

## Lexical Relations Performance Among Criminology Freshmen

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**Abstract.** Effective lexical competence is essential for criminology students to produce accurate and professional written communication, particularly in academic tasks, narrative reports, legal documentation, and future law enforcement information. This study assessed the lexical relations performance of Criminology freshmen at the College of Criminal Justice Education, Cagayan State University – Sanchez Mira, focusing on homonyms, homographs, and homophones. Using a quantitative descriptive-comparative design, the study employed a total population sampling technique involving 105 freshmen respondents enrolled during the academic year 2025-2026. Data were gathered through three assessments: a multiple-choice test for homonyms, a cloze test for homographs, and a timed dictation test for homophones, all designed to measure students' lexical competence and understanding of word relationships. For data analysis, descriptive statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, and mean were utilized to determine the respondents' demographic and academic profile and level of lexical relations performance. Inferential statistical tools, specifically t-test and ANOVA, were also employed to determine whether significant differences existed across demographic and academic variables. Findings revealed that the respondents demonstrated moderate competency in homonyms but low competency in homographs and homophones. Moreover, no significant differences were found across demographic and academic profiles. This suggests that lexical performance is influenced more by exposure and practice than by background characteristics. It is recommended that students engage in guided exercises on homographs and homophones, while instructors utilize the proposed worktext with contextual examples and listening activities. Future researchers may expand sample sizes, explore additional factors, include other lexical relations, and assess the material's effectiveness.

## Introduction

In many fields today, success is not only based on technical knowledge but also on one's ability to express ideas clearly, accurately, and meaningfully. Language is then a framework through which people think, relate, and build understanding. As Gentry (2024) explains, language functions as a tool for communication and a means of navigating different environments in the society.

Globally, professionals who communicate clearly and precisely gain an advantage. Heidenrich (2024) emphasizes that effective communication influences how individuals interact, resolve misunderstandings, and respond to workplace conflicts. American TESOL (2024) also stresses that mastering language structures, grammar, and nuances of speech continues to be essential for professionals, regardless of field. Among these nuances lie lexical relations, specifically homonyms, homophones, and homographs, which allow language users to distinguish shades of meaning, avoid ambiguity, and enhance precision.

Moreover, in the Philippines, English remains a major academic and institutional language used in schools, workplaces, and government documents (Dela Cruz, 2022). However, despite long exposure, from elementary to high school, many students still struggle with vocabulary use and word relationships. Voyager Sopris Learning (2025) highlights that strong language

and literacy skills form the foundation for academic achievement across all subjects. Yet research continues to show that such skills remain underdeveloped across the tertiary level. Contributing factors include limited reading and exposure to rich texts, reliance on informal digital communication, and insufficient instruction on deeper semantic relations among words. A study by Diaz et al. (2024) at the Philippine College of Criminology found that criminology students exhibited English proficiency mostly at the A2 level, indicating the need for improved vocabulary instruction, especially with focus on meaning accuracy and word selection.

For criminology students in particular, the stakes are high. They are soon required handling legal concepts, incident reports, sworn statements, police blotters, investigative narratives, and court-related documentation as mentioned by the National University in 2025.

Errors such as confusing “your” and “you’re,” or writing “Appear” instead of “Affairs,” may seem minor to others, but in legal communication, these errors may change the interpretation of a case, document, or evidence. Bangcaya et al. (2025) found that many criminology students struggle with speaking and writing skills which may hinder both academic performance and readiness for professional responsibilities in law enforcement. Precision in language becomes part of ethical responsibility. Words may influence justice outcomes.

Moreover, this demand for accuracy extends across the criminology curriculum. Students are expected to demonstrate strong lexical and grammatical competence in courses such as English Language Proficiency (ELP) 1 and 2, Purposive Communication, Criminological Research 1 and 2, Technical English 1 for technical report writing, and Technical English 2 for legal forms. These competencies are further reinforced through the writing of narrative reports during Internship 1 and 2, in line with the Bachelor of Science in Criminology 2023 (Enhanced) Curriculum (CMO No. 05, series of 2018). These academic requirements really shows that there is a need of language proficiency in preparing students for accurate documentation, professional accountability, and effective communication in the field of criminology.

Despite the relevance of lexical relations, existing studies have given more focus to grammar structure, reading comprehension, general writing skills, and error analysis, while lexical relations as a specific domain remain underexplored in criminology contexts. While Glushko (2020) explains that lexical relations help individuals interpret context and select words that accurately reflect intended meaning, research rarely examines how this applies to students in criminal justice education programs where the demands for precise language are higher. This lack of emphasis becomes concerning especially since the CHED Outcomes-Based Education framework for Criminology requires competencies in technical communication, documentation accuracy, and legally sound written output. In criminal justice, clarity and accuracy in language is not optional; it influences fairness, accuracy, and accountability in the interpretation of information.

