A VISUAL METHOD IN EXPRESSING JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' VOICE TOWARDS LITERACY

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Abstract

Visual methods are well known in the education research field but rarely used in junior high school, where students' voices are needed to explore the education needs. In this article, the researchers intend to accomplish one fundamental objective. The key objective is to emphasize that photovoice as a visual method can build good engagement for students in learning activities and promote students' voices about how the learning process takes place and what the students are thinking about that process, which is useful in supporting learning activities. Here, the researchers use photovoice as the methodology. The author collected and analyzed the data using SHoWeD. This article, therefore, to expand knowledge about visual methods as methodological innovation in learning research.

Keywords: *Photograph, Photovoice, Research Methods, Visual*

INTRODUCTION

There has been debate nowadays through the use of qualitative and quantitative methodologies in education research. However, this article tends to take a step forward to develop person-oriented research methodologies and implement such methodologies in research in junior high education. Thus, the visual methodology used to gather students' views on how the

learning process occurs in various contexts. Related to this consideration, Bailey & Harken (2014) conducted a study of visual images as teacher inquiry tools. One of the points described that students engaged in their research study by observing and interpreting what they see (Bailey & Van Harken, 2014).

Photovoice as a visual method can build good engagement for students in learning activities and promote students' voices about how the learning process occurs and what the students are thinking about that process, which is useful in supporting learning activities (M.McCormick & Hubbard, 2004; Ciolan & Manasia, 2017). Although photovoice initially used in the medical field, photovoice is now widely used in other fields such as the educational field, including English. In Indonesia, photovoice is slowly known

Photovoice emphasizes the expression of the participant's perspective from the use of imagery and narrative (Stroud, 2014; Guell & Ogilvie, 2015). In this research, the researcher use framework which is initially proposed by Wang and Burris with the following steps: (1) decide the research problem, (2) recruit photovoice participants, (3) collecting the data from participants, and (4) analyzing the data (discussing the chosen photograph). The photovoice method gives research participants (individual or groups) cameras for some time, in which the participants are encouraged to have photography about anything that significant to the study (Foster et al., 1999; Chio & Fandt, 2007).

Based on the issue above, the researchers focus on presenting students' voices about telling stories based on their own experiences by referring to the previous study conducted by Ciolan (2017) that the photovoice method applied to school education. In this research, the participants were high school students age 12-15 years old. This article presents examples from research where visual methods, in this case, photovoice, on junior high school students in Indonesia. Thus, the researchers construct a research question,

"How do the students present their voice about education by telling stories?".

LITERATURE REVIEW

As Ciolan (2017), photovoice is participatory action research where participants use cameras to take photographs about a person, context, or even situations they consider may represent their individual or social life (Harley, 2012). Photovoice described as a voice that came out from the photo that we take. However, we should select the best photo using this method, representing our study (Epstein et al., 2006). The photographs that the participants take should represent life experiences without any interventions. Photographs are not only about a picture but also used for communicating (Radley, 2010). Thus, the photovoice method covered both objective and subjective aspects (Ciolan & Manasia, 2017). There are aspects: first, activities, facts, and persons are as objective aspects. Second, emotional stated and thought are subjective aspects. Those two aspects Give a deeper understanding of human behavior (Ciolan & Manasia, 2017). Both aspects are needed to complement each other. Documentary photography also shows individual stories and perceptions by capturing and expressing stories about the world (Kuo, 2007).

Photovoice is commonly used in educational research because it has many benefits. Photovoice is an engaging tool for students, teachers, and researchers in the classroom or outside the classroom context (Drajati & Zainnuri, 2019). Students' voices can be discussed with friends, teachers, or even policymakers (Edwards et al., 2011; Evans-Agnew & Rosemberg, 2016).

In analyzing photovoice, SHoWeD analysis can be used. SHoWeD analysis is used in research that uses photovoice as a methodology (Wang & Burris, 1997). SHoWeD itself stands for:
S = What do you **See**?

