



TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT POWERPOINT USE AS AN ICT TOOL FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY IN VIETNAM

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Abstract

This paper reports a mixed-methods study designed to explore teachers' perceptions about using PowerPoint (PPT) as an ICT (Information and Communications Technology) tool in vocabulary teaching in Kien Giang province, Vietnam. The data were collected from questionnaire and interviews. Participants were sixty EFL teachers from five colleges in Kien Giang province. The findings reveal that participating teachers perceived PowerPoint use in vocabulary instruction as a useful instructional tool; however, there was no significant difference in their perceptions. These participants reported obstacles such as time investment, insufficient knowledge in information technology (IT), and lack of IT facilities. Pedagogical implications are made to encourage the potential use of PPT in vocabulary instruction.

Keywords: perception, PowerPoint, vocabulary, college

1. Introduction

PowerPoint has been widely adopted as an effective presentational tool for delivering course content and facilitating student learning (e.g., [Adams, 2006](#); [Knight, Paroutis, & Heracleous, 2018](#); [Mahin, 2004](#)) and particularly in language teaching and learning ([Abdellatif, 2015](#); [Alkash & Al-Dersi, 2013](#); [Dang, 2009](#); [Ta, 2012](#); [Wanner, 2015](#)). This instructional visual tool is therefore an innovative and complementary way to promote student learning of language skills that include vocabulary. Vocabulary plays a major part of language proficiency and use ([Le & Nguyen, 2012](#); [Richards & Renandya, 2002](#); [Schmitt, 2000](#)); therefore, teachers employ PowerPoint as an alternative to the traditional approach using flashcards and pictures in vocabulary instruction. This influential impact of the PowerPoint use in teaching vocabulary has been documented in the literature ([Hanardi, 2015](#); [Shoari & Farrokhi, 2014](#); [Ta, 2012](#); [Ta & Trinh, 2015](#)). However, in the context of teaching and learning English as a foreign language in Vietnam, especially in Kien Giang province, it was observed that this potential tool is neglected. Also, majority of teachers in this region use blackboards or translation to

interpret new words in vocabulary lessons, and thus, this traditional approach of vocabulary instruction to some extent is not an effective way to allow learners to communicate in English ([Pham & Nguyen, 2017](#)). In addition, there is a paucity of research into this aspect in the Mekong Delta and Kien Giang Province in particular. The current study is therefore aimed at examining teachers' perceptions about the use of PowerPoint in vocabulary teaching in Kien Giang province.

2. The literature

The following section reviews the literature on vocabulary, ICT and PowerPoint with regard to how these were defined for this study.

2.1 Vocabulary

Vocabulary as knowledge of words has witnessed its role in providing learners with how to use language skills for proficiency for several decades ([Laufer, Elder, Hill, & Congdon, 2004](#); [Laufer & Nation, 1999](#); [Milton, 2009](#); [Richards & Renandya, 2002](#)). This implies the idea that vocabulary is a major part in language learning, understanding the meaning of words, and mastering the world of information around us ([Papadopoulou, 2007](#)). Thus, learners are encouraged to learn a large number of words to become proficient and fluent in English ([Schmitt, 2010](#)). From these perspectives, vocabulary instruction through PowerPoint becomes the focus of this study.

2.2 Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) literally refers to technological tools and resources to communicate and process information ([Blurton, 1999](#); [Newhouse, 2002](#); [Semenov, 2005](#)). These sources include computer applications and internet services that involve communication. Five areas ICTs can contribute to education include access expansion, efficiency promotion, improvements in quality of learning and teaching, and management enrichment. It is also to be noted as a useful method to provide opportunities for students and teachers to communicate with each other effectively during formal and informal teaching and learning ([Ghasemi & Hashemi, 2011](#); [Yusuf, 2005](#)). In particular, in the educational context, ICT provides practitioners and learners with creative and practical ideas to have a learner-friendly environment, increased motivation, active learning, and better access to sources of information. Thus, ICT and foreign language teaching are closely related in ways that the integration of this potential computer technology allows learners to facilitate their learning experience, enhance the quality of teaching and learning, and importantly use the target language efficiently and meaningfully in the digital world.