Therefore, this study investigated the lexical relations performance of Criminology freshmen at Cagayan State University – Sanchez Mira. By examining how students recognize and apply relationships among words through various assessment tasks, the study identified existing lexical gaps and generated findings that support more targeted and context-specific language instruction. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to improving vocabulary precision, which is essential in both academic and legal communication. By addressing these gaps, the study provides a basis for enhancing instructional strategies that develop students’ accuracy in word usage. Ultimately, it aims to strengthen academic communication skills and reinforce professional readiness among criminology students, ensuring that future practitioners are better equipped to produce clear, accurate, and credible written communication in both academic and legal contexts, where precision in language can influence interpretation and justice outcomes.

### *Research Questions*

Generally, this study determined the lexical relations performance of Criminology freshmen at Cagayan State University – Sanchez Mira. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the profile variables of the participants in terms of:
  - a. sex;
  - b. school graduated from;
  - c. academic standing;
  - d. SHS Strand;
  - e. religion;
  - f. ethnicity;
  - g. parents’ occupation; and
  - h. parents’ highest educational attainment?
2. What is the level of lexical relations performance of the students in terms of:
  - a. homonyms as measured by a multiple-choice test;
  - b. homographs as measured by a cloze test; and

- c. homophones as measured by a timed dictation test?
3. Is there a significant difference in the students' lexical relations performance when grouped according to their profile variables?

## Methodology

### *Research Design*

This study utilized a quantitative descriptive-comparative design. The descriptive method determined the profile of the Criminology freshmen. The quantitative part analyzed their lexical relations performance through a multiple-choice test, cloze test, and timed dictation test. Moreover, differences in performance across profile variables were examined using statistical tests. This design allowed the researcher to describe the students' overall lexical relations performance and identify significant group differences.

### *Participants and Sampling Technique*

The respondents of the study were 105 Criminology freshmen at CSU-Sanchez Mira. Those who are enrolled during the Academic Year 2025-2026 were all included. The study used total population sampling, a purposive sampling technique that includes all individuals within the defined group. Since their number is manageable, all sections were included to obtain complete and accurate data.

### *Research Instrument*

The main instrument of the study was a teacher-made assessment composed of three components. It is designed to measure the students' lexical relations performance particularly homonyms, homographs, and homophones.

The first part is a 30-item multiple-choice test which assessed the students' recognition and understanding of homonyms. In this part, students read a sentence and chose the correct meaning of the highlighted word from the given options. The second part is a 30-item cloze test which evaluated their ability to use contextual clues in identifying the correct homographs within sentences. Students chose the correct form and meaning of the word that fit the sentence based on the context. The third part is a 30-item timed dictation test which measured spelling accuracy, listening comprehension, and the correct usage of homophones. Students listened to each dictated sentence and wrote it correctly.

Each assessment was validated by experts. After validation, it was pilot tested at the College of Criminal Justice Education, Florencio L. Vargas College – Abulug Campus, Abulug, Cagayan to ensure its clarity and reliability before being administered to the target respondents. The results of the reliability analysis showed that the Homographs assessment had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.86 (good reliability), the Homonyms assessment had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.86 (good reliability), and the Homophones assessment had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.92, indicating excellent reliability.

### *Data Gathering Procedure*

Prior to the conduct of the study, approval from the Institutional Ethics Review Board (IERB) was secured to ensure that all procedures adhered to ethical standards in research involving human participants. After the validation and reliability testing of the research instruments, a formal letter of request was submitted to the Campus Executive Officer to seek permission to conduct the study. Upon approval, the researcher scheduled the testing sessions during regular class hours. The tests were administered in three separate sessions to minimize fatigue among the students and ensure the validity of the results. Students who were absent in any session were allowed to complete the test during their vacant time to ensure a complete assessment for each student. This approach ensured inclusivity while accommodating natural variations in attendance. The gathered data were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted.

### *Data Analysis*

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics include frequency and percentage to summarize the profile of the respondents. Weighted mean, on the other hand, was employed to determine the level of students' performance in each assessment. The scoring scale below was used to interpret the results:

| Score Range | Descriptive Value    |
|-------------|----------------------|
| 25 – 30     | Very High Competency |
| 19 – 24     | High Competency      |
| 13 – 18     | Moderate Competency  |
| 7 – 12      | Low Competency       |
| 1 – 6       | Very Low Competency  |

Figure 1. Scoring Scale for Students' Lexical Competency per Assessment

Inferential statistics was used to determine whether there are significant differences in the lexical relations performance of students when grouped according to their profile variables. It involved the use of t-test for the sex variable group, school graduated from, academic standing, and F-test for the SHS strand, religion, ethnicity, parents' occupation and parents' highest educational attainment groups.

