ISSN: 2716-9189 E-ISSN: 2676-1750
Journal of Studies in Language, Culture, and Society (JSLCS). (07) 01, 2024. (PP: 33-58)
Received: 16/10/2023 Accepted: 29/11/2023 Published: 30/06/2024

ENGLISH SEGMENTAL PEDAGOGY, HOMOPHONIC REALISATION AND COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN SECOND LANGUAGE (L2) ACQUISITION

Julianah Ajoke Akindele [1] **Victor Ayomide Fabunmi** [2]
[1] **Department of English and Literary Studies**
Osun State University, Osun State -Nigeria
julianah.akindele@uniosun.edu.ng

[2] **Department of English and Literary Studies**
Osun State University, Osun State -Nigeria
ayo_fabunmi@yahoo.com

Abstract

The study investigates and compares the performance of two groups of final year English undergraduates of a Nigerian University in the production and perception of homophones. One group consisting of twenty students were taught the English sound segments with the use of an e-learning software while the second group of twenty students were taught the segmentals without the use of the software. Each of the participants read aloud a text containing homophones and also participated in a dictation test. The collected data was analysed perceptively and acoustically using the sound analytical tool, PRAAT developed by Paul Boersma and David Weenick of the University of Amsterdam. Results reveal that students in the first group who were taught with the e-learning software performed better than those in the second group in the production, reception and interpretation of homophones. Findings confirm that the use of e-learning software in language pedagogy will play a significant role for improved performance and greater communicative competence in Nigeria.

Keywords: Communicative competence, E-Learning software, English segmental pedagogy, Homophonic realisation, Second language acquisition

How to cite the article :
Akindele, J. A., & Fabunmi, V. A. (2024). English segmental pedagogy, homophonic realisation and communicative competence in second language (L2) acquisition. *Journal of Studies in Language, Culture, and Society (JSLCS)7*(1), pp. 33-58. https://www.asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/250264

[1] **Corresponding author:** Victor Ayomide Fabunmi **, ORCID ID-** https://orcid.org/0009-0009-8198-4008

1. Introduction

In all human societies, people interact, socialise, build and nurture relationships. These social activities are conducted through a given medium of communication known as language. Language has been described as being "incontrovertibly central to all human activities" Adeyanju (2004). He states further that "the functions performed by language are of crucial relevance to peaceful co-existence among members of a society" and to the attainment of societal goals. Language occurs in three important media, namely, speech (oral/aural), written (visual) and braille (tactile) media. The aural medium however, serves as the basis of all other media (Atoye, 1994). Indeed, several languages have yet to be "committed to writing and are used by their speakers in the oral form only" (Akindele, 2016). Language plays significant role in human interaction, through language people express their ideas, emotions, desires, and socially interact with each other. One of the most significant languages in the world is English. Thus, English is called "an international language". According to Widiastuti (2013 p.2), English is one of the most important subjects to be learned by the students. English has been selected and designated as a compulsory language been taught from Primary Education level to university level in Nigeria. The choices and decisions are very logical, strategic and perspective because English is a lingua franca of international speakers and has spread across the globe.

English language is perhaps the most important of all human languages because of the crucial roles it performs in several nations in the world. Its functions include international politics where it is used as the language of practically all global organisations such as the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU) among others. Fifty percent of the world's business deals are conducted in English (Akindele, 2016). Many multi-lingual nations use English as "the most available language" for intra-national communication and understanding. In the words of Lubega (1989 p.54) cited in Adeyanju (2004) "the English language is used in all corners of the globe in linguistically and culturally diverse communities where it serves a wide range of functions…" The deployment of E-learning resources in the pedagogy of English Phonology for improved clarity, disambiguation and comprehension in communication is the focus of this study. One important aspect to study in English is the mastering of the necessary skills which includes; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Not only that, but there are also some important elements to be conscious of, one of them is pronunciation. According to Burn and Claire (2003 p.5) Pronunciation means the sounds production of the speaker and how the effect of the listener. Moreover, pronunciation is an important part of speaking skill as communication. If students speak English, students should pronounce the word apparently. In studying English, the correct pronunciation makes it easy to give meaning to speech. The study investigates and compares the performance of two groups of final year English undergraduates of a Nigerian University in the production and reception of homophones.

1.1 The role of English language in Nigeria

The circumstances of the historical experiences that led to the birth of Nigeria as a nation and her linguistically pluralistic composition facilitated the implantation and firm entrenchment of English language in Nigeria. With the creation of Nigeria, several challenges became imperative which required, on a sustainable basis, solutions. Chief among these challenges was the requirement of a veritable medium for knowledge dissemination and acquisition which would in turn facilitate inter-ethnic communication given the fact that Nigeria, in the words of Akinjobi (2004), had "over 400 ethnic languages". Nigeria also required a unifying language for the conduct of her governmental and administrative business, her commerce and industry as well as for intra- and inter-national interaction. English became the providentially most suitable tool for the satisfaction of these myriad needs. Another important function of English

in Nigeria is the facilitation of human co-operation. Barber (1999 p. 27) puts it succinctly thus: "Language enables us to influence one another's behaviour and to influence it in great details and thereby makes human co-operation possible" Competence in the pertinent aspects of English language, as gauged from the performance of users of English as a second language.in Nigeria, is a crucial factor in the realisation of the goal of human co-operation. Lack of competence in such pertinent aspects constitutes a veritable threat to the conduct of human co-operation on a sustainable basis.

1.2 Homophony in English

The phenomenon of homophone is widely developed in modern English language Homophones are words that are pronounced the same as another, but which differs in spelling and meaning, such as cite, sight, and site (Hobbs, 2006, p.3). In other words, homophones mean two words pronounced alike but different in meaning. They can be said to have sound ambiguity. Ambiguity can be defined as having more than one meaning. It can be found in sound, word/phrase, sentence. Ambiguity in the form of sound is also known as homophone, for example, /mi:t/ can be represented into "meat" and "meet". Ambiguity in the form of the word is also known as homonymy, for example, the word "bank" has two meanings (side of the river and financial institution for keeping the money) etc but homophone means units that are similar in sound, but differ in their spelling and meaning.

Basically, "Homophony' is when two words have the same form in speech but not in writing, and convey different meanings. The words are different from each other in writing, they have different orthographic forms. However, they sound the same in speech and have same phonological form. This is also usual in many languages, and a good example in English, for example: air - heir; buy - by; him - hymn; knight - night; not - knot; or - oar; peace - piece; rain - reign; steel - steal; storey - story; write – right, to mention just a few.

1.3 Nigerian English Segmental Pedagogy

1.3.1 Pronunciation Error

According to Hornby (1974) pronunciation is defined as the way in which a language is spoken or the way in which word is pronounced. Similarly, Shaw (1970, p. 355) in Triyani (2000) state that pronunciation is the way words sounds when it is spoken while Lado (1979, p.70) defines pronunciation as the use of sound system in speaking or listening. In a nutshell, pronunciation is making speech sound. Pronunciation of Foreign language is a twofold process. It involves oral reception or the recognition of sound as well as production of sounds be a sure help for the students in comprehending the language more easily and speaking it more accurately. Errors are turning asides of the sound production from the pronunciation rules and caused the differences with the correct pronunciation when the learner pronounce some words.

The pronunciation of English involves the production of individual or isolated sounds and the utterances of words, phrases and sentences with correct stressing or rhythm and intonation (Madya, 1989). Pronunciation is related to articulation and enunciation, but it refers especially to utterances of sounds in syllables and words. Pronunciation is really important in learning language. Bobda states in Kral (1994 p.107) that all levels of linguistic analysis, pronunciation exhibits number of deviation. Pronunciation is an integral part of language learning. Its scope is too broader than an inventory and descriptions of individual sounds. It embraces the element of stress and intonation, which function in the communication process. In pronunciation, there are some parts that should be learned. According to Harmerr (1992, p.21) the parts are sounds, stress and rhythm and intonation. Haycraft (1975 p.2) states that sounds are the articulation of the different consonants and vowels in English and the use of weak forms.

Pronunciation is the most important aspect in learning English. Pronunciation is the way in which a language or particular words are pronounced or viewed how people utter a word or words that created a good speech, so it's been clearly and can be understood by people (Kelly 2000). When people communicate with other people they should not only have good vocabulary but also have good pronunciation. It means that, when speaking a foreign language, pronunciation is of great importance. The students are expected to be able to communicate in English using correct pronunciation. It is one of the basic components of language which must be learnt by students. In some cases, students often make error when they pronounce English words, especially homophones. Crystal in Tyonum 2017 p.2, states that homophones are words that are spelled differently but have similar pronunciation, for example, so – sew, alms - arms, eye - I, no – know. Any form is mispronunciation of these words will lead to misunderstanding of the spoken English.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

This paper focuses on the problem of the inability of many users of English as a second language (ESL) particularly in Nigeria to make the right choices of words from a pair or set of homophonic items during speech communication. This work views the phenomenon of sameness in the pronunciation of pairs or sets of homophones as a potential source of perceptual difficulty and/or confusion for many interlocutors in speech events despite the lack of similarity in the spelling of the homophonic items. In many tertiary institutions in Nigeria, a routine review of students' lecture notes and examination answer scripts often reveal malapropisms and wrong choices of homophones whenever such words occurred during lectures or are required of them in providing answers to examination questions. Such errors could and often detract from the quality of answers provided by such students. This phenomenon of inability to distinguish between, and/or make the right choice among, a pair or set of homophonic lexical items is often times the result of a fundamental misunderstanding of the meaning of such items, lack of knowledge of the appropriate pronunciation of the items or a basic flaw in their knowledge of grammar. The aim of this study is to determine the level of awareness of and performance in the identification, pronunciation and appropriate usage of certain commonly used homophones by selected final year students of English Studies in a Nigeria university. Final-year undergraduates of English studies are chosen for this study because they have been exposed to all the crucial aspects of the study of English language in the course of their study programme and so are expected to possess, and display in their usage, a sound knowledge of the language.

1.5 Questions

This study is predicated on the following research questions:

I. What level of awareness do final-year L2 undergraduates demonstrate in the identification, choice and use of appropriate homophones?
II. How do final-year L2 undergraduates fare in the pronunciation of homophones?
III. In what ways do their performance in the identification, choice, pronunciation and use of homophones impact on their communicative events?

2. Literature Review

The Effect of Homophonic Errors on Listening Comprehension in English as a Foreign Language was examined (Choi and Han, 2017). This study investigates how homophonic mistakes affect second-language learners' English listening comprehension; using Korean English learners, the researchers used a listening comprehension test that included homophone-filled sentences as part of their technique. They evaluated the participants' performance to pinpoint the precise problems brought on by homophonic realization. The results demonstrate

that homophonic mistakes had a substantial impact on the listening comprehension of L2 learners. Participants often misinterpreted the intended meaning of sentences due to the similarity in pronunciation between homophones, leading to comprehension breakdowns.

Jiang and Zheng (2018) researched into Homophonic Vocabulary Errors in Second Language Listening Comprehension. This study explored the occurrence and impact of homophonic vocabulary errors in L2 listening comprehension. The researchers analysed the listening comprehension performance of Chinese learners of English and identified instances where homophones caused comprehension difficulties. They examined the types of errors made and the strategies employed by the learners to overcome these challenges. The study revealed that homophonic vocabulary errors were common among the participants and had a negative impact on their listening comprehension. The learners struggled with distinguishing the meanings of homophones and often relied on contextual cues or their L1 knowledge, leading to inaccurate comprehension.

Homophones in Second Language Acquisition: An Analysis of Portuguese-Speaking Learners of English was the focus of research by Mamede, E., & Lima, S. in 2020. This study examined the challenges Portuguese speakers who are learning English encounter when learning and differentiating homophones. Interviews with English L2 learners were done in addition to the analysis of written works. They looked at the students' knowledge of homophones, their usage of them, and their methods for telling them apart. According to the study, learning and accurately producing homophones were difficult for learners who spoke Portuguese. Because of their poor homophone awareness, the participants made mistakes in both their written and spoken English. The study emphasised the value of specific training and practice in homonyms differentiating skills development.

