Difficulties Encountered by Advanced Iraqi Learners In Identifying English Homophones

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Abstract :

This study examines the phonological abilities of Advanced Iraqi Learners(AIL) regarding the identification of English homophones. It falls into two parts .The first part of the study is devoted to shed light on English homophones, and how they are represented in speech production. Besides ,the problems the properties of homophones cause to Advanced Iraqi students.

To check our student's abilities with respect to English homophones, a test was designed, this is the second part of the study . The test consists of two written questions ,the content of which is taken from different sources, each of which is supposed to test two things: the production as well as the recognition of the English homophones .The first test is organized in a way that it could assess the phonological properties of homophones. Thus, in this test ,subjects are asked to give the other word. In the second test, the subjects are asked to choose the right homophone from the multiple choice items.

In order to get further information from the results, the raw scores were subjected to a relevant statistical technique. This statistical technique that is used in this study is called " The Analysis of Variance test ", the ANOVA test. It has been found out that fourth –year students do face difficulties in the identification of English non -contextual homophones.

الصعوبات التي تواجه متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية المتقدمين في تحديد الالفاظ المتجانسة

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الملخص :

هذه الدراسة تتفحص القابلية الصوتية للمتعلمين العراقيين ذوي المستوى المتقدم في التعرف على الألفاظ الانكليزية المتجانسة. الدراسة تتكون من قسمين . القسم الأول يسلط الضوء على الألفاظ المتجانسة في اللغة الانكليزية وكيف يمكن إن تمثل في عملية نطق الكلام فضلا عن المشاكل التي قد تسببها للمتعلمين العراقيين ذوي المستوى المتقدم.

ولفحص قابلية الطلاب في هذا المجال صمم الاختبار، والذي يمثل الجانب العملي الذي يتكون من سؤالين. ومن الجدير بالذكر إن محتويات السؤالين مستعارة من عدة مصادر. كل جزء من الاختبار يتفحص شيئين: الإدراك والنطق لألفاظ الانكليزية المتجانسة .السؤال الأول نظم بطريقة لتختبر قابلية الصوتية للعينة وقد طلب من العينة أعطاء الكلمة المطابقة . السؤال الثاني احتوى على عدة اختيارات لتساعد العينة في اختيارا للفظ الانكليزية المتجانسة.

ولإعطاء نتائج أكثر دقة خضعت النتائج للمعالجة الإحصائية ، وقد تم الاستنتاج بأن طلاب المرحلة الرابعة يواجهون صعوبة في مطابقة الألفاظ الانكليزية المتجانسة.

Phonetic Symbols

The phonetic symbols that are used in this study are those of the International Phonetic Association (IPA) system.

1.The Vowel Symbols

A. The Vowel Symbols

No.	Vowels	Key Words
1	i:	see
2	I	pity
3	e	get
4	**æ**	hat
5	ɑ:	father
6	D	pot
7	ɔ:	core
8	**ʊ**	put
9	u:	coo
10	ʌ	but
11	ɜ:	cur
12	ə	about

B-The Diphthong Symbols

No.	Diphthongs	Key Words
1	eI	day
2	aI	high
3	**ɔI**	boy
4	Iə	peer
5	eə	pear
6	**ʊə**	poor
7	**əʊ**	go
8	**aʊ**	cow

2. The Consonant Symbols

No.	Consonants	Key Words
1	p	pen
2	b	bag
3	t	take
4	d	desk
5	k	cup
6	m	man
7	n	not
8	l	look
9	r	read
10	f	fat
11	v	very
12	s	see
13	z	zoo
14	h	happy
15	w	want
16	g	go
17	ʧ	church
18	d3	jet
19	ŋ	sing
20	□	thin
21	ð	there
22	ʃ	shut
23	3	Measure
24	j	yes

I-Introduction

The present study surveys English homophones and the problems advanced Iraqi learners of English face in acquiring them .

1.1 Hypotheses

The present study will verify the following hypotheses:

1-Iraqi learners at the advanced stages(fourth level) face difficulties in identifying English non -contextual homophones.

2- Sex as a variable does not play a significant role in the identification of homophones.

3- Context plays a significant role in helping the learners to identify homophones.

1.2 Objectives

1- To identify the areas of difficulty advanced Iraqi learners face with respect to English homophones.

2- To show whether the sex factor has any significant role in homophones identifications.

3- Providing a list of English homophones that can be of value to Arab learners as well as to phonetics and phonology instructors .

1.3 Procedures of the Study

1- The three hypotheses are going to be examined through test sheets that will be distributed to the subjects . Each sheet contains two kinds of tests, namely, identifying the suitable homophone for a given individual word(without context) , then choosing the right homophone to complete the given sentence(multiple choice) .

2- The homophones in this study are borrowed from various sources. Some of them are from the website , others from Introductory English Grammar by Stageberg ,and the rest from Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary .

3- Moreover, the homophones that are used are not arranged alphabetically so as to avoid any mixing between letters and sounds, they are arranged according to the following criteria: familiarity, frequency of use and number of syllables .

II-On English Homophones

2.1 An Overview of English Homophones

Homophone is a Greek word meaning "same-sounding' ", Roach (1983:37) defines homophones as "two different words having identical pronunciation" .For Stageberg (1981:110) ,homophones can be viewed as "those words which sound alike but differ in meaning." In other words, they are words which are pronounced the same , regardless of their spellings e.g., heir, air . Masterson (2000: 30) defines homophones as "words with two spellings and two meanings but only one pronunciation".

