



The Correct Application of Spelling in the Significant Learning of Upper Basic Students



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Abstract

Spelling plays an essential role in ensuring the understanding of written texts, therefore, guaranteeing meaningful learning. The objective of the study is to analyze the correct application of Spelling in the meaningful Learning of Higher Basic students, the research is aimed at identifying the strategies used by the teacher to strengthen spelling, evaluate the students' spelling skills, and determine the benefits of this, in meaningful learning. The methodology presents a mixed, exploratory, and descriptive approach, inductive, analytical, and synthetic methods, survey technique, interview, and observation were used. The results show that teachers incorporate methodologies in their classes to strengthen their spelling. It is concluded that a small group of students has adequate spelling ability, the majority is in the process of achieving it, while a significant group of students present difficulties, finding greater limitations in the application of rules and use of punctuation marks, use of capital letters. and clarity in the expression of ideas and meaningful learning is related to spelling because adequate writing of texts allows the student to better assimilate the contents.

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1 Introduction

Spelling allows or facilitates certain rules to be able to write correctly. At a global level, educational systems recognize that the main problem with writing is the inadequate use of spelling rules; teachers use strategies, materials, and tools to make up for these deficiencies (Castro et al., 2022).

In Ecuador, the Ministry of Education, from the curriculum in the area of Language and Literature, points out that the development of writing requires the work of skills and knowledge before the production of texts. In this sense, it is up to the teacher to remember that the emphasis is not on the decontextualized knowledge of grammar, but on the use of the language in various communication situations, so it is suggested to adequately mediate the contextualized learning of punctuation rules through reflection on the appropriate use of grammatical rules (Ana et al., 2024).

The national report on writing results ERCE - Ecuador carried out by INEVAL (2019), analyzed the domain of readability conventions, which includes all those of written communication that account for the domain of the written code and in which aspects such as the spelling and punctuation marks. It points out that in primary education these are just being learned and that they are progressively consolidated, therefore, through their evaluation, indicators of development and knowledge of spelling rules are analyzed, finding that the majority of students who are years above the fourth year basic they need to reinforce their spelling (Marslen-Wilson & Tyler, 1980).

At the Dr. Gonzalo Abad Grijalva Educational Unit of the Chone Canton, teachers show interest in strengthening spelling skills, applying methodologies with which they seek to help students understand and apply spelling rules with greater precision in their writing, encouraging confidence in their writing skills, improve motivation and attitude towards the area of Language and Literature and promote meaningful learning.

The study variables are the application of spelling and meaningful learning. Various studies have exposed the importance of the correct application of spelling, Trigo et al. (2020), associated the correct application of spelling rules with the influence of social factors, Jiménez & Cartuche (2023), explained the usefulness of methodological strategies to strengthen spelling, Albarracín et al. (2020), proposes the need for students to be actively involved in orthographic learning, based on its relevance as a component of written language.

The problem focuses on the poor application of spelling among parallel eighth-year A and B students of Higher Basic General Education (EGBS) of the Dr. Gonzalo Abad Grijalva Educational Unit of the Chone Canton, a situation that affects meaningful learning. Writing with spelling errors hinders students' ability to communicate effectively, which affects their academic performance in various areas and the process of acquiring writing and written communication skills (Gao et al., 2012; Eyrich et al., 2008).

The objective of the study is to analyze the application of spelling among parallel eighth-year students A and B of Higher General Basic Education (EGBS) of the Dr. Gonzalo Abad Grijalva Educational Unit of the Chone Canton, the specific objectives are aimed at identifying the strategies used by the teacher to strengthen spelling, evaluate students' spelling skills and determine the benefits of spelling in meaningful learning.

Throughout the research, we seek to answer the question: How does the lack of spelling skills affect the significant learning of the eighth-year EGBS students of the Dr. Gonzalo Abad Grijalva Educational Unit of the Chone canton?

2 Materials and Methods

The methodology is based on a mixed approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to obtain a comprehensive vision of understanding the phenomenon. It is an exploratory and descriptive study through which the complexity of students' spelling learning was addressed. Inductive, analytical, and synthetic methods were used to evaluate the correct application of spelling in the meaningful learning of Upper Basic students.

The population includes all the individuals that are considered in a research (Condori, 2020), as a population, 57 people are selected, corresponding to 49 eighth-year Basic students, 5 teachers from the area of Language and Literature and 3 authorities from the Unit. Educational Dr. Gonzalo Abad Grijalva. No sample was selected, we worked with the entire population. The techniques used were the survey, interview and observation. The survey was applied to teachers, as an instrument a structured questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data on the specific characteristics of spelling practice and its relationship with meaningful learning. The interview was applied to the authorities to obtain qualitative information, using the interview guide as an instrument. Finally, observation was applied to the students, the observation guide was used as an instrument, the data was recorded through the development of a class in the area of Language and Literature.