Aprilisa and Ruly (2020) researched into students' ability in understanding homophone in English, the study aimed at finding out the ability of students to understand homophone in English. A qualitative descriptive approach was used in carrying out the research. The research uses final year students (seventh-semester students) of the English Department of IAIN Langsa, in 2018/2019 academic year which consisted of 32 students. The researchers used documentation as an instrument for collecting the data. The documentation was the result of the test given by a lecturer. The test consists of 20 questions on homophone in English. The question was in the form of phonetic transcription which was divided into two parts. In the first part, the students mentioned two different words from a homophony sound, while the second part encouraged students to fill in the blank space correct homophone word by relating to the pronunciation at the end of sentences. The result show that 24 students got low mark because they were only able to answer one to ten questions correctly; 2 students got medium mark because they only answered 11 questions correctly, and six students got high mark because they can answer between 12 to 17 questions correctly. Therefore, it can be said that the ability of students to understand homophone in English was not good enough. The study concludes that the problem faced by the students was that they still could not comprehend the concept of homophone in English despite being at the final level of higher education.

3. Methodology

The data in this study are in two parts. In the first part, we have the audio-recorded utterances of lexical items and sentences that consist of homophones produced by the forty participants in the study- all of whom are final year Students of Osun State University. One group consisting of twenty students were taught the English sound segments with the use of an e-learning software while the second group of twenty students were taught the segmentals without the use of the software. Each of the participants read aloud sentences containing homophones and also participated in a dictation test. The second part consists of the responses

of the participants in the test of use of homophones in contexts. The elicitation instruments used for the collection of data are also in three parts. The first part consists of 30 pairs of homophones which were read aloud by the respondents and recorded on tape. The second part was a dictation of ten sentences each of which contains a pair of homophones which the respondents were required to write on paper. The third assessment is an exercise that deals with interpretation of homophones in Context which require the participants to choose from available options the correct homophonic lexical items in the presented test. It was designed to test their capacity to make the right choices of homophonous items for the appropriate contexts as contained in the sentences dictated to them. The data were subjected to perceptual analysis and the frequency counts of the responses were reduced to percentages. The higher percentages were taken as the norm.

4. Results

Table 1.

Overall performance of L2 realization of homophones

S/N	Tests	Frequencies	No. of Appropriate Frequencies	% of Appropriate Frequencies	No. of Inappropriate Frequencies	% of Inappropriate Frequencies
1.	Lexical (Perception)	**1200**	653	**54.42**	547	**45.58**
2.	Context (Perception)	**400**	181	**45.25**	219	**54.75**
3.	Lexical (Production)	**1200**	660	**55**	540	**45**
4.	Context (Production)	**400**	215	**53.75**	185	**46.25**
5.	Interpretation of Homophones in Context	**1000**	943	**94.3**	57	**5.7**
	TOTAL	**4200**	**2652**	**63.14**	**1548**	**36.86**

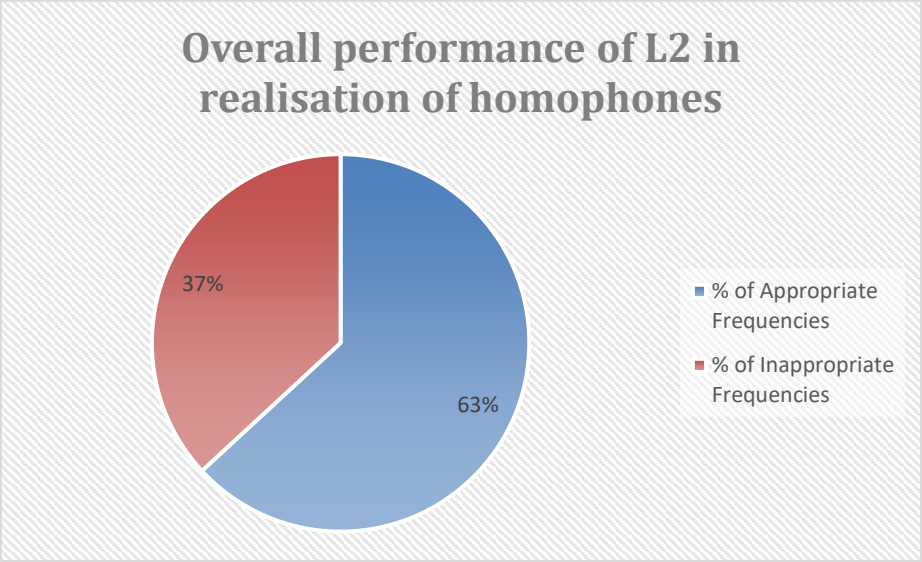


Fig. 1

In **table 1 and figure 1** above shows the overall performance of communicative competence of L2 in their understanding and use of homophones. The findings show a total of **4200** frequencies. The outcome of the data analysed show that **63.14%** which represents **2652** units were able to appropriately respond to the tests while **36.86%** which represents **1548** responses were inappropriately or wrongly answered.

Table 2.

Perceptual Analysis of L2 performance in realization of homophones at the lexical items

S/N	Lexical Items		No. of Participants	No. of Appropriate Frequencies	% of Appropriate Frequencies	No. of inappropriate Frequencies	% of inappropriate Frequencies
1.	Baring /beərɪŋ/	Bearing /beərɪŋ/	**40**	15	**37.5**	25	**62.5**
2.	Incite /ɪnˈsaɪt/	Insight /ɪnsaɪt/	**40**	19	**47.5**	21	**52.5**
3.	Hole /həʊl/	Whole /həʊl/	**40**	29	**72.5**	11	**27.5**
4.	Boared /bɔ:d/	Bored /bɔ:d/	**40**	28	**70**	12	**30**
5.	By /baɪ/	Buy /baɪ/	**40**	18	**45**	22	**55**
6.	Brake /breɪk/	Break /breɪk/	**40**	27	**67.5**	13	**32.5**
7.	For /fɔ:/	Four /fɔ:/	**40**	18	**45**	22	**55**
8.	Grate /greɪt/	Great /greɪt/	**40**	26	**65**	14	**35**
9.	Hour /aʊə/	Our /aʊə/	**40**	25	**62.5**	15	**37.5**
10.	Him /hɪm/	Hymn /hɪm/	**40**	21	**52.5**	19	**47.5**
11.	One /wʌn/	Won /wʌn/	**40**	29	**72.5**	11	**27.5**
12.	Peace /pi:s/	Piece /pi:s/	**40**	30	**75**	10	**25**
13.	Steal /sti:l/	Steel /sti:l/	**40**	24	**60**	16	**40**
14.	Thyme /taɪm/	Time /taɪm/	**40**	16	**40**	24	**60**
15.	Wait /weɪt/	Weight /weɪt/	**40**	17	**42.5**	23	**57.5**
16.	Wear /weə/	Where /weə/	**40**	22	**55**	18	**45**
17.	Weak /wi:k/	Week /wi:k/	**40**	23	**57.5**	17	**42.5**
18.	Which /wɪʧ/	Witch /wɪʧ/	**40**	26	**65**	14	**35**
19.	Sweet /swi:t/	Suite /swi:t/	**40**	14	**35**	26	**65**
20.	Toe /təʊ/	Tow /təʊ/	**40**	20	**50**	20	**50**
21.	Rows /rəʊz/	Rose /rəʊz/	**40**	25	**62.5**	15	**37.5**
22.	There /ðeə/	Their /ðeə/	**40**	23	**57.5**	17	**42.5**
23.	Die /daɪ/	Dye /daɪ/	**40**	29	**72.5**	11	**27.5**
24.	Ate /eɪt/	Eight /eɪt/	**40**	18	**45**	22	**55**
25.	Eye /aɪ/	I /aɪ/	**40**	24	**60**	16	**40**
26.	Dew /dju:/	Due /dju:/	**40**	25	**62.5**	15	**37.5**
27.	Flour /flaʊə/	Flower flaʊə/	**40**	7	**17.5**	33	**82.5**
28.	Air /eə/	Heir /eə/	**40**	22	**55**	18	**45**
39.	Ant /ænt/	Aunt /ɑ:nt/	**40**	18	**45**	22	**55**
30.	Doe /dəʊ/	Dough /dəʊ/	**40**	15	**37.5**	25	**62.5**
	TOTAL		**1200**	**653**	**54.42**	**547**	**45.58**

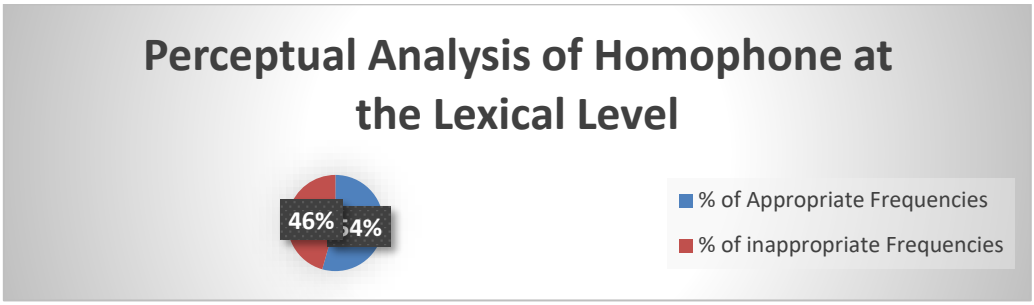


Fig. 2

Table and Figure 2 present the frequencies realised at the perceptual level of tested homophones lexical items of communicative competence of L2 users of English. The table explicitly illustrate the L2 performance in differentiating between lexical items pronounced by the researcher while the assessment determines whether they correctly or incorrectly write the perceived word down. The representation above shows **40** participants produced **1200** Lexical items. **653** homophonic lexical items were rightly perceived and written down. This represents **54.42%** of the participants' assessment while **547** homophones were wrongly written interpreted, which represent **45.58%** of the examined items.

Table 3.

Perceptual Analysis of L2 performance in the use of homophones in context

S/N	Sentences	Frequency	No. of Appropriate Frequencies	% of Appropriate Frequencies	No. of Inappropriate Frequencies	% of Inappropriate Frequencies
1.	You are not **allowed /əˈlaʊd/ to** talk **/əˈlaʊd/ aloud** in the library.	**40**	28	**70**	12	**30**
2.	The hotel **maid /meɪd/ made /meɪd/** the bed.	**40**	27	**67.5**	13	**32.5**
3.	Let's have buffalo **meat /miːt/** when we **meet /miːt/**for dinner.	**40**	25	**62.5**	15	**37.5**
4.	The bartender had a **wry /raɪ/** smile when pouring the shot of **rye /raɪ/.**	**40**	0	**0**	40	**100**
5.	Will the teacher give me a special **role /rəʊl/**now that I'm on the honor **roll /rəʊl/**?	**40**	30	**75**	10	**25**
6.	The paper's **review /rɪˈvjuː/ of** the new **revue /rɪˈvjuː/** wasn't very flattering.	**40**	2	**5**	38	**95**
7.	The bride walked down the sandy **aisle /aɪl/**on the tropical **isle /aɪl/.**	**40**	17	**42.5**	23	**27.5**
8.	You'd be in **pain /peɪn/** if you fell through a window **pane /peɪn/.**	**40**	23	**57.5**	17	**42.5**
9.	I turned **pale /peɪl/** when I dropped the water **pail /peɪl/.**	**40**	28	**70**	12	**30**
10.	I wouldn't **meddle /mɛdᵊl/** with a soldier who was wearing a metal medal, awarded for a display of **mettle /mɛtᵊl/.**	**40**	1	**2.5**	39	**97.5**
	TOTAL	**400**	**181**	**45.25**	**219**	**54.75**

