

Visual research methodologies in the field of Art Education: Conceptual analysis and specific theoretical framework of reference

(Received December 11, 2017- Approved January 13, 2018)

Ana Marqués Ibáñez¹

Abstract

Art education must be studied rigorously through contemporary visual culture which reflects changes in current society, using visual research methodologies that broaden knowledge in the fields of art and education. This paper presents new formats for observing and analysing visual material in art through visual artistic research methodologies applied to education. These methodologies foster new forms of visual narrative discourse and serve as essential experimentation guides to explore and understand complex art concepts, and how they can be used by researchers and trainee teachers as educational material for contemporary visual culture. This study analyses the current formats used to study photographic or visual material, including interactive documentaries, participant mapping and digital storytelling. We also present the design, justification and implementation of a theoretical and practical review including the creation of visual methodologies and their application in education. The aim is for students to acquire tools to understand the images of their immediate visual culture and to generate artworks using different forms of artistic representation with an educational application, such as photographic techniques and audio-visual media.

Key Words: Visual Culture, Visual Methodologies, Research, Education, Art Education.

Introduction

This paper will initially focus on the field of art education as a way to learn art. We will analyse certain methods for teaching and learning art, as well as specialised institutions that develop and promote these methods. Contemporary art education is defined by two fundamental aspects, namely, it is flexible and undergoes changes that are redefined by the cultural, social and political contexts that are established through the education curricula of each region or country. Students develop according to social structures that evolve over time.

Art education responds to different factors involving the arts, art education, the way that art is taught at school, and an expansion of social issues that improve human development. The so-called visual arts can offer innovation and renewal.

Art is capable of generating and improving the learning outcomes of students and enriching the quality of life of a community, by exploring new methodologies that help to connect students with the arts. In the field of art education, a large number of professionals are working in the same direction to create educational teaching resources,

¹ Corresponding author: University of La Laguna, C/ Antonio González, 2. 38204. San Cristóbal de La Laguna (Tenerife, Spain). E-mail: amarquez@ull.edu.es

both inside and outside of the field of art. The aim is to provide a social value that generates diverse roles in education through sustainable and healthy development. Therefore, great importance is attributed to the work of educators, museums curators, musicians, actors, artists, teachers, researchers and writers, who are aware of the intrinsic and enriching social value of art, and who experiment with and promote different roles in education.

Through the acquisition of the discipline of art, not only are new skills forged but also proposals and results are analysed, projects are created forming meaningful creative partnerships, and the relationship between art and education is explored. Art education is divided into plastic and visual arts, which includes several disciplines: sculpture, painting and architecture, music education and teaching, and expressive art education (which refers specifically to body expression and areas of artistic expression related to the performing arts, such as mime, dance, theatre and circus arts).

The professionals working in these fields of art must study, work and constantly improve their skills. Meanwhile, students choose and aim to specialise in a specific art form through pedagogical artistic manifestations that include contemporary visual landscape and artistic expression. Indeed, in art education, students can receive their training through an official art degree. These degrees originated as workshops held at academies that taught trades. In this type of teaching, contemporary art opposes self-taught methods. In this context, it is interesting to contemplate the education that children and adolescents receive in schools through regulated curricular subjects and extracurricular activities. Within the context of non-formal education, it is possible to study socio-cultural animation aimed at a broader and less-specialised audience, educational museums programmes, cultural and vocational training centres, university extension centres, as well as programmes conducted in other settings, such as prisons and other agents that present a change in our society through street art.

Arts Based Educational Research is a growing field in terms of research and research-based implementation of the teaching and learning process through artistic experiences. The arts include art education (music, drama, dance), poetry and literature, storytelling, visual arts education in cinema, arts and crafts, digital arts, media, design and photography. However, art education is not so much defined by teaching in the field of art, but rather by the following factors:

- The way in which the teaching and learning process can be improved through art as an essential factor of change.
- The way in which the form of learning in and through art can be transmitted to different disciplines.
- Exploring and generating an understanding of the forms of human behaviour, different ways of thinking, capabilities and learning styles, in particular, by observing works of art and different forms of participation in artistic experiences.

Arts-integrated learning is a way of teaching artistic skills with academic material.

In education, it is a crucial to value the process as a fundamental feature of student learning which occurs through artistic experience and subsequently through the results obtained from the creation of unique art objects, or those produced as a series responding to productivity with a didactic purpose. Therefore, what is important is not the final product or work created, but rather the student's involvement in the process of teaching and learning together with the frustrations of artistic experimentation.

Visual arts education is based exclusively on art forms that are visible, including painting, drawing, ceramics, sculpture, jewellery and fabric design, etc. Contemporary themes include different media such as video, photography, design and digital art. Art education is based on the concept of students creating art and learning through constructive criticism and an appreciation of art.

