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College of Languages

Department of English Language

***Spelling Problems of secondary school students in writing
English language***

مشكلات الإملاء في اللغة الانجليزية لدى طلاب المدارس الثانوية

**A case study: Alforgan International Secondary schools (two
school) in Khartoum State**

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for M.A Degree in English**

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استهلال

قال تعالى:

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صدق الله العظيم

سورة: البقرة

الآية (286)

Dedication

.To my family

Acknowledgements

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Abstract

This study investigates spelling problems of secondary schools students in writing English Language. So, the main goal is to find out cases of spelling problems in order to suggest relevant solutions that help the students' abilities to avoid their spelling mistakes. The researcher uses a questionnaire and spelling test as tools for collecting data. The number of participants in the questionnaire is 30 teachers of English language, and 22 students of third year are tested. After analyzing and discussing the collected form, the researcher finds out that most of the students from spelling mistakes particularly the words that contain silent letters, which do not have clear rules for English spelling system. The researcher comes up with recommendations for the students and teachers such, Secondary school teachers should provide intensive spelling lessons, students should bring their dictionaries to schools and secondary school teachers should use different methods and ways in teaching English spelling.

المستخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على مشكلات الإملاء لدى طلاب المدارس الثانوية في كتابة اللغة الإنجليزية . لذلك فإن الهدف الرئيسي لمعرفة حالات المشاكل الإملائية التي تعيق الطلاب. ومن ثم إيجاد حلول وتوصيات تساعد الطلاب على الحد من المشاكل الإملائية الخاصة بهم.

استخدم الباحث الاستبانة و الإملاء كأدوات للحصول على المعلومات. وكان عدد المشاركين في الاستبانة 30 من أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية. كما اختبر الباحث 22 طالبا . وبعد تحليل ومناقشة البيانات التي توصل إليها الباحث وجد أن كثير من الطلاب يعانون من مشاكل الإملاء مثل الكلمات التي تشمل الأحرف الصامتة، لا توجد قواعد واضحة في نظام الإملاء في اللغة الانجليزية. وفي نهاية الدراسة أوصي الباحث بعدد من التوصيات للطلاب وأساتذة اللغة الانجليزية. أهمها: تكثيف حصص الإملاء لطلاب المدارس الثانوية، يجب على الطلاب إحضار القواميس إلى المدارس، يجب على أساتذة اللغة الانجليزية استخدام أساليب وطرق مختلفة في تدريس الحصة الإملائية.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Overview 1.0

People learn language to communicate with each others. Communication can be in either spoken or written. A person who wants to communicate through writing should have adequate content and correct form of English words for effective writing. Knowing these (grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc) helps the readers understand the writing materials well. Thus, the writer has to know how to say and what to say in his writing. When he writes, he has to use the right form. The use of correct spelling brings good communication between the writers and the readers. The readers who are reading wrongly spelt words may understand the word in a wrong way and he may confused to understand the message of the writers. Therefore, knowing and using the correct spelling of words help to create good communication between writers and readers. It is important for a person to know how to spell English words. A person who does not know how to spell English words commits spelling errors that can cause communication breakdown. Poor spelling can impede educational achievement, employment opportunity, interpersonal relationships, and self-esteem Moats, (1991). Similarly, learning to spell correctly is not easy for the majority of the learners, but it is important for all, especially with increased competition for good jobs. Even general readers make judgments about a person's intelligence and level of education based on spelling. Poor spelling on a restriction can offend an employer and cost an otherwise-qualified.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Problem is stated as spelling problem of secondary school students in writing English language in particular (Alforgan International Secondary schools). From many experiences of teaching English as foreign language at secondary schools, the researcher noticed that the students encounter many difficulties of spelling in writing English Language. The researcher wants to recognize the factors behind spelling problems that face secondary school students at third year, at Alforgan International secondary schools. Also the researcher wants to investigate the reasons behind spelling problems encountered by secondary school students.

1.2 Research Questions

In order to know the real problem of students in writing English words correctly, the present study aims to address the following research questions:

1. To what extent are spelling lessons provided by teachers sufficient?
2. To what extent are the courses and methods applied, sufficient for solving spelling problems of students?
3. What are the main problematic areas encountered by students in writing English spelling?

1.3 Hypotheses of the study

1. There are in sufficient spelling lessons provided by teachers in writing English.
2. Courses and methods applied are in sufficient for solving spelling problems of students.

3. The most important problematic areas are sounds and silent letters.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main goal of this study is to identify spelling problems of secondary schools in writing English Language, and the areas of the problems that committed by 3rd year students of Alforgan International Secondary schools, so the researcher aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To help students to have sufficient spelling lessons provided by teachers.
2. To know and suggest solutions for the spelling problems of students in writing English Language.
3. To enable the students to differentiate between sounds and letters that exist in English .

1.5 Significance of the study.

Spelling is a very important skill that can facilitate secondary school students to learn English Language. Correct spelling improve handwriting of the secondary school students. Correct spelling will help secondary school students in good pronunciation.

Methodology 1.6

The researcher follows the descriptive analytical methods to analyze the data. The researcher makes test for students in spelling problems and a questionnaire for English teachers. The data will be a sample of spelling problems of secondary school students. Data will be collected and treated statistically.

