Developing a Spelling Conscience

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Turbill draws on a series of case studies and instructional projects to illustrate the importance of proofreading in developing a "spelling conscience" and, ultimately, learning to spell conventionally.

> Spelling is easy—it is getting it right that's the hard part.
> (11-year-old Guilda, cited in Bean & Bouffler, 1987, p. 70)

Guilda's insightful comment highlighted for me the vital role that proofreading seems to play in the spelling process. But what do we know about the proofreading process? Just what does "getting it right" entail?

In a time when many standardized tests are using a proofreading task to test students' spelling ability, isn't it time we understood more about proofreading and its links to spelling? A focus on proofreading, I will argue, serves to operationalize the connections between reading, writing, spelling, and phonics development.

I will argue that spelling is best **learned** if the way it's **taught** is congruent with what we have discovered about learning, about language, and about the role that spelling plays in our culture. I want to present some research findings, which span several years, and which strongly suggest that we have not understood the role that proofreading actually plays in the learning-to-spell process. Nor have we understood that proofreading is a special kind of reading that needs to be explicitly taught, so that students, in turn, can understand how it differs from other kinds of reading, such as reading for meaning, skim reading, and critical reading. Proofreading, I will argue, requires readers to *read like a speller* (Smith, 1983). Basically, I want to argue that proofreading might be the missing link between spelling and phonics and effective reading and writing.

The data that have led me to this conclusion emerged from a series of case studies I conducted over several years and include taped interviews, transcripts, and retrospective journal notes. In what follows, I outline briefly what emerged from each of these studies, and how, cumulatively, these case studies led me to generate a possible theoretical link between proofreading, reading, writing, and spelling, and phonics.

CASE STUDY 1: SALLY'S STORY

Sally was a young woman who had just commenced a course at a vocational college. She feared she would not succeed because she was, as she put it, a hopeless speller. She walked in to the Education Center in which I worked at the time to ask

for help. She asked for a spelling book with lists of words that she could take and memorize. My notes of that meeting indicate that I was reluctant to give her what she asked for because it seemed that she had already spent years at school trying to learn to spell through rote memorization of lists of words. When I pointed this out she pleaded, "So what will help me?"

Over coffee, I shared with her what being a speller involved. We did a short activity that helped her see that there are various spelling strategies people use to spell (Bean & Bouffler, 1987, 1997). I talked about the role that reading plays in learning to spell and, of course, the role writing plays (Graves, 1981; Smith, 1992, 1995; Wilde, 1990, 1992). We then discussed the proofreading process. She agreed to try some new strategies. She agreed to buy a small notebook in which she would jot down a few of the words each day that caused her trouble in her course. Then, when she was reading materials for her course or reading magazines on the train, she would look for these words in the text; perhaps even underline them when she found them.

She seemed to understand that the idea was to look carefully at how others spelled the words that were causing her trouble. Finally, she agreed that she would add the conventional spellings of her trouble-words, as well as others she saw that interested her from her reading, into the back of her notebook. I also suggested that she look carefully at the advertisements in magazines and note how words were often deliberately misspelled to grab the reader's attention. Before Sally left the Center, we did some of these activities together as a demonstration of what I meant.

Sally appeared again some months later. She told me that she came back in order to tell me how much her spelling had improved and to thank me for being such a great teacher. I responded by pointing out that she was doing all the work, and all that I did was to help her understand what spelling involved and how it fitted within the reading/writing processes. I pointed out to her that she had become a very careful proofreader of her own and others' work, (she was even finding typographical errors in the magazine articles she was reading). She indicated that she was now far more confident in her spelling ability.

That was the last time Sally and I met. I did learn that she had easily passed her course.

Sally's case interested me and caused me to wonder about the connections between spelling development and the proofreading process.

CASE STUDY 2: ANDREW'S STORY

Andrew is my nephew and, between the ages of 5 and 10, he spent a great deal of time with me and was my guinea pig during those writing process days in the 80s (Butler & Turbill, 1984; Cambourne & Turbill, 1987; Graves, 1981; Turbill, 1983).