Perspective of the field of contemporary art education (Principal movements)

Art education today is based on different aspects that shape the fields of education and fine arts. The periods of modernity and postmodernity belong to the 20th and 21st century. Therefore, it is essential to study the history of art education and how art movements have configured its structure in specialised and individualised areas of knowledge. As stated by Aguirre (2005), the concepts of art education are subject to their art-related notions and, in turn, to their constant transformation in the fields of education and art: "Current art education, in an attempt to demarcate its object of knowledge, has encountered the same difficulties that have tormented it from its conception to define art." (Aguirre 2005, p. 319 as cited in Aguirre, 1996).

According to Aguirre (2005), trying to conceptualise the areas, in which the field of action of art education takes place, is a complex task: "[...] the legacy of the avant-garde movement has a direct impact on mobility, interdisciplinarity, and the ambiguity of aesthetics." (Aguirre, 2005, p. 319).

It is fundamental to analyse the role of art education in terms of the holistic development of a person. Arnheim (1993) analyses and presents this idea in relation to three areas of learning which aim to develop the key skills needed to approach the different branches of the curriculum:

The first of these three key areas is philosophy, which teaches the student about a) logic, i.e., the ability to reason correctly, b) epistemology, i.e., the ability to understand the relationship between the human mind and reality, and (c) ethics, i.e. knowing the difference between right and wrong. The second key area is visual learning, in which the student learns how to approach visual phenomena as a primary means to address the organisation of thought. The third area is language learning, which involves training students to verbally communicate the fruits of their thoughts. (Arnheim, 1993, p. 89)

Relevant institutions in art education: Institutions and Associations.

In order to obtain a better understanding of how art works and can be analysed from a scientific research perspective, we will study the main institutions and associations in this field of knowledge. Marín's (2011) article on art education research provides a detailed description of these institutions, some of which are non-profit organisations, as well as a discussion about how they drive and promote the field of art education research.

The governmental organisation, UNESCO, deals with topics that are related to art education and collaborates with international non-governmental organisations of various artistic specialities, such as the *International Society for Education Through Art* (INSEA), the *International Drama/Theatre and Education Association* (IDEA), and the *International Society for Music Education* (ISME).

INSEA specialises in education and teaching visual arts professionals including teachers of all stages of education. Every three years, the organisation holds an International Conference, the next of which will take place from 9th to 13th July 2019, in Vancouver, Canada. Such scientific events provide the opportunity to learn about the current situation of art education, and also offer an insight into international publications from the field of education and art.

The most important international professional associations are the *National Art Education Association* (NAEA) of the United States, which focuses on research, and the *National Society for Education in Art and Design* (NSEAD) of the United Kingdom. The former conducts research under the NAEA Research Commission, created in the 2012 NAEA National Convention under the 2011-2014 NAEA Strategic Plan, with the aim to respond to the research needs of the fields of visual arts and education. In addition, the 2015 - 2020 NAEA Strategic Vision has recently been developed. This future strategic vision brings together the ideas of members of the association formed by teachers of the United States and the rest of the world. The ideas are generated through specialised groups which aim to foster creativity in the field of art education and to promote research.

The NAEA Research Commission communicates and coordinates research from the professional art education field. It also responds to interest in critical issues in art and education with the objective of improving the quality of art education in schools and institutions. Furthermore, the NAEA Research Commission analyses a series of Research Factors which are fundamental to understanding the association's research lines. In the area of professional learning, members of the association across all divisions indicate the need for further study of the methodologies applied in the teaching-learning process.

The four research factors of NAEA are related to contents for teachers and students to be implemented in institutions which change dynamically as part of a research agenda. The field of research is employed and valued as a means to improve educa-

tional practice and theory, in addition to defending and determining art education policies. There are four factors established in the current research agenda for 2017. These are as follows: *Learning, Teaching, Disciplines of Art and Art Education and Context/Educational Setting* (NAEA Research Commission: Research Agenda Factors, 2017).

Analysis of the responses given by members of the Research Commission in a survey conducted by the NAEA in 2013, revealed certain themes that obtained a higher level of interest and which are connected in the research:

Evaluation

[...] The systematic process of evaluation determines the quality of the performance of the teacher or the results of the students, with the aim of reporting and grading, or determining whether a programme, procedure, study plan, or policy has attained the planned objectives.

Social justice

It includes topics such as equity of access to visual art education for students in community, school and museum contexts. The students are made up of diverse characteristics and needs, such as sexual orientation, age, cultural identity, religion, and economic level. These issues, which value diversity and ethics in the current globalised world, are essential in education.

Emerging technology

The practice and study of education in art and design includes the use of resources, technological tools, processes in different educational environments, local and international contexts, including innovation, media arts, creativity, as well as interdisciplinary projects related to the integration of art with other materials and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics).

Demographic data

To analyse data about groups of people, demographic research utilises environmental, economic and education conditions, as well as values and impressions of a group. [...] (NAEA Research Commission: Research Agenda Factors, 2017).

