



## FROM ERRORS TO EXCELLENCE: A JOURNEY OF SPELLING EMPOWERMENT THROUGH INTERACTIVE LEARNING AND ENGAGING WORKSHEETS

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### Abstract

This action research paper investigates the efficacy of integrating spelling strategies taught through interactive sessions and engaging worksheets to enhance the spelling learning of a class 7 student. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative observations and quantitative assessments to evaluate the impact of the intervention. Over a period of nearly 3 months, the student participated in interactive sessions where various spelling strategies were introduced and reinforced through hands-on activities. Additionally, a series of meticulously designed worksheets were provided to complement the learning process. The results indicate a significant improvement in the student's spelling abilities, as evidenced by pre- and post-assessment scores and qualitative feedback. The findings suggest that the synthesis of interactive sessions and worksheets not only enhances spelling proficiency but also fosters a positive attitude towards learning. Implications for educators and recommendations for further research have also been discussed.

**Keywords:** Action Research, Engaging Worksheets, Spelling Proficiency, Qualitative Observations, Quantitative Assessments

### INTRODUCTION

Spellings are the linguistic bedrock upon which communication is built, representing the meticulous arrangement of letters to convey meaning and clarity. According to Silva (2021), it is really important that children learn correct spelling practices and avoid spelling mistakes from a young age, as this will enable them to process, retain and relay information more easily. Best (2017) points out that spelling is the art of correctly assembling words from their letters. Shintani, Ellis and Suzuki (2014) believe that the main spelling errors are caused by the non-phonetic aspect of parts of the English language. Apart from the regular sounded elements, Liton (2013) argues that the foundation of spelling rules and instruction can help students learn the patterns of English language and reduce the likelihood of spelling errors. According to Kang and Han (2015) the systematic teaching of spelling should include strategies, guidance and most importantly, independent practice.

### NEED OF THE STUDY

The imperative for conducting a study on an action research program designed to enhance the spelling skills of a class 7 student through interactive learning and engaging worksheets, is paramount. In today's educational landscape, literacy proficiency is fundamental for academic success and future endeavors. This study enriches the existing literature by exploring innovative strategies tailored to individual student needs,



fostering a deeper understanding of effective pedagogical approaches. Moreover, the anticipated outcomes hold significant implications for both educators and learners. For educators, insights garnered from this research can inform instructional practices, offering practical methodologies to tailor interventions for diverse learners. For students, the potential for improved spelling skills not only enhances academic achievement but also cultivates self-efficacy and confidence in their learning journey. Thus, this study not only contributes to the existing scholarly discourse but also promises tangible benefits for the individuals involved in the action research program.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A literature review discusses published information in a particular subject area, and sometimes information in a particular subject area within a certain time period.

Mann, Bushell, and Morris (2010) found that using phonetic pronunciation with the cover-copy-compare (CCC) technique improved spelling accuracy in elementary students.

A study by Medrano, Christina, Zych, Kathleen (1998) highlight phonics instruction as key to improving children's spelling by linking sounds to letters.

Porter and C, (2003) focus on the link between vocabulary and spelling proficiency, recommending activities like reading, word games, and word roots to improve spelling.

Moats (2005), explains that spelling and reading share similar underlying knowledge, and teaching spelling can improve reading skills by reinforcing letter-sound relationships.

Berninger and Fayol (2008) suggest that spelling involves encoding letter sequences using phonological, orthographic, and morphological codes to represent words in the mental dictionary. Children integrate these codes through instruction and practice to form accurate word spellings.

Nurhayati (2006) discusses identifying and addressing spelling difficulties through assessments and tailored interventions.

Qamariah and Wahyuni (2018), posits that using spelling games in EFL lessons increased seventh-grade students' interest in learning spelling.

Sayeski, (2011), identified four key elements for effective spelling instruction for students with learning disabilities, including study strategies, feedback, practice, and rule teaching. Teachers can enhance spelling by using assessment, systematic instruction, and morpheme-based teaching.