Limits of the Study 1.7

The staff of secondary schools teachers will be asked to respond to a questionnaire and spelling test for third year students at Alforgan International Secondary school which are intended to investigate the hypothesis of this study, the sample of the study will be limited to the secondary schools teachers who has experience for long time in teaching English Language. The sample limits to the teachers in Khartoum State. The sample of the study test limits to the secondary school students at Aforgan International secondary schools particularly third year. Those students will be given only a test to see how they write the words. The test will be restricted to the words that have chosen from Spine Series.

Chapter two

Literature Review& Previous Studies

2.0 Introduction:

The problems of English grammar and punctuation are relatively easy. But English spelling is quite the reverse - probably the most irregular of all alphabetic systems. Not only you can tell how to spell a word from hearing it spoken; you can't even be sure how a word is spoken from the written word. The reasons for this irregularity are complex and largely historical. But the economic and social costs are serious. English speaking children take on average three years longer to learn to read and write than others and some never succeed. Adult illiteracy remains. The English Spelling Society tries to address these problems by: Raising awareness and researching the costs of English spelling. Assessing the effectiveness of the various educational schemes for teaching spelling to children. Offering its own solutions to those who are struggling with spelling. Seeking to open minds to the possibility of an eventual reform of English spelling in the interests of improved literacy.

?What is Spelling 2.1

English spelling is a system which integrates phonetic and morphemic patterns to produce meaning in writing. Understanding phonetic patterns enables writers to spell those words that have predicable sound-letter relationships, e.g. mat-spelling is stating the letters and diacritics of a word. Words generally have accepted standard spelling which can vary regionally or nationally - spelling is one of the elements of orthography and a prescriptive element of alphabetic languages. (Boston, 1998:11)

Spelling involves the integration of several skills including knowledge of phonological representations, grammatical and semantic knowledge, as well as the formulation of analogies with words in visual memory and the knowledge of orthographic rules and conventions (Wagner & Torgesen, 1987:13)

2.2 The History of English Spelling

Before the spelling press was invented, there were no particular spelling patterns with regard to English. People spelled the words almost the way they want, according to education and temperament (Baugh, (1962: 251). Spelling standards were not established until the 17th century, when dictionaries were introduced. By the 19th century, most words had fixed spellings (Wikipedia (2006b). The complicated English spelling, or orthography, is to "the evaluation of the spoken language and conservatism in writing" Rollings, (2004 : 43).

Spelling in old English was affected by the Normans brought French, which became the official language, over the next two centuries, English took up many French words and anglicized them, e.g. made them more English –like, specially with respect to pronunciation. The spelling remained mainly unchanged (Calfee, 2005 : 6). However, some changes in spelling did take place. One example is the word *ambiance*, which has preserved the original French spelling, with an especially in America. Robbins, (2005). But another way of spelling the same word in English is *ambience*, which is also the most common spelling in Britain .Wikipedia, (2006b). English has many loan words not only from French and Latin, but also from other languages. Most loan words have kept their original, foreign spelling, even when the pattern is decidedly un-English. However, some spelling of words have changed towards more English patterns, even though the original spelling may still be in use. Loan words are one of the reasons behind the spelling varieties that exist in English today. Wikipedia, (2006b).

2.3 English Spelling Rules

The major problem with English for many students, however, is the correspondence rules that govern how letters are arranged in words, spelling. English is far from having a straightforward, transparent system in which one letter stands for one sound. The letter < h> for example, plays an Important role in consonant pairs such as < th, sh, gh, ph, ch, wh>, without being pronounced as /h/ in any of them. The sound /tʃ/ is usually spelled < ch> with two letters at the beginning of words as in 'chap' but < tch> with three letters at the end as in 'patch' than in 'chap'.

The popular belief is that English spelling is chaotic and un systematic-the evil of our irregular orthography' according to Noah Webster, the dictionary maker- usually based on the ideal, fully transparent alphabetic system. English is far from transparent: it additionally involves not only a system of linking whole items to meanings, as 'in of and yach, but also a system of orthographic regularities, such as <wh> omy occurring initially, as in 'white' an 'when'. Hence it should not be forgotten that native speakers of English also have problems with spelling, some the same as L2 users, some different. On my website the spelling test called 'The most difficult words' has been taken by over 100,000 people, yet at the time of writing only 14 have emailed me to say that they scored 100 per cent (and those mostly worked for publishers)

The charge of being unsystematic ignores the many rules of English spelling only some of which we are aware of. The one spelling rule that any native speaker claims to know is 'I before e except after c, which explains the spelling of 'receive'. There are exceptions to this rule, such as plurals, currencies and when < c> corresponds to /ʃ/ as in 'sufficient'. The rule applies at best to ten base forms in the hundred million running words of the British National Corpus.

2.3.1 Structure word spelling Rules

- **The three-letter rule**

Structure words have fewer than three letters; content words can be any length, from three letters, upwards (but most have not fewer than three-letters):

So:sew /sow to:two/too we:wee oh:owe by:bye/buy
no:know an:Ann I:eye/aye in:inn be:bee
or:ore/oar/awe

- **The 'th' rule**

In structure words, the initial < th > spelling correspond to /the/ this , and they, in content words, initial < th> correspond /θ / as in thesis and Thelma.