Webester Dictionary(1976) tries to equalize homonyms with homophone saying that a "homonym is a word having the same sound ,or the same spelling and sound as another which has a different meaning ".

English homophones can be analysed into two groups : first, those in which the homophonous forms are the same grammatical parts of speech. Second, those in which these forms are different. For instance , bear(n.)and bear (v.) .In English, the second class is much larger.(Ke et al, 2002:4) .

It is worth mentioning in this concern that semantic information is necessary to distinguish these words .Some homophones have different spellings such as hair and hare, others have the same spelling like , bear (n.) and bear (v.) Homophonous forms are frequently functional words and to disambiguate them ,contextual cues are required .(Ibid:6)

In this study , the researcher adopts the following definition "homophones are two words having the same pronunciation and different spellings and meanings , like , meet/meat"(Stageberg ,1981:110).

2.2The Representation of Homophones in Speech Production

Two hypotheses have been proposed to answer the question "How are homophones represented in speech production? One view holds that homophones share a common lexical-phonological representation, but they have different grammatical and meaning properties. For instance , homophones like more(adj.)and moor(n.)/mכ:/ differ in their syntactic properties ;therefore, they require different representations for their grammatical features .Hence, they have different semantic and lexical-grammatical representations(Cutting,&Ferreeiea,1999:318-344;Dell,1990: 313-349). Models of this type are called Shared Representation (SR) models. Four levels of representation in thesemodelscan be distinguished ;namely,

semantic/conceptual nodes, lemma nodes; lexeme nodes and phonological nodes. Lemmas specify the word's grammatical properties, whereas lexemes specify their phonological contents.

The second hypothesis attributes no special status to homophones .In other words, when the phonological forms are identical , there might be no need to assume two separate word form entries , a reasonable hypothesis could assume only one word form representation for homophones .Thus , each word whether it is homophonic or non homophonic, is represented independently (Caramazza,1997:177-208 ; Harely ,1999: 22-45) .This type of models is called Independent Representation (IR) models .Only three levels of representation of this model can be distinguished :they are semantic /conceptual nodes, lexical nodes , and phonological nodes .

To understand the representation of homophones in the lexicon, one has to know the role of homophone frequency in speech production .There are two types of frequency accounts, namely ,specific-word frequency (i.e., the occurrence of "hear") and the accumulative –homophone frequency (the occurrence of "here" and "hear") .One hypothesis is that the production of each homophone correlates with the frequency of its concepts in the language so that "here" would be produced faster , and more accurately than "hear" , which is less frequent. Alternatively, homophones production could depend on the frequency with which word phonology is produced ,'here and hear" which have the same transcription /hIə/,they would have identified frequencies.(Bonin&Fayol,2002;289-313;Dell,1990:313-349).

In brief , two models have been used to account for the representation of homophones in speech; namely , Shared Representation (SR) models and Independent Representation (IR) models.

2.3 Properties of Homophones Confusion Effect

Homophone confusion effect is very rare in spontaneous speech due to two reasons; first, language provides few opportunitiesfortheiroccurrence(Carramazza Hillis,1991:78-88).Many languages like English have a number of n. , v. homophones ,with many nouns also being used as verbs ,e.g., to "stamp "a stamp ,however, many of these homophones are also homographs .

The second reason is that our cognitive system is rather good at detecting and correcting the mistakes online and such substitutions actually happened before producing them. Hotopf (1983: 147-199) notes that written language allows subjects more opportunities to avoid mistakes compared with oral language .This is because of the slow rate of writing which allows writers to bypass or to suppress some mistakes when the message is still in its phonological form or when it is on the point of being transcribed (Largy & Fayol , 1996 : 217-255).

III- The Experimental Design and the Analysis of Results

This section runs a test so as to check our student's abilities with respect to English homophones.

3.1 Subjects

The subjects of the study consist of a group of undergraduate students, fourth-year students , English Department ,College of Education, University of Basrah , for the academic year 2005-2006 .It comprises 49 students (23 females ,and 26 males).As far as their ages are concerned , the range is (20-22)years.

3.2 Test Materials

The test consists of two written questions ,the content of which is taken from different sources, each of which is supposed to test two things: the production as well as the recognition of the English homophones .The first test is organized in a way that it could assess the phonological properties of homophones. Thus, in this test ,subjects are asked to give the other word. In the second test, the subjects are asked to choose the right homophone from the multiple choice items .Two tasks are required in this test : first the semantic and phonological ones (to check if context plays a significant role in the identification of homophones).The material of the first test is borrowed from Stageberg's Introductory English Grammar (1981), as well as Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary(2004) .Test two, on the other hand, is taken from the website. Regarding the test sheet, it begins with some instructions through which the researcher asks the subjects in the first question to give the suitable homophone for the following words. The items of the test are distributed according to the following criteria : frequency of use ,ease of pronunciation and familiarity. It is worth mentioning that the homophones in the test are not arranged alphabetically so as to avoid any confusion between sounds and letters .In the second question of the test , the researcher asks the subjects to choose the right homophone to complete the sentence .The test undertaken in this study consists of 90 homophones: 45 of them are tested non-contextually, while, the other 45 ones are put in an incomplete sentence and the multiple choice items are provided to help the subjects to choose the right homophone.

3.3 Test Administration

The test was administrated in one session in 2006. It was conducted in the Department of English ,College of Education ,University of Basra. It lasted for about an hour and a half .The time interval for each question was (20)minutes followed by a break of (10) minutes for each question .After distributing the test sheets to the subjects, they were given some orientation about the test material and how they are supposed to answer the questions .

