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Exploring the impacts of PowerPoint presentation on English major students' engagement and learning

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ABSTRACT

PowerPoint presentations have become a commonly used instructional medium in university classrooms, including English language teaching. This study examined English-major students' perceptions of PowerPoint use in relation to classroom engagement and learning at the Department of English Language and Literature, Kabul University. A quantitative descriptive survey design was employed. From a target population of 221 undergraduate students, 143 students were selected. Data were collected through a structured online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The instrument was adapted from an existing measure and comprised 24 items organised around two dimensions: classroom engagement and learning. Responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Content validity was assessed through review by two departmental experts, while a pilot study involving 20 students produced a Cronbach's alpha of 0.83. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarise the data. The results showed an overall mean of 3.89 (SD = 0.94) for engagement and 3.89 (SD = 0.90) for learning. Within engagement, the highest mean was recorded for ease of following and understanding presentations (M = 4.19, SD = 0.69), whereas the lowest related to the need for extensive note-taking (M = 3.64, SD = 1.04). For learning, reviewing key points received the highest mean (M = 4.23, SD = 0.69), followed by clarity and readability of slide text (M = 4.21, SD = 0.68). The lowest learning-related mean concerned presentations preventing boredom (M = 3.72, SD = 1.04). Overall, students held generally positive perceptions of PowerPoint use for engagement and learning.

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INTRODUCTION

Technology has become an established component of contemporary education. In language classrooms, digital tools can be used to present information, organize instructional materials, support visual explanation, and provide students with different forms of access to lesson content. The integration of computer technology is particularly relevant to language teaching because language learning frequently requires learners to work with written language, images, audio, examples, exercises, and other forms of representation. Lari (2014) explains that computer technology can support multimodal practice, feedback, individualized learning in large classes, collaborative work, and the development of skills connected to real-life contexts.

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Among the digital tools available to teachers, Microsoft PowerPoint has remained a widely used presentation program. It allows lecturers to organize lesson content into a sequence of slides and to combine written text with images, formatting, diagrams, sound, animation, and other visual elements. In university classrooms, these functions can be used to structure lectures and make key points visible to students. PowerPoint lectures have consequently become common in many educational settings (Gier & Kreiner, 2009).

PowerPoint is particularly relevant to English language instruction because language lessons often involve examples that benefit from clear visual presentation. Vocabulary items, grammatical structures, definitions, short passages, questions, and examples can be placed on slides and presented in a planned sequence. Bolkan (2019) describes PowerPoint as presentation software that permits the use of colored text, images, sound, and animation. Hadiyanti and Widya (2018) similarly discuss the use of visual features to attract students' attention and support instruction.

The educational value of a presentation, however, depends on how it is designed and used. A slide presentation is a medium for delivering instructional content rather than an instructional method by itself. The organization of information, amount of text, selection of visual materials, sequence of examples, and relationship between the slides and classroom explanation can influence students' experience of a lesson. For this reason, examining students' perceptions can provide useful descriptive information about how PowerPoint is experienced in a particular classroom context.

Microsoft PowerPoint is used by educators and trainers in many educational settings and can be used to prepare structured instructional materials. Segundo and Salazar (2011) describe its use in English as a Foreign Language classrooms for presenting language-related materials. Croxton (2016) also identifies PowerPoint among the commonly used presentation programs, despite the availability of numerous alternative presentation applications.

A number of studies cited in the literature have examined students' experiences with PowerPoint. Ozaslan and Maden (2013) reported that students perceived visually presented material positively and associated PowerPoint with greater involvement in lessons. Nouri and Shahid (2005) examined students' perceptions of PowerPoint presentations in relation to learning and attitudes. Gier and Kreiner (2009) examined PowerPoint-based lectures incorporating active learning and reported effects related to student engagement and information processing.

