Chapter 11
Instructor–Generated Orthographic Assessments in Intensive English Classes

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ABSTRACT
Orthographic knowledge, or knowledge of spellings, word forms, and conventions of print, is a crucial skill underpinning a range of literacy skills. Despite its importance, orthographic knowledge receives relatively little attention in second language contexts, including in adult English as a second language (ESL) programs. This chapter provides an overview of orthographic knowledge, its development in first language (L1), and what is understood about orthography in second language (L2). The chapter then reports detailed results of a qualitative interview study in which current and former ESL instructors shared their experiences, practices, and perspectives on orthographic instruction and assessment, including the development and use of instructor-generated assessments. The chapter concludes with a summary of results and suggestions for ESL orthographic instruction and assessment.

INTRODUCTION
In teacher education, there is growing recognition of the importance of assessment literacy – teachers’ knowledge of a range of assessment techniques and best practices for assessment design, development, and implementation (Coombe, Troudi, & Al-Hamly, 2012). However, despite the increasingly widespread acceptance and use of alternative assessment techniques (e.g., H. D. Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010; J. D. Brown, 1998; O’Malley & Pierce, 1996), the development of assessments appropriate for learners of English as a second language (ESL) continues to lag (e.g., Menken, 2008). This lag is particularly acute in areas of language learning that are also under-emphasized in curriculum and instruction. This
chapter focuses on one such area: the development of basic orthographic knowledge (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and other conventions of print) (Birch, 2015).

Assessment literacy is increasingly seen as an essential component of teacher training and professional development. Estimates from both general and ESL/EFL (English as a foreign language) education suggest that teachers spend up to half their time on assessment-related activities (e.g., Cheng, 2001; Stiggins, 1995; Stiggins & Conklin, 1992), and the growing emphasis on accountability in education underscores the central role that assessment plays in relation to curriculum and instruction (e.g., Baker & Wright, 2017; Gareis & Grant, 2015; Gathercole, 2013; Invernizzi, Landrum, Howell, & Warley, 2005). Although the situation is slowly improving with increasing recognition of the value of assessment literacy, teacher-preparation programs and state licensure requirements historically have under-emphasized developing teachers’ knowledge in this area (e.g., Campbell & Collins, 2007; Coombe et al., 2012; Schafer, 1993; Stiggins, 1991, 1995, 2007).

The goals of this chapter are two-fold. It begins with an overview of current understanding of orthographic knowledge, its typical development in first language (L1) English readers, and orthographic knowledge and skills in English language learners (ELLs). The chapter then reports detailed results from a qualitative interview study in which current and former teachers of adult ELLs were interviewed to share their experiences, practices, and perspectives related to students’ orthographic development and its assessment. The chapter concludes with implications for understanding ELLs’ orthographic development and teachers’ own instructional and assessment practices, as well as suggestions for orthographic instruction and assessment.

ORTHOGRAPHIC KNOWLEDGE AND ITS DEVELOPMENT IN L1

Orthographic knowledge is “information that is stored in memory that tells us how to represent spoken language in written form” (Apel, 2011, p. 592). It consists of mentally-stored word forms or visual images of words, plus the rules that govern how speech is represented in writing (Apel, 2011; Berninger, 1994; Koda, 1997). It includes knowledge of both feed-forward (letter to sound, or reading) and feedback (sound to letter, or spelling) correspondences (see Birch, 2015; Cronnell, 1978; Ehri, 1997; Ziegler, Stone, & Jacobs, 1997), not only for simple letter-sound mappings, but also larger spelling patterns (e.g., Birch, 2015; Ehri, 1997; Goswami, 1998; Treiman, Mullelnix, Bijeljac-Babic, & Richmond-Welty, 1995). It also includes print conventions such as the direction of text, spacing, punctuation, and capitalization (e.g., Flanigan, 2007; Invernizzi, 2002; Morris, Bloodgood, Lomax, & Perney, 2003).

Extensive research has shown that orthographic knowledge is a crucial component of literacy skills, including the development of reading and writing quality and fluency (Ehri, 1989, 2000, 2005; Ghandi & Maghsoudi, 2014; Joshi, Treiman, Carreker, & Moats, 2008; Kent & Wanzek, 2016; Mehta, Foorman, Branum-Martin, & Taylor, 2005). There are substantial connections among reading, writing, vocabulary, and orthographic knowledge, in part because they draw on the same basic underlying knowledge (e.g., Berninger, 2000; Berninger, Abbott, Abbott, Graham, & Richards, 2002; Berninger & Amtmann, 2003; Berninger, Cartwright, Yates, Swanson, & Abbott, 1994; Bowers & Wolf, 1993; Chrisman, 1996; S. Graham, Harris, & Hebert, 2011; Joshi et al., 2008; Moats, 2005; Snow, Griffin, & Burns, 2005; Sparks, Patton, Ganschow, Humbach, & Javorsky, 2008; Treiman & Kessler, 2005).

The development of orthographic skills in L1 English-speaking children is well-documented (e.g., Flanigan, 2007; Invernizzi & Hayes, 2004; Masterson & Apel, 2010; Schlagal, 1992; Templeton,
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