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## **TRABAJO DE DIPLOMA**

**Título del trabajo:** Desarrollo de las habilidades de ortografía en Inglés dentro del proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje de la escritura instrumental en la escuela primaria.

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## DIPLOMA THESIS

**Title:** Development of English spelling skills within the  
teaching- learning process of instrumental writing in  
Elementary School.

**Authoress:** Laura Beatriz Hernández Armengol.

**Thesis Director:** Ms.C Deyse Matilde Fernández González.

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*Knowledge of languages is the doorway to wisdom.*

*(Unknown)*

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## **ABSTRACT**

The major paper entitled: “*Development of English spelling skill within the teaching-learning process of instrumental writing in Elementary School*”, was carried out at “Ernesto Guevara de la Serna”, Elementary School in Santa Clara. The subjects of research had many difficulties regarding English spelling skill. Some empirical methods were administered to get more information about this difficulties. A preliminary proposal of activities to develop English spelling skill within the teaching learning process of instrumental writing was designed and implemented during the academic year (2018-2019). The activities were designed taking into account the results of the diagnosis. The proposal was conceived taking into account some theoretical and methodological bases suggested by different authors. Most of the exercises functioned well as the students were motivated as they had the possibility of improving most of their spelling difficulties. The dialectic-materialistic general method was followed, as well as the qualitative approach, mainly the action research methods.

## RESUMÉ

Le document principal intitulé: "Développement des compétences en orthographe anglaise dans le processus d'enseignement-apprentissage de l'écriture instrumentale à l'école primaire" a été réalisé à l'école primaire "Ernesto Guevara de la Serna" à Santa Clara. Les sujets de recherche ont eu beaucoup de difficultés en ce qui concerne les compétences en orthographe anglaise. Certaines méthodes empiriques ont été utilisées pour obtenir plus d'informations sur ces difficultés. Au cours de l'année universitaire (2018-2019), une proposition préliminaire d'activités visant à développer les compétences en orthographe anglaise dans le processus d'enseignement et d'apprentissage de l'écriture instrumentale a été conçue et mise en œuvre. Les activités ont été conçues en tenant compte des résultats du diagnostic. La proposition a été conçue en tenant compte des bases théoriques et méthodologiques suggérées par différents auteurs. La plupart des exercices ont bien fonctionné car les étudiants étaient motivés, car ils avaient la possibilité d'améliorer la plupart de leurs problèmes d'orthographe. Le méthode dialectico-matérialiste générale a été suivie, de même que l'approche qualitative, principalement les méthodes de recherche-action.

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## INTRODUCTION

English is the fourth most widely spoken native language in the world, and in terms of number of speakers, it is the most spoken official language. English helps to communicate across cultures and to conduct in lands one may never have been.

English is the language of science, aviation, computers, diplomacy, tourism and international communication, the media and the internet; so learning English is important for socializing and entertainment as well as work. Many of the world's top films, books and music are published and produced in English.

English has been taught in Cuba since 1961 and it has become an important issue in the educational system. Elementary School is the starting point of the teaching learning process of English language in Cuba. Getting the students to communicate orally and in writing at an elementary level is the main goal in the teaching of English in elementary education in Cuba.

English may be difficult for Spanish speakers, because of different reasons. Firstly, most of the words in Spanish are spelled phonetically; Secondly, because pronunciation in English has changed due to internal factors mainly meanwhile the spelling has not changed. Another reason is that English has borrowed many words from other languages and their foreign spelling is often kept and finally, English has many homonyms (stationary, stationery, etc.). (Penner, 1986: 130)

The reasons expressed above are enough to understand how difficult English spelling is for Spanish speakers. The authoress of this paper as an English language learner first and then as a teacher has experienced the negative effects of the causes mentioned above. During the academic year 2018-2019, she has taught English at "Ernesto Guevara de la Serna", Elementary School and she has noticed through, the administration of different empirical methods, such as, observation and interview, that the students are very motivated to learn English. However, their learning is below the scope of the objectives set in the subject syllabus, both in speaking and writing. In writing, it was found that the most affected skill is spelling.

The students are used to write the same way they pronounce. An example, they write words like the article "the" as (de), mother as (moder), summer as (sumer), etc. The main causes of this difficulty according to the students' opinion, are not only in the

lack of practice in writing and the lack of spelling exercises, but also the lack of teaching aids to enhance the development of spelling skill as well.

Some former major papers carried out at “Félix Varela Morales” Campus, by fifth year students majoring in English and French languages, have considered spelling as a common difficulty in their students. In 2011, authors like Álvarez Chaviano L. (2011) proposes a system of exercises to develop writing abilities in 7<sup>th</sup> graders at “Ricardo Zenon” Secondary School; Farias Pérez A. (2013) proposes a system of exercises to develop spelling skill in 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at “13 de Marzo” Elementary School; Correa Restrepo L (2013) put forward a system of actions to develop spelling skill in 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at “Ramón Pando Ferrer” elementary school in Santa Clara. Ordetx Betancourt B, (2016) presents a final proposal of a system of activities to develop the spelling skill in English in 6<sup>th</sup> graders, class A from “José A. Echeverría” Elementary School.

All these papers have dealt with spelling as the principal concern in their students. They helped the authoress of this study to get more details about the different ways, spelling mistakes may appear. Their proposals gave her many ideas to design an initial proposal able to meet the needs of her subjects of research.

From the problematic situation previously described, the following **scientific problem** was identified: How to contribute to develop English spelling skill within the teaching- learning process of instrumental writing in 5<sup>th</sup> graders, class C, at “Ernesto Guevara de la Serna” Elementary School.

#### **Object of Research:**

Development of English spelling skill in 5<sup>th</sup> graders, class C, “Ernesto Guevara de la Serna” Elementary School.

The **objective** of this research is to build up a proposal of activities to develop English spelling skill in 5<sup>th</sup> graders, class C, at “Ernesto Guevara de la Serna” Elementary School.

The following **scientific questions** have guided this research:

1. What theoretical and methodological fundamentals back up the development of English spelling skill?

2. What is the real situation of 5<sup>th</sup> graders, Class C, at “Ernesto Guevara de la Serna” Elementary School regarding the development of English spelling skill?
3. What new changes could be introduced in the teaching learning process of English in order to develop English spelling skill in 5<sup>th</sup> graders, Class C, at “Ernesto Guevara de la Serna” Elementary School?
4. What transformations take place in 5<sup>th</sup> graders, Class C, “Ernesto Guevara de la Serna” Elementary School during the introduction of new changes to develop English spelling skill?
5. What exercises went well and what did not go well during the introduction of new changes to develop English spelling skill in 5<sup>th</sup> graders, Class C, “Ernesto Guevara de la Serna” Elementary School?
6. What final scientific result emerges from the building up process?  
In order to give answer to the previous scientific questions the following **scientific tasks** were completed:
  - 1- Establishment of the theoretical and methodological fundamentals to back up the development of English spelling skill.
  - 2- Diagnoses of the real situation of 5<sup>th</sup> graders, Class C, “Ernesto Guevara de la Serna” Elementary School regarding the development of English spelling skill.
  - 3- Introduction of new changes to develop English spelling skill in 5<sup>th</sup> graders, Class C, “Ernesto Guevara de la Serna” Elementary School.
  - 4- Evaluation of what exercise went well and what exercises did not go well during the introduction of the new changes.
  - 5- Evaluation of the transformations that took place in 5<sup>th</sup> graders, Class C, “Ernesto Guevara de la Serna” Elementary School during the introduction of new changes to develop English spelling skill.
  - 6- Proposal of the final scientific result that comes out from the building up process.

## **Scientific Methods:**

### **From the theoretical level:**

Historic-Logical: It was used to know about the different researches carried out previously about the development of spelling skill in the elementary level: difficulties, proposals and results by fifth year students majoring in foreign languages at Felix Varela Campus.

Analytic-Synthetic: It was used to analyze all the accumulated theoretical information about English spelling skill in the original sources and the selection of the main ideas to back up the development of spelling skill.

Inductive-Deductive: It was used to analyze the results obtained through the administration of the different instruments, derived from empirical methods to identify the regularities and to carry out the building up process of the final scientific result.

Systemic Approach: It was used to keep coherence among the different phases of this research paper.

### **From the empirical level:**

Analysis of documents (workbook and syllabus), interview, analysis of students' outcomes (evaluations and notebooks), participant observation and triangulation.

All these methods were administered to find the necessary data to corroborate the problematic situation described in the introduction of this major paper.

### **From the mathematical level:**

The percent analysis: to support any information obtained in the diagnosis phase and the evaluation of students' transformations during the introduction of the building up process.

### **Characteristics of the subjects of research**

5<sup>th</sup> graders, Class C, at "Ernesto Guevara de la Serna" Primary School shows characteristics that are described below:

The class is formed by 29 students, all of them are between 10 and 11 years old and they show an average learning rate. Their behavior is standard, though a few of them are not always self-controlled. In general terms, the motivation of the group towards English language is above standards. They consider the subject is enjoyable and productive. This group is motivated, attentive, and willing to participate spontaneously during the lessons; it is also noticeable that they are interested in

learning and are always ready to complete the exercises; they are comfortable with routines and enjoy repetition. Besides, they love using their imagination.

### **Practical contributions**

This paper proposes some activities to develop English spelling skill within the teaching- learning process of instrumental writing in 5<sup>th</sup> graders, Class C, “Ernesto Guevara de la Serna” Elementary School.

### **Structure of the paper**

This paper is structured in introduction, discussion, conclusions, recommendations, bibliography and appendixes.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **I. Theoretical and methodological backgrounds of English spelling.**

#### **1. Historical Antecedents about the treatment of spelling in different contexts.**

This topic has been studied by different researchers in Cuba and in some other countries of the world. For this study, the authoress analyzed some of the major papers carried out at “Félix Varela Morales” Campus by students majoring in foreign languages from 2011 onward to diminish students’ difficulties in English spelling. The most recent papers, already mentioned in the introduction of this study are the following.

