Evaluation of the Spelling Component in First-Grade and Second-Grade Syrian Curriculum of English, Emar`

Maryam Zanyou*

Abstract:

When developing new curricula for language learners, attention should be given to all components of language. This can be of special importance when dealing with foreign young learners as they are newly introduced into the language. Syrian learners in the first and second grades can find the spelling system of English challenging since spelling is one of the important skills to master when writing in English is taken into consideration. The present study is an attempt to evaluate the spelling component in the newly-designed first-grade and second-grade Syrian Curriculum of English, Emar. The aim of the study is to shed light on the positive points of the way spelling is introduced to young learners. It also looks into the drawbacks that teaching orthography in English based on the curriculum can have. The study demonstrates how the curriculum adopts the traditional approach to teaching spelling. Suggestions related to improving the spelling component in the curriculum are presented, and thus recommendations are made to introduce some modifications in the curriculum.

*Chargé d'Affaires – Department of English Language – Specialization in Applied Linguistics – Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences – University of Damascus.

تقييم عنصر التهجئة في منهاج اللغة الإنكليزية السوري "إيمار" للصفين الأول والثاني

د. مريم زينو*

الملخص:

في مرحلة تطوير المناهج لتعليم اللغة الأجنبية، يلجأ معدّو المناهج إلى الاهتمام بكل مكونات اللغة ومهاراتها، وخاصة عند تطوير مناهج اللغة للصغار حيث تعد هذه المناهج المرحلة الأولى لتعرضهم للغة، وفي هذا السياق يمكن أن يشكل نظام التهجئة والإملاء في اللغة الإنجليزية تحدياً للطلاب في الصف الأول والثاني في المدارس الابتدائية السورية إذ يعد الإملاء مهارة ضرورية لإتقان الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية. تسعى الدراسة الحالية إلى تقييم قسم الإملاء في منهاج اللغة الإنكليزية السوري الحديث "إيمار" للصفين الأول والثاني، وتهدف الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على إيجابيات طريقة تقديم نظام الإملاء في المنهاج للطلاب في عمر مبكر، كما تبحث في السلبيات التي يمكن تجاوزها في تعليم الإملاء بالاعتماد على المنهاج الموجود، وتظهر الدراسة أن المنهاج المذكور يعتمد على الطريقة التقليدية في تعليم التهجئة، وبذلك تقدم الدراسة عدداً من المقترحات تتعلق بتحسين قسم تعليم الإملاء كما تقدم توصيات بشأن إدخال بعض التعديلات في المنهاج.

الكلمات المفتاحية: إيمار، الإملاء، التهجئة، منهاج اللغة الإنجليزية

---

*قائم بالأعمال – قسم اللغة الإنكليزية – اختصاص لغويات تطبيقية – كلية الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية – جامعة دمشق.

1. Introduction

Language curriculum design can be one of the challenging tasks in language teaching. It involves several aspects that should be taken into consideration, including needs analysis, characteristics of target learners, intended outcomes, relevant content, methods of introduction, and evaluation strategies. One important process that should be allowed after the development of the curriculum is the ability to perform ongoing review of materials. Brown (1995) believes that "materials must be reviewed periodically so that they do not become stale with regard to the particular curriculum involved" (p. 163). The main purpose of this evaluation of curriculum is, as Nation and Macalister (2010, p. 11) put it, "to continue or discontinue the course, or to bring about improvements in the course", and evaluating the curriculum in this way makes the process of curriculum design and the decisions made in the process "responsible".

Part of the evaluation process is investigating each component of the curriculum on its own as well as within the framework of the whole curriculum. When looking at these different components, one can focus on the four basic skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. One can also look at the integrative skills essential for learning the four sills. Spelling is of paramount importance to developing the essential skills, especially for young learners.

Young children may find spelling challenging as they need to go through several stages to master it. Westwood (2008) describes four stages in spelling development that children go through. These are pre-phonemic, where children copy down strings of letters randomly; early phonetic, where children understand that there is a connection between letters and sounds and try "inventive spelling" using consonants mainly to represent words; phonetic, where children learn the orthographic symbols that represent phonetic units and produce a more accurately-spelled words; and transitional, where they become experienced in applying spelling patterns to newly-spelled words. These stages demonstrate how sophisticated the process of mastering spelling is; therefore, spelling instruction should take these stages into account.

