spelling in the future.

Data Analysis Process

Sidhu (2005) states, "Analysis of data means studying the material in order to determine inherent facts and meaning" (p. 276). In other words, it is a process through which the researcher analyses the collected data and tries to make a meaning out of it. I conducted an action research in which I was directly involved. The aim of this research was to improve English spelling of the learners through different strategies, thus, I planned my research for 35 working days. Those plans are mentioned in timeline form (Appendix 1). As mentioned earlier, the tools to collect data for my research included classroom observation, interview, reflective journals and the learners' written samples.

After collecting data with the help of the above mentioned tools, I analyzed them carefully. I tried to find a certain problem on the basis of their progress, their performance and their attitude and feelings in given tasks. Then, I developed some strategies and games by looking at the pattern of the collected data. I even tried to support the strategies with the help of already published data so that I could authenticate my ideas with that of the experts who have contributed immensely in the related field. Lastly, I made a conclusion whether the action research was helpful or not.

The learners studying in fifth grade were involved in this research study. Therefore, I collected the written samples of the learners' tasks in order to compare the students' mistakes and errors during the research and after the completion of the study. The written samples of three different learners are given in Appendix-2(a), 2(b) and 2(c).

The learners were involved in various activities in groups and sometimes individually or in peers. I started the research with the hope that my strategies would

have a positive impact on the development of the learners. In this study, I intended to use the sampling not only to evaluate their pre-existing knowledge but also the progress, weakness and their level through their participation and reflective journals at various stages of the research.

Assessment tools such as sample tasks, assignments, activities and the surprise tests were used to provide them opportunity to motivate themselves. The students' sample works helped me to find out of their interest, source of motivation, strength as well as their weaknesses. These samples also helped me to improve my teaching styles. I did some activities with the learners whenever they wanted my support. I guided, instructed and facilitated them instead of being rude, authoritative and strict teacher.

The interview of the learners enabled me to understand their perceptions towards my research strategies. I asked simple questions to the students because they were just in fifth grade. The interview questions are attached in the appendix -3 which helped me to know about their progress and weaknesses. As my research met the objective of improving the English spellings, I was excited to see what helped them to do so. Therefore, the interview of the learners helped me to find it out. I interpreted the interviews and found general views and opinions expressed by the different participants.

By keeping the record of the reflective journals said and written by the learners I compared and contrasted the teaching learning process during the research. They also provided me with the insight on their likes and dislikes so that I could carry out the research as per their interest, level and learning strategies.

Quality Standards

After talking about description of my research, my mind again stuck in the question, Are there any quality standards that can be applied? Among three paradigms, critical research paradigm also has some quality standards but those standards are not enough for me. As a result, I borrowed some quality standards from interpretive paradigms. These quality standards are suitable for my research - Trustworthy, praxis, critical reflexivity, standpoint of empowerment and humility.

Trustworthy

Guba and Lincoln (1989) are of the notion that a disciplined inquiry process must be publicly acceptable and open to judgments about the "compression and rearrangement" processes involved. In other words trustworthy in a research can be deep immersion, prolonged engagement, and member checking and skepticism practice. By trustworthy standard, I can say that the participants can rely on this research to bring change in their English spelling. In this regard, I followed a threefold path of awareness, action and emancipation. First, the research participants were made aware of the issue. Then, they went into 'action' to see if desired results would be achieved. Finally, the learners and teachers both benefitted from the change that was seen in English spelling.

Praxis: Impact and Change

According to Sage Dictionary (2010), Praxis refers to a particular philosophy used to guide and conduct research. Action researchers like me engage in praxis-oriented research that involves the community or group under study in the research process. In other words, praxis refers to the way of doing research in practical way. This quality standard impacts and brings changes on research participants as well as researcher. Cohen et al (2007) state, "Praxis is defined as action informed through reflection, and

with emancipation as its goal" (p. 302). Praxis in a research meant to be the practice; making practice, leading towards change and the thoughtful action. It is directly related to action research that aim to bring change through practice. The question like - How are we going to bring the change if the research is going to be just in text format? Thus, it foregrounds the issue of practicality or transforming ideas into practice. The transformation among the learners is one of the components of the research itself which was the successful completion of the research.

Critical Reflexivity

Critical reflexivity refers the reflecting on own unfolding understanding of demonstrating such as uncertainty, questioning. Cohen et al (2007) state, "The notion of reflexivity is a self-conscious awareness of the effects that the participants-as-practitioners-and researchers are having on the research process, how their values, attitudes, perceptions, opinions, actions, feelings etc. are feeding into the situation being studied" (p. 310)

Since the research included reflective journals of students and mine too, critical reflexivity formed the criteria for judging its quality standard. The interpretive commentary of the strategies/activities were represented that supported to maintain the quality of my and learner's knowledge. It showed me the drawbacks and merit points of the research that obviously helped me to modify my research and became helpful to the learners.

Standpoint of Empowerment

Sage Dictionary (2010) defines it as an ethical stance in qualitative research to create an empowering space in which research participants share power with researchers. Learning English spelling is still relying on the traditional memorizing method which is one of the weaknesses of teaching and learning. My research may have the ability

to promote transformation by breaking the traditional hegemonic relationship between the researcher and the researched. The learners transformed their learning as well as the teacher. The learners' involvement empowered them to learn through different strategies and breaking the old monotonous way of memorization.

Humility

Humility is one of the emotional quality of the humans or the quality of being humble. In a research, we have to deal with different types of people who would have different perspectives. A researcher in a research must respect others view instead of being stiff about own view. During the research, I encountered multiple views or realities that I accepted for the sake of my research. A researcher is not allowed to present only his/her ideas while doing research, thus, humility is used to maintain the quality standard of my research.

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Ethical Issues

</div>

"Ethical issues may stem from the kinds of problems investigated by social scientists and the methods they used to obtain valid and reliable data. This means that each stage in the research sequence raises ethical issues. They may arise from the nature of the research project itself, the context for the research, the procedures to be adopted, methods of data collection, the nature of the participants, the type of data collected and what is to be done with the data" (Cohen et al (2007, p. 318). Action research is prolonged process to bring positive outcome through research. Therefore, the researcher should bind herself in some rules to conduct the research. In other words, I kept some criteria to conduct my research that are forsaking of the learners. I let the students know what we were doing and motivate them to be an equally important member of action research team. Only after the consent of the participants, the

research proceeded. I let the authority of the school know what's going on with their course on progress.

During my research, I observed and facilitated the learners and I did not harm them physically or mentally. Care was taken so that negative implications are avoided throughout the research. Moreover, only with the consent of the participants regarding the findings, final report was drafted. I was truthful throughout my research period to the learners, teachers and the institution. I gave them true information regarding the research and its outcome. In order to expect truthfulness from the side of the learners, I also acted accordingly.

The whole idea of this research was to empower the learners with strategies and innovative ideas to enhance the English language learning ability. The whole process was fruitful for the learners, teachers and institution as well. The research that I conducted was based on time consuming and learning by doing method. If any of the learners decides to withdraw from the research, they were given every right to do so. In order to maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants, no real names were used either for participants or for the institution. The data which might disgrace the student/s or the institute or hurt the sentiments of the target group was kept very confidential and dealt in the strict manner for the protection of their fundamental privacy.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I briefly included the different philosophical considerations and research methodology. The various tools for the collection of data were briefly discussed with the research design, the process, the location of my action research and ethical issues.

CHAPTER IV

ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS

This part of the chapter deals with the process of my action research in detail which discusses each and every step that I have applied during my research for the learners. The participants' opinion and photos during research are also presented.

A Proposal to the Learners for My Action Research

Being as an English language teacher, I faced problems during my teaching profession. And those problems were not just related to my teaching but also related to the learning style of the learners. I always worried for my daily lesson and the learners' analytical and creative power which was lacking in students nowadays. They were always busy in thinking inside the box means their concern was to get good marks in exams. Their writing proficiency was somehow lost due to writing exact lines from books. If they were given some new words then they would lose in finding its spelling.

But the problem arose during my research time as I had already left my job and staying at home. Therefore, I started to find the school for my research and visited three schools. Among them one school gave me permission to carry out my research. As a researcher, I entered in a school where I found the same problem which I had faced in my teaching career. Thus, I thought to conduct this action research to empower them with strategies that made them think out of box.

Keeping the above mentioned scenario in mind, first I proposed the learners of fifth grade which consists of 35 students. They seemed unhappy in the beginning.

They again took it as a burden to do some more tasks which would not be useful for the examination. The permission from the school administration was already taken so as a teacher, I tried to convince the learners by explaining importance of spelling with the help of their own writing work in their exercise book. After analyzing their own mistakes of spelling, they took it in positive way. I worked as a volunteer teacher as a result I was not allowed to focus only on my research study in the classroom. Therefore, I got an opportunity to implement the strategies into classroom for the learners' improvement of spellings only twice in a week.

Slowly and steadily, I taught them the strategies which are already mentioned in chapter four. The interest level of the learners started to increase because the games were also being implemented after 3 or 4 strategies. Those games worked as ice breaker that motivated the learners and made easy for me to move on to the next step. I simply did not lecture or preach in the class but worked with them as a companion whenever they needed me at their side. In other words, I worked with them as a facilitator or guide which showed the path as well as walk with them in that path. The detail process of my research is mentioned below.

Background

The objective of my research was to make the learners aware about the spelling in English language, and to take interventionist measures through action research, as well as to find out the positive impact of the strategies on language learning. Thus, I implemented methodology that was able to address both the facets of my inquiry. Firstly I chose one of the private schools of Lalitpur valley. It was the time of third term examination as a result I faced rejections in some of the schools. Then, finally I found one school and informed the authority for my research. The learners were new for me so I took the help of the teacher to collect the data of the learners to

substantiate my research question. Then I entered in the class as a teacher and I informed them about my research for their participation. Secondly, I conducted the action research. Richards (2003) describes action research as an interventionist approach and Ferrance (2000) action research is focused on problem solving through inquiry into human problems in a real context.' My whole research was based on action research that was of 35 days long which is explained step by step below.

