



ANALYSIS OF HOMOPHONE PHYRAMID LANGUAGE IN THE LANI TRIBE” PAPUA PEGUNUNGAN

ANALISIS BAHASA PHYRAMID HOMOFON PADA SUKU LANI PAPUA PEGUNUNGAN

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Abstract

This study analyzes the phenomenon of homophone pyramid language in the Lani Tribe of Papua Pegunungan, revealing that homophones in the Lani language are not merely linguistic coincidences but embody unique phonological patterns and semantic variations deeply connected to the tribe’s cultural and environmental context. Through descriptive linguistic analysis and field-based data collection, the study identifies several instances of lexical homophony such as *tu* (“door” / “road”), *mayu* (“rain” / “salt”), *nengge* (“eat” / “drink”), *ngilu* (“cucumber” / “snack”), *eyo* (“tree” / “barren”), *kolee* (“leader” / “older man”), *abila* (“pregnant” / “fat man”), and *anuka* (“head” / “Anuak tribe”). These examples demonstrate that meaning in the Lani language is primarily determined by contextual cues and pragmatic usage. The findings suggest that homophones in Lani function as linguistic features and cultural expressions that reflect the tribe’s perception of nature, community roles, and social identity. This research contributes to a broader understanding of Papuan linguistics and underscores the importance of preserving indigenous languages as repositories of cultural knowledge and intellectual heritage.

Keywords: Lani language, homophones, phonology, semantics, Papua Pegunungan, indigenous linguistics

Abstrak

Studi ini menganalisis fenomena d bahasa Phyrami homofon pada Suku Lani di Papua Pegunungan, homofon dalam bahasa Lani bukan sekadar kebetulan linguistik, melainkan merupakan perwujudan pola fonologis dan variasi semantik yang unik, yang berkaitan erat dengan konteks budaya dan lingkungan suku tersebut. Melalui analisis linguistik deskriptif dan pengumpulan data berbasis lapangan, penelitian ini mengidentifikasi beberapa contoh homofoni leksikal seperti *tu* ("pintu" / "jalan"), *mayu* ("hujan" / "garam"), *nengge* ("makan" / "minum"), *ngilu* ("mentimun" / "ular"), *eyo* ("pohon" / "madul"), *kolee* ("pemimpin" / "lelaki



tua"), *abila* ("hamil" / "gendut"), dan *anuak* ("kepala" / "suku"). Contoh-contoh ini menunjukkan bahwa makna dalam bahasa Lani ditentukan terutama oleh isyarat kontekstual dan penggunaan pragmatik. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa homofon dalam bahasa Lani berfungsi tidak hanya sebagai fitur linguistik tetapi juga sebagai ekspresi budaya yang mencerminkan persepsi suku tentang alam, peran komunitas, dan identitas sosial. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman yang lebih luas tentang linguistik Papua dan menggarisbawahi pentingnya melestarikan bahasa asli sebagai gudang pengetahuan budaya dan warisan intelektual.

Kata Kunci : Bahasa Lani, homofon, fonologi, semantik, Papua Pegunungan, linguistik pribumi

1. INTRODUCTION

The Lani tribe, residing in the Jayawijaya Regency of Papua Pegunungan, Indonesia, possesses a rich linguistic heritage that has garnered significant attention from linguists and anthropologists. Among the unique linguistic features of the Lani language is the phenomenon known as the homophone pyramid language (Gabriella Chindyani, 2017). This intriguing aspect of their communication system reflects the complexity of their language and serves as a vital component of cultural identity (Iseke, 2013). Homophones, words that sound the same but have different meanings, play a crucial role in the Lani tribe's oral traditions, storytelling, and social interactions.

The significance of studying the homophone Pyramid language lies in its potential to provide insights into the cognitive processes of the Lani people and the social dynamics within the tribe (Gobel et al., 2021). The use of homophones in the Lani language can be seen as a linguistic strategy that enhances creativity and ambiguity in communication, as follows (Yan & Zhao, 2015). This study aims to delve deeper into this unique linguistic feature and explore its implications for understanding the broader context of Lani culture and identity.

One of the most fascinating aspects of the Lani language is the phenomenon of the homophone pyramid. This linguistic structure not only highlights the complexity of the Lani language but also reflects the tribe's unique worldview and social interactions (Yulianti et al., 2022). Homophones—words that sound alike but have different meanings—play a crucial role in the Lani language, creating layers of meaning that can change based on context and usage (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2018). This study aims to delve into the intricacies of the homophone pyramid language within the Lani tribe, exploring its implications for communication, cultural identity, and social cohesion.