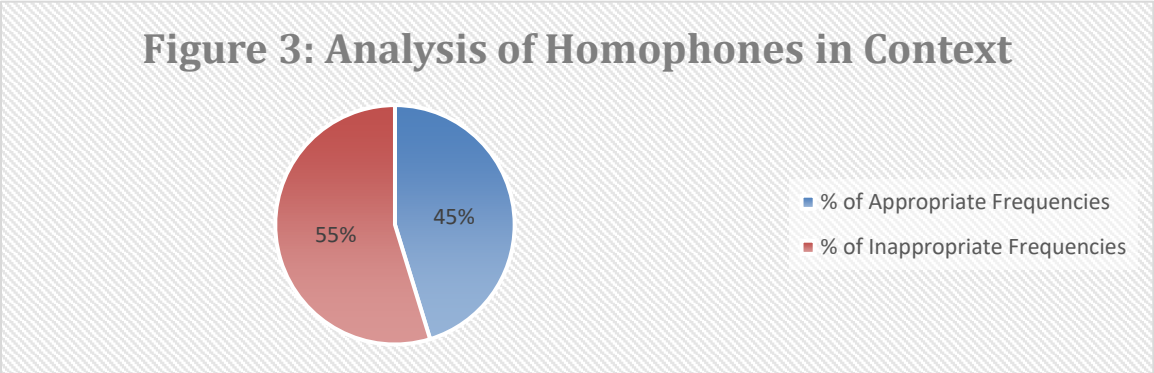


Fig. 3

In **table and figure 3** above, frequencies realised at the contextual level of tested homophonic items were explicitly illustrated. The table shows the L2 homophonic competence performance in differentiating between lexical items pronounce in-between sentences. While the assessment determines whether they correctly or incorrectly perceived and well taken down in the test. The representation above shows **40** participants partook in the test where **400** items were tested. The results show 181 homophonic lexical items were rightly perceived and well written down which represents **45.25%** of the respondents while **219** homophones in context were wrongly taken down. This represents **54.75%** of the examined items.

Table 4. *Perceptual Analysis L2 Performance in Production of Homophones at Lexical item*

S/N	Lexical Items		No. of Participants	No. of Appropriate Frequencies	% of Appropriate Frequencies	No. of inappropriate Frequencies	% of inappropriate Frequencies
1.	Baring /beərɪŋ/	Bearing /beərɪŋ/	**40**	24	**60**	16	**40**
2.	Incite /ɪnˈsaɪt/	Insight /ɪnsaɪt/	**40**	20	**50**	20	**50**
3.	Hole /həʊl/	Whole /həʊl/	**40**	22	**55**	18	**27.5**
4.	Boared /bɔːd/	Bored /bɔːd/	**40**	25	**62.5**	15	**37.5**
5.	By /baɪ/	Buy /baɪ/	**40**	27	**67.5**	13	**32.5**
6.	Brake /breɪk/	Break /breɪk/	**40**	28	**70**	12	**30**
7.	For /fɔː/	Four /fɔː/	**40**	23	**57.5**	17	**42.5**
8.	Grate /greɪt/	Great /greɪt/	**40**	30	**75**	10	**25**
9.	Hour /aʊə/	Our /aʊə/	**40**	21	**52.5**	19	**47.5**
10.	Him /hɪm/	Hymn /hɪm/	**40**	25	**62.5**	15	**37.5**
11.	One /wʌn/	Won /wʌn/	**40**	20	**50**	20	**50**
12.	Peace /piːs/	Piece /piːs/	**40**	21	**52.5**	19	**47.5**
13.	Steal /stiːl/	Steel /stiːl/	**40**	19	**47.5**	21	**52.5**
14.	Thyme /taɪm/	Time /taɪm/	**40**	17	**42.5**	23	**57.5**
15.	Wait /weɪt/	Weight /weɪt/	**40**	21	**52.5**	19	**47.5**
16.	Wear /weə/	Where /weə/	**40**	18	**45**	22	**55**
17.	Weak /wiːk/	Week /wiːk/	**40**	16	**40**	24	**60**
18.	Which /wɪʧ/	Witch /wɪʧ/	**40**	21	**52.5**	19	**47.5**
19.	Sweet /swiːt/	Suite /swiːt/	**40**	18	**45**	22	**55**
20.	Toe /təʊ/	Tow /təʊ/	**40**	19	**47.5**	21	**52.5**
21.	Rows /rəʊz/	Rose /rəʊz/	**40**	27	**67.5**	13	**32.5**
22.	There /ðeə/	Their /ðeə/	**40**	23	**57.5**	17	**42.5**
23.	Die /daɪ/	Dye /daɪ/	**40**	22	**55**	18	**45**
24.	Ate /eɪt/	Eight /eɪt/	**40**	26	**65**	14	**35**
25.	Eye /aɪ/	I /aɪ/	**40**	21	**52.5**	19	**47.5**
26.	Dew /djuː/	Due /djuː/	**40**	23	**57.5**	17	**42.5**
27.	Flour /flaʊə/	Flower flaʊə/	**40**	15	**37.5**	25	**62.5**
28.	Air /eə/	Heir /eə/	**40**	21	**52.5**	19	**47.5**
29.	Ant /ænt/	Aunt /ɑːnt/	**40**	26	**65**	14	**35**
30.	Doe /dəʊ/	Dough /dəʊ/	**40**	21	**52.5**	19	**47.5**
	TOTAL		**1200**	**660**	**55**	**540**	**45**

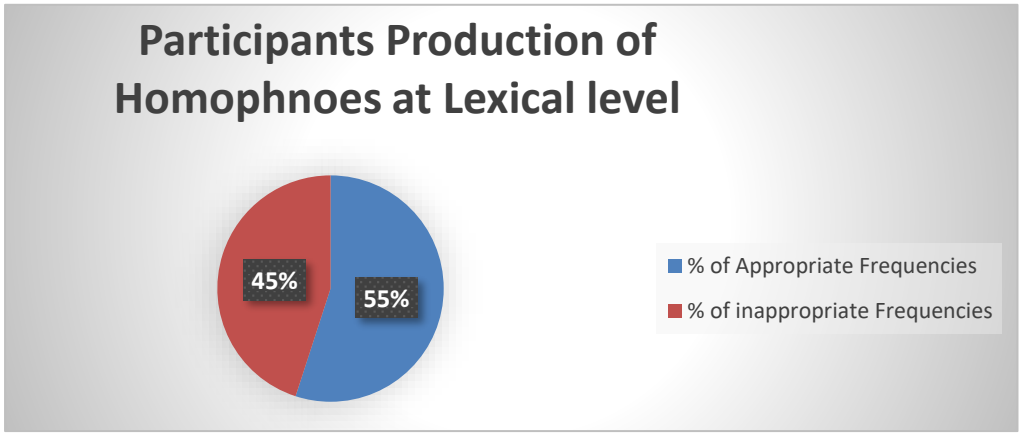


Fig. 4

In **table and figure 4**, the table present the result of performance of L2 users of English in production of homophones. The table shows that **40** participants took part in the production **1200** homophonic items. The collated result as represented in the table above show that **660** homophones were rightly produced by the participants which represents **55%** while **540** homophones were wrongly produced. This represents **45%** of the examined items.

Table 5.

S/N	Sentences	Frequency	No. of Appropriate Frequencies	% of Appropriate Frequencies	No. of Inappropriate Frequencies	% of Inappropriate Frequencies
1.	You are not **allowed /əˈlaʊd/** to talk **/əˈlaʊd/ aloud** in the library.	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
2.	The hotel **maid /meɪd/ made /meɪd/** the bed.	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
3.	Let's have buffalo **meat /miːt/** when we **meet /miːt/** for dinner.	**40**	37	**92.5**	3	**7.5**
4.	The bartender had a **wry /raɪ/** smile when pouring the shot of **rye /raɪ/.**	**40**	0	**0**	40	**100**
5.	Will the teacher give me a special **role /rəʊl/**now that I'm on the honor **roll /rəʊl/**?	**40**	34	**85**	6	**15**
6.	The paper's **review /rɪˈvjuː/ o**f the new **revue /rɪˈvjuː/** wasn't very flattering.	**40**	0	**0**	40	**100**
7.	The bride walked down the sandy **aisle /aɪl/**on the tropical **isle /aɪl/.**	**40**	27	**67.5**	13	**32.5**
8.	You'd be in **pain /peɪn/** if you fell through a window **pane /peɪn/.**	**40**	20	**50**	20	**50**
9.	I turned **pale /peɪl/** when I dropped the water **pail /peɪl/.**	**40**	17	**42.5**	23	**57.5**
10.	I wouldn't **meddle /mɛdᵊl/** with a soldier who was wearing a metal medal, awarded for a display of **mettle /mɛtᵊl/.**	**40**	0	**0**	40	**100**
	TOTAL	**400**	**215**	**53.75**	**185**	**46.25**

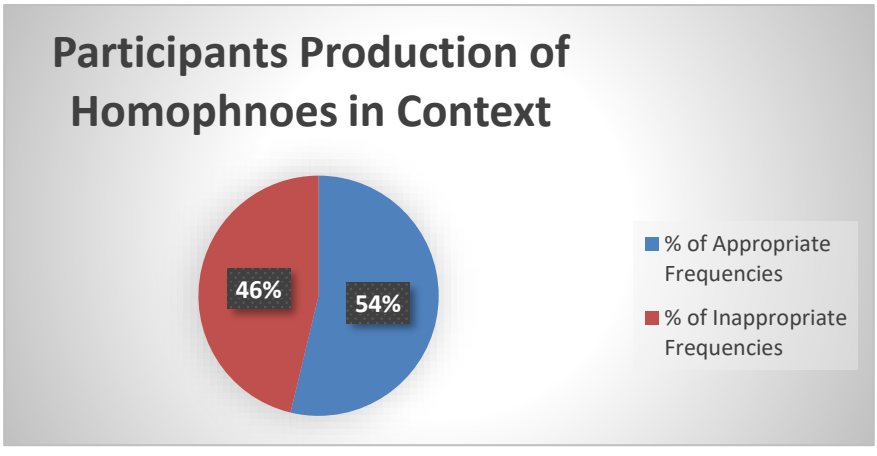


Fig. 5

Table and figure 5 show results of L2 performance in the production of homophones in context. The test was administered to **40** participants. The participants were made to produced **400** homophonic items in context/sentence. The result in the table above show that **215** homophones were appropriately produced by the participants at sentence level (Context) which represents **53.75%** while **185** items were wrongly produced. This represents **46.25%**.

Table 6.

