

Teaching English Language through “Spelling Bee” Games in Education

Iskanderova Shirin Daniyarovna

Student of Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages, Samarkand, Uzbekistan

Abstract

This article discusses the limitations of using subject scores as definitive evidence of students' proficiency in learning a new language. It highlights the fact that students who received good or satisfactory grades had a higher number of words spelled correctly in comparison with students who had excellent grades, indicating a correlation between spelling skills and academic performance. However, this correlation does not necessarily imply language proficiency in general.

Keywords: “Spelling Bee”, students performance, learning English, language development, teaching English, vocabulary development, writing skills, pronunciation, importance of spelling in English.

INTRODUCTION

In an education, language acquisition plays a key role in shaping a child's cognitive development. Proficiency in English as a global language is of utmost importance, providing a strong foundation for future academic and professional success. To ensure effective language learning, teachers are constantly exploring innovative strategies. The importance of spelling in learning English lies in its role in effective communication. Precise writing helps convey meaning clearly and reduces misunderstandings. It improves reading skills, vocabulary development and overall language proficiency. In addition, correct spelling helps develop writing skills, improves grammar and increases confidence in using English. One such strategy that has received considerable attention is teaching English using “**Spelling bee**” game during lessons. “There are spelling bees all over the world, and these are the most well-known spelling bee competitions. Winning a spelling bee is difficult, but not impossible, as most adults would find it difficult to spell some of the words that these adorable young contestants have to deal with” [2]. The “Spelling bee” tactic takes a fun and competitive approach to language acquisition by harnessing the power of friendly competition, memorization, and comprehensive language skills. By integrating this methodology into education, teachers aim to promote a deep understanding of vocabulary, spelling, grammar and pronunciation. “The high focus and cognitive demands of spelling bee competition—participants must memorize and recall complex words quickly and accurately, filter out distractions, and make well-informed decisions about spelling and pronunciation—may contribute to the benefits of spelling bee competition, which have been linked in several studies to enhanced memory, attention, and critical thinking skills” [3].

This article explores the potential benefits of using “Spelling bee” tactic as a teaching tool for English language learners. We will delve into the positive impact it can have on language proficiency, cognitive skills, and overall student achievement. Moreover, in this research paper, we will explore a necessity of students performance in learning English language. In addition,

we will look at how these tactics teach important life skills such as critical thinking, teamwork, and public speaking. With “Spelling bee” tactic, students can become proficient in English while actively participating in an enjoyable and interactive learning environment. By creating an environment that encourages healthy competition and celebrates linguistic achievement, teachers can unleash the potential of their students, fostering a lifelong love of language learning.

METHODOLOGY

“Spelling Bee” game was taken as a major topic of a research in order to identify that orthography is considered one of a vital important key elements in learning English language for people who are not native speakers. The scientific research was conducted in the Second English Faculty of Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages, in Uzbekistan. In order to make experiments there were taken 4 groups of students that studied in the same grade and who were learning English as the second language. Their number was 57. They were main people who participated in the study as a subject of the research. The study was conducted in an open format so that each participating person knew that he was participating as a test subject. Apart from the students, there were professors and high-qualified teachers that conducted the study and were observers to control the position during getting experiment.

The experiment took place in one of the institute’s classrooms which was equipped with all necessary facilities and opportunities which were needed to make this type of research. Moreover, expert teachers prepared the list of words as questions. Approximately 3 hours were spent to conduct the whole research and get the result.

Main rules of the game:

Each participant go to the stage one after one and a judge pronounce one of the English words. The student listens to the word. They can ask for it to be repeated if necessary. Then the student says the word, spells it, and says the word again. (e.g., “Mother, M-O-T-H-E-R, Mother”). The student should spell the word correctly. The judge determine whether or not the word was spelled correctly. If a mistake is made, the participant fails, although if he right spells the word, he moves on to the second round. The difficulty of words increases depending on the rounds. Failed student leaves the game, while passed one remains. “Spelling Bee” game continues like abovementioned strategy. Moreover, there are some opportunities. Participant can ask questions like here:

- “Can you repeat the word again, please?”
- “Can you give me definition of the word, please?”
- “Can you give a part of speech, please?”
- “Can you give the word origin, please?”
- “Can you use it in a sentence, please?”

