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IMPROVING INDONESIAN EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL THROUGH PECHA KUCHA

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Abstract

EFL students' speaking skill at the university level is normally assessed through presentations in the teaching and learning activities. Therefore, the ability to deliver effective presentations is needed as it affects the EFL students' competence in speaking. Most EFL students choose to use Microsoft PowerPoint to deliver their presentations in class. However, the additional pressure given to present in English normally causes them to include as much information as possible on their slides. They have the tendency to focus too much on the content and neglect the delivery aspect. As a result, most of the students only end up reading aloud their text-heavy slides, which often leads to boredom. Pecha Kucha is then introduced as a creative and innovative presentation format to improve EFL students' speaking skill in delivering presentations. It is a simple, concise and effective presentation format which allows only twenty (20) slides that will advance automatically for 20 seconds each. The results of the study show that the use of Pecha Kucha has increased the EFL students' speaking skill in delivering presentations. It is shown from the increased mean scores of the students' presentation scores from before and after Pecha Kucha is used. It is also strengthened by the results of the interview on two students stating that Pecha Kucha has improved their speaking skill in delivering effective presentations in terms of the language use, speech delivery and interaction with audience.

Keywords: EFL, Pecha Kucha, presentation, speaking skill

Introduction

EFL students, particularly those who are trained to become future English teachers, need to acquire effective oral communication ability. How well the EFL students can explain their action determines how people perceive their communication ability (Souter, 2007). EFL learners have the additional pressure to speak in a language other than their mother tongue. Oral presentation is customary in college classrooms and Microsoft PowerPoint has been the widely used software by the students due to its practicality and flexibility. Nevertheless, many students often focus only to the content of their presentation than how they deliver the presentation, which leads to the tendency of putting overload information on the slides. As a result, students' presentations are often boring to follow as they normally end up reading aloud their heavy-text slides and exceeding the time limit, which reflect poor oral presentation ability (Tomsett &

Shaw, 2014; Levin & Peterson, 2013; Artyushina et al., 2011; Anderson & Williams, 2012).

Students need to keep in mind that PowerPoint is merely a tool; and as presenters, it is their obligation to convey the message effectively by maximizing the use of the software (Johnson, 2012). Therefore, language instructors need to expose students to innovative and creative ways in utilizing the software that will improve their speaking skills when delivering presentations. One of the ways is by utilizing Pecha Kucha presentation format. Pecha Kucha, a Japanese term which means "chit-chat", is a unique style of giving a concise presentation (Dytham & Klein, 2007). It is also known as 20 x 20 presentation, as the presenter may only use 20 slides that will advance automatically after 20 seconds each. Thus, the presentation will only last for exactly 6 minutes and 40 seconds. The time limitation will force the presenter to explain the ideas visually using graphics with only little text on the slides and carefully prepare their delivery. Pecha Kucha has been widely adopted over the recent years in the education field due to its' rigid structure format and content flexibility, enabling it to be used for both individual and group presentations.

Some research has been done on the use of Pecha Kucha. Tomsett & Shaw (2014) conducted a pilot study on Creative Classroom Experience Using Pecha Kucha to Encourage ESL Use in Undergraduate Business Courses. The study reported the usefulness of Pecha Kucha. The respondents admitted that they had achieved the learning outcomes in an innovative and meaningful way as shown by their ability to produce a clear and concise presentation of the course material while making creative presentations in English. The study suggested continuing Pecha Kucha use in situations where different aspects of learning including cognitive outcomes, creative challenge, and conceptual challenge are prioritized.

Another study surveyed students' perceptions of the use of Pecha Kucha Presentations for EFL Reading Classes by Hung Nguyen (2015). The findings revealed that Pecha Kucha was beneficial and that it enhanced reading comprehension, speaking and oral presentation skills. Murugaiah (2016) conducted a study on the use of Pecha Kucha as an innovative CALL approach to developing oral presentation skills of tertiary students. It discovered that the presentation format was functional to support collaborative learning and promoting L2 oral presentation skills despite its challenge to low proficiency level students. Pecha Kucha has also been researched in Indonesian context. Baskara (2015) endeavored to develop students' autonomy in oral presentations through Pecha Kucha. The findings indicated that in addition to gaining enjoyment during the Pecha Kucha process, the students became more active and autonomous while preparing for the Pecha Kucha.

