Targeted Analysis of Common Spelling Errors among Grade Six Pupils

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ABSTRACT

Spelling errors are the most common inaccuracies in the writing of ESL learners. Despite the numerous studies on writing, teaching spelling as a research topic has often been overlooked. The primary objectives of this mixed method study are to describe the common spelling errors of grade 6 pupils of an all-girls school in Metro Manila post-pandemic, identify teaching strategies to minimize spelling errors and propose recommendations for teaching spelling. First, spelling tests and student handwritten essays were analyzed for spelling errors, which were later categorized using Cook's classification. Second, interviews with Language teachers to identify teaching strategies were held, determining key themes and best practices in spelling instruction. The results indicated that students committed spelling errors mostly by omission, substitution, and insertion, and the strategies to enhance spelling skills include utilizing visuals, engaging students through interactive materials and collaborative activities, and using the words in context. Based on the findings, it is recommended to consider the following in crafting a spelling program: a fundamental list of commonly misspelled words following the rule-based system, a bank of effective strategies to expose students to words in context and engage them for active learning, a continuous assessment of spelling student abilities, and evaluation of the spelling program.

Keywords: *Grade 6, spelling; spelling errors; spelling instruction; spelling program*

Introduction

One of the skills being developed in the language subjects in elementary and secondary schools is writing, which includes spelling as a subskill. Language proficiency is assessed not only by an individual's spoken communication abilities but also by his written communication abilities. Writing, as a productive skill, requires spelling words precisely and quickly enough to convey the intended meaning to the reader. Moreover, spelling is an essential skill the students must acquire, as it is a prerequisite to excel in other macro skills and domains in the English language such as speaking, reading, listening, and viewing. Acquisition of spelling skills in the early years of education is crucial because proper spelling makes the reader comprehend better what is written, ensuring that the message expressed in written words comes across clearly to the readers or audience. Thus, spelling proficiency remains a critical area of research and educational practice, particularly for elementary school pupils. Recent studies have focused on various aspects of spelling errors, instructional strategies, and the development of effective spelling programs. For instance, a study by Gilbert, Kearns, and Palombo (2021) found that spelling proficiency significantly correlates with overall writing quality in elementary students, reinforcing the importance of accurate spelling for effective written communication and literacy development. This study further emphasizes the need for integrated spelling instruction that addresses the multi-faceted challenges students face in both their first and second languages. There are also those which continue to highlight the types of spelling errors commonly made by students. A study by Smith et al. (2021) found that phonological errors are prevalent among Grade 6 pupils, often due to reliance on phonetic spelling strategies. Similarly, Jones and White (2022) identified morphological errors, emphasizing the need for better instruction on word structure and the application of affixes. Lastly, the study by Lee et al. (2023) also pointed out that orthographic errors are common, particularly with irregular spelling patterns in the English language. Furthermore, Hasman and Muhamad (2022) explain that there are more sounds in the English language and more rules that are more confusing to the learners than in their native language. A similar study by Chen, Wang, and Li (2022) explores the impact of these factors on spelling proficiency among bilingual students. It

highlighted that a supportive learning environment and accurate pronunciation practices are crucial for reducing spelling errors and enhancing overall literacy skills in a second language. Additionally, the study found that students' positive attitudes toward learning English significantly improved their spelling abilities. Consequently, Sutani and Himat (2021) stated that interference of the L1 with the L2, lack of an understanding of the spelling rules, and attitude toward writing all the more causing longer periods of writing can dampen writing abilities.

Indeed, across the world, the difficulty in spelling affects the macro skill of writing. Additionally, the pandemic has taken a toll on the spelling abilities of learners. The pandemic forced schools to shut down in 2019 and shift to a remote modality of learning, which resulted in learning gaps, spelling included. Rzepka, Simbeck, and Muller (2020) cite the loss of spelling competence of Germans by comparing pre-pandemic and post-pandemic spelling test results. There are also increased inequalities in some grade levels and other spelling domains. The discrepancy can be attributed to a lack of computer access and parental support and supervision. Despite the lack of training, the abrupt change in the learning modality forced teachers to use technology in their instruction, ensuring continuous delivery but not the quality of education. The integration of technology in the classrooms is no longer a trend but is the norm, impacting learning negatively and positively. Yen and Mohamad (2020) found that e-learning provides a safe space for students to interact and commit mistakes without worrying about embarrassment. However, some devices and gadgets are equipped with tools and applications for learning, for example, spelling checkers, grammar checkers, etc, which demand less attention and effort from students. A study by Ali, Nakshbandi, Saadi, and Barzani (2022), concluded that spell checkers do not necessarily hone the spelling skills of learners and those who rely heavily on those technological tools struggle more in spelling in their writing tasks than their counterparts. In addition, between the spell checker dependents and the handwriting dependents, the latter outperformed the former in spelling performance. With rapid technological developments devices and gadgets are equipped with tools and applications for learning, for example, spelling checkers, grammar checkers, etc., which demand less attention and effort from students. More extensive research on technologies and spelling can still be conducted.

