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Year 2011

ISSN 1985-9937



Preparation of Power Point Presentation Slideshow in Delivering Lectures: Case in UiTM Pahang

Faizan Abd Jabar, Roslina Ali & Mashita Abd Jabar

ABSTRACT

There are various teaching techniques used by lecturer while assisting students to better understand the subject taught in class. There is no denying that most lecturers prefer to use written material such as whiteboard, handouts, or projectors as their teaching medium.

This study describes experiences and concerns of lecturers in preparing the visual slideshow in delivering lectures among lecturers in UiTM Pahang. There are 100 respondents took part in the survey. Questionnaires were distributed randomly to lecturers regardless of faculty. It is hoped that the findings will be able to facilitate and further enhance the new lecturers in obtaining a better understanding and skills in producing better slide presentation using power point.

Keywords: *Preparation, power point slideshow, delivering, lecturer*

Introduction

Universities must fulfil the expectation of modern society in which they have to promote the use of information communication and technology (ICT). Today society is being more open, flexible, and competitive. An education system has to be suited to the demands of the technological age so that the competitive edge can be maintained.

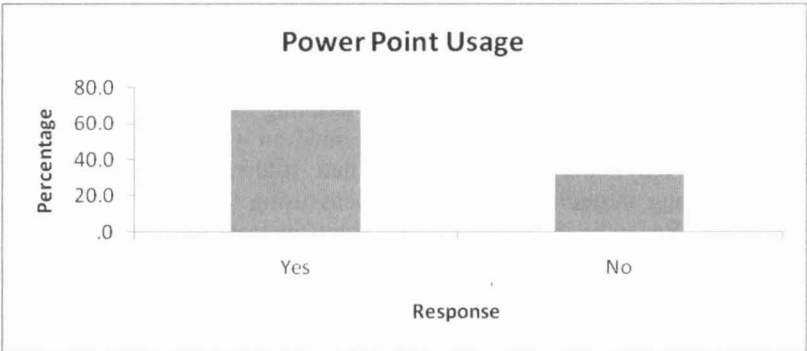
Since universities were founded, lectures have always remained as a popular medium of undergraduate teaching for they are tutor-centred and they can be incorporated with other teaching methods. The lecturers have different intentions and concern in mind on what the students will learn and they have an expectation that students will have better understanding through their teaching focus using selection of teaching mediums. Recently in advance technology environment, however, the proponents of learning via computer have challenged the view of traditional lecture, arguing that computer-assisted teaching is the most appropriate means of facilitating learning in a university environment.

Preparation before visual presentation is crucial for lecturers before starting lectures. Preparation means the procedures need to be done in order to ensure the visual slideshows can perform nicely. Through the Power Point, presentation can be more intuitive and productive because it is enjoyable tools, which can attract the audience with audio, diagram, picture, videoclip and so on. Ms Power Point is a software package that carried out in order to create better and clearer understanding of the presentation. Sometimes the usage of Power Point slideshows gives a very deep understanding even though the presenter did not give explanation. This is supported by Susskind (2008), who claimed that students displayed a clear preference for lectures accompanied by computer mediated PowerPoint presentation because they believe lectures were more organised, interesting and enjoyable. Students prefer to have the visuals in PowerPoint presentation which assists them to have a better knowledge. On the other hand, they also preferred to have more visuals used in slides in classroom, (Cigdem Uz, 2010). Meanwhile, Seaman (1998) described that students can follow a course more easily and do not have difficulties in taking notes when teachers present their materials visually and distribute the slides to students as written materials.

Using Power Point slideshows can differentiate the presentation from any other and really helps the lecturers to express or deliver the subject. Delivering is the dissemination of particular information to the audience to make them understand. A study by Brownell (1991) proved that a good presenter must possess the four elements during delivering presentation which are motivation, attitudes, principle and practices. This is to ensure that the preparation for presentation will be well-organized.