3 Results and Discussions

Spelling is the set of norms and rules that regulate correct writing, establishing guidelines for accentuation, use of letters, and punctuation, among other aspects (Cabanillas, 2021). They include standards and rules that govern the correct spelling of a language. Rules that include, but are not limited to, emphasis, capitalization, punctuation, and other conventions that facilitate understanding and consistency of language (Dich & Cohn, 2013; Morin et al., 2018).

The descriptive approach to spelling highlights that the rules must reflect the reality of linguistic use and evolve with the language, considering regional and contextual variations (Custodio & Rodríguez, 2021). This linguistic science is responsible for establishing conventions and guidelines for the correct graphic presentation of words in a given language (Zúñiga et al., 2020).

The treatment of spelling promotes the establishment of interdisciplinary relationships in all subjects of the curriculum (Rodríguez et al., 2021). It is an important tool in written communication and ensures that ideas are communicated effectively following clear rules that avoid ambiguities and misunderstandings. It guarantees the coherence of written expression that facilitates understanding between senders and receivers. From a didactic perspective, it is important to teach spelling comprehensively, incorporating it in the context of written communication and focusing on the understanding and application of spelling rules (Devonshire et al., 2013; Caravolas et al., 2001).

Spelling from a modern approach proposes rules that adapt to the phonetics and structure of the Spanish language, seeking to simplify and make the writing system more coherent (Espinosa, 2021). This includes graphic conventions that govern how words are written and presented in the text. These agreements developed by normative institutions promote uniformity and correct use of the written language.

Developing spelling skills is a challenge for teachers, who are responsible for guiding the learning process and promoting activities that stimulate the assimilation of new words, which is why it is important to point out the errors commonly made when writing a word so that it can be corrected and replaced with another. Ensuring that the student has good spelling requires teacher knowledge about the basic vocabulary used when writing and the words where errors are frequently made (Llopis & Puig, 2020). In this way, the teacher can design and implement strategies focused on obtaining positive results in spelling (Ávila et al., 2021).

Learning behaviors are learned through the association of stimuli and responses, and positive or negative reinforcements influence the repetition or suppression of said behaviors (Baque & Portilla, 2021). Learning refers to the process by which people acquire new knowledge, skills, attitudes or abilities, whether through experience, formal instruction or interaction with the environment.

Learning, focused on the development of mental structures and the way in which individuals construct their knowledge. It points out the stages of cognitive development, from assimilation to accommodation, and highlights the importance of balance in the individual's adaptation to the learning environment (Armas, 2019). Learning is understood as a relatively permanent change in human behavior resulting from the acquisition and processing of information, experiences or stimuli from the environment.

Humanistic learning theory, which emphasizes self-actualization and individual potential. It highlights the importance of an educational environment that encourages autonomy, self-assessment and self-regulation of learning, recognizing the subjectivity of the student (Quezada & Salinas, 2021). From an evolutionary perspective, learning is seen as a process of adaptation and adaptation to the environment. People develop new skills or change their behavior to meet changing challenges and demands.

Sociocultural theory highlights the influence of the social and cultural environment on learning. Emphasize the role of social interaction, the zone of proximal development and language as a fundamental tool for the construction of knowledge and cognitive development (Vargas & Cárdenas, 2019). Some theories of learning emphasize the idea that learning involves the active construction of meaning and knowledge by the student through the integration of new ideas with their previous experiences. Figure 1 shows some observations made to the students.