By the age of 20, Andrew was a prolific reader and writer—yet, by his own admission, he was a terrible speller. His first drafts were full of errors, and he had great trouble in deciding what was conventional and what was not. He would often send me copies of the narratives he wrote, requesting a telephone conference. His narratives were excellent stories but so filled with spelling errors that my attention was often diverted from the message. This caused me great concern. I felt that I might have been responsible for his poor spelling by inadvertently giving him the message during his formative years that spelling was not important.

Some years later, he stayed with me in order to finish the final report for an honors degree in Science. As usual, he asked me to read his paragraphs and chapters to check the logic and flow. I noted that while he seemed to be able to spell the specialist technical terms conventionally, he had misspelled many comparatively simple words. For instance, he confused the use of "their" and "there," often spelling the latter, "thear." I asked him why he thought this happened. He admitted that he seemed to learn the technical words easily because, as he said, "I had to look at them very carefully as I read in order to work out their meaning." He also commented that when he was writing the technical terms, he had trained himself to check to see if they were correct because he knew "the spell checker didn't always have these scientific words in it."

"I read a lot. Shouldn't I therefore be a great speller?"

My journal notes indicate that it was during this discussion that I made this connection: Here was a 20-year-old reader/writer with no understanding of the connections between the reading and writing processes, in particular the spelling connection. It was at this point that we began to discuss how I thought spelling was learned. I explained that we learn much of our knowledge of how to spell words by seeing them as we read. He seemed to miss the point I was trying to make, for he argued, "I read a lot. Shouldn't I therefore be a great speller?"

I pointed out to Andrew that his ability to spell the scientific words demonstrated that he ***could*** be a great speller. I explained that when he read for meaning, his eyes sampled only parts of words—just enough for him to work out the word's meaning; his eyes didn't look at the letters and letter patterns in sequence. However, when he read to get the visual spelling pattern of the scientific words under control, it seems that he deliberately slowed his reading down, and looked at the letters and patterns of letters in sequence. He admitted that in attempting to write these words he had been forced to return continually to the original written text he was

reading in order to check them. It seemed from this conversation that Andrew was using a different form of reading to both check and then write the technical terms. I began to wonder whether this was akin to what Smith (1983) called "reading like a writer." In Andrew's case, he knew that he would most likely need to write the technical words he was reading, so he engaged in the demonstrations of the letter patterns on the page in such a way that he would be able to spell them at a later time. Andrew was "reading like a speller." What was the relationship between this process of reading-as-a-speller and the proofreading task that we have tended to ask students to carry out only in final drafts of writing? These were the questions that were being raised by our discussions.

This case study concluded in much the same way as did Sally's. My notes indicate that we decided that Andrew should try to do the same with all the words he consistently misspelled. And he did. He became consciously aware of these words. He looked for them as he read and he wrote them in a personal list. It took just a few weeks before he had control over most of the words he needed to use. Like Sally, Andrew had become an efficient proofreader. The portfolio of Andrew's writing that I keep (I am at heart a doting aunt) indicates that the change has been both significant and permanent. The pieces he now E-mails me (and they are all examples of one-draft writing) show very few spelling errors. It seems that the conventional spelling patterns of words that he would have typically misspelled had been internalized so that he can now retrieve them automatically. Furthermore, when he now encounters a word he can't spell, he has a strategy for learning it. Like Sally, he has become an astute proofreader of his own and others' writing.

PULLING SOME THREADS TOGETHER: CLARIFYING THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

These case studies forced me to think more deeply about the issues inherent in learning to spell. I knew for example, that Andrew had experienced a strong phonics-first program in his early years at school and an intensive, direct instruction spelling program, heavily oriented toward lists and rote memorization during his middle-school years. As well, he was an avid writer and reader.

Both his and Sally's case studies made me more conscious of the reading/writing connection and the role that spelling played in this connection. Each made me think more and more about proofreading and its importance in the spelling process, particularly in the getting-it-right process, which, after all, seems to be what really counts with both teachers and students.

