

Aspects of Vocabulary Knowledge in Vietnamese Primary English Textbooks and Teachers’ Perspectives

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RATIONALE

- **Vocabulary is foundational** to L2 learning (Laufer & Goldstein, 2004).
- Vietnam is shifting from National Foreign Language Project 2020 to Introducing **English as a Second Language** in Schools Project (Prime Minister, 2025).
- The **Global Success** series has been adopted as the **official textbook series** nationwide (MOET, 2026).
- Textbooks serve as an **essential source of lexical input** for language learners (Vassiliu, 2001).
- Most studies focus on **different input modes** for vocabulary learning (Vu & Peters, 2021, 2022a, 2022b, 2023); **textbooks’ sociolinguistic, pragmatic, and pedagogical** aspects (Dang & Seals, 2018; Nguyen et al., 2021; Mai et al., 2024).
- **Less attention** has been paid to **vocabulary aspects** (see Vu & Michel, 2021 as an exception) and **teachers’ perspectives** on vocabulary teaching and learning (Newton, 2022).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ1: What aspects of vocabulary knowledge are addressed in Vietnamese primary school EFL textbooks?

RQ2: What are Vietnamese primary school EFL teachers’ perspectives on teaching different aspects of vocabulary knowledge?

METHODOLOGY

Sequential Mixed-Methods Design

Phase 1: Textbook Analysis

- **Method:** Quantitative content analysis.
- **Materials:** 8 Global Success English textbooks (Grades 1–5).
- **Framework:** Nation’s (2022) framework, operationalized into 18 aspects (form, meaning, use).
- **Coding:** One primary aspect coded per activity, based on writers’ intentions and Brown’s (2011) definitions.
- **Reliability:** Inter-rater reliability Cohen’s Kappa = 0.95.
- **Data Analysis:** Descriptive statistics

Phase 2: Teachers’ Perspectives

- **Participants:** 128 primary EFL teachers (convenience sampling).
- **Instruments:** Online questionnaire (5-point Likert-scale and open-ended questions).
- **Focus:** Three dimensions (importance, frequency, confidence) based on Nation’s (2022).
- **Data Types:** 5-point Likert-scale and open-ended questions.
- **Pilot & Reliability:** 20 participants; Cronbach’s Alpha = 0.97.
- **Data Analysis:** Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