This research explores the use of Pecha Kucha among Indonesian EFL students in Sanata Dharma University. More specifically, it aims to examine the impact of this format on students' speaking skill in delivering presentations. In addition, the difficulties that the students encountered in delivering effective presentations are examined. Insights gained will then be valuable for further research in evaluating Pecha Kucha's potency to improve oral presentation ability

and in contributing to the growing body of research on Pecha Kucha globally as well as to establish this field of inquiry in the Indonesian EFL context.
The research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What are the difficulties that Indonesian EFL students experience to deliver effective presentations?
2. How does Pecha Kucha improve Indonesian EFL students' speaking skill in delivering presentations?

Literature Review

Presentations in College Classrooms

Microsoft PowerPoint has been the most commonly used slideware program in college classrooms since it was created in 1985. Its popularity continues until present time to the point where instructors and students are expected to integrate the use of PowerPoint in the teaching and learning activities (Craig & Amernic, 2006; Hardin, 2007). Presentations have been one of the common elements in many courses in college as they play a significant role in many aspects in various fields; among others are the business and education fields. Employers will seek graduates who are competent and possess good communication skills in general and effective presentation ability in particular since delivering presentations has become an inevitable ritual in the business world. Presentation assignment given in classrooms varies in terms of format, length, type and the number or presenters. Despite the varieties, the main purpose is to facilitate students with confidence, effective presentation and speaking abilities.

Pecha Kucha

Pecha Kucha is a simple, concise and effective presentation format created by two British architects: Astrid Klein and Mark Dytham of Klein Dytham architecture in Tokyo, Japan, in 2003. They invented Pecha Kucha as an event for young professionals to present their ideas in a forum that involves a large number of people with limited presentation time. Pecha Kucha is a Japanese term which means "chit chat." This format limits presenters to only twenty (20) slides that will advance automatically for 20 seconds each upon timing setup in the PowerPoint (www.pechakucha.org/faq, 2016). Since the presentation time is limited to strictly 6 minutes and 40 seconds, the presenters are required to use less words and more graphics appropriate to the topic as well as carefully prepare their delivery (Artyushina, Sheypak, & Khovrin, 2011). Pecha Kucha presentations are expected to be well-organized by having interesting introduction, clear main points and memorable conclusion that will surely engage the audience to follow the whole presentations. Pecha Kucha is acknowledged to be an effective and efficient way to give oral presentations and also gives audience plenty of time to ask questions and make comments about the presentation.

Pecha Kucha presentation format accommodates a large number of presentations within a short period of time which then created an event called Pecha Kucha Night in 2003. The first Pecha Kucha Night held in Japan has then become a global phenomenon which spread across the world. In a Pecha Kucha Night, there are approximately 10 to 20 speakers delivering presentations on

topics that they like. The topics presented range from personal hobbies to new suggested concepts or ideas. In present time, there are Pecha Kucha trainings and workshops in addition to Pecha Kucha Night in over 900 big cities in the world as well as almost 19,000 Pecha Kucha videos on YouTube (www.pechakucha.org/global, 2016). Pecha Kucha presentation format is very successful and regarded as an "amazing cure for death by PowerPoint". Therefore, Pecha Kucha presentation style has been popularly adopted by conference organizers and universities for academic presentations.

Pecha Kucha has many advantages for students. It will force students to think critically as they filter the information to present on their slides. Pecha Kucha can also help to improve EFL students' pronunciation and intonation due to its' controlled timing and the English language's stress-timed characteristic that may help students "achieve natural sounding connected speech" (Nguyen, 2015). The strict time limitation requires the students to practice frequently, which will increase their speaking fluency. In addition, Pecha Kucha leads the students to focus more on the key information, which means better content knowledge. Furthermore, students will also significantly improve their communication and presentation skills as they maintain eye contact with the audience, having known precisely what to say. Finally, Pecha Kucha enables instructors to assess a large number of presentations in a short period of time, making it beneficial to apply in a large class.