These case studies, together with other data I've collected since, led me to ask why, with the plethora of research into spelling, with the number of recent books written to help teachers teach spelling (Bean & Bouffler, 1998; Fountas & Pinnell, 1999; Gentry, 1997; Snowball & Bolton, 1999, to name a few), we still seem to have made little headway. In fact, there is some rather alarming evidence that today's children do not appear to be spelling as effectively as their predecessors (Westwood, 1994).

Findings such as these puzzled me when I knew that today's children were engaged in more sustained reading and writing than ever before. Especially when we are supposed to know so much more about the learning and teaching of spelling. Or do we?

Three questions began to form in my mind:

1. What is the relationship between the proofreading process and spelling knowledge?
2. What skills and knowledge do we need and use to be effective proofreaders?
3. What happens in classrooms where proofreading is taught alongside spelling?

These key questions helped frame several research projects which I subsequently carried out over the next few years. One project focused on identifying the skills and knowledge that effective proofreaders use. The second project focused on the implications for practice when these skills and understandings were incorporated into the reading/writing curriculum of a Grade 2 class. In what follows, I will describe what emerged from these projects. First however, I need to make explicit the presuppositions I held at the time about spelling, and about the teaching and learning of spelling.

PRESUPPOSITIONS UNDERPINNING THE PROJECTS

There were many basic assumptions about spelling and the teaching of spelling that I held as I began these projects; assumptions that are strongly supported in the literature on spelling (Bean & Bouffler, 1987, 1997; Gentry, 1978, 1981; Gentry & Gillet, 1993; Henderson & Templeton, 1986; Wilde, 1990, 1992; Zutell, 1990). These include:

- spelling is a language process governed by the same subsystems as reading and writing—namely the semantic, syntactic, and graphophonic systems
- spelling serves writing
- spelling is primarily learned through reading (i.e. reading provides demonstrations of the spellings of words)
- learning to spell is a developmental process
- there are certain orthographic patterns that are consistent within English spelling
- being able to spell conventionally is regarded as a desirable attainment (or, conversely, there is a social stigma attached to poor spelling)
- spellers use a range of strategies to spell words,

including phonics (or sounding out) and visual memory
- spelling needs to be explicitly taught

While there is a great deal written in the literature on most aspects of spelling there seems little written about proofreading and the role it plays in the teaching and learning of spelling. In fact, when I reviewed the literature, I found only one reference which actually supported my hunch, namely that the process of proofreading is not a common feature of many classrooms. Hall (1984, cited in Madraso, 1993) goes as far as claiming that "most teachers expect students to proofread but few teach it or in fact were taught specific proofreading skills themselves" (p. 32).

WORKING DEFINITIONS

It became apparent that before I could begin these projects I needed a working definition of the term proofreading. Bean and Bouffler (1987) define proofreading as "the scanning of a written text for surface errors, focusing on grammar, punctuation and spelling in order to detect deviations from the standard" (p. 66). I decided to begin with this as my working definition.

Project 1

The focus question of this project was: What skills, knowledge, and strategies do people need to know and use when they proofread; that is, to identify words that deviate from the standard and to write the standard form?

To examine this question, I prepared a simple instrument that would enable me to tap into the skills, knowledge, and understandings that were activated when proficient readers are asked to proofread a text. I had the first page of an interesting article from an academic journal electronically scanned so that it was easy for me to create 12 spelling errors without changing the format of the text. The 12 words were chosen deliberately. For instance, one was "peicemeal." This word was chosen because of the "ie" rule and because the word was used again at the end of the text. Another was "managment." Deleting the "e" from the middle of a word, it was thought would make it more difficult for the reader to "see" the error. Also, the spelling of the word "judgment" is acceptable with or without the "e."

Participants were given a response sheet in the form of the grid shown in Figure 1 in which to write their responses and reflections.

The instrument was administered to more than 200 participants, all of whom were teachers. They were given 10 minutes to proofread the text individually and underline any errors they found. They were then asked to work with a colleague and reflect on the skills, knowledge, and strategies they used to first identify the words that deviated from the standard, and then to fill in the standard form. On completion of this procedure, the groups collaboratively analyzed and summarized their responses. I then used their summaries to generate a set of principles about "what proofreading means for our classroom teaching."