The American Educational Research Association (AERA) is currently one of the most important educational research institutions. It features several key sections and programmes related to specific topics. AERA (2017) encompasses five key programmes that structure and shape this art education association, which are articulated and based on the following areas: *Communications, Educational Research, Professional Development, Government Relations and Social Justice*. (AERA: Key Programs, 2017).

Theoretical Framework: Visual culture and its reflection in the fields of art and education

It is important to analyse not only contemporary visual culture, but also that which emerged in earlier art periods such as modernism, postmodernism, right up to contemporary art. As Edwards and Wood (2012) state, the visual culture of modern art responds to cultural changes and shifting trends in art:

A breach with the past is seen by some as central to modern art or ‘modernism’, while others have argued for a continuity of values. Certainly, from the mid nineteenth century onwards, modern art underwent a series of rapid transformations. There was an intensification of formal experimentation and an urgent search for new ways of working. Right through this period, some artists continued to find ways of responding to modern life, both by introducing new formal equivalents for experience and by searching out novel subjects. Others attempted to remain aloof and develop a calmer space for art. This latter tendency is sometimes referred to as autonomous art. Abstract art is one clear example of this trend towards a focus on unique aesthetic experience that was unrelated to other kinds of knowledge or the wider visual culture. (Edwards and Wood, 2012, p, 361)

The visual arts are structured in what is known as visual culture. This concept is connected to how human beings construct and feel through vision, and the way in which it shapes the way in which we live our lives. In advanced post-industrial democratic societies, visual art is perceived as a concept that is part of the normal lives of people and is disseminated through the media. It may take the shape of any form of art or human creation that occupies our immediate surroundings. According to Freedman (2006), the concept of visual art is becoming increasingly broad and flexible, and responds not only to artistic issues but also to other areas that enrich it:

The visual arts are expanding, not only in its forms but also in its influence through connections with all types of social issues, including those that are not always considered to be social, such as ecology and conceptions of the self. As a result, the visual arts have become a fundamental part of the cultural transformation of the political discourse, social interaction and cultural identity that characterises the postmodern condition (Freedman, 2006, as cited in Jameson, 1991).

The term “visual culture” has undergone changes in the educational field and also in terms of its associations with different areas of knowledge. Jenks (2015) explains that the term has a broader meaning nowadays:

Within the academy ‘visual culture’ is a term used conventionally to signify painting, sculpture, design and architecture; it indicates a late-modern

broadening of that previously contained within the definition of ‘fine art’. Broadening this designation further we might suggest that ‘visual culture’ could be taken to refer to all those items of culture whose visual appearance is an important feature of their being or their purpose. (Jenks, 2015, p. 16)

Therefore, it is essential to review the works that have influenced and helped to defined the concept of visual culture, and how it is analysed through scientific literature. Dikovitskaya (2006) mentions a series of essays to help further our understanding of this concept in Art Education:

The term “visual culture” first appeared on the covers of books whose topics were neither Western art nor - in the spirit of their time - art with a capital “A”: *Towards a Visual Culture: Educating through Television* (1969), by Caleb Gattegno; *Comics and Visual Culture: Research Studies from Ten Countries* (1986), [...]; and *The Way It Happened: A Visual Culture History of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa* (1991), by James McClurken., [...] Gattegno had studied the imagery of children’s drawings and worked on films for teachers’ education. Marveling at the efficacy of knowing through sight, in his book he distinguished between “the clumsiness of speech” as a means of expression and “the power of vision”. (Dikovitskaya, 2006, p. 6)

Interpreting Visual Culture is a success because it makes an attempt to “ground” the new field by showing the persistent philosophical interest in the visual throughout history, and as such it is a viable response to those who contend that it is only a twentieth-century phenomenon. (Dikovitskaya, 2006, p. 29)

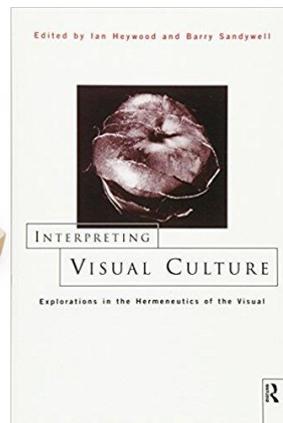


Figure 1. *Towards a Visual Culture: Educating Through Television*, 1969. Caleb Gattegno.

Figure 2. *Interpreting Visual Culture*, 1999. Ian Heywood and Barry Sandywell.