The:therapy than:thank thou:thousand this:thistle
thy:thigh though:thought

- **The titles rule**

In titles of books, films and so on, content words usually start with capital letters, structure words with lower cases.

The case of the stuttering Handbook of Bilingualism
Bishop The Tragedy of King Strangers on a Train

drived forms: 'receive' 'ceiling' receipt' conceive' 'deceive'
'conceit' 'transceive' 'fluoresein' and 'ceilidh'.

Nevertheless, there are rules that do work better for English. One set is the strucure word rules. Teachers are usually aware how structure words such as 'of' and 'the' behave in English sentences compared to content words such as 'oven' and 'drive' how they are pronounced in specific ways, such as the voiced /the/ these compared to / θ/ in think and thesis and how they

have stressed versus weak forms, but they are unaware that they are spelt in particular ways.

2.3.2 Vowel correspondence rules

1. silent 'e' rule

A silent < e > following a single consonant shows that the preceding vowel letter corresponds to a long vowel, lack of an < e > shows a shorter vowel.

Long free vowels		short checked vowels
'a'	/ei/ Dane	/æ/ Dan
'e'	/i:/ pete	/e/ pet
'I'	/ai/ fine	/i/ fin
'o'	/əʊ/ tote	/a/ tot
'u'	/j/ dune	/ʌ/ dun

2. consonant doubling rule

A double consonant shows that the preceding vowel corresponds to a short vowel rather than a long one.

Single consonant	Double consonant
'a' /ei/ playing	/a/ planning
'e' /i:/ beta	/e/ better
'I' /ai/ biter	/i/ bitter
'o' /eʊ/ hoping	/ɔ/ hopping
'u' /(j)/u: supper	/ʌ/ supper

Marker showing that the preceding < a > is siad /ei/ not /a/ that is, it is different from the < a > in fat.

The same relationship between long and short vowels underlies the consonant doubling rule. A doubled consonant in writing, say < tt > in 'bitter' or < nn > in running has nothing to do with saying the consonant twice, but shows, that the correspondence of the preceding vowel is short: the < pp > in 'supper' shows that the preceding < u > corresponds to /iv/ the < p > in 'supper' that < u > is the long /u:/. This version of the doubling rule is highly simplified and ignores the fact that some consonants never double < h,j > or rarely double, < v > and < k > (revving and trekker) and the British and North American spelling styles are slightly different. As always there are exceptions such as doubled consonants after long vowels as in 'small' and 'furry'. What the rules we have discussed show, however, is that there is a system to English spelling. It may be complicated, but it is probably simpler than the system for speaking English. Donna, (1991)

2.4 British and American spelling

There are hundreds of differences between British English and American English, which have developed since the first settlement of America. Words that have the exact same meaning can have different spellings in Britain and America. For example, in the United States, many nouns and verbs derived from nouns (such as the verb analyse/analyze, derived from analysis) are spelt with a z. Therefore, organization and analyze are the American spelling, while British English for the most part uses s instead of z in such words (AskOxford). However, the American -ization and -yze are becoming more and more common in British English as well and are in the process of developing into the standard varieties. Modiano, (1996:109).

British English mostly has the ending -our in words like colour and flavour, whereas the American way of spelling these words is normally without the u, i.e. color and flavor. Another example

is the use of the ending -tre (in British English) and -ter (in American English) in words like centre/center and theatre/theater. Baugh, (1965:428).

A further difference concerns the use of -se/-ce. In American English words like license and offense have the word ending -se. In British English, on the other hand, the same words are spelt with the ending -ce, resulting in licence and offence. However, in British English, the difference between nouns and verbs is crucial for the spelling in these cases. The British English spellings practice and advice, for example, designate nouns. When these words are used as verbs, the -ce ending is replaced by -se. Modiano, (1996:108).

American spelling in general has moved towards simplified forms of spelling more rapidly than British. Redundant letters have been dropped, such as the u in British English colour, and simple consonants have displaced compound ones. One example is traveller, which has been changed into traveler in American English. Mencken, (1921:225).

Noah Webster (1758-1843) is the father of many of the changes that American spelling has undergone. He considered the available English schoolbooks unsatisfactory and was determined to simplify the spelling of American English. He is the main reason why words like honour and fibre are spelt honor and fiber in American English today, although the loss of u had been witnessed earlier, for example in some of Shakespeare's works. Mencken, (1921:231). Webster's The American Spelling Book, published in 1793 and edited several times after that, was a huge success and sold more than 80 million copies in a hundred years. Baugh, (1965:425). The majority of the American spellings are due to Webster and the use of his dictionary, published in 1806. Baugh, 1965:429). The differences in spelling between British and American English often pass unnoticed since there are a number of British spellings still current in America, because some of the American innovations have become common in England too, and because

most of the spelling alternatives mentioned above are accepted in both Britain and America. Baugh, (1965:428).