3.4 Test Scoring

The scoring scheme adopted in the first test is similar to that which is used in the second question .The scoring method was one mark for each item .The total number of the items in the first question was 45 items, therefore, there were 45 marks in test one. The same is true about the test two. Accordingly , the whole test scored 90 marks .The maximum score given for each item in question 1 and question 2 is 45since there were 45 items in each question .Thus, when analyzing the homophones in question 1 , for instance, we get the following : Item No.1 represents the sum of the correct answers which were produced by the subjects who were 49 in number (23 females and 26 males).

3.5 Analysis and Discussion of the Results

Table # 1 illustrates the correct performance of the subjects both the males and the females and their percentages in Test One .

Table #1 The females' and the males' responses in Test One

	Males		Females		Total	
	Correct Answers out of (26)	%	Correct answers out of (23)	%	Correct answers	%
Witch	21	80.77	17	73.91	38	77.55
Weak	17	65.38	20	86.96	37	75.51
Weather	18	69.23	13	56.52	31	63.27
Threw	16	61.54	10	43.48	26	53.06
Meet	15	57.69	16	69.57	31	63.27
Aloud	8	30.77	12	52.17	20	40.82
Eight	7	26.92	8	34.78	15	30.61
Bare	7	26.92	4	17.39	11	22.45
Sight	4	15.38	4	17.39	8	16.33
Check	2	7.69	0	0.00	2	4.08
Phial	3	11.54	0	0.00	3	6.12
Bye	18	69.23	16	69.57	34	69.39
Gate	1	3.85	0	0.00	1	2.04
Urn	4	15.38	1	4.35	5	10.20
Made	3	11.54	5	21.74	8	16.33
Look	10	38.46	12	52.17	22	44.90
Vale	6	23.08	7	30.43	13	26.53
Sell	5	19.23	4	17.39	9	18.37
Write	13	50.00	19	82.61	32	65.31
Die	3	11.54	1	4.35	4	8.16
Cheap	3	11.54	6	26.09	9	18.37
Heir	0	0.00	2	8.70	2	4.08
Heart	1	3.85	0	0.00	1	2.04
Flower	5	19.23	5	21.74	10	20.41
Draught	5	19.23	2	8.70	7	14.29
Feat	9	34.62	15	65.22	24	48.98
Won	0	0.00	5	21.74	5	10.20

Jeans	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Inn	15	57.69	9	39.13	24	48.98
Pour	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Proph et	7	26.92	3	13.04	10	20.41
Reed	18	69.23	12	52.17	30	61.22
Sum	16	61.54	13	56.52	29	59.18
Tail	7	26.92	2	8.70	9	18.37
Rain	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Hear	5	19.23	11	47.83	16	32.65
Oral	4	15.38	3	13.04	7	14.29
Mite	5	19.23	6	26.09	11	22.45
Jury	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Key	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Yore	15	57.69	13	56.52	28	57.14
You	2	7.69	5	21.74	7	14.29
Neigh	3	11.54	1	4.35	4	8.16
See	14	53.85	13	56.52	27	55.10
Turn	2	7.69	0	0.00	2	4.08

3.5.1 Males' Performance in Test One

Although the majority of homophones used in Test One are mono-syllabic, the 26 male subjects face difficulties in identifying the correct homophones .Only 12 males out of the 26 succeeded in recognizing the homophones .Their percentage can be calculated as follows :

$$\frac{\text{The number of the correct answers by the males}}{\text{The total number of homophones in the first test}} \textbf{ X 100}$$

$$\frac{12}{45} \textbf{ x } 100 = 26.1\ \%$$ males' correct responses in the first test.

This means that 33 out of 45 homophones could not be identified correctly by the male subjects as far as the first test

is concerned .This may be attributed to either of two reasons .First, the absence of cues (context) to facilitate the choice of the suitable homophone, and second , males rarely used these homophones in their daily speech .Besides, there is no emphasis on the area of homophone in their textbooks and courses. The following table #2 shows the homophones that could not be identified by the male subjects in the first test .

Table#2 : The homophones that cannot be identified by the male subjects in the first test

s	The homophones in Test One	The score
1-	Aloud	8
2-	Eight	7
3-	Bare	7
4-	Sight	4
5-	Check	2
6-	Phail	3
7-	Gate	1
8-	Urn	4
9-	Made	3
10-	Look	10
11-	Vale	6
12-	Sell	5
13-	Die	3
14-	Cheap	3
15-	Heir	0
16-	Heart	1
17-	Flower	5
18-	Draught	5
19-	Feat	9
20-	Won	0
21-	Jeans	0
22-	Pour	0
23-	Prophet	7
24-	Tail	7
25-	Rain	0
26-	Heart	5
27-	Oral	4
28-	Mite	5
29-	Jury	0
30-	Key	0
31-	You	2
32-	Neight	3
33-	Turn	2

3.5.2 The Males' performance in Test Two

The males' performance in Test Two is better than their performance in Test One .This can be ascribed to the role of cues given in the second test that activates their memory and encourages the right choice .Only 10 males out of 26 succeeded in choosing (29) homophones out of the 45 ones. The percentage can be obtained as follows :

$$\frac{29}{45} \times 100 = 60\%$$ the males correct performances in

In other words , 15 out of the 45 homophones were not identified by the males .This may be attributed to their miscomprehension of the sentence . The following table displays the homophones that the males cannot identify in the second test .