Analysis of Communicative Performance in Interpretation of Homophones in Context

S/N	Sentences	Frequency	No. of Appropriate Frequencies	% of Appropriate Frequencies	No. of inappropriate Frequencies	% of inappropriate Frequencies
1.	The shoes are (**two/too**) small.	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
2.	There are (**two/too**) dogs in the man's house.	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
3.	We were (**taught/ thought**) in Geography that the Earth orbits around the (**son/sun**).	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
4.	The (**son/sun**) shines through the window	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
5.	The little boy held the railing as he (**walked/worked**) down the (**stairs/stares**).	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
6.	It's going to rain today (**weather/whether**) you like it or not.	**40**	38	**95**	2	**5**
7.	The cost of a product depends on (**weather/whether**) you choose the low or the high quality.	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
8.	At the grocery store, tea is in the same (**aisle/isle**) as coffee.	**40**	27	**67.5**	13	**32.5**
9.	Dogs are not (**allowed/aloud**) in the store.	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
10.	The instructions were read (**allowed/aloud**) to the students.	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
11.	The tourists sat at the (**base/bass**) of the statue.	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
12.	Onions should be chopped on the cutting (**board/bored**).	**40**	39	**97.5**	1	**2.5**
13.	She applied (**break/brake**) suddenly in order to avoid hitting the deer.	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
14.	Ikeja is the (**capital/capitol**) of Lagos.	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
15.	The flower (**cent/sent/scent**) is very strong.	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
16.	The products will be (**hear/here**) tomorrow.	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
17.	We collected the clams in a plastic (**pail/pale**).	**40**	35	**87.5**	5	**12.5**
18.	You look (**pail/pale**). Are you okay?	**40**	34	**85**	6	**15**
19.	I would like a (**piece/peace**) of cake.	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
20.	The assignments should be submitted in (**plain/plane**) white paper.	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
21.	Are (**their/there**) any volunteers in the community?	**40**	38	**95**	2	**5**
22.	The messaged was dropped in a personalised (**stationary/stationery**).	**40**	27	**67.5**	13	**32.5**
23.	The hotel offers (**complimentary /complementary**) breakfast.	**40**	28	**70**	12	**30**

24.	The construction (**sight/site**) was surrounded by a chain link fence.	**40**	40	**100**	0	**0**
25.	His words (**wield/wheeled**) tremendous influence among his followers.	**40**	37	**92.5**	3	**7.5**
	TOTAL	**1000**	**943**	**94.3**	**57**	**5.7**

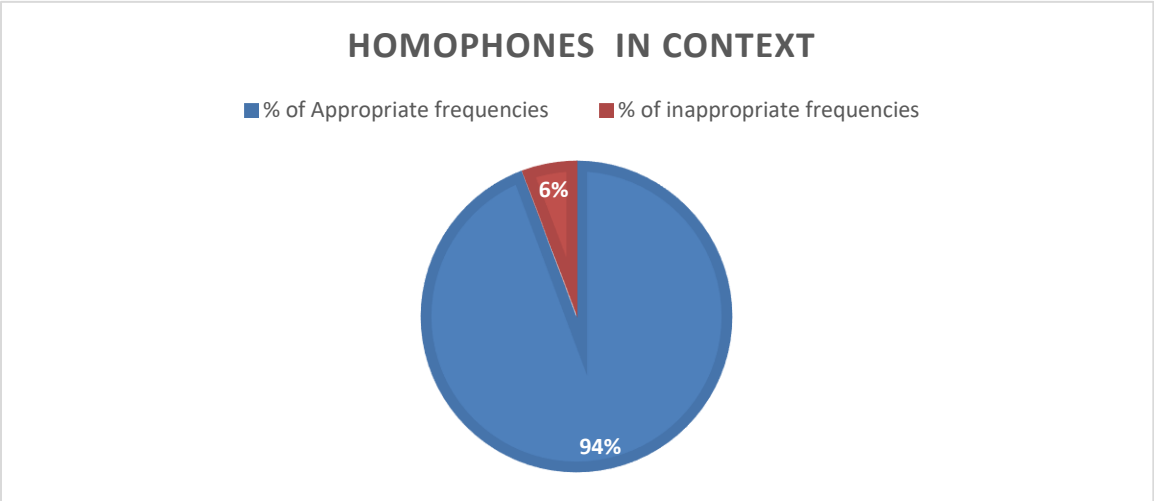
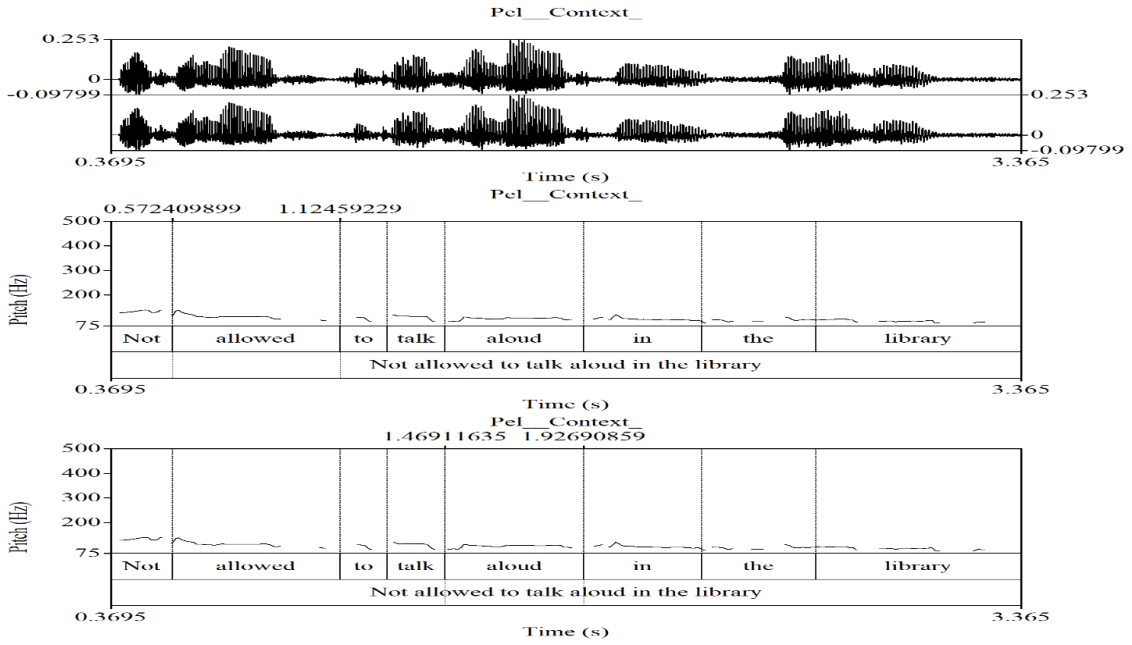


Fig. 6

In **table and figure 6**, the table show the result L2 understanding of Homophones in context. Textual Exercise were administered to participants to choose correct option among options given in the administered test in other to determine the communicative competence of L2 users of English. The table shows the performance of **40** participants in choosing the correct option or options among the given options in the administered test. The result from the assessment clearly shows that from the total frequency of **1000** homophones, **943** homophones were gotten correctly which represent **94.3%** while **57** responses were wrongly answered. This is **5.7%** of the total tested homophonic items.

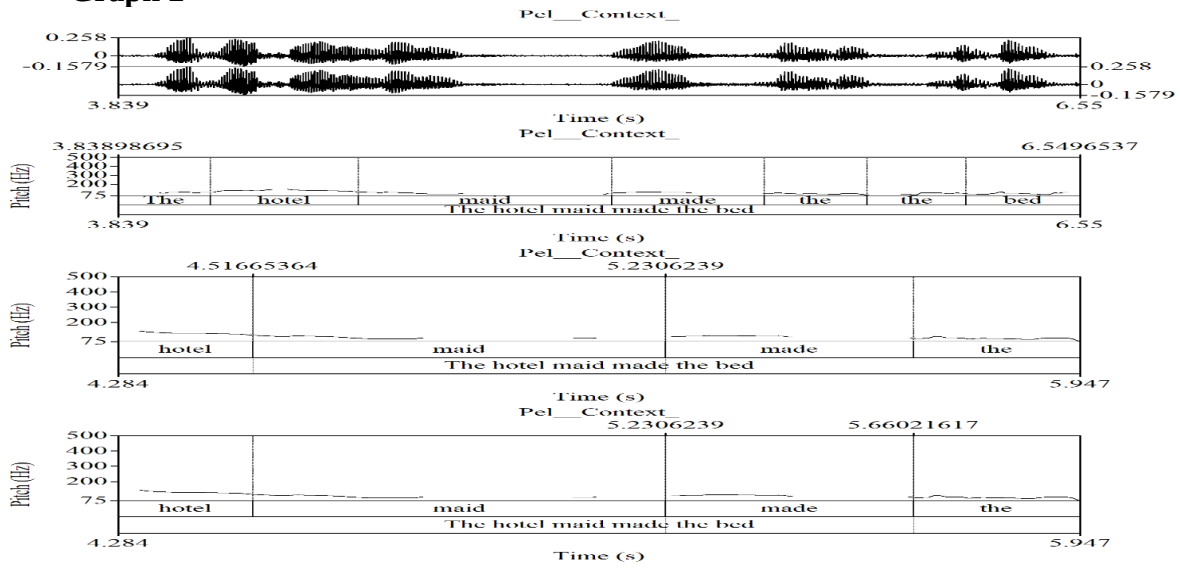
4.1 Acoustic Analysis of Homophones in Context

Graph 1



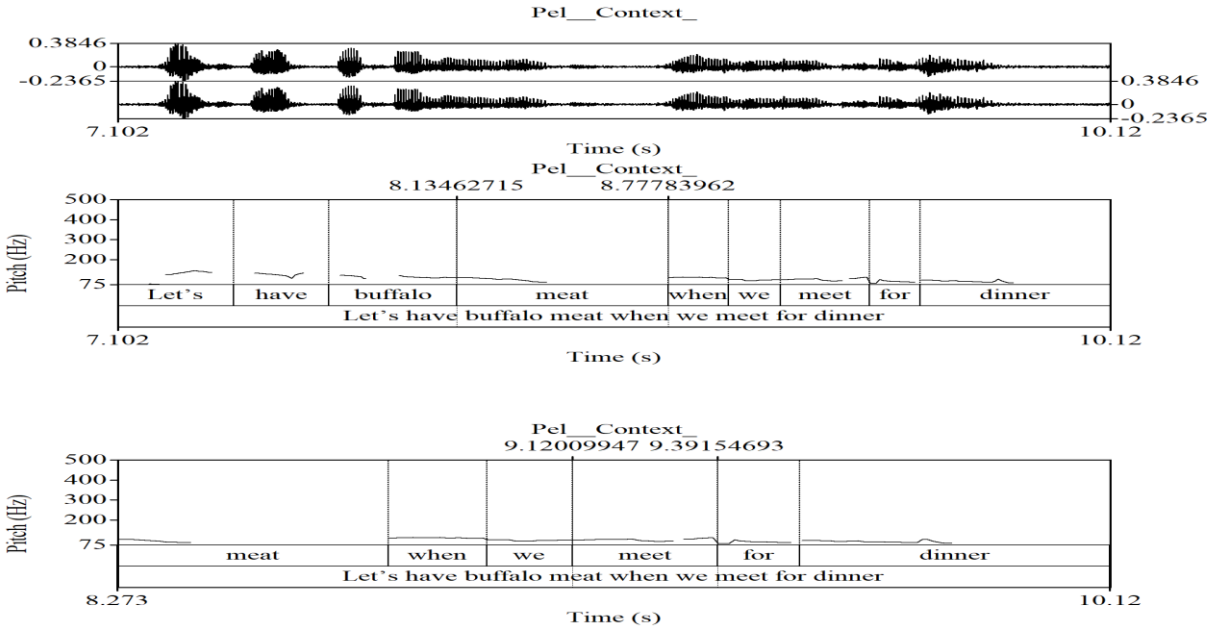
The graph above shows the production of the tested homophone in context. The wave of sounds in the graph is apparently the same. Also, the almost of time used to produce **"allowed"** is **0.552182391 milliseconds** while **"aloud"** was produce in **"0.45779224 milliseconds**. From the wave of sound obtainable the production of the two homophones differs.