Spelling instruction should be based on research by academics on how young learners in the first stages of learning a foreign language gain knowledge of spelling.

Thus, the aim of this study is to evaluate the spelling component of the Syrian English curriculum, Emar, in the first and second grades. It investigates how spelling is introduced in the course books and the choice of spelling words in the curriculum. It adopts the first level of evaluation, which includes qualitative reflections on how well learners can benefit from the spelling component of the curriculum. Some points of comparison are made between the current curriculum and other curricula established by professional experts in the field. The study also suggests a group of recommendations to improve spelling instruction in the first two grades.

2. Significance of Systematic Teaching of Spelling

As Sproat (2016) puts it, "English spelling is quirky and unpredictable. Indeed it probably has the most complicated letter-to-sound correspondence of any language that uses a segmental writing system" (p.31). The challenging nature of English spelling can be attributed to many factors. One of these factors is that "English orthography is a bit segmental, but at the same time a bit logographic" (p.39).

This unpredictability can be manifested basically by the discrepancy between the number of letters (26) and the number of sounds (44) in English. This makes the English language not phonetic in comparison to languages like Arabic, where in most cases each letter stands for a specific sound. An Example of this logographic aspect of the orthographic system in English includes the silent letters in the language (e.g. lamb, where, handsome, knit, calf). Other examples include the different orthographic realizations of the same sound, such as the realization of the sound /f/ by the letters (f, ff, ph, gh); and the different sounds corresponding

to the same orthographic symbols, such as the different sounds represented by the -ough combination of letters. If one looks at words like *though, through, tough, trough, thorough* and sees the way these words are pronounced and the way they are spelled; one may run to the conclusion that English spelling is random.

However, this seemingly-evident arbitrariness of the English spelling is countered by the sweeping tendencies of structured patterns of orthographic symbols in English words. This justifies the systematic approach in teaching spelling. Phenix (2001) states that teaching children spelling patterns can be useful to show them the logicality and predictability of spelling in English. He points out that "perhaps the most important thing children can learn from studying spelling patterns is that knowing how to spell one word can help you to spell many other words. All you have to do is make the right connections. It is many-for-the-price-of-one leaning" (p.31). This idea holds true if we look at words like *night, fight, sight, light, thigh, high, flight*.

In fact, to best describe English spelling, we can refer to the four principles featuring English spelling listed by Ryan (2016). These principles are the following: a) identity principle, which shows that new English spellings take their form from existing spelling rather than their sounds, which is clear in the case of abbreviations; b) phonographic matching principle, which demonstrates the link between spelling and sound; c) distinctiveness principle, which states that every word should have its own spelling, such as homophones, which are spelled differently; d) invariance principle, which states that once spelling is established, it never changes (pp. 53-56).

3. Background about the Syrian Curriculum

"Emar" is a nationally-developed English language learning series for Syrian students from the first grade to the third secondary grade. It was designed by teachers in the Ministry of Education and supervised by instructors in the English Department and the Higher Language Institute at Damascus University. This curriculum change was first introduced in the school year 2021-2022. The new curriculum, Emar, teaches the four basic linguistic skills; i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as supplementary skills, such as spelling, pronunciation, and punctuation. In the first-grade and second-grade, the books are designed in a way to incorporate all of these components.

When it comes to spelling, the first-grade and second-grade English books adopt traditional spelling instruction that focuses on giving learners a list of words to practice and spell correctly. Each of the twenty-five units contains an introduction of one or two letters, with examples of two or more words with the letter(s) introduced in the unit. The first-grade Pupil's Book and Workbook introduce the letters in the following order with a standard word for each letter: Ll (lemon), Oo (orange), Tt (tree), Cc (carrot), Aa (ant), Dd (doll), Ff (fish), Pp (pen), Hh (hen), Ii (insect), Kk (kangaroo), Nn (nest), Gg (goat), Bb (basket), Ss (strawberry, snake), Mm (moon), Jj (jar), Rr (ring, rabbit), Vv (van), Ee (egg), Qq (queen), Zz (zoo), Ww (water), Xx (fox), Uu (umbrella), and Yy (yo-yo). Other words, about two or three, are sometimes provided with each letter. Five phonics corners are also provided to revise the letters given and the sounds of these letters with the same previously-introduced words.