Table #3: The homophones that the males could not identify in the second test

s	The homophones in Test Two	The score
1-	Rode	0
2-	Pale	7
3-	Toe	11
4-	Prey	8
5-	Mail	10
6-	Mane	10
7-	Burry	12
8-	Wore	7
9-	Scent	9
10-	Prays	7
11-	Sore	12
12-	Moan	8
13-	Naval	6
14-	While	6
15-	Born	8

3.5.3Comparing the Males' Performance in Test One and Test Two

It is obvious from table #1 and table #4 that male subjects performed better in the second test .This is because of the context given to them that helped them to choose the correct homophones .Thus, the third hypothesis of the test has been verified .

Table #4: The females and the males performance in Test Two

Item	Males		Females		Total	
	Correct Answers (26)	%	Correct Answers (23)	%	Correct Answers	%
Peace	18	69.23	16	69.57	34	69.39
Heal	20	76.92	14	60.87	34	69.39
Plane	16	61.54	12	52.17	28	57.14
Steal	19	73.08	14	60.87	33	67.35
Their	13	50.00	16	69.57	29	59.18
Waste	13	50.00	13	56.52	26	53.06
Hole	20	76.92	17	73.91	37	75.51
Warn	16	61.54	11	47.83	27	55.10
Rode	0	0.00	12	52.17	12	24.49
Pale	7	26.92	15	65.22	22	44.90
Sun	15	57.69	22	95.65	37	75.51
Cereal	24	92.31	14	60.87	38	77.55
Peal	15	57.69	14	60.87	29	59.18
Toe	11	42.31	15	65.22	26	53.06
Pair	17	65.38	19	82.61	36	73.47
Blouder	21	80.77	11	47.83	32	65.31
Prey	8	30.77	15	65.22	23	46.94
Bow	15	57.69	12	52.17	27	55.10
Tied	15	57.69	14	60.87	29	59.18
Sweet	14	53.85	19	82.61	33	67.35

Beech	**21**	**80.77**	**12**	**52.17**	**33**	**67.35**
Mail	**10**	**38.46**	**14**	**60.87**	**24**	**48.98**
Sale	**19**	**73.08**	**15**	**65.22**	**34**	**69.39**
Herd	**15**	**57.69**	**9**	**39.13**	**24**	**48.98**
Mane	**10**	**38.46**	**12**	**52.17**	**22**	**44.90**
Burry	**12**	**46.15**	**8**	**34.78**	**20**	**40.82**
Wore	**7**	**26.92**	**18**	**78.26**	**25**	**51.02**
Creak	**15**	**57.69**	**13**	**56.52**	**28**	**57.14**
Doe	**18**	**69.23**	**15**	**65.22**	**33**	**67.35**
Miner	**14**	**53.85**	**13**	**56.52**	**27**	**55.10**
Scent	**9**	**34.62**	**7**	**30.43**	**26**	**53.06**
Prays	**7**	**26.92**	**17**	**73.91**	**24**	**48.98**
Far	**13**	**50.00**	**16**	**69.57**	**29**	**59.18**
Bored	**20**	**76.92**	**13**	**56.52**	**33**	**67.35**
Sore	**12**	**46.15**	**10**	**43.48**	**22**	**44.90**
Nights	**21**	**80.77**	**19**	**82.61**	**40**	**81.63**
Flee	**13**	**50.00**	**14**	**60.87**	**27**	**55.10**
Moan	**8**	**30.77**	**13**	**56.52**	**21**	**42.86**
Naval	**6**	**23.08**	**10**	**43.48**	**16**	**32.65**
Lyre	**17**	**65.38**	**17**	**73.91**	**34**	**69.39**
Mourning	**12**	**46.15**	**15**	**65.22**	**27**	**55.10**
Rude	**23**	**88.46**	**19**	**82.61**	**42**	**85.71**
While	**6**	**23.08**	**8**	**34.78**	**14**	**28.57**
Bite	**18**	**69.23**	**18**	**78.26**	**36**	**73.47**
Born	**8**	**30.77**	**10**	**43.48**	**18**	**36.73**