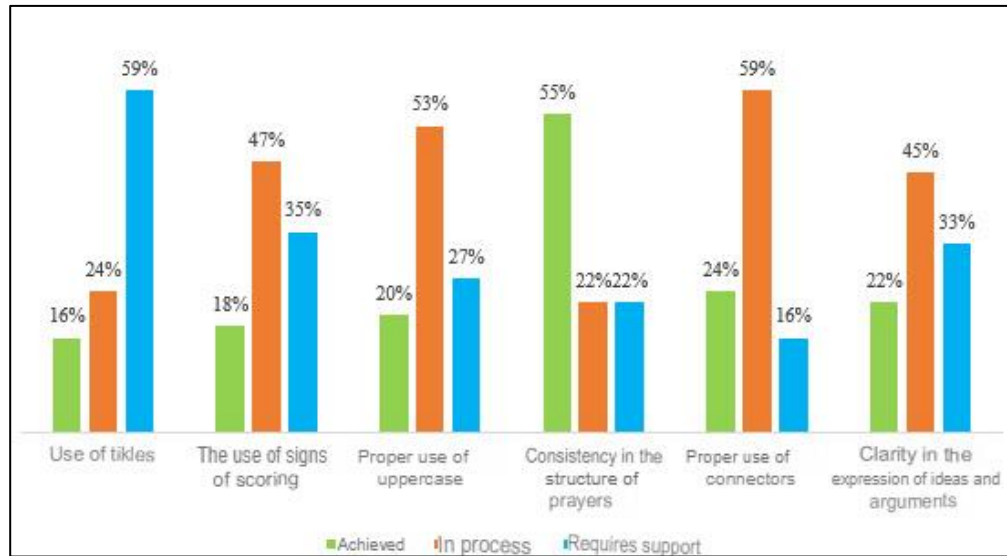


Figure 1. Observation of students

It is shown that about the aspect of using accents, 59% require support, regarding the use of punctuation marks, 35% require help with the use of capital letters, and 27% require knowledge of the coherence in the structure of sentences. 22% need to know the proper use of connectors, 16% need clarity in the expression of ideas and arguments, and 33% require help in a general sense. Figure 2 presents the results of the survey applied to teachers in the Language and Literature area of the Dr. Gonzalo Abad Grijalva Educational Unit, where they consulted about the methodologies used to strengthen the students' spelling.

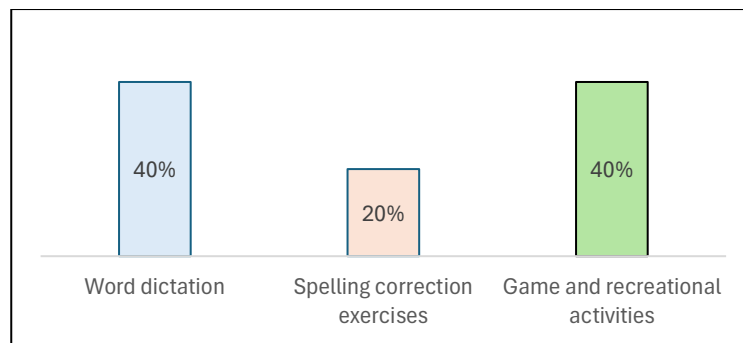


Figure 2. Methodologies used to strengthen students' spelling

As can be seen, 40% of teachers use word dictation, 20% use correction exercises, and 40% use games and recreational activities to strengthen the learning of spelling in their students. Figure 3 shows how spelling is integrated into the teaching process.

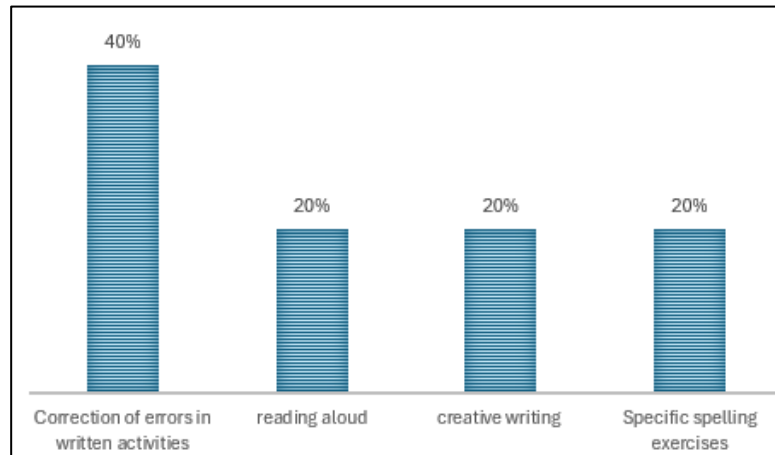


Figure 3. Integration of spelling teaching

The figure shows that 40% of respondents use error correction in written activities, 20% use reading aloud, 20% use creative writing, and 20% use spelling exercises. Figure 4 shows the teaching resources used to evaluate the teaching of spelling.