Other studies have considered PowerPoint in language learning more specifically. Rajab and Ketabi (2012) examined the use of PowerPoint in relation to writing achievement and cohesive devices. Zouari (2015) investigated students' perceptions of PowerPoint in EFL classrooms and described it as a useful instructional tool when used appropriately. Corbeil (2007) examined whether PowerPoint presentations could serve as an effective learning tool in grammar instruction and reported students' preferences concerning presentation formats and visual features.

PowerPoint has also been considered from the perspective of motivation, attention, and classroom participation. Segundo and Salazar (2011) discussed its use for presenting new language structures, practice activities, and review materials. Fatema (2014) examined the impact of PowerPoint on students' learning and motivation. Yukiko and Wang (2016) discussed effective uses of PowerPoint and its potential to support interaction between teachers and students. Abdellatif (2015) reported students' perceptions concerning PowerPoint and active participation in EFL classrooms.

Student engagement is an important consideration because learning in a classroom involves more than exposure to instructional content. Engagement can involve attention to the lesson, participation in classroom activities, willingness to follow the presentation, enthusiasm, and mental involvement with the material. In the present study, engagement is examined through students' responses to statements concerning their ability to follow presentations, enthusiasm, use of class time, involvement in lessons, note-taking, attention, and thinking.

Learning is examined separately from engagement. The learning dimension includes students' perceptions of reviewing key points, clarity of slide text, the use of images, understanding concepts, visual support, interactive elements, memorization, enjoyment of learning, preference for PowerPoint lessons, acquisition of language elements, understanding complex topics, and boredom during class. The distinction between engagement and learning makes it possible to describe the two dimensions separately rather than treating all positive classroom experiences as a single outcome.

The literature reviewed for the study indicates that PowerPoint has been examined in different educational and language-learning contexts. Stepp-Greany (2002), for example, discussed students' perceptions of language learning in a technological environment, while Wanner (2015) examined student engagement and active learning in relation to PowerPoint and just-in-time teaching. Aifan (2022) considered PowerPoint-supported project-based collaborative learning and 21st-century skills. More recent work cited in the manuscript also addresses multimodal learning and student engagement (Pratiwi & Yulia, 2024; Hadizadeh, 2025).

Despite the existing literature, the present study focuses specifically on English major students at Kabul University. The study therefore describes students' perceptions within the local departmental context rather than attempting to generalize the findings to all university students or all EFL classrooms. The focus is on two dimensions, engagement and learning, measured through a structured questionnaire.

The study aims to examine whether students perceive PowerPoint presentations as contributing to their classroom engagement and learning. It also seeks to identify the specific aspects of PowerPoint use that receive higher or lower levels of agreement among the participants. The research addresses the following questions:

1. Do PowerPoint presentations contribute to better learning and engagement compared to traditional ways of teaching?
2. Does the use of computer-assisted PowerPoint presentations have an impact on students' attitudes toward learning and their engagement?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive survey research design to examine English major students' perceptions of PowerPoint presentations in relation to classroom engagement and learning. A descriptive survey design is suitable when the purpose is to collect standardized responses from a defined group and summarize participants' perceptions, attitudes, and reported experiences without manipulating an experimental condition. In this study, the design was used to obtain numerical descriptions of students' responses to statements concerning PowerPoint-supported instruction.

The study did not introduce a treatment group, control group, or experimental intervention. Instead, it collected students' reported perceptions of PowerPoint as it was experienced in their academic context. The resulting data were summarized using descriptive statistical measures. This approach is consistent with the stated purpose of describing students' engagement and learning perceptions rather than establishing a causal effect of PowerPoint use.

Population and Sampling

The target population consisted of 221 undergraduate students enrolled in the Department of English Language and Literature at Kabul University during the study period. The sample size was determined with reference to the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table. For a population of 221, the recommended minimum sample is approximately 140 participants. Accordingly, 143 students were selected for participation in the study.