The second-grade Pupil's Book and Workbook connect spelling more to sounds. They focus on how sounds are put together to make words. They introduce letters in the following order with standard words for each letter: a (ant, mat, cat, car), b (butterfly, bird, rubber), e (egg, elephant, wet), l (ball, black, lamp), o (doll, okra, octopus, crayon), c (car, cup, octopus), u (umbrella, bus, sun, fun), d (dolphin, duck, doll, bed), h (hen, head), i (fridge, six), g (eagle, swing), j (juice, jacket), m (mud, moon), n (nose, nuts), p (pineapple, pear), s (star, salad), k (key, kite), q (queen, quack), f (frog, face), r (ruler, rabbit, rain), y (yolk, eye), x (box, axe), z (zero, zebra), t (tomato, tooth), v (van, vase), and w (watch, window). Five phonics corners are also included to enable learners to differentiate between long vowels and short vowels.

Phonics Corner 1 demonstrates the difference between the short a-sound in words like *cat* and *mat* and the long a-sound in words like *cake* and *lake*. Phonics Corner 2 focuses on the short e-sound in words like *net* and *bed* and the long e-sound in words like *feet* and *bee*. Phonics Corner 3 makes a distinction between the short i-sound in words like *fish* and *ship* and the long i-sound in words like *ice* and *kite*. Phonics Corner 4 focuses on the difference between the short o-sound in words like *pot* and *socks* and the long o-sound in words like *boat* and *rope*. Phonics Corner 5 introduces the difference between the short u-sound in words like *duck* and *mug* and the long u-sound in words like *cube* and *cute*.

The two books contain different kinds of activities related to spelling, like tracing and copying letters and words, writing the first letter of certain pictures, matching a letter with a picture that starts with it, writing the sound they hear, writing the missing letter, choosing a letter to complete a word, unscrambling the letters to make a word, circling words that have the same initial sound, circling words that have the same vowel sound, circling words that have the same final sound, and circling rhyming words. These activities enhance to some extent the connection between phonetic patterns and spelling as some of these activities can reinforce the patterns that words share. However, there are still some drawbacks in the curriculum that can make learners take much time and effort when learning English spelling.

4. Drawbacks of the Spelling System in the Curriculum

Although the two books of first and second grades can be described as comprehensive in terms of including all of the letters with examples, the curriculum at hand still has some drawbacks in terms of how spelling is introduced. Given the significance of orthographic awareness at the early stages of learning a language, "an important goal in any effective spelling program is helping students take advantage of the regularities and patterns underlying English spelling" (Westwood, 2008, p. 16). The way spelling is introduced in the books shows very little attention to the regularities and patterns present in English. For example, when the letter (o) is introduced in the first-grade book, four words are given: boy, olive, door, and orange. This can make it challenging for the child to distinguish the short vowel sound from the long vowel sound or the diphthong, which can result in spelling errors in inventive writing. Another example is the words introduced with the letter (w) for first-graders, i.e. water, window, and two. The selection of words with a (w) where a combination of letters, (ow), represents a diphthong sound in the case of the word *window* or with a silent (w) in the case of the word *two* can confuse the child rather than facilitate spelling. The connection between sounds and letters is ignored and the overwhelming patterns present in the language are neglected in favor of the few irregularities. This makes it hard for the students to see connections and just allows them to look at words in a case-by-case basis. A clear example of this arbitrariness in choosing spelling words is activities for second-graders to write missing letters in words; they are asked to write the missing *c* and *o* in the word "crown", the missing *r* and *s* in the word "trousers", the missing *h* and *c* in the word "chick", the missing *s* in the word "dress", and the missing *i*, *t*, and *e* in the word "kitten". Asking students to do so without teaching the *ow* and *ou* diphthongs, the consonant diagraph *ch*, the -*ck* ending, bonus-letter words, as well as double-letter words can be an attempt to make students rely on their memorization practices of each word on its own rather than helping them see regularities in the language.

The failure to make learners recognize patterns and regularities can lead to another obstacle: the lack of cyclical gradation. Although cyclical gradation is not always possible as it can result in lengthy textbooks, "few would doubt the advantages of cyclical over linear gradation" (Richards, 2001, p. 14). In relation to spelling, cyclical gradation involves introducing some aspects, the most common ones, and building on these aspects later on. In this respect, introducing letters that represent short vowels, for instance, is prioritized and later learners can be introduced to the letters that represent long vowels or diphthongs.