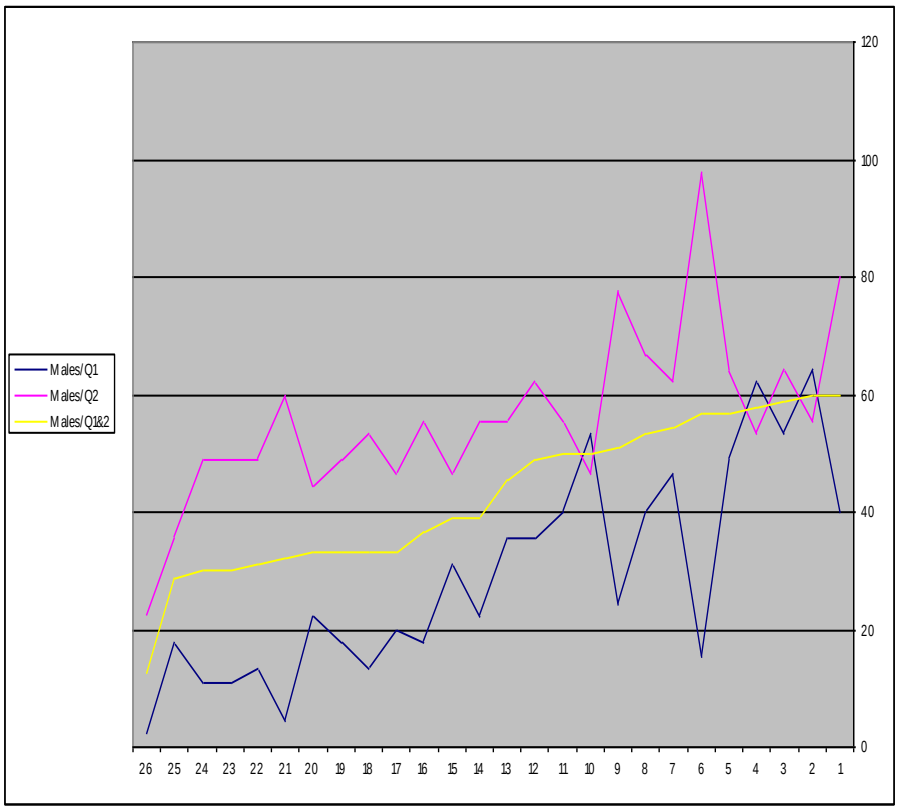

Figure 1: The performance of the males in the first test and the second and in both

3.5.4 The Females' Performance in Test One

Only 13 females out of the 23 succeeded in identifying (13) correct homophones out of 45 in the first test .The percentage is 28.88% .This means that 32 homophones out of the 45 ones could not be identified correctly by the females The following table exhibits that .

Table #5: The homophones that the females cannot identify in the first test

S	The homophones in Test One	The score
1-	Threw	10
2-	Eight	8
3-	Bare	4
4-	Sight	4
5-	Check	0
6-	Phail	0
7-	Gate	0
8-	Urn	1
9-	Made	5
10-	Vale	7
11-	Sell	4
12-	Die	1
13-	Cheap	6
14-	Heir	1
15-	Heart	0
16-	Flower	5
17-	Draught	2
18-	Won	5
19-	Jeans	0
20-	Inn	9
21-	Pour	0
22-	Prophet	3
23-	Tail	2
24-	Rain	0
25-	Hear	11
26-	Heart	11
27-	Oral	3
28-	Mite	6
29-	Jury	0
30-	Key	0
31-	You	5
32-	Neigh	1
33-	Turn	0

3.5.5 The Females' Performance in Test Two

14 females out of the 23 ones succeeded in identifying the suitable homophones in the second test. 31.11% succeeded in choosing 36 homophones out of the 45 ones. This means that the females face less difficulty in recognizing the homophones in the second test. This is due to the cues provided to them in the second test .There are only 9 homophones that the females failed to identify can be summarized in the following table .

Table #6: The homophones that the females could not identify in the second test

S	**The homophones in Test Two**	**The score**
1-	Warn	11
2-	Blouder	11
3-	Herd	9
4-	Burry	8
5-	Scent	7
6-	Sore	10
7-	Naval	10
8-	While	8
9-	Born	10

3.5.6 Comparing the Females' Performance in Test One and Test Two

The females' performance in the second test is better than their performance in the first test .This can be ascribed to the

available cues given to them in the second test .The following figure clarifies that .

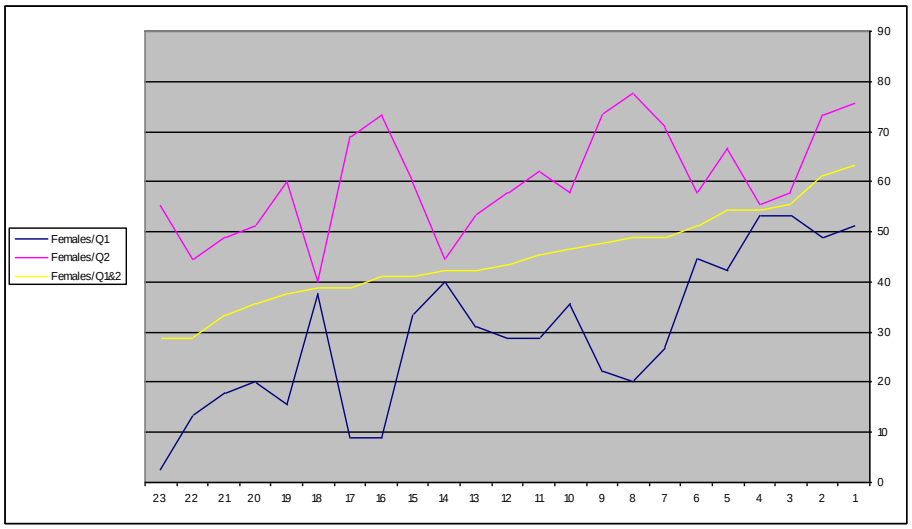

Figure 2: The performance of the females in the first test and the second and in both

3.5.7 Comparing the Females' Performance to the Males' in Test One

Both the female and the male subjects performed badly in the first test. However, the females are somehow better(28.%) in comparison with the males. The following figure shows the females' and the males' performance as far as Test One is concerned .