The participants were male students enrolled in the third and fourth years of the English Language and Literature program. The original study reports an age range extending from 23 years to 27 years and above in the method section, while the demographic table presents categories of 17–19, 23–25, and 26 and above. The findings section reports the demographic frequencies exactly as presented in the data table. These figures are therefore retained without attempting to reconstruct information that is not available in the source.

The demographic characteristics provide contextual information about the participants whose responses were analyzed. The sample consisted entirely of male respondents. Participants were also categorized according to age, English proficiency, study shift, and marital status. These variables are reported descriptively and are not used in the present study to establish relationships or causal explanations.

Data Collection

Data were collected through a structured online questionnaire developed using Google Forms. The questionnaire link was distributed through departmental WhatsApp groups and, where possible, was shared directly with students during classroom sessions. Data collection took place over a period of three weeks in order to maximize participation.

Before responding to the questionnaire, participants were informed about the purpose of the study and were assured that their responses would remain anonymous and confidential. They

were informed that the information would be used solely for academic research purposes. Participation was voluntary. At the end of the data-collection period, 143 questionnaires had been completed and returned, producing a reported response rate of 100% for the selected sample.

Instrumentation

The study employed a structured questionnaire adapted from Giang (2024), which examined the effects of PowerPoint presentations on students' engagement and learning. Minor modifications were made to adapt the instrument to the Department of English Language and Literature at Kabul University. The questionnaire was organized around two dimensions: students' engagement and students' learning.

The instrument is described in the source as containing 24 items. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The engagement items addressed students' ability to follow presentations, enthusiasm, use of class time, engagement in lessons, note-taking, attention, and thinking. The learning items addressed review of key points, clarity of text, use of images and visuals, conceptual learning, interactive elements, memorization, enjoyment, lesson preference, language learning, understanding of complex topics, and boredom.

The use of a standardized response scale allowed participants to indicate the degree to which they agreed with each statement. Means and standard deviations were subsequently calculated for the individual items and for the two dimensions.

Validity and Reliability

Content validity was assessed by two experts from the Department of English Language and Literature at Kabul University. The experts reviewed the adapted questionnaire, and their comments and suggestions were incorporated before the instrument was administered. This procedure was used to assess whether the questionnaire items were appropriate for the study context and the dimensions being examined.

A pilot study involving 20 students was conducted to assess the reliability of the questionnaire. Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The questionnaire produced a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.83 across 24 items. This value indicates a satisfactory level of internal consistency for the instrument used in the study (George & Mallery, 2003).

Table 1. *Reliability Statistics*

Measure	Value
Cronbach's Alpha	0.83
Number of Items	24

Data Analysis

The collected data were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 24. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the responses.

Frequencies and percentages were used for demographic characteristics, while means and standard deviations were used to describe responses to the engagement and learning items. The descriptive approach allows the pattern of responses to be presented directly without making claims beyond the information contained in the collected data.

RESULTS

The findings are presented in three parts: demographic characteristics, students' engagement, and students' learning. The demographic section describes the composition of the 143 respondents. The engagement section reports the mean and standard deviation for each engagement item and the overall engagement score. The learning section reports the corresponding results for learning-related items. This section is limited to the data obtained from the participants and does not compare the results with previous research.

Demographic Characteristics

A total of 143 students participated in the study. All respondents were male, representing 100.0% of the sample. The age distribution consisted of 71 students (49.7%) aged 17–19 years, 53 students (37.1%) aged 23–25 years, and 19 students (13.3%) aged 26 years and above. The largest reported age group was therefore 17–19 years.

With respect to English proficiency, 88 respondents (61.5%) were classified as basic level, 49 respondents (34.3%) as intermediate level, and 6 respondents (4.2%) as advanced level. The basic-level group represented the largest proportion of the participants.