Despite the adoption of this approach in the second-grade books, it is still done a while after introduction to the spelling system in the language, which can result in lack of gradual learning.

Another aspect that hinders cyclical gradation is the failure of the curriculum to first introduce the CVC pattern and then build on it later with CVCC or CCVC patterns or even with two-syllable words. In fact, Rhoda (2021) views that "CVC words have a quality of being highly effective tools to help the child recognize sounds. They also help draw a clear connection between the sounds and the letters that form the sound" (para. 9). This view is valid if our focus is on creating phonological awareness and connecting it to the spelling patterns. This facilitates reading as well as writing on the part of learners. The books at hand do not follow a gradual progression in introducing spelling words, which may slow down learners' progress and may make reading even more challenging than it actually is. An example of this is the use of the word "orange", "carrot", "lemon", "umbrella", and many other words.

One factor that can be confusing in the order of introducing letters is that some letters which are similar in sound are introduced together. For example, in the first-grade book, the letters *u* and *y* are introduced in the same lesson, including words like "umbrella" and "yo-yo". That can cause some difficulty for learners because they are similar in look and sometimes they can stand for the same sound. Therefore, they should not be introduced in the same lesson.

Another obstacle that can hinder building up orthographic awareness among children is that the curriculum fails to invest learners' spelling knowledge in the choice of reading texts and the enhancement of vocabulary. Cataldo and Ellis (1990) view that "spelling acts as a mediator for the influence of explicit phonological awareness on reading" (p. 122). This shows the important role that spelling can play in the enhancement of reading. Stahl and Stahl (2004) also suggest that "we learn words by making connections of their particular spelling, their spelling patterns, or parts of their spelling patterns." They state that "as the words are encountered more frequently, information about the word is tied to a number of different contexts, and we forget about the specific contexts and learn to recognize the word automatically" (p. 35). Repetition, in this way, can promote automaticity as it makes a connection between the word and information stored in the long-term memory. However, the curriculum at hand ignores this completely and uses reading texts and vocabulary that are not linked to the spelling words introduced in each unit. This may require more time on the part of the learners to absorb even the most common patterns in spelling, which results in difficulties in reading. This failure to include spelling words in texts also can affect learners' ability to gain knowledge of these words because of the lack of repetition or contextualized use of them.

Yet another aspect that can be improved is the lack of activities that reinforce learners' knowledge of spelling. Although there are activities of different types on spelling, they might not be deemed sufficient to master the letters introduced in the unit. For example, when the letter (Aa) is introduced in the first-grade book, two activities are provided and these include circling the letter (a) in four words: grandmother, black, ant, and father, as well as copying and writing the letter in uppercase and lowercase. One can argue that children at this stage only need to know the shape of the letter, which makes sense of course; however, adding some other activities can reinforce the learners' knowledge of the letter and connect it to the sound, like writing the missing letter when learners hear the sound. For example, learners can be asked to write the missing (m) or (n) in given words; this can be done with new words to link the sound they hear to the letter as well as with the same words introduced in the lesson as repetition is so important in developing children's spelling system.

Overall, the whole approach of teaching spelling in the first and second grade curriculum can be best described as visual rather than phonetic. While the visual techniques, such as repetitive writing and coloring segments or letters, to remember the spelling of words can be

essential to mastering spelling high-frequency words and homophones, there is still need to make children aware of the phonetic connection to master predictable patterns and apply this knowledge to new words and to develop vocabulary learning and reading skills.

5. Suggestions to Improve the Spelling Component of the Curriculum

The teacher plays an important role in boosting learners' knowledge of proper spelling. However, when the curriculum itself adopts a clear instructional methodology, it encourages teachers to follow successful pedagogic strategies that can boost learners' learning, and it aids learners in acquiring good practices in their learning. The following paragraphs provide some suggestions to improve the spelling component in the first and second grade curriculum.