2.5 Spelling in English

Mastery of the writing system includes the ability to spell. However, because in English the relationship between sound and symbol is a complex one, spelling is a problem for many users of the language, native and non-native speakers alike, and most of us are obliged to consult a dictionary from time to time. While we do not want to encourage the learners to be indifferent towards spelling, we should acknowledge that miss-spelling rarely interferes with communication –in fact, spelling was not standardized until the eighteenth century- any more than, on a phonemic level, mistakes of pronunciation greatly affect intelligibility. It is inappropriate, therefore, in a writing program, today too prescriptive an attitude towards spelling. This tends to be encouraged by that writing is open to inspection and is used in tests and examinations. Responsibility for ensuring an adequate mastery of spelling should be divided between the teacher and the learner: it is key areas, through rules, since English spelling is by no means unsystematic and much help can be given in this way, while it is the learners task to consult a dictionary for guidance. This habit will be greatly encouraged by drawing attention to mistakes rather than correcting them. Brune, (1997 : 15-16).

Significance of Spelling in Language learning 2.6

English language plays an essential role as an international language of commerce, industry, politics and education to the extent that it has become an agreed-upon fact in the academic world of today. So it is important to be able to express oneself properly and to communicate with other people, not only orally, but in written as well.

One important factor to take into account when they discuss writing as spelling. In the worst cause, one single misspelled

letter can change a word and alter the whole meaning of a text. In the popular view, correct spelling is a sign of education. Conversely, bad spelling simply looks ill. Al. Hamash, (1974: 116).

It has been argued that spelling is very important factor in writing. Al. Hamash, (1974:114) States that spelling is necessary for composition and composition writing strengthens the mastery of correct spelling. He adds that the mastery of spelling demands the mastery of English spelling patterns at the level of production (writing)

To sum up, spelling is very important in written language. Any mistake in spelling can affect the written product and may lead .to misunderstanding

Understanding English Spelling 2.7

Writers need to understand English spelling, in order to spell correctly. English spelling is a system which integrate phonetic and morphemic patterns to produce meaning in writing. Understanding phonetic patterns enables writers to spell those words that have predictable sound-letter relationships, e.g. mad.

Morphemes are the smallest units of language that carry meaning . The morphemes /b/, /a/ and /t/ together form the morpheme /bat/. While the word bat carries some meaning, its particular meaning depends on the context of its use. For example, its meaning is different in each of the following:

" I bought a cricket bat"

" she went in to bat."

"The bat spread its wings."

The ending –ing is also a morpheme , even though it carries meaning only when it is bound to a word like bat, to make batting. As you see, adding the -ing morpheme causes a change

to the other morpheme, in this case the doubling of the end consonant. Fortunately, such morphemic changes are fairly regular in English, which is why understanding morphemic patterns is another important aspect of spelling knowledge. This is often the point of spelling "rules". Understanding these features of the English language helps writers to spell, because it is useful to remember that many of the words that are difficult to spell have non-phonetic spelling for a variety of reasons: their present spelling might reflect the way were pronounced many years ago (the word knight is an example) or they might be borrowed from a foreign language (the word charade, from French, is an example).

Most of these features must be learnt as individual cases. There is no consistent approach to what the English language. Either
..visual knowledge is used in these instance

The best way to learn how to spell the common word two correctly is simply to learn that it looks like, that, relying on
..visual knowledge

On the other hand, the best way to learn how to spell psychology correctly is to learn that it starts with the Greek letter psi and has within it other Greek letter chi, the same letter as in Christmas. This demonstrates the importance of etymological knowledge, not only for older students, but also for students at any stage of learning when they need to learn the spelling of a particular word

Spelling is a skill that is very important in writing. Misspelled words make writing look careless and unprofessional. The English language was derived from many different languages, and so it has many strangely spelled words. There are spelling rules to help you, but there are always exceptions to the rules. Words that sound alike are not always spelled with the same letter combinations, and words that are spelled alike are not always pronounced alike. If you are not sure if you have spelled a word correctly, look up your spelling in a dictionary. If your spelling is not there, you must find the correct spelling.(Judith, 1997).

2.8.1. Spelling Hints

1. Reading: In any reading that you do, be aware of the spelling of the words you are reading. If you see a new word, spell it to yourself a few times. Being a good speller is often a matter of knowing when a word looks right or wrong.

2. ie or ei words: Even good spellers memorize this rhyme to help them remember whether the I or e comes first. I before E (piece, belief) Except after C (receipt, deceit) or when sound like /ei/ As in neighbor and weigh.

Exceptions:

ancient	foreign	leisure	science
Conscience	forfeit	neither	seize
either	height	protein	seizure
	heist		weird

3. Sounds like shun: The last syllable of intention and fusion both sound the same –shun. Pay special attention to words that end in –ion, and learn whether –ion has an s or a t before it.

Example

Abstention inflation ration

Association jurisdiction relation

Commission lesion section

Coercion mission tension

4. Sound like ur: The last syllable of computer, operator, and polar all the sound the same-ur. Study words that end in the sound ur so you know how to spell them. Most of them end in –er, so you must be aware of the –or and –ar exceptions. Within words, there are even more variations. All these words have the –ur sound, the spelling is usually –er.

Example

Further respiration merchant

Carburetor nurse emergency

Steward merge service

Word circuit refrigeration .(Judith, 1997).

?What is writing 2.9

Byrne ,(1999:45) points out that writing in its simplest meaning is the act of forming the graphic symbols (letters) making marks on flat surface of some kind. These graphic symbols or letters should be arranged in order to form sentences. Generally, writing is a real process of communication. It is the sense of being in contact with people who are part of particular audience. In other words, writing is a representation of language in a textual medium through the case of a set of signs or symbols (known as writing system).