According to Ferrance (2000), "Although there are many types of research that may be undertaken, action research specifically refers to a disciplined inquiry done by a teacher with the intent that the research will inform and change his or her practices in the future"(P. 1). This research was carried out within the school context with the learners regarding my question that deals with educational matters at hand. People who call for greater professionalization say that teachers have to be constantly researching and educating themselves about their area of expertise. Therefore, this research may help them as well. In this research I began with a cycle of posing questions, gathering data, reflection, and deciding on a course of action. During action research, I structured routines and these routines were loosely guided by movement through five steps of inquiry, which is illustrated in this picture from action research book by Ferrance (2000) in chapter three. The brief description of the phases of action research with data collection tools are given below:

Identify the Problem

Teachers often have several questions they wish to investigate; however, it is important to limit the question to one that is meaningful at their daily work. I chose my problem on the basis of my daily teaching and learning activities. I found that spelling mistakes and errors are the main problems with students in the class.

Therefore, I realized and identified it as a problem and made it as my research problem.

Beginning with A Smile

As I entered into classroom of a private school in Lalitpur district, I introduced myself with a smile. The learners also seemed happy to see me in their class as I was a new teacher for them. I looked little curious and more excited. Then, I openly shared the information about my research with them and they also agreed to co-operate with me. Some of the learners raised questions like *what type of benefit they will get?*, *will it help them to obtain marks in their examination?* Well, they seemed worried about their examination and marks rather than learning some creative works which is one of system in Nepal where exams and marks play vital role than the learners' creativity and learning.

Short Information

The learners were curious when I entered into the classroom. I began the class with short information about the spelling and its significance. Until and unless they are unaware of the spelling and its significance they were not interested to participate in the activities. While discussing about the spelling, one of the learners raised a question if spelling is important like grammar in their writing. Well, the question was right because teacher always gives importance to the grammatical part than the spelling. But if the learners committed any mistakes in spelling, their mark is reduced. Thus, spelling also plays vital role in writing like the grammar part.

Gather Data

The collection of data is an important step in deciding what action needs to be taken. Multiple sources of data are used to better understand the scope of happenings in the classroom or school. Individual files, surveys, tests, report cards, attendance, self-

assessment samples of student work, projects, performances interviews, portfolios, diaries, questionnaires, reflective journals and observation are used as tools of data collection. As I had already mentioned the tools in chapter three, here I have explained it in detail.

One to One Talk

While talking in a mass many of the learners felt hesitation to speak up with their problems and knowledge. Therefore, I chose two brilliant, two mediocre and two poor learners to have one to one talk. The model questions of the interview are given in Appendix 2, which helped me to find out their knowledge level. While interviewing, the students showed their keen interest in spelling but due to negligence of the teachers, they were unable to improve their spelling which is a good source to get mark. All of them were in the need of help to improve their spelling for better writing. They were mostly using the memorization strategy and spelling test for their improvement which were not enough to enhance their creativity. They were just fifth grade learners so their helping hand is teachers at school and the elders at home. They lack confident in correcting their mistakes themselves.

Collecting the Mistakes

 This was the most important part for me because I was going to collect their mistakes in their writing. It sounded pretty odd but I had to do it for my research. I began with a short story which they listened very attentively. Everybody had a smile on their faces while telling them a tale. When I finished my part, they began their work. They started to write a short story which they had heard or read. They looked pretty excited while writing a story which is known as a favorite part of a learner. One of the samples of learner's writing is below and some more samples are given in Appendix 3(a), 3(b) and 3(c).

One Boy

*Once **open** a time there was a little boy who has father, mother and his friend. When he sleep and he sees **drem** of a ghost and he tell the story in his class and all the friend are **afried** and the **drem** was when he sleep and wake up and come out of the house and play with friend and the man who have long leg and his **stomake** is big and head is small and he can **jume** one place to another and the boy was so **afrid** with him and he has one **grandmothe**. She dance so nice and he always go to see her.*

After the activities I kept on evaluating the students' writing and observe their work during the activities. I wrote my own personal journal and kept as a record, whatever the learners told about the opinion after the activities in the class.

Interpret Data

Analyzing and identifying major themes with the help of classroom data, individual data, or subgroup data, I continued filing their works according to their names here.

Analyze the Mistakes

The next day they were given back their writings which showed many mistakes. The learners seemed busy in analyzing their mistakes and their colleagues' mistakes. This was part where they put their first step towards the awareness. They were trying to correct their mistakes by looking books and by asking their colleagues which showed a good sign for research study. Their efforts were the beginning of the change.

Effort to the Spelling Mistakes

In this part, I distributed some of the samples of writing and conducted a group activity. Their task was to find the faults in those writings and correct it themselves. They were pretty good in finding faults and started to correct it. They used books as a source for correction but the book was not enough to correct all. Therefore, some of them were bit confused. One of the learners asked permission to go to the library and

bring dictionary and another learner did same. They ran towards the library and brought dictionary. But the number of dictionary was less; as a result some of them brought newspapers and some reference books. This effort was also another step towards the change.

Spelling Learning Strategies

During interview only six learners explained about their spelling learning strategies. Therefore, I headed towards the mass and went to ask their learning strategies (model questions in Appendix 2). Their answers seemed quite similar to the interviewees. Their teachers were still using same old strategy where the words were underlined by teachers and learners memorize it at home and the next day, they were given spelling test. They found it difficult in memorizing long words and confusing words. Here, I saw the effect of 'ghost teacher' to teach in that school. They were following the same strategies which I had learned in my school days.

Act on Evidence

After collecting the information from collected data and review of current literature, design, a plan of action was made to make a change and to study that change. While the new technique was being implemented, I continued to document and collect data on performance. During the collection of evidence of the learners, they wrote short stories which were being analyzed by themselves and their classmates. The enough evidence was collected and it was the time to act on those evidences. Here, in this part, I introduced different types of strategies and games related to English spellings.

Strategies

According to Oxford Advance Learning Dictionary (2005) strategy means a plan that is intended to achieve a particular purpose. The plans were set in the beginning and implemented according to the action research purpose. The first strategy that I began

with was to let the learner recognize syllables and broke words and long words into elements. Allen (2002) says, "One of the problems with long words is that it is difficult to think of the whole word at once….It's rather like trying to remember a long telephone number" (p. 34). I simply broke long words into syllable on the whiteboard by pronouncing them for drill practice. Some of the examples that I used are Dan-ger, re-mem-ber, cir-cum-stances, gar-den, Pea-nut, bi-cy-cle. The learners already had knowledge about the syllables but they did not have idea where to use it. Then, they started to practice orally at first and they did it quiet good with word breaking system. If they got stuck in any word, they immediately asked my help.

The second strategy was numbering and breaking words. The examples that I used in the research are 1. Re-mem-ber 2. Gar-den 3 Pea-nut. Numbering the words is like giving name to the person. When we wanted to remember anyone, we obviously asked name so that we could recognize that person later on. After giving number to each word, the learners easily recalled the word. To test this strategy, I took a spelling test. I gave them 10 words by giving number to each words and breaking long words on the board and took test by erasing the words but left the initial words on the board. They looked at the initial words and wrote the whole sentences and I did not need to shout out the words. After the test, they checked spelling mistakes themselves and to re-check they swapped their exercise copies with their classmates which were another strategy to concentrate on mistakes of oneself and others. Most of the learners scored 10 out 10, even the poor learners scored 8 or 9 marks which were good result. The sample is given below:

Figure 3. Learners' Written Samples

A learner's comment on the above strategy is given below:

Figure 4. Comment by the Learner

During my teaching career I checked lots of exercise books of the learners. Their writings sometimes disappointed me. While writing words, most of the learners miss out letters in their writing and among those miss out double letters came in the first place. The learners only picked one letter and omitted another one. Therefore, for this I introduced another strategy to the students and that is underlining double letters like; Ve<u>ss</u>el, fr<u>ee</u>zer, m<u>oo</u>n. This was introduced so that they would be careful about double letters and concentrate on it. While underlining I introduced another strategy that is underlining silent letters; <u>K</u>night, <u>k</u>now, boa<u>r</u>d. This helped them to recognize silent words which is not pronounced while we speak but written in our writing pieces. After introducing this, they were given some words to underline double and silent words and their performances were good than I expected.

Then, the next strategy that I used was Mnemonics. Allen (2002) says, "A mnemonic is a rhyme or other set of words that helps you remember how to do something, in this case how to spell a word" (p. 18). This strategy was counted as creative work by the learners. They were in a peer so I gave them this task according to their seating arrangement. Firstly, I explained it by giving examples like; Because = *Big Elephants Can Always Understand Small Elephants*, they looked puzzled in the beginning but when I displayed some more samples (appendix 4) they got how to do it. Then, I gave them some words and let them find out the mnemonics of it. They started their task and found it enjoyable while doing it. But some learners found it hard because they could not think suitable words for it. They looked sad, thus, I facilitated them by giving lots of hints and words.

> *I was little disappointed when one of the learner said ma'am its too hard.*

Arty spelling was another creative strategy that I used in my research. It is related to art. Therefore, it is called arty spelling. In this strategy the learners were given magazines, newspaper, scissors and glue. They were given the task that they had to cut the letters of the newspaper or magazines and paste it in a paper to make words. In the beginning, they cut small alphabets which were not appropriate for task. Hence, I again instructed them to cut only big letters which would be easy to paste. They pasted letters and made words. Some learner's samples are given in appendix 5. This strategy helped them to look and concentrate each letter of the words.

Another strategy that I presented in my research was compound words. The learners were already aware of this strategy and I did not have to waste my time explaining in brief. I simply presented the examples of compound words and they started doing it quickly. The examples are pea+nut=peanut, butter+fly=butterfly. They took this strategy as an addiction sum in mathematical subject. They were doing addiction and taking out the answer which was a nice mathematical experience for me as well. Sample writing of the learners are given below.