As stated by Freedman (2006), there are different concepts that serve as a guide to understand the basic concepts of visual culture. These are as follows:

1. Art as a cultural production: A reflection of cultural conditions, cultural criticism, cultural symbols and the challenge of elitism in modern art.
2. The flow of time and space: Environmentalism, pastiche, eclecticism and Recycling and transformation
3. Democratisation and concern for the quality of others: Power/knowledge, Pluralism, Popular culture and Less emphasis on “good” aesthetics and “good” design”.
4. Acceptance of conceptual conflicts: Fragmentation, Dissonant beauty, Collage and Deconstruction.
5. Multiple readings: Reading images, Issues of representation, Related meanings and Double coding. (Freedman, 2006, p. 131)

It is essential to understand the fundamental concepts that form the basis of teaching visual culture, so that students attain a critical understanding of the postmodern world that surrounds them, as well as certain foundations of the educational curriculum that should place more importance on the power of visual forms and artefacts. Indeed, the analysis should focus on the different perspectives offered by each culture and the artistic areas expressed in their various disciplines.

There are a number of concepts based on artistic content that must be addressed in order to understand education in the field of culture. Freedman (2006) highlights the following points:

Symbolism: This is the perspective of the field of aesthetics in which the form is thought to have a symbolic meaning.

Expressionism: Aesthetic reasoning in which the form drives the emotional expression of humans.

Form follows function: The Bauhaus approach in which the form obeys its use.

Gestalt: Arnheim proposes that the environment of the form is fundamental for its analysis in interpretation and appreciation.

The medium as a message: McLuhan argues that the form or procedure used is an intermediary and an extension of the meanings that humans give them.

Pragmatism: Dewey’s presentation of aesthetics defined as being educational and inherent to social experience.

Formalism: Bell’s book from the early 20th century was based on the notion that art can be understood universally by treating the form as form.

Postmodernism: The premise that the form can be analysed in different ways, but in certain contexts so that it may be interpreted correctly. (Freedman, 2006, p. 69).

Different notions of contemporary culture have been constructed through postmodernity. These ideas help to enrich visual culture and educational curricula, and tend to be more flexible, dynamic and less static than those established in modernity. For this reason, we analyse the concept of visual culture and related artistic notions to provide a clearer definition of the field of study of visual culture from a theoretical perspective. Ultimately, the aim is to design and create teaching materials and projects based on visual culture.

Specific study of visual research methodologies applied to education

Research in the field of art education occupies a specific and heterogeneous space. Research issues and questions are specialised and specific to the areas of education and art. For the analysis of visual research methodologies applied to the field of education, we will study current art education and how our cultural systems, when teaching art, involve not only knowledge but also different formats that can be used for the purpose of study and analysis, such as photographic and visual material. This material can form the underlying structure of a research project.

Aguirre (2005) calls for a reconceptualization of art education research, in which art is a symbolic structure related through meanings and performance with culture. Aguirre goes on to explain that the objective provided by the aesthetic experience has relevant consequences on the systematisation of art education research, since, according to these parameters, research studies should be formulated based on the following notions: “Specific art practices, interaction with these practices with other symbolic forms and cultural systems, specific functions performed by art in each cultural system, research on aesthetic experiences, organisation and curricular development, the issue of transversality, and the need for a strategy to consolidate art education” (Aguirre, 2005, p. 340).

There are different formats through which images can be studied, not only as still and static objects but also as images that can be interpreted and conceptualised, as is the case with *interactive designs*, *participatory mapping* and *digital storytelling*.

Interactive designs

This refers to a field of knowledge in which analysis is aimed at the user and is structured around meaningful communication through various means and subsequent processes, establishing a collaboration between people and technology. Relevant interactive designs offer specific objectives through a particular intention and an interface that is intuitive and easy to use.

Participatory mapping

Participatory mapping is a qualitative research methodology carried out in a collaborative manner, offering different possibilities to the group members, producing

critical debates about specific themes with little intervention from researchers. Mapping creates a broad connection and generates knowledge between organisations, associations, formal and informal institutions, as well as the people that comprise it. It addresses notions of time and space as fundamental concepts for its implementation.

Those involved in the process of participatory mapping aim to alter certain fundamentals in the structures of power between the researched party and the researcher. This enables the involved parties to determine and conceptualise issues, participatory experiences and meaningful concepts that are fundamental through their large-scale paper format representation. This enables the participants to obtain new insight into the problem, a specific environment, specific social, political and economic structures, thereby offering a broader perspective of the idea. In addition, it broadens knowledge of the problem or concept, since the questions presented prove to be of interest to the participants. The figure of the researcher facilitates the collection of data in a relevant and enriching manner, as it is displayed by means of maps and auditory creations based on the conversations of the participant group.

Digital storytelling

In digital storytelling, means of digital communication make it possible for anyone to present and share ideas and aspects of their life. The most frequently used means of communication are audio, video, images, as well as other non-physical formats, such as digital files. These methods can be used to tell a story or present a certain concept.

Related to the concept of digital storytelling, we encounter a more complex medium in terms of format and creation, namely, touch-sensitive display stories. One example of this format is Sony's Future Lab, an R&D group that narrates the story of Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll with an interactive projector. This technique makes use of a digital open reading format which enables the participants to define the story.