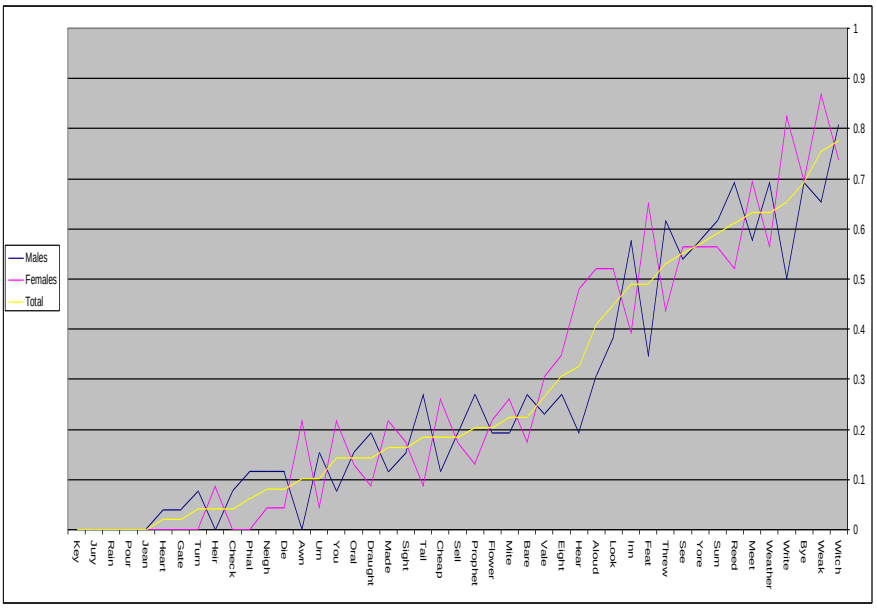

Figure 3**:** The performance of the females and the males in the first test

arranged according to their percentages

3.5.8 Comparing the Females' Performance to the Males' in the Second Test

Not only did the female subjects but also the males perform well in the second test .This can be attributed to the role of context in identifying the suitable homophones .However, the females are better than the males in responding to the correct homophones .The following figure illustrates that :

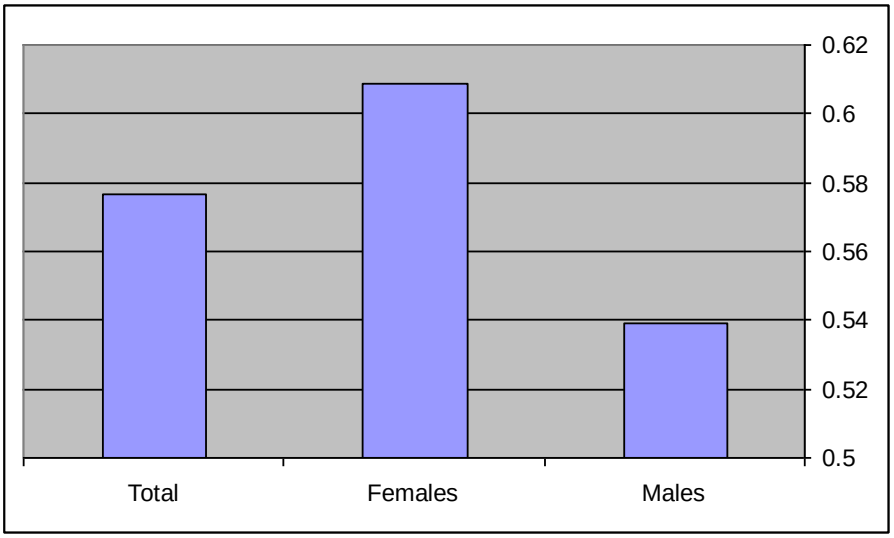

Figure 4: The performance of the females and the males in the second test with their percentages

3.6 Statistical Interpretations of the Results

In order to get further information from the results, the raw scores were subjected to a relevant statistical technique. This statistical technique that is used in this study is called " The Analysis of Variance test ", the ANOVA test .It is used to assess the significance of the difference between the means of various samples. Walpole (1982:422) describes it as " a process for splitting the total variable of a set of experimental data into meaningful components that measure different scores of variation".

3.6.1 The Statistical Interpretation of the Males' Performance in Test One and Test Two

Although the performance of the males in the second test is better than theirs in the first test from the statistical point of view ,the differences are not significant because the obtained significance level is 0.308 which is less than $P \leq 0.05$ as table#7 shows .

Table # 7: The statistical interpretation of the males' performance in the two tests

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	948.649	13	72.973	1.343	.308
Within Groups	651.967	12	54.331		
Total	1600.615	25			

Males/ ANOVA Test:

F: 1.343

Significance level: 0.308 **(**Not Significant**)**

3.6.2 The Statistical Interpretation of the Males' performance in Test One as it is Compared to the Females' Performance

Both the females and the males performed badly in the first test. However, the females performed somehow better, yet the differences are significant because the obtained significance level is 0.941 which is larger than P. 0.05 .Table# 8# exhibits this.

Table#8 : The statistical interpretation of the males' performance in Test One as it is compared to the females' performance

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	412.228	14	29.445	.389	.941
Within Groups	605.250	8	75.656		
Total	1017.478	22			

Males/ ANOVA Test:
F: 0.389
Significance level: 0.941 **(**Significant)

3.6.3 The Statistical Interpretation of the females' Performance in Test One and Test Two

The females performed well in the first and second tests This is from the statistical point of view because the obtained significance level is 0.0001 larger than $P \leq 0.05$ as the coming table presents .

