

Written Exams: Concrete Solution to Solve Image-Text Relation for Visual Communication Design's students (art students)?

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Abstract

Post modern visual culture and semiotic places on emphasis on image as text; consequently, learning now includes the study of both text and image that are made up of many forms of mixed media, and does not separate text from images. Visual Communication Design's Students have seldom taken written exams, reading text, and writing assignments. Most design's subject matter emphasize in studio productions. Thus the lecturers have seldom given exams or assignments which relate between text and images. One of design's subject matter is photography. Most photographic lecturers had never given written exams; instead they gave photo assignments for final project. Most of the lecturers gave either written exams or studio productions, but they have seldom or never integrate the text and images. The survey research conducted on 100 communication design students in third and fifth semester, and three photographic lecturers, in Tarumanagara University. The photographic lecturers prepared learning materials, student's presentation, and exams with combine text and images. Problem based learning was used to make students more focused on the themes and assignments. Moreover, the lecturers can facilitates student, supervise student, and provide feed back. Barrett's photo criticism was used to help students relate text and image of photographs. Some guided question was modified from Barrett's photo criticism model. The guided questions and images selections became important steps during delivery materials, and listed in lecturer's presentation and student's assignments. The guided questions and a good selection of images helped the discussion, and brought students to complex thinking.

Keywords: art criticism models, image –text, written exams, photography.

1. INTRODUCTION

The traditional Instructional in photographic course emphasize on studio production or practices, and ignored photographic theory such as photo criticism and history of photographic. Most photographic lecturers in Tarumanagara University give a studio critique which is not sufficient to improve the student's photo appreciation ability or photographic theory.

A studio critique is carried out to improve student's work; therefore, we should give photo criticism, and history of photographic or final evaluation which integrates between text and image. Most lecturers of History of Art course introduce students to vast numbers of unfamiliar images under conditions more conducive to sleep than intellectual stimulation. Opportunities for students' questions or in-depth discussion of works art are rare in large classes. During the test or assignment, student is typically asked to recall names, dates, periods, and stylistic characteristic.

A number of changes have been proposed by art historians. A chronological introduction to the great masterpieces of Western art, to a thematically work of art and broader selection of works (Collins, B. (Ed). (1995). Small discussion groups provide opportunities for in-depth examination and art criticism in class (Clayson & Leja, 1995). Moreover, writing assignments develop critical thinking and writing skills (Alpers, 1995; Condon, 1995).

In this paper, the photographic lecturers prepared learning materials, student's presentation and exams with combine text and images. Problem based learning was used to make students more focused on the themes and assignments. Moreover, the lecturers can facilitates student, supervise student, and provide feed back. Barrett's photo criticism and Feldman's art criticism models were used to help students relate text and image of photographs. Some guided questions were modified from Barrett's photo criticism model. The guided questions and images selections became important steps during delivery materials, and listed in lecturer's presentation and student's assignments.

2. RELATION BETWEEN VERBAL AND VISUAL

Research up the early 1960s had been dominated by opinion that memory and cognitive tasks was mediated by the process that are primarily verbal or linguistic. Dual coding approach was a reaction against that singular opinion. Dual coding emphasized the importance of non-verbal imagery as a mode of thought that coordinated with verbal process. Pavio's dual-coding theory proposes that there are separate memory systems for different types of information;

one for verbal information and one for imaginal information. Pavio describes verbal and imaginal memory. Imaginal memory involves pictures, sounds, tastes, and nonverbal thoughts (imagination), while verbal memory involves activity related to language systems (auditory and speech) (Paivio, 1986, 2007). Even Gombrich (1960) argue that pictures are more effective than spoken or written language in evoking affective response from reader. Furthermore, he says the picture cannot stand alone to explain the story, they need text to accompany. Text can appear as captions or written words to add picture's meaning.

Research on picturebook are mainly done to find the relationship between words and pictures, to teach children how to look picturebook (Arizpe, E and Styles, M, 2003) to find appropriate metaphorical language to describe varied interaction (Sipe, 1998 and Lewis 2001). These researches usually were done for children. Other researchers investigate the use of illustration in books. For complete review about picturebook's researchers can be referred to Arizpe, E and Styles, M, 2003.