Figure 5. Compound Words

Land + lord = Land lord
For + give = for give
Sky + blue = Sky blue
News + paper = Newspaper
water + melon = water melon
Old + lady = old lady
Honey + bee = honey bee
Land + lady = land lady
ten old + lady = old lady
watch + man = watch man
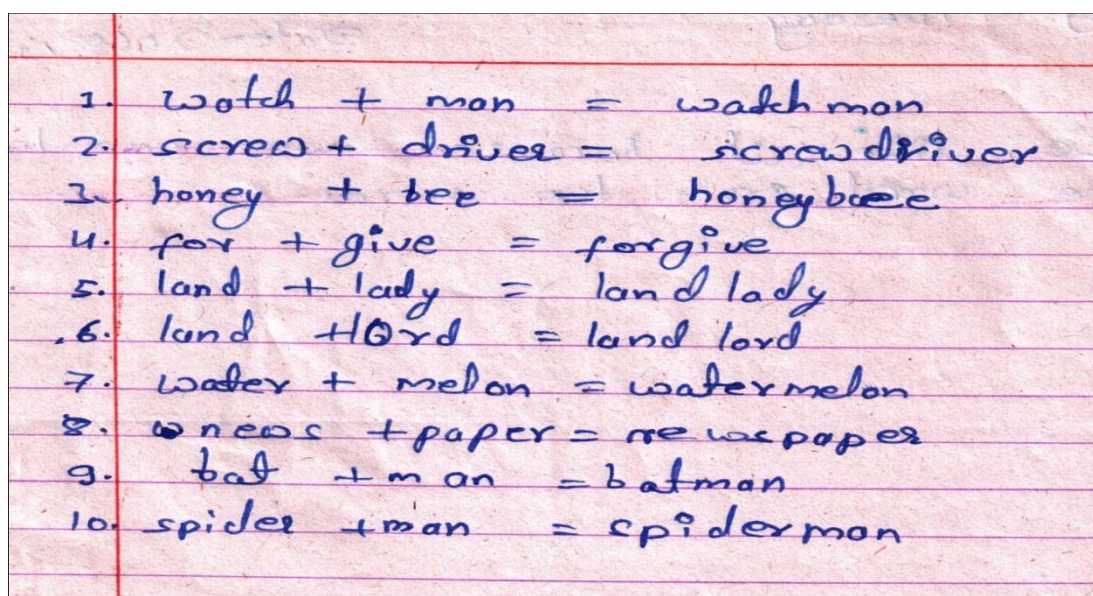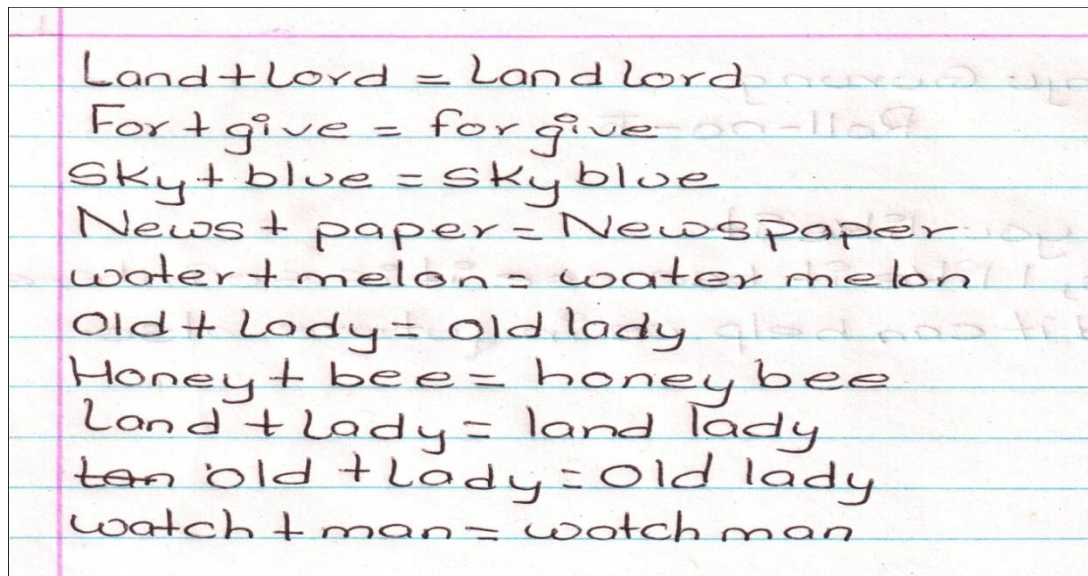
Source: My Data

Another strategy was not in my plan but it was added later on when I was going through one concrete poem written by Ludwig Wittgenstein which gave me an idea to use that technique in my spelling strategy as well. Therefore, I gave it a name sketching image as a spelling strategy. In this strategy, the learners sketched image with the help of the words not lines. To give perfect shape to image I told them to draw a blunt line image on it so that it would be easy to write those words in it. I found the learners very creative in sketching an image. Their creative work is given in Appendix 6(a) and (b)

I was overwhelmed after seeing their beautiful creations and the learners were happy to be appreciated.

Word scramble is another strategy which most of English books use as the exercise part. The teachers also do not bother to use as a strategy section. This is useful strategy which helped the learners arrange the letters in correct way in short the unscrambled words. Theme is necessary part to unscramble the words otherwise the

learners could not complete their task in time. The sample with its answer is given in Appendix 7

Picturing words is the strategy related to breaking words and adding suffixes and prefixes. In those two strategies, only alphabets were used but in this strategy pictures were used to spell correct spelling. With the help of the picture, the learners found the words and completed the task. This became one of the ways to visualize the word whenever they found the word difficult or long. One of the samples of picturing words is given in Appendix 8.

Word puzzle is another strategy that helped the learners concentrates on spelling. This strategy was taken as a game by the learners because they enjoyed while finding words in the puzzles. They mentioned that they had done this type of task in exercise part but not as spelling learning strategy. This strategy became the strategy for the teacher where teacher could give them word puzzle instead of giving memorization task. After completing their task, they asked for some more crossword puzzles that showed their interest towards the words and its spelling. They found out correct words in those puzzle. But theme is necessary in this strategy as well (Appendix 9(a) and (b)).

Another strategy that I used with the learners was adding prefixes and suffixes. The learners were of fifth graders. Therefore according to their level, I used common prefixes and suffixes that are needed in their daily work. Some examples are, Cloud=cloudy, Magic=magical, happy=unhappy, care=careless. I prepared and presented on chart on Allen's list of suffixes and prefixes with their meaning. The chart given in chapter two became a useful material that I used in my research. This strategy took a bit longer time because it has lots of suffixes and prefixes. The

learners were aware of those suffixes and prefixes which helped them to be conscious in spelling of any words.

While writing a word, we have to follow some basic rules. Thus, my next strategy that I taught was basic spelling rules. Without knowing a rule the writing of correct spelling seems somehow difficult. Hence, I presented some rules for the learners according to my time limit. Some of rules were related to adding suffixes and prefixes. Therefore, I taught this strategy immediately after those strategies (Appendix 10(a) and (b)).

The learners make spelling mistake when they do not understand the meaning of it. Thus, meaning of a word plays vital role in spelling. Using dictionary is another strategy that I used to empower the learners. Allen (2002) says, "The dictionary is your most useful support in checking and improving your spelling" (p. 11) .Since the learners were of fifth grade they had less ideas about using dictionary in daily work. They had a habit of asking meanings of the words to the teachers instead of using dictionary. Firstly, I presented them how to look the words in alphabetical order and told them to point out its parts of speech and then its meaning and sentences. After this strategy, their habits seemed changed. They started to consult dictionary rather than asking spelling or meaning to the teacher. They started to carry pocket dictionary in the school along with their books.

After giving knowledge of using dictionary, they somehow became familiar with meaning, but still they seemed confused while asking about words and spelling. Therefore, in this case, antonyms and synonyms became helpful strategy which gave them idea about a word without going through dictionary. They provided the exact knowledge of words in direct way. Synonyms refer to similar words like tiny = small, where as antonyms refer to opposite word like happy = sad. Sometimes, the learners

did not get the meaning of the words from the dictionary. Hence, I had to explain those words using synonyms and antonyms.

Look-spell-cover-write-check method is the strategy that I taught the learners to practice while they were busy in memorizing spelling. They were just pointing the words and reading again and again but still they could not remember. I told them to look at the word properly then spell it and cover the word and write it and then check it. This was the systematic way of learning any new or difficult words and they were also recalling the words easily after teaching this strategy. This method was based on the book name "Spelling" by Allen. With the help of his chart, I made the chart for the learners so that they would be benefitted after the completion of this research study. I distributed the prepared chart in print out form which is given in appendix 11.

Games

Kids are fond of games; even elders like to play game in leisure time. Games are of two types, indoor games and outdoor games. In my research, I involved the learners in indoor games which were related to fun as well as learning. Ur (2002) says, "Games help and encourage many learners to sustain their interest and work" (p. 1). As mentioned before my aim was to empower the learners to improve their spelling which is done in strategy part so here in games part I tested those strategies. After 3 or 4 strategies, I used to involve them in game to break their monotony and to motivate and activate their learning interest. While playing the games the learners were divided into groups or peers according to game rule.

The first game was searching words initiated with the alphabets from a to z. The whole class was divided into peers and each peers got 3 letters. The time was limited for 25 minutes and they searched the words using their English book along

with other subject to increase their number of words. The peer with the largest number of words was rewarded in that game.