All abovementioned questions give each member of observing a chance to understand a pronunciation of the word and spell correctly.

RESULT

During the experiment an index of students’ answers were written by the teacher-observers. The maximum number of words which were correct spelled was 15. One of the students who became a winner of the “Spelling Bee” competition could pass all the rounds and spell advanced 15 words correctly that was better result rather than expectation of teachers, while only 3 words were right pronounced by another student that was the lowest index.

All the results of participants were showed in 2 tables which were given below (how many words they could spell).

Table 1

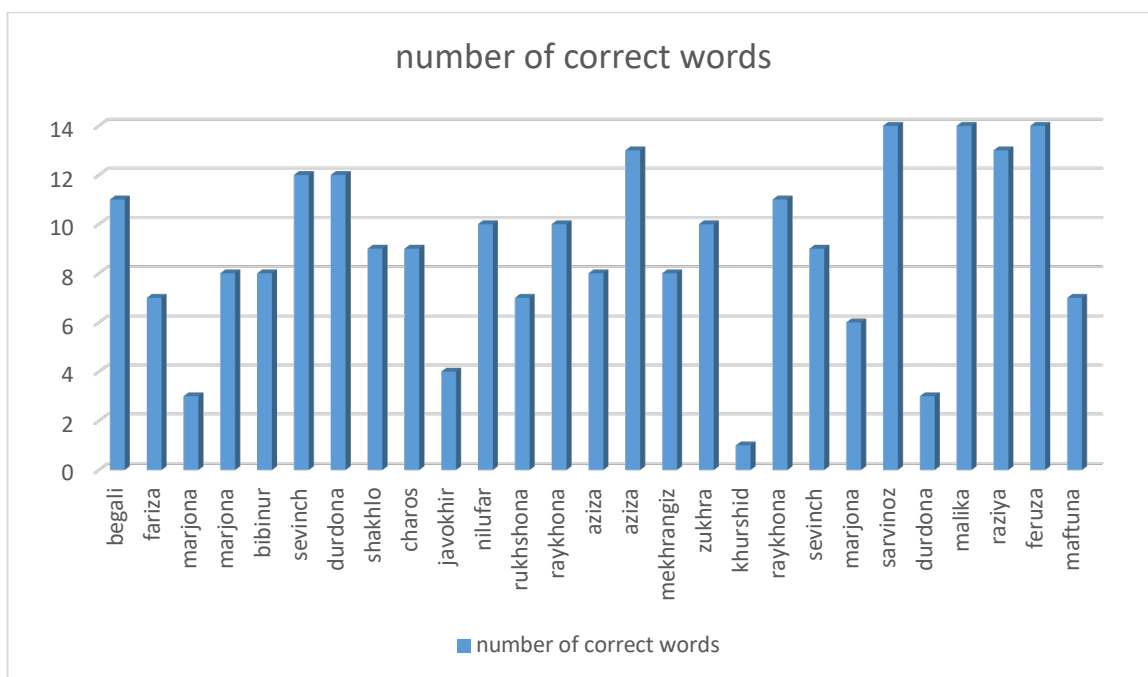
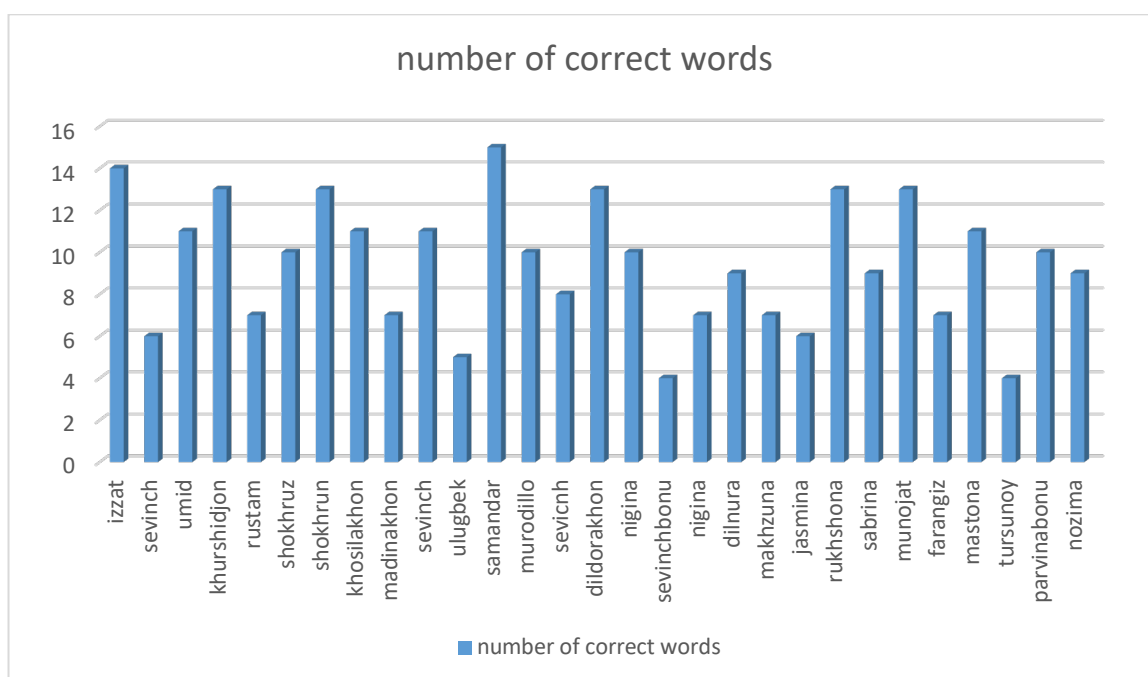