Graph 2



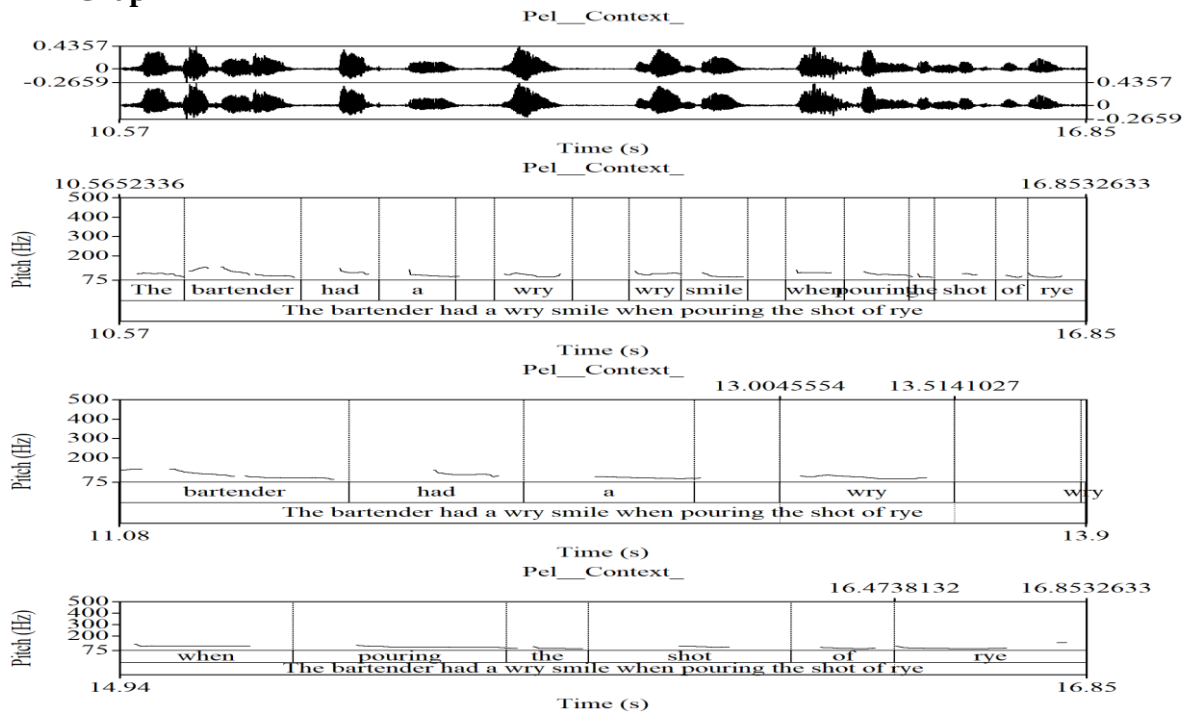
The graph 2 shows distinction in wave of sounds in the graph. Apparently, the time used to produce the examined homophones differs. **"maid and made"** were produced in **0.71397026 milliseconds and 0.42959227 milliseconds** respectively. This shows variation in the production of the tested homophones.

Graph 3



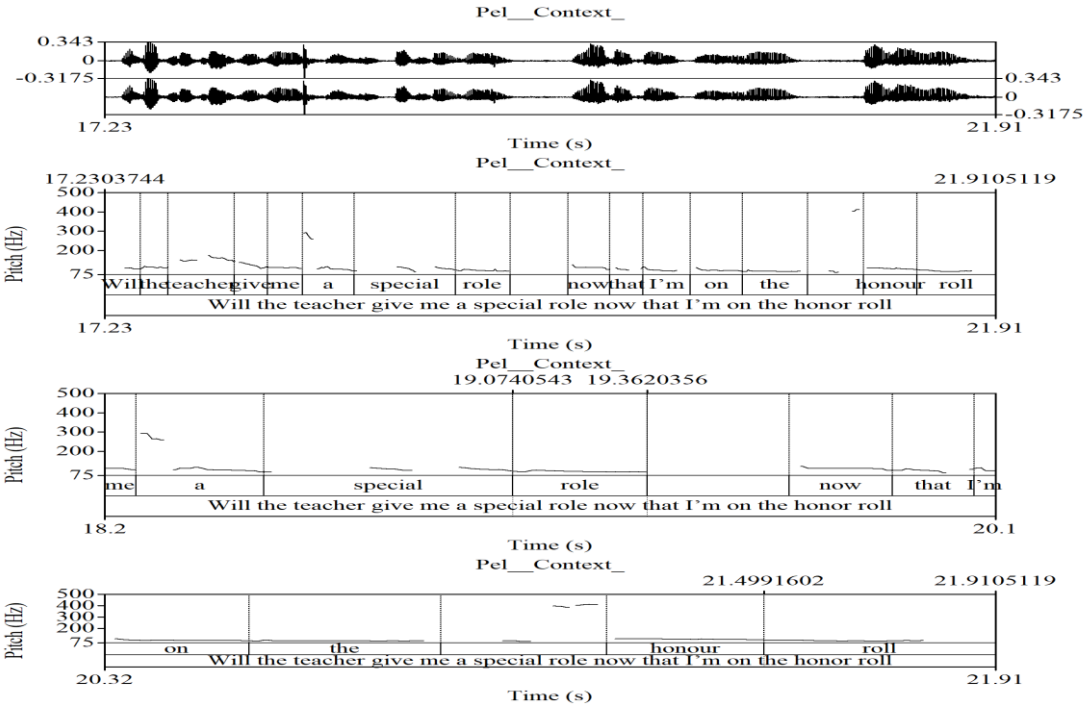
Graph 3 shows variation in wave of sounds in the graph. The time used to produce the tested homophones differs. **"meat"** was produced in **0.64321247 milliseconds** while **"meat"** was produced in **0.27144746 milliseconds** respectively. This shows clear difference in the production of the tested homophones.

Graph 4



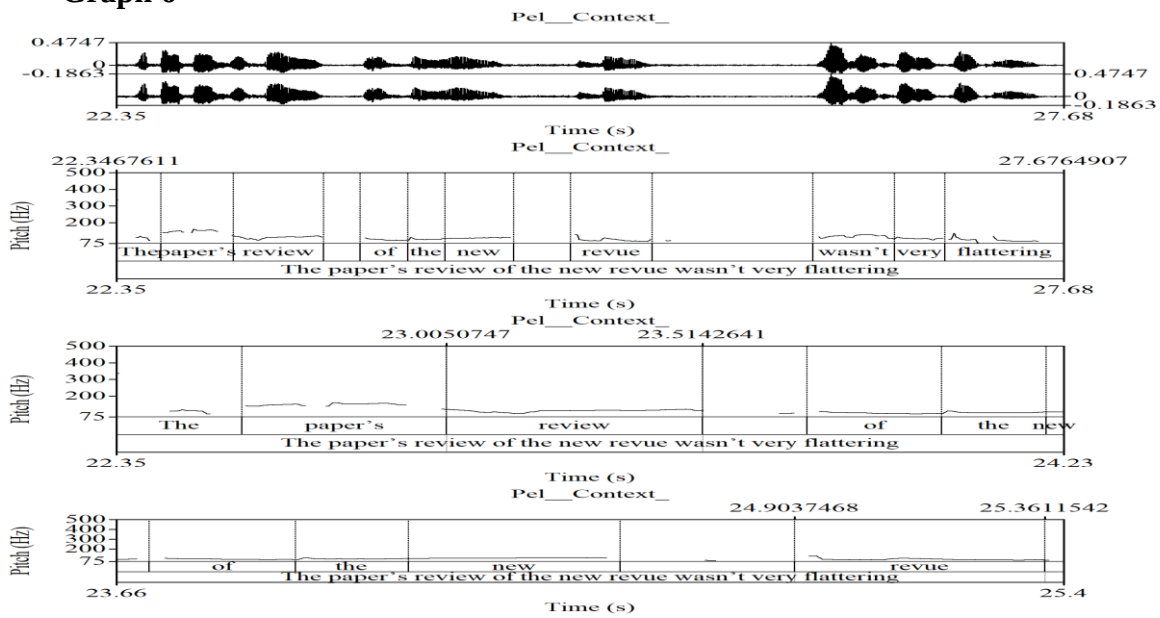
Graph 4 shows variation in wave of sounds in the graph. The time used to produce the tested homophones differs. **"wry"** was produced in **0.5095473 milliseconds** while **"rye"** was produced in **0.3794501 milliseconds** respectively. This shows clear difference in the production of the tested homophones.

Graph 5



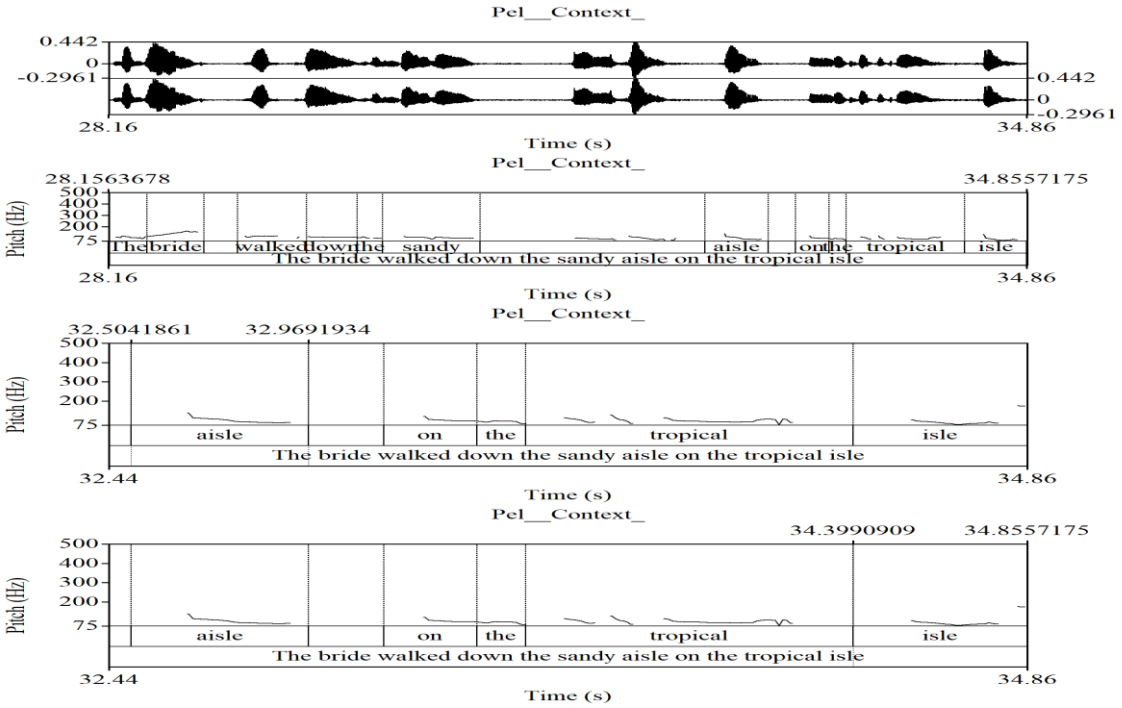
Graph 5 shows similarities and variation in wave of sounds in the graph. The time used to produce the examined homophones differs. **"Role and roll"** were produced in **0.2879813 milliseconds and 0.4113517 milliseconds** respectively. This shows clear variation in the production of the tested homophones.

Graph 6



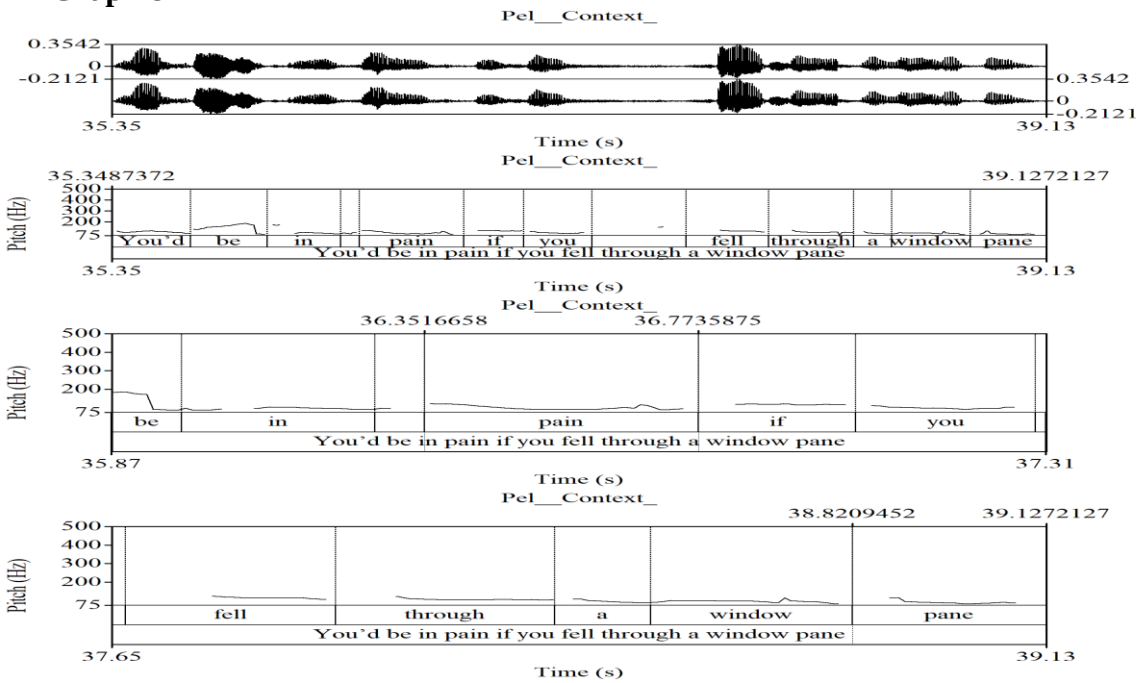
In graph 6, it shows variation in wave of sounds in the graph. Apparently, the time used to produce the examined homophones differs. **"Review and revue"** were produced in **0.5091894 milliseconds and 0.4574074 milliseconds** respectively. The timing is quite accurate but the movement of the wave of sounds differs.