The authoress analyzed those papers written since 2011 onward. The first one was, the paper written by Álvarez Chaviano L. (2011) who proposes a system of exercises to develop writing abilities in 7<sup>th</sup> grade at “Ricardo Zenon” Secondary School. This major paper deals with the teaching of the writing skill in seventh grade. The paper presents the theoretical foundations that account for the importance of instrumental writing, the assessments of student’s needs in terms of the development of this skill and of the teacher’s needs in terms of preparation for the teaching of it. Not only, the proposal was suitable and applicable since it takes into consideration students’ needs and interests, but also, it proved its effectiveness concerning the development of the writing skill as well.

Correa Restrepo L (2013) put forward a system of actions to develop spelling skills in 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at “Ramón Pando Ferrer” elementary school in Santa Clara. With the use of various theoretical and empirical methods, she found that there was lack of teaching materials and of actions that allowed the students to improve spelling skill. The system proposes actions to improve the existing material aids, to involve all of the students’ senses in the learning process, and to make use of games, competitions, and artistic creation for the sake of developing spelling skill. This system resulted from a process of implementation of planned actions, reflection on their results, changing what did not work as expected and keeping what worked well. The effectiveness of the actions presented as a system was verified by assessing the students’ improvements during the English lessons.

Farias Pérez A. (2013) proposes a system of exercises to develop spelling skill in 5th grade students at “13 de Marzo” Elementary School. It offered to the teachers of English a guide to treat the students’ needs and potentialities concerning writing and a structured model to improve spelling skill within the teaching-learning process of instrumental writing in 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.

Ordetx Betancourt B. (2016) presents a proposal of a system of activities to develop the spelling skill in English in class 6<sup>th</sup> A from “José A. Echeverría” Elementary School. The proposal has been conceived taking into account the theoretical and methodological bases put together by the author, the results of a diagnosis carried out, as well as the experiences of implementing a preliminary proposal of the activities. The proposal proved that when teaching the spelling skill in English, it is crucial for teachers to make a careful selection of the topics and the types of activities taking into account the students’ characteristics and needs.

Although, all these authors have dealt with spelling as the principal concern in their students, they have done it in different grades and in different schools, suggesting interesting and meaningful proposals. However, their proposals cannot be applied in the subjects of research of this paper because they are in a different context and they have their own characteristics. Anyway, all the papers checked helped the authoress of this study to follow an appropriate methodology and look for fresh and motivating exercises.

## **2. Characteristics of English Language Teaching in Cuba.**

The teaching of English in Cuba starts in third grade in primary school and continuous to secondary, high and university educations. This language is also taught in language schools for adults where they should develop language skills in English, French, German, Portuguese and other languages and in elementary school teacher training colleague.

The focus in the teaching of English in Cuba has been on communicative competence, which is a high-level concept that implies according to Font (2006) “an individual’s performance in his verbal and non-verbal activity in real communicative situations involving the interaction between two or more people, or between one

person and an aural or written text, in correspondence with a given social context.”  
(Font, 2006: 122 )

In order to achieve that communicative competence at an elementary level as it has been considered in primary, secondary and pre- university levels, teachers should plan lessons taking into account the communicative language teaching approach as well as the communicative language teaching principles (CLT)

These CLT principles have been defined by specialists such as Keith Morrow (1983), Neil Naiman (1989) and redefined and adapted to the Cuban context by Dr. C. Alfredo Camacho Delgado (2001). These three specialists have expressed similar requisites that must be taken into account when planning and teaching a communicative lesson. Each one has expressed the principles using their own words and language organization. The syntax used by Naiman has helped this researcher to understand the scope of the principles easier. His principles are:

1. Meaningful practice beyond the sentence level
2. Student-centered class
3. Task- orientation of classroom activities
4. Development of strategies for learning beyond the classroom
5. Peer correction in group work

These principles enhance student's motivation, participation, self-esteem, social interaction and fluency. They favor not only the learning of the language during the lessons but also opportunities created by the teacher outside the classroom.

### **3. Writing as an essential ability in the English teaching learning process.**

From Richards' (2002) point of view, writing is one of the most difficult skills in learning a native and a foreign language. The difficulty lies in generating and organizing ideas and in translating these ideas into readable text as well. The skills involved in writing are highly complex. Writing in a foreign language involves higher level skills of planning and organizing as well as lower level skills of spelling, punctuation, word choice, and so on. (Richards, 2002, 303:305).

Writing, as one of the communicative skills, has been neglected, as compared with the other skills, speaking, listening, and reading. This can be traced back to the time



of Plato in which he explains that "speaking is superior to writing because speaking allows one to grasp the truth" (Raimes, 198:141).

When analyzing different sources, it could be noticed that writing may be taught as a means *or as an end*. Writing as a means is widely used within foreign language for engaging with aspects of language rather than writing itself. According to Rosa Antich (1975) writing as a means is synonymous of *instrumental writing*. Meanwhile writing as an end makes emphasis on content and organization; tasks invite learners to express themselves using their own words, state a purpose for writing and often specify an audience.

Ur (1996) also uses the term writing as a means to denote the use of writing for engaging with aspects of the language other than writing itself; for example: learners note down new vocabulary, copy out grammar rules, write out answers to reading or listening comprehension questions, do written tests, and the like. (Ur, 1996: 162).

The practice of instrumental writing is a very profitable way to assimilate a foreign language because the recurrent and varied work helps the students to deal with grammar and vocabulary; the establishment of a phoneme-grapheme relationship and it allows the students to improve the oral expression as they acquire and grow their habits of stating ideas.

It is true that writing is one of the most difficult skills in any language as it implies production. It is also true that writing is not a priority in the elementary level. However, the authoress taking into account her experience as a language learner, considers that practicing instrumental writing since the very beginning may contribute to fix vocabulary, grammar and spelling rules.

To develop instrumental writing skills, the students should learn how to write correctly the letters and the other components of the graphic system, should know how to apply the orthographic directions and how to express in writing what they are able to say orally. In the achievement of writing, the audio, visual, and motor agents take part. Psychological researches show that any knowledge is more rapidly inferred and it is fixed if it is exercised in written after having perceived it by the ear and repeated it orally.

#### **4. Characteristics of English spelling.**

According to Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, spelling is "the forming of words from letters according to accepted usage: ORTHOGRAPHY; also: the letters composing a word." (1987:840)

In the Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics, spelling is settled as orthography, term used for (1) general spelling (2) for correct or standard spelling.

These two definitions are very close to the concept of spelling needed by the authoress to transform the reality in the subjects of research regarding spelling.

English belongs to a large language family called Indo-European. Although it has changed radically throughout centuries, English has frequently been criticized for the complexity of its spelling rules and for a lack of system and consistency in the relationship between the sounds of the spoken language and the symbols of the written language. (Upward. C & Davidson. G, 2011: 3)

English spelling is a result of the evolution of English language, the use of Latin alphabet as well as the changes that took place in pronunciation which did not cause any change in writing and the number of borrowed words. The symbols used in modern English spelling are the 26 letters of the Latin alphabet as it is currently established for English. However, the English alphabet did not always consist of 26 letters. (Ibidem)

The alphabet evolved very gradually. Originally, each letter of the Roman alphabet stood for one of the speech-sounds of spoken Latin, and when it came to be applied to Old English, the broad sound-spelling relationships of the Roman alphabet were retained as they had applied in Latin; but since Old English contained sounds for which the Roman alphabet provided no letters, a few new letters were introduced from a Germanic alphabet. (Ibidem)

The sound-to-symbol/symbol-to-sound simplicity of that original system, however, was undermined by subsequent events, such as the Norman Conquest itself, the introduction of printing from continental Europe. Whenever there is a universal tendency for the pronunciation of a language to change over time, the changes needed to maintain a match between sound and symbol but it did not happen in the evolution of English language. And it has led to much of the irregularity and

unpredictability that characterizes the spelling system of present-day English. (Ibidem)

These are some of the causes of Spanish speakers' difficulties when they learn English as a foreign language. Students from the different levels and grades in Cuba are disappointed when they have to write in this language.

These are the main causes of spelling mistakes mainly for Spanish speakers. There is some spelling combination that gives different sound in different words or one letter represents variety of sounds e.g. [oo] in book, sounds /ʊ/ but in pool, it sounds /u:/; the letter [u] in put sounds /ʊ/ but in hut it sounds /ʌ/. The other variation between orthography and the pronunciation is of least significance. One comes across the fact that letters with no sound exist etymologically.

English orthographic system has morphophonemic system. The pattern of word formation and its associated form e.g. period and periodically, the base word is spelt the same way in both but pronunciation is not same e.g. period /'piəriəd/ and /,piəri'ɒ pɒdɪkli/. Similarly, it can be applied to other phonemes as well. For example:

- a. The character [c] in authentic and authenticity is pronounced with variation i.e. /k/ is replaced with /s/ sound or the letter [i] in define /dɪ'faɪ ɪn/ and definition /,defɪ ɪ'nɪʃn/ are associated with /aɪ ɪ/ and /ɪ ɪ/.
- b. It could be predicted about reduction of vowel in syllables of authentic and authenticity depending on stress-pattern while the substitution of /K/ with /S/ is depending on the feature of succeeding suffix initial vowels.
- c. /ai/ is reduced according to tri-syllabic reduction rule. It is applied with regard to reduce the third syllable back from the last when it's succeeded by two syllables in which the first syllable is not stressed. (Sipra,2013)

Fuller, & Whitaker (1996) believe that accurate spelling plays a key role in the development of writing skills. Templeton (1991) found that students who are good spellers are able to express themselves in writing more effectively than poor spellers. The relationship between poor handwriting and spelling has also been a frequent topic among general and special education researchers. Spelling contributes to writing through fluency so the speller is not too focused on the mechanics of spelling (Graves, 1983). In general, studies have shown that writing becomes fluent when a

student is not overwhelmed by the mechanics of spelling (Graham, Schwartz, & McArthur, 1993).