Findings and analysis

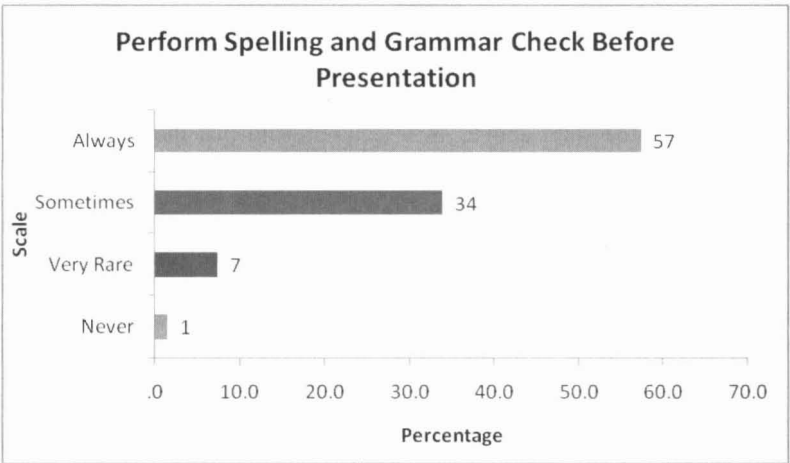
Table 1: Power Point Usage among Lecturers for Lecturing Purposes



As shown in Table 1, a question was made on Yes or No answer based on lecturers' usage of Power Point for lecturing purposes. The results obtained were 68 respondents used PowerPoint during their lectures in class and 32 respondents had never used it before. Most of them did not use the Power Point because there are no facilities available in the classroom. Rickman and Grudzinski (2000) said that in their study, students mostly prefer to have PowerPoint as the most efficient way to study but if the slideshows are not updated or have poor designs it will cause them to be unpleasant. Hence, students prefer to have the visuals in PowerPoint presentation which assists them in gaining a better knowledge. That is why they prefer to have more visuals used in slides in classroom, (Cigdem Uz, 2010)

In addition, most teachers use PowerPoint slideshows to encourage students' esteem and give them exposure of learning process. (Janet Mei-Chuen Lin, 2003).

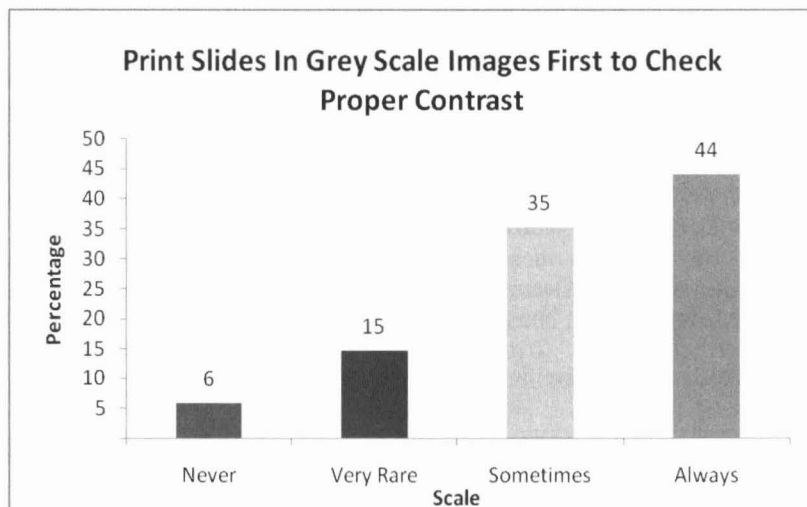
Table 2: Perform Spelling and Grammar Check before Presentation



We had examined the above table and it is shown that 57 out of 100 lecturers always take a pre-action step by checking on spelling and grammar before starting up with their power point presentation in class. It is to ensure that there is no typo error or spelling mistake done on the slides. Where else the remaining of 34 respondents sometimes do checking on the spelling and grammar, 7 respondents indicate they very rarely do this and 1 respondent do not go through this step at all. Besides the grammar and spelling checking, Stein (2006) highlighted the need to limit the words used in each slide, with not exceeding 25 words each.

Stein also suggested for the extra long points to be allocated in other slides.