Error	Corrected word	Skills, knowledge I used to identify word
peicemeal	piecemeal	• looked wrong • checked rule, "i before e" etc. • read on to see if word used elsewhere
stowtly	stoutly	• looked wrong • more I looked more I wasn't sure because "ow" as in "cow" sounds the same • reread

Figure 1. Sample of Grid Used by Participants.

Results of Project 1

The analysis of these data indicated that proofreading required participants to carry out two broad tasks. These were to identify the misspelled word and then to use a range of strategies for changing that word so that it met the conventions of spelling.

With respect to being able to identify the misspelled words, participants indicated that they first needed to be able to read. If one could not read, they argued, one would not be able to identify the word as right or wrong. But they also agreed that they needed to be strategic readers. That is, they were aware that they used reading strategies such as skimming through the whole text to gain the meaning before coming back and rereading the text carefully. They were conscious that they were reading a text from an academic journal and thus some words could be "jargon" words, spelled in a particular way. They read ahead as well as reread to check if the word they thought was wrong was written somewhere else in the text, or that they had the correct meaning for the word and thus the spelling (e.g. the use of words such as "to," "two," "too," and "there," "their" and "they're") and so on.

Participants indicated that they had developed a good eye for identifying misspellings (they'd become, as one person indicated, "spelling detectives"). This meant that during the proofreading process, they needed to slow down their reading of the text, quite consciously and deliberately, so that each word was scanned carefully.

Having confidence in themselves as spellers seemed to be another important aspect in the proofreading process. Some participants viewed themselves to be "good" spellers and thus made their decisions about which words were incorrect confidently. Those who perceived themselves to be "poor" spellers indicated that they began to feel anxious as to whether they had identified all the incorrect spellings, and began to seek reassurance from people around them. Others indicated that the more they searched for incorrect words the more uncertain they became about their choices and they began to feel uncomfortable about sharing with others.

Participants agreed that an understanding of the writing process was vital during proofreading.

Participants agreed that an understanding of the writing process was vital during proofreading as this meant that a reader knew that there is a time for draft writing and a time for polished, published writing. This understanding led to knowing why and when proofreading should be done. They indicated that, although it seems obvious, it is important that writers understand that they write texts for readers to read. Furthermore, writers need to know and use the conventional, accepted ways for writing (spelling) words or they risk being labeled a poor speller, and, by implication, a poor writer, and possibly a poor student.

Critical to the proofreading process was having a range of proofreading strategies that can be used to assist in checking writing. Participants identified many personal strategies they used as proofreaders. These included fixing one's focus on each word, reading aloud and looking at the words as one reads, using a pencil to physically touch each word in order to slow down one's reading of the words, placing a ruler or piece of paper under a line of text, or reading one line at a time beginning from the bottom of the page and so on.

Finally, it was agreed that once misspellings were identified, it was important to have a range of spelling strategies to be able to locate their conventional spellings. Participants indicated a range of strategies such as writing the word several times to see which one "looked" right, sounding out the word and the syllables in the word, referring to spelling rules they knew, checking in books where they knew the word was written, using dictionaries and spell checkers, and, most importantly, asking others.

Comment on Results of Project 1

The general principles that emerged from this project were:

1. The "getting-it-right" aspect of spelling (the proofreading process) is a highly complex process that draws on reading, writing, spelling (i.e. encoding) and phonics (i.e. decoding) skills and knowledge
2. Proofreading seems to be a powerful tool that integrates reading, writing, spelling, and phonic knowledge in the minds of the users
3. Society values conventional spelling above all and these values are reflected in the attitudes and perceptions we have of ourselves as spellers

Given these findings, I began to ask myself: Should we be focusing more on proofreading as a classroom instructional strategy? What were the implications of the above for classroom practice? These questions became the focus of the next project.

Project 2

Project 2 took place in a Grade 2 classroom of 28 mixed-ability children. Mark, the teacher, had participated in Project 1 because he had become frustrated with his current spelling curriculum. While he felt that the children in his class were learning to spell words, he was concerned that there was little transfer to their first-draft writing. He was particularly frustrated that the children showed little effort or ability in proofreading their writing, even though he felt that he had set up the expectation that they should.