H = What is really **happening**?
O = How does this relate to **Our** life?
W = **Why** do you choose this photo?
e = How could this image **educate** the community?
D = What can we **Do** after this photo was taken? (impacts)

SHoWeD analysis, as described by Wang & Burris, consists of six questions that represent the photographer's voice about his/her interest. However, in this study, students are the photographer themselves. The SHoWeD analysis consists of six questions to trigger students to have narrative and critical answers. However, to get the answer correctly or closely related to what the question means, in this case, researcher and teachers. Without the scaffold from an adult, young ages students might get the question incorrectly or improperly. They might also answer the questions correctly but in a concise description that did not fully show the real experience.

Students these days are familiar with the existence of technology and gadget. Taking some photos from their mobile phone is relatively easy for them. Using photovoice to express their voices towards their life experiences and thoughts helps students positively use technology and gadgets. By expressing their voices through something that catches their interest, they also learn to think critically about life experiences related to education.

There are some previous studies related to the use of photovoice in the educational field. These previous studies also highlight voices from educational actors, such as teachers and senior high school students. Ciolan and Manasia (2017) conducted a study about photovoice in higher education where students' need is central. Their study's result was photovoice enriches the students' engagement in learning activities, such as how the learning takes place and what students are thinking about the process. Drajati et

al. (2019) also conducted a study related to the educational field. Teachers were the educational actors who implement photovoice for themselves. This study's result was that photovoice is considered a powerful tool to promote teachers' voices about multimodal literacy. Based on those previous studies, the researcher implies that photovoice can be widely used in every teaching-learning process to enhance students' learning activity, for example, in showing voices about multimodal literacy.

RESEARCH METHOD

Five students participated in this study. The 12-15 years old students were in third grade of Junior High School. All the participants were Indonesian students who learned English. The participants worked in a group of two in having photovoice as their part of expressing students' voices. Four students (Participant 1-4) took pictures related to their experiences in literacy. The literacy that they want to expose is when their school visited one of the most significant printed media (Newspaper Media). Meanwhile, one student (Participant 5) who came from another class worked individually, not in a group of two as the other participants.

Participant 5 also used photovoice as a methodology to express her voice about the importance of telling stories to young learners. At the first stage of the study, they took photographs based on the related topic chosen. After that, they analyzed the photo taken. All the students did SHoWeD Analysis of each picture to express their voice towards literacy. They used the related topic as their critical incidents to express their voice. The data source obtained from students' photovoice, responses on the questionnaire, and in-depth interviews. All the participants' written assignments were coded manually by using SHoWeD analysis. SHoWeD analysis represented a photographer's interest in relation with the topic of learning carried out on the research. Merriam (1998) suggested using member checking to ensure the trustworthiness of the data that has been exposed by all participants in expressing their voice. Member checking used to check the data

validity by ensuring the findings that has been collected by the researcher, by asking to the participants about its originality of the data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The five students learned about using photovoice to express their voice towards literacy. They felt that photovoice is very interesting since it is closely related to their real-life and real activity. They can connect the engagement between taking a photo and describing the situation or their way of thinking from their photography. Students are encouraged to take their intentional pictures from inside or outside the classroom.

The students were interested in improving their reading habits or even intended to share the importance of having reading habits from a very young age. These students just revealed their mindset and want to change other Indonesian students' reading habits out there. They hoped that their voices would improve Indonesian reading habits and encourage them to keep learning and practicing with any methods.

Students described their experiences based on the photos that they choose and share with other students. After that, students did an analysis using SHoWeD analysis. Students revealed their voices from a combination of photo and SHoWeD analysis. It unconsciously creates students' awareness and critical thinking towards literacy. The following figures showed the voices created by students. Four students in each group of two highlighted literary voice by their school activity with printed media. Moreover, one student individually highlighted the voice of learning to read by using storybook for young learners:

Figure 1. Example of student's photovoice to describe the student's voice

Literacy with Solo Pos

Photograher & Writer   : Ms. PL & Ms. PA

Title: Newspaper

1.   **What is SEEN in the photo!**
     The reporter is interviewing some of my friends about their understanding by reading a newspaper.