#### *Ethical Considerations*

The researcher ensured that the study upholds ethical standards throughout the study. Prior to data collection, approval from the research adviser and campus authorities was also secured before the conduct of the study. Informed consent was also obtained from all participants. They were also informed about the purpose of the study and the voluntary nature of their participation. They were made aware of their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Confidentiality and anonymity of responses were strictly maintained. Additionally, the data gathered were used for academic purposes only. All collected data were securely disposed of immediately after the completion and tallying of the study. These measures ensured that participants' privacy and rights were fully protected throughout the research process.

## Results and Discussion

#### *Profile of the Participants*

Table 1 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the participants according to their demographic and academic characteristics. The respondents come from various municipalities across Northwestern Cagayan, including Allacapan, Ballesteros, Abulug, Pamplona, Sanchez Mira, and Claveria. A number of participants also originate from neighboring regions such as Ilocos Norte and Apayao. This geographical diversity reflects a rich mix of cultural and educational backgrounds which contributes to the overall perspective of the study.

Among the participants, 68 were male and 37 were female. Most of them graduated from public schools (87), while only 18 came from private institutions. In terms of academic standing, 37 were honor students, whereas the majority, 68, were non-honor students.

With regard to Senior High School (SHS) strands, more than half of the participants were from the Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) strand, followed by Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL), Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM), General Academic Strand (GAS), and Sports respectively. It is important to note, however, that under the present strengthened curriculum, HUMSS is no longer offered as an independent strand but has been integrated into Academic track (Department of Education).

In terms of religion, the majority of participants identified as Roman Catholic, followed by Born Again (23), Iglesia Ni Cristo (12), Iglesia Filipina Independiente (8), and Adventist (3). Ethnically, most participants were Ilocano (83), with smaller groups of Tagalog (13), Isnag (5), and Ibanag (4) which further highlights the multicultural composition of the participants.

Regarding parents' occupations, it is revealed that most fathers were engaged in blue-collar jobs such as farming, labor, driving, and fishing, with the majority working as farmers (57.1%) and laborers (20%). A smaller proportion held white-collar employment positions, including government service and other skilled professions. Similarly, most mothers were involved in blue-collar roles, particularly housekeeping (64.8%), vending, and others, while some were employed in white-collar occupations such as government service or worked abroad as overseas Filipino workers (OFWs).

Concerning educational attainment, the majority of fathers completed high school, followed by college graduates and elementary graduates. A similar pattern is observed among mothers, with most having finished high school, followed by college and elementary education.

Generally, the participants represent a diverse group in terms of sex, academic background, religion, ethnicity, and parental socioeconomic characteristics which provides a basis for analyzing their lexical relations performance.

| Profile                         |  |                                     | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Sex                             |  | Male                                | 68        | 64.8           |
|                                 |  | Female                              | 37        | 35.2           |
| School Graduated From           |  | Public                              | 87        | 82.9           |
|                                 |  | Private                             | 18        | 17.1           |
| Academic Standing               |  | Honor                               | 37        | 35.2           |
|                                 |  | Non-honor                           | 68        | 64.8           |
|                                 |  | STEM                                | 11        | 10.5           |
| SHS Strand                      |  | ABM                                 | 7         | 6.7            |
|                                 |  | HUMSS                               | 57        | 54.3           |
|                                 |  | GAS                                 | 5         | 4.8            |
|                                 |  | TVL                                 | 24        | 22.9           |
|                                 |  | Sports                              | 1         | 1.0            |
| Religion                        |  | Roman Catholic                      | 59        | 56.2           |
|                                 |  | INC                                 | 12        | 11.4           |
|                                 |  | Born Again                          | 23        | 21.9           |
|                                 |  | IFI                                 | 8         | 7.6            |
|                                 |  | Adventist                           | 3         | 2.9            |
| Ethnicity                       |  | Ilocano                             | 83        | 79.0           |
|                                 |  | Ibanag                              | 4         | 3.8            |
|                                 |  | Isnag                               | 5         | 4.8            |
|                                 |  | Tagalog                             | 13        | 12.4           |
|                                 |  | Farmer                              | 60        | 57.1           |
|                                 |  | Laborer                             | 21        | 20.0           |
|                                 |  | Brgy. Official                      | 3         | 2.9            |
|                                 |  | Guard                               | 3         | 2.9            |
| Father's Occupation             |  | Driver                              | 6         | 5.7            |
|                                 |  | Gov't Employee (LGU, Bureau, DepEd) | 7         | 6.7            |
|                                 |  | OFW                                 | 1         | 1.0            |
|                                 |  | Fishermen                           | 4         | 3.8            |
|                                 |  | Housekeeper                         | 68        | 64.8           |
|                                 |  | Brgy. Official                      | 8         | 7.6            |
|                                 |  | Government Employee                 | 4         | 3.8            |
|                                 |  | Laborer                             | 4         | 3.8            |
|                                 |  | Vendor                              | 6         | 5.7            |
|                                 |  | OFW                                 | 11        | 10.5           |
| Mother's Occupation             |  | Maid                                | 4         | 3.8            |
|                                 |  | Elementary                          | 18        | 17.1           |
|                                 |  | High School                         | 60        | 57.1           |
|                                 |  | College                             | 27        | 25.7           |
|                                 |  | Elementary                          | 13        | 12.4           |
| Father's Educational Attainment |  | High School                         | 63        | 60.0           |
|                                 |  | College                             | 29        | 27.6           |
|                                 |  | Elementary                          | 13        | 12.4           |
| Mother's Educational Attainment |  | High School                         | 63        | 60.0           |
|                                 |  | College                             | 29        | 27.6           |
|                                 |  | Elementary                          | 13        | 12.4           |

