ERROR IDENTIFICATION AND IMPROVEMENT IN ENGLISH FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EFAL): A CASE STUDY OF GRADE 10 ESSAY WRITING.

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Abstract
This paper seeks to identify errors committed by learners in EFAL essay writing, focussing on causes behind such errors, and strategies to eliminate them as a way of improving learners' writing skills. Document review was adopted as the research method in this study. 15 Grade 10 essays from Mmapadi Secondary school were reviewed based on errors committed. The study revealed ten types of errors committed in EFAL Grade 10 essay writings. It revealed that learners' use of technological devices is one of the main sources of spelling errors. It also revealed the following as sources of spelling errors:The interference of mother – tongue and partial learning in the target language.Inability to differentiate between spoken and written language. Not proofreading and carelessness. The paper recommends that learners should be given more practice on essay writing with intensive monitoring by teachers. Learners should be encouraged not to rely on technology for spelling rather encourage practice through dictation and spelling tests. The culture of reading should be cultivated in learners for writing proficiency.This leads to a conclusion that reading and writing skills practice under the guidance of skilful and experts teachers can improve learners' writing competency.

.**Introduction/Background**
English First Additional language (EFAL) is the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) in most South African schools. Writing in EFAL is always problematic to learners whose English is not their Home language. Learners' writings are characterised by persistence errors which sometimes affect meaning. It is important that learners should learn to read and write in order to read and write for learning. This count writing among the vital aspects of learning.

The theories of writing are rooted in modality-sensitive views of second language acquisition which can also enrich second language learning. Linguistic modality entails the expression of how the world might be and should be, including expressions of necessity, permissibility and probability of any particular form and genre of writing. (Harklau, 2002) states that communicative modality includes audience in reading and writing. The Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) describes language as a tool for thought and communication; and as such, learning to use the language effectively enables learners to acquire knowledge, to express their identities and ideas, to interact with others and to manage their own world.EFAL learners use English in their academic writing and to communicate their ideas clearly.

Spelling proficiency is an important skill that could help them succeed throughout their studies. Writing is a craft which needs to be learned. (Perk, & Coyle, 2012) therefore states that teachers have to play an important role in nurturing spelling proficiency and accuracy in second language acquisition. Corder S, P stressed positive contribution to learning in his seminal paper of (1967). According to Corder learners errors indicate the process of discovering language; Corder's view on learner's errors is that there is discrepancy between "transitional competencies" of learner's target language. He further suggests that learners use intrinsic internal linguistic process to learn the language .Error Analysis is a type of linguistic analysis that focuses on the errors learners make (Abeywickrama, 2010). (Weireesh,2003) considers Error Analysis as a valuable aid in identifying and explaining difficulties faced by learners in writing.

(Watcharapunyawong, 2013) argues that amongst the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), writing has been perceived as the most difficult to teach and study because teachers need to devote

considerably more time, energy, and expertise in order to help learners develop writing skills. Moreover, one can easily say that teaching writing is not a simple task because a variety of writing competences such as grammatical structures, organization, vocabulary, ability to give feedback and appropriate assessment of learner's written work, is highly required. (Matsuda,2002) also asserts that to help learners to write with efficiency, the writing activities should take into account strategic development and language skills.This article answers the following questions:

What kind of errors are committed by Grade 10 learners in essay writing?

Why are learners committing such errors and what strategies can be in place to eliminate them?

Literature Review

Upon registration at school, children know their home language and they begin learning to read and write, capacities which build on this home-language foundation (Basic Education, 2011). When children are exposed to an environment that is conducive to learning an additional language, the environment serves as a contributory factor in developing good writing skills. This implies that educators should lead by an example and nurture the skills of speaking and writing in the English language in the classroom.

(Perk, & Coyle,2012)indicated the impact of technological devices such as computers, SMS, Mixit and Facebook on the written work of EFAL learners. He further stated that sources of spelling errors happen to be the negative side of over-relying on technology for spell checks. He described writing as a way of using correct words in the correct order. He further went on to defend his argument by highlighting the fact that spelling is all about getting the words right. In the view of this researcher, SMS lingo contributes to learners' poor spelling since learners are now used to writing words in short hand and they fail to distinguish between writing for academic purposes and writing for casual, informal communicative purposes.