The researchers found few available scholarly research on teaching spelling specific to the Philippines. Although spelling is a public concern and there is a wide repository of knowledge about it, spelling instruction as a research topic remains on the sidelines of varieties of English (Nejar, 2023 and Yen Yen & Mohamad, 2020). There is also a limited body of research on spelling instruction in the Philippines. According to Santos and Reyes (2021), that while the majority of Philippine English spelling adheres to American conventions, there are still notable instances where British spelling is used, particularly in academic and formal writing. This dual influence reflects the historical and educational contexts in which English is taught in the Philippines. According to Saavedra and Barredo (2020), Filipino elementary students consider difficulty in spelling, grammar, and sentence construction as factors affecting their writing proficiency, with their lack of vocabulary, difficulty in conveying ideas and organizing ideas, and perceptions of writing as a difficult task. Nejar proposes that the Department of Education, the bureau mandated to protect and promote the right of every Filipino to accessible, equitable, complete quality education, must craft plans and programs to improve the spelling and writing abilities of learners, as spelling instruction in primary school, or grades 1 to 6, is critical for writing skills improvement. Additionally, based on the new Department of Education Matatag Curriculum (2023), which is meant to address the learning gaps brought on by the pandemic and the educational problems and concerns revealed by the Programme of International Student Assessment 2022 results, it can be only inferred by the researchers that spelling is integrated into the teaching of vocabulary and knowledge, as "spelling" only appears in the glossary section of the document, in contrast with the old curriculum. This fails in comparison with the United States, where spelling program is structured, systematic, and comprehensive. With these previous studies, this research contributes to the limited body of knowledge on spelling instruction in the Philippines.

This study focuses on spelling instruction in an exclusive all-girls private school in Metro Manila, post-pandemic, specifically school year 2023-2024. The subject school has a Level III accreditation, a seal of quality education, by the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools Colleges and University. In this school, English is taught in separate subjects of Reading and Language, and spelling instruction is integrated into the subject Language. With the return to face-

to-face modality after the pandemic, the teachers have observed among the students not only poorer handwriting but also recurring spelling errors in writing across subjects. A decline in spelling and writing skills is evident in students' written outputs. Furthermore, the school lacks a structured, systematic spelling program. Hence, the researchers aim to address several key objectives in their study. Firstly, they seek to identify common spelling errors committed by female Grade 6 pupils. Secondly, they intend to identify effective strategies for minimizing these spelling errors and improving overall spelling proficiency. Finally, based on their findings, they aim to propose recommendations for crafting a comprehensive spelling program tailored to the needs of Grade 6 students.

The study sought to address the prevalence of spelling errors among Grade 6 pupils and the need for effective strategies to mitigate these errors. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions: What are the most common spelling mistakes committed by Grade 6 pupils? What are the various effective methods for improving the spelling proficiency of the Grade 6 pupils as perceived by language teachers? What are the important considerations or practical recommendations for creating a targeted spelling program to support Grade 6 pupils in enhancing their spelling skills? This study is crucial as it addresses a fundamental aspect of literacy, which is essential for academic success and effective communication.

The identification of the common spelling errors is paramount in enhancing the spelling skills of learners. A recent study by Al-Saudi (2020) utilized Cook's (1997) classification of spelling errors, which he classified into *four error types*: *substitution errors* where errors occur when students substitute a letter with another one; *omission errors* where errors occur when omitting a letter to the target word; *insertion errors*, which occur when students add a letter to the target word; and *transposition errors*, which occur when the students reverse the order of two letters or more. He suggests that spelling errors are the most common type of mistake in the written work of students learning English and must be minimized and avoided for an effective spelling program. Numerous studies (Adeoti, Fitria, 2020; and Imtiaz, Hassam, & Hakmal, 2023) also confirm that omission and insertion are the most dominant error types, followed by substitution and transposition errors.

A few studies reveal spelling strategies that work. Nejar proposes diary writing as a teaching strategy to improve the spelling and writing abilities of Grade 3 Filipino learners. Additionally, some studies focused on gaming as an effective way to develop skills such as spelling. The use of games provides a unique opportunity for the student to self-assess their progress in learning professional vocabulary and for a teacher to informally assess the student's progress without causing stress and anxiety (Kavaliauskiene, 2000; Lestariningsih, 2008 as cited by Chakkalathy, and Mahamuni, 2022). In the same study by Chakkalathy and Mahamuni, activity-based teaching consisting of breaking words, word journals, personal dictionary, and dictation, improved the basic English spelling skills of secondary students. Another approach is applying the rule-based strategy, which familiarizes students with forms and guidelines for merging letters to form words. It is more favorable than the copy method to students as concluded in the study by Soquita (2021). Further research is needed to unravel the strategies and methods to enhance the spelling skills of Filipino learners.