Mark asked if I would work in his classroom in a project aimed at improving the teaching of proofreading in his classroom. I agreed to work with Mark in a co-researching relationship (Cambourne & Turbill, 1991), a relationship in which each recognized the other's expertise and what the other had to offer the project. From the beginning, the project would belong to both of us, and we would make all major decisions together.

We decided to focus on the many ways proofreading could become part of Mark's reading/writing curriculum and to monitor carefully the children's responses to his modified instruction. Mark's task, therefore, was to introduce various strategies (described below) into his reading/writing curriculum. My task was to observe Mark's classroom as he introduced these strategies into his reading/writing block and to interview the children to ascertain what they were learning from these strategies.

Mark had indicated that he already modeled for his students how to proofread. However, as a result of his experiences in Project 1, he recognized that he needed to make explicit for himself and me what he was doing in the name of spelling and proofreading and why he was doing these things. He began to realize that only then would he be in a position of being able to make explicit to his students the strategies he used as a proofreader and the many decisions that he made during the proofreading of a text. Such explicitness, he believed, would also enable him to be more systematic about his planning and instruction.

Together, Mark and I formulated three principles that he would use to guide and frame his teaching. These were to:

- make explicit wherever possible the covert, invisible processes that underpinned effective reading and writing and spelling
- help his students understand what he meant by reading-like-a-writer and how this in turn entailed reading-like-a-speller
- demonstrate often how to read one's writing with a reader's critical eye (i.e. to be able to change one's stance from that of the writer of a text to that of the reader)

These decisions enabled Mark to establish a class ethos that led children to understand when and why they needed to proofread their writing as well as the ramifications of not doing so. He increased the incidence of modeled writing, specifically focusing on the writing process, when it was important to spell conventionally, and when it was all right to draft-spell. During modeled writing, he used a "think-aloud" strategy as he attempted to spell words, thus demonstrating a wide range of strategies, including using words on the many charts around the room, using books he had been reading, using a dictionary and, the spell checker on the computer.

Mark focused students' attention on spelling patterns, syllables, the use of prefixes and suffixes, word derivatives, and so on, whenever the opportunity arose. He modeled proofreading, both with groups and individuals, specifically focusing on identifying unconventionally spelled words and how to fix them.

He introduced "peer proofreading" (Turbill, Butler & Cambourne, 1991) as a class activity. Peer proofreading entails selecting one child's unedited draft (with permission), making copies for all students, and then using an overhead transparency to demonstrate the proofreading process on the first few lines of this draft, finally asking the students to work in pairs to proofread their version of the text. On completion, Mark would return to the overhead and ask the class to complete the overhead together.

Each child was given a spelling journal. These were made by Mark. The photocopied pages (one for each week) were set out with the top half used by students to "have-a-go" at spellings they were trying to use. In the bottom-left-hand section, the students recorded the words that they believed they had learned that week. And in the bottom-right-hand section, they recorded words that were causing them trouble and needed to be learned. Mark found that these journals also provided valuable information about each student's spelling growth.

Many opportunities were provided for word study activities (see Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnson, 1996; Fountas & Pinnell, 1998; NSW Department of Education's Teaching Spelling K–6, 1999; Snowball & Bolton, 1999, to name a few). These included word sorts, have-a-go cards, developing charts of like-words, adding prefixes and suffixes, and so on. As well, Mark introduced various word games. These included hangman, Scrabble, Boggle, crosswords, and Snap. Class and group work were placed in prominent positions on the walls and Mark constantly modeled how these could be used as spelling resources. He brought into the classroom a range of dictionaries and taught children how to use them.

Finally, Mark provided many reading and writing opportunities in which children could practice their spelling and the proofreading of their spelling. He would leave messages on the board with deliberate misspellings and encourage his students to be word detectives. Students who discovered the "typos," as he called them, were given the task to "fix" the words and thus score a point for their class team.