In learning how to spell, the four forms of spelling knowledge should be integrated: phonological, visual, morphemic and etymological. Students who need additional support in spelling should be provided with a program that recognizes their current developmental level and builds an understanding of word patterns based on each of the four forms of spelling knowledge. (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2007: 156)

- Phonological knowledge: how words sound.
- Visual knowledge: how words look (using visual patterns, grouping words with letter patterns such as, enough, cough, rough)
- Morphemic knowledge: how words change form (working with word families, compound words, contractions, plurals, affixes, abbreviations, comparatives/superlatives, classification, formation of tenses, homophones)
- Etymological knowledge: where words come from.

These forms of knowledge will make the student understand and use the correct spelling of words, depending on which they feel more comfortable and enabled to write and to spell. Students do not necessarily draw on just one of the four forms of spelling knowledge to spell a word. In order to become proficient spellers, they need to be able draw on and integrate several forms of knowledge to spell. (Correa L, 2013) Although, the authoress of this research recognizes the importance of integrating these four forms of spelling knowledge and indeed in some activities they could have been integrated, she focused on the visual knowledge and the morphemic knowledge for a pedagogical purpose. The students are from fifth grade and their level of language is limited. Besides that, these were the two strategies the subjects of research favored. That is, to help and develop the English spelling skill of the subjects of research, according to their characteristics, preferences, strategies and abilities.

#### **4.1 Teaching spelling strategies.**

Systematic teaching of spelling will involve initial teacher modeling of strategies, followed by guided and then independent practice. The teacher's role is to organize the examination of words in such a way that students understand how particular

spelling features and patterns operate (Templeton & Morris, 1999). Teach strategies that enable children to learn how to spell unknown words. A teach incidental lessons based on student's needs are goals to pursuit in the students.

A classroom that is rich in resources, supportive of children's attempts to learn language and immerses children in print is essential for facilitating growth in spelling. Creating such an environment requires careful planning on the part of the teacher. Classroom features should enable children to become independent learners and should include:

(<https://www.goabroad.com/teach-abroad/search/cuba/teach-abroad-1> )

- A seating arrangement that encourages collaboration and allows all children to be part of the working group.
- A floor space for individual, small group and large group activities
- An area ding corner that facilitates browsing and reading
- A variety of books, magazines and other print material
- A print-rich environment where displayed print can be easily read, such as:
  - A high-frequency word chart
  - A How-To-Help-Me-Spell charts
  - A Words-We-Can-Spell charts
  - A theme word charts
  - A word family charts
  - A spelling pattern charts
  - A spelling generalizations charts
  - A alphabet chart
  - A Sound-Symbol chart
  - A proofreading and editing tips charts
  - An enlarged copy of familiar poems
  - A variety of writing materials and resources located where children can easily access them, including: (pencils, crayons, markers, computer and printer paper of various shapes, sizes and colours)

The above classroom features should be included in a plan of actions to improve students' spelling skill. The subjects of research selected the ones that could help them the most and the ones they could design as they have the available materials. The ones selected will form part of the set of actions, the authoress decided to put into practice before implementing the initial proposal.

#### **4.1.1 Developing Visual Strategies**

Children need help to learn how to use visual strategies to spell words, there are many activities that will help children develop visual strategies, these include:

1. A Word Frames: Children draw frames around each letter of the word to show the body, tail and head of the letter.
2. A Word Shapes: Words are outlined and children print the letters outlined to produce the word.
3. A Word Blanks: The teacher provides a series of letters and blanks. The correct letters are written down and blanks are included for the letters missed. The children work as a team to create as many words as they can using the letters and the blanks.
4. A What's My Message: The teacher gives the children a message with the vowels missing. The children decode the message by providing the vowels.

Example: ***Thsmrnng w wll d mssngvwlsmssgs***

(<https://www.goabroad.com/teach-abroad/search/cuba/teach-abroad-1>)

#### **4.1.2 Developing Morphemic Strategies**

Morphemic spelling, involves the meaningful units of language: prefixes, roots, and suffixes. Researchers emphasize that a growing knowledge of morphology, through direct and explicit instruction in common roots and affixes, leads to improvements in spelling accuracy (Henry (1993); Nunes, Bryant, & Olsson( 2003)

- Building spelling word lists: use words that exemplify targeted spelling rules or patterns.
- Immediate correction, better outcomes: Immediate correction of misspellings leads to better outcomes than students writing words without any error correction or providing delayed error correction

The authoress agrees with the creation of a classroom environment that favors the development of spelling skill. Templeton & Morris (1999), suggested some useful strategies to develop these skills. However, the one related to a print-rich environment where displayed print can be easily read is the tactic that can be used with the subjects of research of this paper because of their characteristics and context where the English lesson is taught. The use of high-frequency word charts, a theme word charts, a word family charts, a spelling pattern charts and an alphabet chart were the most profitable strategies the authoress used a with the students.

This calls for the teacher to demonstrate the strategies and to create teaching situations and activities to direct children's attention to strategy development and practice using the strategy in real life situations. In such situations, emphasis, should be on the application of spelling generalizations to spell new words rather than on committing the generalization to memory. The students were asked as part of the strategy to create different charts to fulfil their needs regarding the spelling mistakes. The use of the different strategies to develop English spelling skills was really helpful for the authoress of this research to accomplish the objective of this study. It helped her to understand better the theory and how to apply the spelling rules for the students. It also contributed to improve the authoress' professional development, because it gave her tools and devices to achieve a teaching learning process based on the students' needs and CLT principles. These strategies helped the subjects of research to develop English spelling skills as well.

## II. NEEDS ASSESSMENTS.

To carry out this important phase in this study, the following empirical methods were administered;

Analysis of documents (workbook and syllabus): It was used to evaluate the treatment of spelling in the official documents and the didactic materials of the subject.

Interview (to the students): It was used to get more information about the students' opinions on the causes of their spelling mistakes.

Analysis of students' outcomes (evaluations and notebooks): It was used to get the most common mistakes in spelling.

Participant observation: It was used to check the students' spelling mistakes while they participate in the lessons.

Triangulation: It was used to identify the regularities derived from the data obtained in the diagnostic phase.

To determine the real situation of the subjects of research with regards to the development of English spelling skill, the following categories and subcategories were stated.

### 1. Categories and sub categories:

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Category: Double Consonant

Sub categories:

- Double consonants in the middle.
- Suffixes added to words.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Category: Basic grapheme units.

Sub categories:

- Simple graphemes.
- Compound graphemes.

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Category. Silent letters.

Sub categories:

- Silent letters at the beginning of words.
- Silent letters at the end of words.



In order to organize the analysis of the data obtained through the administration of the different empirical instruments, the authoress followed the suggestion given by the discussion group of presenting the following table with the objective of describing the results obtained in every sub category appropriately.

Instruments	Sub categories
Participant observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double consonants in the middle of the word.</li> <li>• Double consonants when suffixes are added to words.</li> <li>• Silent letters at the beginning of words.</li> <li>• Silent letters at the end of words.</li> <li>• Simple graphemes.</li> <li>• Compound graphemes.</li> </ul>
Analysis of students' outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double consonants in the middle of the word.</li> <li>• Double consonants when suffixes are added to words.</li> <li>• Silent letters at the beginning of words.</li> <li>• Silent letters at the end of words.</li> <li>• Simple graphemes.</li> <li>• Compound graphemes</li> </ul>
Interview to the students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double consonants in the middle of the word.</li> <li>• Double consonants when suffixes are added to words.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Silent letters at the beginning of words.</li> <li>• Silent letters at the end of words.</li> <li>• Simple graphemes.</li> <li>• Compound graphemes</li> </ul>
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## 2. Analysis of documents.

- Syllabus
  - It has 10 units, with a total of 37 hours, from this analysis it was inferred that the objectives of the subject do not pay too much attention to writing skill. The main concern is more directed to the speaking skill, and give less importance to other askills like spelling.
- Workbook
  - The analysis from the workbook revealed that there are not exercises that deal with spelling skill specifically; all of them aimed at the development of speaking ability. In the case of writing, the exercises are aimed at the development of writing as an instrumental skill; that is, writing to reinforce speaking.

## 3. Analysis of results:

### 1<sup>nd</sup> Category: Double Consonant

Sub categories:

- ✓ Participant Observación.

The lack of knowledge and practice in English language spelling skill and the fact that there are a very limited number of words in Spanish with double consonant could be considered the main causes of the students' mistakes when writing English words with double consonants such as *yellow, pretty, happy, letter, little, following, lesson, tomorrow, bigger*, etc. The authoress could realize that most of the students (90%) had difficulties in writing the double consonant in the middle of words. Regarding the double consonant when a suffix is added to the root of the word a similar result was made, the

students do not double the consonant. It happens because they do not know the rule.

✓ Analysis of students' outcomes.

In the analysis of the student's outcomes (evaluations), the authoress realized that the students made the same mistakes regarding the double consonant. Most of the students' evaluations were poor because of their spelling mistakes and among them, the double consonant. When the authoress reflected on the students' poor evaluation, she realized that 90% of the students had not written the words with double consonant correctly.

The students' notebooks were checked. The two types of spelling mistakes regarding double consonants were made. However, when a suffix was added to adjectives to form comparatives (fat-fatter) or to verbs to express the present progressive (sim-swimming) was the most common. The 93% of the students make mistakes in the two cases.

✓ Interview to the students.