Table 1. Frequency and percentage distribution of the profile of the participants

#### Level of Lexical Relations Performance of the Students

The first assessment was administered through a structured questionnaire focused on homonyms. Each item was designed in a multiple-choice format with four options which allowed the participants to carefully select the most appropriate answer. The test was conducted in a classroom setting under controlled conditions, where students were seated one seat apart to ensure independence of responses, minimize distractions, and maintain the integrity of the assessment process.

As reflected in Table 2.1, fourteen participants achieved scores of 25–30 (very high competency), 25 participants scored 19–24 (high competency), 31 participants scored 13–18 (moderate competency), 28 participants scored 7–12 (low competency), and 7 participants scored 1–6 (very low competency). The mean score of 15.88 indicates that participants were overall moderately competent in homonyms. This suggests that students have a fair understanding of homonyms and are generally able to recognize and interpret words with multiple meanings. This supports the findings of Booton et al.

(2022), who explained that learners develop better comprehension of words with multiple meanings when they frequently encounter these meanings in context which enable them to recognize and interpret them more accurately.

| Score Range         | Frequency | Percentage (%) | Descriptive Value           |
|---------------------|-----------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| 25 – 30             | 14        | 13.3           | Very High Competency        |
| 19 – 24             | 25        | 23.8           | High Competency             |
| 13 – 18             | 31        | 29.5           | Moderate Competency         |
| 7 – 12              | 28        | 26.7           | Low Competency              |
| 1 – 6               | 7         | 6.7            | Very Low Competency         |
| <b>Mean – 15.88</b> |           |                | <b>Moderately Competent</b> |

Table 2a. Level of lexical relations performance of the students in homonyms.

Just like the first assessment, the participants were given a questionnaire in the form of a cloze test, administered under the same controlled classroom conditions. They were instructed to answer independently while seated one seat apart to ensure academic integrity and minimize distractions. In this part of the test, each item presented a sentence with a missing word, and the participants were asked to choose the correct answer from two given options to complete the blank appropriately.

Findings show that the highest number of participants, 46, scored 7–12, indicating low competency in homographs. This was followed by 44 participants who obtained scores of 13–18, reflecting moderate competency. Meanwhile, nine participants scored 19–24, categorized as high competency, and six participants scored 1–6, indicating very low competency. Notably, no participants scored within the range of 25–30, which corresponds to very high competency. The mean score of 12.66 further indicates that the participants demonstrated overall low competency in homographs.

This reveals that students struggle to identify and correctly interpret homographs within sentences, which aligns with research showing many learners have difficulty providing multiple meanings for homographs in tests (Alghamdi, 2021). Similarly, Martin et. al (2024) found that homographs increase cognitive processing demands, making them more challenging for learners to interpret accurately. The low performance highlights the need for targeted teaching strategies that focus on contextual understanding and practice with words that have multiple spellings but different meanings.

| Score Range         | Frequency | Percentage (%) | Descriptive Value    |
|---------------------|-----------|----------------|----------------------|
| 25 – 30             | 0         | 0              | Very High Competency |
| 19 – 24             | 9         | 8.6            | High Competency      |
| 13 – 18             | 44        | 41.9           | Moderate Competency  |
| 7 – 12              | 46        | 43.8           | Low Competency       |
| 1 – 6               | 6         | 5.7            | Very Low Competency  |
| <b>Mean – 12.66</b> |           |                | <b>Low Competent</b> |

Table 2b. Level of lexical relations performance of the students in homographs.

In the last assessment, the participants were given the same controlled classroom conditions, however, a different approach was used. The assessment was conducted through a timed dictation activity. The researcher read aloud sentences while clearly emphasizing the target homophones to guide the participants. The students were then asked to write their answers on a 1/2 lengthwise yellow pad paper where they carefully wrote the correct homophones based on what they heard.

The results show that majority of participants, 64, scored 7–12, indicating low competency in homophones. This was followed by 35 participants who scored 13–18, reflecting moderate competency. Only 1 participant achieved a score of 19–24, categorized as high competency, and 5 participants scored 1–6, indicating very low competency. Notably, no participants scored within the range of 25–30, which corresponds to very high competency. The mean score of 11.83 further reveals that participants demonstrated overall low competency in homophones.

