



**ENGLISH TEACHERS' AND LEARNERS' EXPERIENCES IN TEACHING
AND LEARNING HOMOPHONES IN A PRIVATE SCHOOL:
BASES FOR A REMEDIAL PROGRAM**

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explored the experiences of English teachers and learners in teaching and learning homophones in a private school as bases for a remedial program. Findings showed that teachers observed learners' enjoyment of rhyming words, improved vocabulary and comprehension, and developed skills in poetry writing. Likewise, learners reported having fun with words of the same pronunciation, improving their vocabulary and comprehension, and assisting their ability in constructing sentences and poems. However, several hindering factors were identified. Teachers noted learners' confusion with homophones, the influence of social media on language use, difficulty in pronunciation, and limitation in language proficiency. Learners also experienced overexposure to social media and confusion regarding sounds, spelling, and meaning. Despite these challenges, facilitating factors that support both teaching and learning were recognized. Based on these findings, a remedial program was proposed to equip learners with effective strategies in learning homophones.

Keywords: *Homophones, English Language Teaching, Learners' Experiences, Teachers' Experiences, Private School Education, Remedial Program*

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INTRODUCTION

English language learning remains a significant area of focus in education, particularly in contexts where it is taught as a second or foreign language. One of the essential components of language acquisition is vocabulary development, which plays a crucial role in learners' comprehension, communication, and overall language proficiency. However, vocabulary learning is often challenging due to linguistic features such as pronunciation, spelling, and meaning. Among these features, homophones—words that share the same pronunciation but differ in meaning—pose a unique difficulty for learners.

Recent studies highlight that homophones and similar lexical items contribute to confusion among English language learners, particularly in listening and speaking contexts. According to Fermadi, Kurniawan, and Lubis (2023), learners often find it difficult to differentiate homophones because identical pronunciation leads to misunderstanding, especially in listening activities.

Similarly, Hussein (2024) emphasized that phonological and orthographic similarities, along with limited vocabulary knowledge, significantly contribute to learners' difficulties in understanding homonymous words.

In addition, pronunciation has been identified as a critical factor in second language acquisition. Nanda, Aravind, and Rajasekaran (2021) found that ESL learners commonly experience pronunciation difficulties due to mother tongue interference, which affects their ability to produce and distinguish sounds accurately. This is supported by Du (2025), who explained that learners' first language significantly influences pronunciation patterns, resulting in persistent challenges in recognizing and producing correct sounds in English.

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Moreover, vocabulary learning difficulties—including issues with homophones—are often associated with limited exposure to the English language and ineffective instructional strategies. Viñalon (2023) noted that lack of vocabulary exposure, low language proficiency, and inadequate reading practices hinder learners’ comprehension and language development. These challenges highlight the need for effective teaching approaches that can address learners’ diverse needs in the classroom.

Furthermore, studies suggest that pronunciation and vocabulary instruction are sometimes overlooked in classroom settings due to limited time and insufficient emphasis in instructional design. Nguyen and Giang (2022) pointed out that inadequate classroom focus on pronunciation contributes to learners’ poor performance, particularly in distinguishing similar-sounding words such as homophones.

Despite the growing body of literature on vocabulary and pronunciation difficulties, there remains a gap in studies that explore both teachers’ and learners’ experiences in teaching and learning homophones, particularly in private school contexts. Understanding these experiences is essential in identifying both facilitating and hindering factors that influence learning outcomes.

Therefore, this study aimed to explore the experiences of English teachers and learners in teaching and learning homophones in a private school. The findings of this study may serve as bases for developing a remedial program designed to address learners’ difficulties, enhance vocabulary and pronunciation skills, and improve overall language proficiency.

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter describes the fundamental procedures of phenomenological research and focuses on the following components: Research Method, Research Design, Participants in the Study, Sampling Design, Research Instrument, Validity of the Research Instrument, Data-gathering Procedure, and Data Analyses.

Research Method

This study utilized a descriptive research design, employing a researcher-made in-depth interview guide to identify the experiences of English teachers and learners in teaching and learning homophones, as well as the factors that hinder or facilitate the process.