The next game was little tougher than previous one because this time they had to search words ending with the alphabets from a to z. Therefore, I divided the class in a group but still they had hard time to find the words. I increased the time limit and made it 30 minutes. They were doing the task hurriedly but also their word lists were less than previous game. Finding words ending with alphabet c, i, x, z became tough for them so I omitted those words for the fair game. Here also the winning group was rewarded. I took some snaps while they were engage in their work are presented as below:

Figure 6. Ongoing Language game

Source: My Data

The previous game was to familiarize them with the words and spelling from textbook where as next game was based on newspapers. In this game, they searched the words in newspaper according to theme. The class was divided into groups with five members. Each group got different theme to search the words in the newspaper like; plant, insect, machines, politics, food and festival. They listed words without any

spelling mistake and presented in the class. The aim of this game was to introduce some new words as well as familiarize them with spelling of those words. In this game, they came out from the textbook words and got a chance to have a look on words that are used in real context.

Another game was matching words with meaning. Actually the idea of this game was used by one of my colleagues when we were in fourth semester in the classroom. During the mock session of internship my colleagues involved us in playing this game which was a part of fun as well as learning vocabulary. Groups were divided in this game and strips were given to them. In each stripes the meaning of the words were written and the words of those meaning were with me. I said the word loudly and they had shouted 'hurray!' whoever found its meaning at first. The learners were too much excited while playing this game that made me feel difficult to handle the learners. But anyways, their involvement and excitement showed their good performance.

Hangman game is one of the popular paper pencil game among kids and myself as well. I used to play this game during my school days; therefore, I included it into my research study as well. It is one of the games which can be taken as strategy as well. This game is much fun while playing in peers so I divided the class in peers. To give them knowledge about the game I firstly played it with them using a blackboard. The detail explanation of the game is given in the Appendix 12(a) and (b). Then, the game began and whoever hanged less was known as the winner.

Another game is Mime game which I found in English text book. This game reminded me of my childhood where I used to play this game as a favorite game. I used to play it with my friends. I included this game as well. Again the group was divided and one member from each group had to come to perform the word. One

person had to choose one card and according to the word, he/she performed in front of their group. They were not allowed to speak so they were using their hands and gesture to give hints. A snap is presented while a member was standing in front to perform as;

Figure 7. Mime Game

Numbering alphabets is the next game which can be taken as code letters or code speaking. In my childhood I used to speak with my friends in code language which was not understood by the outsiders. The same game or strategy I included as an activity to help the learners in spelling. In this game, the English alphabets were given numbers like; a=1, b=2, c=3, d=4, after that I gave them words and they used to tell me its number. For example, water= 23,1,20,5,18. They were quiet happy to know code language but the game was played individually. To win it, a person must have a

good memory power to memorize all the numbers. Thus, a person with good memory could be the winner of this game. A snap taken during playing this game is given below.

Figure 8. Numbering Alphabets

Source: My Data

The pictures which are given at the end of this paragraph, were taken during running dictation time. This game was suggested by one of my colleagues when I was in the search of games. The learners liked and enjoyed it more than I thought. They were asking to play it again and again but due to time limit I did it only once. As seen in the photos, firstly the whole class was divided into groups and the leader was selected in each group. Some paragraphs were pasted in papers with group number outside and inside classroom, the leader was instructed to play the game. The game began and each member's leader went out to read their paragraph. Then, they came inside and told the lines to their group members. The members attentively listened to

the leader and wrote in a paper accordingly. The leader again went out and memorized another words, lines and again came inside to tell the members because they were not allowed to take that paper inside. The game continued until they finished the whole paragraph which must be copied without any mistakes. The group which completed the paragraph first, won the game.

Figure 9. Running Dictation Game

Source: My Data

The next game that I used in my research was Bingo which became one of the favorite games of the learners and they demanded to play it time and again. I had played this game once during my college study. I used two types of bingo game. They are worksheet bingo and blackboard bingo. The instruction to play those two bingo game is given in Appendix 13(a) (b) and (c).

Another is a parcel game which was noise making game. The learners became too much excited that made the situation difficult to handle class. First of all, I let the learners manage the desk and benches so that they could stand in big circle shape. Then, I chose one learner to stand in the middle of the circle with mouth organ. Any musical instrument is needed to play this game. Therefore, I used mouth organ. To pass the parcel, a small box was used and inside the box pieces of paper was kept with some words written on it. Then, the game started with the music of mouth organ and the learners passed the box to the next learner. When the music stopped and whoever had that box in his/her hand, picked one paper. I unfold that piece of paper and told him/her to spell it and if he spelt correct he/she stayed and if not went out of the circle. This game was interesting but took longer time than other games.

Evaluate Result

While taking action in the class, evaluation of the effects of the intervention was taking place side by side for better result. Improvement of the learners was being evaluated as well as their reflective journals and their writing samples. The writing sample of before and after my research (Appendix 3(a), (b) and (c) were evaluated which showed drastic improvement in their spelling. They found the strategies innovative as well as exciting to make them aware of the English spelling. Among all the learners some found the strategies like mnemonics as a very difficult one where as some found it as easy. Here, I found that if you think out of box nothing is impossible.

The situation was same with the learners, the learners who were brilliant in memorizing books found mnemonics difficult strategy where as creative learners found it easy. One of the learners' written reflective journal is presented here as:

Daily maam was teaching us new technic and today also she taught us one of the technic. At first she tell us to spell the spelling of Because and then she worte on the board. Then she made a sentence of that word Big Elephant Can always Understand small Elephant. I thought it is easy when maam was writin in the board. She gave other words and said that its our turn to do it. I felt very hard because I can't think what sentence to make. My so many friends finished it quickly but I was still doing No. 1.

Next Steps

My research on English spelling was completed but still some more questions were being raised while doing research and it encouraged me to take my next step. After the result of this study, I am inspired to do action research on grammatical mistakes in their writing.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed my action research in detail with the help of the spiral steps of Ferrance (2000). The strategies that I taught and the games were discussed with the instruction. Some snaps that I took during the learners' involvement in activities are presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER V

OUTCOME AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter makes an attempt to show the outcomes of my research with the interpretation of the journals of the learners and outcomes based on my journals.

Analyzing the Fact

Writing is the part of our daily life. It is taken as a part of language, means we express ourselves in written language, the way of communication. Writing has different parts and among those spelling does matter. Allen (2002) claims, "Spelling has not always mattered as much as it does today" (p. 8). Good and bad impression towards the writing is left by spelling nowadays. Again he states that bad spelling can distract the reader from the main purpose of what you have written, which is to get a message across. A meaning of simple message can be spoiled by bad spelling. In formal writing, like applying for job or writing business letter and so on emphasize on correct spelling. Same like in school context, spelling does matter in the learner's homework, class work, unit test and terminal test.

But the irony in our country is that English is given high priority but spelling is given least priority by the teachers in the classroom. The teacher is taken as a huge source of knowledge and the students have to depend upon the teacher for the knowledge. Spelling is taken as a vocabulary part which is being neglected during teaching. But while checking the exercise book, the teacher usually focuses on spelling and gives red marks in it. The teacher feels burden when he/she has to correct spelling mistakes. Spelling plays important role in writing but also teachers still teach

in traditional way by neglecting spellings. He/she simply underlines the words and tells them to read at home and next day spelling test is taken where the students get marks for their performance. The students also take it as a memorization section, thus, most of the students take it as a headache or burden. They even try to be absent in the spelling test day.

Nowadays teaching learning style is being changed. James and Garretteer (1991 as cited by Karki, 2007) say, "Teacher-centered lecturing and structural syllabus instruction are giving way to more student-centered, hands on, practical and flexible approaches" (p. 39). The traditional concept of learning through memorization is changed into practical way of learning where the students themselves bring knowledge in their head with the help of the teachers and other sources of knowledge. The same changed concept was in my mind while I was doing my research. The strategies were the tools to bring change in the learners learning style. Their total dependence on the teacher or elders was good for their future because they have to survive alone in the near future. Their habit of asking and taking help in minor things showed their incapability and lack of confidence. They were eligible to point out their mistakes themselves and correct it but they were not empowered by it. As a researcher, I worked as a facilitator or guide teacher to teach the strategies which empowered them to handle their spelling as well as their writing in the classroom. The responsibility of their writing works was taken by themselves.

Progress of the Learners

The success or failure of any research is measured by the progress of the learners. Therefore, the progress of the learners plays vital role in my action research because my research was purely based on the learners. For the sake of my research I analyzed their work in the beginning of my research where I found lots mistakes. They seemed

confused in the basic rule of the spelling like ie or ei. Even a simple word like, friend is written as *frend, fiend*. They wrote how they pronounced the words like *stomack, tecnick hankercheif, becoz*. Missing out the letters was another big problem in their writing, for instance, *splling, boad, granmoth, danc*. The long words were another problem for them which were presented in disaster way like, *resturant, compition, remember*. Those mistakes seemed common in all learners because all are using memorizing strategy.

After knowing their mistakes I implemented the strategies that I discussed in chapter four. Therefore, those strategies proved to be helpful for the learners to improve their spelling. I observed their progress during the research and after completion of the research and it showed the positive result. One of the learners said, "*I am happy that you taught us those strategies because that helped me a lot to improve my spelling*." Their progress was expressed by the learners and even their works showed the same story. The learners who used to get 3 or 4 marks in the spelling test started to get 8 or 9 marks out of 10.

Their confusion towards the spelling was reduced by the strategy like using dictionary. The learners started to use some strategies to improve their spelling in the school as well as at their home. They used recognizing syllables and breaking words strategy to remember long words which used be the big problem for memorizing. Numbering words is to give a kind of name to words which helped them to visualize the words' spelling. They used compound words strategy as addition and started to use it memorizing long words. They used sketching image strategy to improve difficult words through their creative art. Hangman game was being used in leisure time to check each others spelling. The strategies that helped the learners to overcome of their spelling mistakes are basic spelling rules which helped them to solve their

confusion and to give good base to their spelling. Similarly, using dictionary strategy helped them to verify their spelling with meaning. Spelling games as alternatives to spelling test motivated them towards their spelling improvement. Creative strategies like mnemonics, arty spelling brought awareness towards their mistakes and helped them to improve themselves in creative way.