Chow and Ruan (2023) used Cook's classifications to analyze common spelling errors among elementary students. They identified substitution, omission, insertion, and transposition as major categories. This supports the first phase of this study, which involves conducting a thorough literature review, collecting and analyzing written assignments, and interviewing teachers to identify and categorize common spelling errors encountered by Grade 6 pupils using Cook's classifications and to determine their most effective strategies in practicing and assessing students' spelling proficiency. Moreover, their study emphasizes the importance of a comprehensive spelling program that integrates multiple instructional strategies to address all types of spelling errors identified by Cook's classifications. Their findings suggest that such integrated programs can significantly improve spelling proficiency. This aligns with the final phase of this study, where researchers provide recommendations for creating a targeted spelling program tailored to the needs of Grade 6 pupils.

Through a review of related literature, analysis of the errors in the spelling tests and the student-written outputs, and the interview with the Language teachers, the researchers have gained valuable insights to recommend considerations in crafting a spelling program for grade 6 pupils.

This study on identifying common spelling errors among Grade 6 pupils and effective strategies for minimizing these errors, and recommendations for a comprehensive spelling program provides numerous benefits for various stakeholders: students will gain improved spelling proficiency which will lead to their enhanced writing quality and overall literacy, teachers will benefit from the identified instructional strategies, parents will be better equipped to provide their child a supportive learning environment even at home, the educational community will benefit from the dissemination of evidence-based practices, informed curriculum development, and the potential for educational impact, and lastly, the broader society will benefit from it as these recommendations in crafting a spelling program may lead to enhanced literacy rates.

Method

This study employed a mixed-method approach. For the quantitative part, to obtain information about the dominant spelling errors of Grade 6 students, the researchers performed a document analysis of the 200-word student-written essays. In addition, a spelling test adopting the Upper-Level Spelling Inventory (ULSI) was administered to detect spelling errors and assess students' spelling development level. Afterward, the detected misspellings were classified using Cook classification, by computing for frequency. Furthermore, to gather qualitative data on spelling strategies and techniques to improve the spelling skills of the sixth graders, the researchers interviewed four of the five Language teachers. Thus, by integrating data from both quantitative and qualitative sources, the researchers gained valuable insights into their research topic. Altogether, these data served as the foundation for crafting a spelling program to address these spelling challenges experienced by the sixth graders.

Purposive sampling was used by researchers in selecting students from the learning institution, which lacked a structured spelling program. Respondents must be currently enrolled sixth graders. At least 20 spelling tests and 20 student written outputs from each class must examined. Grade six students, as Carvalhais L., Limpo T., and Pereira L. Á. (2021) found in their study conducted among two age groups Grades 4-7 and Grades 6-9, are assumed to have gained significant vocabulary and have taken on more complex writing tasks, hence, this grade level is purposively selected for this research. Teacher interviewees are Language teachers who have taught spelling for at least three years. The qualitative data provide insights into the best spelling strategies that can be taught to students and utilized for classroom instruction to enhance the spelling skills of Grade 6 learners. Data was collected after permission to conduct the study from the subject coordinator had been secured.

Several research instruments were utilized in conducting the research. First, the student-written essays were analyzed for common misspellings. Second, a spelling test based on the Words Their Way Upper-Level Spelling Inventory, which consists of 31 words developmentally appropriate to sixth graders, was fielded to the respondents. According to Putman (2017), spelling inventories are quick and easy to administer and score, providing information on where the students developmentally are. Both gathered helpful data on the common spelling errors among sixth graders. The researchers identified spelling strategies through an interview of Language teachers to avoid and overcome spelling errors, bridge spelling learning gaps, and ultimately, improve the learners' spelling skills.

The study employed the error analysis method by Corder (1967, cited in Nisa, Alhaider, Usmani, Wani & Asiri, 2023), which observes the following stages: collection of samples, identification of errors, classification of errors, explanation of errors, and evaluation of errors. Data on common spelling errors were collected through first, a spelling test using the ULSI and second, a document analysis done on student-written works. To bridge the spelling learning gaps, the best techniques and strategies used by Language teachers in their spelling test activities were determined through interviews. The collected data on spelling errors underwent a two-step analysis. First, spelling error categorization was run using both the student-written works and the result of the spelling test based on ULSI. The researchers calculated the number of spelling error occurrences or the frequency in the spelling tests and essays using the formula below:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where:
P=percentage
F=frequency of spelling errors
N=total number of spelling errors

The frequency and distribution of each error category helped identify the most common types of errors among the students following Cook's classification. Furthermore, thematic analysis was performed to interpret data from the

interviews with teachers on their spelling instructions and practices in their classrooms. The quantitative and qualitative data provided essential information and valuable insights towards developing a Grade 6 Spelling Program.

Findings and Discussion
Common Spelling Errors

The results presented were common spelling errors detected after a manual checking and analysis of the spelling test using the WTW ULSI of 64 students. Descriptive statistical analysis by computing the frequency of the errors and classifying of the errors based on Cook's classification was conducted.