Methodology

This research employed a descriptive study using a mixed-method that adopts quantitative and qualitative approaches. Creswell (2003:12) stated that "in mixed methods research, investigators use both quantitative and qualitative data because they work to provide the best understanding of a research problem." The first research question, "What are the causes of Indonesian EFL students' inability to deliver effective presentations?" was investigated quantitatively by distributing questionnaires related to difficulties experienced by the students to deliver an effective presentation. The second research question, "How does Pecha Kucha improve Indonesian EFL students' speaking skill in delivering presentations?" was investigated quantitatively by comparing the mean scores of the students' presentation scores in the first, second and third round of presentation as well qualitatively by conducting an interview with two respondents using purposive sampling.

The research was conducted in the English Language Education Study Program of Sanata Dharma University. The research participants were 46 students of batch 2016/2017 who were enrolled in Textual Pronunciation class. The questionnaires were distributed in May 2017. There were two participants involved in the interview. They were the students who obtained the highest score in their third round of presentation. The interview was conducted in June 2017.

There were three instruments used in this research. The first one was the questionnaire to identify students' difficulties in delivering effective presentations. The questionnaire consisted of 35 statements which were the elaboration of three categories in assessing one's presentation ability, namely clarity of speech and

voice quality, correctness of language and interaction with audience. Likert scale was provided next to each statement to enable the students as the respondents to clearly state their view towards each statement. The second instrument was an assessment rubric that was used to assess the students' presentation ability. There were three aspects that are assessed, namely: delivery, language use and interaction with audience. The third instrument was the guideline questions for the interview. The questions asked were intended to draw meaning from the students' experience, especially on the way Pecha Kucha helps improving their presentation ability.

To answer the research questions, the researcher collected the data by distributing questionnaires, scoring the students' presentation and conducting interview. The data from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics, which helped to identify the frequencies and percentages of each item. The score of the students' presentation were obtained using the evaluation rubric for assessing the students' speaking skill in delivering presentations. The mean scores of the students' presentation were then calculated by using this following formula (Arkin and Colton, 1971):

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\Sigma X}{n}$$

Notes:

$\overline{X}$:Average score
ΣX : Total students' score
n : Number of the students

Meanwhile, the data from the interview were analyzed qualitatively by transcribing the content of the interview and summarizing the answers and classifying them according to the categories asked.

Discussion

Students' Difficulties in Delivering an Effective Presentation

The first category of difficulties in delivering effective presentations is the clarity of speech and voice quality. This category is elaborated into 11 statements. Based on the results of the questionnaire, there are two statements in this category that the respondents highlight as the major difficulties that they encounter which greatly affect their speech clarity and voice quality when delivering their presentations. The first difficulty in this category as stated by 30 respondents (65.2%) is that too many examples and details are included in the presentations. The second difficulty is that the respondents do not use appropriate transitional words and clear signals when they deliver the presentation, which is also chosen by 30 respondents (65.2%). The complete results of the first category, which is about the clarity of speech and voice quality, is presented in the following table.

Table 1. Difficulties in Speech Clarity and Voice Quality

Difficulties	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Clarity of speech and voice quality				
1. My presentation is delivered in a disorganized way.	19.6%	45.7%	30.4%	4.3%
2. My presentation includes many examples and details.	2.2%	28.3%	**65.2%**	4.3%
3. I don't outline the presentation objectives to audience.	17.4%	45.7%	26.1%	10.9%
4. I don't stick to the objectives of the speech.	19.6%	47.8%	32.6%	0%
5. I deliver the presentation with unclear and low voice.	47.8%	30.4%	19.6%	2.2%
6. I speak with lack of confidence.	32.6%	32.6%	26.1%	8.7%
7. I hesitate while speaking and presenting.	17.4%	39.1%	34.8%	8.7%
8. My presentation lacks a good connection of ideas.	17.4%	58.7%	21.7%	2.2%
9. I don't use appropriate transitional words & clear signals.	2.2%	4.3%	**65.2%**	28.3%
10. I am unfamiliar with the criteria of effective oral presentation.	17.4%	45.7%	28.3%	8.7%
11. I fear negative evaluation and comments.	26.1%	32.6%	30.4%	10.9%