Sony's Future Lab takes initial ideas and turns them into a prototype. At the SXSW event held in Austin, Texas, the group presented a projector that could turn any flat surface into a screen with which people interacted by means of light sensors. An Interactive Tabletop tracks movement so that objects placed on the table come alive through the activation of the sensors. Bastian Broecker, the creator of the 2012 project, uses a PlayStation Eye camera and a Microsoft Kinect sensor.

Sony programmed the prototype to reproduce a version of Alice in Carroll. When the book is opened, it comes alive with animations that jump out and interact with objects, such as a teacup and a deck of cards. The table responds to finger pressure and a grid lights up when fingers move over the surface, which enables the projector to track the user's movements.

This type of technology has great potential as an educational tool to narrate tales or historical stories interactively, or simply to provide a relaxed interactive play space. The projector is an intermediary between current screens, also used for augmented

reality and hologram-based technology. Despite the fact that the company describes the Future Lab projects as prototypes, it is clear to see their enormous interest and potential.

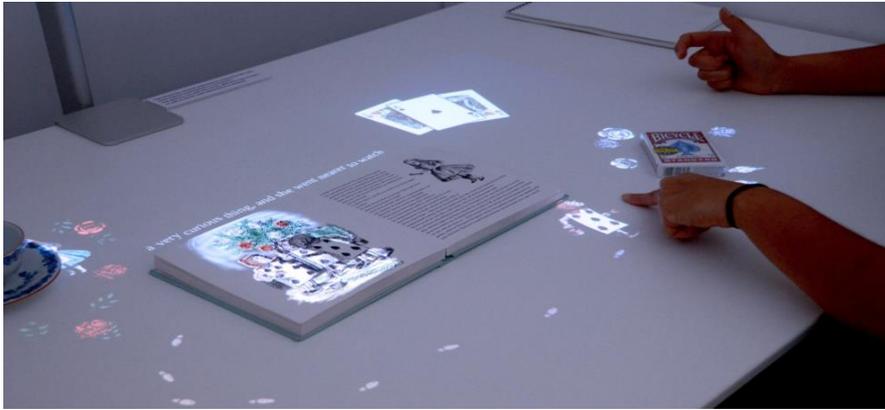


Figure 3. Alice In Wonderland, 2016. Sony’s Future Lab Prototype Projector. Retrieved From: <https://www.theverge.com/2016/3/13/11215454/sony-interactive-projector-future-lab-sxsw-2016> [Accessed: 6 February 2018].

Research methodologies

Therefore, the creation of images can be used to structure and implement an art project in relation to visual imagery as a research methodology. Of the visual methodologies that are discussed in detail by Rose (2007), *Photodocumentation*, *Photo-Elicitation* and *Photo Essays* are particularly worth mentioning.

There is a wide range of research methods that can be applied to social sciences, sociology or education. These methods are different because they do not use images that have been found, but rather work with visual material created for a specific project with the aim of designing and implementing a research study. The images are created by the researcher or members involved in the research study and include video films, photographs, collages, maps, paintings, drawings, newspapers, etc. It is important to note that visual objects are not the elements that explain or present certain contents of the research project. Banks (2001, p. 144. as cited in Rose, 2007.) refers to this idea as a “largely redundant visual representation of something already described in the text”. On the contrary, these methods actively use images as a research process, together with various factors such as other types of evidence gathered from interviews or activities proposed in the ethnographic area of study. These are known as “*visual research methods*”.

Photodocumentation

In this method, photographs provide accurate records of what is in front of the

camera, and the systematic creation of photographs provides information that can be used in research for structured data analysis. An example of this methodology is the project related to urban areas carried out by Charles Suchar that analyses the gentrification of neighbourhoods in the lower area of Lincoln Park in Chicago and Jordaan in Amsterdam. (Suchar, 2006, as cited in Rose, 2007, p. 301).

Gentrification is a process of change that takes place in established, central urban neighbourhoods. When new people arrive, who are interested in the price of houses and the location, the area begins to change. Suchar (1997) became interested in the cultural, physical and social changes brought about by the process of gentrification of urban areas, both in the appearance of the neighbourhood and the internal aesthetics of living spaces.

Suchar (1997) writes down some notes to every photograph he makes with his camera. This includes factual information (date, time, location for example), but also a paragraph or two of commentary on how each photo relates to the shooting script questions. Suchar also attaches labels to each photo which he describes as a kind of coding (Suchar 1997, p. 38, as cited in Rose, 2007, p. 301-302).

Photo-Elicitation

This method is widely used in social science research. Douglas Harper states that it is “based on the simple idea of inserting a picture in a research interview” (Harper 2002, p.13, as cited in Rose, 2007, p. 304). Although the photo can be created or found by the researcher, members of the research group are usually asked to take photos that will be discussed later. This is a very useful method because photographs offer a lot of information, and encouraging the research participants to present and generate information is “an opportunity to gain not just more but different insights into social phenomena, which research methods relying on oral, aural or written data cannot provide” (Bolton, Pole, & Mizen, 2001, p. 503. as cited in Rose, 2007, p. 305).