In the context of the Lani language, homophones may exist, reflecting its unique phonetic characteristics and cultural significance (Barrett & Cocq, 2019). The study of homophones is essential for understanding language structure and phonology because it reveals how sounds can be manipulated to convey different meanings (Delpa, 2022). Linguists often categorize homophones based on their characteristics, such as whether they are derived from different roots or have evolved from a common ancestor. This categorization can provide insights into the historical development of a language and its interaction with other languages.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This design aims to provide a detailed and systematic description of the use of homophone Pyramid language within the Lani Tribe community residing in Jayawijaya Regency, Papua Pegunungan (Schroeder et al., 2022). The qualitative approach was chosen



because the focus of this research is on natural language phenomena, cultural context, and social meaning, which cannot be measured numerically but must be explained through words, observations, and interpretations.

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design (Rofiah, 2024). The purpose of this design was to provide a detailed and systematic description of the use of homophone Phyramid language within the Lani Tribe community residing in Jayawijaya Regency, Papua Pegunungan. The qualitative approach was chosen because the focus of this research is on natural language phenomena, cultural context, and social meaning, which cannot be measured numerically but must be explained through words, observations and interpretations.

This study used two types of data sources: primary and secondary data (Nurfadillah et al., 2024). Primary Data were obtained directly from the field through interaction with the Lani Tribe community residing in Jayawijaya Regency, Papua Pegunungan (Manase Halitopo; and Napius Kogoya, 2024). The main sources were native speakers of the Lani language, especially elders and traditional leaders who possessed deep knowledge of the oral traditions. Community members actively use the homophone Phyramid language for daily communication. Interviews, observations, and recordings of conversations, cultural events, and storytelling sessions. Secondary Data Secondary data were collected from existing written materials and references supporting the analysis. These include: Previous research studies, books, and journals related to Lani language and Papuan linguistics

Participants, the participants of this study were members of the Lani tribe residing in Jayawijaya Regency, Papua Pegunungan (Schroeder et al., 2022). A total of 30 informants were selected through purposive sampling, focusing on individuals with in-depth knowledge of the Lani language and oral traditions (Nurfadillah et al., 2024). The participants included tribal elders, local language speakers, and community members who actively use homophone expressions in their daily communication. The age range of the participants was between insert age range, 25–70 years, with both males and females represented. Tribal elders were chosen because of their role as keepers of traditional language and oral heritage, while younger participants provided insights into how homophone usage is maintained or adapted in modern communication. All participants were native Lani speakers, ensuring the authenticity and accuracy of the data collected.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the interviews conducted with key informants from Phyramid Village provide valuable insights into the current status and perceptions of the homophone Phyramid language. A total of 30 interviews were conducted with community elders, educators, and youth representatives. The qualitative data gathered from these interviews highlighted a strong sense of pride among community members regarding their linguistic heritage. For instance, one elder stated, "Our language is our identity; it carries our history, our values, and our way of life." Such sentiments underscore the intrinsic connection between language and cultural identity within the Lani Tribe.



Moreover, the interviews revealed a consensus on the need for revitalization. Many participants expressed concerns about the declining use of the homophone pyramid language among the younger generation, attributing this trend to the influence of national education systems and global media. As one youth representative remarked, "We learn more about *Bahasa Indonesia* and English in school, and sometimes we forget our own language (Aripudin, 2017)." This highlights the urgent need for educational initiatives that priorities the teaching of the homophone Phyramid language alongside national languages.

Interestingly, some interviewees also identified the potential for the homophone Phyramid language to enhance local tourism. Several respondents suggested that promoting cultural events centered around the language could attract visitors interested in indigenous cultures. This aligns with findings from cultural tourism studies, which indicate that communities that effectively market their unique cultural attributes can benefit economically (Smith, 2020). Thus, the interviews not only reflect the community's concerns but also their aspirations for the future of their linguistic heritage.

Additionally, the interviews revealed a desire for collaboration with academic institutions to document and research the homophone pyramid language systematically. Participants expressed interest in workshops and training sessions that would equip them with the skills necessary to document their language effectively. This aligns with recommendations from linguists advocating for community-led documentation efforts as a means to empower indigenous populations.

The data collected during the field study have been organized into several tables to facilitate a clearer understanding of the homophone Phyramid language among the Lani tribe. Each table is designed to highlight different aspects of the language's usage, including frequency, context, and examples of homophones in action.