## METHODOLOGY

Methodology is a system of methods used in a particular area of study or activity. It usually describes how the data was collected and how was it analyzed or even intervened to arrive at the desired outcome. The action research began with observation to find out the subject with spelling difficulties, interview of the teachers to cross verify the result of observation, and a detailed case study about the subject. After this a baseline study was conducted followed by ten interventions. The detailed methodology is as follows:

**OBSERVATION** - Observation is one method for collecting research data. It involves watching a participant and recording relevant behaviours for later analysis. Observation can be of different types such as : **i) Controlled observation** (usually a structured observation) are likely to be carried out in a psychology laboratory; **ii) Natural observation** (Unstructured observation) involves studying the spontaneous behaviour



of participants in natural surroundings; and **iii) Participant observation** is a variant of the natural observation but here the researcher joins in and becomes a part of the group they are studying to get a deeper insight into their lives.

Many naturalistic observation were done during the first month of internship in several occasions which are as follows:-

- 1) **Class observation** - Few classes taken by their teachers were to be observed as a part of the internship activity. During that time, sitting at the back of the classroom, a global view was possible.

**Substitutions** - Many substitutions with class 7 were given where many activities like vocabulary games, spelling Bee, word ladder, etc. were organised. At that time, a rough idea of the spelling difficulties of many students was drawn by the student-teacher.

- 2) **Classes** - This was the major chunk of time where there was an opportunity to observe them and find out the one with the most spelling deficit disorder. The student who was detected with the most spelling difficulties was often found making mistakes while writing anything that is being dictated. The same reflected in her worksheets and this problem also affected her academic performance as well.

**INTERVIEW** - The word 'interview' refers to one-on-one conversation with one person acting in the role of the interviewer and the other in the role of the interviewee. Interviews can be **structured interview** which is also known as a formal interview (like a job interview). Another type is the **unstructured interview** which are sometimes referred to as 'discovery interviews' and are more like a guided conversation than a strictly structured interview.

An unstructured interview of the class teacher of class 7 was taken who had the same opinions about the student subject having a problem regarding spellings. She is at times not even familiar with basic spellings. The class teacher had often noticed her struggling to keep up with the pace with other students while writing an answer which is being dictated to them or while giving a test, as she gets confused with several spellings when writing the answers, which affects her work.

**CASE STUDY** -Case study in psychology refers to the use of a descriptive research approach to obtain an in-depth analysis of a person, group, or phenomenon.

A detailed study about the student of class 7 affirms that, she has shown strong abilities in verbal communication and comprehension, but she consistently struggles with spelling. She frequently misspells common words and has difficulty remembering spelling rules. The student tends to rely heavily on phonetic spelling, often spelling words the way they sound. This leads to inaccuracies, especially with irregularly spelled words. She struggles to differentiate between homophones. Her written expression is limited by her spelling difficulties.

## DATA COLLECTION -

**Baseline Survey** - In psychological research, a baseline is a measurement of the variable of interest at the beginning of treatment or a study that is used to compare to later measurement in order to judge the effectiveness of the interventions or treatment.



To find out where exactly the student is in her level of deficit or to find out the intensity of her deficiency in spelling, a baseline survey or study was assessed which consisted of three kinds of tasks. Data collection for the first baseline was done by giving the student to write twenty easy spellings, twenty moderate level spellings and finally to write twenty difficult spellings. This baseline was assessed after every ten interventions.

**Interventions** – In psychology, interventions are actions performed to bring about change in people.

After having assessed the first baseline survey, ten interventions were conducted. Each intervention was an activity to increase the proficiency of the student subject in spelling and to minimize her spelling errors. Each activity was conducted on a single day within a duration of 15 minutes. Sometimes even more than one activity were also conducted on a single day, keeping intact the time duration of 15 minutes for each activity. The supervision of the subject was done during the intervention.

Ten such interventions were done after which the baseline was repeated and the results differed positively. After the second baseline survey, another ten interventions were conducted and after the third baseline survey, another ten interventions were again conducted, till the fourth and the final baseline survey was made. Each activity during the intervention period differed in its level of difficulty (easy, medium, difficult) in each phase respectively.