The second category of difficulties in delivering effective presentations is the correctness of language. This category is elaborated into 11 statements as well. Based on the results of the questionnaire, there are three statements in this category that the respondents highlight as the major difficulties that they encounter which greatly affect their correctness of language when delivering their presentations. The first difficulty is that the respondents produce grammatical mistakes when they deliver the presentation, which is selected by 25 respondents (54.3%). The second difficulty in this category is that as many as 23 respondents (50%) deliver their presentation with incorrect pronunciation. The third difficulty stated by 20 respondents (43.5%) is that they have low speaking proficiency. The complete results of the second category, which is about the correctness of language, is presented in table 4.2.

Table 2. Difficulties in Correctness of Language

Difficulties	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Correctness of Language				
1. My presentation is delivered with incorrect pronunciation.	19.6%	21.7%	**50%**	8.7%
2. My presentation lacks of appropriate vocabulary and expressions.	17.4%	41.3%	30.4%	10.9%
3. I make grammar mistakes during the presentation.	6.5%	23.9%	**54.3%**	15.2%

	Difficulties	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Correctness of Language				
4.	I rarely speak English in social interactions and contexts.	17.4%	45.7%	26.1%	10.9%
5.	I have low communicative competence.	19.6%	43.5%	28.3%	8.7%
6.	I have weak speaking proficiency.	17.4%	34.8%	**43.5%**	4.3%
7.	I focus more on grammar accuracy rather than fluency.	23.9%	45.7%	28.3%	2.2%
8.	I lack of appropriate structures and discourse markers to express ideas.	2.2%	54.3%	39.1%	4.3%
9.	I suffer from inter-lingual mistakes while presenting.	43.5%	45.7%	10.9%	0%
10.	I am unfamiliar with free oral and speaking activities.	15.2%	54.3%	30.4%	0%
11.	I have a weakness in knowledge in comparative linguistics.	4.3%	50%	39.1%	6.5%

The third category of difficulties in delivering effective presentations is the interaction with audience. This category is elaborated into 13 statements. Based on the results of the questionnaire, there are three statements in this category that the respondents highlight as the major difficulties that they encounter which greatly affect their interaction with audience when delivering their presentations. The first difficulty is that the respondents do not keep eye-contact with the audience when they deliver the presentation, which is chosen by 25 respondents (54.3%). The second difficulty in this category stated by 24 respondents (52.2%) is the lack of using body language and gestures while delivering their presentations. The third difficulty stated by 21 respondents (45.7%) is that they have weakness in building rapport with their audience. The complete results of the third category, which is about the interaction with audience, is presented in following table.

Table 3. Difficulties in Interaction with Audience

	Difficulties	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Interaction with audience				
1.	I rarely interact orally with my instructors in many courses.	10.9%	50%	34.8%	4.3%
2.	I am unable to use tools such as LCD and PowerPoint effectively.	60.9%	26.1%	13%	0%
3.	I lack of courses that develop my speaking and conversational skills.	30.4%	47.8%	19.6%	2.2%
4.	I don't act cheerfully and smile when speaking.	37%	47.8%	10.9%	4.3%
5.	I don't keep eye-contact with audience.	6.5%	37%	**54.3%**	2.2%
6.	I lack of using body language and gestures while speaking.	4.3%	32.6%	**52.2%**	10.9%

Difficulties	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Interaction with audience				
7. I have weakness in building rapport with my audience.	19.6%	30.4%	**45.7%**	4.3%
8. I get distracted by interruption from audience during presentation.	21.7%	43.5%	30.4%	4.3%
9. I lack of motivation towards giving the academic oral presentation.	23.9%	39.1%	30.4%	6.5%
10. I don't use English language in my real-life situations.	15.2%	37%	30.4%	17.4%
11. I don't practice giving presentation solo or with peers.	21.7%	34.8%	32.6%	10.9%
12. I don't have the right to choose the topics in certain courses.	15.2%	63%	21.7%	0%
13. I have weak academic interactions with my friends outside the class.	19.6%	56.5%	17.4%	6.5%

How Pecha Kucha Improves the Students' Speaking Skill in Delivering Presentations

The mean score of the students' presentation in the first round is 70.961. There is an increase of 7.308 in the mean score of the students' presentation in the second round to 78.269. As for the third round, the mean score of the students' presentation is 86.737. The mean score of the students' presentation in the first, second and third round are presented in the following figure.