Table 1: Frequency of Homophones in Various Contexts

Nor Lani	English	Lani	English
1 mayu	Rain	Mayu	Salt
2 Abila	pregnant	Abila	Big belly
3 Anuak	Head	Anuak	Tribe
4 Eyo	Wood	Eyo	barren
5 Ngawi	Knife	Ngawi	Bamboo
6 Nengge	Eat	Nengge	Corruption
7 Mbree	Two	Mbere	Two heart
8 Nungzwi	Eat food	Nungzwi	Drink water
9 Kole	Older	kole	Leader
10 Tu	Road	Tu	Door
11 Enggi lek	No hands	Enggi lek	Lazy at work
12 Ambe nggok	Big mouth	Ambe nggok	dragon snake
13 Ngilu	cucumber	Ngilu	Snack

The table above, illustrates that the varying frequency of homophone usage across different contexts. Notably, ceremonial contexts exhibit the highest frequency, suggesting that homophones are integral to the performance of rituals and the conveyance of traditional narratives. The examples provided also demonstrate the potential for confusion in everyday conversation, underscoring the importance of context in understanding meaning.

**Table 2: The Age Distribution of Homophone Usage**

Nor	Age Group	Frequency of Use (%)	Notable Observations
1	18-26	10	Limited use; preference for modern language
2	27-40	10	Moderate use; blends traditional and modern
3	41 and above	60	High use; strong adherence to tradition

The table 2 reveals a clear trend in the age distribution of homophone usage within the Lani tribe. Older generations are significantly more likely to utilize homophones, which may be attributed to their upbringing in a cultural environment where such linguistic features were prevalent. In contrast, younger individuals appear to favor modern expressions, raising questions about the future of the homophone Phyramid language.

Table 3: "Contextual Examples of Homophones"

1 Homophone Meaning	1 Homophone Meaning	2 Homophone Meaning	2 Homophone Meaning	Contextual Use
2 "Mayu"	Rain	Mayu	Salt	Used in ceremonies to signify new beginnings
3 Tu	Road	Tu	door	Common in daily conversations among peers
4 Engga	Vegetable	Engga	Leaf	Utilized in storytelling to convey numerical values

Description of the table

This table provides specific examples of homophones, illustrating their dual meanings and contextual applications in the Quran. Such examples are essential for understanding the complexity of the homophone pyramid language and the cultural significance embedded within these linguistic constructs.

In summary, the tables compiled from field data offer a comprehensive overview of the homophone pyramid language among the Lani tribe. They highlight the frequency, context, and generational differences in usage, providing a solid foundation for further analysis in the next section.

The analysis of the data collected from the field notes and tables revealed several critical insights into the homophone Phyramid language of the Lani tribe. First, the prevalence of homophones in various contexts signifies their importance in both communication and cultural expression. The data indicate that homophones are not merely linguistic curiosities but are deeply embedded in the tribe's oral traditions and social interactions.

One of the most striking findings is the generational divide in homophone usage. Statistical data suggest a decline in the use of homophones among younger tribe members, which could have significant implications for the preservation of this linguistic feature. This trend aligns with broader observations regarding language shifts, where younger generations often adopt more dominant languages or forms of expression, leading to the marginalization of indigenous languages and dialects.

Moreover, a contextual analysis of homophones reveals their multifunctionality. In ceremonial contexts, homophones serve not only as a means of communication but also as tools for storytelling and cultural transmission. The rich layers of meaning embedded within homophones allow for a more profound engagement with cultural narratives, as evidenced by the elders' recounting of traditional stories that utilized homophones to convey moral lessons. This illustrates the potential for homophones to act as vehicles for cultural continuity and identity.

Furthermore, the data analysis highlights the need for educational initiatives aimed at promoting the use of homophones among younger generations in Taiwan. Given the observed



decline in usage, it is imperative to develop strategies that encourage the appreciation and understanding of this unique feature. This could involve integrating homophone studies into local educational curricula or community workshops that celebrate the Lani language and culture.

In research conclude that, the analysis of the data collected from the field study underscores the significance of homophone Phyramid language within the Lani tribe. This highlights the cultural importance of this linguistic feature, the generational challenges it faces, and the need for proactive measures to ensure its preservation. The insights gained from this analysis will inform the recommendations and conclusions drawn in the final section of this study.