If the conversation in an interview explores various topics, discussing a photograph or image with the interviewee can generate more varied conversations that offer many possibilities for analysis. A project about the impact of consumption on the identity of youths from the United Kingdom revealed that only when the young participants commented on the photographs that they were asked to take, were debates generated on issues such as race, ethnicity and religion. (Croghan, Griffin, Hunter & Phoenix, 2008). “These sorts of interviews can also prompt talk in different registers: more emotional, more affective, more ineffable” (Bagnoli, 2009, p. 548. Cited in Rose, 2007, p. 305).

Kunimoto (2004) researched the experience of Canadians who were imprisoned during World War II, and then again after this period. While it is not a specific photo-elicitation study, her essay analyses how the photos generated different types of memories during the interviews. The author says that at the beginning of an interview, the

topics tended to be moderate and formal until she asked to see the images of the internment camps taken by the interviewee. Once the photographs were displayed, she describes how the interview changed completely, becoming more intense and emotional as the images provided memories that were often very difficult. On the other hand, for many researchers, photo-elicitation interviews bring out different types of knowledge from the participants (Darbyshire, MacDougall, & Schiller, 2005), and the interview is made even more enriching by the visual methods employed.

Photographs are things that people work with, use to explain and to show. Photographs provide a vehicle for invoking and considering situations, events and issues. The meaning of a photograph is thus more fluid and variable in response to the changing circumstances of the photographer, the viewers, and what is being done in the interaction between them. (Hodgetts, Chamberlain and Radley, 2007, p. 266 – 267)

Photo-Essays

Photo-Essays represent a fusion of photographs and writing. Writing formats range from subtitles to studies of books, and the images are as important as the text itself in terms of the impact generated by the photo-essay. Mitchell (1994, p. 290., as cited in Rose, p. 317.) states that the photo-essay is “a truly composite form” since equality exists between the image and the text. Certain stories are created by a photographer and writer who work together. However, sometimes the photographs and the text is produced by the same person.

The photo-essay is not a research method in itself but rather a useful method to communicate the results of a research project to the scientific community. The methodology used to create photo-essays is an essential part of the project that is being researched. Photo-essays are established by demonstrating the ability of photographs to create large amounts of information about “how culture and social life looks ... that’s difficult to represent in text alone” (Wagner, 2007, p.47); they can display “the taken-for-granted moments that communicated ethnographic meaning” (Harper, 2006, p.158).

What can you do with pictures that you couldn’t do just as well with words (or numbers)? The answer is that I can lead you to believe that the abstract tale I’ve told you has a real, flesh and blood life, and therefore is to be believed in a way that is hard to do when all you have is the argument and some scraps and can only wonder if there really is anyone like that out there. (Becker, 2002, p.11).

Roldán and Mena (2017) describe photo-essays as an effective research method in the field of Fine Art. Therefore, despite being a reference book that offers an introduction to research methods in art and education, with a focus on visual narrative, this

methodology is of particular interest for the fields of photography and journalism, as well as for master's degree projects, as it is a highly effective and descriptive visual format.

[...] The photo-essay makes it possible to associate ideas by connecting an indefinite number of images in very different ways, with the inclusion of Visual References. It is the visual tool that offers the most control of meaning since it can organise images in a very specific direction: whether it is used to describe a panorama and contextualise research in order to connect ideas metaphorically, or to tell stories and create Visual Narratives, the photo-essay is a complex tool that can adopt numerous configurations. (Roldán & Mena, 2017, p. 46)

Finally, photo-essays have great potential because, as with photography, they possess the power to evoke. This wide range of responses in the viewer can produce descriptions, explanations, analysis, emotions, affection, etc.

Results

A photo-essay based on the theme of social justice will be created. The work should originate from a brainstorming session to define the initial ideas of the project, which will be presented in a digital magazine. Next, a visual map will be created to demonstrate the work process rather than focusing on the artistic value of the final pieces. The aim is to value the importance of the artistic process as a means of conceptual creation.

We will also analyse different academic and journalistic works in which the visual essay takes shape through the interaction between text and image. The topics are complex and diverse such as ecology, identity, indigenous flora and fauna, and vernacular architecture as a vehicle of heritage and artistic value that must be preserved. Subsequently, we will take photographs related to the ideas obtained from the brainstorming session, the visual map, and the presented visual project.

In this case, the photographs were taken in the streets of San Cristóbal de la Laguna (Tenerife, Spain), in which importance was placed on constructing identity and expressing the characteristics and concerns of a population, as well as providing a means and artistic format to promote spaces by showcasing the talent of local artists.



Figure 4 and 5. Mural Photography: Los Rosales Street, Visual Trash. San Cristóbal de La Laguna: Tenerife, 2018.
Photography: Ana María Marqués Ibáñez.