The nature of writing 2.10

The study of language in the twentieth century has tended to concentrate on spoken language. Written language was thought by some to be spoken language put into written form. Many linguists from de Saussure through Chomsky, for what seemed like good reasons at the time, neglected the written mode in favor of the spoken. This, however, contributed to the fact that written was for a long time a neglected area in language teaching. Furthermore, the assumption that writing is putting the spoken language into written form is only true for activities like taking down dictation or transcribing a tape (Arthur, 1998).

2.11. Writing as a cognitive approach

The third major approach in composition studies considers writing as a complex cognitive process requiring appropriate strategies. In the past two decades, a great deal has been learned about these processes. Both L1 and L2 researches have examined the mental states of writers, their problem-solving strategies and decisions about focus, audience and language usage their stylistic decisions as well as composing process- planning, decisions during writing, and revising-in order to determine what is involved in the act of writing and what skills are required. Ulla Connor, (1978 :76).

2.12 Making Writing Interactive

The interactive nature of writing is stressed because writing for an audience cause problems for students on writing courses. In writing courses students often feel that they are somehow

writing in a vacuum. This feeling is reinforced by the system of marking, which communicates to the student the sense that the markers are the only reason for writing. In this case good piece writing is one which attracts higher marks than previous ones, and not necessarily one which communicates with an audience. And yet, no-one really writes except for someone.

By making writing conditions more interactive an awareness of audience is reinforced. In discussing a proposed piece of writing with another student, the student writer is forced to consider the audience and is more likely to adopt a reader-oriented approach to writing. It is important that the teacher should not be the only audience, because teachers are so often seen as critics and mark givers. Writing for a variety of audiences develops flexibility and control in the writer.

2.13 Developing written communication skills

In speaking, we tend to leave out elements when they are obvious from the context, for example:

A Working?

B No, just writing a letter.

Instead of:

A Are you working?

B No, I am not working. I am just writing a letter.

If we did not leave out elements like this, spoken communication would include a great number of unnecessary words and would take up an enormous amount of time.

In contrast, the written language is usually more grammatically complete. The main reason for this is that, unlike listeners,

readers do not have tone of voice, facial expression, and gestures, or a real situational context to help them understand messages. A written text has to create context and make the references and connections of the messages clear through the language itself. It requires more grammatically complete and often longer sentences, and also a greater range of vocabulary and the use of grammatical structures that rarely occur in speech. But the fact the readers and writers can take their own time compensates for this greater complexity. Writers can plan, and then edit and correct early drafts of a text, and reread passages that they do not understand at first.(Paul,2000)

2.14 Linguistic Differences between Arabic and English

Kharma and Hajjaj (1997) discuss a number of the linguistic distinctions that exist between Arabic and English that make the acquisition of English for Arab learners quite challenging. One of these distinctions is the differences in the orthographic systems. They note that “the greatest difficulty [for ALEs] arises from the difference between the seemingly irregular spelling system of English compared with the greater regularity of the predominantly phonetic script of Arabic. As discussed earlier, the English writing system is quite irregular which causes most learners of English, including native speakers some confusion In contrast, Arabic has a highly regular writing system that is mostly phonetic. Thus, Arab learners, as a result of their L1 background, will be looking for sound-symbol correspondence in English words, which is, as Ediger (2001) indicates, not available in most common words in English. For example, as Kharma and Hajjaj note, silent and doubled letters are some of the language irregularities that are not found in Arabic, and thus confuse Arab learners

2.15 Spelling and Writing

Moats (2006) stated that, there is a strong connection between spelling and writing. She added that, writing is a mental manipulating task that depends on automatic utilization of fundamental skills, such as grammar, handwriting, punctuation and spelling, so that the writer can hold follow of such matters like word choice, authentic needs, topic and organization. Writers who should think too hard about how to spell utilize expensive able cognitive resources required for higher level of composition. Moat (2006) added that, poor spellers may limit what they write to words that they can spell, with unavoidable loss of verbal power, or they may lose follow of their thoughts when they spell a word. It is required for learners to have endured with verbal and written language, containing phonemic knowledge, to certain that learners are victorious in their own written work, "the first factor affecting the success of writers was a lack of experience with language". They added that, "in order for children to be successful in written language, they must have a strong verbal language developed, which is often based in phonemic awareness" (p. 22). The basic problem among most learners is to spell words accurately and this shows the limit of useful spelling knowledge and these learners can inhibit their ability to write (Baleghizadeh & Dargahi, 2011(.

On the basis of the argument of the El Koumy (2002) argued that there were two chief approaches for pretend the teaching learning process and foreign language instruction and learning area for over the last two decades: (1)" the skill-based approach, sometimes appeared as the "formal" or "intentional", "direct" instructional approach and (2) the whole-language approach, sometimes appeared as the "informal", or "indirect", "incidental" learning approach"(p. 11). Each approach will be described in the following section.

2.16 Previous studies:

This part involves an overview of some studies done in spelling problems of students in writing English words by secondary school students. Most researchers who have dealt with this area state that: spelling problems of students have vary.

Ahmed Mohammed Goron (1992), in his study (problems facing Sudanese secondary school students in learning English language), touch the area of speaking. He compared the lexis between English and Arabic language to spot the areas of problems confronting Sudanese learners of English in receiving producing English words.