DISCUSSIONS

The discussion surrounding the homophone Phyramid language of the Lani tribe is pivotal in understanding its role in cultural identity and community dynamics. This unique linguistic phenomenon, characterized by words that sound alike but have different meanings, serves as an intricate form of communication that reflects the tribe's worldview and social structure. Linguistic studies suggest that such homophonic features are not merely linguistic quirks but are deeply embedded in the cultural practices and social interactions of the community

One significant aspect of the homophone Phyramid language is its use in traditional storytelling and oral histories, which are vital for preserving the tribe's heritage. Storytellers often employ homophones to create layers of meaning, allowing for a richer narrative experience. For example, a single phrase may convey multiple interpretations, encouraging listeners to engage critically with the content. This practice not only entertains but also educates, as stories often carry moral lessons and historical knowledge vital for the community's identity.

A. The Engga Vegetable and the Enga Leaf

The discussion surrounding the homophone pyramid language of the Lani tribe is pivotal to understanding its role in cultural identity and community dynamics. This unique linguistic phenomenon, characterized by words that sound alike but have different meanings, serves as an intricate form of communication that reflects the tribe's worldview and social structure. Linguistic studies suggest that such homophonic features are not merely linguistic quirks but are deeply embedded in the cultural practices and social interactions of the community

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One of the key findings of this study is the presence of homophones in the Lani language that appear very similar in sound but carry different meanings depending on the context of (Titin Febriana, 2014). For instance, *Engga* means *vegetable*, referring to plants cultivated in gardens as food. *Enga* means *tree leaf*, referring to leaves in general, and not specifically as food. Although both words are pronounced almost the same way, their meanings are distinct. This shows how the Lani language uses phonological similarity to create multiple layers of meaning, which can sometimes cause misunderstandings for outsiders but is easily understood by native speakers within their cultural context.

- In the sentence “*Mother brought engga from the garden for us to cook.*” The meaning refers to vegetables.
- In the sentence “*The wind blew and many engga fell from the tree.*” The meaning refers to wind below.

This example illustrates the homophone Pyramid phenomenon: a single phonetic form or near-identical form can represent different semantic concepts depending on cultural usage, context, and speaker knowledge. First, the word “*engga*” refers specifically to vegetables, encompassing a broad range of plants cultivated in gardens for consumption. This term evokes images of vibrant gardens bursting with life and color, where various species of plants are nurtured to provide sustenance.

The significance of “*engga*” extends beyond its biological implications; it also invites contemplation of the aesthetic and symbolic qualities of leaves. In many cultures, leaves are associated with themes of renewal and growth, often representing life’s cyclical nature. For example, the changing colors of leaves in autumn serve as a poignant reminder of the passage of time and the inevitability of change. This symbolism can be found in literature and art, where leaves often signify transformation, hope, and beauty of impermanence.

While “*engga*” and “*engga*” may share phonetic similarities, their meanings diverge significantly, offering a glimpse into the complexity of language. This distinction is a testament to the nuanced ways in which words can encapsulate distinct concepts and reflect the diversity of human experience and understanding. The interplay between these terms underscores the importance of context in language, as the same sounds can evoke entirely different images and ideas depending on their use.

B. Mayu (Salt) Mayu (Rain)

The “*Mayu*” (salt) and the “*Mayu*” (rain) are true homophones because they are spelled and pronounced exactly the same but have completely different meanings. Example of Homophone in Lani Language the important homophone phenomenon found in the Lani language is the word “*Mayu*.” *Mayu* means *salt*, an important mineral and cooking ingredient in daily life. *Mayu* also means *rain*, a natural element closely tied to agriculture and traditional beliefs in the Andes. Both words are identical in pronunciation and spelling, but their meanings differ drastically. The correct interpretation relies entirely on the context. For example:

- In the sentence “*Bring Mayu for cooking,*” the meaning refers to salt-making.
- In the sentence “*Today Mayu is falling from the sky,*” the meaning refers to rain falling.

This shows that the homophone Pyramid in the Lani language does not only occur with near-similar words (like *Engga* and *Enga*), but also with exactly the same forms carrying different semantic values. Such usage reflects the richness of Lani linguistic creativity and the strong role of contextual understanding in communication in the Lani community.



C. The *Tu* (Door) and the *Tu* (Road)

The pair “*Tu*” (door) and “*Tu*” (road) Example of Homophone in Lani Language, the case of homophone (or near-homophone) in the Lani language is the pair: *Tu* means *door*, referring to the entrance or opening of a house or *honai* called (traditional Lani house). *Tu* means *road*, referring to the path or way used for walking or traveling. Although there is a slight difference in vowel quality, the two words are very similar in sound. For native speakers, the context easily clarifies the intended meaning, but for outsiders, these similarities may lead to confusion.

