

Pecha Kucha Presentation in the University English Classes: Advantages and Disadvantages

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Abstract:- The main focus of this article is to address issues about the pecha kucha approach in the university English classes. It is intended here to describe the impact of the new presentation format in the new modern University English classrooms. In order to attain the aim of this article, we conducted a bibliographic study that pays a special attention on the advantages and disadvantages of pecha kucha in university classroom. Under advantage section we can find some important features such as the pedagogical benefits, the teacher-student roles, and last but not the least, the use of technology. On the other side, the drawback section explains the three main limitations such as time constraint, content restriction, and excessive number of rehearsals. In this new decade there is a burning desire among teachers in helping students to be technologically skilled. Through the use of pecha kucha students not only acquire the necessary tech skills but also it builds in them a critical thinking. The study concludes that there are more advantages than disadvantages in using pecha kucha in the university English classes. Moreover, the study also highlights that one possible solution to mitigate the time constraint problem is to allow the flexibility at the moment of action.

Keywords: *Pecha Kucha, Presentation, University Classes, Advantages, Drawbacks.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Developing good speaking skill has been one of the most important goals of people who learn a new foreign language. Some universities in Angola have created and implemented brilliant projects to improve students' speaking skill in English language, but even so there are a lot of hard work to be done in order to uplift students' fluency and accuracy in the target language. Hence, Richards (2008) also affirmed that the current challenge that educators or lectures face is to find an effective strategy that can assist students to develop fluency, accuracy, and last but not the least the appropriateness of language use.

King (2002) starts discussing that, oral presentations can be seen as the provision of meaningful situations where students are given the opportunity to communicate with their colleagues in the classroom while developing lifelong skills that will be beneficial in their careers in the future. Moreover, they can be used as effective communicative learning activities that offer learners the opportunity to communicate in the target language in a natural way (Brooks & Wilson, 2015). At the end, Sundrarajun & Kiely (2010) also confirmed that they can be effective assessment tools for oral communication.

Therefore, to fulfill the main objective of this paper, oral presentation will be considered as an effective tool for developing oral communication in the foreign language classroom for the many benefits it offers to university students. Hence, this can be a great way to introduce pecha kucha strategy as a bridge to make the English classes more interactive and innovative so the students can perform an oral presentation effectively. The term Pecha Kucha was first introduced by Astrid Klein and Mark Dythan back in 2003. The term means "chit chat" and it is originated from Japan.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Definition of Pecha Kucha

Beyer (2011) defined Pecha Kucha as "a presentation method that requires students to focus on the message to be conveyed through a presentation slide that lasts 20 seconds each". Thus this presentation is normally done via Microsoft PowerPoint application or other types of applications that have similar functions. Moreover, the presentation evolves more visuals than slides full of useless and sometimes boring texts. The idea is that the presenters must have enough knowledge on the topic being presented. This method in fact has become so famous in many academic settings around the world due to its nature of facilitating and improving the way of presenting assignments and projects. Furthermore, Tomsett & Shaw (2014) believed that Pecha Kucha "was introduced as part of a series of multimodal teaching methods designed to enhance creative and innovative problem solving abilities and encourage students to speak spontaneous English."

B. Advantages of Pecha Kucha in the University Classroom

We actually know how dynamic university classrooms look like, and bringing new approach to make the classes even more interesting is an outstanding initiative to keep the quality required in the higher level. Under this section, Hayashi & Holland (2017) discuss that the benefits of Pecha Kucha can fall into three important categories such as: the pedagogy perspective, teacher-students roles, and technology.

A. Pedagogical Advantages

The pedagogical advantages are considered to be central ones. However, Hayashi & Holland (2017) declare that “in addition to the language practice provided by pecha kucha presentations, the task provides a context for the students to recycle the textbook language in a natural manner”. This is to say that there are also amazing opportunities for students to learn self-organization better as well as the time management or on the other hand to help learners to become more time conscious. Moreover, the pecha kucha approach requires the learners to be more organized. Therefore, students also must be willing to organize the class time for the task effectively. The process entails, deciding the main topic, finding the information and visuals, composing the captions, writing and checking the presentation script, and last but not the least, doing the essential rehearsals before the presentation. Through a good planning everything will fit accordingly.

Furthermore, Hayashi & Holland (2017) also state that time management of “pecha kucha can be beneficial to students as the time constraints illustrate the value of timed practice”. Hence, due to such strict time constraints, it is compulsory that students be completely prepared for the presentation. In addition, as the slides are settled to remain on the screen for only 20 seconds, students must drill discrimination in choosing the visuals and language to avoid some possible constraints during the presentation. All in all pecha kucha provides a valuable lesson if students devote enough time to practice presentation over and over again.

B. Teacher and Student Roles

According to Hayashi & Holland (2017) the teacher and students' role are considered to be “expanded in a multimodal task like pecha kucha beyond the scope of more traditional classroom roles”. As English language practitioners, they alleged to introduce pecha kucha to their students as a learning task in conjunction with the set syllabus in university English language courses. In a broad sense, it is believed that the teacher's role in task-based language teaching is nontraditional, mainly in speaking or integrated skills classes. However, in a nontraditional role, teachers do not stick in lectures or question-answer dialogues with students; in fact, they act as instigator, designer, classroom facilitator, and posttask assessor in order to ease the learning process.

