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THE USE OF *PECHA KUCHA* IN TEXTUAL PRONUNCIATION COURSE

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Abstract

Pecha Kucha is a presentation format which is originally invented by and for architects to show their work to public efficiently. Due to its new and interesting format, *Pecha Kucha* has been modified to be used in various fields, including education. Textual Pronunciation course is a course which requires students to put their comprehensive pronunciation knowledge into practice. The objective of the course is among others to develop students' accuracy and fluency. *Pecha Kucha* presentation format was chosen to be employed in the course so as to provide a new and more challenging way to help students achieve the course objectives. This paper is aimed to unveil how the students viewed the use of *Pecha Kucha* in Textual Pronunciation course.

Keywords: *Pecha Kucha*, implementation, Textual Pronunciation

Introduction

Speaking is one of the four basic skills, along with listening, reading and writing. Speaking and writing are classified as active or productive skills whereas listening and reading are considered as passive or receptive skills. Nunan (2003) states that in learning a language, speaking can be considered as the hardest skill to be learnt among all skills for two reasons. First, the people who are involved in a conversation are always waiting for immediate responses. Second, people cannot edit and revise what they wish to say, as they can do in writing skill. Fluency plays an essential role in speaking since it will affect how other people perceive one's competence. Therefore, fluency has always become one of the assessment aspects in measuring people's proficiency. Fostering speaking fluency is considered very important. Good fluency will allow people to communicate ideas and information easily in a way that will be understood by the hearers.

In English Language Education Study Program (henceforth called ELESP) of Sanata Dharma University Yogyakarta, to enhance the development of speaking ability, the undergraduate students are equipped with Pronunciation courses. Pronunciation is considered one of the important aspects of speaking ability so that the ELESP allocates a number of courses in the curriculum to deal with fostering pronunciation mastery. They are Pronunciation Practice I, Pronunciation Practice II, and Textual Pronunciation. Pronunciation Practice I and Pronunciation Practice II are two compulsory subjects offered in the first and second semester respectively, while Textual Pronunciation is an elective subject offered in both third and fourth semesters.

Textual Pronunciation is designed to expose students to pronunciation in context. They are required to read aloud various texts whereby they should put their knowledge about accuracy, stress, stress shifting, linkage, rhythm and intonation into practice (*Dosen-dosen PBI*, 2010). These practices are meant to generally develop students' pronunciation mastery and specifically improve students' accuracy and fluency.

Despite the position of the subject as an elective one, the course has always received great interest from ELESP students to take. Thus, there are always two parallel classes to handle, be they taught by the same or different lecturers. This situation has led

to the emergence of some boredom on the lecturer's part in terms of how the course has been managed and run. Consequently, it is felt that there is a need to introduce a fresh activity to the course. By and large, *Pecha Kucha* presentation format is chosen to help students foster their speaking fluency in a motivating way. This new kind of technique is introduced to provide a more challenging way to promote students' speaking ability in general and their fluency in particular (Artyushina, Sheypak & Khovrin, 2011). However, as it is newly adopted in the course, it is essential to discover the students' opinions on the use of *Pecha Kucha* presentation format in an attempt to promote their speaking fluency.

Speaking Fluency

According to Clark and Clark (1977), speaking is an instrumental activity in which speakers talk in order to have some effects on their listeners. In speaking, a message is transferred from a speaker to a hearer. The speaker produces the message and the hearer receives the message. Speaking is considered accomplished when both the speaker and the hearer exchange their knowledge, thoughts and feelings. The researcher needs to know the characteristics of speaking in order to be able to select appropriate activities to improve speaking ability.

There are five principles for teaching speaking as stated by Nunan (2003, pp. 54-56). It is said that teachers should: (a) be aware of the differences between second language and foreign language learning contexts; (b) give learners practice with both fluency and accuracy; (c) provide opportunities for learners to talk by using group work or pair work, and limiting teacher talk; (d) plan speaking tasks that involve negotiation for meaning; (e) design classroom activities that involve guidance and practice in both transactional and interactional speaking. Having understood the principles for teaching speaking, the writer can now design suitable activities by taking the principles for teaching speaking into consideration.

Pecha Kucha

Pecha Kucha is a simple, concise and effective presentation format created by Astrid Klein and Mark Dytham of Klein Dytham architecture in Tokyo in February 2003. In Japanese, *Pecha Kucha* means "chit chat." Using this format, the presenter should talk while showing twenty (20) images that will advance automatically for 20 seconds each (Pecha Kucha, 2013). Therefore, the presenters are required to use less words and more relevant pictures and graphics appropriate to the topic (Artyushina, Sheypak, & Khovrin, 2011). 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. Each presentation will only take 6 minutes and 40 seconds, which gives audience plenty of time to ask questions and make comments about the presentation.

Research Method

The study was conducted in English Language Education Study Program of Sanata Dharma University, in which both of the researchers are teaching Textual Pronunciation. To meet the research objective, a questionnaire was distributed to ELESPP students who were taking Textual Pronunciation in the even semester of the academic year 2015/2016. There were two parallel classes with 32 students in each class.