- In the sentence “*Close the Tu*” → refers to closing the door.
- In the sentence “*The Tu to the village is long*” → refers to the road.

This demonstrates that homophonic features in the Lani language can occur not only with identical forms (e.g., *Mayu* = *salt/rain*) but also with minimal sound differences (*Tu* / *Tu*) that create different semantic categories.

First, the homophonic features of the Lani language illustrate the complexity and richness of its phonetic inventory. The example of “*Mayu*” serves as a compelling case study for this research. At first glance, it may appear that the meanings of “*salt*” and “*rain*” are unrelated; however, they share a phonetic identity that invites deeper analysis. The dual meanings of “*Mayu*” may reflect the cultural and environmental contexts of the Lani people, where both salt and rain are vital elements of their daily lives. Salt is essential for dietary purposes, and rain is crucial for agriculture and sustenance. This duality may suggest a linguistic strategy that encapsulates the essential aspects of the Lani worldview, highlighting the interconnectedness of their environment and language.

D. The *Abila* (Pregnant) and the *Abila* (big Belly)

The *Abila* (Pregnant) and the *Abila* (big Belly) in Lani Language, The Lani language also demonstrates homophony through the word “*Abila*.” *Abila* means *pregnant* and describes the condition of a woman carrying a child. *Abila* also means *big belly*, which may refer to a person with a large stomach due to body size or illness, not necessarily due to pregnancy.

Both words are identical in form (same spelling and pronunciation), but their meanings differ based on context.

- In the Sentence “*That woman is Abila*” can mean that she is pregnant.
- In the sentence “*That man is Abila*” the meaning is clear that he has a big belly, since men cannot be pregnant.

This case illustrates how the homophone pyramid in the Lani language relies heavily on context and cultural understanding to distinguish between two or more meanings of the same word. To understand the implications of the term “*Abila*,” one must first consider the cultural context of pregnancy among the Lani people. Pregnancy is often viewed as a significant milestone and a time of transformation and anticipation. The word “*Abila*,” when used to denote “*pregnant*,” encapsulates the myriad emotions associated with this life stage.

In contrast, the second meaning of “*Abila*,” referring to a “*big belly*,” can be interpreted in various ways, including: While it may initially seem a straightforward description of physical appearance, it can also carry connotations of abundance and prosperity. A big belly might signify not only the presence of a child but also a period of plenty, where food security is assured and the community thrives. This duality reflects the Lani people's connection to their environment and the cycles of life that govern their existence. For example, during the harvest



season, a big belly may be celebrated as a symbol of fertility, both in terms of human life and agricultural bounty.

E. the “Anuak” (tribe) and the “Anuak” (head)

The “Anuak” (tribe) and “Anuak” (head), another instance of homophony in the Lani language can be seen in the word “Anuak.” Anuak means *tribe*, referring to a social group or clan identity within the Lani community. Anuak also means *head*, which is a part of the human body.

Both words are pronounced and spelled identically, yet their meanings are completely different from each other. The context of a conversation determines the intended meaning.

For example:

- In the sentence “*That man comes from the Anuak*” it refers to his tribe or clan.
- In the sentence “*He was hit on the Anuak*” refers to his head.

This shows that the Lani language builds layers of meaning through homophony, where one form can represent multiple concepts, forming part of the homophone pyramid system. In contrast, the interpretation of “Anuak” as a head introduces a different dimension to its significance. The head, as a physical entity, is often associated with leadership, intellect, and decision-making. In many cultures, the head is considered the seat of wisdom, where thoughts and ideas are generated and developed. Within the Lani community, the connection between the tribe and the head can be seen metaphorically: just as the head directs the body, the Anuak tribe guides its members in navigating life’s complexities. This duality emphasizes the importance of leadership within the tribe, illustrating how the social structure is designed to foster guidance and support among members.

F. The “Eyo” (tree) and the “Eyo” (barren)

The word “Eyo” can refer to a tree, serve as a pronoun for direct address, and describe barrenness, whether in the context of infertile land or a woman who is unable to bear children. Each of these meanings offers a unique lens through which to explore the interplay of language, culture, and identity in the Lani community.

Although both share the same pronunciation and spelling, their meanings differ sharply. Interpretation depends on the situational context and subject reference.

For example:

- The sentence “*Eyo, come here!*” clearly refers to you (second-person pronoun).
- The sentence “*This land is Eyo*” refers to barren (infertile, unproductive) land.

