

Teaching Students the Importance of Preparation and Practice with PechaKucha

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Introduction/Need for Innovation

Effective teaching can be defined as “the actions of someone who is trying to assist others to reach their fullest potential in all aspects of development” (Moore, 2015, p. 2). Rosenshine and Furst (1971) define clarity, variability, enthusiasm, student opportunity to learn criterion material, and task oriented behavior (C-VEST) as the five most important characteristics of effective teachers. C-VEST is taught to future teachers/educators as a tool to assist them in writing lesson plans and effectively deliver a lesson. Lesson planning is an essential skill of teachers (Blömeke, et al., 2008). For some students, learning this skill holds “creative possibilities; for others, it is a brick wall of bewilderment and anxiety” (John, 2006, p. 483). Moreover, lesson planning and presentation skills are areas of weakness pre-service teachers wish to improve upon before entering the workforce (Janensky & Ewing, 2008). In an effort to reinforce the importance of planning and preparation before teaching a lesson, the PechaKucha assignment was introduced.

How it works/Methods/Steps

In 2003, PechaKucha (Japanese for “chit chat”) was introduced by Astrid Klein and Mark Dytham (Christianson & Payne, 2011). The idea is to regiment PowerPoint slides by limiting the number of slides and timing them. The creators call it “PechaKucha 20x20,” meaning 20 PowerPoint slides for 20 seconds a piece. This will result in a six minute, 40 second presentation. For our class purposes, the criteria were modified to at least 15 slides for 30 seconds each, resulting in a seven and a half minute presentation.

Given the guidelines stated above, 49 students were asked to plan a lesson in which they would deliver in their microteaching labs. Students were told this was the only lesson they should treat as a presentation. The first microteaching lesson is set up to be at least seven minutes long, therefore the use of PechaKucha would guarantee everyone would make the minimum time required. Many students in the class have never taught in a formal setting, so the goal of having students give a presentation as their first lesson in their microteaching labs was to help eliminate fears they may have about standing in front of their peers, and the importance of practice and preparation. Asking them to complete a PechaKucha also reinforced the difference between presenting and teaching.

Results to Date/Implications

Students were asked to complete a satisfaction instrument to determine the impact of the PechaKucha assignment. Overall, the students did benefit from using PechaKucha. Only one student knew what PechaKucha was prior to this assignment. Twenty-one students found Pecha Kucha easy to implement. Since PechaKucha is a timed presentation, more than half the class ($n = 19$) expressed how the layout forced them to practice their lesson more than once. Students were asked to assess their level of agreement on several items related to the use of PechaKucha for their first microteach (Table 1).

Table 1
Level of agreement when using PechaKucha for 1st microteach

Item	strongly disagree		disagree		neutral		agree		strongly agree	
	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
PechaKucha enhanced my learning.	1	2.04	6	12.24	20	40.82	18	36.73	6	12.24
PechaKucha was relevant to the lesson I taught.	1	2.04	6	12.24	20	40.82	15	30.61	9	18.37
PechaKucha was confusing to use.	3	6.12	28	57.14	10	20.41	6	12.24	2	4.08
PechaKucha was easy to implement in my lesson.	2	4.08	6	12.24	17	34.69	21	42.86	3	6.12
PechaKucha helped me stay on track while presenting my lesson.	5	10.20	5	10.20	8	16.33	22	44.90	9	18.37
PechaKucha made me more confident my first time teaching.	7	14.29	12	24.49	15	30.61	9	18.37	6	12.24
PechaKucha forced me practice my lesson more than once to make sure the timing was correct.	0	0.00	4	8.16	10	20.41	15	30.61	19	38.78
PechaKucha made my lesson engaging.	4	8.16	9	18.37	19	38.78	13	26.5	4	8.16
I will use PechaKucha in other classes or settings.	11	22.45	12	24.49	15	30.61	8	16.33	3	6.12

Future Plans/Advice to Others

Teacher educators striving to impart knowledge on future educators can use PechaKucha as a way for students to learn the importance of practice and preparation. By using PechaKucha in a microteaching setting, students will have a better grasp of time management and classroom engagement. Although this generation of students have been using technology for years, we recommend walking them through the steps to set the timer. Also, the timing of the slides and total number of slides can be changed to fit the assignment criteria. PechaKucha will be used in future semesters as their first microteaching experience.

Costs/Resources Needed

There were no costs associated with this innovative idea other than the technology the students already have access to. Students need PowerPoint access on their computers in order to create a PechaKucha presentation. In the microteaching lab setting, an LCD projector must be available to display the presentation.

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