During the 10 weeks of this project, I collected observational data, interviews, and work samples from several case-study students. Nicole was one of these students. She was an interesting child who made significant gains during the time of the project.

CASE STUDY: NICOLE'S STORY

Nicole was an eight-year-old second grader whom I observed and interviewed in Mark's class as she developed as a reader, writer, and speller. When we began the project, Nicole's reading and spelling were below grade average, but she loved to write. Her spelling was often so unconventional she was unable to reread what she had written by the next day.

The following is a first draft of a report written by Nicole.

> the rads
>
> rads are wit black dran and ossoss of cules thay Et ~~vegetarian~~ vegetables mostlliy kares. Thay are mosliy fad in dooshes or farway pases some rads liv with peple in the city. The baby radt folos ther ~~mum~~ mumthers. The radts barow into the growd with ther sharp kcoos to make the ~~hom~~ nests they have a tanll to cam in and aut thay are protected from llal cids of wiyd emos.

A translation of the above is this:

> The Rabbits
>
> Rabbits are white, black, brown, and all sorts of colors. They eat ~~vegetarian~~ vegetables mostly carrots. They are mostly found in bushes or faraway places. Some rabbits live with people in the city. The baby rabbit follows their ~~mum~~ mothers. The rabbits burrow into the ground with their sharp claws to make their ~~home~~ nests. They have a tunnel to come in and out. They are protected from all kinds of wild animals.

When Nicole brought the piece to me, she struggled to read her written text. An analysis of Nicole's text indicated that she was able to spell most of the high frequency words, such as "are," "and," "of." Other words she attempted to

sound out. There were some words, like "black," "vegetables," "protected," that she had spelled correctly. When asked how she was able to write these, she commented that she had copied them from various charts around the room. A further analysis indicated that she sometimes had two ways of spelling the same word. In this text, these were "they" and "thay" for "they," "mostlliy" and "mosliy" for "mostly," and "rads" and "radts" for "rabbits." When this was pointed out to Nicole, she looked amazed and said, "I thought that I was supposed to do that."

It seemed that Nicole has taken literally the encouragement given by well-meaning teachers to invent her spellings, to guess, or have-a-go at the spellings of words.

Somehow, Nicole had picked up the message that invented spelling meant having-a-go at the same word as many ways as she could. Because she did not read very well, Nicole, it seemed, relied on her phonemic awareness and her understanding of the sound/symbol relationships of the words. She sounded out almost every word. She was an expert at phonemic and orthographic segmentation and analysis. For instance, she had written "like" in a previous piece as "lyk," "lik," "licke," "liek" (as in "lie -k"). The first breakthrough therefore came for Nicole when she began to understand that she did not have to invent every word she wrote.

Mark's constant, systematic, and explicit demonstrations that there was a conventional way to spell a word, and that words could be found in books that she read, on charts on the wall, or in dictionaries, began to have an impact on Nicole. She first began to understand that the words she read could be used for her spelling when she wrote and, that if she needed to check the spelling of these words, she could return to where she had read the word (the proofreading process at work). She also began to understand that the knowledge of sounds that she used to write unknown words could be used to work out unknown words in her reading. This in turn helped her to develop more and more word-attack skills. Thus, the more she read, the more she began to engage in the visual patterns of words and the more conventional her spellings became in her writing.

Nicole began to develop a spelling conscience . . . "fixing" her writing so that other people could read it.

The next major breakthrough came when Nicole was helped to understand the writing process. She began to realize that there was a place for her many invented spellings, but there was also a time when she needed to read over her work and begin to identify which words were conventional and which were not. She learned that her readers had rights too. Thus, she needed to read her writing with a reader's eye. She could only begin to do this after she had begun to look at the words she read with a writer's eye. And so one thing fed on another and Nicole began to make rapid progress. Her reading improved greatly and, alongside it, a love for reading began to grow. The more she read, the more she could draw on for her own writing, not only for spelling but also punctuation and ideas for her writing. And so it went on.