2.3 PowerPoint

Research into PowerPoint (PPT) use has indicated its nature and effects in the field of language teaching and learning for more than three decades ([Baker, Goodboy,](#)

[Bowman, & Wright, 2018](#)). Statistics show that PPT as digital presentational tool can be loaded on approximately 400 million computers worldwide ([James, Burke, & Hutchins, 2006](#)) and found on over 250 million computers ([Baker et al., 2018](#)), indicating its ubiquitous search and use in business, higher education and other aspects of life. In the educational context, PPT-based lessons can appeal to both teachers and learners in the sense that they help us understand the use of text while processing information ([Farcas, 2005](#)), encourage productive learning activity ([Amare, 2006](#); [Harrison, 1998](#)) increase visibility ([Fritschi, 2008](#)) and maintain attention ([Baker et al., 2018](#)). PPT presentations thus allow teachers to produce professional-looking presentations in EFL classroom contexts. PPT is also viewed as a visual perspective of meaning-making ([Knight et al., 2018](#)). These authors stress the role of visuals that promote learners' new ideas and communicate strategies to others in the learning process.

2.4 PowerPoint and vocabulary instruction

Several studies have shown that PowerPoint and vocabulary teaching and learning are closely interrelated ([Alkash & Al-Dersi, 2013](#); [Farahnia & Khodi, 2017](#); [Ta, 2012](#); [Ta & Trinh, 2015](#)). These authors indicate that the use of PowerPoint contributes to learners' vocabulary achievement and positive attitudes towards this presentational tool.

A study by Ta and Trinh (2012) reported on the impact of PowerPoint on teaching vocabulary in English classes in a Vietnamese secondary school showed that learners' vocabulary retention was enhanced and their attitudes towards the use of PowerPoint in teaching and learning vocabulary were positive. Moreover, their study indicated that PowerPoint was substantially beneficial in promoting learners' motivation, engagement and participation when learning English.

Alkash and Al-Dersi (2013) carried out their research to explore the benefits PowerPoint could provide for both the EFL teacher and learners in Sebha and the actual use of PowerPoint in the Libyan EFL classrooms of the University of Sebha. 111 EFL students of the department of English Language and Translation Studies of the University of Sebha participated and were interviewed to collect the data for this study. The results revealed that PPT use could enrich the text information and make the presentation more organized and flexible. Moreover, it could also assist in sustaining learners' attention for successful learning.

A study by Mulyanah (2018) investigated whether the PPT program could improve 12th grade students' vocabulary mastery at an Indonesian school. The results showed that students improved their vocabulary through this visual instruction.

These above-mentioned studies suggest that despite the positive impact of PPT use in English language learning and vocabulary lessons, little research has been conducted with regard to faculty perceptions about this presentational instruction at tertiary level. This paper therefore adds to the literature of PPT use in vocabulary teaching.

3. The study

A mixed-methods design was used in this study to investigate teachers' perceptions about PPT use as an ICT tool in vocabulary teaching in Kien Giang province, Mekong Delta, Vietnam. This type of research involving both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection can provide insightful views of a particular topic under investigation ([Creswell, 2014](#); [Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009](#)).

Questionnaires and interviews were investigative tools for collecting data of this study. The questionnaires had two sections. While Section One focuses on participants' personal information (gender, age, and years of teaching experience at college), Section Two consists of 30 items (27 close-ended items and 3 open-ended ones) regarding teachers' perceptions about the use of PowerPoint in vocabulary instruction. All 27 items in Section Two are categorized into three clusters: teachers' perceptions about advantages of PPT use in vocabulary instruction (items 1-17), disadvantages (items 18-23) and its necessity (items 24-27). The three open-ended items were asked about teachers' views of PPT-based vocabulary lessons and suggestions for difficulties while teaching. The questionnaire was piloted to 29 teachers of English and the reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed with the Cronbach's alpha at .88. Interview questions were designed in English and then translated into Vietnamese to ensure the participants could understand the questions and express their views freely and naturally. Each interview took approximately half an hour.