(Yau Hau Tse A,2014) analysed the spelling errors in Japanese classrooms following the constructs from Contrastive Analysis (CA) and Error Analysis (EA) with the assumption that these errors are neither coincidental nor randomly made. Contrastive analysis (CA) is the systematic study of a pair of languages with

a view of identifying the differences and similarities between them. Error Analysis also studies the types and causes of language errors which occur as part of second language pedagogy. CA is a good starting point to survey why second language learners make systematic grammatical errors according to their linguistic backgrounds. EA is closely related to the study of error treatment in language learning and teaching. In a nutshell, the study of errors is crucial in teaching methods and approaches. (Weireesh,2003) argued that EA is a significant element in the learning process. He highlighted that errors can be recognized and analysed according to the learning difficulties encountered by the learners.

(Khalid,2013) examined spelling mistakes made by 43 Learners of English in a written composition in an urban school in South Africa. He analysed a total of 228 spelling errors that occurred in the 43 written papers and subsequently classified them into four types: insertion, substitution, omission and transposition. He also determined the kinds and frequencies of errors that could occur in extended writing tasks. In addition, the researcher informed teachers to choose a suitable topic that students could write about. Results indicated that most of the spelling errors were substitution and omission errors. Substitution is the replacement of a word or phrase in order to avoid repetition e.g. instead of saying "such as "one can replace it with "so", and omission is to leave something out while writing i.e. a letter or a vowel "lying our parent" in this sentence the word "to" has been omitted. The above research focuses on a grammatical errors, which in the researcher's view, is the most problematic area that needs a lot of attention by educational linguists. Looking at the above mentioned study the researcher realised the need to find an effective teaching and learning strategy that could help teachers to prepare Grade10 learners for Grade 11. The current research focuses on sources of spelling errors, grammatical as well as mother tongue interference, and the spectre of multilingualism. (Watcharapunyawong,2013), compelled by the findings from (Weireesh,2003) analysed writing errors caused by the interference of a second language. The results revealed that the first language interference errors fell into 16 categories: verb tense, word choice, sentence structure, article, preposition, modal or auxiliary, singular or plural form, fragment, verb form, pronoun, run-on sentence, infinitive

or gerund, transition, subject-verb agreement, parallel structure, and comparison structure, respectively, and the number of frequent errors made in each type of written tasks was different.

In narration, the five most frequent errors found were verb -tense, word choice, sentence structure, preposition, and modal or auxiliary, respectively, while the five most frequent errors in description and comparison or contrast were article, sentence structure, word choice, singular or plural form, and subject-verb agreement, respectively. Interestingly, in the narrative and descriptive paragraphs, comparison structure was found to be the least frequent error, whereas it became the 10th frequent error in comparison or contrast writing. It was apparent that the genres of the affect writing errors as different text types require different structural features. This leads to the tentative conclusion that in order to enhance students' grammatical and lexical accuracy, a Second Language (L2) writing teacher should take into consideration L1 interference categories for tasks in different genres.

Error Analysis is what teachers in the rural context need; learners in the rural areas find it difficult to master EFAL so EA could be a solution to spelling errors problem. Furthermore the influence of technological devices, ignorance of language elements as well as the mother tongue interference seem to be the main causes of spelling errors. This means that teachers should lay a good foundation from Grade R to 10 and beyond secondary school exit.

(Wessels,2011) says that spelling should form an integral part of any meaningful language teaching-learning programme and that teachers could select spelling words and sentences for dictation from stories, poems, plays and novels that learners read and benefit from knowing how to spell words that are content- based.

(Bancha,2013) investigated the types of spelling inaccuracy learners made. He found that the causes of spelling errors happen to come from various elements of language which are mentioned in (Zawahreh,2012) study where learner writers use present instead of past tense forms. For example, in an essay topic whereby a learner must give his or her own experience about the day that he or she will never forget,

learners usually use present tense like 'I am afraid 'instead of 'I was afraid when I was attacked.' There is also another trend of misspelling of words such as 'because' which is often written in the colloquial form as 'cause' and many more.