Their written works improved day by day. Their confusion in spelling was still there because of irregularity in English spelling. But also they improved in their work that helped them to get good marks in spelling test and examination. Missing out letter was being lessened and long words were being taken as easily. The mistakes that were seen in the beginning of the research were decreased. They wrote *friend, grandmother, handkerchief, spelling, dance, stomach, restaurant, competition* in correct form which showed their progress due to the strategies. Though, their progress was little but also it was a good achievement by the learners towards their mistakes.

Interpretation of the Journals

As I have mentioned earlier that journals were one of the tools for my data collection. Accordingly, I asked the learners to write their journals daily in class. The summary and success or failure of the strategies was clearly seen in the journals of the learners and according to that I did necessary changes. I even got chance to know their likes and dislikes and their growth in writing skills with their personal feeling towards me and my research study. They mentioned to have similar classes in upcoming days as well. They were thankful to me for teaching those strategies which were a kind of remedy for their spelling mistakes. Therefore, according to the data given by the learners, I have tried to thematize the key points below:

Learners' Comment on the Strategies

All the learners mentioned that they were enchanted by the strategies that I used to improve their spelling. L1 said, "*I liked the strategies. It helped me to improve my spelling.*" They said they enjoyed and had fun while learning and doing strategies. Even the games were taken as a learning way by them which helped them to test themselves in different ways. L2 said, "*playing game was so much fun and it helped me test my spelling.*" Their monotonous experience of learning spelling through memorization was taken an exciting and simulative experience. They even said that the strategies were the big help for their study in school as well as at home. Most of them mentioned that their favorite strategy was breaking words and image sketch. The learners took running dictation and bingo as a favorite game. L3 said, "*Bingo game is my favorite game and I wish I can play that game again.*"

Learners' Comment on their Improvement in English Spelling

All the learners mentioned in their journal that their English spelling had improved a lot than the previous writing. They were surprised to see the results themselves. During the final interview, one learner mentioned that her spelling mistakes were decreased, therefore, she is getting better in writing than before. L4 said, "*My marks in exam are increased because I can check my spelling mistakes myself.*" Even poor learner said that his spelling mistakes were reduced because he is getting 8 or 7 marks out of 10 which used to be 3 or 4 marks earlier. L5 said, "*I am so happy that today I got 8 marks in spelling test.*" He has become more careful of his spellings than the previous days which were said by the rest of the learners as well. They said that their red cross marks or circle mark is being less in their writing by the teachers. L6 said, "*Ma'am used to give me lots of red marks in my exercise book but now it became less than before.*"

Learners' Comment on their Change in Attitude

Due to the strategies, their way of learning spelling is being changed. L7 said, "*I can easily remember long words by breaking words strategy which used to be a problem for them*." L8 said, "*I do not need to be totally dependent upon the teacher or elders for words because the dictionary has been my partner for meaning of the words*.' They even started to go through the newspaper to find new words and its spelling which became interesting experience for them. They even said that going through the letters of a word is exciting part to learn spelling which is like seeing the parts of our body. Their seriousness towards the spelling helped them to improve their writing and get good marks. Therefore, they were motivated by the strategies that did a great contribution to empower them.

Learners' Comment on the Overall Research

They were impressed by the way I taught the strategies and took the test through different games. L9 said, "*I like to have test through games so that they would not have to worry about it*." Their anxiety towards spelling is being reduced and made them more conscious in their writing. Another said he would not have headache any more when teacher asked the spelling. All the learners had wished to learn some more strategies which made them feel so excited as well as fun towards the learning.

Outcomes Based on My Journals and Classroom Observation

In the beginning phase, most of the learners had a negative attitude towards spelling. Therefore, I had tough time to bring them into track to improve their spelling. Firstly, I motivated and encouraged them by telling its importance in their writing. I started with their own writing analyzing part which helped to grab their attention towards their mistakes. Gradually, their interest increased to improve their spelling which they took take as headache and try to avoid it as possible. The learners were fully

cooperative during the strategies and games. Even when someone used to go out of track, the learners used to bring him/her back into the line that was their full support for me. Due to their positive attitude, they turned my research into a successful research. During the games, the class became little noisy but some decent learners used to help me to take control over them.

During the class, the time limitation was there but I was also able to complete my research in my time except in some strategies and games where 40 minutes time was not enough. Therefore, I had to hurriedly wrap up everything sometimes. Except that I did not face any major problem to complete my research. Sometimes, I wished to have partner to have control over them who would suggest me for my further steps. One of the English teachers in that school who is also my friend in 10+2 became a helping hand for me.

I really had hectic time during my research because preparing for class and going through journal everyday was not easy job. I even had to write my own journal of a day which irritated me. The time limitation by the school created tension in my mind to complete my research. In spite of all these hurdles, I enjoyed carrying out my research with the young learners who were very cooperative, joyful and did not let me feel down.

The Outcomes of My Research in General

English is an international language which is widely used in all over the world. In Nepal also, people are very much enchanted by this language, thus, they are ready to spend large amount in English language. The private schools, colleges and universities are some examples where people blindly spend their money to learn accurate English. I worked as a teacher in private school and a student in private college. Hence, I also realized the importance of English language. Sometimes, I get

amazed by the perception of the parents for demanding the English language. The children who were in fifth grade want to talk freely in Nepali but the rules of school and the rules of home bound them to speak in English.

After knowing the importance of English especially in schools, I decided to choose English subject for my action research. The learners were of fifth grade in class, thus, I got lots of problem in their writing. When I analyzed their exercise book, I found the common problem of Nepali writers that is the spelling mistakes. My journey to action research to solve it started from that day. I collected the samples of the learners' work, their view as reflection, and my reflection.

The learners were very hyper active to take control over. Therefore, I divided the groups to utilize their activeness in different activities. At first, I implemented the strategies to involve them in the classroom and gradually, they started to concentrate on learning because I was teaching something new to them. They slowly started to behave well in the classroom. After implementing the strategies, I tested them through the games. They slowly took interest in every bit of work that I gave them. I usually had my class in last period, thus, they started to ask the questions like, *how many minutes are there to be the last period?* I was totally surprised to see their excitement and good behavior than before.

They started to take interest in spelling of new words in the textbook and other sources. They became careful about their spelling mistakes, not only during research but also in their works of other subjects. They were fully motivated by the activities during the English period. They started to point and correct the mistakes themselves as well as their classmates and started re-checking their works before submitting to me. They started to play spelling games rather than disturbing others in leisure time like hangman. They became attentive towards the pronunciation of the words. Their

performance in examination was improved due to less spelling mistakes (HajAli, 2008). They were very much happy to play game and learn new strategies and recalled some of the strategies that were already taught by their teachers related to English spelling.

I was also happy to see the change in them but that did not happen in a day. I took 14 weeks to complete my research which was the tough job for me. They were young learners, therefore, I had faced many problems. Sometimes, I had to take control over them when they made noise and disturbed other classes. Sometimes, the numbers of the learners were large as a result the activities turned into disaster.

I am satisfied with my research but not fully. Because of the time limitation of the school, sometimes the activities used to be incomplete. From my inner feeling, I want to say that the action research is the very important and fruitful process to solve problem in the classroom but the huge number of students and limited time sometimes turned as obstacles in this process.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the major outcomes which were based on the journal of the learners and my own journals. Through it I clearly proved that my action research is a successful one.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES, CONCLUSION AND CLASSROOM

IMPLICATIONS

In this concluding chapter, I have mentioned the gist of outcomes to prove the success of my action research**.** I have mentioned the lesson that I learnt during my research and after completion of my research. Lastly, I have concluded the chapter with some classroom implications and with a conclusion.

Summary of Outcomes

The 14 weeks long action research turned into the successful project. I really got a chance to enhance my teaching style and strategies that became big help for me as well. The learners' interest and their perceptions towards the research became the good way to satisfy myself in the completion of my research. Though the limitation of time was there but also the change and improvement took place in systematic way. The improvement or changes that happened on the basis of my subsidiary questions are given below;

a)   The learners used to have problems in long words and they used to make spelling mistakes like *hankerchif, resturant*. Similarly, they used to be confused in letters like *ie* or *ei* in words like *piece, conceive, chief* and they used to write how they speak like *stomack*, *once open time*, *becoze, tecknik, bycycle* and missed out letters like *vesel, boad, granmother* etc (Groff 1996). Therefore, my research solved out their problems and their spelling improved and came into correct form.

b) The learners started to use some strategies to improve their spelling in the school as well as at their home (Meriem 2009). They used recognizing syllables and breaking words strategy to remember long words whereas numbering words to give a kind of name to words which helped them to visualize the words' spelling. They used compound words strategy as addition and started to use it memorizing long words. They used sketching image strategy to improve difficult words through their creative art effect. Hangman game was being used in leisure time to check each others spelling.

c) The strategies that helped the learners to overcome of their spelling mistakes are basic spelling rules which helped them solve their confusion and to give good base to their spelling. Similarly, using dictionary strategy helped them to verify their spelling with meaning. Spelling games as alternative to spelling test motivated them towards their spelling improvement. Creative strategies like mnemonics, arty spelling brought awareness towards their mistakes and helped them to improve themselves in creative way.

Some more outcomes were discovered during my research which was necessary for the learners and teachers. Those are given below:

d) The learners changed their perceptions towards English spelling. They developed positive attitude and realized that learning spelling is not a burden (HajAli 2008). They found that learning spelling could be fun.

e) They learnt spelling plays vital role in their writing. Therefore, they became more conscious of their spelling mistakes. Some strategies worked as a remedy for their mistakes. One of the learners said that she does not need to bother of learning long words anymore because breaking words strategy gave

her an idea for it. Another learner said that he could see some mistakes in his writing and correct it himself.

f) The creative way of learning spelling motivated the learners to learn spelling that provided them different perspectives towards spelling. They learnt that their creative works could be displayed in language class as well and they do not need to limit their creative work only in art and craft class.

g) They used to play games as a time pass but after my research; they came to know that games could be alternative ways for spelling test. Through the language games they had fun, knowledge and tested their work themselves. They realized the importance of leisure time and thus, utilized it by playing spelling games.

h) Their self dependence was bloomed by those strategies. One of the learners said that he could get meaning of words or spelling by using dictionary. Therefore, he does not need to be worried when his elders or teachers are not there to help him in his spelling. Their self dependence showed that they gained enough confidence to handle their mistakes themselves.

i) They learnt to work collaboratively by exchanging their views, ideas and creativity. One of the learners said that he worked alone but after working in group and peer, he gained more ideas and learnt the way of doing work faster than before.