5. 1. Focus on Spelling Patterns

Using a phonics-based instruction can help learners a lot at their early stages of learning. It allows them to see connections between sounds and letters. In this way, the curriculum can eliminate words that can only be studied by rote. It is more effective to make learners use letter-sound correspondences in the language at an early stage rather than leaving them to discover these patterns later on their own. Thus, learners can benefit from systematic instruction that moves them from the easiest patterns to the more difficult ones. Curriculum developers can benefit from research done in the field and books designed for this purpose. For example, Rhoades (2019b) suggests starting with the most common continuous consonants, together with short vowels, then moving to stop consonants or less common continuous consonants, and complex sounds come next, followed by consonant diagraphs and double consonants. After that come long vowels and r-controlled vowels and silent e (see Table 1). This order is practical as letters of high utility appear first and low-frequency letters are introduced later. Also, letters that look or sound similar are kept apart to stop confusion.

Unit	Letters/Phonetic Pattern	Unit	Letters/Phonetic Pattern
1	Letters *m* and *f*	19	short *u* rimes
2	Letters *n* and *s*	20	diagraph *sh*
3	Letters *l* and *r*	21	diagraph *ch*
4	Letters *i* and *a*	22	diagraph *th*
5	Letters *t* and *d*	23	diagraph *ck*
6	Letters *g* and *u*	24	double consonants *ll*
7	Letters *k* and *o*	25	more double consonants *ll*
8	Letters *p* and *e*	26	double consonants *ss*
9	Letters *b* and *c*	27	long vowels *e* and *ee*
10	Letters *h* and *j*	28	long vowels *o* and *ow*
11	Letters *v* and z	29	long vowels *ay*
12	Letters *w* and *y*	30	long vowels *oo*
13	Letters *q* and *x*	31	- *ing* ending
14	short *a* rimes	32	*ar* pattern
15	more short *a* rimes	33	*or* pattern
16	short *i* rimes	34	long vowels -y
17	short *o* rimes	35	silent *e* with long *i*
18	short *e* rimes	36	silent *e* with long *a*

Table 1. Order of Letters for Kindergarten, Rhoades (2019b), p.8

Rhoades (2019a) also suggests cyclical curriculum progression, where learners return to the same topics with increased depth to foster learners' knowledge of certain essential aspects of the curriculum. This repetitive nature of curriculum development is fundamental for young

learners to strengthen the connections and ultimately master skills. Table 2 demonstrates a revisiting of spelling instruction for first graders.

Unit	Words	Spelling Pattern
1	bag, cap, fan, jam, nap, pad, pan, rag, wax, yam	short *a* words
2	bib, dig, fin, kids, lips, pig, quit, ribs, six, zip	short *i* words
3	box, cop, fox, job, jog, log, mop, nod, pot, sob	short *o* words
4	bug, bun, cup, gum, jug, mud, nut, rug, sun, tub	short *u* words
5	bed, beg, hen, jet, leg, men, net, pen, said, web	short *e* words
6	bell, buzz, cuff, doll, fill, hill, kiss, miss, puff, yell	bonus letters
7	back, deck, duck, kick, lick, lock, neck, puck, sack, sock	-*ck* ending
8	chick, chin, chip, dish, fish, rash, rich, shell, shin, ship	consonant diagraphs *ch* and *sh*
9	bath, path, than, that, thick, thin, this, when, whip, with	consonant diagraphs *th* and *wh*
10	ate, base, chase, late, same, save, shape, take, vase, whale	silent *e* with *a*
11	bike, bite, chime, dive, five, hide, lime, pile, shine, time	silent *e* with *i*
12	cute, home, joke, mule, nose, robe, rose, tube, use	silent *e* with *o* and *u*
13	come, done, give, gone, have, live, love, none, one, some	silent *e* rule breakers
14	ace, cage, face, huge, ice, nice, page, race, rage, rice	soft *c* and soft *g* words
15	blob, clap, class, cliff, flag, glad, glass, plus, sled, slip	initial blends with *l*
16	scab, skin, smell, snap, spot, stem, still, stop, stuff, swim	initial blends with *s*
17	brag, crab, dress, drop, frog, from, grass, grill, press, trap	initial blends with *r*

Table 2. Spelling Instruction for First Graders, adapted from Rhoades (2019a), p.8

These two tables can be used when modifying the spelling component in the curriculum. The plenty of activities that accompany each unit can show how important repetition is, and if this is the way native speakers learn about the spelling of their own language, it goes without saying that learners of the language need to be aware of these regularities.

It is also recommended to include a spelling booklet that covers these points as the inclusion of activities can result in a lengthy curriculum. This can make it possible to include a group of activities to reinforce spelling instruction.