An interview administered to the students showed that they are aware of their spelling mistakes, they expressed that when the teacher assigns them writing tasks, they feel upset, because they do not know how to write English words correctly as they have many spelling difficulties. The main causes of these mistakes are the lack of practice in writing and the fact that teachers not always have focused their attention on spelling mistakes. They added that they do not write any word with double consonants in their mother tongue.

When they were asked why the consonant "n" was doubled in the verb *run* in present continuous (I'm *running* to get the bus), they said that they did not know why and that they had not been taught any rule regarding the spelling of double consonants when they are expressing ideas in present continuous or when they were comparing people or things.

2<sup>nd</sup> Category: Basic graphemic units.

Sub categories:

✓ Participant Observación.

As it was expressed above, the lack of practice in English language spelling skill could be considered the main cause of the students' mistakes when writing English words with simple grapheme units such as *large (larch)* and words with compound graphemes as in *father(fader)*, *mother(moder)*, *fashion (fashion)*, *mechanic (mecanic)*, *intelligent (inteligent)*, etc. The authoress could realize that most of the students (89%) had difficulties with the basic grapheme units.

✓ Analysis of students' outcomes.

In the analysis of the student's outcomes (notebook and evaluations), the authoress appreciated that the same mistakes were observed. In this case, the spelling of compound graphemes was more common. Most of the students (88%) made mistakes in writing words with compound grapheme units. When the authoress reflected on the students' evaluation, she realized that one of the causes of their poor evaluations was spelling mistakes.

✓ Interview to the students.

An interview administered to the students showed that they are conscious of their spelling mistakes, but they feel disappointed, because they do not know how to write English words correctly. The main causes of these mistakes are that there are not words in their mother tongue written with two graphemes as in English. That is why they need more practice in writing.

### 3<sup>rd</sup>Category. Silent letters.

Sub categories:

✓ Participant Observación.

The differences between English and Spanish spelling could be considered the principal reasons of the students' mistakes in writing silent letters at the beginning and in the middle of words (86%), as well. Mistakes in words such as, **write, hour, honest, know, what, listen, often**, as well as the silent **e** in words such as, **shape, table, large** etc.

✓ Analysis of students' outcomes.

In the analysis of the student's outcomes (notebooks), the authoress gathered all the information and it was corroborated that the same mistakes

were found in the students' notebooks. The two types of spelling mistakes regarding silent letters were common in the 89% of them.

✓ Interview to the students.

An interview was administered to the students and it showed that they are not even conscious of their spelling mistakes regarding silent letters. According to their opinion some words have silent letters and they do not know why they are not pronounced. They do not know the rules to write these English words correctly if there is any. They think that if they would have had more practice in spelling skills, they would have had lesser spelling mistakes when writing English words.

### Triangulation

Through this empirical method, the authoress identified the following regularities:

#### Strengths:

- Students are highly motivated to learn about the subject and are willing to do the exercises in the lessons,
- Students have a good mastery of the different lexical sets taught in the grade.

#### Weaknesses:

- Around 91% of the students have problems with the use of double consonants in any position,
- about 90% of the students have difficulties with the use of basic grapheme units,
- near 87% of the students have problems with the use of the silent letters.
- Lack of practice in spelling is the most common cause of the students' mistakes.

### **III. Building up process of the final scientific result:**

For the teacher's initial intervention, it was necessary to put into practice some actions before the proposal of activities.

#### **1. Actions:**

1. The teacher discussed with the students the data obtained in the diagnosis because it was very important to have the students aware of their mistakes.
2. The teacher explained and shared with the students some strategies to develop English spelling skills with the objective of given the students the possibility of choosing the strategies that best meet their needs. The tactics suggested were:
  1. Visual knowledge.
  2. Phonemic knowledge.
  3. Morphemic knowledge.
  4. Etymological knowledge.

The students agreed in using visual and morphemic strategies mainly, because they are linked in some way to their learning strategies.

3. The teacher invited the students to design some teaching aids with the following information during the period the action research was carried out to be hunged on the walls of their classrooms.
  - The English Alphabet
  - Common English Silent Letters
  - Words Families
  - Homophones
  - Homonyms

#### **2. Building up process of the final proposal of activities to develop English spelling skills in 5<sup>th</sup> graders.**

At the beginning of this regular course (2018-2019), it was detected that students from 5<sup>th</sup> grade, class C, "Ernesto Guevara de la Serna" Elementary School presented problems with spelling skill in English language. First, it was analyzed in the group discussion the goals and different communicative functions of the grade and then it

was suggested to carry out a research intended to develop English spelling skills, taking into account the most common students' mistakes.

Consequently, it was designed an initial proposal of activities with very simple activities in the first lessons aimed at developing and practicing English spelling skill in 5<sup>th</sup> graders, class C in units one, two, four, five, six, seven and nine.

The authoress reflected on the results of every activity and some notes were taken down about what went well and what did not go well, students' reactions, evidences and causes of why the activities did or did not work well and what new actions should be included next time.

## **Unit 1.**

### **Lesson: 3**

#### **Activity # 1**

In this activity the students will fill in the blank spaces using images to improve the spelling of words having simple and compound basic graphemic units. The teacher asked the students to work individually first and then check their answers in pairs. The students had difficulties in identifying the words *thermometer* and *lightning* because of their lack of vocabulary. Anyway, the teacher explained to the students the meaning of the words and made emphases on their spelling.

The activity went well, the exercise was not complex. So, the students could do it well and finish it on time; they seemed to enjoy the activity as they did it enthusiastically; they helped each other while working in pairs. The use of visuals helped them to answer the exercise easier. Some students expressed that they had not done this type of exercise before to practice spelling

## **Unit 2.**

### **Lesson: 4**

#### **Activity # 2.**

In this activity the students will fill in the blank spaces using images too to improve their spelling in words with simple and compound basic graphemic units as this is one of the most common mistakes the subjects of research have. The teacher asked the students to work individually first and then check their answers in pairs. They should also work in pairs to ask each other about family members' job using the

ones in the pictures as a guide. To conclude with the activity, they spelled the job and the family member to each other. The teacher asked three of the best students to spell slowly the most difficult words to the whole class and the whole class had to write the words once more following the spelling of the words and compare the way they had spelled the words before with this new spelling. The teacher asked for any differences.

In this activity the pictures used were very supportive because they helped the students to do the exercise easier. The different activities kept the students working hard during some minutes. The students told the teacher that they were very pleased because the activities gave them the chance of fixing the correct spelling. The students were attentive during the period devoted to do the activities. They also showed interest in doing the exercise as they asked the teacher questions about other words they new with similar spelling complexity. However, the most advanced students got bored during the exercise because it was too easy for them. The main cause of this phenomenon was that the authoress did not take into account the students' individual differences when designing the first part of this activity. Next lesson, these most advanced students will do a more complex activity.

### **Unit 3.**

#### **Lesson: 5**

##### **Activity # 3.**

In this activity the students will fill in the blank spaces using images to improve their spelling in words having double consonants. The teacher oriented the students to work individually first and then check their answers in pairs and ask each other to spell the words. The students were also asked to write in a sentence how often they practiced one or more of the sports spelled.

This activity contained visuals that called the students' interest highly, so this helped them to keep their attention while doing the activity. Students liked the action of finding missing letters of words using images. The teacher had to help them in the sentences they were asked to write saying how often they practiced one or more of the sports spelled because they did not remember the frequency adverbs well. Anyway, those adverbs were written on the board to help them.



They asked for more exercises like this one and they stated that they liked it because they could practice spelling while writing the words and the sentences.

### **Activity # 3.1.**

The students should choose one of the sports that are represented in the images and write a short text saying why they would prefer one of the sports rather than any other. They were given an example. However, it was difficult for them to write the second part of the sentences; that is, to say why. But they asked the most advanced students' help and they were able to do the activity.

#### **Look at the example:**

I would like to be a baseball player .....(sport) player because baseball is the national sport.

The other activity was conceived for the advanced students, taking into account the results of the previous lesson, as well as their needs and abilities. The students should solve the following activity: A Word Blanks: The teacher provided a series of letters and blanks. The correct letters are written down and blanks are included for the letters missed. The four students should work as a team to create as many words as they could. They not only were able to complete the blanks but they were able to write some other words.

### **Unit 4.**

#### **Lesson:3**

#### **Activity # 4.**

In this activity the students will fill in the blank spaces using images to improve their spelling. Afterwards, they were asked to write a sentence using the colors and clothes. The teacher will orient the students to work individually first and then check their sentences in pairs.

This activity kept the students attentive and in a dynamic mood, and the time was enough to develop it. Related to spelling, some students showed an improvement in their skills as they spelled most of the words correctly, but some still had to think too much to spell even short words, in spite of this, they were willing to participate and correcting their classmates.

## **Activity # 5.**

### **Lesson: 4**

In this activity, the teacher will present a video with action verbs in present continuous spelled correctly. The activity answered to the student's difficulties regarding the spelling of affixes to form the present continuous. This exercise also helped the students to cope with the final consonant of the *ing* suffix, a troublesome grammatical aspect for the students.

The activity went well due to different reasons, although it took more time than it was expected and some students found it complex; the most important of all was that the activity was designed following the CLT principles. First of all, the students were organized in pairs. Second, the task was clear and students knew what they were supposed to do. They showed a high motivation with the use of videos.

### **Activity # 5.1**

This activity was related to the previous one. It was a pair work. The students asked and answered each other questions related to the images. The task orientation was well designed and easy to understand. The students could interact each other and could detect and correct their partners' mistakes. They enjoyed the activity and showed respect and solidarity to the students that could not accomplish the exercise so well.

## **Unit 5.**

### **Lesson: 3**

### **Activity # 6**

In this activity the teacher presented family members through a video to work the most difficult spelling combinations: th, ph, nd. Family members is a communicative function already studied and the spelling of some members were practiced. However, there are still mistakes in the spelling of some of them. So, as a way of systematizing the spelling of family members, the researcher decided to practice the spelling of the words of this lexical set once more. The activity was not so difficult; even though, there were difficulties in the spelling of *cousin* because this family member is not commonly practiced in the lessons and they forget its spelling.