Conclusion

I am glad of what the loath class accomplished in these 14 weeks and the amount of improvement they have shown in their writing assignments. I just hope that the students will be able to maintain the same enthusiasm in the days to come. The learners enjoyed and carried on with the same zeal and passion for their writing

assignments and take care of their carelessness. I am very happy with the result of my students. I do believe that I achieved the set objectives of my action research.

Has the research really ended? It was the question that knocked my head when I sat down to write the review of the last week. Yes, with lots of ups and downs and struggling to cope up with the strategies that I developed and fully implemented them as per the norms was not an easy task. I had to really guide the students and made them complete their works on time.

However, the strategies are up to their level but they sometimes faced difficulty in applying it. There are many benefits in teaching strategies if it is taught in correct way with the interest of the learners. Even the perfect strategy can fail if it is not used or taught properly. Allen (2002) states, "English spelling is full of inconsistencies" (p. 9). Hence, it is not possible to teach each and every spelling of the words. The learners usually feel uncomfortable when their mistakes are being pointed out. The strategies in spelling are worthwhile to help the learners to   learn spelling and improve their spelling mistakes. The mistakes due to unawareness and lack of good base somehow became less after the implementation of the strategies. For example, recognizing syllable and breaking words became one of the popular strategies to learn spelling. Nowadays new revolution has arrived in teaching; therefore, strategies and activities are widely being used. Thus, teaching spelling can also take part on it. It can also teach other parts of language and give equal importance to lessen mistakes in the learners' writing rather counting their mistakes and scolding in their spelling mistakes. If the teacher takes action then surely there would be change. The change of mistakes into improvement is seen when the learners and teacher both recognize the mistakes and implement strategies to overcome.

To sum up the key factors for using spelling strategies are theme wise selection of words, games as alternative of spelling test, learning spelling in creative and interesting way to motivate the learners to improve their spelling. Spelling is important in writing so as the learners and teachers both must emphasize in its teaching and learning for their better piece of writing. Hence, through my action research I have come to know that in English Language Teaching classroom, focus has to be in each and every parts of writing such as spelling which plays important role in writing and convey message to the readers.

Lesson Learnt

By end of this dissertation, I came to realize that doing action research with young learners is a challenging task. Action research sounded pretty difficult in the beginning for me but when the research slowly took its speed, I enjoyed it with the learners. My perception towards the action research also changed after it.

This action research has taught me that any student is capable to correct their mistakes, some of them quickly and some of them slowly, some of them do it by their own and some of them with the assistance of the teachers. The only thing is teachers have to be careful and follow up constantly. Students can do mistakes and deviate from the main stream of academics but the teachers cannot. It has also encouraged me to venture into other action research in the days to come to bring the significant improvements in the students various sphere of academics.

Similarly, it changed my views towards teaching and learning. I myself used to take classroom activities as a burden where I had to prepare lots of material and prepare myself for class. But after this research, I came to know that teacher's role is not just preacher or lecturer but facilitator or guide who helped the learners to guide in

correct path. Therefore, 5 or 10 minutes explanation for the chapter or activities is enough. The learners are capable to do their work independently.

My research made me think that creativity and humor is also important in any class. When the learners and teachers built a friendly and humorous relation, the hesitation, fear and anxiety disappears and they can work cooperatively. Their creativity does not need to be limited only within extra activity classes. They can easily display their creativity in daily classes which makes the teaching learning as an interesting than boring.

Teaching strategies are far better than explaining each and every word. Spelling strategies are just an example through my research such strategies can actually be applied in other parts of study as well like in grammar, creative writing and many more. Teacher works as a guide in the class, therefore, he/she is responsible to show the learners the right or wrong way.

This research taught me to set my goal before doing any work. While doing some strategy I was clear about the goal. Thus, I easily handled the class. If I had not set the goal or randomly took the class then my research would have been a mess. Therefore, it is important that a teacher must set a goal before guiding the young learners.

Classroom Implications

a. Day by day English Spelling is being changed to cope with the generation but some rules and exceptions remain same in spelling. Thus, rules must be kept in mind. The teacher and students both must be aware of spelling because simple mistakes can lead to greater problem. Hence, it is better to improve the spelling mistakes in primary level for their good writing in upper level.

b. Strategies are good keys to open the door of mind of the learners because once the strategies are taught, they could utilize in their lifetime. They will walk on the path themselves after the teacher showed the correct path. The teacher does not need to repeat the same thing time and again. Spelling strategies like numbering words and breaking words are helpful for their future studies as well.

c. The strategies and games could be used as ice breaker or warmer exercise like running dictation, arty spelling and sketching image which break the monotony of the learners and simulate them towards their work or the lesson.

d. Motivation plays vital role in the learners' performance. Therefore, before and after learning, the motivation is important. Even a poor performer will perform better when he/she is motivated towards his/her work. Displaying their work in class or on notice board, giving reward after their brilliant performance and giving smiley in their written work are the good ways to motivate them.

e. While selecting the words from the text book or any other resources, the theme is important factor. If the words are selected according to theme then it is easy to relate the letters with word and they imagine the spelling of word. Random selection of words can puzzle them and make no sense for them.

f. Different teachers have their own teaching style, thus, it's not necessary to follow strictly one way of teaching because it can demotivate the students. The teacher must be updated with latest style, strategies and teaching methodology which make their class meaningful to the learners.

My Concluding Note

Regarding the role of writing, it has been taken as way to get marks in examination. Till now people think that writing especially English is fear factor. If they write well

in exams then it will be valued. Otherwise they take it as a way to avoid teacher by completing the work only. Creativity in writing seemed lost and their interest to make their writing good piece is dropping down. They are not concerned about even simple spelling mistakes because they know that the teacher will write correct word so they do not bother to go through it. In exams also they quickly finish their paper and do not bother to check their mistakes. They would not also take a glance in their spelling mistakes. Therefore, the teacher must play the role of facilitator to make them aware of their mistakes.

Spelling till now is not given much emphasis while teaching and strategies for it is far place. Therefore, to boost up the spirit of the learners towards the spelling, new strategies must be followed than just sticking in traditional activities. The learners' writing will be better when they are given good strategies for their improvement. Improvement and change is not possible until the learners give importance towards their study. A teacher alone cannot change the entire teaching and learning system without the support of the learners.

My research was based on empowering the learning where they can improve themselves and be independent. Thus, my specific objective was to improve their spelling mistakes with different strategies but games also played good role to warm up them. I used limited strategies but there are lot more strategies for teaching and learning. Therefore, I would further enhance those strategies and use them in my own classroom where the learners will be benefitted. This is not the end of the journey but the beginning of new journey which is on the way towards me.

Chapter Summary

This is concluding chapter that discussed the gist of outcomes, the lesson that I learnt as a researcher and finally some classroom implications and a conclusion.

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=mantle_skin;content

Appendix 1(a)

DAYS OF THE ACTION

GANTT CHART ACTIVITIES

Activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
Introduce my project & myself and tell them the significance of my project.	▓	▓																																	
Inform students about spelling and its significance.		▓	▓																																
Interview individuals to know their interest.			▓	▓																															
Make the students to write a short story. (Collect their writing samples).				▓	▓																														
Let them analyze on their work					▓	▓																													

Appendix 1(b)

DAYS OF THE ACTION

GANTT CHART ACTIVITIES

Activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
Discussing about their learning strategies					X	X																													
Teaching some strategies of spelling and evaluating with the help of games. (breaking, numbering underlining words) (hang man bingo game)							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X																					
Involve participants in different creative strategies like arty spelling, sketch image, mnemonics and crossword puzzle. Collect samples.															X	X	X	X																	
Provide feedback for their performance and collect feedback from them.																			X																
Introduce them about adding prefixes and suffixes																				X	X	X													

Appendix 1(c)

DAYS OF THE ACTION

GANTT CHART ACTIVITIES

Activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
Introduce basic spelling rules																							■	■											
Introduce some more strategies and evaluate them with the help of games																									■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Ask participants to write a short story to evaluate final progress.																																		■	
Interview individual participants, evaluate and provide feedback.																																			■

Appendix 2

Model of the Interview Questions

At the beginning of the action research

1. Do you like English subject?

2. Do you feel any difficulty in learning English? Which part is difficult for you?

3. Do you have any problems regarding English spellings?

4. What type of problems are you facing?

5. Do you use any strategies to learn English spellings?

6. What are those strategies?

7. How do you use them?

8. Do you correct your spelling mistakes yourself in your writing?

9. Who and how have you been helped in your mistakes in your school and home?

10. Do you need any innovative strategies to improve your spelling in English class?

At the end of action research

1. Do you like the strategies or not?

2. What do you feel about the strategies?

3. What knowledge did you get from all these works in class?

4. Do you feel any difference after learning all those strategies?

5. What changes or improvement do you see in yourself?

6. Among all the strategies, which one do you like most and why?

7. Will you participate in the activities that your teacher will provide in future?

Appendix 3(a)

Sample Writing before Action Research

once opne a time there was king of
Jungle. that time noone like the king.
King was so hungry. And there was neat
It near the Jungle there was Village
Small. vally. I that vally tin lion tell
Iam so hungry so I need every day
one one child. and one man said of
ok. tham vally discuss. To morrow
who will go. one child said I will go
tomorrow. and her Parents said no no.
don't go. but child was not obvay.
and child is going. and Child is going
too late and when child going with
lion. king said why you xare comming
late. Child Said whe I am comming
that time like you one king is Comming
telling lion said where is that King.

once up a time there was two o girls
one name is Malisha. and Akulya.
They are wearing new dress. There mother
are also wearing new dress. They are
have to go in the churce.
They are playing in tle pool.
There clothes are dirty. and there mother
are comming. and there mother are sch
scold them... They they there mother
are a scold them.
They mother sclod them but
again they ra Akulya and Malisha
going # in the pool. There was a
chirmastday. There Malisha and Akulya
going in the churce. and they are
They are a eating cakes, drink etc.
they are giving to Malisha, Akulay.
gift. Malisha got te the cycile and
Akulay got the Table tenice.