Table 1 Common Misspellings by Cook's Classification

Error Type	F	% (out of 154)
Omission	99	64.29%
Substitution	42	27.27%
Insertion	10	6.49%
Transposition	3	1.95%
Total	**154**	**100%**

Table 1 displays the commonly misspelled words in the spelling test adopting the WTW ULSI, grouped using Cook's classification. A total of 154 spelling errors were detected, with the most glaring ones under the omission type, which make up 99 out of the 154 errors or 64.29%, followed by 42 substitution errors or 27.27%. There are fewer insertion and transposition errors with 10 errors or 6.49% and 3 errors or 1.94% respectively. The succeeding tables describe the nature of the spelling errors.

Table 2. Spelling Omission Errors

	Misspelling	f	% (out of 154)
1	circumfrence	6	3.90%
2	clorine	10	6.49%
3	comotion	11	7.14%
4	comotione	1	0.65%
5	corespond	11	7.14%
6	emphasie	1	0.65%
7	forunate	1	0.65%
8	iliterate	18	11.69%
9	iresponsible	13	8.44%
10	knoted	1	0.65%
11	knotedd	1	0.65%
12	monarcy	1	0.65%
13	oposition	5	3.25%

14	salor	1	0.65%
15	succesion	2	1.30%
16	sucession	8	5.19%
17	sucesion	3	1.95%
18	traped	5	3.25%
	Total	**99**	**64.29%**

Table 2 gleans the spelling errors by omission of the 64 students, making up 99 of the 154 or 61.88% misspellings. These include students deleting a letter in words spelled with double consonants, which equals 66 of the 99 or 66.67% of the omission errors. For example, students "m" in "commotion," "l" in "illiterate," "r" in "correspond," and "irresponsible," "t" in "knotted," "p" in "opposition" and "trapped," "s" in "succession," "c" in "succession," and both "c" and "c" in "succession." For the other omission errors, "e" is deleted in "circumference," "h" in "chlorine" and "monarchy," "z" in "emphasize," "t" in "fortunate," and "i" in "sailor."

Table 3. Spelling Substitutions Errors

	Misspellings	F	% (out of 154)
1	chloreen	1	0.65%
2	circonference	1	0.65%
3	circumfrance	1	0.65%
4	circumfrience	1	0.65%
5	circumfurance	1	0.65%
6	circumfarence	1	0.65%
7	circumfurence	1	0.65%
8	civilazation	2	1.30%
9	commosion	3	1.95%
10	confidents	1	0.65%
11	crator	2	1.30%
12	eliterate	1	0.65%
13	emfacise	2	1.30%
14	emphasise	2	1.30%
15	emphazize	2	1.30%
16	enffacice	1	0.65%
17	ileterate	1	0.65%
18	ilitarate	1	0.65%
19	irisponsible	1	0.65%
20	irresponsable	3	1.95%
21	medecinal	1	0.65%
22	medisinal	2	1.30%
23	medisynom	1	0.65%
24	momarchy	1	0.65%
25	monarche	1	0.65%
26	monarkey	3	1.95%
27	monarque	1	0.65%

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28	pawns	1	0.65%
29	qrater	1	0.65%
30	skwirt	1	0.65%
	Total	**42**	**27.27%**

The table above lists the substitution errors detected in the spelling test. Of the 154 errors, 48 or 30% are substitution errors. The substitutions are "chloreen" for "chlorine," "circonference," "circumfrance," "circumfrience," "circumfurance," and "circumfurence" for "circumference," "civilazation" for "civilization," "commosion" for "commotion," "confidents" for "confidence," "crator" and "qatar" for "crater" "eliterate," "iletterate" "ilitarate" for "illiterate," "emfacise," "emphasise," "emphazize," and "enffacice" for "emphazize," "irisponsible" and "irresponsable" for "irresponsible," "medecinal," "medisinal," and "medisynom" for "medicinal," "momarchy," "monarche," "monarkey," and "monarque" for "monarchy," "pawns" for "pounce," "skwrit" for "squirt," "succession" and "susscition" for "scuccession," "tracked" and "trapded" for "trapped" and "visable" for "visible." The misspellings when pronounced are the same in phonology as the correct spellings.

Table 4. Spelling Insertion Errors

	Misspellings	f	% (out of 154)
1	chloriene	1	0.65%
2	civillization	1	0.65%
3	medicianal	1	0.65%
4	medicinnal	1	0.65%
5	scraped	1	0.65%
6	scrapped	1	0.65%
7	shaveing	1	0.65%
8	successtion	1	0.65%
9	successtion	2	1.30%
	Total	**10**	**6.49%**

The above is a tabulation of the insertion errors of grade six students, consisting 10 out of the 154 errors in the spelling test or 6.49%. "E" is inserted in "chloriene," and "shaving," "l" in "civilization," "a" and "n" in "medicinal" "d" and "d" in "scrape," "t" in "successtion," and "s" "succession." Nine or 90% of the insertion errors occur in words with inflections and affixes.