Smah Hesan Ismail Babeker (2011), in her study (problems of secondary school in writing English language) touch the consonant and vowels areas. She made spelling test in order to investigate the real problem of students in writing English words and she has done case study at Alhoda secondary school for girls in Karemma.

Chapter three

Methodology of The Study

Introduction:

The subject consists of 30 teachers, the subjects are asked to give their opinions of 12 statements, which are prepared by the researcher to test the hypotheses of the study. Also, the study

consists of test for students. They are 22 students, they are given spelling test that consists of 20 words that prepared by the researcher.

A descriptive analytical method of discussion with illustration tables will follow to show the various percentages indication interpretations and explanations of their results will be presented. The data of the study aims to identify spelling problems of secondary schools students in writing English language in Khartoum state from the teacher's point of view.

3.1 Subjects

3.1.1 Teachers

Thirty teachers from secondary schools participated. They are males and females, their age ranged between 26 to 45 years. They were randomly selected from all over Khartoum State secondary schools. Their teaching experience from two to more than 15 years. All of them graduated from Faculties of Arts and Educations, and were specialized in English Language.

3.1.2 Students

Twenty-two students, both males and females participated in this study. All of them were secondary students, their age ranged between 18- 20 years. All of them were from third year only. They have been studying English as a school subject more than 12 years and the number of English periods taught per week is six and the duration of each period is 40 minutes. Their native language is Arabic, but English, the Target language, is being taught as a Foreign Language .

3.2 Instruments

In this study two tools were used for data collection and analysis. The teacher's questionnaire and student's spelling test.

The questionnaire and spelling test of the study attempt to examine spelling problems of secondary schools students in writing English. Thus, the data of this study has been elicited through a questionnaire for teachers and spelling test for students. The questionnaire which was prepared consists of 12 statements and spelling test that consists of 20 words in order to collect the data of the study and will be analyzed to satisfy the questions and the hypotheses of the study. Those are very important, because thus show an idea about spelling problems that committed by secondary schools students and to understand the problematic areas of students. The questionnaire and spelling test were quite helpful.

3.3 Validity and Reliability

The questionnaire was validated by experts who omitted, added and corrected. Their notes and suggestions were taken into consideration, and the researcher made the necessary modifications before administered the questionnaire. Before the questionnaire was distributed, it was given to the supervisor for the final evaluation then it was given to a number of subjects who face no problem in answering the questions. Spelling test was designed by the researcher in consultation with some teachers, then presented to the supervisor for approval. For the reliability, the researcher used the statistical package for social studies (SPSS) to conduct his research. The validity of the test was calculated by excel. The above result confirmed three hypotheses.

3.4 The procedures

To investigate the problems of third year students in English spelling, at Alforgan International secondary school. 22 students are chosen as the sample of the study and also a questionnaire which consists of 12 statements was handed over to 30

secondary school teachers – by the researcher. The teachers filled it out and collected back by the researcher on the same day. Also 20 words presented by the researcher for 22 students as spelling test. Both tools have done in order to get data about spelling problems of secondary schools students in writing English.

Chapter Four

Data analysis, & Discussion of the results

Introduction .1 .4

This chapter is devoted to the analysis and discussion of the study. The data is collected by using questionnaire to 30 English teachers in Khartoum state secondary schools and spelling test for 22 secondary school students in Alforjan International

School, to investigate spelling problems of secondary schools in writing English Language. The researcher used the statistical analysis to analyze the results.

Table (4.1): Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	12	
Female	18	
Total	30	

Table (4.1) shows the teachers who participated in this study. They are professional in teaching English Language, at secondary schools. Both were males and females. They have different teaching experiences and most of them have a bachelor degree.

Spelling problems can be overcome by intensive spelling -4.2 .test

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	18	60%
Agree	11	36,6%

Neutral	-	-
Disagree	1	3,3%
Strongly disagree	1	3,3%
Total	30	100%

Table 4.2 above about intensive spelling problems for secondary school students. Considering the positive variable it is seen that about 90,6% of the teachers state that intensive spelling lessons for secondary schools is possible to solve spelling problems. None of them are neutral about this statement. Only 6,6% of the teachers disagree with this statement and this is very low percentage because, secondary school students need intensive spelling lessons to solve spelling problems.

Spelling lessons play a major role in solving spelling -4.3 .problems

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	13	43,3%
Agree	13	43,3%

Neutral	1	3,3%
Disagree	2	6,6%
Strongly disagree	1	3,3%
Total	30	100%

Table 4.3 above is about spelling lessons play major role in solving spelling problems. The majority of participants about 81% are completely agree with the researcher on his opinion that ,spelling lessons play major role in solving spelling problems. Actually this very high percentage and this indicate that spelling lessons are very important for secondary school students. Only about 3,3% of the teachers are neutral. However, 10 % of the them are disagree with the researcher.

Some students commit spelling mistakes because, -4.4
.English spelling system does not have clear rules

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	7	23,3%
Agree	10	33,3%

Neutral	6	20%
Disagree	6	20%
Strongly disagree	1	3,3%
Total	30	100%

Table 4.4 above considers 23,3% of the educators are strongly agree with the researcher on his statement and about 33,3% of educators are agree with the researcher. However, only 20% of the educators are neutral on some students commit spelling problems because, English spelling system does not have clear system and also with the same percentage of the educators are disagree with the researcher. It noticed that on the table above about only 3,3% of the educators are strongly disagree with the researcher on the statement. This is very low percentage and this support researcher's opinion.