Figure 6. Mural Photography: Violeta Street, Visual Trash. San Cristóbal de La Laguna, Tenerife 2018.
Photography: Ana María Marqués Ibáñez.

Conclusion

The field of art education is becoming increasingly varied, hybrid, and related to subjects of diverse disciplines that merge together and respond to forms of thinking related to artistic creation in a convergent and divergent way. The reason why this occurs is because notions of art have evolved during the 20th and 21st centuries, and, at the beginning of the 20th century, art adopts a more linear approach. However, the current field of contemporary art and its application in education has several branches and is structured in relation to concepts of postmodernity and expanded art, in which artistic disciplines overlap and merge to enrich the concept of creating a work of art, its evolution, and the aesthetic and formal concepts involved in the creative process.

Interpreting contemporary works is a complex process and should be studied in relation to previous art movements, because emerging artistic trends break with past conceptions. After analysing the modern and postmodern movements, it is fundamental to emphasise some of the visual formats that can be applied in art education research. Therefore, this study not only analyses still images but also a broader definition of visual culture, in order to subsequently discover the visual methods that can be applied.

This paper offers an initial contact with the theory of visual methodologies in order to introduce visual culture in primary education contexts, and also to provide methodologies for the creation, configuration and design of future photography projects in schools.

Therefore, the purpose is not only for students to learn about the theory of the subject based on educational research, but also to create their own visual pieces drawing upon the presented notions and premises. Moreover, it is essential that the scientific community acquires a broad knowledge of art education institutions, most of which are associations through which the teachers involved are trained in workshops or lectures, in addition to receiving information about current research lines, and sharing knowledge about how they teach in the classroom. Indeed, the ultimate aim is to improve the research areas, as well as the application of general or specific themes in art education.

References

- Aguirre, I. (2005). *Teorías y prácticas en Educación Artística. Ideas para una revisión pragmática de la experiencia estética*. Barcelona: Octaedro.
- American Educational Research Association (2017). *AERA: Key Programs*. Retrieved November 15, 2017, from <http://www.aera.net/About-AERA/Key-Programs>.
- Arnheim, R. (1993). *Consideraciones sobre la educación artística*. Barcelona: Ediciones Paidós.
- Bagnoli, A. (2009). Beyond the standard interview: the use of graphic elicitation and

- arts-based methods. *Qualitative Research*, 9, 547– 70.
- Banks, M. (2001). *Visual methods in social research*. London: Sage.
- Becker, H. (2002). Visual evidence: A seventh man, the specified generalization, and the work of the reader. *Visual Studies*, 17, 3– 11.
- Bolton, A., Pole, C. & Mizen, P. (2001). *Picture this: researching child workers*. *Sociology*, 35, 501– 18.
- Croghan, R., Griffin, C. Hunter, J. & Phoenix, A. (2008). Young people's constructions of self: Notes on the use and analysis of the photo-elicitation methods. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 11, 345– 56.
- Darbyshire, P., MacDougall, C. & Schiller, W. (2005). Multiple methods in qualitative research with children: more insight or just more? *Qualitative Research*, 5, 417– 36.
- Dikovitskaya, M. (2006). *Visual culture: the study of the visual after the cultural turn*. Massachusetts, MA: MIT Press, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Edwards, S., & Wood, P. (2012). *Visual culture 1850-2010: modernity to globalisation*. London, UK: Tate Publishing.
- Freedman, K. (2006). *Enseñar la cultura visual: Currículum, estética y la vida social del arte*. Barcelona: Octaedro.
- Harper, D. A. (2006). *Good Company: A tramp life. Updated and expanded edition*, Boulder, CO: Paradigm.
- Harper, D. (2002). Talking about pictures: a case for photo-elicitation. *Visual Studies*, 17, 13– 26.
- Jameson, F. (1991). *Postmodernism, or the logic of late capitalism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Jenks, C. (2015). *Visual culture*. New York, N.Y: Routledge.
- Kunimoto, N. (2004). Intimate archives: Japanese-Canadian family photography, 1939-49, *Art History*, 27, 129– 55.
- Hodgetts, D., Chamberlain, K. & Radley, A. (2007). Considering photographs never taken during photo-production projects, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 4, 263– 80.
- Marín, R. (2011). La Investigación en Educación Artística. *Educatio Siglo XXI*, 29(1), 211-230.
- Mitchell, W. J. T. (1994). *Picture theory: Essays on verbal and visual representation*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- National Art Education Association. NAEA Research Commission (2017). Research Agenda.Factors. Retrieved from: <https://arteducators-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/-documents/321/e6fe0112-4c68-4f34-b546-1f3ef569e1eb.pdf?1451965976>
- Roldán, J., & Mena, J. (2017). Instrumentos de Investigación Basados en las Artes Visuales en Educación Artística. In Marín, R. & Roldán, J. (Eds.). *Ideas visuales. Investigación Basada en Artes e investigación artística*. Granada: EUG. Editorial

de la Universidad de Granada.