Table 2. *Demographic Characteristics of Participants*

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	143	100.0
Age	17–19	71	49.7
	23–25	53	37.1
	26 and above	19	13.3
English proficiency	Basic	88	61.5
	Intermediate	49	34.3
	Advanced	6	4.2
Shift	Night	75	52.4
	Day	68	47.6
Marital status	Married	118	82.5
	Single	25	17.5

Regarding study shift, 75 respondents (52.4%) were from the night shift and 68 respondents (47.6%) were from the day shift. In terms of marital status, 118 respondents (82.5%) were married and 25 respondents (17.5%) were single.

Students' Engagement

The engagement dimension consisted of statements addressing students' classroom experience while PowerPoint was used. The overall mean score for engagement was 3.89 on the five-point scale, with a standard deviation of 0.94.

The statement "It was easy to follow and understand the PowerPoint presentation" recorded the highest mean among the engagement items (M = 4.19, SD = 0.69). The statement "I feel enthusiastic when my lecturer uses PowerPoint for teaching" had the second-highest mean (M = 4.00, SD = 0.80). "PowerPoint helped to use class time efficiently" recorded a mean of 3.97 (SD = 0.91), while "The use of PowerPoint makes me more engaged in the lesson" recorded a mean of 3.90 (SD = 0.96).

The item "I could take better notes during the lesson with PowerPoint" had a mean of 3.87 (SD = 1.02). "The PowerPoint presentation held my attention throughout the class" recorded a mean of 3.81 (SD = 0.99). The statement "The PowerPoint presentation inspired my thinking" recorded a mean of 3.77 (SD = 0.96). The lowest mean in this dimension was recorded for "The presentation required extensive note-taking," with M = 3.64 and SD = 1.04.

The engagement results therefore show item-level means ranging from 3.64 to 4.19, with an overall mean of 3.89. The standard deviations ranged from 0.69 to 1.04 across the individual items.

Table 3. *Students' Engagement*

Engagement Item	Mean	SD
It was easy to follow and understand the PowerPoint presentation.	4.19	0.69
I feel enthusiastic when my lecturer uses PowerPoint for teaching.	4.00	0.80
PowerPoint helped to use class time efficiently.	3.97	0.91
The use of PowerPoint makes me more engaged in the lesson.	3.90	0.96
I could take better notes during the lesson with PowerPoint.	3.87	1.02
The PowerPoint presentation held my attention throughout the class.	3.81	0.99
The PowerPoint presentation inspired my thinking.	3.77	0.96
The presentation required extensive note-taking.	3.64	1.04
Overall mean score	3.89	0.94

Students' Learning

The learning dimension examined students' responses to statements concerning the presentation of course material, review, visual support, conceptual understanding, interactive elements, memorization, enjoyment, lesson preference, language learning, complex topics, and boredom. The overall mean score for learning was 3.89, with a standard deviation of 0.90.

The highest mean was recorded for the statement "PowerPoint helped to review key points during the lesson" (M = 4.23, SD = 0.69). The second-highest mean was recorded for "The text on PowerPoint slides is clear and easy to read" (M = 4.21, SD = 0.68). The statement "The use of images in PowerPoint slides enhances my learning" recorded M = 4.12 (SD = 0.87), while "I can learn the concepts well with PowerPoint presentations" recorded M = 4.04 (SD = 0.79).

Additional learning-related items recorded means of 4.03 for the statement that visuals enhance understanding (SD = 0.75), 4.02 for the benefit of interactive elements such as quizzes and links (SD = 0.79), and 4.02 for appreciation of the lecturer's consistent use of PowerPoint (SD = 0.77). "PowerPoint presentations aid in memorizing content better" recorded M = 3.99 (SD = 0.79).

The statement "PowerPoint presentations make the learning process more enjoyable" recorded M = 3.94 (SD = 0.96). "I prefer lessons with PowerPoint" recorded M = 3.93 (SD = 1.03), while "PowerPoint helped me learn more language elements" recorded M = 3.85 (SD = 1.00). "The use of PowerPoint increases my understanding of complex topics" recorded M = 3.83 (SD = 1.08).