Shiro and The Gold

Long ago in Japan, there lived an old couple who had a dog called Shiro. The old man and woman were poor and they lived a simple life. All they wanted was enough money to buy rice for themselves and Shiro. But year by year their savings grew smaller. They worried that soon there would be no money for rice. One day the old man and woman were working hard in their garden. Shiro ran here and there, sniffing the ground. Suddenly he started digging a hole and barking. "Be quiet Shiro," said the old woman. But Shiro kept barking and digging, so the old man went to see what the dog had found. He poked a stick into the hole and felt it strike something hard. He dug a little further and uncovered a small box. When the old man opened the box he was amazed to see it was full of gold coins - enough to buy rice for the rest of the year. But their greedy neighbour heard of this gold fortune and he was jealous. He followed Shiro digging holes wherever the dog sniffed, but he found nothing. Finally the neighbour flew into a rage and killed poor Shiro. The old couple cried when they learned that Shiro was dead, for they loved the old dog dearly. Then one night the ghost of Shiro appeared to them. "You loved and cared for me," said Shiro's ghost, "and I will care for you. Tomorrow cut down the pine tree in the garden. Mix some splinters from the tree into a pot of rice." Then he vanished. The next day old man chopped down the pine tree and he cooked a pot of rice. She stirred in the splinters and peered into the pot. "Look," she cried, her eyes filled with wonder. "Each grain is turning into a gold coin. We shall have money for our lives." The old couple smiled sadly as they thought of Shiro; though he had died the faithful old dog had not forgotten them.

Appendix 3(c)

Long ago, in Japan, there lived an old couple who had a dog called Shiro. The old man and woman were poor and they lived a simple life. All they wanted was enough money to buy rice for themselves and Shiro. But year by year their savings grew smaller. They worried that soon there would be no money for rice.

One day the old man and woman were working hard in their garden. Shiro san here started digging a hole and barking loudly.

"Be quiet, Shiro," said the old man woman. But Shiro kept barking and digging, so the old man went to see what the dog had found. He poked a stick into the hole and felt it strike something hard. He dug a little further and uncovered a small box. When the old man open that box there was full of golden coins- enough to buy rice for the rest of the year.

But their neighbour heard of this dog. They were jealous. He followed the Shiro digging holes wherever the dog sniffed, but he found nothing. Finally the neighbour flew into a rage and killed poor Shiro.

The old couple cried when they learned that Shiro was dead, for they loved the old dog dearly. Then one night the ghost of Shiro appeared to them.

"You loved and cared for me," said Shiro's ghost, "and cared for you. Tomorrow cut down the pine tree in the garden. Mix some splinters from the tree into a pot of rice."

Then he vanished.

The next day the old man chopped down the pine tree and the old woman cooked a pot of rice she stirred and splinters and peered into the pot.

"Look," she cried, her eyes filled with wonder. Each grain is turning into a golden coin! We shall have money for our lives."

The old couple smiled sadly as they thought of Shiro, though he had the faithful old dog had not forgotten them.

The End

Appendix 4

Mnemonics

soldier

Soldiers
sometimes
die

in battle

because
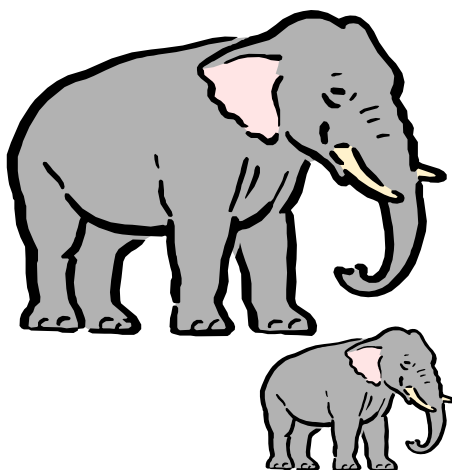
- Big
- Elephants
- Can
- Always
- Understand
- Small
- Elephants

Appendix 5

Arty Spelling

Ten Arty Spellings

Nepal Council First Minister Action Function Report Baran Legal Call

ARTY SPELLING

Meeting Action Prime Minister Nepal State First Function Main Organs

Appendix 6(a)

Sketching Image

Appendix 6(b)

Appendix 7

Scramble Words

Sea Animals

Unscramble the words and write them in the blanks.

1. ESAHRESO   s e a h o r s e

2. ETOSLBR   l o b s t e r

3. HSFTSAIR   s t a r f i s h

4. SRTYOE   o y s t e r

5. HSKRA   s h a r k

6. MCLA   c l a m

7. HPLIDON   d o l p h i n

8. IUDSQ   s q u i d

9. RCAB   c r a b

10. HAWLE   w h a l e

Appendix 8

Picturing Words

Cab

e

_ _ _ _ _ _
_

ager

_ _ _ _ _ _ _

tery

_ _ _ _ _ _ _

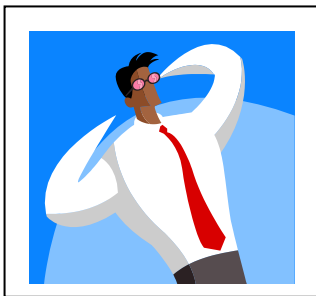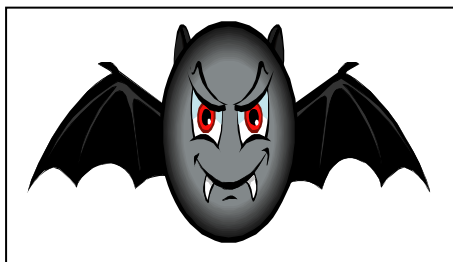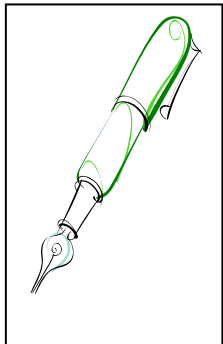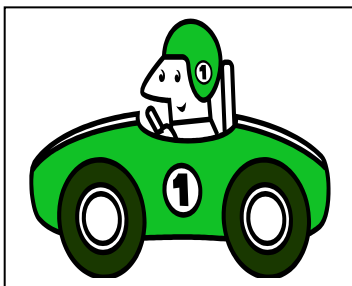

ter

_ _ _ _ _ _ _

Appendix 9(a)

Word Puzzle

Family

			F						
		A	R	I					
		M	C	E	C	R			
	I	T	L	H	B	E	H		
	L	C	Q	P	T	Q	H	N	Z
	Y	M	N	U	A	O	N	T	M	V	X
Z	G	J	J	F	Z	M	L	O	H	C	F	Z
E	R	S	N	Z	G	D	N	M	H	S	R	M
L	A			U	N	I				E	V
C	N			X	A	S				H	R
N	D			P	R	U				T	E
U	P	R	N	B	P	G	O	S	G	A	A	V
I	A	E	F	R	R	B	C	I	T	M	F	I
G	R	H	W	O			S	K	B	D	T
Y	E	T	V	T			T	Y	B	N	A
Y	N	A	Z	H			E	P	N	A	L
Q	T	F	P	E			R	Y	A	R	E
Z	N	I	W	R	Z	L	A	U	N	T	G	R
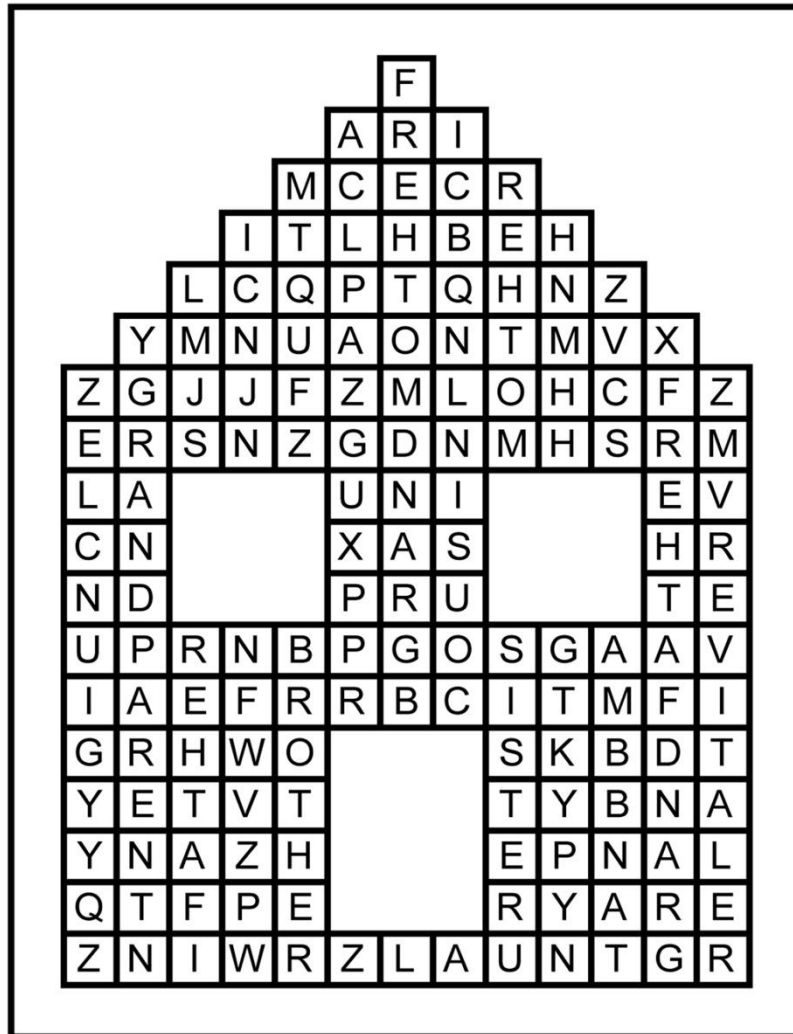
AUNT	BROTHER	COUSIN	FAMILY
FATHER	GRANDPARENT	GRANDFATHER	GRANDMOTHER
MOTHER	RELATIVE	SISTER	UNCLE