5. 2. Integrating Reading with Spelling Instruction

A helpful tool to support spelling instruction is to connect it to reading. "Reading plays an enormous role in spelling development… Good readers are often good spellers" (Tompkins, 2004, p. 126). When learners see words with the same spelling pattern in the reading they have, they can visually retain the shape of the word and that can help them to spell properly when writing. On the other hand, spelling instruction can support reading instruction because phonological awareness facilitates reading. Thus, the benefits brought by integrating reading with spelling are twofold.

An example of how to apply this in the present curriculum is to present stories that are connected to phonics skills. For instance, Keller (2005)'s *The Hat* can be used to support spelling instruction of short *a* sound. The story reads as follows:

Pam lost her hat.

Pam ran up.

Pam ran down.
Dan ran up.
Dan ran down.
Dan got the hat!
Yay, Dan! Yay, Pam!
Although the story contains some sight words, such as *up*, *down*, *lost*, and *got*; these are high-frequency words that should be learned automatically since high-frequency words account for at least 50% of the words we read and they boost automaticity as well as confidence and that pays off in reading (Johns & Wilke, 2018). Integrating reading and spelling in this way can be advantageous as children learn to read words before they spell them. Moreover, repetition and exposure to words enable children to store words visually in their memories and help them spell the words accurately when they need to.

6. Conclusion

Curriculum evaluation can be essential when implementing any new curriculum to identify where the curriculum is working well and where improvements can be made. The present paper is an attempt to scrutinize the curriculum to see strengths and weaknesses in the spelling component in the curriculum. The textbooks examined demonstrate that, except for some instances in the second-grade textbook, spelling is presented in a traditional way, focusing on the visual rather than the phonetic aspect of spelling. If our goal is to enable learners to master English spelling, there should be structured practice that adopts a structured approach to spelling. Implementing a systematic approach to teaching spelling can easily be done in curricula for young learners learning English as a foreign language. The activities and techniques discussed above can save time and effort on the part of the learners; they can facilitate learners' early cognition of how letters and sounds are connected in the English language. In this way, the activities can make spelling fun for young learners. Moreover, spelling skills should be integrated with reading, which can promote the development of these skills.

References:

• Brown, J. D. (1995). *The elements of language curriculum: A systematic approach to program development.* Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
• Cataldo, S. & Ellis, N. (1990). Learning to spell, learning to read. In P. D. Pumfrey & C. D. Elliott (Eds.), *Children's difficulties in reading, spelling, and writing* (pp. 101-125). London & New York: Routledge.
• Johns, J. L. & Wilke, K. H. (2018). High-frequency words: Some ways to teach and help students practice and learn them. *Texas Journal of Literacy Education, 6*(1), 3-13.
• Keller, H. (2005). *The hat.* Green Light Readers: Harcourt, Inc.
• Nation, I. S. P. & Macalister, J. (2010). *Language curriculum design.* New York: Routledge.
• Phenix, J. (2001). *The spelling teacher's handbook.* Ontario: Folens Limited.
• Rhoda (2021, February 18). *Why your child needs to practice CVC word lists.* Rhoda Design Studio. Retrieved from https://www.rhodadesignstudio.com/cvc-word-lists/
• Rhoades, S. P. (2019a). *180 days of spelling and word study for first grade.* California: Shell Educational Publishing, Inc.
• Rhoades, S. P. (2019b). *180 days of spelling and word study for kindergarten.* California: Shell Educational Publishing, Inc.
• Richards, J. C. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
• Ryan, D. (2016). Linguists' descriptions of the English writing system. In V. Cook & D. Ryan (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of the English writing system* (pp. 41-64). New York: Routledge.

• Sproat, R. (2016). English among the writing systems of the world. In V. Cook & D. Ryan (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of the English writing system* (pp. 27-40). New York: Routledge.

• Stahl, S. A & Stahl, K. A. D (2004). From Brown Bear to Paddington Bear: The role of text in the development of fluency. In J. V. Hoffman & D. L. Schallert (Eds.), *The texts in elementary classrooms* (pp. 33-52). London: Lawrence Erlbaum associates.

• Tompkins, G. E. (2004). *Teaching writing: Balancing process and product* (4th ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.

• Westwood, P. (2008). *What teachers need to know about spelling.* Camberwell: ACER Press.