Graph 7



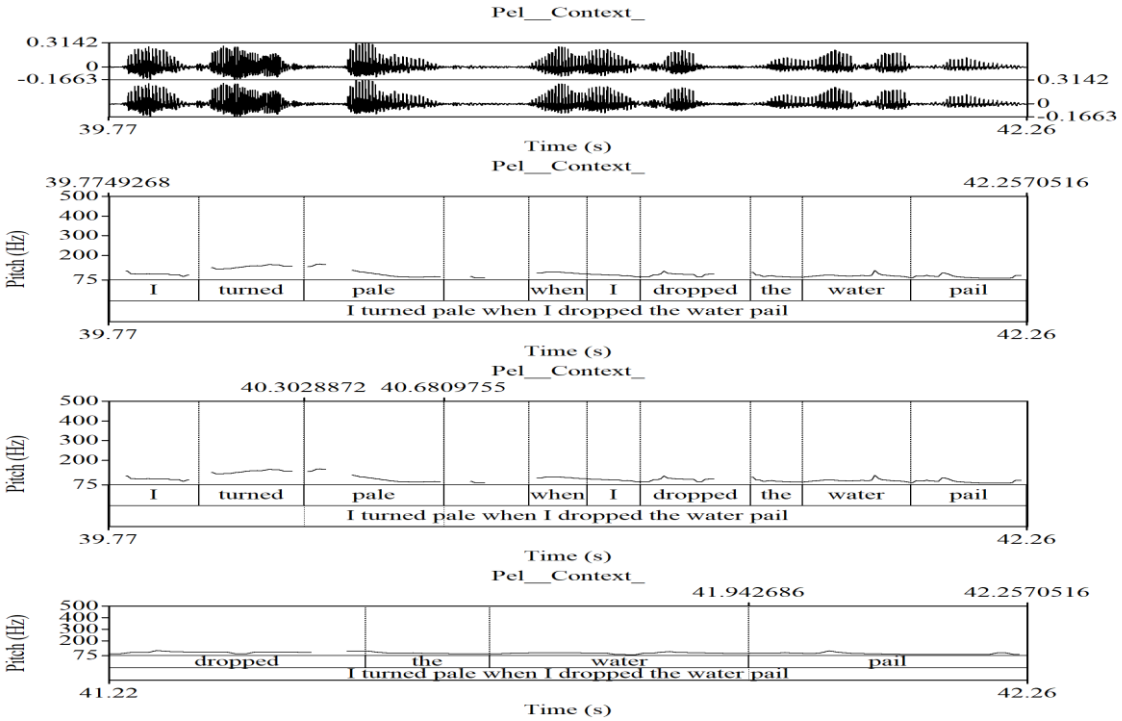
Graph 7 show the wave of sounds in the graph. The time used to produce the tested homophones differs. **"Aisle"** was produced in **0.4650073 milliseconds** while **"isle"** was produced in **0.4566266 milliseconds** respectively. The result shows close similarity in the production of the tested homophones.

Graph 8



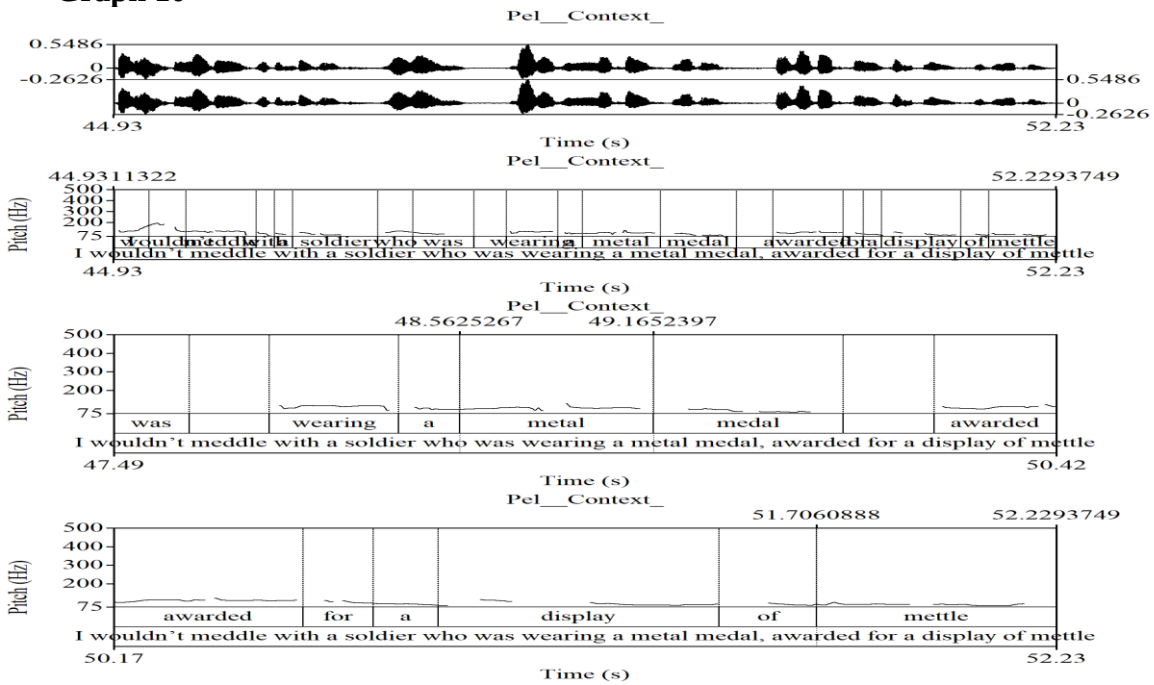
Graph 8 shows similarities and variations in the wave of sounds in the graph. Apparently, the time used to produce the examined homophones differs. **"Pain and Pane"** were produced in **0.4219217 milliseconds and 0.3062675 milliseconds** respectively. The articulation of the two homophones differs.

Graph 9



Graph 9 shows similarities and variations in the wave of sounds in the graph. Apparently, the time used to produce the examined homophones differs. **"Pale and Pail"** were produced in **0.3780883 milliseconds and 0.3143656 milliseconds** respectively. The articulation of the two homophones were closely realised.

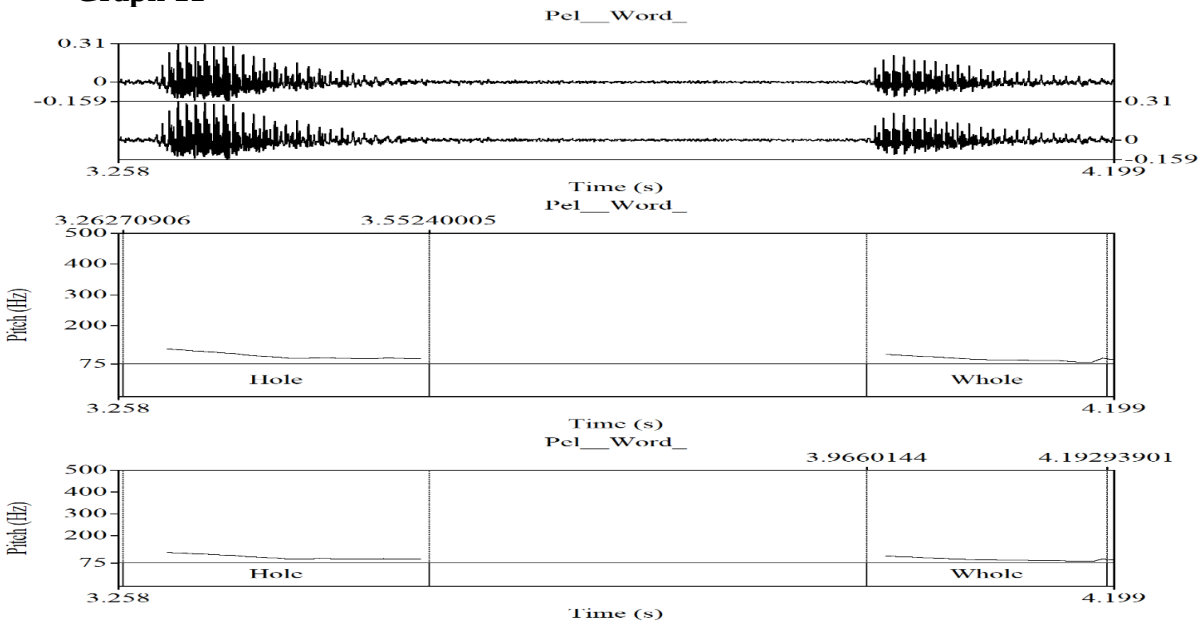
Graph 10



Graph 10 shows similarities and variations in the wave of sounds in the graph. Apparently, the wave of sounds and time used to produce the examined homophones differs. The homophones **"metal"** was produced in 0.**6027120 milliseconds** while 0.**5232861** *milliseconds.*

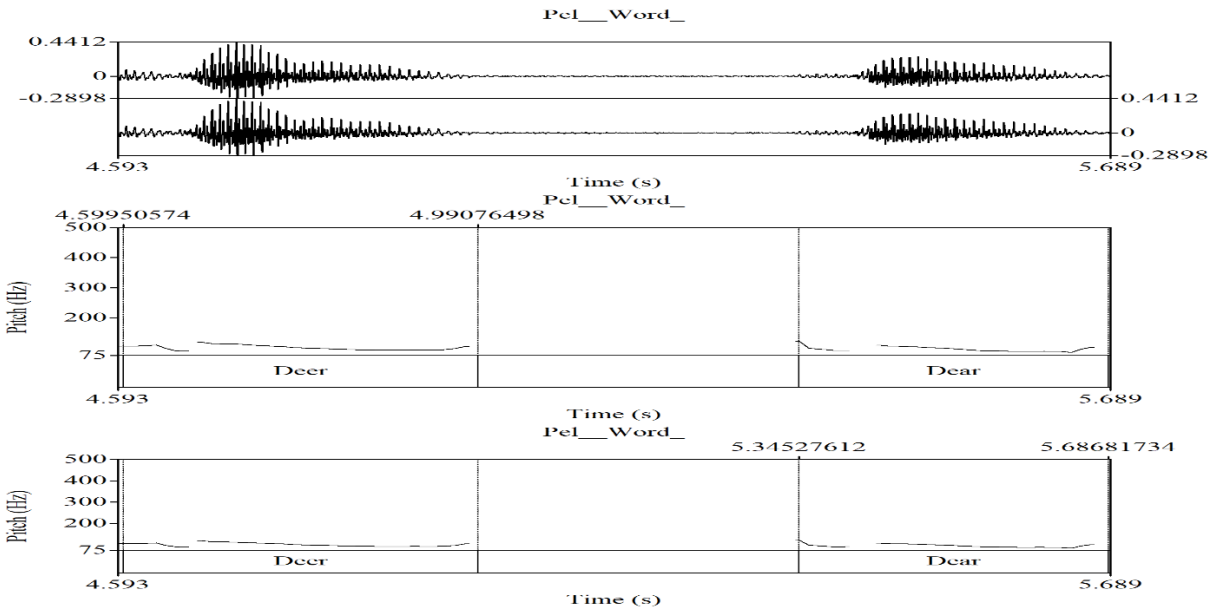
4.2 Acoustic Analysis of Lexical Homophones