Nevertheless, they could interact one another and could correct their partners' mistakes.

The time devoted to the activity was not enough. The students could not finish the task on time. So, it is recommended for next time to adjust the duration of the activity according to the students' needs. .

The students were asked to draw *A word family chart* with their family members as homework. They should use a color to highlight the spelling difficulty in each word. This homework was checked the following lesson. It was a great satisfaction for the teacher as all the students brought their chart, there were no spelling mistakes and they use their favorite color to highlight the most misspelled graphemes.

## **Unit 7.**

### **Lesson: 2**

#### **Activity # 7.**

In this activity, the students worked in teams of three. They had to select the word correctly spelled. The activity was not complex, so the students could do it well and on time. They were able to identify the spelling difficulty in each word. The exercise where they were asked to find words with similar combination of letters was very difficult for the students, even the advanced students were not able to find words with the following combination of letters (Word forming the plural with *ies* and a word with *j* sounding like the Spanish *y*). Next time, the teacher should do the activity together with the students to give them the opportunity of writing and reading other words with similar combinations of letters. The students liked to work in teams because they could help each other and they could also learn from their partners' mistakes. They enjoyed doing the last exercise together with the teacher as they realized they knew other words with the same spelling difficulty .

## **Unit 8.**

### **Lesson: 6**

#### **Activity # 8.**

In this activity the teacher will invite the students to play a game called "Great Spellers", in which they had to spell words from the lexical set *animals and pets*.

While the spelling of the words was taking place, the class was getting more competitive. This allowed the students to practice the letters of the English alphabet, as well as, the spelling of silent letters and double consonants enthusiastically. This activity assessed the students' spelling behavior thoroughly and their involvement with their own spelling learning process. The students made few mistakes. It proves that they really are improving their English spelling.

## **Unit 8.**

### **Lesson: 6**

#### **Activity # 9.**

In this activity the students should work in pairs to practice the spelling of the two suffixes used to form the plural. The students were encouraged to write, read and spell the words aloud from a video segment. They were motivated to do this activity in pairs and they showed a great satisfaction when they were given the opportunity to ask their partner about the spelling of some words because they wanted to be spelled correctly. They expressed how comfortable they felt when supporting each other in pairs.

#### **Activity # 9.1.**

In this activity the students had to form the plural of the words given in the list. Then, they had to identify the plurals formed differently from the examples given in the video. In general, the activity worked well, the students expressed that they were comfortable working with this type of activity. The students participated actively and well.

As homework, the teacher oriented *A What's My Message Activity*. The teacher gives the students a message with missing graphemes: simple, compound graphemes, double consonants and silent letters. The students decoded the message by providing the graphemes. They were given an example. The students liked the exercise very much. They had to provide the word with the correct grapheme by context and then, they had to write the words correctly. They said that the exercise took them much time; however, they enjoyed it very much because they have not practiced this type of exercise before.

### 3. Evaluation of the transformations:

All the activities of the proposal were implemented successfully. During its implementation, the teacher assessed the students' participation and the quality of their answers. This assessment was done through participant observations and analysis of students' outcomes (evaluations).

There were 29 nine students in the group, all of them had difficulties in spelling one or another category at the beginning of the implementation of new changes to develop this skill. Most of the students(90) had difficulties in spelling the double consonant in the middle of the words and when the comparative affix was added to an adjective having the stress on the last syllable with a vowel between two consonants. During the implementation of the activities, the number of students with this type of mistake was reduced, only four students still make this mistake (14 %). They expressed that they forget to write the double consonant even though they know the rule.

Regarding the basic graphemic units, it was corroborated in the needs assessment that most of the students (88%) made mistakes in writing words with compound graphemic units. Through the evaluations done, compound graphemes proved to be one of the most troublesome sub category. It was confirmed in the systematic evaluations that almost, the 40 % of the students still make this mistake when writing words with *th* and *sh* combinations. The students who continuous making this mistake are troubled because there is not any rule they can follow to write words with compound graphemes correctly. Whenever there was an activity to practice the graphemes, the students repeated the same idea, there is no rule to be followed to avoid this mistake.

Regarding silent letters, the students still make mistakes in words having final silent *e* and silent letters in the middle of words. It was confirmed that 20 students continuous making mistakes in one or another word. They say that it was too difficult to write those words with silent letters correctly.

In an in-depth-interview administered to the students at the end of the action research period, the students communicated that the insertion of activities in the English lessons to practice spelling skill was a great idea, they were able to write making less mistakes. However, some of the mistakes will continue because the class period is too short and the number of hours in a week to practice English was reduced to 45 minutes a week. They acknowledged the teacher's effort to develop their spelling skill, they liked the activities planned by her and they really enjoyed her lessons. Nevertheless, they think that spelling skill is too difficult to develop as they do not write too much in the English lessons.

#### **4. The Final scientific result: A proposal of activities to develop English spelling skills in 5<sup>th</sup> graders**

The final scientific result was a proposal of activities to develop the English spelling skills in fifth graders

#### **5. Philosophical, pedagogical, psychological and methodological foundations that back up the proposal:**

##### Philosophical foundations

The philosophical foundations of the proposal of the present research are grounded by the Marxist-Leninist philosophy, specifically the negation of negation law because during the implementation of the proposal the teacher took into consideration the aspects that did not go so well, to improve them next time. In addition, the dialectical materialism studies the nature of human beings and its laws to turn the prior objective laws into method of further knowledge and transformation of reality. The study of the historical antecedents of strategies followed to teach English spelling in the associate degree program has demonstrated that in the previous educational levels have not been effective. Therefore, the proposal of the system of activities paves the way for the creation of a positive learning environment that will help to expand the English spelling skills in fifth graders.

##### Pedagogical foundations

The school offers the requirements for the development of an appropriate teaching learning process of English. The different class organization that were put into

practice facilitated that the implementation of the teaching aids in each activity which led to the creation of a good learning environment.

#### Methodological foundations

The proposal is based on the Communicative approach for the teaching of foreign languages. The author affiliates to the Communicative Language Teaching principles redefined by Alfredo Camacho.

#### Psychological foundations

The proposal was intended upon psychological foundations that mirror the Socio-cultural-historical theory developed by L. S. Vygotsky, therefore the design of the system of activities with socio-cultural insides attained to the students were able to do in present with levels of assistance, helping them to do on their own in the near future. The proposal also assumes the relations between the cognitive and the emotional aspects of learning, as well as the integration of education and the development in the students' personality.

### **6. Characteristics of the proposal.**

The proposal presents activities and procedures to develop students' spelling skills within the teaching-learning process of instrumental writing in English as a Foreign Language. The activities were designed according to the students' needs, potentialities and interests attained through the diagnosis.

The final proposal has 14 activities that were properly incorporated in the course program taking into account the contents: communicative functions, vocabulary, grammatical structures and pronunciation. It is also important to express that spelling is practiced withing writing as an instrumental skill. These activities are very simple because of the students' low language level, and the poor development of this skill in the subjects of research. Needless to say, that the students do not practice spelling systematically and that the students' control of English spelling is too difficult for Spanish learners. There is one activity in each lesson of the selected units.

## **7. Example of an activity:**

### **Unit 8.**

#### **Lesson: 7**

**Objective:** Practice the spelling of basic graphemic units (simple and compound) and suffixes to express plural.

#### **Activity # 9**

9.a) The teacher will start telling the students the following information in Spanish:

« Yo tengo muchos libros en mi casa. Todos ellos tienen muchos cuentos y leyendas interesantes. ¿Y ustedes?»



Nessy Spelling Strategy- Plurals -s -es(1).mp4

#### **Before watching the video**

- Do you have any book at home?
- What do we say when we have more than one book?

The teacher will explain to the students that in the following video they will learn how to spell words when there is more than one object, animal, etc

#### **While watching the video.**

- Watch the video and write in your notebook all the words in the video.
- Notice the spelling of words when there is more than one object, animal, etc.
- Then, spell them to your partner.
- What are the letters added to the words?
- What are they used for?

#### **After watching the video.**

- Write in your notebooks some words with the same ending?
- Spell the words to your partner

9.b) Here you have some nouns. Write their plural. Select the ones that do not belong to the rule that the Pluraleto taught you. Then write them in your notebooks:



- a) \_\_ House
- b) \_\_ Dog
- c) \_\_ Fish
- d) \_\_ Table
- e) \_\_ Umbrella
- f) \_\_ Fox
- g) \_\_ box

### Procedures

- ✚ Ask the students underline the suffixes to form the plural.
  - ✚ Ask them circle the letter preceding the suffix added to form the plural.
  - ✚ The teacher should explain to the students when s or es is added to the word to form plurals.
  - ✚ Homework: A *What's My Message* Activity. The teacher gives the students a message with missing graphemes: simple, compound graphemic units, double consonants and silent letters, etc. They had to complete it in teams and hand it to the teacher.
1. I hav som fish in the refrierato. I do not now how to ck them. My moer helped me.
  2. My bst frien Rob has a dg namd Tey. He is vry funy an lov to pla around wit a bal

## **CONCLUSIONS**

1. The theoretical and methodological judgments that backed up the development of English spelling skill were: the antecedents of the treatment of spelling skill by different major papers carried out in the Pedagogical Campus by fifth year students majoring in foreign languages; definition and components of writing as an instrumental skill, the communicative language teaching principles that should be followed when planning and teaching a foreign language lesson; as well as the definition, main features and importance of the English spelling skill.
2. The assessment of the current situation in fifth graders, Class C, at “Ernesto Guevara de la Serna” Elementary School revealed that the students have an suitable level in English language. However, there were many learning gaps in relation to English spelling skill.
3. Some changes were introduced in the teaching and learning process of English to practice the spelling skill. These new changes consisted on using visuals, videos and more elaborated, fresh and motivating activities.
4. The building up process proved that most of the activities included in the initial proposal functioned well. The most common evidences were students 'motivation, their spontaneous participation, the way they enjoyed the activities, they worked in pairs and learned from their own and classmates 'mistakes.
5. Their answers had a high quality and most students expressed that they had been benefited to a certain extent since they could write more and be more aware of their English spelling difficulties. However, they realized that they need a more systematic practice to cope with all the spelling mistakes they make.
6. The final scientific result that emerged from the building up process was a proposal of activities.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The proposal should be enriched with more activities so as to cover all the units of the grade.
- The proposal could be used as a guide for other fifth grade classes having similar spelling difficulties.