This shows that students face significant difficulty in distinguishing homophones, which affects both their spelling and listening comprehension. This difficulty is consistent with research from Deibel and Folk (2022), who found that the learning and recognition of homophones depend on learners' lexical expertise and familiarity with the words, making homophones particularly challenging for students who have weaker word recognition skills. The findings suggest a strong need for instructional materials and exercises that emphasize correct usage, listening practice, and repeated exposure to homophones in context.

| Score Range         | Frequency | Percentage | Descriptive Value    |
|---------------------|-----------|------------|----------------------|
| 25 – 30             | 0         | 0          | Very High Competency |
| 19 – 24             | 1         | 1.0        | High Competency      |
| 13 – 18             | 35        | 33.3       | Moderate Competency  |
| 7 – 12              | 64        | 61.0       | Low Competency       |
| 1 – 6               | 5         | 4.8        | Very Low Competency  |
| <b>Mean – 11.83</b> |           |            | <b>Low Competent</b> |

Table 2c. Level of lexical relations performance of the students in homophones.

#### Differences in the Students' Lexical Relations Performance

Table 3a reveals slight variations in the mean scores of participants when grouped according to selected profile variables. In terms of sex, female participants obtained a higher mean score (17.86) compared to males (14.79). This pattern is also observed in the classroom, where female students tend to participate more actively in language tasks and provide more accurate and elaborated responses, while some male students may show hesitation or need more prompting.

A similar pattern can be observed in terms of school background, where participants who graduated from private schools achieved a mean score of 16.11, slightly higher than the 15.82 mean score of those from public schools. With respect to academic standing, honor students demonstrated relatively higher performance with a mean score of 17.72, while non-honor students obtained a mean score of 14.86. This is evident in classroom performance, where honor students tend to complete tasks more accurately and efficiently, often showing better comprehension of word relationships and requiring less assistance from the teacher. Despite these observed differences in mean scores across the groups, the results of the t-test indicate that the differences are not statistically significant.

Regarding Senior High School (SHS) strands, slight variations in mean scores were observed, with some strands performing relatively higher than others; however, the differences were not statistically significant ( $F = 1.065$ ,  $p = 0.384$ ). A similar pattern was found when grouped according to religion and ethnicity, where certain groups obtained relatively higher or lower mean scores, yet all differences remained not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Students' performance was also examined based on parents' occupation and educational attainment. Although there were minor differences in mean scores across these categories, the results revealed no statistically significant differences, indicating that parental background did not significantly influence students' competency in homonyms.

These results then indicate that students' performance in homonyms was generally consistent regardless of demographic or academic background. The slight variations in mean scores across the profile variables do not reflect significant differences in lexical relations competency. This implies that instructional strategies, exposure to homonyms, and learning experiences were likely uniform across all groups, producing relatively comparable outcomes. The findings align with research showing that demographic factors often have minimal impact on vocabulary learning and lexical competence, as performance is more closely associated with exposure, practice, and instructional quality rather than inherent background characteristics (Yang, 2022).

|                   | Profile        | Mean  | t-value | P-value | Remarks         |
|-------------------|----------------|-------|---------|---------|-----------------|
| Sex               | Male           | 14.79 | 1.452   | 0.231   | Not Significant |
|                   | Female         | 17.86 |         |         |                 |
| School Grad From  | Public         | 15.82 | 1.618   | .206    | Not Significant |
|                   | Private        | 16.11 |         |         |                 |
| Academic Standing | Honor          | 17.72 | 1.945   | .166    | Not Significant |
|                   | Non-honor      | 14.86 |         |         |                 |
|                   | Profile        | Mean  | F-value | P-value | Remarks         |
| SHS Strand        | STEM           | 17.91 | 1.065   | .384    | Not Significant |
|                   | ABM            | 18.14 |         |         |                 |
|                   | HUMSS          | 15.43 |         |         |                 |
|                   | GAS            | 16.40 |         |         |                 |
|                   | TVL            | 14.79 |         |         |                 |
|                   | Sports         | 26.0  |         |         |                 |
| Religion          | Roman Catholic | 15.88 | .454    | .770    | Not Significant |