(Sawalmeh,2013) andclassified spelling errors into two major categories and then divided them into several subcategories. The two main categories are: inter-lingual errors and intra-lingual errors. Under the inter-lingual errors there are sub-categories which are grammatical errors for example (insertion of incorrect verb tense and omission) while intra-lingual errors sub-categories result from learners' lack of knowledge of the target language i.e. (English First Additional Language) e.g. overgeneralization of the article use, poor spelling (omission, addition and misuse). Some sub-categories were also identified as misspellings which emanate from mispronunciation errors and written mis-encodings.

The second type is called mechanical errors, which consist of punctuation errors, and confusable homonyms e.g. the word 'dessert' which means sweet meal, can be easily misspelled in writing with 'desert' which is noun describing a dry sandy area where there is no rain. This miscuing is important to educators as it serves as a guide on how to deal with issues of such nature, which also happen to be prevalent, in their classroom. Educators should be able to classify spelling errors into categories so that they can offer the necessary remediation on areas that need special attention.

(Sawalmeh,2013) defines inter-lingual errors as those errors that result from language transfer caused by learner's mother tongue whereas the intra-lingual errors are those which result from incorrect or partial learning of either first or second additional language by learners.He also highlighted the fact that in intra-lingual error categories, some spelling errors may reflect poor linguistic competence on different levels, including phonological awareness, and knowledge of orthography, vocabulary, morphological and semantic relationships, and mental orthographic images.

It means mother tongue can be regarded as one source of the spelling errors amongst high school learners. In Mmapadi Secondary School most learners are not exposed to environments

that are conducive for learning the target language. Home languages spoken by most members of the rural household in the villages are morphologically and syntactically analogous from the target language to facilitate a good foundation for learners' development of good writing proficiency. For example, in vocabulary building, the word "Calendar" in English is written as "calendara" in Sepedi and the word "Take" is written as "Teka" and this comes as a result of mother tongue simplification and accommodation processes relating to foreign words being localised by the recipient communities of speakers, in this instance, Xitsonga. In as far as intra-lingual errors are concerned, learners are taught grammar rules in class on a daily basis and usually pretend to understand, but when they are being assessed about the same grammar rules learned, they get it wrong. To some extent, therefore this can later be regarded as partial learning.

This is the area that needs the attention of all language teachers as teaching language structures is the root to learning the language and accessing competence in a school context. Teachers need to give learners robust activities which could assist in spelling e.g. dictation drills, editing skills, and also inculcate the culture of reading into the learners.

Methodology

In this study the researcher followed a qualitative research approach which adopted a phenomenological design. Phenomenological design seeks to describe the essence of the experiences of its participants (Creswell, 2003). Phenomenological approach to research allows a researcher to collect data using interviews, review documents and make observations. The current study followed a document analysis as the research method. Document analysis is a form of research in which documents are read, categorised and interpreted and by the researcher to give voice and meaning around error types and sources of spelling errors at Grade 10 in Mmapadi Secondary School (Creswell,2009).Mmapadi Secondary School has an enrolment of 239 Grade 10 learners for 2016 academic year. There are three classes namely Grade 10a with the total number of 87 learners, followed by Grade 10b with 65 learners and Grade 10c with 87 learners. 15 learners were purposively and non-probability sampled

DATA PRESENTATION

Data revealed twelve types of misspelling errors produced by the 15 Grade 10 Mmapadi Secondary school learners. The twelve main types of errors are presented in the table below:

Nature of spelling errors	Target word	Learners response in the activity
1. Omission of either a letter or vowel	Empty, poverty, necessary, can, what, when, each	emty-, povety, Nessary- ,ca-wat-,wen-,ech-
2. Omission of an article "a, an, the".	Get a lot of money, some of the children, in the drain.	Get lot of money- some of children, in drain.
3. Omission of preposition	Lying to our parents.	Lying our parents.
4. Insertion of wrong article (a) e.g.	Money is the cause of evil.	a money is the cause of evil.
5. Insertion of an incorrect pronoun, preposition	They, it, them, your, themselves, Their.	the, at-it, in, their-, they-their, him-her, you-, at-in, them selfe, ther, the.
6. The use of singular instead of plural or vice versa	Pages, makes, good, lives.	Page, make, goods, lifes.