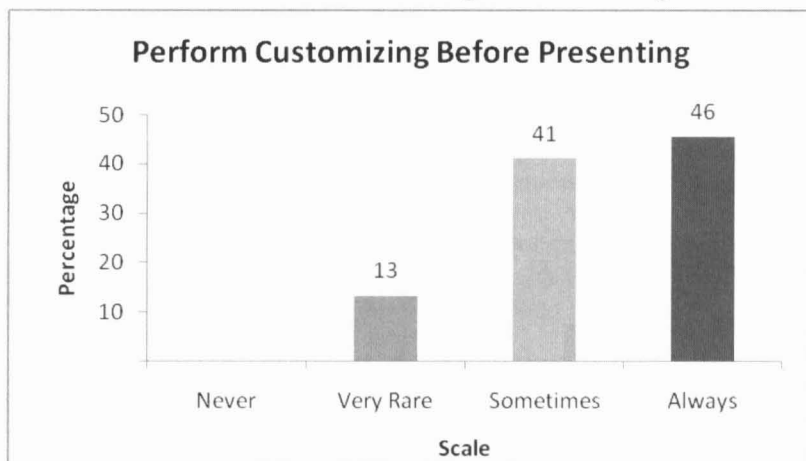
Table 3: Print Slides In Grey Scale Images First to Check Proper Contrast



According to the chart above, 44% lecturers said that they always print slides in grey scale images to check the contrast before they start presentation. This step is very important to check the suitability of the colors used in the slideshow. As we know, the colour usage can give a good impact if we know how to use attractive colours. Wrong combination of colors can make the viewer feeling bored and losing focus of what the presenter is trying to deliver. According to Tisdale (2005) the slides need a good combination of the background and the text or illustration whereby the slide needs to be created in a sharp contrast.

Only 35% said that they sometimes print slides in grey scale in order to check the proper contrast. This is followed by 15%, saying they very rarely do it and 6% said never. This result comes from respondents who are familiar with the Power Point slideshow who already know the good combination of colours to produce a good visual slideshow.

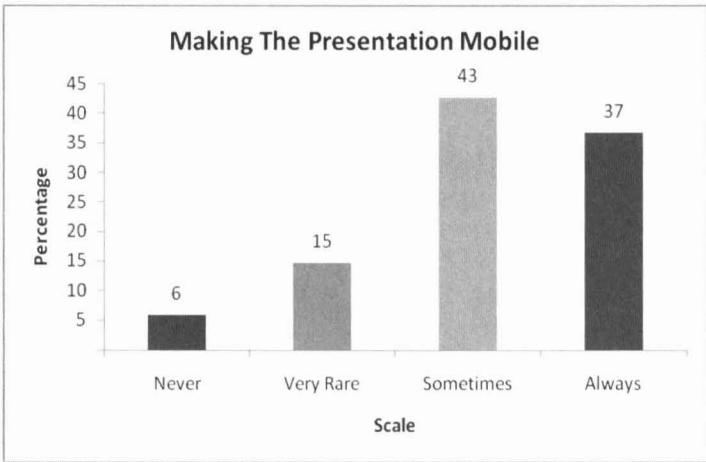
Table 4: Perform Customizing before Presenting



Another preparation needs to be highlighted is performing customization before presenting. Performing customization here means creating slideshows with animated bullets, animations, adding motion, creative transitions, goods graphics etc. The findings show that most of lecturers, “always” (46%), “sometimes” (41%), and “very rarely” (13%,) customize their slides before presenting. The lecturers are seen as having initiative to entertain student while lecturing.

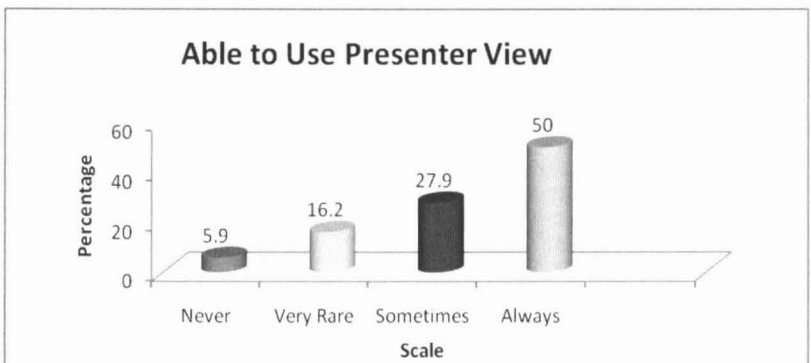
Preparation for customizing is needed in order to avoid being condemned by students during lectures. Failing to produce good visual slideshows reflects lecturers’ lack of skills and knowlegde about PowerPoint. According to Sakip Kahraman (2010), the slides presentation need to be splendored with appropriate font size, font style, colour, and others in order to avoid students being sleepy and having less attention during learning process.