#### DETAILED PLAN OF ACTION / DATA COLLECTION TABLE

CLASS - 7

TIME - 14.09.2023 – 22.11.2023

DATE	LESSON	ACTIVITY DONE	WORKSHEET
14.09.2023	BASELINE 1 (A) EASY	The first set of 20 spellings is administered on the student. They comprise of relatively simple spellings such as 'mice'.  The student scored 17 out of 20 in the test.	1
14.09.2023	BASELINE 1 (B) MODERATE	The second set of 20 spellings is administered on the student. They comprise of relatively moderate spellings such as 'debt'.  The student scored 11 out of 20 in the test.	2



14.09.2023	BASELINE 1 (C) DIFFICULT	The final set of 20 spellings is administered on the student. They comprise of relatively difficult spellings such as 'haughty'. The student scored 3 out of 20 in the test.	3
19.09.2023	CVC WORDS	The worksheet requires the CVC words to be identified and coloured.	4
20.09.2023	SYLLABLES	The number of syllables in each of the words given requires to be counted.	5
20.09.2023.	ALPHABETICAL ORDER	Each of the word list is to be written in alphabetical order.	6
26.09.2023.	'oi' AND 'oy' SOUND WORDS	The task is to circle the pictures and the letters in the given words that make the 'oi'/'oy' sounds.	7
26.09.2023.	SILENT LETTERS	The silent letters in the given sentences is to be circled and words having silent letters in them have to be grouped under the correct boxes.	8



26.09.2023.	LONG 'A' SOUND WORDS	Words with long 'A' sound often have the vowel sound similar to the letter 'a' for example 'gate', 'rate'. The task is to sort and write the long 'A' words under the correct sounds given.	9
27.09.2023.	FINDING HIDDEN WORDS	The task is to find the three letter words that are hiding in each of the given words.	10
27.09.2023.	'ch' WORDS	The activity is to circle all the words beginning with 'ch' and to write them down.	11
04.10.2023.	'-tial' AND '-cial' WORD PARTS	The task is to complete each of the given word parts with '-tial' or '-cial' and write down the words.	12
04.10.2023.	CORRECTLY SPELLED WORDS	The correctly spelled word in each of the given sets is required to be coloured.	13
05.10.2023.	BASELINE 2 (A) EASY	The first set of 20 spellings is administered on the student. They comprise of relatively simple spellings such as 'rope'.	14



		The student scored 19 out of 20 in the test.	
05.10.2023.	BASELINE 2 (B) MODERATE	The second set of 20 spellings is administered on the student. They comprise relatively moderate spellings such as 'occasion'. The student scored 10 out of 20 in the test.	15
05.10.2023.	BASELINE 2 (C) DIFFICULT	The final set of 20 spellings is administered on the student. They comprise of relatively difficult spellings such as 'reprehensible'. The student scored 6 out of 20 in the test.	16
09.10.2023.	ROOT WORDS	The activity is to write down the root word or base word for each of the given words.	17
09.10.2023.	PREFIXES	The task is to add the suitable prefixes to each of the given words in order to make a new word.	18
09.10.2023.	SUFFIXES	The activity is to choose the proper words with the suffixes '-able' and '-ible' to complete each of the given sentences.	19



12.10.2023.	WORDS ENDING WITH 'ing'	The task is to add 'ing' to the given words ending with 'e'.	20
12.10.2023.	THE SUFFIX 'ed' : DOUBLE THE CONSONANT	The task is to add the suffix 'ed' to each of the given words and write down the new words in the blanks to complete the sentences.	21
12.10.2023.	SOUND WORDS	The given animal sounds need to be chosen for the suitable animals listed.	22
12.10.2023.	COMPOUND WORDS	The activity is to circle the word in each line that is not a compound word.	23
18.10.2023.	WORD PUZZLE	The activity is to search for the listed words in the puzzle and circle them out.	24
18.10.2023.	HOMOPHONES	In this worksheet, a list of sentences have been given. The student has to put the correct homophones from the clue box given.  In this worksheet, a word bank is given. A list of incomplete	25