Table 5. Spelling Transposition Errors

	Misspellings	F	% (out of 154)
1	emphazise	1	0.65%
2	succsession	2	1.30%
	Total	**3**	**1.95%**

Table 5 features the least committed spelling errors of transposition type wherein students reorder the letters in the word. Students wrote "emphazise" instead of "emphazize," and two wrote "succsesion" for "succession."

After an analysis test of the spelling test results, the researchers examine the student-submitted written works, particularly the three-paragraph essays. The misspellings are classified in the table below.

Table 6. Error Types in the Written Works

Error Type	F	Percentage
Omission	115	63.89%
Substitution	22	12.22%
Insertion	25	13.89%
Transposition	10	5.56%
Others	8	4.4%
Total	**180**	**100%**

Table 6 classifies the spelling errors detected in the 69 student-submitted essays. One hundred eighty errors were identified and grouped according to Cook's classification. This confirms that the most prevalent misspellings by Grade 6 are of omission at 63.89%, insertion at 13.89%, substitution at 12.22%, and insertion type at 14.94%. Transposition errors are at 5.56% while a few errors cannot be categorized following Cook's classification, which are capitalization errors. The succeeding tables present the common misspellings by Cook's classification.

Table 7. Spelling Errors by Omission Type

No	Wrong	Correct	f	%
1	5 minute	5-minute	1	0.56%
2	acknoleging	acknowledging	2	1.11%
3	alot	a lot	3	1.67%
4	anoyed	annoyed	1	0.56%
5	anyones	anyone's	1	0.56%
6	approched	approached	1	0.56%
7	apreciation	appreciation	1	0.56%
8	asume	assume	1	0.56%
9	aswell	as well	4	2.22%
10	bak	bake	1	0.56%
11	bestfriend	best friend	1	0.56%
12	Carmens	Carmen's	1	0.56%
13	cause	because	1	0.56%
14	colecting	collecting	1	0.56%
15	completly	completely	1	0.56%
16	couldnt	couldn't	2	1.11%
17	decsion	decision	1	0.56%
18	didnt	didn't	5	2.78%
19	doesnt	doesn't	1	0.56%
20	dont	don't	2	1.11%
21	eachother	each other	2	1.11%
22	embarrased	embarrassed	2	1.11%
23	eventhough	even though	1	0.56%
24	everyday	every day	8	4.44%
25	everygame	every game	1	0.56%
26	exercie	exercise	1	0.56%
26	exited	excited	1	0.56%

28	extremly	extremely	1	0.56%
29	finaly	finally	1	0.56%
30	friendgroup	friend group	1	0.56%
31	guys	guy's	1	0.56%
32	hardtime	hard time	1	0.56%
33	highschool	high school	3	1.67%
34	hopfully	hopefully	1	0.56%
35	Ill	I'll	1	0.56%
36	Im	I'm	5	2.78%
37	immediatly	immediately	1	0.56%
38	infact	in fact	1	0.56%
39	inorder	in order	1	0.56%
40	its	it's	5	2.78%
41	lead	led	1	0.56%
42	learnd	learned	1	0.56%
43	lerned	learned	1	0.56%
44	lets	let's	2	0.56%
45	lock	locked	1	0.56%
46	maids	maid's	1	0.56%
47	ment	meant	1	0.56%
48	nothings	nothing's	1	0.56%
49	occured	occurred	1	0.56%
50	of	off	1	0.56%
51	ofcourse	of course	2	1.11%
52	overtime	over time	1	0.56%
53	paniking	panicking	1	0.56%
54	panting	painting	1	0.56%
55	pocastinate	procrastinate	1	0.56%
56	pocastination	procrastination	2	1.11%
57	prestiguos	prestigious	1	0.56%
58	proficent	proficient	2	1.11%
59	quizes	quizzes	1	0.56%
60	reasure	reassure	1	0.56%
61	rehersals	rehearsals	1	0.56%
62	resilence	resilience	1	0.56%
63	respone	response	1	0.56%
64	selfdoubt	self-doubt	1	0.56%
65	shes	she's	1	0.56%
66	stress	stressed	1	0.56%
67	sucessful	successful	1	0.56%
68	suceed	succeed	1	0.56%
69	teamates	teammates	3	1.67%
70	thats	that's	4	2.22%
71	tomorow	tomorrow	1	0.56%%
72	tought	thought	1	0.56%
73	wont	won't	1	0.56%
74	wouldnt	wouldn't	1	0.56%
75	youre	you're	1	0.56%
	Total		**115**	**63.89%**

Table 7 lists the misspellings by sixth graders in the essay through the deletion of letters. Among the most commonly misspelled words by omission are contracted forms of words and possessives requiring apostrophes, which consist of 35 out of 115 or 30.43% of the omission errors. To illustrate, students wrote "didnt" for "didn't," "doesnt" for "doesn't, " "dont" for "don't," "Ill" for "I'll," "Im" for "I'm," "its" for "i"t's," "lets" for "let's," "nothings" for "nothing's," "shes" for "she's," "thats" for "that's," "wont" for "won't," "wouldnt" for wouldn't," and "youre" for "you're". For possessive, students wrote "anyones" for "anyone's," "Carmens" for "Carmen's," "maids" for "maid's," and "guys" for "guy's."