The lowest mean among the listed learning items was recorded for "PowerPoint presentations keep me from getting bored in class" (M = 3.72, SD = 1.04). The statement "I prefer lessons without PowerPoint presentations" recorded M = 2.65 (SD = 1.48). The learning-item means therefore ranged from 2.65 to 4.23.

Table 4. *Students' Learning*

Learning Item	Mean	SD
PowerPoint helped to review key points during the lesson.	4.23	0.69
The text on PowerPoint slides is clear and easy to read.	4.21	0.68
The use of images in PowerPoint slides enhances my learning.	4.12	0.87
I can learn the concepts well with PowerPoint presentations.	4.04	0.79
The visuals in PowerPoint presentations enhance my understanding.	4.03	0.75
Interactive elements (e.g., quizzes, links) in PowerPoint are beneficial for learning.	4.02	0.79
I appreciate my lecturer's consistent use of PowerPoint for teaching and my learning.	4.02	0.77
PowerPoint presentations aid in memorizing content better.	3.99	0.79
PowerPoint presentations make the learning process more enjoyable.	3.94	0.96
I prefer lessons with PowerPoint.	3.93	1.03
PowerPoint helped me learn more language elements.	3.85	1.00
The use of PowerPoint increases my understanding of complex topics.	3.83	1.08
PowerPoint presentations keep me from getting bored in class.	3.72	1.04
I prefer lessons without PowerPoint presentations.	2.65	1.48
Overall mean score	3.89	0.90

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that the participants reported generally positive perceptions of PowerPoint presentations in both engagement and learning. The overall mean for engagement was 3.89, while the overall mean for learning was also 3.89. Although the two dimensions produced the same overall mean, the individual items reveal differences in the specific aspects of PowerPoint use that student valued most.

The highest engagement score was associated with ease of following and understanding the presentation (M = 4.19, SD = 0.69). This result suggests that, within the group studied, the organization and presentation of material through PowerPoint were perceived as relatively easy

to follow. The relatively small standard deviation indicates that responses were comparatively concentrated around the mean. Enthusiasm toward PowerPoint-supported teaching also received a relatively high mean of 4.00.

The results for class-time efficiency, lesson engagement, note-taking, attention, and thinking were somewhat lower but remained above the midpoint of the five-point scale. The item concerning extensive note-taking had the lowest engagement mean. This result should be interpreted in relation to the wording of the item: unlike most engagement statements, it describes a demand associated with the presentation rather than a positive experience. The result indicates that extensive note-taking was less strongly endorsed than the other engagement-related statements.

The learning results show that students placed particular value on PowerPoint as a means of reviewing key points. The highest mean in the learning dimension was 4.23 for the review item. Clear and readable slide text also received a high mean of 4.21. These results suggest that the students' positive responses were especially associated with the organization and visibility of instructional information.

Visual materials also received relatively high ratings. The mean for the use of images to enhance learning was 4.12, and the mean for visuals enhancing understanding was 4.03. Interactive elements received a mean of 4.02. These responses indicate that students recognized several different functions of presentation materials rather than responding positively to PowerPoint only as a method of displaying text.

The preference item provides an additional perspective. Students reported a mean of 3.93 for preferring lessons with PowerPoint, whereas the statement "I prefer lessons without PowerPoint presentations" had a lower mean of 2.65. The two responses therefore point in different directions and provide descriptive evidence of a general preference toward PowerPoint-supported lessons within the sample.

The findings can be considered alongside the previous literature cited in the study. Ozaslan and Maden (2013) reported positive student perceptions of PowerPoint in foreign language education, while Nouri and Shahid (2005) examined its relationship with student learning and attitudes. Gier and Kreiner (2009) incorporated active learning into PowerPoint-based lectures. These studies provide a basis for considering the present findings within existing work on presentation-supported instruction.