Table 2



In abovementioned tables, we are able to see that approximately 12,5% of the students could spell till 5 words, 48% of them could correct spell words in number from 5 to 10 and from 10 to 15 words could be spelled correctly by about 39,5% of the participants.

Moreover, teachers noted students' scores in the last session in order to observe how **students performance** plays a vital role in learning new language because “students who possess general knowledge and experience are better equipped to learn a new language than those who do not” [1]. *In the given below table, we can see scores of students. (The amount of marks which they got from each subject)*

NAMES OF STUDENTS	5 (excellent)	4 (good)	3 (satisfactory)	2 (unsatisfactory)
Begali		6		
Fariza	5			
Marjona	4	2		

Marjona		4	2	
Bibinur	3	3		
Sevinch	5	1		
Durdona	3	3		
Shaxlo	3	2	1	
Charos	2	3	1	
Javokhir	4	1	1	
Nilufar		4	2	
Raykhona	3	3		
Aziza	2	4		
Aziza	2	4		
Mekhrangiz	5	1		
Zukhra	3	3		
Khurshid		5	1	
Raykhona		3	3	
Sevinch	3	3		
Marjona	1	2	3	
Sarvinoz	4	2		
Durdona	1	2	3	
Malika	3	2	1	
Roziya	2	3	1	
Feruza	2	1	2	1
Maftunakhon	3	2	1	
Izzat		5	1	
Sevinch	2	3	1	
Umid		5	1	
Khurshidjon	2	4		
Rustam		3	3	
Shokhruz	1	3	2	
Shokhrun	2	3	2	
Khosilakhon	2	2	2	
Madinakhon	2	3	1	
Sevinch	2	2	2	
Ulugbek	2	2	2	
Samandar	3	3		
Murodillo		5	1	
Sevinch	1	3	2	
Dildorakhon	1	3	2	
Nigina	1	4	1	
Sevinchbonu	1	4	1	
Nigina		4	2	
Dilnura	1	3	2	
Makhzuna	6			
Jasmina	1	2	2	1
Rukhshona	3	3		
Sabrina	2	3	1	
Munajat	1	3		2
Farangiz		4	2	
Mastona	1	4	1	
Tursunoy	4	2		
Parvinabonu	4	2		
Nozima	3	3		
Sevinch	2	2	2	