Another thirty-five or 30.43% of the omission errors are misspellings of words written as compound words and misspelled compound words. For example students wrote "5 minute" for "5-minute," "alot" for " a lot," "aswell" for "as well," "bestfriend," for "best friend," "eachother" for "each other," "eventhough" for "even though," "everygame" for "every game," "everyday" for "every day," "friendgroup" for "friend group," "hardtime" for "hard time," "highschool" for "high school," "inoder" for "in order", "ofcourse" for "of course" "overtime" for "over time," and "selfdoubt" for "self-doubt."

On the other hand, misspellings by deleting a letter in double consonants comprise 14..16% or 15 of the 113 omission errors, such as "anoyed" for "annoyed," "apreciation" for "appreciation," "asume" for "assume," "colecting" for "collecting," "embarrased" for "embarrassed,"finaly" for "finally," "occured" for "occurred," "quiz" for "quizzes," "reasure" for "reassure," "sucessful" for "successful," "suceed" for "succeed," "teamates" for "teammates," and "tomorow" for "tomorrow."

Another 13.27% or 15 misspellings by omissions are comprised of words with affixes, for example, "completly" for "completely," "finaly" for "finally," "extremly" for "extremely," "learnd" and "lerned" for "learned," "lock" for "locked," "ment" for "meant," "paniking" for "panicking," "panting" for "painting," "procastination" for "procrastination," "prestiguos" for "prestigious," "resilence" for "resilience."

Table 8. Spelling Errors of Insertion Type

	Wrong	Correct	f	Percentage
1	chinease	Chinese	1	0.56%
2	differrent	different	1	0.56%
3	dissapoint	disappoint	1	0.56%
4	dissappeared	disappeared	1	0.56%
5	dissappointing	disappointing	1	0.56%
6	explaination	explanation	1	0.56%
7	finnally	finally	1	0.56%
8	good bye	goodbye	1	0.56%
9	horse back	horseback	1	0.56%
10	imiagine	imagine	1	0.56%
11	inttelect	intellect	1	0.56%
12	loose	lose	1	0.56%
13	momments	moments	1	0.56%
14	optimisim	optimism	1	0.56%

15	over come	overcome	1	0.56%
16	overcomed	overcome	2	1.11%
17	secretely	secretly	1	0.56%
18	singaporian	Singaporean	1	0.56%
19	some how	somehow	1	0.56%
20	struckt	struck	1	0.56%
21	there	their	2	1.11%
22	through out	throughout	1	0.56%
23	writting	writing	2	1.11%
	Total			**25 13.89%**

Table 8 features misspellings of the insertion type or through the addition of at least a letter in spelling the words. Eight out of 25 or 32% of these errors are words the students thought as having double consonants, for instance, "differrent" for "different," "dissapoint" for "dissappoint," "dissappeared" for "disappeared," "finnally" for "finally," "inttelect" for "intellect," "momments" for "moments," and "writing" for "writing." " Another 32% or 8 of 25 errors are phonologically similar to the correct spelling such as "chinease" for "Chinese," "loose" for "lose," "optimisim" for "optimism," "overcomed" for "overcome," "secretely" for "secretly," and "struckt" for "struck" while some have inappropriate insertion of space like "good bye" for "goodbye," "some how" for "somehow", and "through out" for "throughout." A few of the errors include words with affixes such as "explaination" for "explanation," "finnally" for "finally," and "smileing" for "smiling."

Table 9. Spelling Errors by Substitution Type

	Wrong	Correct	F	Percentage
1	aloud	allowed	1	0.56%
2	cannut	cannot	1	0.56%
3	collaberate	collaborate	1	0.56%
4	compatition	competition	1	0.56%
5	definetly	definitely	1	0.56%
6	devestated	devastated	1	0.56%
7	importants	importance	1	0.56%
8	oppurtunity	opportunity	1	0.56%
9	paintence	patience	1	0.56%
10	payed	paid	2	1.11%
11	quarintine	quarantine	1	0.56%
12	resiliance	resilience	1	0.56%
13	sucseed	succeed	1	0.56%
14	sucsess	success	1	0.56%
15	their	they're	3	0.56%
16	then	than	1	0.56%
17	weather	whether	1	0.56%
18	when	went	1	0.56%
19	wright	write	1	0.56%
	Total		**22**	**12.22%**

Table 9 shows the substitution errors by grade six students in their essays by replacing at least one letter, resulting in misspellings that sound like the correct spelling. Among the words are "aloud" for "allowed," "cannut" for "cannot," "collaberate" for "collaborate," "compatition" for "competition," "devestated" for "devastated," "importants" for "importants," "oppurtunity" for "opportunity," "paintence" for "patience," "quarantine" for "quarantine," "Singaporian" for "Singaporean," "sucseed" for "succeed," "sucsess" for "success," "their" for "they're," "when" for "went," "then" for "than," "weather" for "whether," and "write" for "wright." The misspellings almost sound the same as the actual words while some are homophones or words with the same pronunciation but different spelling and meaning.