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## APPENDIXES

### Appendix #1

Photograph of class 5 th C at “Ernesto Guevara de la Serna” Elementary School.



## **Appendix #2**

### **Interview**

Objective: to gather the students' judgements about their spelling mistakes.

#### Questions:

1. Do you think learning English is difficult?
2. Is writing a difficult ability?
3. Why do you have many spelling mistakes? ( Double consonants, Silent letters, Simple graphemes and compound graphemes)



## **Appendix #3**

### **Guide for the Analysis of Documents**

Document: English Workbook “English Come! 5 th ”

Objective: to analyze the treatment of spelling in the didactic material in fifth grade.

Aspects:

1. Number of exercises explicitly devoted to develop spelling skills.
2. Number of exercises that implicitly contribute to develop spelling skills.

## **Appendix #4**







### **Participant observation guide for the needs assesment**

**Objective:** to get more information about the students' difficulties in English spelling.

**Type:** Participant observation..

#### **Observation guide:**

1. Students' spelling mistakes in:

-  Double consonants in the middle of the word.
-  Double consonants when suffixes are added to words.
-  Silent letters at the beginning of words.
-  Silent letters at the end of words.
-  Simple graphemes.
-  Compound graphemes

2. Students' most common mistakes.

## Appendix # 6

### Examples of the teaching aids.

Chart 1.

HOMONYMS	HOMOPHONES	HOMOGRAPHS
<i>multiple meaning words</i>	<i>words that sound alike</i>	<i>same spelling, different pronunciation, different meanings</i>
the spruce tree... to spruce up...	addition for math edition of a book	desert = abandon desert = area of land
suit yourself... wore a suit...	I want to go I like it too One plus one is two	bass = fish bass = instrument
weigh on the scale... scale the wall...	capitol building state capital	close = nearby close = to shut
the price is fair... go to the fair...	pick a flower bake with flour	bow = to bend down bow = ribbon

Chart 2.

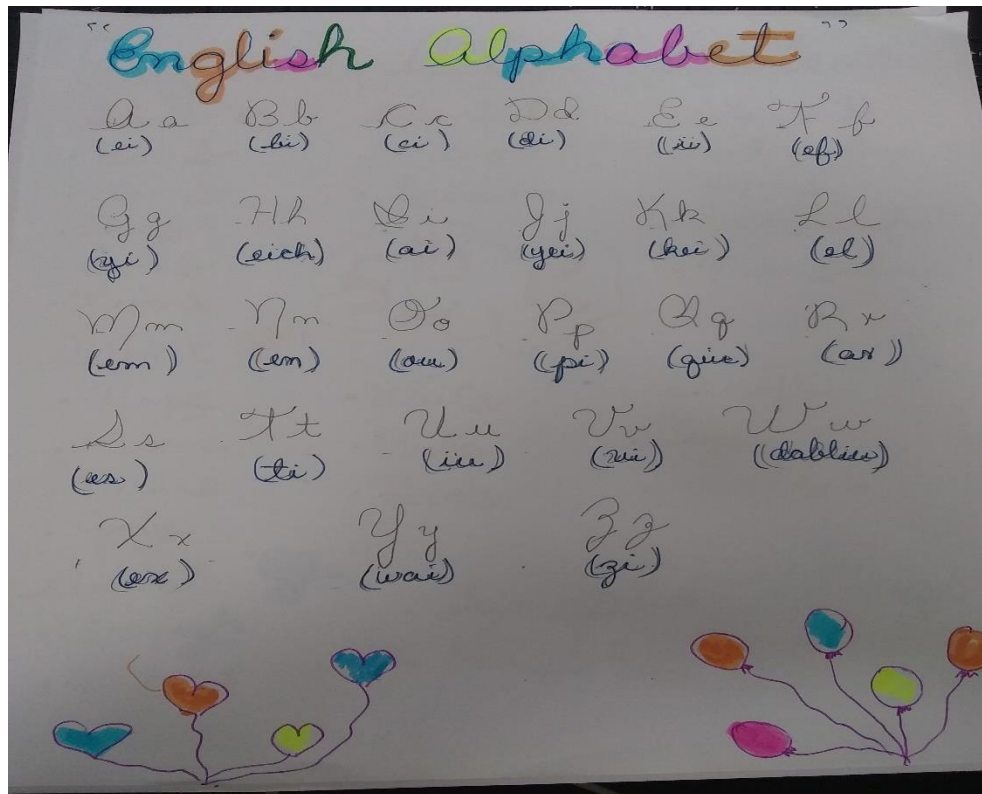
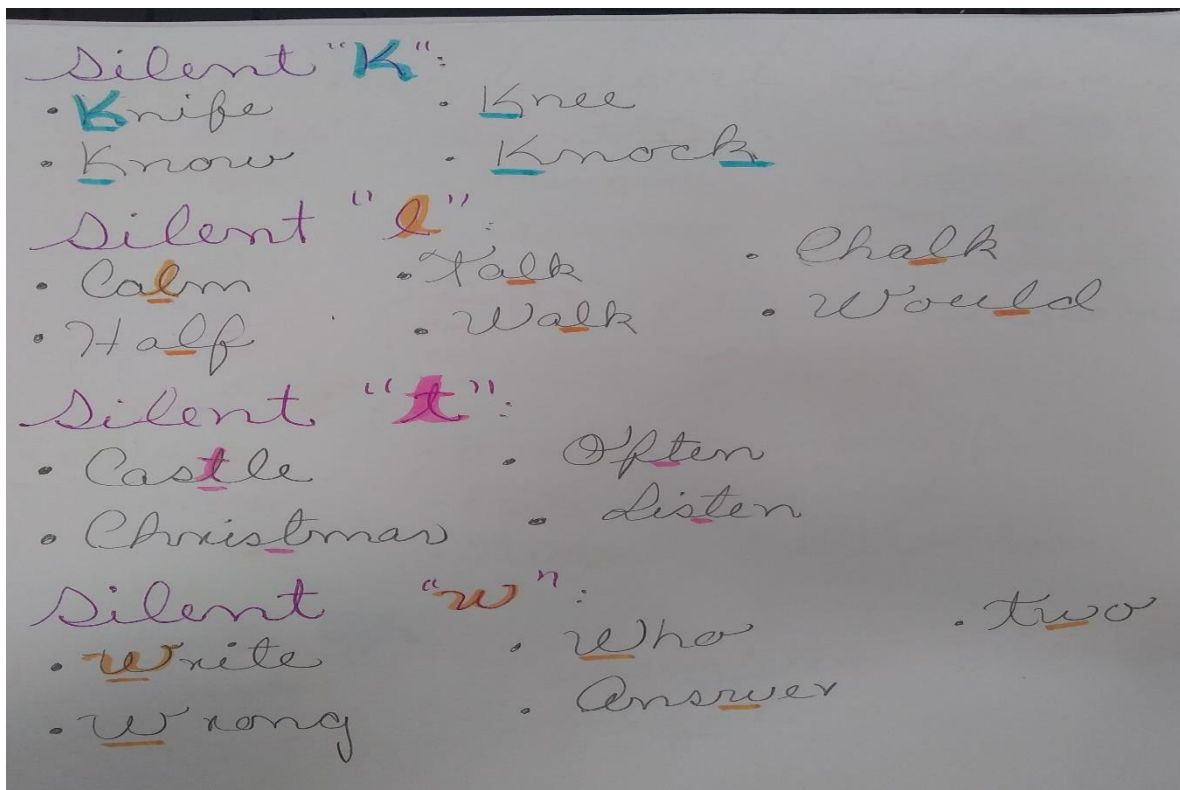
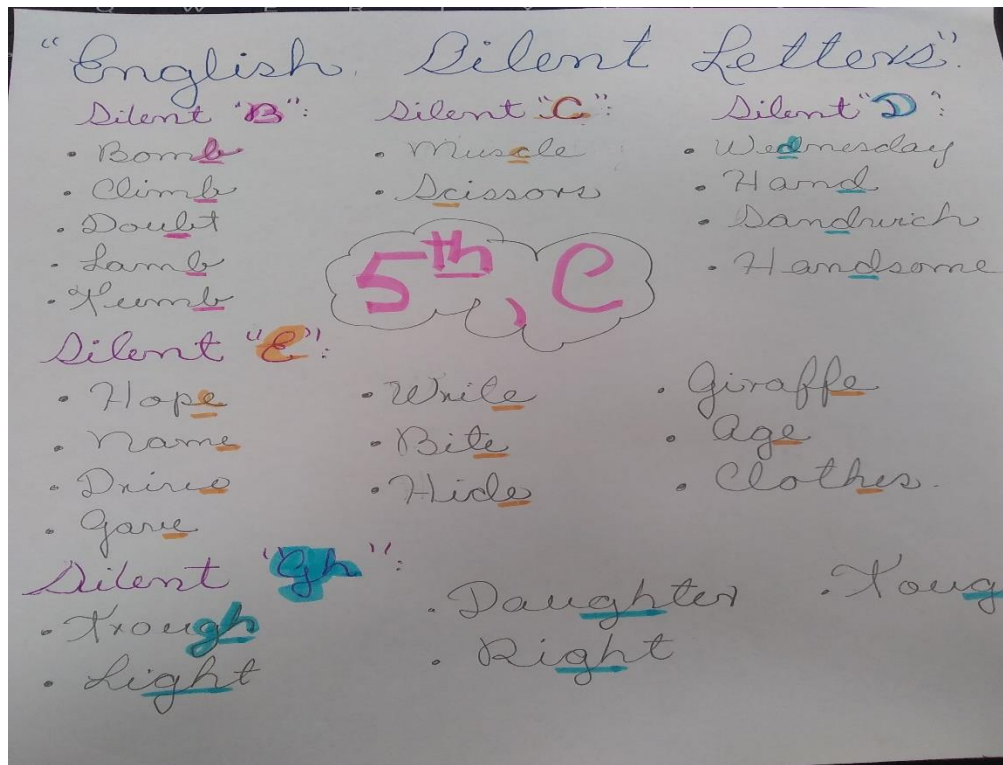
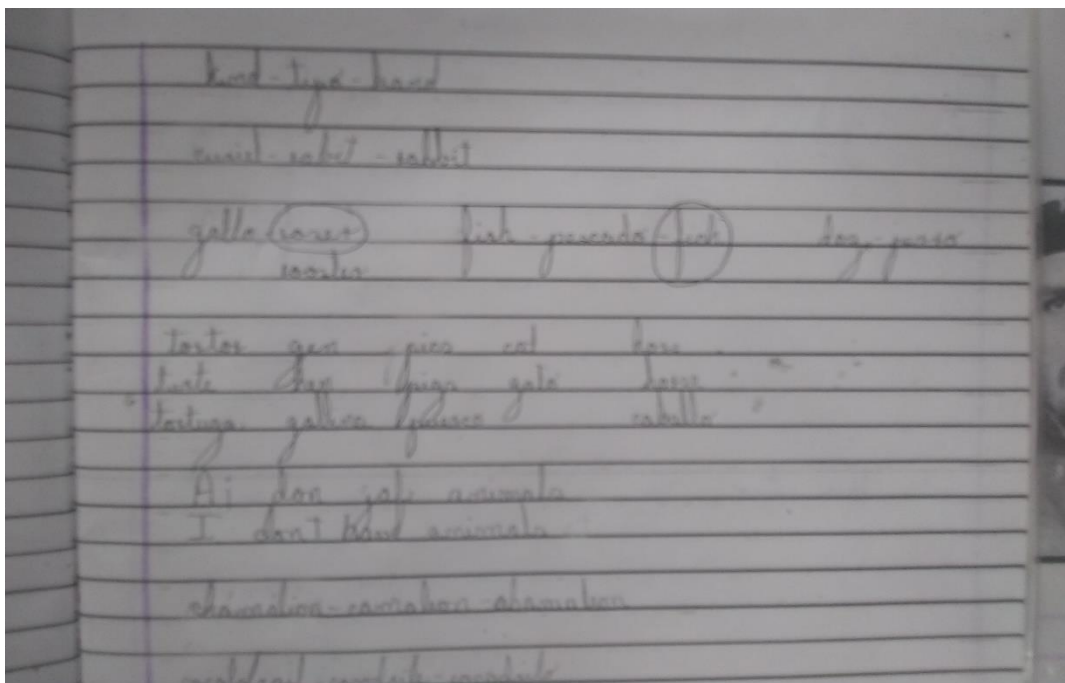
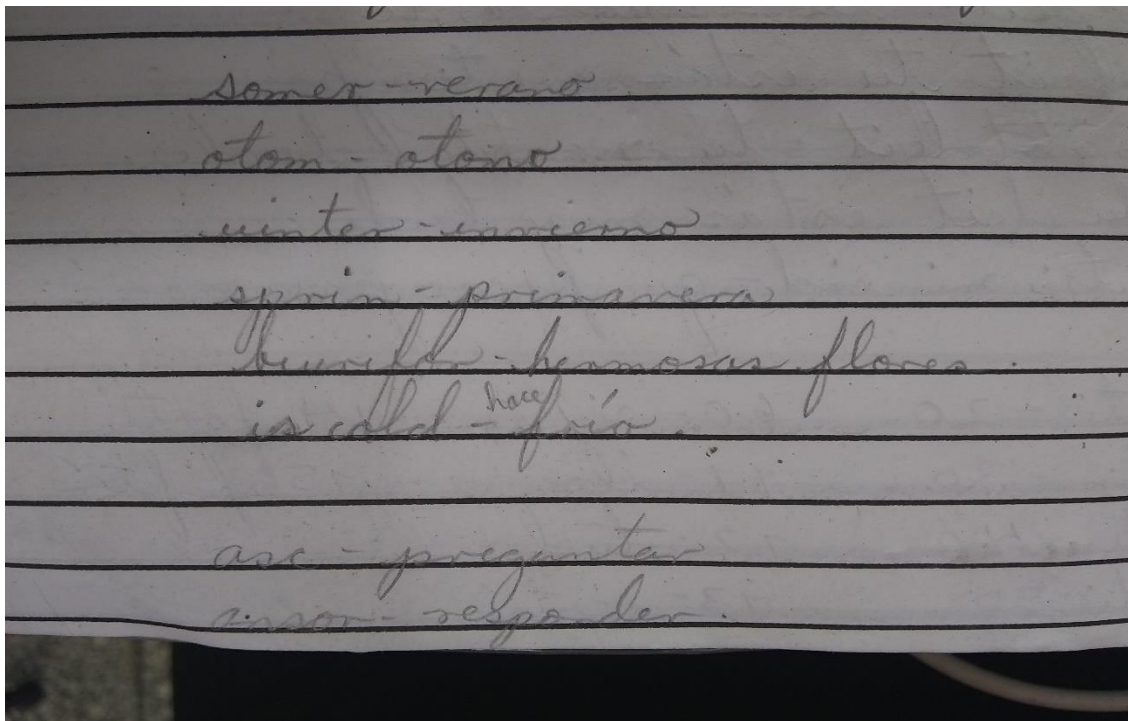