2.   **What is really HAPPENING? (The "unseen" story behind the photo)**
     Six students are standing in front of the outdoor class.

3.   **How does this photo relate to OUR everyday life?**
     Students love to read together.

4.   **WHY do you choose this photo?**
     I choose this photo because this photo gives me the motivation to love reading.

5. How could this photo EDUCATE people around you? Describe briefly!

Yes. I realize that we can answer some questions easily by reading a newspaper.

6. What is your plan related to the photo above?

I will improve my reading habit to be better.

Figure 2. Literacy activity at school in collaboration with Local Printed Media (Newspaper)

<u>**Literacy Culture with Newspaper**</u>

Photographer & Writer: Ms. A & Ms. S
Title: Culture

1. What is SEEN in the photo!
Reading Newspaper.

2. What is really HAPPENING? (The "unseen" story behind the photo)

The activity is held in the school field. Students are sitting on mattrass. Students are reading a newspaper.

3. **How does this photo relate to OUR everyday life?**
   This kind of activity support students to be more active in studying, especially in reading.

4. **WHY do you choose this photo?**
   Because we are delighted to meet visitor

5. **How could this photo EDUCATE people around you? Describe briefly!**
   By reading activity with Solo Pos, students are feeling happy. By listening to some instructions from Solo Pos, we wish this kind of activity can motivate students to love reading.

6. **What is your plan related to the photo above?**
   We wish to be more diligent, especially related to Literacy or reading activity

Figure 3. Read storybook activity

Learn to Read
Photographer & Writer: Ms. R
Title: Learn to Read

1. **What is SEEN in the photo!**
   I teach my younger brothers to read. This activity took place at home. They love to read a storybook.

2. **What is really HAPPENING? (The "unseen" story behind the photo)**
   This photo took in the afternoon on Wednesday, and we read a storybook.

3. **How does this photo relate to OUR everyday life?**
   Teach them how to read correctly and fluently.

4. **WHY do you choose this photo?**
   To motivate older brothers and sisters to teach their younger brothers and sisters.

5. **How could this photo EDUCATE people around you? Describe briefly!**
   Yes. Motivating them to learn to read promotes them to read fluently and love to read books.

6. **What is your plan related to the photo above?**
   To motivate other people to teach their younger brothers and teachers to read.

DISCUSSION

According to Drajati's research on photovoice (2019), there are four (4) steps of successful photovoice to express voices through the photograph that is suitably taken by learners or students in Junior High School grades. The steps are as follow:

Step 1: Introducing what is Photovoice and SHoWeD analysis.

Photovoice and SHoWeD analysis might be new knowledge for students, especially for Junior High School students. Thus, the researcher should ensure that teachers assist their students while implementing photovoice and SHoWeD analysis. Since in this research, students are active photographers, which means that they

took their photo, adults like teachers and researchers may assist them.

Step 2: Select the topic.

Before the students took the photo, they choose one or more topics they want to explore and describe. This topic is closely related to their voices, especially on reading activity. In this research, the students focus on selecting reading topics, such as describing their voices about reading newspapers and retelling young learners' stories. Later this topic may be read by other parties such as other students, other teachers, or even policymakers. Thus, students need to choose a topic that can have a good impact on others.

Step 3: Take photos.

Students may use a camera or mobile phone to capture the classroom photos or outside the classroom. Students can take photos of their interests, such as their hobbies, favorite or memorable events, and daily activities.

Step 4: Select and analyze photos.

Students should choose one of the best photos that represent their voices from many photos taken by students. After that, they begin to analyze the photos using SHoWeD analysis. In this analysis stage, the researcher and teachers play a significant role in assisting the students in finishing SHoWeD analysis.

In the SHoWeD analysis done by the students, six questions had answered correctly to represent their voices. The first question was about the things that can be seen in the photo. What is the photo representing? In the first figure, the photographer / the students represent how printed media is trying to interview some students in their school. Another example is in figure 2, where the

photographers/students were trying to voice how literacy is being introduced by reading a newspaper. Still related to question number one in figure 3, she tried to express how she taught her younger brothers to read.