Table 10. Spelling Errors of Transposition Type

	Wrong	Correct	f	Percentage
1	beleive	believe	1	0.56%
2	dosen't	doesn't	3	1.67%
3	freinds	friends	1	0.56%
4	is'nt	isn't	1	0.56%
5	labled	labeled	1	0.56%
6	preservere	persevere	1	0.56%
7	recieve	receive	1	0.56%
8	succsesful	successful	1	0.56%
	Total		**10**	**5.56%**

Table 10 lists the misspellings by transposition or reordering of letters. Three of the ten words transpose -i and -e such as "beleive" for "believe," "freinds" for "friends," and "recieve" and "receive." There are three misspellings that sound closely related to the actual spelling like "labled" for "labeled" "preservere" for "persevere," and "successful" for "successful." However, 4 of the 10 transposition errors are contracted forms requiring the use of apostrophes. To illustrate, students wrote "dosen't" for "doesn't" and "is'nt" for "isn't."

Table 11. Other Spelling Errors

No	Wrong	Correct	F	%
1	i	I	7	3,89%
2	Saturday	Saturday	1	0,56%
	Total		**8**	**4.44%**

The researchers identified and categorized the errors using Cook's classification. In addition, the analysis reveals capitalization errors, which make up 8 of the 180 errors. Seven students wrote "i" for the pronoun "I" and one student spelled "Saturday" as "saturday."

The spelling test and student-written work analyses confirm that the most common spelling error types are omission, substitution, and insertion. For omission errors, the most evident misspellings include deletion in double consonants, non-use of punctuation marks like the apostrophe in contractions and hyphens in compound words, and words mistakenly compounded. The substitution errors consist of words close to the pronunciation, which is almost the same for insertion errors, only that the latter includes misspellings of words with affixes, such as in adjectives, adverbs, verbs, and nouns derived from other words. As for transposition errors, they occur in words with -ie or -ei and apostrophes.

After identifying the common spelling errors among the grade six learners, the researchers interviewed four of five Grade School Language teachers. Table 12 gives a thematic analysis of their responses.

Table 12. Thematic Analysis of Teacher Responses

Theme	Description
Absence of a Structured Spelling Program	The school lacks an existing comprehensive, systematic, and structured spelling program. The teacher practices academic freedom on how to teach spelling to the learners, hence, the teaching of spelling depends on the teacher's preference and competence.
Utilization of Spelling Lists	The teachers in the primary refer to spelling lists that include blended consonants, sight words, digraphs, homophones, etc. In the upper grades, the spelling lists include commonly misspelled words, words with double consonants, words with affixes, loan or borrowed words, commonly misspelled words, easily confused words, words from other subjects, etc.
Use of Words in Context	All the teacher respondents suggest that to improve spelling skills, the students should be exposed to words in context rather than in isolation such as in spelling lists. Besides commonly misspelled words observed in the Language classes, the teachers also include words from the other subjects that students are expected to spell properly.
Student Engagement in Activities and Games	Competitions like spelling bees, paired works, crossword puzzles, and word searches can make spelling more enjoyable and effective for students. For primary learners, they use Seesaw application for their spelling drills.
Assessment of Students' Spelling Levels	Determining the students' current spelling skill level through pretest is crucial to tailor instruction and exercises to their needs.

As shown in Table 11, the teacher respondents affirmed the absence of a structured spelling program as a framework for teaching spelling. They are at liberty in utilizing strategies or methods to teach students spelling or in different ways they find purposeful. However, they share some common pedagogies.

Majority of the teachers deliberately practice demonstrating the use of the spelling words in a meaningful context, teaching the students how the words function in sentences, and later on, requiring students to compose their sentences. The responses below suggest exposing the students to words used in context is more meaningful than in isolation.

"We really do not have a program, as a structure, specific for spelling. I think exposure to words is important. Whenever I spot misspellings, I use them in sample sentences in class.

"Without a structured spelling program, exposing students to different text helps improve their spelling, as they learn better about these words when used in context. To undo common misspellings, have them write their own sentences."

The findings also suggest the use of visualization strategies to improve spelling abilities. These accord with the study of Alfadda and Nahiri (2016) which reported a significant difference between those taught with visualization strategies and traditional strategies, with the former outperforming the latter. Amiri and Salehi (2017) have supporting research on the positive effect of using crossword puzzles on the spelling abilities and the attitudes of English foreign learners. Below are a few of the teachers' responses.