Table #9: The statistical interpretation of the females' performance in Test One and Test Two

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1598.928	18	88.829	17.632	.000
Within Groups	130.983	26	5.038		
Total	1729.911	44			

F: 17.632
Significance level: 0.0001 **(Significant)**

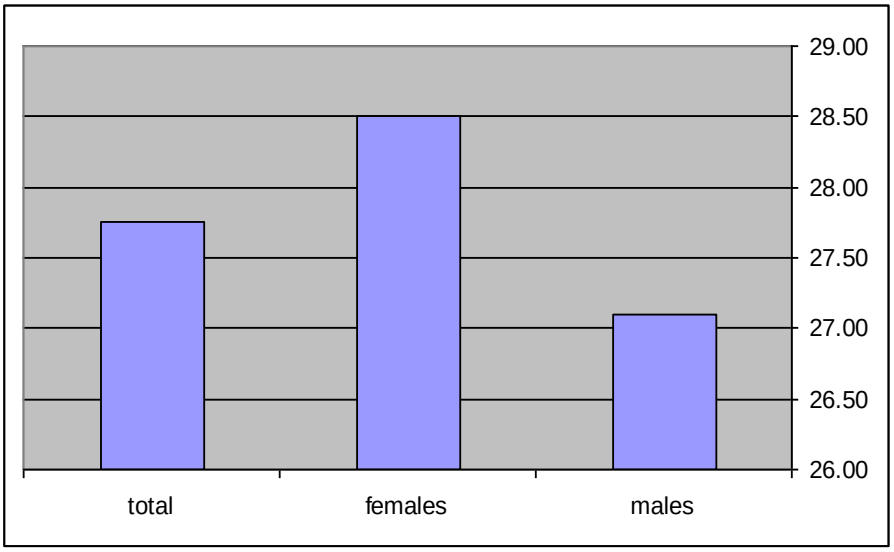

Figure 5: The performance of the females and the males in Test One

3.6.4 The Statistical Interpretation of the females' Performance in Test One as it is Compared to the Males' Performance

In applying the ANOVA test to the females responses , it has been found out that the differences are significant in the sense that the obtained significance level is.284 larger than $P \leq 0.05$,as table #10 shows .

Table #10:The statistical interpretation of the females' performance in Test One as it is compared to the males' performance

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	363.922	13	27.994	1.269	.284
Within Groups	661.964	30	22.065		
Total	1025.886	43			

F: 1.269

Significance level: 0.284 (Significant)

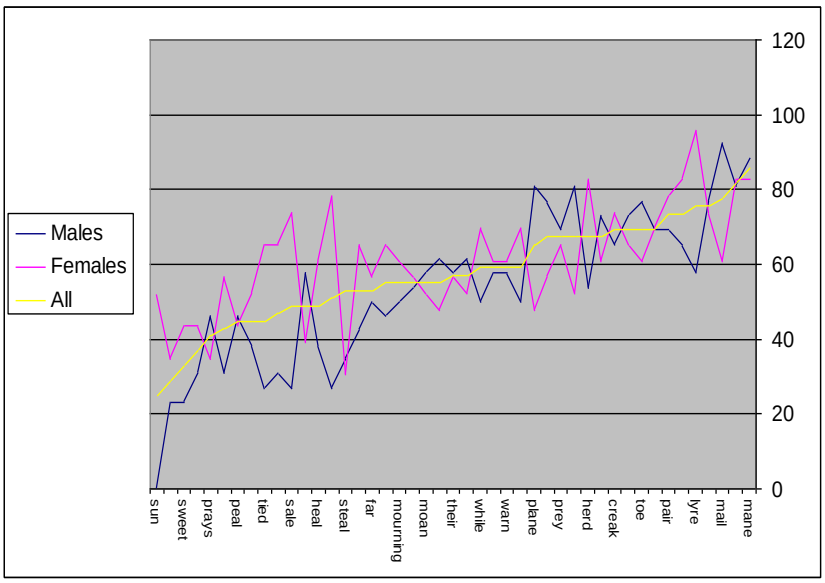

Figure 6: The performance of the females and the males in Test Two

3.7 Conclusions

1- The present analysis has shown that the first hypothesis is valid .In other words, Iraqi learners at the advanced stage face difficulties in identifying English non-contextual homophones ,this can be ascribed to either of the following factors :

a- Their knowledge (background information) is poor .

b- Both the textbooks and the courses do not pay enough attention to this area .

c- The answers have shown that the subjects were not authentically serious in answering the test.

2- The second hypothesis of the study has been rejected and, therefore, we accept the alternative one which states

that sex as a variable does play a significant role in the identification of English homophones.

3- The third hypothesis is valid as the analysis has shown .So, context plays a significant role in helping the learners to identify the homophones .

4-Female subjects are better than the males in identifying English homophones in both tests .This can be attributed to the fact that females show more seriousness than the males in their academic commitments in general and this may be due to their having less commitments in life (outside homes and studies) than the males .

5- In comparing the females' responses to their counterparts (males) in Test One, it has been found out that the differences are not statistically significant .In Test Two, the differences between them are statistically significant .

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Appendices
Appendix(1)

A-The first test / Give the suitable homophone for the following words :

Witch …….
Weak……
Weather……
Threw……..
Meet……..
Aloud……..
Eight ……
Bare……
Sight……..
Check…….……..
Phial……..
Bye……
Gate……..
Urn……
Made……..……
Look……..
Vale……..…….
Sell……..
Write…….
Die…….…….
Cheap…….
Heir……
Heart……..
Flower……
Draught……..
Feat……
Won……..
Jeans……..
Inn……
Pour……..…….
Prophet…….……
Reed…….……...
Sum……

Tail…….
Rain……..……
Hear……..
Oral……
Mite……
Jury…….
Key……
Yore……..……
You……
Neigh……
See…….
Turn……..