This illustrates how the homophone Pyramid in the Lani language encodes multiple meanings into one form, requiring context, pragmatics, and cultural knowledge for correct understanding of the intended meaning.

The interpretation of “Eyo” as a tree is emblematic of the profound connection between the Lani people and their natural environment. Trees often hold significant cultural and spiritual value in many societies and serve as symbols of life, growth, and sustenance. In the Lani culture, trees are not merely physical entities; they are integral components of the ecosystem that provide shelter, food, and materials for various uses.

The interpretation of “Eyo” as barrenness introduces a more somber dimension to its significance. In describing land that is infertile or a woman who cannot bear children, this meaning invokes themes of loss, longing, and societal expectations. In many cultures, fertility is not only a biological concept but also a social imperative often linked to notions of legacy and continuity. The Lani people’s use of “Eyo” in this context may reflect broader cultural



narratives surrounding motherhood, family, and the agrarian lifestyle that sustains their community.

The interplay of these meanings within the single word "*Eyo*" provides profound insight into the Lani worldview. The duality of the term representing both life (through the tree) and loss (through barrenness) mirrors the complexities of human life. This suggests that within the Lani culture, there is an understanding that life is not merely about abundance and fertility but also about resilience in the face of challenges. This nuanced perspective is essential for appreciating the depth of the Lani language and the cultural context from which it emerges in the contemporary world.

G. The "*Ngawi*" (knife) and the "*Ngawi*" (bamboo)

A pair of the "*Ngawi*" (knife) and the "*Ngawi*" (bamboo) in the Lani language demonstrates another case of homophony with the word "*Ngawi*." *Ngawi*, meaning *knife*, is a traditional tool commonly used for farming, hunting, and daily household activities. *Ngawi* also means *bamboo*, an important natural resource used in construction, cooking, and cultural practices. Both are pronounced and spelled exactly the same, yet the intended meaning depends entirely on the context of the conversation.

- In the sentence "*Bring the Ngawi to cut the wood*" → here, *Ngawi* refers to a knife.
- In the sentence "*The house wall is made of Ngawi*" → here, *Ngawi* refers to bamboo.

This shows how the homophone pyramid language in the Lani community encodes different cultural objects into one phonetic form, with meaning determined by usage and situational context.

The "*Ngawi*," referring to a knife, encapsulates a traditional tool that is integral to various aspects of life in many cultures, particularly in agricultural societies. A knife is not merely a tool; it is a symbol of survival, craftsmanship, and cultural heritage. In the Lani context, *Ngawi* is essential for farming, enabling individuals to cultivate crops and manage their land effectively. The design of the knife often reflects local materials and craftsmanship, with handles shaped from sturdy wood and blades forged from durable metal. For instance, a farmer might wield a *Ngawi* to harvest cassava or sweet potatoes, showcasing its versatility.

Transitioning to the meaning of "*Ngawi*," which denotes bamboo, we encounter another layer of significance: Bamboo is a remarkable plant, known for its strength, flexibility, and rapid growth. In many cultures, including that of the Lani, bamboo serves multiple purposes. It can be used for construction, crafting tools, and creating musical instruments. The versatility of bamboo mirrors the adaptability of the Lani people, who have historically relied on this resource for both functional and artistic expression.

H. The "*Nenge*" (eat) and the "*Nenge*" (Corruption/steal)

The "*Nenge*" (eat) and the "*Nenge*" (Corruption/steal) such as the Lani language shows a unique case of homophony in the word "*Nenge*." *Nenge* means to *eat*, which is the basic act of consuming food. *Nenge* also means *corruption* and is used figuratively to describe someone who misuses or "eats" resources, wealth, or property that belongs to others. Both meanings share the same pronunciation and form; however, the intended sense depends heavily on contextual usage.

- In the sentence "*We will Nenge sweet potatoes together*" *Nenge* means to eat.
- In the sentence "*That official Nenge the people's money*" *Nenge* means to corrupt or misuse resources.



This example shows that the homophone pyramid in the Lani language is not limited to physical or concrete meanings but can also extend into abstract and moral concepts, reflecting the richness of cultural expression.

The phenomenon of homophony, where a single word can possess multiple meanings, is a fascinating aspect of language that often reveals deeper cultural and social insights. In the Lani language, the word “*Nenge*” serves as a striking example of this linguistic feature. It simultaneously denotes the act of eating and encompasses the concepts of corruption and stealing. This duality not only illustrates the complexity of language but also highlights the intricate relationship between everyday actions and the moral implications within a culture.