Appendix 9(b)

Word Search: Solar System

```
      M J C G
  Y L C V O R W
  O X B B Y R K F
  Q A Q M T L B V V
  C T K E   G D J C
    R A R     Q D C     Z Q M J
    I B C       D S U N S P O T S
      V U X       E R D Q Y O K R X K L
      W R Z       D H B M F L P G O E D X Y
        Y A X   R J U P I T E R L G P L U T O
          P S O L A R S Y S T E M G D H C I I J
          M K C L D F C J Y Q E Y Y M W V B K
          Z M D V S U N P Q L T L G K A Y E O
          A A T L D S E C N E N I M O R P B B
          P E A R T H T J B D A Z O R G Q J W
          S U N E V V L U R A N U S M A V C I
          W R C J I F G R J L B O X E K Q E Y
          J Q X O W P V E N U T P E N J T S A
          S O L A R F L A R E S R X E R L I L
          P G Y V Y P P F B A Q T A A K   T Y
          P G R Z P K G B I V L M K     Y F
          E Q X B D P W Q X Y E       J N M
          I D Z Y B G A V           R A M
            V P I H             U N D
            R K G L           T O P
          W G I X L L A R V
          Z C E K S O B
          R I K X C
```

EARTH   SUNSPOTS   SOLAR SYSTEM   GRAVITY   PROMINENCES
SOLAR FLARES   CORONA   SUN   MERCURY   VENUS
MARS   JUPITER   SATURN   URANUS   NEPTUNE
PLUTO

Appendix 10(a)

I before e except after c

One of the first English spelling rules that were learnt in most schools is "I before e except after c". This only works when the pronunciation of the word is like a long ee as in shield.

For example:-

piece, relief, niece, priest, thief

but after c

conceive, conceit, receive, receipt

when A or I is the sound

it's the other way round

with an 'a' sound – deign, eight, neighbor, feign, reign, vein, weight

with an 'I' sound either, feisty, height, neither, sleight

Exceptions (sorry):

seize, weird, conscientious, conscience, efficient . . .

Appendix 10(b)

| **Words ending in a consonant** |
| When the suffix begins with a consonant, just add the ending without any changes. |
| **For example:-** |
| treat + ment   treatment |

| **Doubling the consonant** |
| For most words with a short vowel sound, ending with a single consonant, double the consonant when adding a suffix that starts with a vowel, such as er, ed or ing. |
| **For example:-** |
| mop + ing   mopping
      big + est   biggest
      hot + er   hotter |
| For words endling in l after a vowel, double the l before adding er, ed or ing. |
| **For example:-** |
| carol + ing   carolling
      travel + er   travelling |
| **Exceptions:**
Some words ending in r, x, w or y are exceptions to the doubling rule

      tear + ing   tearing
      blow + ing   blowing
      box + er   boxer
      know + ing   knowing

And if your main word has two consonants at the end, or more than one vowel, don't double the consonant. |

rain + ing (two vowels a + i)	raining
keep + er (two vowels e + e)	keeper
break + ing (two vowels e + a)	breaking
hang + er (two consonants n + g)	hanger

Words ending in ce and ge

When you want to add a suffix starting with a or o leave the e in.

For example:-

manage + able	manageable
notice + able	noticeable
courage + ous	courageous

Exceptions:

prestige + ous	prestigious

Words ending in ie

When you want to add **ing** to verbs ending in ie, drop the e and change the i to a y.

For example:-

die - dying
lie - lying
tie - tying

Words ending in y after a consonant

When you want to add suffixes such -as, -ed, -es, -er, -eth, -ly, -ness, -ful and -ous to a word ending in y after a consonant, change the y to an i before adding the suffix.

For example:-

eighty + eth	eightieth
duty + es	duties
lazy + ness	laziness
mystery +ous	mysterious
beauty + ful	beautiful
multiply + ed	multiplied
busy + ly	busily

Words ending in y after a vowel
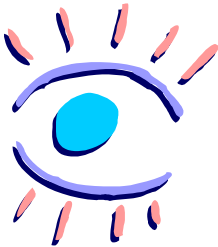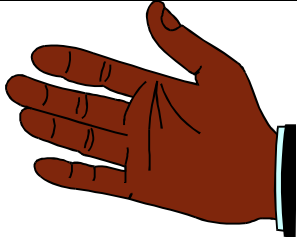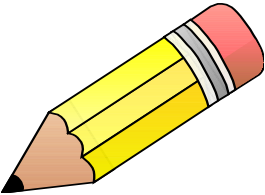
Keep the y when adding suffixes such as er, ing or ed.

For example:-

destroy	destroying	destroyed
pry	prying	pried
buy	buying	buyer
play	playing	player

Appendix 11

Look-Spell-Cover-Write-Check Method

Look		Look at the word carefully. Look at each letter of the word. Trace over the word with your finger as you read it.
spell		Spell the word slowly. Listen to each sound in the word. Trace over the word with your finger as you say it. Say each letter of the word.
Cover		Cover the word. Try to see the word in your head.
Write		Now write the word down.
Check		Check to see if you were right. If you did not get it right, TRY AGAIN!

Appendix 12(a)

Rules for Hangman Word Game

Hangman is a classic paper and pencil game. The idea of the gallows may be a little morbid, but it also adds to the excitement of the game, especially for boys. Everyone wants to save the poor person from a grim fate!

Number of players: 2 (or more). 1 must be the executioner, and 1 or more letter guessers.

What's needed to play: A pencil and some paper are needed to play the game. A clipboard is also a handy hard surface to play on.

Setup: Either prints out some pre-prepared hangman pages or draw a simple gallows and write out the alphabet above or below the gallows. To save time you can print out one of these hangman pages:

How to play: Choose one person to be the executioner. That person will think of a word or short phrase an mark out blanks (short lines) for each letter of each word. Separate words with either a slash, a fairly wide gap, or place words on separate lines. Then another player will guess a letter. If that letter is in the word(s) then write the letter in everywhere it would appear, an cross out that letter in the alphabet. If the letter isn't in the word then add a body part to the gallows (head, body, left arm, right arm, left leg, right leg). The player will continue guessing letters until they can either solve the word (or phrase) or all six body parts are on the gallows.

To win: The executioner wins if the full body is hanging from the gallows. The guesser(s) wins if they guess the word before the person is hung.

Appendix 12(b)

Hangman example:

Here is an example of a hangman game in progress. The phrase is Happy Birthday, so

5 blank spaces were marked out for Happy, and below that 8 blank space were

marked out for birthday. Three correct guesses were made: A, R and T. Three

incorrect guesses were made: S, E, and M. Three body parts were added for the 3

incorrect guesses.
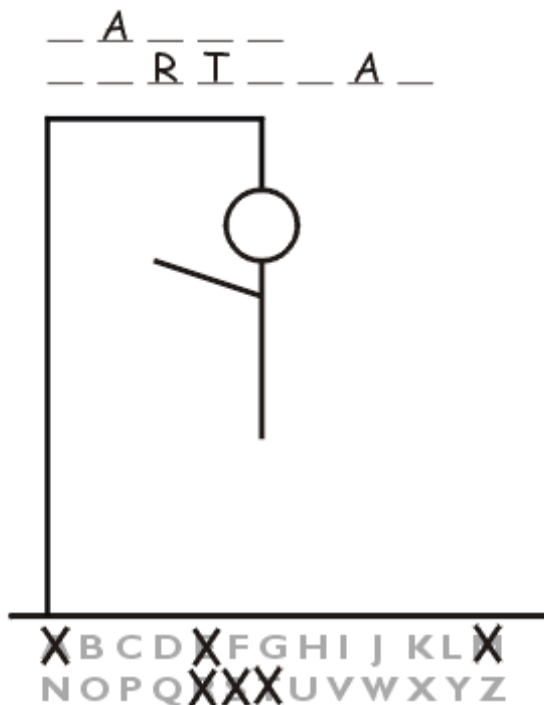
Appendix 13(a)

Worksheet bingo

Student 1		
1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9
10	11	12
13	14	15

Student 2		
1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9
10	11	12
13	14	15

Appendix 13(b)

Notes:

1. Give to each student two grids – one for his / her own words and one for the words of his / her partner.

2. Dictate 10 words. The learners write the words in squares of their choice. They should not let the other students see which squares they are filling in.

3. Put the children into pairs. One child in each pair calls out a number between 1-15. If the other learner has a word in this square, he/she says the word. The first learner then writes the word in his / her bottom grid and calls out another number. If the child has no word in the square, he / she says "No!" and it is then his / her turn to call out numbers.

4. The winner of the game is the first learner who finds the location of the other learner's 10 words.

Appendix 13(c)

Blackboard bingo

During the game I listed out the words on the blackboard (more than 25). The learners were instructed to make the boxes of 4 rows and 4 columns. I let them choose 16 words from the board and write in the boxes that they have drawn.

Marker			

Then I read out the words one by one randomly from board and if they hear the word, they circled or cut the word.

~~Marker~~			

They shouted "Bingo" whenever their four words were cut out in a way like this.

~~Board~~			
~~Marker~~			
~~Chair~~			
~~Fan~~			

At last the winner was one who had the full house.