Participants in this study were sixty EFL teachers (50 females and 10 males) from five colleges in Kien Giang province. Their ages range from 24 to 50. At the time of the study, the range of teachers' years of experiences at the college was two to twenty-seven years. 26 teachers earned masters' degree in Principles and Methods in English Language Education; and the rest had bachelor's degree in English Language Education. This study was conducted within a fifteen-week semester of the academic year 2017-2018.

The quantitative data collected from the questionnaire were statistically analyzed using the computer software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 20. The interview responses were recorded, transcribed, and then organized using thematic analysis ([Boyatzis, 1998](#)).

4. Findings

4.1 Findings from questionnaire

4.1.1 Teachers' perceptions about advantages of using PPT in vocabulary lessons

The *Descriptive Statistics Test* was computed to examine teachers' perceptions about advantages of PPT use in vocabulary lessons. The results of the test are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Teachers' perceptions about advantages of using PPT in vocabulary lessons

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Advantages	60	2.29	5.00	4.0657	.52065
Valid N (listwise)	60				

Table 4.1 shows that the mean scores of teachers' perceptions about advantages of PPT use in vocabulary lessons was at a high level ($M=4.06$; $SD=.52$) in comparison with the five-point scale.

A *One-Sample t-Test* was conducted to confirm whether the mean score of teachers' perceptions about this instructional method was significantly different from the accepted mean for high level. However, the results of the test (Table 4.2) show that no significant difference was found between the sample mean ($M=4.06$; $SD=.52$) and the accepted mean at 4.0 ($t=.97$, $df= 59$, $p=.33$).

Table 4.2: One-Sample *t-Test* of advantages of PPT use in vocabulary lessons

	Test Value = 4.0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
					Lower	Upper
Advantages	.977	59	.332	.06569	-.0688	.2002

Table 4.3 below presents the percentages of teachers responding to each of the seventeen items regarding the advantages of PPT use in vocabulary lessons.

Table 4.3: Percentages of teachers' perceptions about PPT use in vocabulary lessons

	D& SD		N		A& SA	
	F	P	F	P	F	P
1. PPT can engage learners' attention in learning vocabulary.	0	0.0	2	3.3	58	96.7
2. Teaching vocabulary through PPT can make the classroom atmosphere more interesting	2	3.3	4	6.7	54	90
3. Teaching vocabulary through PPT can heighten learners' interest.	1	1.7	8	13.3	51	85
4. Teaching vocabulary through PPT can help learners understand the word meanings easily.	0	0.0	9	15	51	85
5. Photos, texts, sound and colors in PPT lessons can help learners recall the lesson contents	2	3.3	3	5.0	56	93.3
6. Learners can comprehend and remember vocabulary longer when using PPT	2	3.3	8	13.3	50	83.3
7. It is easier to learn vocabulary through PPT.	3	5.0	4	6.7	53	88.3
8. It is more effective to learn vocabulary through PPT.	2	3.3	6	10	52	86.6
9. It is more interesting to learn vocabulary through PPT.	1	1.7	3	5.0	56	93.3
10. Learners can become more active when the teacher uses PPT in vocabulary lessons.	4	6.7	7	11.7	49	81.7
11. When the teacher uses PPT to teach vocabulary, learners can take notes more easily.	11	18.4	7	11.7	42	70
12. Illustrations through pictures or videos, animations are shown lively and comprehensive in PPT lessons.	0	0.0	2	3.3	58	96.7
13. Teaching vocabulary through PPT helps learners remember the	3	5.0	11	18.3	46	76.6

lesson quickly.						
14. Teaching vocabulary through PPT helps learners get high test scores.	12	20	29	48.3	19	31.6
15. Using PPT in teaching vocabulary helps the teacher save talking time.	2	3.3	11	18.3	44	73.3
16. When using PPT, learners can have more time to practice vocabulary.	6	10	19	31.7	35	58.4
17. PPT vocabulary lessons can be used in other classes for many times.	0	0.0	8	13.3	52	86.6

Notes: F: frequency; P: percentage; D &SD: disagree and strongly disagree; N: neutral; A &SA: agree and strongly agree