**Some students commit spelling mistakes because, they -4.4
.do not revise spelling lessons at home**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	10	33,3%
Agree	14	46,6%

Neutral	3	10%
Disagree	3	10%
Strongly disagree	-	-
Total	30	100%

Regarding this item the above table shows that 79,9% of the teachers agree that their students commit spelling problems because, they do not revise spelling lessons at home and this is high percentage for this item. 10% are neutral and also 10% are disagree.

**Some students commit spelling mistakes because spine -4.5
.six do not contain enough spelling activities**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	11	36,6%

Agree	9	30%
Neutral	3	10%
Disagree	3	10%
Strongly disagree	4	13,3%
Total	30	100%

The table above shows that about 66,6% of the participants believe that spine six do not contain enough spelling activities, so that their students commit spelling problems in writing English language. Only about 10% of them are neutral with this statement, while 23,3% of the participants are disagree with the researcher.

Spelling problems can be overcome by focusing on -4.6 .spelling activities found in spine six

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	6	20%

Agree	8	26,6%
Neutral	3	10%
Disagree	9	30%
Strongly disagree	3	10%
Total	30	100%

The above table shows that 46,6% of the educators, according to their experiences believe that spelling problems can be overcome by focusing on spelling activities found in spine six. About 10% of them are neutral in their opinion, while 40% are disagree with the researcher on the mention proposition.

**To overcome spelling problems students should use the -4.7
.dictionaries at schools**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
--------	-----------	------------

Strongly agree	16	53,3%
Agree	8	26,6%
Neutral	3	10%
Disagree	2	6,6%
Strongly disagree	1	3,3%
Total	30	100%

In the above table it noticed that, more than half of the number of the teachers, about 79,9% believe that students should use the dictionaries at schools in order to overcome spelling problems and this very high percentage. This indicate that using the dictionary is very important for the learner and help him to be good speller. 10 % of them are neutral and also 10% are disagree with the researcher.

**To overcome spelling problems, teachers must use -4.8
.different methods for teaching spelling lessons**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	17	56,6%

Agree	5	16,6%
Neutral	2	6,6%
Disagree	5	16,6%
Strongly disagree	1	3,3%
Total	30	100%

The above table exhibits that about 73% of the teachers agree that to overcome spelling problems, they must use different methods for teaching spelling lessons. While 6,6% of them are neutral in their attitudes and 20% of them are disagree with the researcher on the statement.

**Some students commit spelling mistakes because, the -4.9
.linguistics differences between English and Arabic**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
--------	-----------	------------

Strongly agree	11	36,6%
Agree	7	23,3%
Neutral	6	20%
Disagree	4	13%
Strongly disagree	2	6,6%
Total	30	100%

The above table shows that more than half number about 60% of the teachers supported researcher's statement that, the linguistics differences between English and Arabic. 20 % of them are neutral according to their attitudes and also about 20 % of the teachers are disagree with the researcher.

**Students commit spelling mistakes because, they do not -4.10
.understand words with unstressed vowels**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
--------	-----------	------------

Strongly agree	13	43,3%
Agree	7	23,3%
Neutral	7	23,3%
Disagree	2	6,6%
Strongly disagree	1	3,3%
Total	30	100%

Regarding the above statement, 71% of the teachers believe that students do not understand words with unstressed vowels, so that they commit spelling problems when they write English language. About 23,3 % are neutral according to their experiences in the field of teaching, while only about 10% of them are disagree with the researcher on the statement.

Students commit spelling mistakes because of silent -4.11 .letters in English Language

Option	Frequency	Percentage
---------------	------------------	-------------------

Strongly agree	14	46,6%
Agree	7	23,3%
Neutral	3	10%
Disagree	5	16,6%
Strongly disagree	1	3,3%
Total	30	100%

The above table shows that, the majority of respondents about 70 % advocated that, students commit spelling problems because of silent letters in English language. 10% of them are neutral in their attitudes, while 20% of them are disagree with the researcher.

To overcome the spelling problems students should be acquainted with the forty four phonemes by practicing spine
.six

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	12	40%
Agree	7	23,3%
Neutral	8	26,6%
Disagree	3	10%
Strongly disagree	-	-
Total	30	100%

It is noticeable in the above table most of the respondents 63,3% are agree with the researcher on the statement that, students should be acquainted with the forty four phonemes to overcome spelling problems. 26,6% of them are neutral in their attitudes, while only 10% of them are disagree with the researcher.