Chia investigated the way professor Wu teach his students in Taiwan using Barrett photo criticism. (Chia, 2005). Zahar, I (2010) tried to use Barrett's photo criticism to investigate student's respond on photographs which have urban theme. Both researchers use pre and post test to know students progress in responding photographs. Most students had to answer three questions which accompanied along with each photographic image. The three questions were (a) What do you see? (b) What does this photograph mean? And (c) How do you know? Both researchers showed the important of written test to know the progress of students and student's knowledge of photo criticism.

3. METHOD OF RESEARCH AND INSTRUCTIONAL

3.1 Survey Method

The research started on September – December 2010 at Visual Communication Design, Tarumanagara University. The subjects of the research were one hundred students in third and fifth semester. The third semester students were chosen because they were taking photography I which more emphasis in photo technique. The fifth semester students were chosen to learn photographic interpretations because the students had prior knowledge in arts appreciation. Survey research methods (Cresswell, 2008) were the main forms of inquiry used in this qualitative study. The survey research were designed to investigate: (a) the students' knowledge, values, beliefs, and assumptions at the end of the semester, (b) the students' meaning making processes in their reading of photography; and (c) the factors that influenced the student's

interpretations of photography images, (d) the implementation of Barret's criticism model in learning photography appreciation and photo technique. In order to attain beliefs, knowledge, assumptions, and values of students, asking questions was the main form of inquiry in this study. Written questionnaires and oral questionnaires were used to gather in-depth data of students' learning on how to interpret paintings. Interviewed also conducted to three photographic lecturers in Tarumanagara Pre test and post test is to compare students' interpretations of photographic images before and after they had received instruction in photographic appreciation course. For the third semester student, three photographs were projected through projectors along with the questions: a) What photo techniques are being used by photographer?; b) What is the composition of this photograph?, and c) What will you do to improve this photograph?

Using these results, the student's initial interpretation of the five photographic images compared with their interpretations of the same five images near the end of the photographic course to see if the use of Barrett's critics' model improved their interpretations. For written questionnaires, five images were projected through projectors along with the questions. The three questions were listed with each photographic images were: (a) What do you see? (b) What does this photograph mean? and (c) How do you know?. These three questions were similar to Barrett's interpretation questions to students (Chia, 2008).

The research question is how effective the image-text relates for student. Before conducting survey methods, the steps of preparation learning materials become important.

3.2. Preparation and delivery learning materials

3.2.1 Preparation for third semester students

Step 1 Prepare Theme for student's presentation

I prepared Photo technique such as the use of aperture, speed, and flash as a theme. Fifty students were divided into twelve groups and each group chooses one theme.

Step 2 Facilitate Student

Students read and translate photography's text to Indonesian language. Comprehending the text and the pictures by themselves will help them to select the pictures and summarize the text, and integrate the text and pictures into power point before presentation

Step 3 Presentation

The lecturer act as facilitator who supervise student, provide feedback during student presentation.

3.2.2. Preparation for fifth semester students

Step 1. prepare learning material

Theme as a problem: -Developing the problems units requires extensive planning by the lecturer to ensure that required content and skill are being covered. Contemporaries issues related to culture, race identity, gender and so on favored by the issues-based approach could be performed to PBL units according to Constantino (2002). Urban as a theme was chosen because there were many photographers took urban pictures which related to gender, social, homosexual, poverty etc.. I used aesthetic exemplars in the form of modern and post modern photographers and Barrett's critic model as the latest model for photo interpretation.

Barrett critics' model

I chose Barrett critics model because his methods are suitable for photographs (Barrett, 2001) and his methods have been applied in Chia's dissertations (Chia, 2008). Barrett critics methods are weighted both ratio and feelings. Barrett's critic models will be divided into three steps, description, interpretation, and judgment. The first step is describing form, medium, style, comparing and contrast. The second step is interpretation which employs two signifying practices of Roland Barthes: denotations and connotations. A photographs still-life arrangement may denote (show) flowers in a vase on a wooden table; it may connote tranquility, peace. The benefit of using critic's models is to make the student know the interdisciplinary between art and other disciplines. Also the photographic teacher can make format from Barrett's model which helps them in delivery materials, student assignment, feed backs and evaluation.