|                                 |                                     |       |       |      |                 |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|------|-----------------|
|                                 | INC                                 | 14.08 |       |      |                 |
|                                 | Born Again                          | 16.26 |       |      |                 |
|                                 | IFI                                 | 16.12 |       |      |                 |
|                                 | Adventist                           | 19.33 |       |      |                 |
|                                 | Ilocano                             | 15.80 |       |      |                 |
| Ethnicity                       | Ibanag                              | 12.75 | 1.126 | .342 | Not Significant |
|                                 | Isnag                               | 13.40 |       |      |                 |
|                                 | Tagalog                             | 18.23 |       |      |                 |
|                                 | Farmer                              | 16.08 |       |      |                 |
|                                 | Laborer                             | 16.09 |       |      |                 |
|                                 | Brgy. Official                      | 15.66 |       |      |                 |
|                                 | Guard                               | 16.66 |       |      |                 |
| Father's Occupation             | Driver                              | 15.16 | .179  | .989 | Not Significant |
|                                 | Gov't Employee (LGU, Bureau, DepEd) | 16.0  |       |      |                 |
|                                 | OFW                                 | 13.0  |       |      |                 |
|                                 | Fishermen                           | 12.75 |       |      |                 |
|                                 | Housekeeper                         | 16.07 |       |      |                 |
|                                 | Brgy. Official                      | 20.0  |       |      |                 |
|                                 | Government Employee                 | 17.50 |       |      |                 |
| Mother's Occupation             | Laborer                             | 12.50 | 1.129 | .351 | Not Significant |
|                                 | Vendor                              | 15.33 |       |      |                 |
|                                 | OFW                                 | 13.36 |       |      |                 |
|                                 | Maid                                | 13.75 |       |      |                 |
| Father's Educational Attainment | Elementary                          | 14.94 |       |      |                 |
|                                 | High School                         | 16.11 | .225  | .799 | Not Significant |
|                                 | College                             | 15.96 |       |      |                 |
|                                 | Elementary                          | 16.0  |       |      |                 |
| Mother's Educational Attainment | High School                         | 15.84 | .003  | .997 | Not Significant |
|                                 | College                             | 15.89 |       |      |                 |

Table 3a. Comparison on the students' lexical relations performance in homonyms when grouped according to their profile.

Table 3b presents the comparison of students' lexical relations performance in homographs when grouped according to their profile variables. In terms of sex, female students obtained a slightly higher mean score (13.35) than male students (12.28), yet this shows no significant difference. This is also typically seen in the classroom, where female students are more likely to respond actively and explain their answers clearly, while some male students participate less often or need encouragement.

In terms of school graduated from, students from private schools had a mean score of 13.50, while those from public schools obtained 12.48. Although private school graduates showed a slightly higher mean, the computed t-value of 0.881 with a p-value of 0.350 indicates no significant difference between the two groups. This implies that the type of school previously attended did not significantly influence students' competency in identifying homographs.

When grouped according to academic standing, honor students achieved a mean score of 13.27, while non-honor students obtained 12.32. Although honor students performed marginally better, the t-value of 1.523 and p-value of 0.220 indicate that the difference is not statistically significant which suggest that academic distinction does not necessarily correspond to stronger competency in homographs. In practice, honor students may complete tasks more quickly or accurately, but non-honor students are still able to perform similarly when given sufficient time and guidance.

For Senior High School (SHS) strand, STEM students recorded the highest mean score (13.54), followed by HUMSS (12.98), TVL (12.25), ABM (11.71), Sports (11.0), and GAS (10.60). However, the computed F-value of 0.605 and p-value of 0.696 show no statistically significant differences among the strands. This indicates that students' SHS academic specialization did not significantly affect their ability to recognize and interpret homographs. This also reflects observation in class that students from different strands approach tasks differently but generally reach similar levels of understanding, although students from academic strands are sometimes perceived as more confident or as having a stronger academic advantage during activities.

Similarly, variations were observed across religion and ethnicity, but the computed F-values and p-values indicate no significant differences among these groups. This suggests that students' cultural or religious background does not

significantly influence their lexical relations performance in homographs. In actual classroom interaction, students participate and perform similarly regardless of these backgrounds, with differences more attributable to individual engagement.

The analysis also examined parents' occupation and educational attainment. Although some groups showed slightly higher mean scores, the statistical results reveal no significant differences. This implies that parental socioeconomic status and educational background did not significantly affect students' competency in recognizing homographs. As observed in the class, students from varied family backgrounds still demonstrate comparable abilities.

Overall, the findings indicate that students' performance in homographs is relatively consistent across different demographic and academic profile variables. The absence of significant differences suggests that lexical relations competency is less influenced by background characteristics and more closely associated with language exposure, vocabulary development, and contextual learning experiences shared by the students. This observation is supported by Booton et. al (2022), who explained that understanding words with multiple meanings develops primarily through repeated exposure and contextual encounters rather than demographic differences among learners. Teaching interventions should therefore target all students rather than specific groups.