The results reveal that teachers perceived PowerPoint as a positive way to teach vocabulary to learners for each of the items surveyed. In particular, 96.7% (n=58) representing the highest response rate of the participants believed that PPT could engage learners' attention in learning vocabulary and that its lively and comprehensive illustrations such as pictures, videos, and animations got them involved. 93.3% (n=56) of the surveyed teachers agreed that photos, texts, sound and colors in PPT-based vocabulary lessons could assist learners in recalling the lesson contents and that these PPT lessons were more interesting than those without PPTs. 90% (n=54) of the teachers indicated that PPT could make the classroom atmosphere more interesting. 88.3% (n=53) of responses showed that PPT could make vocabulary learning easier. 86.6% (n=52) of teachers agreed that it was more effective to learn lexicon through PPT and that PPT-based vocabulary lessons could be reused in other classes for several times. 85% (n=51) of the teachers indicated that teaching vocabulary through PPT could heighten learners' interest and that this type of visual instruction could help students understand the word meanings easily. 83.3% (n=50) of the respondents believed that learners could comprehend and remember vocabulary longer when teachers applying PPT in classroom. 81.7% (n=49) of the teachers stated that learners could become more active through PPT use. 76.6% (n=46) of participants agreed that PPT-based vocabulary instruction could help students remember the lesson quickly. 73.3% (n=44) of the teachers revealed that PPT use in vocabulary lessons could assist them in saving talking time. 70% (n=42) of the participants revealed that when teachers used PPT to teach vocabulary, learners could take notes easily. 58.4% (n=35) of responses agreed that when using PPT, learners were able to have more time to practice vocabulary. 31.6% (n=19) of participants considered this type of visual presentation could help students get high test scores.

4.1.2 Teachers' perceptions about disadvantages of PPT use in vocabulary lessons

The *Descriptive Statistics Test* was employed to examine the mean scores of teachers' perceptions about disadvantages of PowerPoint use in vocabulary lessons. The results of the test are outlined in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Teachers' perceptions about disadvantages of PPT use in vocabulary lessons

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD.
Disadvantages	60	2.17	4.83	3.8722	.61015
Valid N (listwise)	60				

As can be seen from the Table 4.4, the total mean score of teachers' perceptions about disadvantages of PPT use in vocabulary lessons was quite high ($M=3.87$; $SD=.61$) as compared to the accepted mean for average level ($M=3.0$) on the five-point scale.

Table 4.5: One-Sample *t*-Test of disadvantages of PPT use in vocabulary lessons

	Test Value = 4.0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Disadvantages	-1.622	59	.110	-.12778	-.2854	.0298

A *One-Sample t-Test* was run to check whether the mean scores was significantly different from the accepted mean for high level with regard to teachers' perceptions about disadvantages of PowerPoint in vocabulary instruction. However, the results of the test, as shown in Table 4.5, show that the mean score of teachers' perceptions about disadvantages of PPT use in vocabulary lessons ($M=3.87$; $SD=.61$) was not significantly different from 4.0 ($t= -1.62$, $df= 59$, $p=.11$).

Table 4.6 reveals teachers' responses regarding the disadvantages while using PPT in their vocabulary lessons. In particular, 90% ($n=54$) of the participants indicated that designing PPT-based vocabulary tasks was difficult for those who were not good at IT. 88.4% ($n=53$) of the surveyed teachers agreed that PPT lessons would be less interesting if lack of technical equipment (e.g., projectors and digital TV). 86.6% ($n=52$) of the respondents revealed that PPT lessons could be uninteresting if teachers often paid more attention to the screen than interacting with students. 78.3% ($n=47$) of the participants identified that teachers spent lots of time finding appropriate ways to instruct vocabulary (e.g. pictures, videos, and sounds). 56.6% ($n=34$) of the participants indicated that the vocabulary lessons would be boring if teachers overused texts in the slides. 46.7% of responses ($n=28$) believed that vocabulary instruction through PowerPoint took much time.