7 .The use of sms lingo	I want to, God, because.	I wanna, gosh, cause.
8. Vowel substitution	Husband, because, suffering, most, selling, prostitute, censa, etc., destroy, just, quote, soldiers, enemies, drawn, another, genius, some, guide, family, tell, before, gamble.	Husbend, becase, Suffuring, must, salling, ,prestitude,cansa, atc., jast, destroy,quate, ,soldirs, anamies, drown, ,onather, gineus, somo, gaide, family, tall, befare, gumble.
9. Consonant substitution	Bodies, depend, bother, services, colleagues.	Bodys, depent, brohe, serviers, collics.
10. Inaccurate double consonant	Support, already, support, afford.	Suport, allredy, surport, arford.
11.Confusion of writing	Take, better, many, save, thieves, desperately, forbid, right, stupid, achieve, disease, you, church, many, another, future, played, want.	Taker, bater, mane, saver, ,thiefs, despratly, forbit, rought, stupit, ,archirve, deases, yau, cheche, mare athor ,fuature-plaed-,whant.
12. Inaccurate spacing	A lot, devil-worshipers, for instance.	Alot, devilworshipers, for ristance,

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In the above activity the nature of errors which happen to be problematic for learners' include vowel omission, confusion of writing and insertion of an incorrect pronoun or preposition. The latter errors were committed by almost 80% of learners in the study.

Vowel Substitution

As seen in the above table, learners find it difficult to differentiate between letter (a) and letter (e) for example (Husband is written as" hasbend"), (suffering as "suffuring"). Other examples are "salling" for selling an "cansa" for cancer. This indicates that learners do not know how words are spelt and tend to substitute with vowels they deem correct. Another explanation to this problem could be the fact that learners write words as they are pronounced. (Rello & Joaquim,2012) states that learners substitute vowels because they do not see the correspondence between the sounds and the letters.

Consonant Substitution

To add onto vowel substitution is also a problem of consonant substitution with the following examples taken from learners' essays: "Bodys"- bodies, "depent"- depend, "brohe"- bother, "serviers"- services , "collics"- colleagues.

Inaccurate Double Consonant

Double consonant is also another problem that was identified as a challenge by learners. For example: the following words: "Suport"/surport- support, "allredy"- already, "arford"- afford. This indicates inadequate knowledge of phonology and how words are sounded.

Confusion in Writing

Learners confuse words when writing e.g. the word "take" is confused with "talk", better as "beter" while "save" is confused with "safe". In this example the learner may have found it difficult to make a phonological switch from Xitsonga to English as the learners Home language is Xitsonga. Other examples of confusion are as follows: "forbit"- forbid, "stupit" -stupid, where the learner confuses the sound of the letter (d) with (t), conqour-conquer, "rite"-right. These errors indicate that learners do not recognise sounds as such and they get confused when they are supposed to

switch from their mother tongue to target language.

Insertion of an Incorrect Pronoun and Preposition
Insertion of an incorrect pronoun is another challenge that learners face when writing essays. The table above indicated that many learners also find it difficult to use pronouns and prepositions correctly when writing. For example, learners insert "at "instead" of "it", "the" is written in place of "they", "themselfe", is misspelt for themselves, "ther" is often used for their. In the latter examples at times these errors render the writing erroneous and even make it lose the intended meaning.

Omission
Omission is another problem and it makes learners' writing erroneous; learners either forget or leave out a consonant or a vowel, examples from the above tables are as follows: Omission of either a consonant or a vowel "povety" instead poverty "wen" instead of when and omission of a consonant that changes the whole meaning of the word as in "rite" for right.

Omission of article "a","an" and "the"
Learners sometimes make mistakes of omitting articles and the following examples were identified in the learner documents: "get lot of money- some of children", "in drain". This indicates that learners could have been careless in proofreading their final written products.

Omission of preposition
Learners sometimes make mistakes of omitting prepositions and the following examples were identified in document analysis: Laying our parents - lying *to* our parents and this could be attributed to not knowing the application of appropriate grammar rules.