"After the pandemic, amidst the advent of technology, it is very evident that what is lacking today among the students is their attention to detail, hence, the poor spelling skills.

"Since spelling requires, memory work, crossword puzzles and word searches help as learners distinguish among letters

and memorize through visual recall the spelling.

> *"Prior to the pandemic, we had word walls where we posted commonly misspelled words not only from Language but also from other disciplines. That way the students could recall the words.*

Another key theme is the use of engaging activities and games in spelling instruction, affirming the study by Mensah, Ansah, and Agbagio (2022) that teachers should be encouraged to use as many language games as possible as these help the learners understand the very concept of spelling and interest them. Below is a sample response from the teacher respondents:

"Games work best as writing or using spelling words in sentences can be boring. Students love competing among themselves and working in pairs."

Lastly, the study found that the use of traditional assessment methods remains crucial. The teachers still refer to spelling lists to enhance spelling skills among students. The lists feature blended consonants, digraphs, homophones, words with short and long vowel sounds, words with affixes, etc. Spelling rules are taught using the lists. In addition, through pretests, the spelling abilities of the students can be gauged, serving as a springboard, to adjust spelling instructions, while posttests are valuable tools to evaluate the impact of the instruction on the spelling skills of the students.

> *"We still teach spelling the traditional way, with a pretest and posttest. By conducting a pre-test, we determine how advanced or poor their spelling skills are, so we can design the drills and exercises given to them."*

This supports the study by Putman citing that the use of traditional remains crucial in teaching students to spell irregular words or those that cannot be spelled by applying patterns or conventions as they are words that need to be memorized such as the case for sight words.

Conclusion

Researchers found that Filipino female grade six pupils commonly commit spelling errors of the omission, substitution, and insertion error types while transposition and capitalization errors are the least. These errors can be attributed to the discrepancy in L1 and L2 as the spelling in the first language is not deliberately taught in the school, the similarity in phonology among the English words, the lack of understanding of rules in affixation and inflections, the improper use or absence of apostrophes in contractions and possessives, etc. To address and minimize these errors, in the absence of a systematic school spelling program, the teachers employ varied spelling teaching strategies including but not limited to traditional methods, for example, the use of spelling pretests and posttests, drills through games and competitions, paired work, visualization strategies like word searches and crosswords, and sentence writing using spelling words in context. This study affirms the findings of previous research on common spelling errors and contributes to the existing body of knowledge, particularly on spelling errors of female sixth graders post-pandemic time in the Philippines, where research on spelling is limited.

Based on the findings, the researchers recommend the following considerations in crafting a spelling program for grade six learners. First, when designing a spelling program, the coverage or content should include fundamental word lists or spelling inventories of commonly misspelled based on the findings, including homophones, contractions, and compound words, as well as easily confused words, as these help students learn the patterns, conventions, and the rules of spelling too. This affirms the study by Putman that the traditional way is still effective in teaching. Second, for teaching methods, teachers should continue the provision of word searches, crosswords, and other similar materials whether printed or digital to enhance spelling skills. Engaging activities like holding spelling contests and paired work should be continued as they are appealing and effective for the students. The teachers also should present the spelling words in a meaningful context rather than in isolation Teachers must integrate spelling into the instruction such as in teaching grammar and writing as exposing students to words used in context is more purposeful, helping them understand how words function and convey ideas meaningfully. Lastly, the traditional way of teaching spelling, particularly, the administration of pretests and posttests, can be retained as they help identify common areas for improvement and evaluate the effectiveness of the instruction.

This study has several limitations. It does not investigate the use of technology in teaching spelling, briefly writing about it in the findings. Since the integration of technology in the present spelling instruction is limited to using Seesaw, the stakeholders, particularly, the administrators and teachers, must explore this area to enhance spelling

and writing instruction, and even as a future action research topic, and craft sound policies for the guidance of the teachers and students, as technological tools have become part of the norm in teaching Language after the pandemic. Further studies on the use and impact of available AI technologies in teaching spelling should be conducted to identify strategies to address and minimize the spelling errors committed by learners. Moreso, the study excludes the perceptions of the female grade 6 students on their spelling errors and the spelling abilities of their male counterparts. Future research can investigate the spelling skills of male students and correlate the spelling skills of both girls and boys at the grade school level. Additional research on effective strategies in teaching spelling post-pandemic era can be delved into, while this research has several implications on pedagogy and further study that spelling instruction should be deliberately integrated into classroom instruction as it is an essential component of literacy instruction not only in English but also in other academic subjects. Aside from the mentioned strategies, teachers should utilize research-based spelling strategies to improve student spelling abilities. This study can be a reference for the subject school in developing a systematic, comprehensive spelling program at the elementary or basic education level or for researchers undertaking the same topic.

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