The second question of SHoWeD analysis is something significant, which cannot be seen in the photo. Such as represented in figure 3, the student told about the day the photo was taken. The third question of SHoWeD analysis shows how the photo had a relation to the photographer's life. In figure 1, the photographers wanted to show that students love to read together. The photographers thought that reading by themselves might be boring, but read together with their friends, such as encouragement. In figure 2, the photographers wanted to show that reading newspapers together in the outdoor field can encourage reading habits. In figure 3, the photographer wanted to show that we have to take care of younger children and teach them how to read by implementing storybooks.

The fourth question of SHoWeD analysis shows the reason why the photographer chooses the photo. In figure 1, the photographers choose the photo because they feel that the photo motivates reading. In figure 2, the photographers choose the photo because they felt happy that one of the most significant printed media visited their school. In figure 3, the photographer chooses the photo because she wanted to motivate other older brothers/sisters to care for and teach their siblings or younger brother/sister.

The fifth question of SHoWeD analysis shows how the photographer's photo can give education to other people. In figure 1, the photographer emphasized that by reading the newspaper, we can get broader knowledge. In figure 2, the photographer emphasized that students feel happy by reading newspapers, and

they are eager to love reading activity by reading newspapers. In figure 3, the photographer emphasized that giving motivation to younger children/siblings can build their eagerness to be fluent in reading.

The last question of SHoWeD analysis shows the photographer's plan from the photo that they choose. In figure 1, the photographer explains that they will improve their reading habit in the future. Based on the photo that they took, they realize how essential reading is, and they are eager to improve their reading habit for a better future. In figure 2, the photographer explains that they want to be more diligent, especially literacy matters. In figure 3, the photographer emphasized giving other people motivation to be more aware of their environment, especially literacy matters.

From the SHoWeD analysis done with five students, all of them described the importance of reading in their real life. They wished to change not only their reading habit but also other people's reading habits. Even policymakers might see students' voices to create better programs and socialization towards Indonesian's literacy level, especially reading. In figure 1, the students emphasized the importance of reading newspapers to learn about the world and fix reading habits.

In figure 2, the students emphasized their happy feeling while reading newspapers, leading them to be more diligent. In figure 3, the student emphasized her awareness of her brothers' reading skills. She has an eagerness to make her brothers read fluently. Besides that, she wanted to make her brothers had a high interest in reading books. Moreover, she wanted to express her voice to make other people had the same awareness as her.

IMPLICATION AND CONCLUSION

Activities facilitated with Photovoice has a good effect on the educational field. However, since it is related to the educational field, educators like teachers still need to pay attention to their students' actions using photovoice to express students' voices. Besides that, students need scaffolding from teachers to ensure that they narratively the photovoice correctly. This scaffolding is needed for the students to make sure that they can tell their stories according to the questions that represent their voice. Teachers, as a scaffolder, need to make sure that students are writing the voice correctly and adequately. It is about answering the question and making sure to speak out the voice that can positively influence others.

Students in this era are familiar with technology and gadget. They did not find difficulty in taking photos. However, to do SHoWeD analysis correctly, they need more practice. Thus, the role of the teacher is needed. Students also learn how to express their voices, which gives a good or broad impact on other parties. By using photovoice, it improves students' critical thinking to think and write down their voices narratively. Completing the SHoWeD analysis is about writing down the story or answering the questions, but they also need to correctly answer and deliver the purpose of showing the photos to other people or parties.

While taking photos to speak out students' voices, the students also need to consider photos representing their real-life perspectives and experiences. Thus, students can take photos anywhere and anytime they want. Besides that, photovoice may lead students to use technology positively. They learn that they need to positively write down their perspective, which may give good real-life to other people. Based on the conclusion above, the researchers imply that photovoice can be used widely for the

teaching-learning process, specifically for the teaching-learning process in Indonesia.

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