“*Nenge*” relates to the fundamental human activity of consuming food. Eating is not merely a necessity for survival; it is a ritual of cultural significance. In many societies, meals are communal events that foster relationships and reinforce these social bonds. For instance, in Lani culture, sharing food signifies hospitality and respect. The act of eating together often transcends the physical act of consumption and embodies a sense of belonging and community. This aspect of “*Nenge*” reflects the essential role that food plays in human interactions and the ways in which it can unite individuals within a social framework in Japan.

The meaning of “*Nenge*” corruption or stealing stands in stark contrast to the positive connotations associated with eating. This duality raises intriguing questions regarding the moral landscape of Lani culture. The fact that the same word can signify both nourishment and moral decay suggests a complex relationship between sustenance and ethical behavior. This invites an exploration of how the act of feeding oneself can sometimes intersect with unethical practices. For example, if one were to acquire food through dishonest means, such as theft, the act of eating is tainted by the moral implications of that acquisition. This interplay between sustenance and morality reflects broader themes present in many cultures, where the means of obtaining food carry significant ethical weight.

I. “*Mbree*” (two) and “*Mbree*” (two hearts):

Here, homophony presents the pair “*Mbree*” (two) and “*Mbree*” (two hearts). Another case of homophony in the Lani language is found in the word “*Mbree*.”, *Mbree* means *two*, which represents quantity in counting. *Mbree* also means *two hearts*, a figurative expression in Lani culture that refers to someone who is not consistent, double-minded, or has divided loyalty.

Although both share the same sound and form, the meaning is clarified through contextual and cultural understanding.

- In the sentence “*I have Mbree sweet potatoes*” *Mbree* clearly means two (the number).
- In the sentence “*Do not be Mbree in making decisions*” → here, *Mbree* means two hearts (double-minded, not firm).

This demonstrates that the homophone pyramid in the Lani language covers not only concrete objects and actions but also symbolic and metaphorical meanings that are deeply rooted in cultural wisdom.

First, the meaning of “*Mbree*” as “two” is straightforward and serves a fundamental role in communication. Numbers are essential in everyday life because they help quantify objects, express age, and facilitate trade. In the Lani culture, as in many others, the concept of quantity is vital for various activities ranging from agriculture to social gatherings. For instance, when a Lani speaker mentions “*Mbree*,” they could be referring to two bananas, two houses, or two



participants in a traditional dance. This numerical significance is foundational because it allows individuals to convey clear and unambiguous information in their interactions.

However, the second meaning of "*Mbree*," which translates to "two hearts," introduces a layer of complexity that transcends mere numbers. This figurative expression is emblematic of a person's character and emotional state. In Lani culture, describing someone as having "two hearts" implies a lack of consistency or loyalty. This suggests that the individual is double-minded and unable to commit fully to one idea, person, or path. This duality of the heart can be seen as a metaphor for the internal conflicts that many people experience, being torn between different desires or allegiances.

J. The "*Nengge*" (eat) and the "*Nengge*" (drink)

Here clearly present the "*Nengge*" (eat) and the "*Nengge*" (drink) The Lani language provides a unique case of homophony with the word "*Nengge*." *Nengge* means *eat*, the act of consuming solid food such as sweet potatoes, taro, or vegetables. *Nenggwe* also means *drink*, the act of consuming liquid such as water or traditional beverages.

Both meanings use the same form in pronunciation and spelling, but the actual sense depends entirely on the object and context.

- In the sentence "*We Nengge sweet potatoes together*" → here *Nengge* means to eat.
- In the sentence "*They Nengge water from the river*" → here *Nengge* means to drink.

This case shows that in the Lani language, the homophone *Phyramid* can cover even the most basic daily activities, where one word carries multiple essential meanings. Interpretation is only possible through contextual and cultural cues.

The Lani language, spoken by the indigenous people of Papua, Indonesia, offers a fascinating glimpse into the complexities of human communication through its unique linguistic features. One particularly intriguing aspect is the homophony of the word "*Nengge*," which serves as both a verb meaning "to eat" and "to drink." This dual usage not only highlights the richness of the Lani language but also reflects the cultural significance of food and drink in the daily lives of its speakers.