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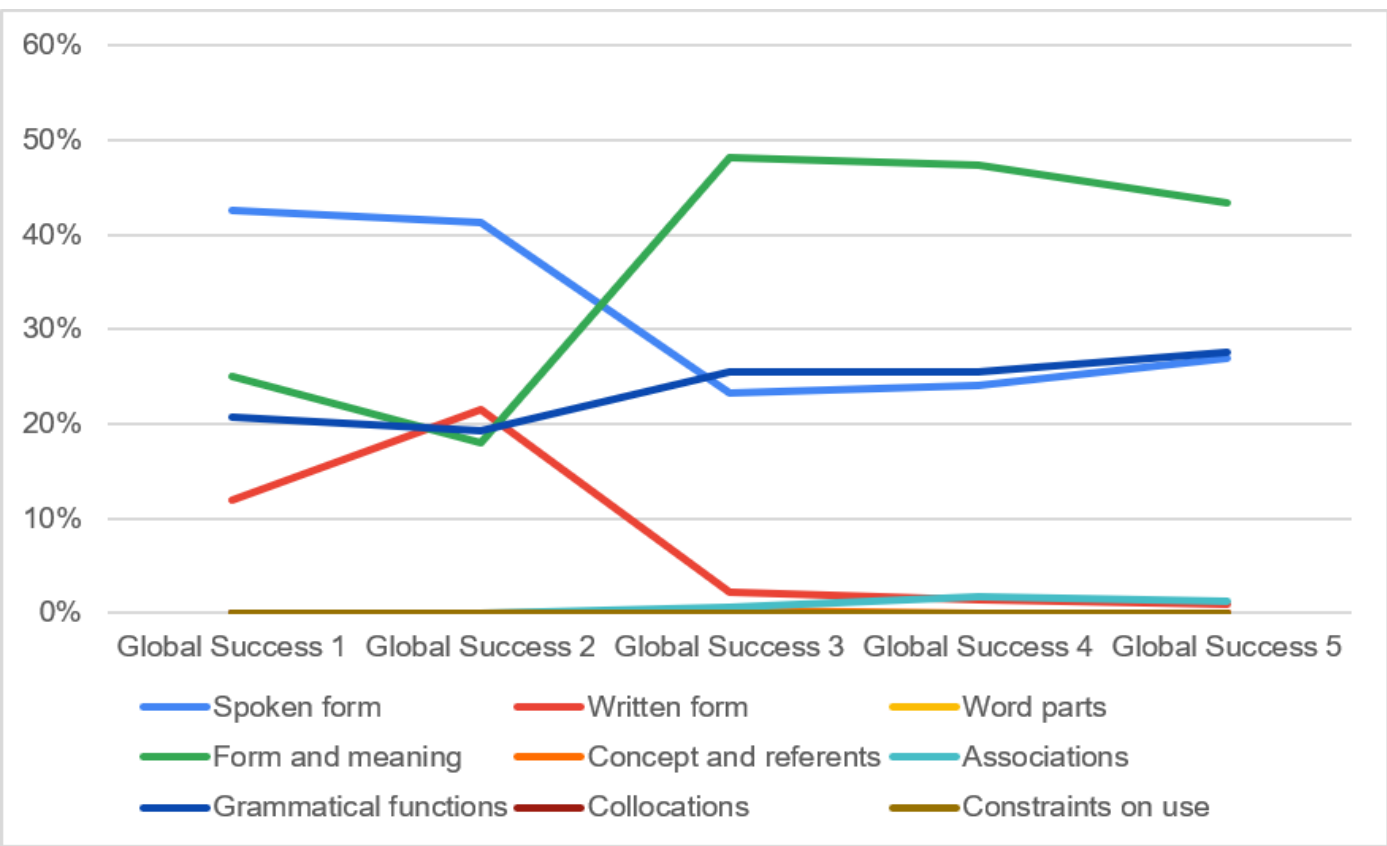
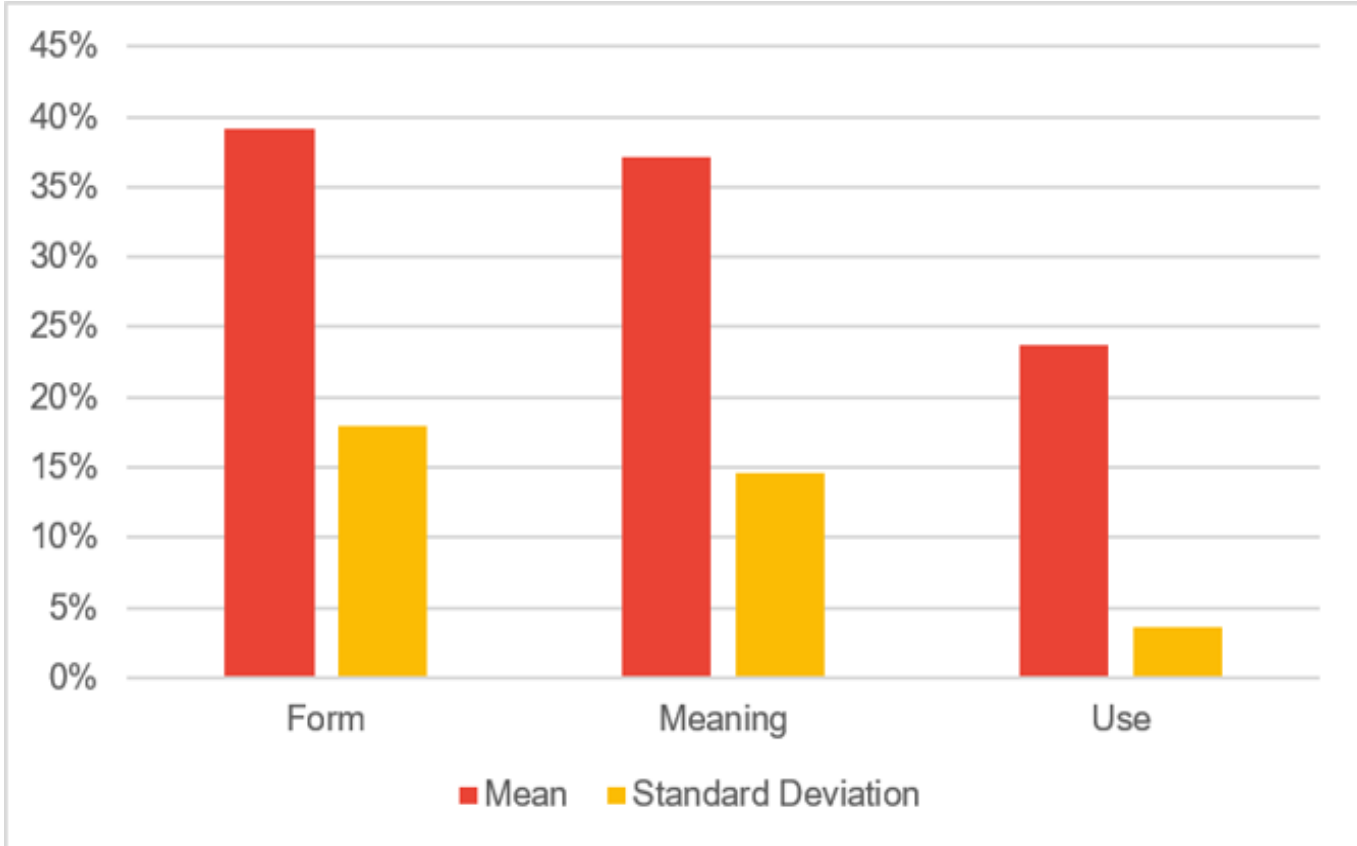
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FINDINGS