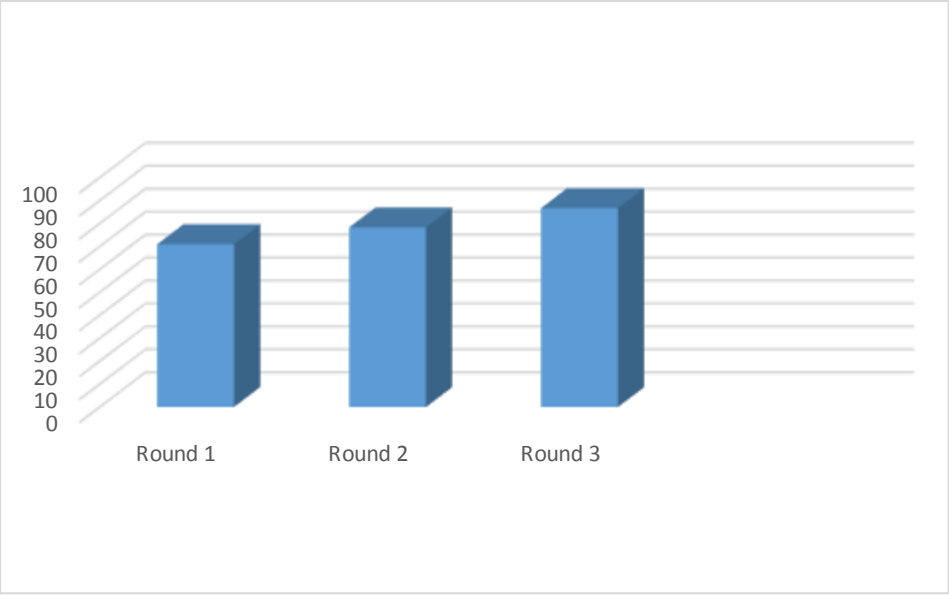


Figure 4.1. Mean Scores of the Students' Presentations

The students' mean scores of the first, second and third round of presentations clearly show that there is a significant improvement on the students' presentation ability after Pecha Kucha format was employed. This becomes one of the

indicators that Pecha Kucha really improves the students' speaking skill when delivering presentations.

There are two students from each Textual Pronunciation class who become the participants for the interview. They are chosen because they obtain the highest score in their third round of presentation which is done individually. The first participant's score for the final round of presentation is 95.6, while the second participant obtains 94.4 as her final score in the third round of presentation. There are several main questions asked that aim to find out the participants' opinion on the effectiveness of Pecha Kucha, how Pecha Kucha has helped them to improve their speaking skill when delivering presentations, and the disadvantages of using Pecha Kucha presentation format.

Both participants agree that the use of Pecha Kucha presentation format is very effective, especially in improving their speaking skill when delivering presentations. However, each participant highlights different aspects that are improved by using the Pecha Kucha presentation format. The first participant for the interview states that Pecha Kucha has really helped him to improve how he delivers his presentation. Before he is introduced to Pecha Kucha presentation format, he states that he likes to include many examples and details on his slides. As a result, when he presents, he tends to end up reading from his crowded slides. Therefore, he barely makes eye-contact with the audience since he is mostly focused on the screen instead of building rapport with the audience. This situation also often leads his classmates to boredom when he delivers a presentation, although he produces no major mispronunciation or grammatical mistakes in his presentation.