<p>18.10.2023.</p>	<p>THE VOCABULARY BOX</p>	<p>sentences have been given and the student is required to fill in the blanks by choosing the most appropriate words from the word bank.</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>01.11.2023.</p>	<p>BASELINE 3 (A) EASY</p>	<p>The first set of 20 spellings is administered on the student. They comprise of relatively simple spellings such as 'shy'. The student scored 20 out of 20 in the test.</p> <p>The second set of 20 spellings is administered on the student. They comprise relatively moderate spellings such as 'receipt'. The student scored 13 out of 20 in the test.</p>	<p>27</p>
<p>01.11.2023.</p>	<p>BASELINE 3 (B) MODERATE</p>	<p>The final set of 20 spellings is administered on the student. They comprise of relatively difficult spellings such as 'didgeeridoo'. The student scored 10 out of 20 in the test.</p> <p>The activity is to circle words that should be capitalized and to capitalize each of the given sentences</p>	<p>28</p>



01.11.2023.	BASELINE 3 (C) DIFFICULT	correctly by rewriting them.  The task is to categorize the given set of words under the correct boxes of Person, Animal, Thing and Place.	29
02.11.2023.	CAPITALIZATION		30
02.11.2023.	CATEGORIZE WORDS		31



06.11.2023.	SPELLING WORD MAZE	In this worksheet, a spelling word maze is provided where the correctly spelt words are to be marked.	32
06.11.2023.	RHYMING WORDS	A rhyming word for each of the given words is required to be written.	33
06.11.2023.	PLURAL NOUNS	The task is to complete each of the given sentences by filling the blanks with the plural form of the words in the bracket.	34
08.11.2023.	SYNONYMS	In this worksheet, the student is required to rewrite a given paragraph by changing the underlined words to their synonyms.	35



08.11.2023.	ANTONYMS	<p>In this worksheet, the student is required to change the underlined words in the given sentences to its antonyms.</p>	36
08.11.2023.	UNSCRAMBLING JUMBLED WORDS	<p>The task is to unscramble the words by viewing a given list of compound words for help.</p>	37
21.11.2023.	WORD ASSOCIATION	<p>In this worksheet, the student is required to write two words each that comes to her mind when she hears each of the words listed.</p>	38
21.11.2023.	FRAMING SENTENCES  BASELINE 4  (A)	<p>The activity is to create sentences for each word in the word bank given.</p> <p>The first set of 20 spellings is administered on the student. They comprise of relatively simple spellings such as 'hem'. The student scored 20 out of 20 in the test.</p> <p>The second set of 20 spellings is</p>	39



22.11.2023.	EASY	administered on the student. They comprise relatively moderate spellings such as 'manipulate'. The student scored 18 out of 20 in the test.	40
22.11.2023.	BASELINE 4 (B) MODERATE	The final set of 20 spellings is administered on the student. They comprise of relatively difficult spellings such as 'Mississippi'. The student scored 18 out of 20 in the test.	41
22.11.2023.	BASELINE 4 (C) DIFFICULT		42



## DATA ANALYSIS

### Parameters Used :

Spelling accuracy and consistency are simple parameters for assessing student's spelling proficiency. Evaluating correct spelling of commonly used words and adherence to spelling rules were the straightforward parameters used to measure the spelling proficiency of the child.