Nicole began to develop a spelling conscience. She worked hard at "fixing" her writing so that people could read it and so that people didn't think she was "dumb and couldn't spell." She learned to use strategies such as writing the word several times until it looked right, asking people, checking words in books, and using a dictionary. She happily used her own spelling journal and dictionary, filling it with words that she wanted to record as well as with strategies and mnemonics she could use to remember her trouble words. For instance, " 'i-g-h-t' is in 'night' and 'fight' and 'might'—am I right?" She became a spelling detective. She noticed words: different spellings of words that sounded the same, little words within long words, and so on. She became an astute proofreader.

AN EMERGING THEORY

The following figure summarizes what has emerged from all these studies:

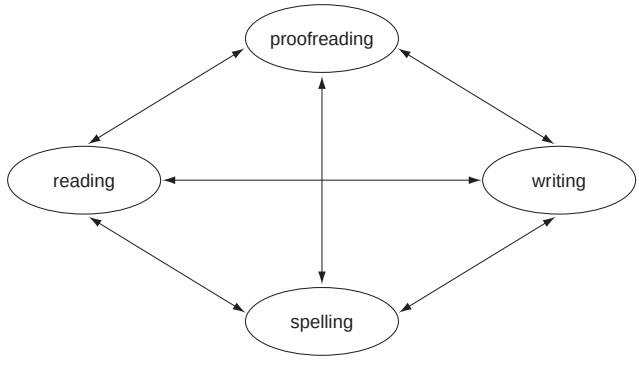

Figure 2. The Relationship between the Proofreading Process and Reading, Writing, and Spelling.

Proofreading is a far more complex process than we have previously realized. It is not a simple strategy that can be taught and learned easily. The process of proofreading involves the orchestration of many other skills and strategies.

The ability to proofread requires a person to not only be a reader but to understand the reading process in such a way as to know when to slow down one's reading and consciously focus on the letter clusters in a word. A person needs also to

understand that the conventional spellings of words are there in the texts that one reads.

Proofreading also requires a person to be a writer and to understand the writing process. When one understands the writing process, one begins to understand when it is appropriate to draft-spell and when it is appropriate to check that spellings are conventional. Most importantly, a person needs to understand the role that society plays in dictating the need for "getting spelling right" at particular times in the writing.

Critical in all the case studies cited in this paper is the conscious awareness of what readers and writers do with letters and letter clusters that go to create words and texts. Moreover, readers have at their disposal, in the texts they read, all the information about letters, letter clusters, and words that they as writers need in order to spell the words in the texts they compose. Such understandings about the connections between reading and writing, about how one supports and feeds off the other, contributes greatly to the ability to produce conventional spellings in the first place. More importantly, it contributes to one's ability to change one's stance from a writer of the text to a reader of the text and proofread one's writing so that "getting it right" is made easier.

A knowledge of conventional spellings of words is the outcome of this orchestration, one in which proofreading is pivotal and not simply an end piece.

This model has some potentially important implications for classrooms. One is the potential importance of proofreading and proofreading instruction. Another is that proofreading needs to be more than an occasional activity. Another is that the proofreading process needs to be introduced into the reading/writing curriculum in the very early grades. Finally, there are potential theoretical implications related to the role which proofreading might play in spelling development. My data seem to suggest that the process of proofreading relies on the skills and understandings used in both reading and writing. This in turn suggests that proofreading should be an integral part of learning to read, write, and spell. It involves a complexity of overlapping factors, including:

- a classroom culture that emphasizes the social purposes of standard spelling
- the language the teacher uses to make explicit the many invisible and often intuitive decisions made during the proofreading process
- the demonstrations the teacher gives in writing and reading
- the explicit instruction given during writing conferences, shared and guided reading activities, as well as through all spelling activities
- expectations set up by the teacher that students would spell words they knew conventionally in first-draft writing. This included words that have been explicitly referenced around the room

The findings that have emerged from these studies have convinced me that if we want our students to be effective spellers, we need to develop in them a spelling conscience. In order to develop a spelling conscience, they need to become effective proofreaders. Proofreading should be seen, therefore, not simply as a set of procedural skills, but rather as an integral part of the literacy curriculum from the time children begin to learn to read and write. ●

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