The Pecha Kucha presentation format limits the amount of slides that he can show. Not only that, he is also required to display more pictures and less words on his slides. These requirements make him think hard to filter what he would display on his slides. After he employs the Pecha Kucha presentation format, he feels that he can connect more with his audience as he only spends a little time to look at the screen. When he presents, he is able to make constant eye-contact with his classmates, which then engages the audience to pay full attention to his presentation. In terms of the content of the slides, he is now able to really display only the important keywords and finds suitable pictures that really address the points that he wants to deliver in his presentation.

In terms of the disadvantages of using the Pecha Kucha presentation format, he mentions that his major obstacle is the time needed for preparing the presentation. Since he is a very active student who is involved in many committees, he has difficulty in finding the time to prepare the content of the slides as well as to practice his speech. Pecha Kucha presentation format only gives the presenter 20 seconds for each slide before the next slide appears automatically. Therefore, the presenters have to really prepare what they want to talk about on each slide and practice it repeatedly before the real presentation takes place in order to be able to deliver a flawless Pecha Kucha presentation.

The second participant for the interview states that Pecha Kucha has really helped her to improve her language use when presenting. Before she uses the Pecha Kucha presentation format, she claims that she has low speaking

proficiency, as she often produces many mistakes in her pronunciation and her grammatical accuracy when speaking. As a consequence, most of the time the audience would get distracted and decides not to listen because they could not really understand what she is talking about.

As what has been stated before, Pecha Kucha presentation format only allows the presenter to use 20 slides. In addition, each slide will advance automatically after 20 seconds. Therefore, all presenters who use the Pecha Kucha presentation format will have to allocate much more time to prepare what they want to say for each slide that appears. This requirement forces her to make a transcript on every slide that she displays. Besides that, she also asks some of her friends who have good control of grammatical accuracy to read her transcript to check whether there are any grammatical mistakes which they will later correct. She also constantly checks the audio dictionary for every word that she will say. Therefore, when she presents using the Pecha Kucha presentation format, she produces no grammatical mistakes and no inaccurate pronunciation during her presentation. She feels that after she uses the Pecha Kucha presentation format, her classmates are able to pay attention to what she is trying to say.

As for the disadvantages of using the Pecha Kucha presentation format, she highlights that her biggest difficulty is to manage the perfect timing so that the transition from the current slide to the next slide can take place according to plan, which is exactly after 20 seconds. Even though she has practiced many times, sometimes she still feels nervous when she is standing in front of the class. As a result, she sometimes produces quite many speech fillers when delivering her presentation.

Conclusion

There are three categories that affect one's speaking skill when delivering presentations. The first category is the clarity of speech and voice quality. The second category is the language use. The third category is the interaction with audience. Based on the results of the questionnaires distributed to 46 students who are enrolled in Textual Pronunciation class, the researcher is able to identify the major difficulties for each category.

For the first category, clarity of speech and voice quality, most respondents state that their first difficulty is that they include many examples and details in their presentation, while the second difficulty is that they do not use appropriate transitional words and clear signals when delivering presentations. In terms of the second category, language use, most of the respondents state that their major difficulties are that their presentations are delivered with incorrect pronunciation, that they make grammatical mistakes during the presentation, and that they have low speaking proficiency. As for the third category, the interaction with audience, most respondents state that their major difficulties are that they do not keep eye-contact with the audience, that they lack of using body language and gestures while speaking, and that they have weakness in building rapport with their audience.

The increased mean scores of the students' presentation score before and after the Pecha Kucha presentation format is used proves that Pecha Kucha really

improves the students' speaking skill when delivering presentations. This is also supported by the opinion of the two students who are the participants of the interview. Both of the participants of the interview agree that Pecha Kucha has helped them to improve their speaking skill when delivering presentations. The first participant states that Pecha Kucha has helped him improves his interaction with the audience. By using Pecha Kucha, he manages to make constant eye-contact and succeeds to build rapport with his audience. The second participant states that Pecha Kucha has helped her improves her pronunciation and grammatical accuracy when delivering presentations. In terms of the disadvantage of using Pecha Kucha, both participants highlight the same aspect, which is the extra time and preparation needed in preparing a Pecha Kucha presentation, due to the time and amount of slides limitation that Pecha Kucha requires.

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