

Comprehension Level of Homographs and Homophones of English Language Students

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ABSTRACT

Effective communication involves accurate comprehension of the message. Homophones and Homographs are figurative words that require an individual to take time to think about their meaning when used in sentences. The researcher conducted this study to determine the comprehension level of BSED major in English and ABELS students of Isabela State University Echague Campus in Homophones and Homographs. The study aimed to determine the comprehension level of the respondents using a descriptive-correlation design. The result shows that the respondent's comprehension level in Homographs is "High" with a frequency of 60 or 45.5% while the respondent's level of comprehension in Homophones is "Very High" with a frequency of 78 or 59.1%. Moreover, the result also revealed that there is a significant difference between the respondent's year level and their level of reading comprehension. Therefore, it is concluded that students from different cultural backgrounds may have different perspectives and experiences which can create a gap between the students understanding and their peers. Furthermore, older adults have the ability to push themselves to recruit extra brain power to support their reading comprehension

Keywords: Homographs, Homophones, Semantics, Reading Comprehension, Lexical Ambiguity

INTRODUCTION

Language is used by humans to communicate. Barbieri M. (2020), discusses that language is an activity that produces sound and meaning. That is how language is used to communicate and certain words can distinctively create meaning.

Semantics is necessary in understanding the exact context of a text or words when one communicates. Words have different meanings even though some words are spelled the same or pronounced the same. Comprehension of the exact meaning of the words in the context is very important to avoid misinterpretation. According to Yule (2016), Semantics is the study of meaning and its connection between the words around it. The meaning of the word can be identified using how the words are used. Therefore, reading comprehension of homophones and homographs is crucial to comprehend the correct meaning of words used in a sentence. For example, are the words "ate" and "eight" if the usage of the two is wrong it will lead the receiver to misinterpretation of the correct message. It is important to understand the semantic meaning of these words because homophones and homographs are figurative words. Similarly, the words "been" (past participle of be) and "bin" (a receptacle for storing a specified substance) are homophones that have the same pronunciation but do not share the same meaning. Awareness of the semantically meaning of homographs and homophones is fundamental in using the words accurately in context.

Semantics is the study of words and meaning. Communication will be considered effective if it consists of the same thoughts and information. It will reveal the importance of semantics in communication because it will provide concise meaning, and accurate comprehension and prevent you from misunderstanding. It allows everyone to use the precise words they have in mind to create a meaningful message. By understanding the nuances and connotations associated with particular words, communicators can convey their thoughts in a more precise and deliberate manner. For example, using the word "certain" instead of "sure" conveys a stronger sense

of constant of what the communicator is saying without showing any misunderstanding or misconception.

Misunderstandings can arise when individuals think of a word or understand a word differently, it might deliver the wrong message of a word and lead to confusion and semantics is the aid for that, knowing and having knowledge of the different meanings of words will help individuals avoid such situations. Though words have different meanings and interpretations when individuals understand the root meaning of words even if it is used in different statements, they can identify what is the meaning of it. For example, “cool” is both used as a temperature and social approval. Being aware of how the word is used in a sentence can help an individual receive the precise meaning of the message without confusion. Moreover, semantic accuracy improves the overall clarity of communication, Listeners and readers will be enable to acquire the precise meaning easily. Students may become confused while utilizing the phrase as a result. This has motivated the study to look into this gap. Specifically, the study aimed to: (1) determine the profile of the respondents, (2) assess their level of reading comprehension of homographs and homophones, and (3) explore the significant differences between their profiles and their comprehension levels.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A descriptive correlational design was employed to investigate the comprehension levels of English language learners (ELLs) in understanding homographs and homophones. This study aimed to:

1. Identify the range of understanding skills among ELLs in relation to homographs and homophones.
2. Establish the comprehension level of English language students for homographs and homophones.
3. Describe the relationship between respondents' profiles and their level of comprehension of homographs and homophones.

Participants

The study involved 2nd to 4th-year Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies and Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English students enrolled in the 1st Semester of the School Year 2023-2024 at Isabela State University.

Data Collection Procedures

1. **Permission and Administration:** The researcher obtained approval from the deans of the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Education. Questionnaires were personally administered to the selected respondents.
2. **Instrument Development:** Two sets of questionnaires were adapted and modified from Abdulraziq Mohammed and Abdulraziq Ibrahim (2018) and Beth Parent (2021). The questionnaire consisted of three parts:

Part I: Demographic information about the respondents

Part II: Homograph comprehension, where respondents were asked to identify the correct meaning of homographs based on context.

Part III: Homophone usage, where respondents were asked to choose the correct homophone to complete sentences.

3. **Sampling:** A random sampling technique was used to select the respondents from the target population.

Data Analysis

1. **Descriptive Statistics:** Frequency counts, percentages, and means were used to describe the respondents'

demographic characteristics and their performance on the comprehension test.

- Inferential Statistics:** An independent samples t-test was used to compare the comprehension levels of different groups of respondents (e.g., by year level, major). Additionally, an ANOVA test was conducted to determine if there were significant differences in comprehension levels based on various demographic factors.

Criteria for comprehension Test

| Descriptive Equivalent | Number of correct | Percentage answer |
|------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Very High | 17-20 | 81% - 100% |
| High | 13-16 | 61% - 80% |
| Average | 09-Dec | 41% - 60% |
| Fair | 05-Aug | 21% - 40% |
| Low | 0-4 | 0% - 20% |

RECOMMENDATION AND DISCUSSION

The study suggests implementing targeted intervention programs for lower-year students to enhance their reading comprehension. This involves focusing on vocabulary development, reading fluency, and comprehension strategies. Additionally, incorporating a diverse range of reading materials into the curriculum is crucial to cater to the needs of all students. Teacher training in effective reading instruction strategies, such as explicit instruction, guided practice, and independent reading, is essential. Encouraging parental involvement by providing resources and tips for home reading activities can also significantly contribute to students' reading development.

The study highlights the significant variation in reading comprehension levels among English language students. Higher-year students generally exhibit a higher level of comprehension, while lower-year students may require additional support. Consistent reading habits are vital for improving comprehension, so promoting a reading culture in schools and encouraging students to read regularly is crucial. Vocabulary development is another key factor in reading comprehension. Teachers should incorporate vocabulary instruction into their lessons and encourage students to use context clues and dictionaries to learn new words. In conclusion, targeted interventions, curriculum enhancement, teacher training, and parental involvement are essential to improve reading comprehension among English language students. Future research should explore the long-term impact of these interventions and investigate the effectiveness of different instructional approaches in promoting reading comprehension.

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