Table 4.6: Percentages of teachers' perceptions about disadvantages of PPT use in vocabulary lessons

	D& SD		N		A& SA	
	F	P	F	P	F	P
18. It takes time to teach vocabulary through PPT.	23	38.4	9	15	28	46.7
19. Teachers spend a lot of time finding appropriate ways to teach vocabulary (e.g., pictures, videos, and sounds)	3	5.0	10	16.7	47	78.3
20. Lack of technical equipment (e.g., projectors and digital TV) makes PPT lessons less interesting.	3	5.0	4	6.7	53	88.4
21. PPT lessons can be boring if the teacher often pays more	6	10	2	3.35	52	86.6

attention to the screen than interacting with students.						
22. Overusing PPT based texts will make the lessons boring.	16	26.6	10	16.7	34	56.6
23. Designing tasks using PPT (matching, picture ordering, or games) is difficult if the teacher is not good at information technology.	4	6.7	2	3.35	54	90

4.1.3 Teachers' perceptions about the necessity of PPT use in vocabulary lessons

The *Descriptive Statistics Test* was used to investigate teachers' perceptions about necessity of using PowerPoint in vocabulary lessons, as shown in Table 4.7. The mean score of teachers' perceptions about the necessity of PPT use in vocabulary lessons was at a quite high level ($M= 3.68$; $SD= .66$).

Table 4.7: Mean of teachers' perceptions about necessity of using PPT in vocabulary lessons

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD.
Mean Necessity	60	2.00	5.00	3.6875	.66642
Valid N (listwise)	60				

A *One-Sample t-Test* was computed to determine whether the mean score was significantly different from the accepted mean for high level ($M=3.5$) with regard to teachers' perceptions about necessity of PPT use in vocabulary lessons. The results of the test, as demonstrated in Table 4.8, show that the sample mean ($M=3.87$; $SD= .61$) was not significantly different from 3.5 ($t= 2.17$, $df= 59$, $p=.33$).

Table 4.8: One-Sample *t*-Test of necessity of PPT use in vocabulary lessons

Test Value = 3.5						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Necessity	2.179	59	.033	.18750	.0153	.3597

Table 4.9 reveals teachers' responses regarding the necessity of PPT use in vocabulary instruction. 73.4% ($n=44$) of the teachers acknowledged the necessity of this type of instruction and identified students' preference for learning vocabulary through PPT. More than two-third (66.7%) and nearly half (45%) of the respondents identified the need for frequent practice of PPT-based vocabulary lessons and their preference for this type of instruction, respectively.

Table 4.9: Percentages of teachers' perceptions about necessity of PPT use in vocabulary lessons

	D& SD		N		A& SA	
	F	P	F	P	F	P
24. Teachers realize that learners like to learn vocabulary through PPT.	3	5.0	13	21.7	44	73.4
25. Teachers like using PPT in most of vocabulary lessons.	9	15	24	40	27	45
26. Using PPT in teaching vocabulary is necessary.	2	3.3	14	23.3	44	73.4
27. Teachers should often teach vocabulary using PPT.	4	6.7	16	26.7	40	66.7

4.2 Findings from the interviews

4.2.1 Teachers' perceptions about advantages of PPT use in vocabulary lessons

Analysis from the interview data indicates that all of six interviewed teachers shared the same view that PowerPoint was useful in vocabulary lessons. Its usefulness involves engaging learners' attention, creating active and comfortable learning environments, assisting learners in understanding and remembering effectively, enhancing teachers' expertise in IT, reusing the PowerPoint-based lessons, and increasing learners' practicing time.

A. Engaging learners' attention

All of the teachers revealed that PowerPoint could engage learners' attention and helped them concentrate on learning vocabulary through interesting images and sounds. This view is illustrated in the following comments from two teachers (Mai and Lan):

"...PPT use can attract my learners' attention and help them understand the contents of the vocabulary lessons through lively illustrations." (Mai, interview extract)

"...PPT helps me to use colored pictures to make my learners eager about the lessons." (Lan, interview extract)

B. Creating active and comfortable learning environments

Two teachers (Cuc and Truc) agreed that the PowerPoint-based vocabulary lessons could create active and comfortable learning environment. The interviewees expressed:

"...I usually use games through PowerPoint slides to get my learners focus and feel at ease." (Cuc, interview extract)

"...Thanks to this presentational tool, I can see my learners learn new words in a game in a friendly atmosphere." (Truc, interview extract)

C. Assisting the learners in understanding and remembering words

Six participating teachers believed that using PowerPoint in vocabulary lessons could aid learners in understanding and remembering words quickly and effectively. The examples of two teachers' views are presented below.