|                                 | Profile                             | Mean  | t-value | P-value | Remarks         |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|---------|---------|-----------------|
| Sex                             | Male                                | 12.28 | .380    | .539    | Not Significant |
|                                 | Female                              | 13.35 |         |         |                 |
| School Grad From                | Public                              | 12.48 | .881    | .350    | Not Significant |
|                                 | Private                             | 13.50 |         |         |                 |
| Academic Standing               | Honor                               | 13.27 | 1.523   | .220    | Not Significant |
|                                 | Non-honor                           | 12.32 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | Profile                             | Mean  | F-value | P-value | Remarks         |
| SHS Strand                      | STEM                                | 13.54 | .605    | .696    | Not Significant |
|                                 | ABM                                 | 11.71 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | HUMSS                               | 12.98 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | GAS                                 | 10.60 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | TVL                                 | 12.25 |         |         |                 |
| Religion                        | Sports                              | 11.0  | 1.890   | .118    | Not Significant |
|                                 | Roman Catholic                      | 12.45 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | INC                                 | 10.50 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | Born Again                          | 14.08 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | IFI                                 | 13.62 |         |         |                 |
| Ethnicity                       | Adventist                           | 11.67 | 1.014   | .390    | Not Significant |
|                                 | Ilocano                             | 12.90 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | Ibanag                              | 12.25 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | Isnag                               | 9.80  |         |         |                 |
|                                 | Tagalog                             | 12.31 |         |         |                 |
| Father's Occupation             | Farmer                              | 12.70 | .177    | .989    | Not Significant |
|                                 | Laborer                             | 12.71 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | Brgy. Official                      | 12.67 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | Guard                               | 11.0  |         |         |                 |
|                                 | Driver                              | 12.83 |         |         |                 |
| Mother's Occupation             | Gov't Employee (LGU, Bureau, DepEd) | 13.42 | .653    | .688    | Not Significant |
|                                 | OFW                                 | 13.0  |         |         |                 |
|                                 | Fishermen                           | 11.25 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | Housekeeper                         | 12.36 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | Brgy. Official                      | 13.87 |         |         |                 |
| Father's Educational Attainment | Government Employee                 | 12.75 | 2.067   | .132    | Not Significant |
|                                 | Laborer                             | 12.50 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | Vendor                              | 14.67 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | OFW                                 | 11.82 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | Maid                                | 14.50 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | Elementary                          | 10.94 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | High School                         | 12.97 |         |         |                 |
|                                 | College                             | 13.11 |         |         |                 |

|                                 |             |       |      |      |                 |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------|------|------|-----------------|
| Mother's Educational Attainment | Elementary  | 11.69 | .661 | .519 | Not Significant |
|                                 | High School | 12.60 |      |      |                 |
|                                 | College     | 13.20 |      |      |                 |

Table 3b. Comparison on the students' lexical relations performance in homographs when grouped according to their profile.

Table 3c shows that the mean scores of students in homophones slightly differed across the profile variables, but none of the differences were statistically significant. In terms of sex, female students obtained a higher mean score than male students; however, values indicate no significant difference between the two groups. Similarly, students who graduated from public schools ( $M = 12.14$ ) and private schools ( $M = 11.33$ ) showed comparable performance, with a t-value of .048 and p-value of .827, which is not significant. When grouped according to academic standing, honor students obtained a slightly higher mean score than non-honor students, but the difference remained statistically insignificant.

Across SHS strands, the mean scores ranged from 11.0 to 12.60, with GAS students obtaining the highest mean score (12.60) and Sports strand students the lowest (11.0). However, the computed F-value and p-value indicate that these differences were not statistically significant. The same pattern was observed when students were grouped according to religion and ethnicity. Roman Catholic students obtained a mean score of 12.10, while other religious groups showed slightly varying means; however, the F-value and p-value indicate no significant difference. Similarly, Ilocano students had the highest mean score among ethnic groups, but the F-value and p-value of confirm that these variations were not significant.

Furthermore, the results reveal that the students' performance in homophones did not significantly vary when grouped according to their parents' occupation and educational attainment. Mean scores across the different categories of fathers' and mothers' occupations were relatively close, and the computed F-values and p-values (.575,  $p = .775$  for fathers' occupation and 1.294,  $p = .267$  for mothers' occupation) indicate no significant differences. Likewise, fathers' and mothers' educational attainment showed minimal variation in mean scores, with corresponding p-values of .278 and .549, respectively, confirming that these factors did not significantly influence students' homophone performance.

In classroom practice, students may appear to perform differently in terms of confidence, speed, or participation; however, their actual understanding of homophones remains relatively similar. This suggests that while individual responses may vary, the learners' overall competency level does not greatly differ which indicates that they are generally at the same level of performance regardless of their demographic and academic background.