Step 2. Deliver materials, present problems, brainstorming

Urban problems illustrates the integrated nature of PBL units, since the students must not only exercise photography practice skills, they also have to study history of photography and social. The lecturer develops and presents the problem situation, but student have to pinpoint the central problem and then brainstorm how to go about solving it by using Barrett questions and making a list of what do I see? What does it mean? What is the subject matter? What is the relation amongst the subject matter? What is the form? What is the medium? What is the style? What is the difference between one photos and others? Who made this photo? Why he/she made this photo? Who influenced the photograher?. Students locate information sources for answering the questions. Usually, students will have to draw information from a variety of disciplines. In this way, the problems act as a central organizer for an integrated unit or curriculum.

Step 3 describe individual and group assignments

Students are divided into working groups, but each student assumes responsibility for a particular question or area of research and begins the investigation process. In this survey research, 50 students will be divided into 12 groups that consist of four to five students. Urban theme will be divided into 12 sub themes such as unusual subject matter, abstract, violence, gender, homosexual, crime, pollution, nude and sex, culture, cityscapes.

Step 4 facilitate student to criticize photographs

Lecturer act as facilitator and helps students to arrange format follow Barrett's model criticism. Students will fill the format from subject matter, medium, form, denotation, connotation, style, comparing and contrast, internal and external source of information. Filling the format will be for the first time for students and they need to be assisted and explained during course, discussion and presentation.

Step 5 assisting student to combine data and discuss sub theme

As a fourth step, students reconvene in their groups to discuss the information gathered and refine their questions and research strategy. Hence, students are self-directed while learning in a cooperative environment. These steps may be repeated several times inside or outside class until the groups feels that it has arrived at a reasonable conclusion. Lecturer facilitates the process when they sort photos, fill the Barrett Model format, cooperation, assist student with questions to focus on problems.

Step 6 provide feedback and summative evaluation

At the final stage, students present their research in a manner authentic to the nature of the problem, for example through a presentation to a panel with power point. The final presentation serves as assessment of students learning although self-assessment is embedded in the process as students reflect on their own progress throughout the research experience. Lecturer provides feedback during student's presentations. Also we gave written exams and show five photos with questions; (a) What do you see? (b)What does it mean? And (c) How do you know?

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Selected Questions

The three lecturers had never given written exams in the course, given reading text, and presentation. These activities impeded students to develop their modalities of expressions such as combining written text, pictures, video, and simulations. They could produce pictures but has a little knowledge to read pictures. One of the lecturers provided written exams for the third semester student by asking what aperture was,

what lens function was etc. These type questions tend to memory recall, and do not lead to complex thinking or high order of thinking. Photographs were projected through projectors along with the questions; a) What photo techniques are being used by photographer?; b) What is the composition of this photograph?; c) What will you do to improve this photograph? Etc. These questions led to complex thinking skill, and the questions reflected to real life conditions as photographer.

Student in the third and fifth semester in Visual Communication Design, Tarumanagara University were not usually took written exams and photo or art criticism. Most students usually had difficulties to answer question what the photograph means, or to answer what you did to improve this photograph. Most of the students said that they did not feel comfortable to answer differently from other student, and they were not sure whether their answers correct or not.

4.2. Barrett's criticism model

Barrett's criticism model helped student to answer during written exams, presentation, and writing assignment. Barrett's criticism model also helped lecturer during prepare learning material to deliver materials. The student answered the question much better after seven times course from their pre to post test results. (Zahar, I, 2010). For example, one of the fifth semester student answer during pre test when she responded to Versace advertising photo that showed two lady hold Versace's bag. She answered the first question what she saw. The writing answer is "one woman hold bag with energetic face". After seven times meeting, she improved her answer during post test. Her answer is "The composition of the photo is balanced, because there is diagonal line on the top right to bottom left corner in the form of a "X". Crossing of two woman's leg strengthen the "X" form. Fine lighting create beautiful shadow. Light from side and above produce lines in the hair; therefore, the picture is not flat and emerges with the backdrop. Barrett's criticism model help student to write the answer during exams in systematic way. The lecturer could identify the weakness of students answer. Most students usually found difficulties in comparing and contrast. Students had a little knowledge on history of photography.

4.3. Group discussion and problem based learning.

Choosing theme for third semester student helped them in group discussion. Moreover, theme is important for student in the fifth semester especially in problem based learning. Group discussion for third semester student and problem based learning for fifth semester student created condition for student to be

more active in selecting pictures, combining text and pictures, and placing to the power point for presentation. Showing pictures stimulated student to be more active in discussion, and students were more willing to give different opinion. Student centre's teaching methods facilitated the student to relate between the combination of text and picture.

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