B-Second test/ Choose the right homophone to complete the sentences below:

1- He went on a march for world (peace ,piece)
2- His leg is broken , but it will (heal, heel)
3-The (plain, plane) landed late because of heavy fog
4-- The thief got caught trying to (steel, steal) the diamond
5-It was (there , their)dog that bite the postman .
6-Waiting for the wrong train was a(waist, waste) of time
7- There was a (whole, hole) in his sock
8-He tried to (warn, worn) her about the wet floor
9- He (road , rode ,rowed)his motor bike
10-After her illness , she looked very (pail , pale)
11-The (son , sun)is shinning
12- He liked to eat a bowl of (cereal, serial) every morning
13- Everyone listened to the (peel , peal) of the church bells
14-I do not put nail varnish on my (tow , toe)nails
15- She bought a new (pear , pair) of trousers
16- The man was killed by a falling (boulder , bolder)
17- An eagle is a large bird of (pray, prey)
18- When men meet the Queen , they should (bough ,bow)
19- When he was old enough he (tide tied) his own shoelaces

20- Too much (suite, sweet) food is bad for your teeth
21- The (beech , beach)is my favorite tree
22- At work, I check the (mail , male)every morning
23- She gets 10% commission on each (sail , sale)
24-The (heard, herd) of the cows was very noisy
25- The horse's (main, mane) flowed in the wind
26- He will (burry, berry)his treasure in the garden
27- The bride (war, wore) white
28- Did you hear the door (creak ,creek)
29- A female deer is called a (doe ,dough)
30- That (minor, miner) over there dug up lots of gold
31- They love the (sent, cent, scent) of the fresh fruit
32- He always (praise , preys, prays)
33- That sheep has tick (fur , fir)
34- I was really (bored , board) today
35- My legs are (sore, soar) after the 900 meter run
36-James did not have a very good (knights , nights) sleep
37- He (flea , flee) quickly
38- That child (mown, moan) loudly
39-They like (navel, naval)ships
40- I like the (lair , lyre)
41- She was still in (mourning , morning)for her husband
42-She was very (rued , rude, rood) about my driving
43- You can go swimming (wile, while)I am having lunch
44- The recession is beginning to(byte ,bight, bite)
45-I was (bourn, borne , born, bourne) in 1976

Appendix (2)
The transcription of the homophones
A-Homophones in Test One

S	The Words	The homophone	The transcription
1	Witch	Which	/ w I ʧ /
2	Weak	week	/ wi:k /
3	Weather	whether	/we ð ə/
4	Threw	Through	□□ru:/
5	Meet	meat	/mi:t/
6	Aloud	Allowed	/ə l**aʊ**d /
7	Eight	ate	/eI t/
8	Bare	Bear	/b eə/
9	Sight	site ,cite	/s aIt/
10	Check	Cheque	ʧ /ek/
11	Phial	file	/fail/
12	Bye	Buy ,by	/baI/
13	Gate	Gait	/ g It/
14	Urn	Earn	/3:n/
15	Made	maid	/m eId/

16	Look	lock	/l **D**k/
17	Vale	Veil	/veil/
18	Sell	cell	/sel/
19	Write	Right	/raIt/
20	Die	dye	/daI/
21	Cheap	cheep	ʧ i:p/
22	Heir	Air, ere	/ eə/
23	Heart	hart	/ha:t/
24	Flower	flour	/fl aʊə/
25	Draught	draft	/drɑ:ft/
26	Feat	feet	/fi:t/
27	Won	one	/w^ n/
28	Jeans	Genes	/d3 i:nz/
29	Inn	in	/In/
30	Pour	pore	/pɔ:r/
31	Prophet	profit	/pr**D**fIt/
32	Reed	Read	/ri:d/
33	Sum	Some	/s^m/
34	Tail	Tail	/t eil/

35	Rain	rain , reign	/rein/
36	Hear	here	/h Iə/
37	Oral	Aural	:rəl/כ /
38	Mite	might	/maIt/
39	Jury	Jewry	/d3ʊəri/
40	Key	Quay	/ki:/
41	Yore	Your	/jכ:r/
42	You	Ewe	/ju:/
43	Neigh	nee , nay	/n eI/
44	See	sea	/si:/
45	Turn	Tern	/t3 :n/

B-Homophones in Test Two

S	The Items	The homophone	The transcription
1	peace	piece	/pi:s/
2	heal	heel	/hi:l/
3	plane	plain	/pleIn/
4	steal	steel	/sti:l/
5	their	there	/ ð eə/
6	waste	waist	/weIst/
7	hole	whole	/həʊl/
8	warn	worn	/wɔ:n/
9	rode	road, rowed	/r**D**d/
10	pale	pail	/peIl/
11	sun	son	/s^n/
12	cereal	serial	/s Iər Iəl/
13	peal	peel	/pi:l/
14	toe	tow	/təʊ/
15	pair	pear	/p eə/
16	blouder	bolder	/bəʊldə/
17	prey	pray	/ preI /
18	bow	bough	/b**aʊ**/
19	tied	tide	/taId/
20	sweet	suite	/swi:t/
21	beech	beach	/biʧ : /
22	mail	male	/meIl/
23	sale	sail	/seIl/
24	herd	heard	/h3:d/
25	mane	main	/meIn/
26	burry	berry	/beri/
27	wore	war	/wə:/
28	creak	creek	/kri:k/
29	doe	dough	/dəʊ/
30	miner	minor	/m aInə/
31	scent	scent	/sent/

32	prays	preys, praise	/preIz/
33	fur	fir	/f3:/
34	bored	board	/bɔ :d/
35	sore	soar	/sɔ:r/
36	nights	knights	/naIt/
37	flee	flea	/fli:/
38	moan	mown	/məʊn/
39	naval	navel	/n eIvl/
40	lyre	lair	/ləIə/
41	mourning	morning	/mɔ :nIŋ/
42	rude	rued ,rood	/ru:d/
43	while	wile	/wail/
44	bite	byte	/bait/
45	born	borne	/bɔ :n/