"...Yes, lively pictures can allow my learners to recall the lesson contents and review them easier." (Hung, interview extract)

"...Moreover, lively illustrations also give learners good impressions of the meanings of new words." (Tin, interview extract)

D. Enhancing teachers' qualification in using information technology

Two participants (Mai and Cuc) indicated that teachers' ability of using information technology was enhanced over time by employing PowerPoint presentations while teaching vocabulary. They stated:

"...I also learn more about how to use IT in teaching new words." (Mai, interview extract)

"...I can learn how to use IT in order to design many effective vocabulary lessons." (Cuc, interview extract)

E. Reusing the PowerPoint-based lessons

Four participants shared that they could reuse the PPT-based vocabulary lessons. The two examples below illustrate their views:

"I can use the PowerPoint designed vocabulary lesson in many classes." (Truc, interview extract)

"I apply the PowerPoint based lessons for several classes with the same vocabulary lesson contents." (Tin, interview extract)

F. Increasing learners' practicing time

Two participants (Hung and Lan) responded that teachers' talking time was decreased and learners' practicing time was increased in vocabulary classrooms using PowerPoint. They stated:

"...I often apply PowerPoint in my vocabulary lessons because this allows my learners to talk more in English instead of listening to my explanations for each word." (Hung, interview extract)

"...I can save time when teaching vocabulary using PPT slides instead of writing key words from the text passage on the board" (Lan, interview extract)

4.2.2 Teachers' perceptions about disadvantages of PowerPoint use in vocabulary lessons

Interviewees were asked about the difficulties which they often encountered in teaching vocabulary using PowerPoint and their solutions for these problems. Three themes emerged from the interview data include time-consuming issue, limited qualification in IT, and lack of classroom IT facilities.

A. Time-consuming issue

Five interviewees answered that it took a lot of time to design a vocabulary lesson using PowerPoint for interesting demonstrations. For example, three interviewees stated:

*"...I have to spend a lot of time designing the vocabulary lessons by PowerPoint."
(Mai, interview extract)*

"...The first disadvantage of using PowerPoint is that time consuming. I have to spend a lot of time to find the suitable photos, videos, animations" (Lan, interview extract).

"...Time is a big problem for me. You know, preparing PowerPoint slides for presenting vocabulary to get learners' attention is not an easy thing, too." (Hung, interview extract)

B. Limited qualification (skill) in IT

Three of six participants thought that lack of IT skills is also their difficulty when they employ PowerPoint to teach vocabulary. They said:

*"...I often get difficulties about my ability to use information technology in teaching."
(Cuc, interview extract)*

"...I am not good at using information technology in teaching context." (Truc, interview extract)

*"...I was confused to retrieve information on some slides hyperlinked with interpretation of words when there was no connection between the computer and digital TV transition."
(Tin, interview extract)*

C. Lack of classroom IT facilities

Two teachers (Mai and Tin) complained about the lack of computer facilities or network problems at their classes. They shared:

*"...Sometimes, neither overhead projector nor digital TV broadcasting was available at my school. Thus, I found it hard to present the lesson prepared via TV transition."
(Mai, interview extract)*

"...Occasionally, as more teachers needed to use technical devices at the same time, I could not check out mobile devices such as projectors or access digital TV-equipped lecture room." (Tin, interview extract)

Moreover, Truc and Tin indicated that failure to use technology also prevented teachers' success from integrating the use of PowerPoint into vocabulary lessons. They stated:

"...Occasionally, there is a blackout (no electricity) while I am teaching. So I cannot use PowerPoint to teach vocabulary." (Truc, interview extract)

"...I also meet the problem with the facilities at school including old projectors or TVs. Moreover, I suddenly get the effected files, so I cannot continue my PowerPoint lessons." (Tin, interview extract)

4.2.3 Teachers' perceptions about necessity of PPT use in vocabulary lessons

Participating teachers were asked if they employed PowerPoint in vocabulary instruction. All of the participants shared that they often used PowerPoint to teach vocabulary because this type of interactive instructional tool could help students learn vocabulary. The following extracts illustrate their views.