Chart 3.



## Appendix # 8

### Evidence of the student's mistakes.



## Appendix # 9

### Final proposal of activities.

#### Unit 1.

##### Lesson: 3

**Objective:** Practice the spelling of basic grapheme units (simple and compound)

##### Activity # 1

1. Spell the following words using the images on the right as a guide. Then exchange your notebooks with your partner to check spelling mistakes

1. \_ U \_

2. C \_ \_ \_ \_ S

3. R \_ \_ \_

4. \_ \_ G H \_ \_ \_ \_

5. \_ O \_ \_ A \_ \_

6. \_ \_ E R \_ \_ \_ E \_ \_ \_

7. \_ \_ \_ W

8. \_ A \_ \_ \_ \_ W

1)



2)



3)



4)



5)



6)



7)



8)



#### Unit 2

##### Lesson: 4

**Objective:** Practice the spelling of basic grapheme units (simple and compound)

## Activity # 2

2.a) Spell the following jobs using the images on the right as a guide. Then exchange your answers with your partner to check spelling mistakes.

1. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

2. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

3. \_ U \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

4. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

5. A \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

6. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ E \_



b) Pair work. You are interested in having more information about your partner's family members (mother, father, brother, sister, cousin, uncle, aunt).

### Procedures:

- ✚ Each pair should ask and answer questions using the information in the pictures and family members in parenthesis.
- ✚ The teacher checks the students working in pairs, given them help and correcting any mistake.
- ✚ The teacher should write down the most common spelling mistakes.
- ✚ The teacher asks the students to spell the job and the family member to each other.
- ✚ The teacher asked three of the best students to spell slowly the most difficult words to the whole class and the whole class write the words once more following the spelling of the words and compare the way they had spelled them before with this new attempt. The teacher asked for any differences.

Pair Work:

St A: Ask your partner: Is your father a fireman?

St B: Answer your partner's question. Ask him the following question? Is your mother a doctor?

**Unit: 3**

**Lesson: 5**

**Objective:** Practice the spelling of double consonants and basic grapheme units (simple and compound).

**Activity # 3**

3.a) Spell the following sports using the images on the right as a guide. Then write sentences in which you express how often you practice one or more of the sports spelled.

1. F \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

2. \_ \_ N N \_ \_

3. \_ A \_ \_ \_ A \_ \_

4. S \_ \_ I \_ \_ \_

5. \_ \_ C K \_ \_

6. B \_ W \_ \_ \_ \_

7. \_ \_ S K \_ T \_ \_ \_ \_

8. \_ \_ C C \_ \_



- b) You want to become a sport player. Choose one of the sports that are represented in the images and write a short text saying why you would prefer this sport rather than any other.

**Look at the example:**



I would like to be a baseball.....(sport) player because baseball is the national sport.

- c) This activity was conceived for the advanced students, taking into account the results of the previous lesson, as well as their needs and skills). The students should solve the following activity: *A Word Blanks*: The teacher provided the students with several letters and blanks. The correct letters are written down and blanks are included for the letters missed. The four students should work as a team to create as many words as they can using the letters and the blanks:

blanks:

- \_ o \_ \_ \_ \_
- t \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ ,
- \_ \_ \_ \_ e \_
- \_ \_ \_ t \_ \_
- \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ r
- \_ o \_ \_ \_ \_
- \_ \_ c \_ \_
- \_ \_ \_ t
- \_ \_ o \_ \_ \_ l
- \_ e \_ \_ \_ \_

Letters: b m s f r o a t h e r i n o u c p d

#### Unit 4.

#### Lesson: 3

**Objective:** Practice the spelling of double consonants, affixes added to words.

















#### Activity # 4

4.a) Spell the following words

#### Procedures:

-  Spell the color using the images on the right as a guide.