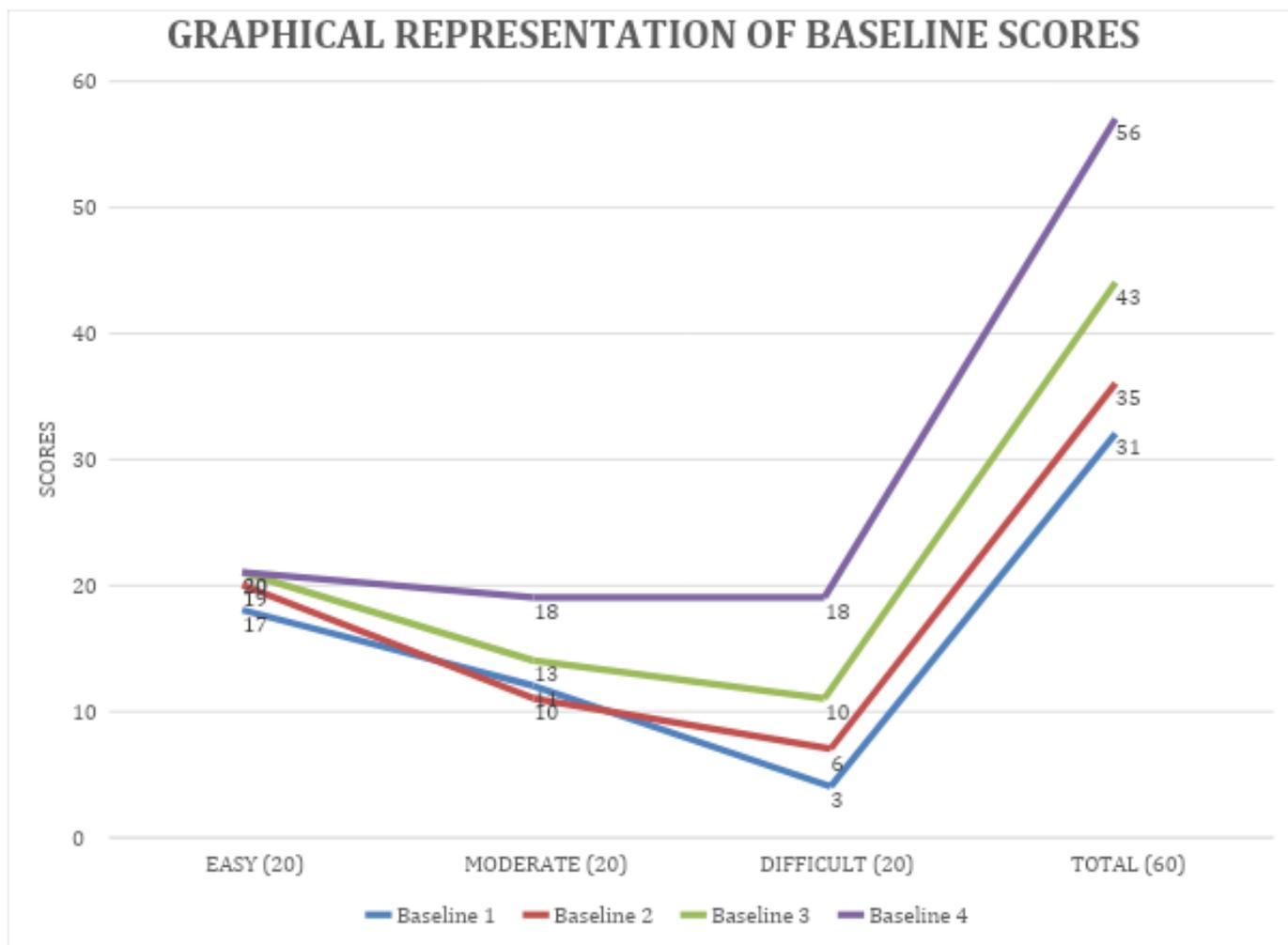
### Tabular Representation Of Scores :

The following table represents the marks scored by the student in each of the baseline tests that were assessed after every ten set of interventions. Each of the baseline tests have 3 difficulty levels – Easy, Moderate and Difficult. At each difficulty level, the student was given a set of 20 spellings, thus adding up to a total of 60 spellings for each of the four baseline tests assessed.

BASELINE TESTS	EASY (20)	MODERATE (20)	DIFFICULT (20)	TOTAL (60)
Baseline 1	17	11	3	31
Baseline 2	19	10	6	35
Baseline 3	20	13	10	43
Baseline 4	20	18	18	56