As written in the table above, every student had own marks from each subject in the university. Some of them had excellent and good marks, meanwhile other possessed unsatisfactory marks. Not all participants who had more excellent marks in comparison with others, could get good

results during “Spelling Bee” competition, while students who studied in good marks spelled more words correctly.

Findings

Teachers observing the results of research made a decision that subjects’ scores of students could not be a proof that they were good at learning new language because higher number of correct words were spelled by students who had good marks. In addition, some of them possessed satisfactory and unsatisfactory scores from certain subjects. Finally, it is important to recognize that academic achievement and English language proficiency are different skills that do not always go hand in hand. Although a student may excel academically, their level of English proficiency may vary. A student's language proficiency can be influenced by various factors, such as educational level, exposure to English outside of school, and individual ability. Therefore, it is critical to assess language skills separately from academic achievement to provide a comprehensive understanding of a student's abilities.

DISCUSSION

Teaching English through educational “Spelling Bee” games is an effective and fun approach that can benefit language learners in a variety of ways. “Spelling Bee” games encourage *active participation, vocabulary development, and the development of spelling and pronunciation skills*. First, spelling games promote *active learning* by engaging students in friendly competition. Participants are motivated to learn and practice English words, which increases their engagement in the learning process. This active participation promotes a deeper understanding of vocabulary as students are required to listen and spell and pronounce words correctly. Secondly, these games help *expand vocabulary*. By incorporating a wide range of words into spelling exercises, students are introduced to new terms and phrases, expanding their lexical knowledge. In addition, learning spelling patterns and word structure helps students internalize the spelling rules of the English language, *improving their overall writing and reading skills*. Finally, “Spelling Bee” games strengthen *spelling and pronunciation skills*. Students must pronounce words accurately out loud, which helps them recognize and internalize the correct spelling. Additionally, this process improves *phonemic awareness* as students develop stronger connections between sounds and letters. Improving spelling and pronunciation skills improves overall *language proficiency and communication*. Therefore, using “Spelling Bee” tactics is considered one of the most effective ways to teach students English which can bring a lot of benefits not only for teachers, but also for students.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the “Spelling bee” tactic is a valuable and effective approach to teaching English. This fun method not only improves students' spelling skills but also improves their overall language proficiency. First, “Spelling bee” tactics promote a competitive and interactive learning environment. By participating in “Spelling bee”, students are motivated to study and practice spelling words diligently. This healthy competition increases their engagement and enthusiasm, leading to better retention of spelling rules and word pattern. Secondly, “Spelling bee” tactics promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Students must analyze word structure, identify phonetic patterns, and apply spelling rules to spell words correctly. This process improves their cognitive abilities and helps them develop effective strategies for learning unfamiliar words. Moreover, “Spelling bee” tactics encourage teamwork and cooperation. Students often study and practice together, supporting each other in learning spelling and remembering words. This collaborative atmosphere promotes a sense of community and peer learning, improving students' social skills and creating a positive classroom environment. Finally, there are numerous benefits to incorporating “Spelling bee” tactics into education. Using this effective approach, teachers can foster a love of language and give students a solid foundation in English.

References

1. Factors influencing and affecting Second Language Learning | Blogging for the ELT Community (wordpress.com)
2. The Advanced Spelling Bee Guide: All You Need to Know! [Updated 2021] (spellquiz.com)
3. The Cognitive Benefits of Spelling Bee Participation: What Research Tells Us | by Rennetremblay | Medium