Research Question 1

General category:

- **High attention:** Form (39.19%) and meaning (37.27%).
- **Low attention:** Use (23.66%).



- **Form:** Spoken form dominated (31.59%); word parts were absent.
- **Meaning:** Form-meaning connection dominated (36.39%); concept and referents (0.06%) and associations (0.71%) were minimal.
- **Use:** Productive grammatical functions was most emphasized (23.59%); collocations and constraints on use were absent.

Research Question 2

Highest rated: spoken form, written form, form-meaning connection.

- Likert-scale questions: Importance (4.39–4.45) | Frequency (4.56–4.59) | Confidence (4.06–4.11).
- Open-ended questions:
 - Build foundation of language learning.
 - Face limited instructional time, large classes, mixed-ability learners.
 - Stem from teacher expertise & textbook support.
- **Lowest rated:** word parts, collocations, constraints on use.
- Likert-scale questions: Importance (3.72–3.78) | Frequency (3.13–3.25) | Confidence (3.45).
- Open-ended questions:
 - Rarely mention.
 - Limit teaching due to abstractness and complexity.
 - Stem from high cognitive demands & complexity.

DISCUSSION

Vocabulary Knowledge Addressed in English Primary Textbooks (RQ1)

Aspects receiving adequate attention:

- **Spoken form** = to be immersed in spoken language (Pinter, 2017).
- **Form-meaning connection** = to build foundation for beginners (Cameron, 2001; Pinter, 2017).
- **Grammatical functions** = to support vocabulary-grammar integration (Pinter, 2017).
- Delayed introduction of **word parts** = to require high proficiency demands (Nation, 2022).
- **Aspects requiring more attention:**
 - **Written form** → to map with spoken form (Cameron, 2001; Pinter, 2017).
 - **Concept & referents** → to make learning dynamic (Pinter, 2017).
 - **Associations** → to build lexical networks (Nation, 2022).
 - **Collocations** → to develop more natural and fluent language use (Bland, 2015).
 - **Constraints on use** → to introduce foundational knowledge of foreign social culture (MOET, 2018).

Teachers' Perspectives on Teaching Vocabulary Aspects (RQ2)

Aspects receiving adequate attention:

- **Spoken form/Written form/Form-meaning connection** = to build foundation for learners’ language development (Pinter, 2017).
- **Grammatical functions** = to support vocabulary-grammar integration (Pinter, 2017).
- Delayed introduction of **word parts** = to require high proficiency demands (Nation, 2022).

Aspects requiring more attention:

- **Concept and referents** → to make learning dynamic (Pinter, 2017).
- **Collocations** → to provide natural language use (Bland, 2015).
- **Constraints on use** → to provide social culture (Bland, 2015).
- **Associations** → to make vocabulary learning come alive (Bland, 2015).