Research focused specifically on EFL classrooms also provides relevant points of comparison. Abdellatif (2015) examined students' perceptions of PowerPoint and active participation. Segundo and Salazar (2011) discussed PowerPoint for grammar and vocabulary learning. Corbeil (2007) considered PowerPoint in grammar instruction, while Zouari (2015) examined students' perceptions of PowerPoint in an EFL classroom. The present findings, particularly the relatively high scores for following presentations, reviewing key points, and visual support, are compatible with the general direction of these studies.

At the same time, the discussion should recognize that PowerPoint itself does not determine the quality of instruction. The results concern students' perceptions of PowerPoint-supported

lessons, and the questionnaire does not separately measure the quality of slide design, teaching method, lecturer preparation, classroom interaction, or the amount of time devoted to explanation. Therefore, the findings should be understood as evidence about students' reported experiences rather than as a direct experimental measurement of PowerPoint's causal effect on learning.

The results also indicate that positive responses were not equally strong across all items. The mean for understanding complex topics was 3.83, lower than the mean for reviewing key points and slide clarity. Similarly, the mean for avoiding boredom was 3.72. This variation is useful because it shows that students did not assign the same level of agreement to every possible benefit of PowerPoint. The use of PowerPoint may therefore be particularly valued for organization, review, readability, and visual support, while its perceived contribution to more complex forms of understanding or boredom reduction is comparatively lower.

The literature cited in the original manuscript includes both positive and contrasting evidence. Sewasew, Mengestie, and Abate (2015), for example, reported a comparative study involving PowerPoint and traditional lectures and found more favorable perceptions for lecture-based teaching on some measures. Including this contrasting evidence is important because it prevents the discussion from presenting PowerPoint as universally superior to traditional teaching. The present study likewise does not establish superiority through an experimental comparison; it describes the perceptions recorded by the participating students.

Overall, the discussion indicates that the present data support a generally favorable student perception of PowerPoint in the studied context. The strongest responses concern following and understanding presentations, reviewing key points, slide readability, images, and visual support. Lower responses concern extensive note-taking, boredom, and understanding complex topics. These distinctions provide a more precise account than a general statement that PowerPoint is simply effective or ineffective.

CONCLUSION

This study examined English major students' perceptions of PowerPoint presentations in relation to classroom engagement and learning at the Department of English Language and Literature, Kabul University. Based on responses from 143 students, the descriptive results produced an overall engagement mean of 3.89 (SD = 0.94) and an overall learning mean of 3.89 (SD = 0.90).

Within the engagement dimension, students reported the highest mean for ease of following and understanding PowerPoint presentations (M = 4.19, SD = 0.69). Enthusiasm when lecturers used PowerPoint also received a relatively high mean (M = 4.00, SD = 0.80). The lowest engagement mean was associated with the statement that the presentation required extensive note-taking (M = 3.64, SD = 1.04).

Within the learning dimension, the highest mean was recorded for reviewing key points during the lesson (M = 4.23, SD = 0.69), followed by the clarity and readability of PowerPoint text (M = 4.21, SD = 0.68). Students also reported relatively high means for images, visuals,

interactive elements, and conceptual learning. The lowest mean among the learning items was for the statement that PowerPoint presentations keep students from getting bored in class (M = 3.72, SD = 1.04), while preference for lessons without PowerPoint was 2.65 (SD = 1.48).

Taken together, the descriptive results indicate that students in the sample generally reported favorable experiences with PowerPoint-supported instruction. The findings are strongest for functions related to presentation clarity, organization, review, and visual support. However, the study measures perceptions rather than experimental learning gains. The results should therefore be interpreted as a description of students' reported engagement and learning experiences in the study setting.

The study provides a quantitative description of how the participating English major students responded to PowerPoint-supported teaching. The data can be used by instructors to understand which aspects of presentation-based instruction students rated more positively and which aspects received comparatively lower ratings. Any instructional use of PowerPoint should be considered in relation to the content of the lesson, the needs of students, and the way the presentation is integrated with classroom teaching.

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