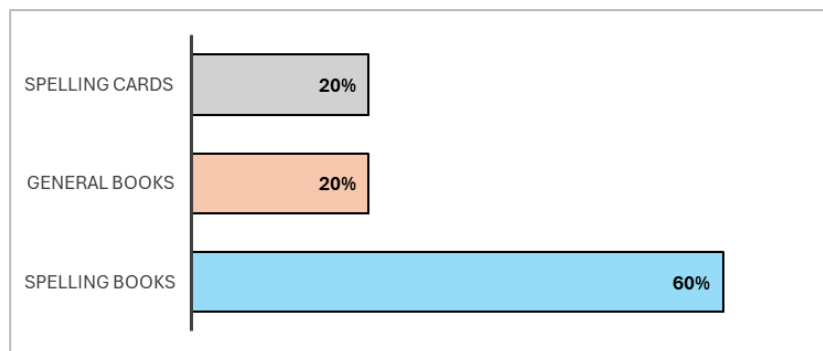


Figure 4. Teaching resources to evaluate the teaching of spelling

Figure four shows that 60% of the respondents use spelling books to evaluate spelling instruction, 20% general books, and 20% spelling cards. Table 1 shows the interview carried out with the manager.

Table 1
Interview with the manager

N°	Ask	Informant 1	Informant 2	Informant 3
1	How do you rate students' meaningful learning in the area of language and literature?	They achieve the acquired learning	They get a good learning	Students' meaningful learning in the area of language and literature is fair to good.
2	Does the educational institution aim to implement spelling teaching programs for students?	In this 2024 school year, the institution's improvement plan included the teaching program for the language area based on reading - writing.	Yes, because it is the process of carrying out a plan or strategies to teach students spelling rules.	The educational institution aims to implement a spelling teaching program for students by 2024.

3	Does the educational institution provide training to teachers around language and literature before starting the school year?	No	No	No
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Discussion

The analysis of the results of the observation applied to the students shows that most of the students are in the process of mastering the spelling skill, which represents a deficiency because they are Eighth Year Basic students who must have an adequate command of this skill. In addition, specific limitations were found for a significant group of students who require support in relation to the use of accent marks; they also present deficiencies with the use of punctuation marks, capital letters and clarity in the expression of ideas, in this sense [Ávila et al. \(2021\)](#), maintain that there are shortcomings in the teaching and learning of spelling, with the poor mastery of the spelling rules reflected by students being common, regardless of the academic level studied. Under similar conditions, [Suárez et al. \(2021\)](#), and [Trigo et al. \(2020\)](#), found that spelling difficulties that are related to the use of the accent mark are the most frequently observed.

From the survey applied to teachers, it was found that they mainly use the dictation of words, games and recreational activities to strengthen the learning of spelling in their students, that the teaching of spelling is mainly integrated by correcting errors in written activities, and Among the most used resources and materials are spelling books to evaluate your teaching. Findings that are related to [Ávila et al. \(2021\)](#), which defines active methodological strategies as novel and innovative teaching tools that are located in the constructivist pedagogical model that places the student at the center of the learning process, identify the main methodological strategies. active applied in the teaching of spelling, reading, play, spelling, dictation, mural and the orthographic story, [Jiménez & Cartuche \(2023\)](#), concluded that the teaching strategies used by teachers must be striking to awaken interest, generating active participation and cooperation in children, highlighting strategies such as puzzles, anagrams and games in general.

As far as the authorities are concerned, there is an institutional commitment to the implementation of spelling teaching programs, although there is a lack of prior training for teachers in this matter. In this regard, [Hunt et al., \(2020\)](#), point out the importance of providing teachers in training with the necessary skills so that they can incorporate them into their teaching practice and improve the spelling skills of their students. For his part, [Gaviño \(2022\)](#), recognizes the importance of the teaching role as disseminators and catalysts of academic spelling.

The main limitation was a limited institutional commitment to the implementation of specific spelling reinforcement programs that reflect a holistic vision of educational quality, and there is no solid basis to identify specific areas that need continuous growth and educational interventions more effective ([Panigrahi et al., 2018](#); [Lewalter, 2003](#)).

It is recommended to implement specific spelling reinforcement programs that reflect a holistic vision of educational quality, improve professional development through pedagogical strategies in the area of spelling, and identify specific areas that need continuous growth, creating a solid foundation to design more effective educational interventions ([Merchant et al., 2014](#)).

4 Conclusion

Only a small group of students has adequate spelling ability, the majority is in the process of achieving it, which represents a serious deficiency since at the level corresponding to the Eighth Basic Year, students must already have an adequate command of spelling. In addition, a significant group of students have difficulties in applying spelling rules and use of punctuation marks, use of capital letters, and clarity in the expression of ideas,

Students require greater intervention at the teaching and management level to strengthen their spelling skills. To make up for this deficiency, teachers strive to continuously apply strategies and methodologies, which contribute to the holistic vision of the educational quality offered in the institution. Meaningful learning is related to spelling because adequate writing of texts allows the student to better assimilate the contents.

Conflict of interest statement

The author declared that she has no competing interests.

Statement of authorship

The author has a responsibility for the conception and design of the study. The author has approved the final article.

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