The goal of a descriptive research design is to gather data in a methodical manner in order to assess a population, circumstance, or phenomenon. In particular, it helps in providing answers to the research problem's what, when, where, and how inquiries as opposed to its why. In contrast to experimental research, it is crucial to remember that when using a descriptive research approach, the researcher does not control or change any factors. Rather, only the variables are recognized, observed, and quantified (Voxcov, 2021).

Research Design

The study used the qualitative design using phenomenological approach. As explained by Tenny et al. (2022), it's an area of study that looks deeper into issues facing the actual world. Qualitative research aids in the generation of hypotheses as well as the further investigation and understanding of quantitative data, as opposed to gathering numerical data

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points or intervening or introducing treatments as in quantitative research. Rather than addressing how many or how much, it addresses how's and whys.

This study used a researcher-made questionnaire guide to collect information about teachers' and learners' experiences in teaching and learning homophones. The researcher asked the respondents to freely respond to the questions based on their experiences in order to gather relevant data.

Participants of the Study

The selection of the participants in the study was based on a strategy referred to as "purposive selection" technique. According to Palinkas et al. (2015), it is widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest. The participants were three (3) English teachers and fifteen learners (15). To uphold ethical standards, ensure fairness, and protect the participants' confidentiality, all respondents were assigned codes and were identified as Participants 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17, and 18.

Sampling Design

Purposive sampling was used to identify the learner participants while the teachers used total population. The participants consisted of English teachers and learners from a private school who had direct experiences in teaching and learning homophones. Specifically, the teacher-participants had at least six months of experience in teaching homophones, while the learner-participants were those who had been exposed to lessons on homophones. All

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participants met the necessary qualifications relevant to the study, which focused on their experiences as bases for the development of a remedial program.

Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study was a researcher- made in depth interview guide. The instrument was designed to gather on teachers and learners’ experiences in teaching and learning homophones as bases for a remedial program

The questionnaire was designed to capture the experiences of English teachers and learners in teaching and learning homophones, including the factors that facilitate or hinder this process. For teachers, the questions focused on how homophones are introduced, taught, and reinforced in the classroom, as well as the challenges they encounter and their insights into learners’ difficulties.

For learners, the questions explored their experiences in understanding homophones, particularly in reading and writing tasks, the difficulties they face, and the factors that support or hinder their learning. They were encouraged to share situations where they experienced confusion or success in distinguishing homophones.

Validity of the Research Instrument

The validity of the research instrument refers to its ability to accurately measure what it intends to measure. In this study, validity ensured that the researcher-made in-depth interview guide were effectively captured the experiences of English teachers and learners in teaching and learning homophones, including the facilitating and hindering factors involved.

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To establish validity, the instrument was first reviewed by the research adviser to ensure alignment with the study's objectives. After revisions, it was evaluated by a panel of experts validated the researcher- made in depth interview guide. The final edition took into account all opinions and ideas about the tool's validation and underwent face-and-content validation.

The revised interview guide was then resubmitted for final approval and was deemed valid for data collection.

Data Gathering Procedures

The researcher secured official permission to conduct the study from the Dean of the Graduate School of the University of Iloilo and subsequently sought approval from the principal of one of the private schools in Dumangas Iloilo. Upon approval, the researcher identified the participants and ensured that participation was voluntary by distributing and collecting signed informed consent forms from the English teachers and from the learners, with parental consent obtained for student participants.

The data gathering procedures primarily involved the administration of the validated instrument, which served as the main instrument for collecting qualitative data consistent with the phenomenological nature of the study. Separate questionnaires were distributed to English teachers and learners to elicit detailed descriptions of their experiences in teaching and learning homophones, including the challenges they encounter, the strategies they employ, and the factors that facilitate or hinder homophone instruction and comprehension. The questionnaire included open-ended items that allowed participants to freely express their

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perceptions and experiences, providing rich and meaningful data that captured the essence of their encounters with homophones in classroom contexts.

The responses obtained from the questionnaires were carefully documented and analyzed to identify recurring themes and patterns. These themes served as the primary basis for the development of a remedial program designed to address the identified difficulties in teaching and learning homophones. Throughout the data collection process, ethical considerations were strictly observed, including the confidentiality of responses, respect for participants' rights, and the use of data solely for academic research purposes.