Table 5: Making the Presentation Mobile



A lot of things can be done to get the presentation ready. Making the presentation mobile includes optimizing image size, embedding fonts, adjusting document properties to claim ownership of slideshows and checking the compatibility as to suit from older version to new version example from Microsoft 2005 to Microsoft 2010 and vice versa. One of major mistakes in this part is the presenters always forget to get a compatible version of visual presentation while working with different computers or laptops. This makes the presentation being delayed for a while. Making the presentation mobile in the above table shows that most of lecturers did not make the presentation mobile (43%) whereas 37% did it, 15%, and 6% respectively said “very rare” and “never”.

Table 6: Lecturers’ Ability to Use Presenter View



Another preparation that should be highlighted before delivering lectures is the ability to use the presenter view for example running a presentation from one computer and sending it to another screen like projector. What is likely to happen is some lecturers do not know how to connect the laptop to projector and preferred help from technician. These would waste lecture hours and show a very weak preparation. As lecturers, the technical skills are needed besides the communication skills because it shows the credibility of the lecturers themselves. According to Table 6 above, 50% of lecturers notice this problem. This might occur because of awareness of Power Point usages by young lecturers as majority of respondents are ranged from age 21-30 years old.

Table 7: Lecturers’ Knowledge about the Suitable Media Use to Help the Presentation

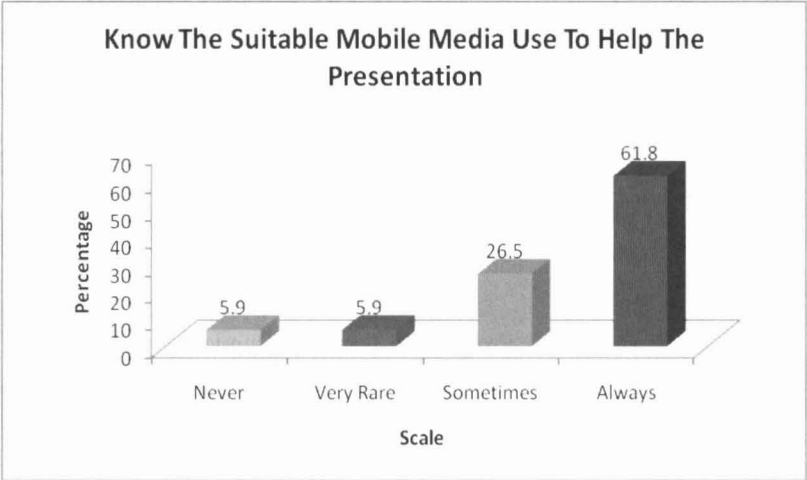


Table 7 indicates that most lecturers (42%) definitely know the suitable mobile media used to help the presentation. The mobile media means thumb drives, pointer, hard drives, CD, DVD and etc which can help presenter to smoothly deliver the presentation. For example, pointer is a wise tool to use in a presentation because it may help the presenter shows the important point as well as free gestures on the stage without the need to stay at the computer desk in to click the slides. Besides, the lecturers also need to know which player is for DVD or CD in case of information storage. But still, there is quite a large number of lecturers (26.5%) answered “sometimes”, “very rare” (5.9%) and “never” when asked about their knowledge on these mobile media. It can be suggested here that

UiTM should provide some ICT workshop to reduce this figure in the future.

Conclusion

Power Point presentation is well known to lecturers in assisting students during the process of teaching and learning. It is also a very effective way to interact with students in classroom. In order to give exposure to students, lecturers need to ensure that their slides presentations and skills are well prepared and beneficial to students learning. Students will enjoy the learning process more. Most lecturers of UiTM Pahang agreed that the steps pointed out in this study have resulted a good performance for their lectures. All steps mentioned should be practiced when presenting lectures because it give benefits for both parties, lecturers and students as well and it is hoped that they will continue with it and do improvement from time to time in their next lectures.

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FAIZAN ABD JABAR & ROSLINA ALI, Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Pahang. faizan@pahang.uitm.edu.my, roslinaali@pahang.uitm.edu.my
MASHITA ABD JABAR, Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Melaka. mashita@melaka.uitm.edu.my