"...I think teachers should often use PowerPoint in teaching vocabulary." (Mai, interview extract)

"...As a leader, I strongly encourage my colleagues applying IT especially PowerPoint in teaching vocabulary." (Lan, interview extract)

"...I have the vocabulary lessons using PowerPoint about 80% and connect various approaches such as games, videos, reality." (Cuc, interview extract)

"...Very often, I employ more than 90% of the lessons used PowerPoint in teaching vocabulary." (Truc, interview extract)

5. Discussion

The findings of the study reveal that teachers perceived the usefulness of PowerPoint in vocabulary instruction although there were some challenges for this practice. Analysis from the questionnaire data indicates that PowerPoint was a good ICT tool versus traditional instruction such as blackboards. This finding is consistent with prior studies by several researchers (e.g., [Alkash & Al-Dersi, 2013](#); [Apperson, Laws, & Scepansky, 2006](#); [Baker et al., 2018](#); [Szabo & Hastings, 2000](#)). These authors contend that PowerPoint is useful for attracting and sustaining learners' attention. A possible explanation for this claim is that this type of visual instruction was effective in getting learners focused on main points, communicating ideas and having fun. Moreover, these findings reinforce a study by Dang ([2009](#)) who confirms that PowerPoint could make lessons more interesting and heighten learners' interests.

Participating teachers perceived PowerPoint as a useful device to combine text, images, and videos, thereby assisting learners in remembering vocabulary quickly. This supports the claim by the findings of other researchers (e.g., [Savoy, Proctor, & Salvendy, 2009](#); [Shoari & Farrokhi, 2014](#); [Ta & Trinh, 2015](#)) who indicate that learners' vocabulary retention is increased when teachers deliver this visual tool.

Participating teachers identified that through PPT-based delivery, their talking time was reduced whereas learners had more time to practice vocabulary. They further indicated that PPT-based lessons or designs could be reused in different classes. These findings confirm the literature on how PPT as a multimedia tool can be integrated into classroom learning ([Roblyer, 2015](#)), modified and used several times ([Miltenoff & Rodgers, 2003](#)).

The findings from the interviews reveal three challenges perceived by participants include time-consuming issue, lack of IT qualification and lack of classroom facilities while designing vocabulary lessons. This may be attributed to their understanding about and inexperience in using PPT instruction in their teaching practices ([Fritschi, 2008](#)). Understanding such constraints suggests that teachers should consider how, why and when to design PPT presentations and incorporate them into their vocabulary instruction ([Baker et al., 2018](#); [Pugsley, 2010](#)).

6. Conclusions

The findings from this study reveal that participating teachers at Kien Giang colleges perceived PowerPoint use in vocabulary instruction as an ICT tool although no significant differences were found. In particular, these teachers perceived that this visual tool benefited them in several ways through engaging learners' attention, creating an interactive learning atmosphere, sustaining word retention, and increasing learners' talking time. However, it was observed that these teachers indicated some challenges that prevented them from teaching vocabulary through PowerPoint. These challenges include time constraints, limited qualification in IT, and lack of IT facilities.

Several pedagogical implications for both teachers and school administrators are also presented from this current study. It is necessary that teachers should learn how to use IT to integrate PowerPoint slides or designs into vocabulary lessons to enhance the quality of learner learning English. For administrators, providing opportunities for teachers to attend professional development training courses or seminars on the use of PowerPoint in language learning classrooms is essential. If these can be done, teachers can share experiences in exploiting PowerPoint features with their colleagues to improve their PowerPoint-based vocabulary lessons. Heads of schools or faculty deans need to provide sufficient and timely financial support to teachers so that they can include quality PowerPoint presentations in inspiring learners' interests in vocabulary lessons over time.

About the authors

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