To begin with, the term "*Nengge*" as it pertains to eating encompasses a broad spectrum of food consumption practices. In the Lani culture, meals are often communal events, where family and friends gather to share food. The act of eating is not merely a means of sustenance; it is a ritual that fosters social bonds and reinforces community ties. For instance, traditional dishes such as sweet potatoes, taro, and various vegetables are not only staples of the Lani diet but also carry deep cultural significance. These foods are often harvested from the surrounding land, symbolizing a connection to nature and the environment. The preparation and sharing of these meals can involve elaborate processes, from planting and harvesting to cooking and serving, each step imbued with cultural meaning.

Moreover, the significance of "*Nengge*" as a term for drinking reveals similar cultural dimensions. In Lani communities, the consumption of liquids—whether water or traditional beverages—serves as an essential aspect of daily life. Water, often sourced from local springs or rivers, is vital for survival, particularly in the humid tropical climate of Papua. On the other hand, traditional drinks, which may include fermented beverages or herbal infusions, play a crucial role in social gatherings and ceremonies.

K. "*Kolee*" (older) and "*Kolee*" (leader)

Here's how to present "*Kolee*" (older) and "*Kolee*" (leader) The word "*Kolee*" in the Lani language is a homophone with two distinct meanings: *Kolee* means *older*, referring to



someone who has more age or seniority. *Kolee* also means *leader*, referring to someone who has authority, responsibility, and influence within the tribe or community.

Although both share the same spelling and pronunciation, the interpretation relies on context.

- In the sentence "*He is Kolee in the family*" here *Kolee* means older sibling or elder person.
- In the sentence "*He is Kolee of the village*" here *Kolee* means leader or head of the community.

This shows how the homophone Pyramid in the Lani language encodes not only material and daily activities but also social hierarchy and leadership roles, demonstrating the richness of semantic layers.

To begin with, the interpretation of "*Kolee*" as "older" encompasses more than just a numerical age; it signifies respect, wisdom, and experience. In many cultures, age is revered, and the Lani people are no exception. An older person in the community is often seen as a repository of knowledge, with life experiences that contribute to their understanding of social norms, traditions, and values. For instance, an elder in the Lani community may share stories of past events, imparting lessons learned through hardship and triumph. These narratives serve not only to entertain but also to educate younger generations about their heritage and the importance of cultural continuity.

Transitioning to the second interpretation of "*Kolee*," we encounter the concept of leadership. Here, "*Kolee*" embodies authority, responsibility, and influence. In the Lani context, a leader is not merely someone who holds a position of power; rather, they are a figure who earns the trust and respect of their community through their actions and decisions. A "*Kolee*" in this sense is expected to demonstrate qualities such as integrity, empathy, and vision. For example, a leader may spearhead initiatives aimed at improving community welfare, such as organizing educational programmes or health clinics. Their ability to inspire and mobilise others is crucial in fostering a sense of collective purpose and direction.

The relationship between being "older" and being a "leader" in the Lani culture is intricate and significant. Often, the most respected leaders are those who have attained the status of "older" within the community. This connection suggests that leadership is not solely a function of age or position but is also deeply rooted in the respect and trust that one garners over time. An elder who has served the community faithfully and has demonstrated sound judgment is more likely to be viewed as a leader, thereby reinforcing the idea that true leadership is earned through experience and wisdom.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the data analysis from the pre-test and post-test, it can be concluded that there are clear differences in the understanding and use of homophone pyramid language among participants of different age groups within the Lani tribe. Participants aged 18–26 years showed better improvement in recognizing and interpreting homophone words after the post-test compared to those aged 27–40 years. This indicates that younger participants tend to adapt more quickly to language variations and changes in pronunciation or meaning. Meanwhile, the older participants (27–40 years) demonstrated a deeper understanding of traditional language use but were less responsive to new or evolving homophone forms. Overall, the findings show that age plays an important role in language comprehension and usage within the Lani community.



The homophone pyramid language reflects both the cultural richness and linguistic dynamics of the Lani tribe, where generational differences influence the preservation and interpretation of language forms. The study also identified several instances of lexical homophony, such as *tu* (“door” / “road”), *mayu* (“rain” / “salt”), *nengge* (“eat” / “drink”), *ngilu* (“cucumber” / “snack”), *eyo* (“tree” / “barren”), *kolee* (“leader” / “older man”), *abila* (“pregnant” / “stomach”), and *anuka* (“head” / “Anuak tribe”). These examples reveal that meaning in the Lani language is determined primarily through contextual cues and pragmatic interpretation. Overall, the findings highlight the dynamic nature of the Lani language and demonstrate how generational differences influence the preservation and evolution of indigenous linguistic forms in Papua Pegunungan

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