The questionnaire took the form of open-ended format. It was aimed at revealing the students' opinions on the use of *Pecha Kucha* presentation format in Textual

Pronunciation class. There were twelve (12) questions to which the students had to respond. The questions were as follows.

1. What did you expect from the *Pecha Kucha* implementation?
2. What encouraging experience did you have during *Pecha Kucha*?
3. What discouraging experience did you have during *Pecha Kucha*?
4. In general, how do you describe your experience of using *Pecha Kucha* in Textual Pronunciation class?
5. In the scale of 1 to 10, how did you measure your satisfaction from *Pecha Kucha* implementation? Why?
6. In the scale of 1 to 10, how did you rate the success of *Pecha Kucha* implementation in Textual Pronunciation class? Why?
7. What contributions did you make during *Pecha Kucha* preparation and performance?
8. How did you view your friends' contributions in *Pecha Kucha* preparation and performance?
9. In what way did *Pecha Kucha* help you foster your speaking fluency?
10. What problems did you encounter during the use of *Pecha Kucha*? How did you solve them?
11. What drawbacks did you feel during the *Pecha Kucha* implementation?
12. What suggestions do you have to improve *Pecha Kucha* implementation?

The questions were intended to explore students' evaluation on their personal experience and the process of implementation.

Findings and Discussion

Pecha Kucha was implemented in Textual Pronunciation class in the odd semester of 2015/2016 academic year. The implementation of the strategy was slightly modified in that the performance was carried out in group, and not individually. Another modification was in the absence of question and answer sessions following each presentation.

The process of applying this strategy began with modeling whereby the instructors explained thoroughly how it worked and showed some examples of *Pecha Kucha*. Afterwards, the grouping was set. In the first *Pecha Kucha* performance, as it was new, the students were demanded to work in group of four people. They were to do the preparation, which was to brainstorm topics to perform, draft the text, finalize the text, and prepare power point slides for their performance. The group was also responsible for practicing in order to perform well. As duration of class meeting was limited, they should organize out-of-class meetings with their group members. In the second *Pecha Kucha* performance, they should follow the same procedure, yet it was done in pairs.

To find out the students' perception on the use of *Pecha Kucha* in the class, a questionnaire was handed out to two existing classes. The expected total number of students was 64; however, on the day the instrument was distributed, some students were absent and the result was that there were only 60 people. From the data collected, some important findings could be reported.

The study began by revealing what the students expected from the *Pecha Kucha* implementation. Various expectations were highlighted, namely to speak fluently (48.33%), to have good pronunciation (18.33%), to do a challenging activity (16.67%), to produce effective timing (15%), and to improve confidence (15%). A small number of respondents expected to have the ability to produce succinct texts and to speak loudly.

In terms of encouraging experiences that they had during *Pecha Kucha*, the ability to speak fluently was stated by the majority of the respondents (36.67%). There were 20% of them who claimed that they were able to organize their speech effectively and

stayed focus after they experienced *Pecha Kucha*. Furthermore, 15% of the respondents mentioned that *Pecha Kucha* had made them feel challenged because it had given them a new experience, and 13.33% of them claimed that *Pecha Kucha* had improved their confidence. In addition, they also stated that they were able to pronounce correctly because of *Pecha Kucha* (8.33%), and had become more diligent after experiencing *Pecha Kucha* (5%). Besides, they felt encouraged because they dealt with interesting topics (5%) and because they could choose their own topics (3.33%).

When inquired about discouraging experiences that they encountered during *Pecha Kucha*, the respondents mentioned poor time management (28.33%) which made them finish speaking much earlier or much later than they were supposed to. Another discouragement originated from their nervousness (21.67%) and inability to memorize what they had to say when using *Pecha Kucha* (10%). It happened because in *Pecha Kucha* presentation format, presenters were not allowed to read their notes. Some respondents mentioned their discouraging experience occurred because they did not have solid teamwork (8.33%). Some of them did not get along really well with certain students, whereas they had to collaborate in their performance. Getting difficult topics (6.67%), unsatisfactory performance (3.33%), poor voice audibility (1.67%), unsatisfactory grouping system (1.67%), and technical problems (1.67%) were some other discouraging instances the respondents pointed out.

The students were also asked to describe their experience of using *Pecha Kucha* in Textual Pronunciation class. The majority of the respondents perceived *Pecha Kucha* as a challenging activity (45%), due to its time constraints and limited control of the presenters. There were 28.33% of the respondents who stated that *Pecha Kucha* was a nice and fun experience. Furthermore, 18.33% of them thought that *Pecha Kucha* was beneficial for their improvement in becoming effective presenters and better public speakers, as well as in their speaking fluency and pronunciation accuracy. They described that they had never experienced something like *Pecha Kucha* during their study in ELESP. In addition, some respondents claimed that *Pecha Kucha* was interesting (5%). They explained that *Pecha Kucha* enabled them to make presentations alive and not boring as what they usually experienced. Meanwhile, some others said that *Pecha Kucha* was effort-consuming (5%) and they were frustrated (1.67%) because of the constraints that *Pecha Kucha* had.