In the comparative table above, we can see that in the first baseline test, the total score of the student was 31 out of 60 but in the second baseline test there is a slight improvement in her scores. In the easy and difficult levels, she scored 19 and 6 against 17 and 3 respectively, in the first baseline. The total score of the student in the second baseline test was 35 out of 60 which shows some level of improvement especially in the easy and in the difficult level. In the third baseline, a marked improvement can be seen in her scores, especially in the greatest difficulty level, where she scored 10 against 6 in the second baseline. Her scores also show a slight improvement in the easy and moderate levels of the third baseline. Her total score in the third baseline was 43 out of 60 which can be considered as a huge improvement when compared to the grand total of 31 and 35 out of 60 in her first and second baseline tests, respectively. In the fourth and final baseline, the student has a total score of 56 out of 60 which shows a remarkable overall improvement when compared to the grand total of 31, 35 and 43 in her first, second and third baseline tests, respectively. There is a profound and commendable improvement in her moderate and difficult level scores in the fourth baseline test when compared to all the three baseline tests. This considerable difference in scores depicts that learning has taken place.

### Graphical Representation of Scores :



In the line graph shown, we can see a successful learning taking place in the student with regards to spelling over a period of nearly three months. The line graph has two axis - the X-axis represents the difficulty levels of the baseline tests which are been compared over time and the Y-axis depicts the scale which is a set of numbers that represent the data of the baseline scores organized into equal intervals.

The four different coloured lines represent the four baseline tests of the student which were assessed after the completion of 10 interventions each. The blue line shows Baseline 1 where the scores of the student are relatively low. The red line located above the blue line shows Baseline 2, where we can see that the red line is a little above the blue line at the easy and difficult level and dropping a little below the blue line at the moderate level which depicts that there has been a very slight improvement in the student's scores. The green line in the graph shows Baseline 3 which is comparatively at a higher level above the blue and the red line, depicting that there has been a huge and marked improvement in the student's scores. The purple line in the graph shows the final baseline, i. e. Baseline 4 and it is situated high above all the other lines which depicts that the overall scores of the student in the fourth baseline spelling test was remarkably higher, better and commendable than the rest of the three baseline tests.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION



After the selection of the student subject, A. W. of class 7, the action research programme began with the first baseline survey which reflected the spelling errors of the student. The first baseline test showed that the student was not attentive to the pronunciation of the words being spelled out to her before writing them down. On being asked the reason, A. W. conveyed to the student-teacher that she would get all her spellings wrong even if she writes them down by being attentive. This depicted her lack of self-confidence and her loss of interest to improve her spelling skills. A. W. faced a great difficulty in writing down the moderate and difficult level words in comparison to the easy words. A. W. made a lot of spelling errors such as misjudging the pronunciations, missing out the silent letters, missing out some core well-spelt letters, misspelling 'e' as 'i' for instance 'ditachment' in place of 'detachment', misspelling 'c' as 's' for instance 'essentric' in place of 'eccentric' and random capitalization of any word she feels. She also faced difficulty while pronouncing some of the moderate and difficult level words herself. After the first baseline test was assessed, the first 10 set of interventions were carried out to teach A. W. some of the ground rules of spelling. Over the first ten interventions, A. W. regained her lost interest and displayed an honest attempt to learn the rules of spelling and to rectify her spelling errors.

After the execution of the first 10 set of interventions, the second baseline test of A. W. was administered, which showed that she had a little less difficulty in writing down the moderate and difficult level words and consciously tried very hard to get all the spellings correct. A. W. even made an attempt on her own to loudly spell out some of the difficult words and break them into syllables in an attempt to write them down correctly. A. W. also made an attempt to carefully recognize the silent letters in the words pronounced. However, most of her spelling difficulties still persisted such as missing out core spelt letters, dropping the double letters in a word for instance 'sucess' in place of 'success', dropping the 'e' at the end of words like 'catastrophe' and misspelling 'c' as 'k' for instance 'stakato' in place of 'staccato'. After the second baseline test was assessed, the second set of 10 interventions were carried out to make A. W. familiar with some other general principles of spelling. Over the second set of ten interventions, A. W. developed a marked interest and excitement to learn the rules of spelling and solve all the spelling activities.