Spelling test

Table 1. Population

school	male	Female	total
Alfouragn	10	12	22

The above table shows the population of this study that the researcher did the spelling test. The population of this study were secondary school students in the Khartoum state, at Alfourgan International secondary schools. The population of this study is composed of the students of third year, in the summer course that was part of coming academic year. The population were (22) students girls and boys distributed into two schools (girls school and boys school). The population of girls school were (12) students while boys were (10) students. English Language is one of their subjects. Besides they have different subjects such as Arabic, Geography, Math..... etc.. The school of this population is located in Arkwit Abed Katim Street, near to the Sudan international University. It was founded since 1998. The two schools were separated each other (girls school, boys school)

Table 2. Spelling test

No.	word	No.	Word
1	happy	11	through
2	write	12	school

3	enjoy	13	month
4	photograph	14	psychology
5	play	15	pure
6	church	16	description
7	sleep	17	government
8	history	18	problem
9	queen	19	center
10	geography	20	match

The above table show the spelling test that have prepared by the researcher. It was carried out in the following way: the spelling test considered of (20) words with the vowel in different position, at the initial, in the middle and at the end of word. Consonants and words with the problem areas in English spelling and words silent letters. Beside the different types of words which are used in everyday English. They have chosen from spine serious.

Table.3. result of spelling test

Problematic list of students	percentage	Success list of students	Percentage
14	70%	8	40%

From the above table, it is observed that about 14 of the students out of 22 have spelling problem in writing English language, with 70%. This very high percentage and this indicate that students of Alforan International secondary schools students have spelling problems in writing English. While only 8 students out of 22 are success in spelling test.

Table.4. result of spelling test

The word	No	The result		Percentage of errors
		correct	Incorrect	
happy	22	17	5	22,7%
write	22	16	6	27,2%
enjoy	22	11	11	50%
photograph	22	9	13	59%
play	22	19	3	13,6%
church	22	9	13	59%
sleep	22	19	3	13,6%
history	22	10	12	54,5%
queen	22	17	5	22,7%
geography	22	9	13	59%
through	22	6	16	72,7%
school	22	16	6	27,2%
month	22	9	13	59%
psychology	22	6	16	72,7%
pure	22	16	6	27,2%
description	22	2	20	90%
government	22	6	16	72,7%
problem	22	12	10	45,4%

center	22	8	14	63,6%
Match	22	17	5	22,7%
Average	22	234	206	

Table (5)

1	Errors of unsuccessful students were = 206
2	Errors of success students were =24
3	The total errors of students were = 230

Chapter Five

Conclusion, Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Study

Introduction 5.1

This chapter presents the main findings of the study and it includes some recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

:Conclusion 5.2

The main aim of this study is to identify spelling problems of secondary schools students in writing English language, the researcher has come out with the following findings after the analysis of the obtained data.

1. Secondary school students commit spelling mistakes because, there are not enough spelling test.

.Spelling lessons are neglected by secondary schools teachers .2

3. Most of the important reason of spelling problems in Spine three does not contain enough spelling activities .

4. Secondary schools students need more spelling activities to solve spelling problems.

5. There are no clear rules for English spelling system to students to understand.

:Recommendations 5.3

Based on the result of the study, the following recommendations are suggested

1. Secondary schools teachers should provide intensive spelling lessons for secondary schools students to solve spelling problems.

.Students should bring their dictionaries to schools .2

3. Educators should work hard in the area of different between American spelling and British spelling.

4. Secondary school teachers should use different methods and ways for teaching English spelling.

5. Teachers must encourage their students at spelling activities.

6. Teachers should teach the students spelling rules and correct pronunciation of the words.

:Suggestions for further studies 5.4

The researcher might propose some useful suggestions,

1. Teachers and researchers can prepare suitable studies in spelling field

2. Investigate the difficulties that encounter secondary schools students in writing compound words.

The role of secondary schools teachers in promoting spelling .3 skill

4. Investigating the role of Spine six for developing spelling skill

5. The role of spine six in promoting spelling skill among the secondary schools students.

6. The difficulties that encounter secondary students in understanding words with silent letters.

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Appendix (A)

Questionnaire

Sudan University of Science and Technology

Collage of Graduate studies

collage of Languages

Department of English Language

Questionnaire

Dear teacher, I will be very grateful if you read and respond to the following questionnaire. It is planned to collect data about (*Spelling Problems of*

secondary school students in writing English language).The data will be confidentially used for research purpose only.

Thanks

The researcher

(-----)Are you :- male (-----) female

Tick (√) according to your point of view

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Spelling problems can be -1 overcome by intensive spelling .test					
Spelling lessons play a major -2 role in solving spelling problems					
Some students commit spelling -3 problems because, they didn't understand during the spelling .lessons					
Some students commit spelling -4 mistakes because, they do not revise spelling lessons again					
Some students commit spelling .5 mistakes because, Spine three is .not sufficient for students					
Spelling problems can be .6 overcome teaching students spine three and other courses in English spelling					
To overcome, spelling problems .7 of students, teachers should use different methods for teaching English spelling					
To overcome, spelling .8 problems, Teachers must use different methods for teaching .spelling problems					

some students commit spelling . 9 mistakes because of the existence of different sounds in English . Language					
Students commit spelling . 10 mistakes because they didn't understand silent letters in English . Language					
To avoid spelling problems of . 11 Students , they should know the affricates in English Language					
Students commit spelling . 12 mistakes because, they didn't hear the correct pronunciation					

Appendix (B)

Spelling test

No.	word	No.	Word
1	happy	11	through
2	write	12	school
3	enjoy	13	month
4	photograph	14	psychology
5	play	15	pure
6	church	16	description
7	sleep	17	government
8	history	18	problem
9	queen	19	center
10	geography	20	match