- Rose, G. (2007). *Visual methodologies: An introduction to researching with visual materials*. London: Sage.
- Suchar, C. S. (2006). The physical transformations of Metropolitan Chicago: Chicago's central area, in J.P. Koval et al. (eds), *The New Chicago: A social and cultural analysis*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Suchar, C. S. (1997). Grounding visual sociology in shooting scripts. *Qualitative Sociology*, 20, 33– 55.
- The Verge. Sony's prototype projector turns any table top into a touch-sensitive display: A step toward holograms. Nick Statt. Mar 13, 2016. Retrieved from: <https://www.theverge.com/2016/3/13/11215454/sony-interactive-projector-future-lab-sxsw-2016>.
- Wagner, J. (2007). Observing culture and social life: documentary photography, fieldwork, and social research. In G.C. Stanczak (ed.). *Visual research methods: Image, society, and representation* (pp. 23– 60), London: Sage.

Bibliography

- Adler, J. (1989). Origins of sightseeing, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 16, 7– 29.
- Araño, J. C. (1996). El Valor del Arte. En: *Zehar: Revista de Arteleku-ko Aldizkaria*. 30, 22-25.
- Armstrong, C. (1998) *Scenes in a library: Reading the photograph in the book*. London: MIT Press.
- Barker, M. (2009). Fantasy audiences versus fantasy audiences, in W. Buckland (ed.), *Film Theory and Contemporary Hollywood Movies*. London: Routledge, 286– 309.
- Baker, T., & Wang, C. (2006). Photovoice: use of a participatory action research method to explore the chronic pain experience in older adults, *Qualitative Health Research*, 16, 1405– 1413.
- Banks, M. (2008). *Using visual data in qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Barnard, M. (2001). *Approaches to understanding visual culture*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Barnet, B.A. (2009). Idiomedias: The rise of personalized, aggregated content, *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 23, 93.
- Baudrillard, J. (1988). *Selected writings*, edited by M. Poster. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Becker, H. (2004). Afterword: photography as evidence, photographs as exposition, in C. Knowles & J. Sweetman (eds), *Picturing the social landscape: visual methods and the sociological imagination*. London: Routledge, pp. 193– 7.
- Becker, H. (1982). *Art worlds*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Bell, P. (2001). Content analysis of visual images. In T. van Leeuwen & C. Jewitt (eds),

- Handbook of visual analysis*. London: Sage.
- Berger, J. (2013). *Understanding a photograph*. London: Penguin Books.
- Berger, J. (2008). *Ways of seeing*. London: Penguin Books.
- Blinn, L. & Harrist, A.W. (1991). Combining native instant photography and photo-elicitation, *Visual Anthropology*, 4, 175–92.
- Bolton, R. (1989). In the American West: Richard Avedon Incorporated. In R. Bolton (ed.), *The contest of meaning: Critical histories of photography*. London: MIT Press.
- Buckingham, D. (2009). Creative visual methods in media research: possibilities, problems and proposals. *Media, Culture and Society*, 31, 559–77.
- Chandler, D. (2007). *Semiotics: The basics*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Debord, G. (1983). *Society of the spectacle*. Detroit: Black and Red.
- Duncan, C. (1993). *The aesthetics of power: Essays in critical art history*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Edwards, E. (2002). Material beings: objecthood and ethnographic photographs, *Visual Studies*, 17, 67–75.
- Evans, H. & Evans, M. (2006). *Picture researcher's handbook: An international guide to picture sources and how to use them* (8th edition). Leatherhead: Pira International.
- Frosh, P. (2003). *The image factory: Consumer culture, photography and the visual content industry*. London: Berg.
- Grady, J. (2004) 'Working with visible evidence: an invitation and some practical advice', in C. Knowles & J. Sweetman (eds), *Picturing the social landscape: Visual methods and the sociological imagination*. London: Routledge.
- Gray, C. & Malins, J. (2004). *visualizing research: A guide to the research process in art and design*. New York: Routledge.
- Harper, D. (2003). Framing photographic ethnography: A case study, *Ethnography*, 4, 241.
- Kress, G. & Leeuwen, V. T. (2006). *Reading images: The grammar of visual design*. London: Routledge.
- Mannay, D. (2015). *Visual, narrative and creative research methods: Application, reflection and ethics*. New York: Routledge.
- McNiff, S. (2013). *Art as research: Opportunities and challenges*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press: Intellect Ltd.
- Smith, H. & Dean, T. R. (2009). *Practice-led research, research-led practice in the creative arts (research methods for the arts and humanities)*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press.
- Sontag, S. (2013). *On photography*. London: Penguin Books.
- Sturken, M. & Cartwright, L. (2017). *Practices of looking: An introduction to visual culture*. Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press.