The use of sms lingo
Another problem that apparently causes learners to commit spelling errors is the use of language used for texting on either cellular phones or with computers. Examples taken from learners' essays are as follows: I "wanna" - instead of I want to", gosh"- God, "cause" for because. This suggests that learners struggle to distinguish between formal and informal writing and as classroom practitioners; we are far from winning this spelling battle as this type

of shorthand appears to have a significant hold on learners currently in Grade 10.

Discussion of Findings
Sources of Learners' Spelling Errors
The study revealed that learners' use of technological devices is one of the main sources of spelling errors.
When learners use technological devices like computers and cellular phones to make life easy, a lot of damage may occur as this tends to block the opportunities for learning good spelling skills. (Perk & Coyle,2012)also pointed out the damage done to learners who rely on computers, SMS, Mixit and Facebook for spell checks is inestimable. It was pointed out that when learners use too much technological devices they end up not knowing the formal and correct way of spelling.

The Interference of Mother-Tongue and Partial Learning in the Target Language
It was found that mother tongue interference and partial knowledge of grammar rules are serious sources of the most common spelling errors committed by learners. Interference of mother tongue has been described by (Sawalmeh,2013) into two categories i.e. inter-lingual and intra-lingual errors and this is what the researcher also found in the study. The difference between the two studies is that in the current study, the context of the problem under study is in South Africa, in a deep rural environment where many of the learners are historically disadvantaged.

Inability to Understand Tthe Difference between Spoken and Written Language
Insertion of an incorrect pronoun, preposition, and vowel substitution, confusion of writing and omission of either a consonant or vowel are errors which occurred more frequently. These errors are usually called mechanical and orthographic errors. This suggests that learners cannot differentiate between spoken and written language. When they speak, words sound correct but when they write those words, spelling errors may occur.

The results suggest that the sources of spelling errors seem to be the result of a weak understanding of grammar rulers. (Chomsky,1970) emphasized the importance of knowledge not only on a surface level of sound correspondence but also an underlying level of lexical representation and described knowledge of grammar as inevitable. The results also

suggested a weak conceptualisation of vocabulary building e.g. instead of saying that "Money is not important, they would rather say that money is not a famous thing, but that happens only in writing. The latter example also confirms lack of deep knowledge of the target language.

Lack Of Proofreading and Carelessness
Findings in this study indicated that learners commit many spelling errors because they do not proofread their work after writing and other errors come as a result of carelessness.

Recommendations
1. Teachers should encourage learners not to rely much on technology for spelling so that they can practise good spelling skills.
2. It is the responsibility of teachers to ensure that they create an environment that is conducive to learning the EFAL in their classroom.
3. Teachers should also monitor the spelling development of learners. Teachers should not only diagnose problems but rather be there to guide learners to the right methods of learning spelling.
4. Teachers should give learners more practice on essay writing and monitor their work regularly.
5. Teachers should make sure that learners understand correction codes used by teachers when marking as this persuades learners from repeating similar errors. Learners should be made aware of assessment criteria for essay writing.
6. Teachers must go back to the traditional methods of teaching spelling e.g. dictation and spelling tests to help towards the development of writing proficiency.
7. Teachers need to encourage learners to have spelling books where they write lists of words that are troublesome.
8. Teachers need to encourage learners to read more because reading can be another way of learning spelling.
9. Teachers should emphasise the importance of editing and proofreading any written work.

Writing skills should be practised and learnt through experience and teachers should be empowered to offer activities that assist learners develop good writing skills thereby boosting their confidence. A variety of resources that could assist teachers in the teaching and learning EFAL writing should be utilised.

Conclusion
The problems which learners face in this study could be resolved if learners are exposed to LOLT which is EFAL in the school premises from the beginning of their schooling , and learners get used to this language. This leads to a conclusion that a lot still need to be done if we are to win the battle for spelling errors of learners in public schools. Teachers should change their attitude and focus on the true development of learners who are competent globally. Teachers must prepare themselves for the kind of learners they are teaching in the twenty-first century and they should not assume that if learners are fluent in English then they are skilled in writing: learners can still commit errors, so relevant support must be provided. Teachers must be prepared to teach learners English spelling rules from time to time.

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