In general, these results indicate that students' competency in homophones was relatively consistent across all demographic and academic profile variables. Although slight variations in mean scores were observed, the absence of statistically significant differences suggests that learners' performance in homophones is not strongly influenced by personal background characteristics. Instead, it may be more closely associated with exposure to language and contextual learning experiences. This finding is supported by Treiman et. al (2016), who explained that learners often experience difficulty distinguishing homophones because such words share the same pronunciation but differ in meaning and spelling which require contextual understanding and repeated exposure for accurate interpretation. This suggests that instructional support and targeted exercises are needed universally to improve listening comprehension, spelling, and recognition of homophones among students.

| Profile           |                | Mean  | t-value | P-value | Remarks         |
|-------------------|----------------|-------|---------|---------|-----------------|
| Sex               | Male           | 11.39 | .721    | .398    | Not Significant |
|                   | Female         | 12.62 |         |         |                 |
| School Grad From  | Public         | 12.14 | .048    | .827    | Not Significant |
|                   | Private        | 11.33 |         |         |                 |
| Academic Standing | Honor          | 12.67 | 1.344   | .249    | Not Significant |
|                   | Non-honor      | 11.37 |         |         |                 |
| Profile           |                | Mean  | F-value | P-value | Remarks         |
| SHS Strand        | STEM           | 12.09 | .227    | .950    | Not Significant |
|                   | ABM            | 12.57 |         |         |                 |
|                   | HUMSS          | 11.67 |         |         |                 |
|                   | GAS            | 12.60 |         |         |                 |
|                   | TVL            | 11.75 |         |         |                 |
|                   | Sports         | 11.0  |         |         |                 |
| Religion          | Roman Catholic | 12.10 | 1.887   | .119    | Not Significant |
|                   | INC            | 10.25 |         |         |                 |
|                   | Born Again     | 12.52 |         |         |                 |

|                                 |  |                                     |       |       |      |                 |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|------|-----------------|
|                                 |  | IFI                                 | 10.50 |       |      |                 |
|                                 |  | Adventist                           | 11.0  |       |      |                 |
|                                 |  | Ilocano                             | 11.97 |       |      |                 |
| Ethnicity                       |  | Ibanag                              | 10.0  | .681  | .566 | Not Significant |
|                                 |  | Isnag                               | 11.20 |       |      |                 |
|                                 |  | Tagalog                             | 11.69 |       |      |                 |
|                                 |  | Farmer                              | 11.77 |       |      |                 |
|                                 |  | Laborer                             | 12.33 |       |      |                 |
|                                 |  | Brgy. Official                      | 9.67  |       |      |                 |
| Father's Occupation             |  | Guard                               | 10.0  | .575  | .775 | Not Significant |
|                                 |  | Driver                              | 12.50 |       |      |                 |
|                                 |  | Gov't Employee (LGU, Bureau, DepEd) | 12.29 |       |      |                 |
|                                 |  | OFW                                 | 11.0  |       |      |                 |
|                                 |  | Fishermen                           | 11.50 |       |      |                 |
|                                 |  | Housekeeper                         | 11.62 |       |      |                 |
| Mother's Occupation             |  | Brgy. Official                      | 14.25 | 1.294 | .267 | Not Significant |
|                                 |  | Government Employee                 | 12.25 |       |      |                 |
|                                 |  | Laborer                             | 12.26 |       |      |                 |
|                                 |  | Vendor                              | 11.83 |       |      |                 |
|                                 |  | OFW                                 | 10.82 |       |      |                 |
|                                 |  | Maid                                | 12.50 |       |      |                 |
| Father's Educational Attainment |  | Elementary                          | 10.83 | 1.297 | .278 | Not Significant |
|                                 |  | High School                         | 12.0  |       |      |                 |
|                                 |  | College                             | 12.11 |       |      |                 |
| Mother's Educational Attainment |  | Elementary                          | 11.07 | .604  | .549 | Not Significant |
|                                 |  | High School                         | 12.03 |       |      |                 |
|                                 |  | College                             | 11.72 |       |      |                 |

Table 3c. Comparison on the students' lexical relations performance in homophones when grouped according to their profile.

## Conclusion and Implications

Based on the findings, the participants were a diverse in terms of sex, academic background, religion, ethnicity, and parents' occupations and education. Most of the students were male, from public schools, and non-honor students, HUMSS strand, Roman Catholic, and Ilocano. Fathers were mostly farmers, and mothers were mainly housekeepers, with most parents having completed high school education. In terms of lexical relations performance, students demonstrated moderate competency in homonyms, but low competency in homographs and homophones. These challenges were consistent across all profile variables, with no significant differences found, indicating that the challenges are generally shared among students rather than linked to their background.

The findings indicate that students' difficulties in homographs and homophones are systemic and not influenced by their background variables. This implies a need for more focused and contextualized instruction in classroom practice, incorporating interactive and multimodal strategies to enhance understanding. Additionally, curriculum frameworks should strengthen competencies related to lexical relations and support targeted language intervention programs. There is also a need to equip educators with effective pedagogical approaches in teaching topics like these. Furthermore, future research should explore intervention-based and technology-assisted methods to improve students' lexical competence. Inclusively, addressing these challenges requires a coordinated effort across instructional practice, curriculum development, and research initiatives.

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## Data Availability Statement

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analyzed in this study; all data used were obtained from previously published sources as cited in the reference list.

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## Appendices

No appendices are attached to this study.