After the execution of the second set of 10 interventions, the third baseline test of A. W. was taken, which showed a huge improvement in her spelling skills which led her to write the easy and moderate level spellings with ease. Though A. W. still felt a little less confident to write the difficult level spellings but she took an intense effort to apply all of the spelling rules being taught to her which got her half of the spellings in the category of difficult level correct. A. W. was successful in recognizing few of the silent letters as well as the correct use of letters like 'e', 'i', 'c', 's' and 'k'. Her understanding of root words, prefixes and suffixes was also revealed during the third baseline survey. However, she continued to make some of the spelling errors such as missing out a few core spelt letters, dropping the double letters and the letter 'e' in some words, misspelling 'a' as 'u' for instance 'catustrophe' in place of 'catastrophe' and random capitalization of words. After the third baseline test was assessed, the third and the final set of 10 interventions were carried out to teach A. W. some other relevant rules of spelling. Over the final set of ten interventions, A. W. displayed a willful and enthusiastic spirit to learn the new set of spelling principles.

After the execution of the final set of ten interventions, the fourth and the final baseline test of A. W. was administered, which showed a remarkable overall improvement in her spelling proficiency which led her to minimize her spelling errors. A. W. was successful in effectively imbibing and applying the taught spelling principles and strategies while she took the fourth baseline test. A. W. felt more confident and revealed a nuanced understanding of her spelling skills, especially while she wrote all the moderate and difficult level spellings and got almost all the spellings correct in both the categories. A. W. was successful in recognizing almost all the silent letters and as well as the correct use of especially letters like 'a', 'u', 'e' and 'i'. Her tendency to miss out on core spelt letters and to drop the double letters and letters like 'e' in some of the words



minimized to a great extent. A. W. also showed her correct understanding of capitalization of words. She paid greater attention to the pronunciation of the words this time and herself pronounced most of the moderate and difficult level words correctly.

Thus, it can be confidently stated that the action research programme targeted to improve the spelling proficiency of A. W. was successful, for it brought about positive changes in her spelling proficiency both quantitatively and qualitatively. The student subject showed a commendable overall improvement in her spelling skills. Her quick adaptation to the diverse principles and strategies of spelling helped her minimize the spelling errors, which in turn had a positive impact on her level of academic performance.

## CONCLUSION

The action research programme had the intention of improving the spelling proficiency of the chosen subject. After having conducted the programme, the interventions have been able to bring about both quantitative and qualitative changes in the subject. Through the interventions carried out, A. W. was able to find her self-esteem, realize her true potential and gain immense self-confidence. This was clearly reflected in the steady improvement of scores in all the successive baseline tests that she took. Witnessing A. W. gradually learn the rules of spelling and improve her overall proficiency in spellings felt immensely rewarding to the student-teacher. It greatly encouraged and inspired the student-teacher to carry out such intervention work with students in actual need for it, in the near future.

## LIMITATIONS

During the course of the action research there were several difficulties faced. Taking out time for the interventions to be conducted during the busy school hours was the foremost problematic challenge. Demanding time from the child for extra spelling activities when she was already tied down by the pressure of academics and several co-curricular activities was also a notable challenge. Thus, keeping all the challenges and limitations in mind, it must be stated that the school authority and the student subject herself displayed tremendous cooperation, which helped the student-teacher to complete the action research programme.

## RECOMMENDATION

Spelling improvement programmes in schools play a crucial role in enhancing language skills and communication abilities among students. Future directions may involve incorporating technology, such as interactive apps, to make spelling practice more engaging and personalized. Collaboration with linguists and language experts can contribute to designing comprehensive spelling curricula that align with linguistic principles. Introducing game elements can foster a positive learning environment, encouraging students to actively participate in spelling exercises. Adaptive learning systems can tailor spelling challenges to individual student needs, addressing weaknesses and reinforcing strengths. Integrating spelling improvement within a broader context of writing skills can enhance practical application and overall language competency. Collaboration between educators and parents is essential to create a consistent approach to spelling improvement, bridging the gap between school and home learning environments. Regular assessment and feedback mechanisms are crucial to track students' progress and adjust teaching strategies accordingly. Emphasizing the real-world relevance of strong spelling skills, such as in professional communication, ensures that students recognize the practical importance of these programs in their future endeavours.



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