On being asked to measure their satisfaction from *Pecha Kucha* implementation in the scales of 1 to 10, most of the respondents chose between the scales of 7 to 10, meaning that the majority of them felt satisfied in the implementation of *Pecha Kucha* in Textual Pronunciation class. They felt that *Pecha Kucha* had made them possess better skill that covered speaking fluency, presentation skill, public speaking skill and pronunciation accuracy (23.33%). They felt satisfied because of the challenge (18.33%), the interestingness (8.33%), and the improved confidence that it yielded (1.67%). A small number of respondents chose the scales of 4 to 6, admitting that they had not done their best and that the planning was different from the performance.

Concerning the success of *Pecha Kucha* implementation in the class, most respondents chose between the scales of 7 to 10, with the scale of 8 being voted the most. It showed that most of them perceived *Pecha Kucha* to have been successfully implemented in Textual Pronunciation class. Some reasons that appeared were the respondents admitted to have better speaking fluency, better pronunciation, better critical thinking, to have done well in the performance and given their maximum effort. As the learning strategy was still new for the students, some of them were not fully happy with the result since their performance did not run as planned. Furthermore, regarding the way *Pecha Kucha* helped foster their speaking fluency, the majority of the respondents (40%)

acknowledged that the limited time had forced them to speak effectively. Besides, doing a lot of practice (21.67%), speaking without notes (8.33%), organizing speech better (6.67%), and presenting the performance in front of the class (1.67%) were some other factors that fostered their speaking fluency.

In terms of the contributions they made during *Pecha Kucha* preparation and performance, majority (70%) mentioned that they contributed to the performance by practicing hard. Some other contributions they made were preparing the slides (35%), preparing the texts for their own parts (23.33%), suggesting possible topics to the rest of the group members (20%), preparing the needed properties for the performance (11.67%), setting the timing (5%), and cheering other group members (1.67%). Meanwhile, on viewing their friends' contributions in *Pecha Kucha* preparation and performance, the majority (43.33%) stated that their friends had made a good team work. Another 31.67% of the respondents claimed that their friends had done their job well. Meanwhile, 11.67% of the respondents thought that some friends were not cooperative. Lastly, there were 1.67% of them who said that their friends had supplied brilliant ideas for their groups.

Regarding the problems that the students encountered during the use of *Pecha Kucha*, the majority (26.67%) pointed out the time restrictions of *Pecha Kucha* as the main problem in their performance. Furthermore, 18.33% of the respondents claimed that the main problem was their personal nervousness when speaking in front of the class, 16.67% of the respondents mentioned that they had unsuccessful time management, and 11.67% felt that the biggest problem was that they could not memorize what they had to say well. In addition, the respondents stated that they had difficulty in choosing the topics as well as the properties (8.33%), poor oral skills (6.67%), poor teamwork (3.33%), technical problems (3.33%), poor grammar mastery (1.67%), and poor preparation (1.67%). As for the solutions to overcome those problems, practicing was mentioned the most frequently by the respondents. Other solutions that appeared were consulting the lecturer, discussing the problem with their group members, and dividing the jobs among group members. Additionally, the respondents were requested to mention the drawbacks they felt during the *Pecha Kucha* implementation. Personal limitation in terms of nervousness was the most frequently mentioned drawback (18.33%) followed by the difficulty level of the task (16.67%). Other drawbacks the students felt during *Pecha Kucha* were the grouping (11.67%), limited preparation (10%), time constraints (3.33%), time management (3.33%), time precision instead of oral skill (3.33%), subjective assessment (1.67%), poor attention from the audience (1.67%) and personal limitation in terms of concentration (1.67%).

Some suggestions were proposed to improve *Pecha Kucha* implementation. The majority (33.33%) pointed out that they needed to have longer time to prepare and practice better for the performance. There were 10% of the respondents who suggested to provide longer time for each slide. Furthermore, there were 8.33% of the respondents who believed that *Pecha Kucha* was better done in pairs; and another 3.33% suggested that it was better done in group of three (3) people. In addition, reducing its frequency of use into one time only (3.33%), providing the text for the first project (1.67%), providing more examples of *Pecha Kucha* (1.67%), and providing students with more specific feedback and suggestions (1.67%) were some other suggestions disclosed.

Conclusion

This study was aimed at revealing the students' opinions on the use of *Pecha Kucha* presentation format in Textual Pronunciation class. The results obtained from the questionnaire exhibited that students had positive perception on its implementation. From various expectations that they students had prior to its implementation, a lot of them had

been met throughout the course. They were largely related to improvement in oral skills. Despite the discouraging experiences which were mainly caused by nervousness and poor time management as the top two factors, the majority of them mentioned more encouraging experiences, such as increased speaking fluency, better speech organization, and improved concentration. Nevertheless, some problems were still found during the use of *Pecha Kucha*, the top three problems being the time constraints, nervousness and unsuccessful time management. Suggestions for improvement were spelled out in terms of giving students extended time to prepare and practice better.

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