In the same flaw, they added that university teachers who are responsible for individual class syllabus design can use the freedom to introduce pecha kucha. By freedom they meant giving students the autonomy to choose their own topic or task for the presentation. Therefore, for Hayashi & Holland's case, there was no top-down imposition; using a pecha kucha instructional task in the classroom was a teacher-led initiative. Thus, Ellis (2015) clarifies that the combination of task-based teaching with the structured traditional teaching, is hybrid approach.

A study conducted by (Willis & Willis, 2007) affirms that students' training may be a necessary component to alert students about what is expected of them. However, for an effective implementation of the hybrid approach teachers need to take into consideration the contextual appropriateness of a task-based approach and the learners' needs, interests, and potential difficulties. Van den Branden (2006:177), asserts that the actions teachers take “motivating the language learners and supporting the learners' cognitive and interactional activity”, are crucial to the success of the task. From this perspective, teachers are regarded as “linguistic advisors” (Willis & Willis, 2007). Further, Thomas & Reinders, (2015) affirm that the focus of the task-based approach shifts from the teaching to the learning as the nature of the task assumes a considerable degree of student creativity and independent effort. Long (2015:77) came with the idea of advocating teacher-student relationships in task-based language teaching due to the fact that students “will not only improve classroom climate but also create advantageous psycholinguistic conditions for language learning”. To conclude, Ellis (2003) agrees that asking learners to explicitly ponder and comment on their own learning experiences makes them more individually accountable.

C. Use of Technology

Tigre (2006) defines technology “as a system of knowledge about specific techniques. The techniques involve applications of knowledge in products, processes and organizational methods”.

According to (MEXT, 2011:1-2) the other advantage of pecha kucha in the classroom is its use of technology. In this current century (21st) Technology has shaped the entire world. This is to say that basic duties are also now assisted by the use technology. Therefore, it is an integral tool to our daily interactions and activities. The truth is that students of this generation need to be updated of the new technology being incorporate in every education systems around the world.

Moreover, many experts around the world are now affirming that an illiterate is no longer a person who cannot read or write but rather someone who have no domain or skill in the new technology as well as the person who cannot speak at least one foreign language. However, it is urgent that university students possess such skills in order to succeed in this new digital era. Another great comment comes from Fallows & Steven (2000), who assert that students with high technological skills can raise the possibilities of being employed in short period of time. In addition they added that such employability skills include: the a) retrieval and handling of information, b) communication and presentation, c) planning and problem solving, and d) social interaction (Fallows & Steven, 2000). On the other hand, Walker & White (2013), state that technology enables teachers and students to repackage information into new learning formats due to the combination of different modes of learning—including speaking, writing, reading, and listening in pecha kucha presentation.

All in all, the use of technology requires that teachers and learners step out of traditional teaching methods in order to attain the needs of 21st century communication. For this reason, it is fair to say that “Assumptions about learners, language form and format, text types, and social discourses must all be reexamined” (Lotherington & Jenson, 2011:227). However, pecha kucha presentations are in fact good strategy to develop students’ use of ICT in the university environment.

III. DISADVANTAGES OF PECHA KUCHA

Despite all the things we mentioned above by using pecha kucha approach in the university English classes, Anderson & Williams (2012) affirm that there some few limitations to consider, as follow:

A. Time Constraint:

The time is not favorable to the students. There is no time to explain more details; trying to stay within the deadline is frustrating; time is difficult to grasp; twenty seconds is short and frightening. Some other researchers said that one possible solution could be to allow some flexibility with the time limit, increasing for instance the time limit per slide (Soto-Caban et al, 2011; Nguyen, 2015; Anderson and Williams, 2012).

B. Restrictions on Content

Restrictions on content are viewed as unfavorable by many people. An example does not have time to explain more details; it is difficult to choose the information to use limited coverage of essential topics, tight time, and not everything can be covered (in a hurry).

C. More Practice Required

Compared with the traditional presentation format, more practice is required. This is because students are forced to study longer slides. If the host has not practiced well before, it will be a weak presentation.

To conclude this section, we can affirm that the above limitations are only visible if there is not enough preparation for the presentation. Life in the academia requires a lot of agility in order to make significant progress.

IV. CONCLUSION

After a deep discussion on the theoretical ideas of different authors who wrote about pecha kucha presentation in the university, we can sum up that the use of such presentation format can positively contribute to the improvement of presentation skills in the foreign language classroom.

Despite the incredible benefits that pecha kucha presentation offers we also could analyze that it is extremely important that language teachers bear in mind some few limitations such as time constraints, lack of flexibility, and restricted content that can possibly inhibit students to perform well in their oral presentations. However, we also saw that in order to reduce the risks of these limitations it is necessary to provide learners with sufficient aids and time to practice their presentations. On the other hand, it is also recommended that this presentation format should be used with students who have acceptable proficiency in the target language in order to cope with its fast pace. In addition, apart from pedagogical support, teachers also must introduce students with different software applications to familiarize themselves with the other styles of the pecha kucha format.

To finish, this bibliographic study was done with the intention of making foreign language university teachers aware of the impact of pecha kucha approach in the classroom. In the future we intend to extend to an action research or a case study.

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