Data Analysis

The data gathered for the study were written up, assessed, and analyzed using thematic analysis. Kelly (2023) defined data analysis as the procedure for transforming, cleansing, and processing unprocessed data in order to extract pertinent, usable information that aids in commercial decision-making. By providing helpful information and insights—which are frequently shown in the form of tables, graphs, charts, and images—the process helps lower the risks associated with making decisions. According to Maguire and Delahunt (2017), the purpose of thematic analysis is to identify themes, that are relevant or intriguing patterns in data, and then use these themes to address the research or make a statement about an issue. A strong thematic analysis does more than just summarize data; it analyzes and makes meaning of it.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of this study was to find out teachers' and learners' experiences and facilitating factors in teaching and learning homophones as bases for remedial program.

The participants in the study were three (3) teachers and fifteen (15) learners in one of the private schools in Dumangas, Iloilo during School Year 2025-2026. They were chosen through purposive sampling.

The instrument used was a research- made in depth interview guide to obtain the data. The instrument was subjected to validity test and was found by the validators valid and appropriate to use.

To analyze the responses of the participants, thematic analysis was used. Data were organized and relevant themes were selected, coded, and discussed.

The study came up with the following findings:

Teachers' experiences in teaching homophones were: enjoying rhyming words, increasing vocabulary and comprehension, and developing poetry writing skills; while learners experiences were: having fun with words of the same pronunciation, improving vocabulary and comprehension, and assisting constructing sentences and poems.

The hindering factors experienced by teachers in teaching homophones were: confusion with homophones, influence of social media on language use, difficulty in pronunciation, and limitation in language proficiency; while for learners' hindering factors were: overexposure to social media, and confusion regarding sounds, spelling and meaning.

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The facilitating factors experienced by teachers in teaching homophones were: giving short paragraph with homophones, using differentiated instruction, and games and writing sessions; while learners facilitating factors in learning homophones were: reading books to expand vocabulary, using social media and dictionaries, and answering flashcards and activity sheets.

Based on these findings, a remedial program was proposed to enhance learners' understanding and correct usage of homophones by addressing the identified difficulties such as confusion in spelling, meaning, and pronunciation.

Specifically, the program seeks to provide structured and differentiated learning activities, including contextualized reading tasks, guided writing exercises, and interactive games, to improve learners' vocabulary, comprehension, and sentence construction skills.

Furthermore, the program intends to support teachers by offering effective and varied instructional strategies that cater to learners' diverse needs and abilities, thereby making the teaching and learning of homophones more engaging, meaningful, and effective.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study reveal that both teachers and learners generally have positive and engaging experiences in teaching and learning homophones, despite existing challenges.

Teachers observed that learners enjoy working with rhyming words, particularly when integrated into creative tasks such as poetry writing, which enhances both vocabulary and

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comprehension. Similarly, learners expressed that they find homophones enjoyable and stimulating, especially when used in sentence construction and language activities.

These shared experiences indicate that when homophones are taught in meaningful and interactive contexts, they can promote not only language development but also learner motivation and participation.

However, the study also highlights several hindering factors that affect the effective teaching and learning of homophones. A major concern among both teachers and learners is the persistent confusion between words that share the same pronunciation but differ in spelling and meaning. This difficulty is further compounded by learners' overexposure to social media, where informal language use, shortcuts, and incorrect spelling are common.

Additionally, issues such as limited reading exposure, difficulty in pronunciation, and low language proficiency contribute to learners' struggles. These challenges suggest that learners require more structured guidance and reinforcement to fully grasp the correct usage of homophones.

On the other hand, the facilitating factors identified in the study provide valuable direction for improving instruction and addressing these challenges. Teachers employ strategies such as giving short paragraphs with contextualized homophones, using differentiated instruction, and incorporating games and writing sessions to make learning more interactive and accessible.

Meanwhile, learners support their learning through reading books, using dictionaries and social media as learning tools, and engaging in activities like flashcards and worksheets.

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These practices highlight the importance of varied, student-centered approaches in teaching homophones. Consequently, these insights serve as a strong foundation for the development of a remedial program that is responsive to learners' needs and grounded in effective teaching strategies.



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