Graph 11



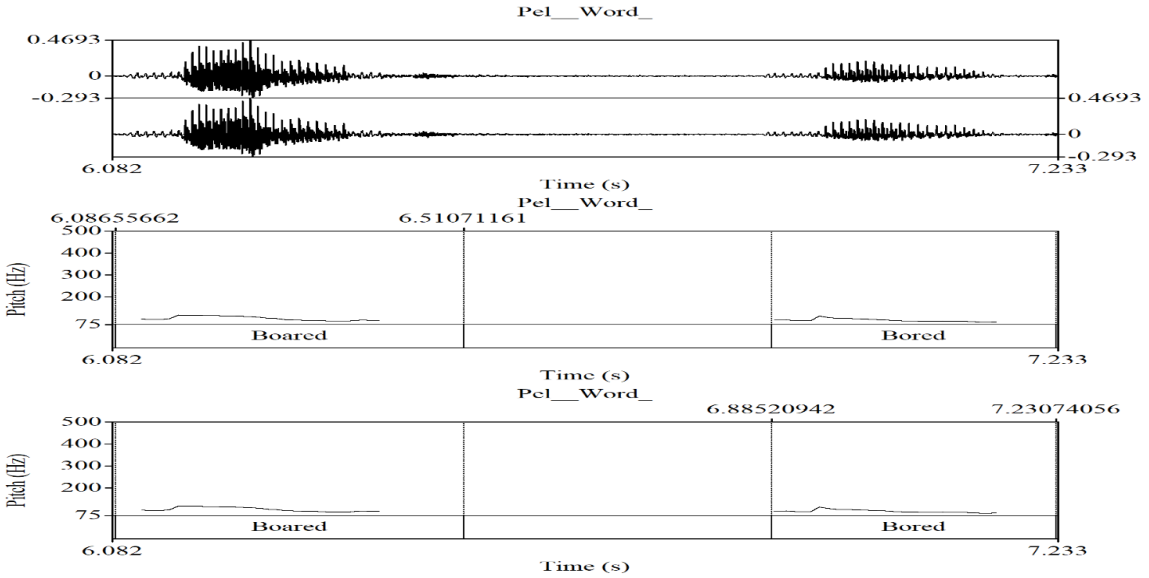
Graph 11 shows similarities and variations in the production of lexical homophones. From the graph above, it clearly shows close similarities in the production the examined lexical homophones. **"Hole and Whole"** were produced in **0.28969099 milliseconds and 0.22692461 milliseconds** respectively. The articulation of the two homophones were closely realised.

Graph 12



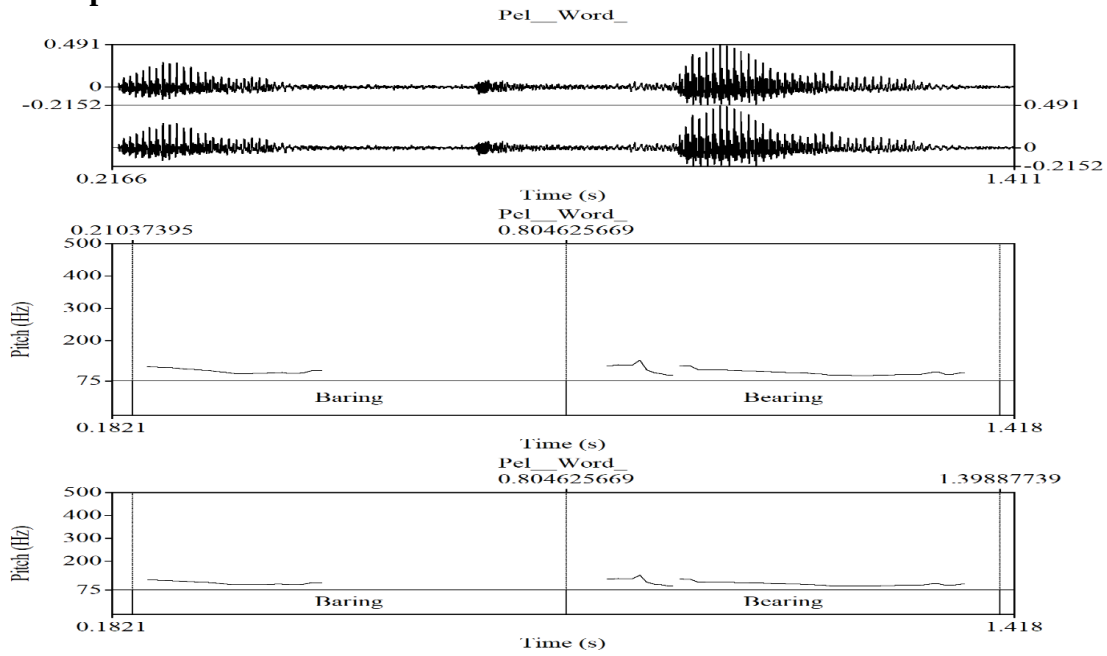
Graph 12 above shows similarities and variations in the production of lexical homophones. From the graph presented, it clearly shows close similarities in the production the examined lexical homophones. **"Deer and Dear"** were produced in **0.39125924 milliseconds and 0.34154122 milliseconds** respectively. The articulation of the two homophones were closely realised.

Graph 13



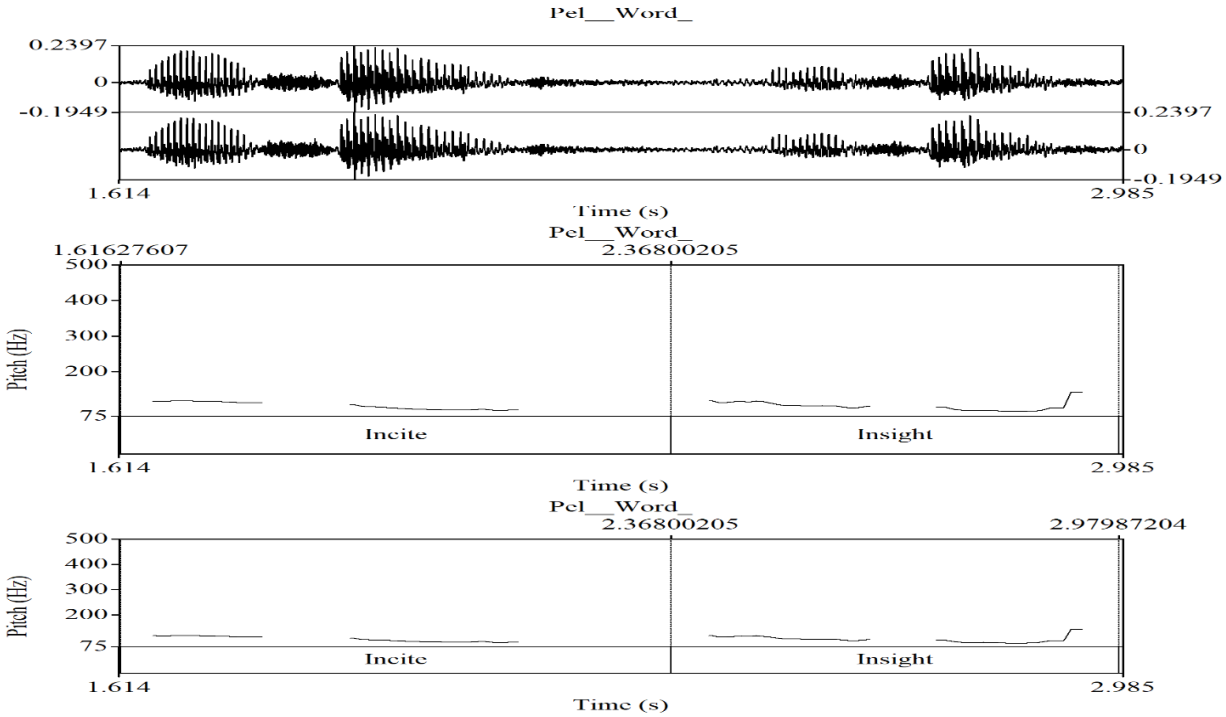
Graph 13 above shows similarities and variations in the production of lexical homophones. From the graph presented, there is variation in the production the examined lexical homophones. **"Boared and Bored"** were produced in 0.42415499 **milliseconds and 0.34553136 milliseconds** respectively.

Graph 14



Graph 14 above shows similarities and variations in the production of lexical homophones. From the graph presented, it clearly shows close similarities in the production the examined lexical homophones. **"Baring and Bearing"** were produced in **0.594251719 milliseconds and 0.594251721 milliseconds** respectively. The articulation of the two homophones were closely realised.

Graph 15



Graph 15 above shows similarities and variations in the production of lexical homophones. From the graphs presented, there seems to be a variation in the production of the examined lexical homophones. For instance, **"Incite and Insight"** were produced in **0.76374443 milliseconds and 0.611869990 milliseconds** respectively.

5. Discussion of Findings

i. *What level of awareness do final-year L2 undergraduates demonstrate in the identification, choice and use of appropriate homophones?*

Based on these findings, it can be inferred that the final-year undergraduate students, on average, demonstrate moderate awareness and proficiency in identifying and using appropriate homophones. While they perform above average in the perception test of homophonic lexical items, their performance decreases slightly when applying this knowledge in context. This suggests that while they have a good grasp of homophones in isolation, they may encounter challenges when using them in real-world communicative situations. The study tests the overall performance of the participants in identifying and using homophones. In the realisation of homophones in isolation, 63.14% of responses were appropriate, while 36.86% were inappropriate or incorrect. In the perception test of homophonic lexical items, 54.42% of items were correctly identified, and 45.58% were incorrectly identified while the assessment of homophones in context, revealed 45.25% of items were correctly perceived and used, while 54.75% were incorrectly perceived or used. Based on these findings, it can be inferred that the final-year undergraduate students, on average, demonstrate moderate awareness and proficiency in identifying and using appropriate homophones. While they perform above average in the perception test of homophonic lexical items, their performance decreases slightly when applying this knowledge in context. This suggests that while they have a good grasp of homophones in isolation, they may encounter challenges when using them in real-world communicative situations.

ii. *How do final-year L2 undergraduates fare in the pronunciation of homophones?*

In the production of homophones in isolation (as indicated in Table 4), final-year L2 undergraduates demonstrated a 55% accuracy rate. This means that out of 1200 homophonic items, 660 were produced appropriately, while 540 were produced incorrectly. Also, in the production of homophones in context or within sentences (as indicated in Table 5), the accuracy

rate slightly decreases to 53.75%. This means that out of 400 homophonic items presented in sentences, 215 were produced appropriately, while 185 were produced incorrectly. Overall, the final-year L2 undergraduates seem to exhibit a moderate level of proficiency in the pronunciation of homophones. They demonstrate a better accuracy rate when producing homophones in isolation compared to when using them within sentences or contexts. However, there is still room for improvement, as a significant portion of homophones were produced incorrectly in both scenarios.

iii. *In what ways do their performance in the identification, choice, pronunciation and use of homophones impact on their communicative events?*

The analysis provides insights into the performance of final-year L2 undergraduate students in various aspects related to homophones and their impact on communicative events. In the identification and choice of homophones, the participants demonstrated above-average performance in identifying homophones, with 63.14% of responses being appropriate. This suggests a reasonable understanding of homophones. A higher accuracy rate in identifying homophones positively impacts communicative events by ensuring that the intended meaning is understood by both the speaker and the listener. On the pronunciation of homophones, is above-average with 55% of responses being appropriate. This implied that the participants perform adequately, given their higher accuracy rates in the pronunciation of homophones. As accurate pronunciation of homophones is essential for effective oral communication. If pronunciation is incorrect, it may lead to misunderstandings or misinterpretations during communicative events. Also, the study on the use of homophones in context shows a relatively lower performance, with only 45.25% of items being perceived and used correctly. From the Praat analysis, it is observed that participants performed better with homophones in isolation than in context. This highlights a potential gap in their ability to apply knowledge in real-world communicative situations. This suggests a need for additional practice or instruction to improve the participants' ability to use homophones effectively within sentences or discourse, thus enhancing their overall communicative competence. By implication, the challenges in using homophones inappropriately within sentences or contexts may hinder effective communication, leading to confusion or ambiguity in meaning during communicative events. The overall impact on communicative acts is that, strong performance in the identification and choice of homophones positively contributes to the clarity and effectiveness of communication. However, weaknesses in using homophones in context may lead to misunderstandings or misinterpretations, impacting the overall success of communicative events.