- ✚ Identify the pieces of clothes in the set of pictures in the opposite side and spell them.
- ✚ Identify the colors in the clothes in the images in the opposite side
- ✚ check your answers with your partner.
- ✚ Write a sentence in your notebook using colors and pieces of clothes.
- ✚ Check the spelling of difficult words with your partner.
- ✚ Ask for the teacher's help if necessary.

<p>1. <u>O</u> <u>R</u> _ _ _ _</p> <p>2. <u>B</u> _ _ _ _</p> <p>3. _ _ _ _ <u>Y</u></p> <p>4. <u>G</u> _ _ _ _ <u>N</u></p> <p>5. <u>B</u> _ _ _ _ _</p> <p>6. _ _ <u>L</u> <u>L</u> _ _</p> <p>7. <u>B</u> _ _ _ _ _</p> <p>8. <u>P</u> _ _ _ <u>P</u> _ _</p> <p>9. _ _ <u>D</u></p> <p>10. _ <u>H</u> _ _ _ _</p>	<p>1) </p> <p>2) </p> <p>3) </p> <p>4) </p> <p>5) </p> <p>6) </p> <p>7) </p> <p>8) </p> <p>9) </p> <p>10) </p>
<p>1. <u>B</u> _ _ _ _</p> <p>2. _ _ _ _ <u>S</u> <u>S</u></p> <p>3. <u>S</u> _ _ _ _ <u>S</u></p> <p>4. _ <u>I</u> _</p> <p>5. <u>S</u> _ _ _ <u>R</u> _</p> <p>6. _ _ _ _ _ <u>S</u></p> <p>7. <u>J</u> <u>A</u> _ _ _ _ _</p> <p>8. _ _ _ <u>I</u> _</p>	<p>1) </p> <p>2) </p> <p>3) </p> <p>4) </p> <p>5) </p> <p>6) </p> <p>7) </p> <p>8) </p>

**Unit: 4**

**Lesson: 3**

**Objective:** Practice the spelling of suffixes (ing)

**Activity # 5**

5. a) Watch a video

**Before watching the video**

The teacher will start by remembering the students the structure, meaning and use of the present continuous.

The teacher will explain to the students that in the following video there are some action verbs used in present continuous. Pay attention to the spelling of each verb.



- Mention some of the action verbs you expect to find in the video.

**While watching the video.**

- Watch the video and check if you guessed any action verb
- Watch the video again and write in your notebook, all the verbs in the video. Spell the verbs in your mind while you are writing them. Then spell them to your partner.

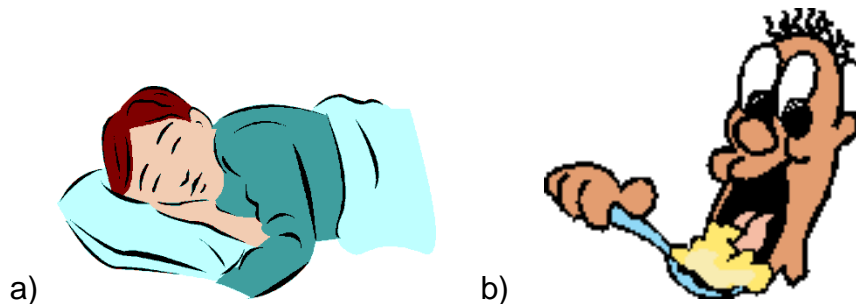
**After watching the video.**

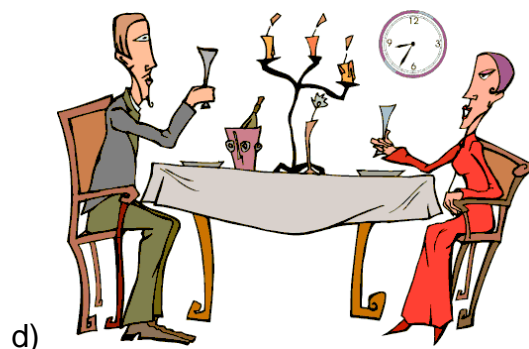
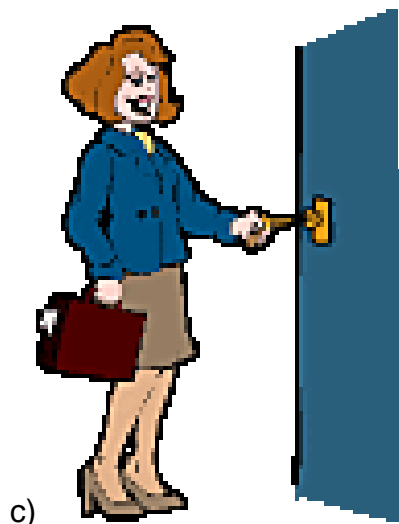
Work in pairs.

St A: Ask your partner what the person is doing.

St B: Say to your partner what the person is doing.

(Change roles)





St A: Dictate to your partner what the person is doing.

St B: Copy the sentence in your notebook. Ask him/her for the spelling of the action represented in the image.

## Unit: 5

### Lesson: 3

**Objective:** Practice the spelling of basic grapheme units (simple and compound)

### Activity # 6

6. Watch a video about family members



### Before watching the video

The teacher will start by asking the students the following questions:

- Where do you live?
- Who do you live with?

The teacher will explain to the students that in the following video they will watch the family members. Pay attention to the spelling of each word once more.

### While watching the video.

- Write in your notebooks all the family members in the video.

- Spell them in your mind while you are writing the family members, then spell them to your partner.

**After watching the video.**

- ✚ Write down the missing family members in the video.
- ✚ Share with your partner the family members you wrote down.
- ✚ Ask three or four students for the missing family members to complete the list.
- ✚ Ask these students to spell all the family members included in the final list.
- ✚ The students should draw *A word family chart* with their family members as homework. They should use a color to highlight the spelling difficulty in each word. This homework was checked the following lesson. It was a great satisfaction for the teacher as all the students brought their chart, there were no spelling mistakes and they used their favorite color to highlight the graphemes oriented.

**Unit: 7.**

**Lesson: 2**

**Objective:** Practice the spelling of basic grapheme units (simple and compound), double consonant and the combination *vowel +consonant+ silent e*

**Activity # 7**

7. Work in teams of three

**Procedures**

- 7.a) look at the images and select the word correctly spelled.



\_\_\_butter \_\_\_boteer \_\_\_buter\_\_\_voterr



\_\_waine \_\_wine \_\_wiane \_\_guane



\_\_cake \_\_caicke \_\_kake \_\_key



\_\_coquies \_\_cokies \_\_cookies



\_\_eggs and jam \_\_egs and yam \_\_eks and yam



\_\_aice cream \_\_ice creem, \_\_ice cream

- b) Ask the students discuss in teams (in Spanish) about the spelling difficulty in each word. Inform the teacher about that spelling difficulty.
- c) Ask each team to find out at least one word in each case with similar spelling. Ask the best students control the team work and give them any necessary help.
  1. Double consonant:
  2. *i*+ consonant+ silent *e*
  3. a word with *a*+ consonant+ silent *e*

4. A word with double oo
5. Word forming the plural with *ies*
6. A word with *j* sounding like the Spanish *y*

## **Unit: 8**

### **Lesson: 6**

**Objective:** Practice the spelling of basic grapheme units (simple and compound) and silent letters

### **Activity # 8**

8 .a) The teacher organizes the class into two teams to practice spelling in a game called “Great Spellers”.

#### **Procedures**

1. Give the first student in each team a sheet of paper
2. Announce the first word to be spelled.
3. All the students write the word in the sheet of paper.
4. Then, the teacher asked the first student in each team to write only the first letter of the word on the board. The second player of each team adds the next letter, and so on till the word is completely written.
5. When a team member has added the last letter to the word, the next student in the team checks it. He may leave the word as it is spelled or correct any or all of the letters in it.
6. The teacher awards one point for every correct word.
7. The winning team is the one with more points.

#### List of words.

-  Rooster
-  Hen
-  Fish
-  Horse
-  Turtle
-  Monkey

 Rabbit

 Giraffes

## Unit 8.

### Lesson: 7

**Objective:** Practice the spelling of basic grapheme units (simple and compound) and suffixes to express plural.

### Activity # 9

9.a) The teacher will start telling the students the following information in Spanish:

« Yo tengo muchos libros en mi casa. Todos ellos tienen muchos cuentos y leyendas interesantes. Y ustedes?

### Before watching the video

- Do you have any book at home?
- What do we say when we have more than one book?

The teacher will explain to the students that in the following video they will learn how to spell words when there is more than one object, animal, etc



Nessy Spelling Strategy- Plurals -s -es(1).mp4

### While watching the video.

- Watch the video and write in your notebook all the words in the video.
- Notice the spelling of words when there is more than one object, animal, etc.
- Then, spell them to your partner.
- What are the letters added to the words?
- What are they used for?

### After watching the video.

- Write in your notebooks some words with the same ending?
- Spell the words to your partner

9.b) Here you have some nouns. Write their plural. Select the ones that do not belong to the rule that the Pluralizer taught you. Then write them in your notebooks:



- a) \_\_ House
- b) \_\_ Dog
- c) \_\_ Fish
- d) \_\_ Table
- e) \_\_ Umbrella
- f) \_\_ Fox
- g) \_\_ box

### Procedures

- ✚ Ask the students underline the suffixes to form the plural.
- ✚ Ask them circle the letter preceding the suffix added to form the plural.
- ✚ The teacher should explain to the students when s or es is added to the word to form plurals.
- ✚ Homework: A *What's My Message* Activity. The teacher gives the students a message with missing graphemes: simple, compound graphemes, double consonants and silent letters, etc. They had to complete it in teams and hand it to the teacher.
  1. I hav som fish in the refrierato. I do not now how to ck them.  
My moer helped me.
  2. My bst frien Rob has a dg namd Tey. He is vry funy an lov to  
pla aroud wit a bal