6. **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the performance of final-year L2 undergraduate students in the identification, choice, pronunciation, and usage of homophones can significantly impact their communicative events. Strengthening these skills through targeted instruction and practice is essential for enhancing overall communicative competence in English. From the result, the level of awareness demonstrated by final-year L2 undergraduates in the identification, choice, and use of appropriate homophones suggests that average majority of the final-year L2 undergraduates were able to correctly identify, choose, and use appropriate homophones in the given tests. However, 38.86% (1548 responses) were considered inappropriate or incorrect, indicating that there is room for improvement in the understanding and application of homophones among this group. This portion of the data suggests that a notable minority of the final-year L2 undergraduates may still struggle with accurately recognizing and utilizing appropriate homophones. Overall, while a majority of the final-year L2 undergraduates demonstrated a satisfactory level of awareness in the identification, choice, and use of

appropriate homophones, the data also indicates that there is a subset of students who would benefit from further instruction and practice in this area.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that final-year L2 undergraduates demonstrate a moderate level of proficiency in the pronunciation of homophones. This indicates that majority of the homophonic items were pronounced correctly by the participants. However, there is still room for improvement, as nearly a quarter of the items were mispronounced. The findings suggest that final-year L2 undergraduates have a reasonable grasp of the pronunciation of homophones, but some difficulties or errors still persist. Pronouncing homophones accurately can be challenging due to the similar sounds and stress patterns associated with these words. It's possible that individual differences, language backgrounds, and the specific homophones being assessed may have influenced the participants' performance. To further enhance their pronunciation skills, it is recommended for final-year L2 undergraduates to receive targeted instruction, practice, and feedback on the correct pronunciation of homophones. Continued exposure to authentic spoken English, including listening exercises and engaging in conversation, can also contribute to improving their proficiency in the pronunciation of homophones.

Overall, L2 learners' performance in the identification, choice, pronunciation, and use of homophones directly impacts their ability to communicate effectively and accurately. Developing competence in these areas is crucial for enhancing their communicative competence and successfully navigating various communicative events in the target language. It is evident that the respondents perform very well in the assessment of their level of awareness in identification, choice and use of homophones. The final year students used for the research perform performed well in the pronunciation of lexical homophones while averagely performed when presented in context.

7. Recommendations

English segmental pedagogy, homophonic realisation, and communicative competence are all important aspects of language learning and teaching, particularly in the context of second language (L2) acquisition. Therefore, the study finds the following suggestions important. This will have advanced pedagogical implications on L2 learners.

1. **Pronunciation of sounds**: Segmental pedagogy emphasises the teaching of individual speech sounds or phonemes, that is emphasise on the importance of focusing on the pronunciation of individual speech sounds, also known as phonemes and teaching that focuses on teaching individual segments or units of speech, such as phonemes, rather than larger units like words or phrases. Teachers/ instructors should focus on helping L2 learners produce and distinguish between different sounds in English. This will aid the pedagogical level of the learners.
2. **Use of phonetics dictionaries**: The use of phonetics materials for teaching and learning will have pedagogical implication on language learners. Introducing learners to phonetic symbols and teaching them how to use phonetic dictionaries can be beneficial. This helps learners understand and produce sounds accurately.
3. **Listening and repetition exercises**: Incorporating listening exercises and repetition drills can enhance learners' ability to recognise and reproduce segmental features accurately. Having a prepared test material which can be used as drilling tools for language learners can improve students pedagogical level.

4. **Integration of technological tools**: Development of pronunciation software and use of technology tools such as pronunciation apps, online dictionaries with audio, and language learning platforms to supplement traditional teaching methods.
5. **Teaching of word stress patterns and contrastive stress exercises**: As L2 learners, teachers should be able to highlight the importance of word stress in English. English is a stress-timed language, and the placement of stress in a word can affect its meaning, therefore, it is of importance that emphasis is laid on the word stress pattern of English in the process of teaching and learning. Also, incorporating activities that focus on contrasting stressed and unstressed syllables in words and sentences can improve learners' ability to convey meaning effectively.
6. **Contextualised Learning**: Contextualised learning will emphasise the importance of learning language in context and provide activities that simulate real communication situations to develop learners' ability to use language meaningfully.

In summary, incorporating English segmental pedagogy, homophonic realisation, and a focus on communicative competence into language teaching can contribute to a more comprehensive and effective language learning experience for L2 learners. By addressing pronunciation, stress patterns, and communication skills, teachers can better prepare learners for real-life language use.

References

Aiyeola, A. (2023). Technology-enhanced approximation to Standard English stress shift: The case of educated Yoruba (Nigerian) teenagers. *English Today*, 1-12. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078423000251

Akindele, J., & Fabunmi, V. (2023). Syllable Isochrony in Selected Nigerian Hip Hops: Implication for Nigerian English Pedagogy. *Revue Traduction et Langues22 (1),* 374-399.

Akindele, J., & Fabunmi, V. (2019). British or American English? A Survey of Variety Preference in the English of L2 University Undergraduates. *Revue Traduction et Langues1 (1),* 71-84.

Akinola, A., & Oladipupo, R. (2022). Word-stress free variation in Nigerian English: A corpus-based study. *English Today*, *38*(3), 165-177. https://doi.org/10.1017/S026607842100002X

Aprilisa Astri & Ruly Adha (2020). Students' Ability in Understanding Homophone in English. In *Journal of Linguistics, Literature & Language Teaching*. JL3T. Vol. VI, No. 1

Burns, Anne, and Claire, Stephanie. 2003. *Speaking Pronunciation in Action for Teachers.* Macquarie University.

Choi, J. H., & Han, Z. H. (2017). The Effect of Homophonic Errors on Listening Comprehension in English as a Foreign Language. System, 67, 92-104.

Hansen Edwards, J. (2023). *The Sounds of English Around the World: An Introduction to Phonetics and Phonology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108894562

Hobbs, J. B. (2006). *Homophones and Homographs*: *An American dictionary (4th ed).* McFarland & Company.

Jiang, N., & Zheng, X. (2018). Homophonic Vocabulary Errors in Second Language Listening Comprehension. *TESOL Quarterly, 52(*2), 371-397.

Jowitt, D. (1994). The English of Nigerian newspapers. *English Today*, *10*(4), 23-28. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078400007859

Mamede, E., & Lima, S. (2020). Homophones in Second Language Acquisition: An Analysis of Portuguese-Speaking Learners of English. *Bellaterra Journal of Teaching & Learning Language & Literature, 13*(2), 27-50.

Oladipupo, R. (2015). A comparative study of connected speech features in Nigerian English & Received Pronunciation: An analysis of the proximity of educated Nigerian English speakers to Received Pronunciation. *English Today*, *31*(4), 21-29. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078415000358

Sunday, A. (2011). Compound stress in Nigerian English: An empirical study of stress placement in compounds in educated Nigerian English. *English Today*, *27*(3), 43-51. https://doi.org/10.1017/S026607841100037X

Tyonum, Msugh. Vitalis. (2017). *The Linguistic Effects of Homonyms and homophones in Tiv Language System,* (online), Vol. 2, No. 1, https://www.academia.edu/31595766/The_Linguistic_Effects_of_Homonyms_and_homophones_in_Tiv_Language_System

Widiastuti, Sri & Padma Devi, Ni Nym & Artini, L.P. (2013). *Study on the Implementation of English School-Based Curriculum in Sma Negeri 5 Denpasar,* (online), Vol. 1, http://pasca.undiksha.ac.id/ejournal/index.php/jpbi/article/download/577/365

Appendix(ces)

1.0 Lexical Items

1.	Baring	Bearing
2.	Incite	Insight
3.	Hole	Whole
4.	Deer	Dear
5.	Boared	Bored
6.	By	Buy
7.	Brake	Break
8.	Cell	Sell
9.	For	Four
10.	Grate	Great
11.	Hear	Here
12.	Hour	Our
13.	Him	Hymn
14.	Mail	Male
15.	Meat	Meet
16.	One	Won
17.	Plain	Plane
18.	Peace	Piece
19.	Right	Write
20.	Red	Read
21.	Sight	Site
22.	Son	Sun
23.	Sale	Sail
24.	Steal	Steel
25.	Sea	See
26.	Tale	Tail
27.	Thyme	Time
28.	Vein	Vain
29.	Wait	Weight
30.	Wear	Where
31.	Weak	Week
32.	Which	Witch
33.	Wine	Whine
34.	Sweet	Suite
35.	Stare	Stair
36.	Reel	Real
37.	Toe	Tow
38.	Rows	Rose
39.	There	Their
40.	Die	Dye
41.	Ate	Eight
42.	Bare	Bear
43.	Eye	I
44.	Dew	Due
45.	Flour	Flower
46.	Air	Heir
47.	Cain	Cane
48.	Ant	Aunt
49.	Course	Coarse
50.	Doe	Dough

2.0 In Context

1. You are not allowed to talk aloud in the library.
2. The hotel maid made the bed.
3. Let’s have buffalo meat when we meet for dinner.
4. The bartender had a wry smile when pouring the shot of rye.

5. Will the teacher give me a special role now that I'm on the honor roll?
6. The paper's review of the new revue wasn't very flattering.
7. The bride walked down the sandy aisle on the tropical isle.
8. You'd be in pain if you fell through a window pane.
9. I turned pale when I dropped the water pail.
10. I wouldn't meddle with a soldier who was wearing a metal medal, awarded for a display of mettle.

3.0 Exercise

1. The shoes are (two/too) small.
2. There are (two/too) dogs in the man's house.
3. We were (taught/ thought) in Geography that the Earth orbits around the (son/sun).
4. The (son/sun) shines through the window.
5. The little boy held the railing as he (walked/worked) down the (stairs/stares).
6. It's going to rain today (weather/whether) you like it or not.
7. The cost of a product depends on (weather/whether) you choose the low or the high quality.
8. At the grocery store, tea is in the same (aisle/isle) as coffee.
9. Dogs are not (allowed/aloud) in the store.
10. The instructions were read (allowed/aloud) to the students.
11. The tourists sat at the (base/bass) of the statue.
12. Onions should be chopped on the cutting (board/bored).
13. She applied (break/brake) suddenly in order to avoid hitting the deer.
14. Ikeja is the (capital/capitol) of Lagos.
15. The flower (cent/sent/scent) is very strong.
16. The products will be (hear/here) tomorrow.
17. We collected the clams in a plastic (pail/pale).
18. You look (pail/pale). Are you okay?
19. I would like a (piece/peace) of cake.
20. The assignments should be submitted in (plain/plane) white paper.
21. Are (their/there) any volunteers in the community?
22. The messaged was dropped in a personalised (stationary/stationery).
23. The hotel offers (complimentary/complementary) breakfast.
24. The construction (sight/site) was surrounded by a chain link fence.
25. His words (wield/wheeled) tremendous influence among his followers.