

ENGAGING SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PHOTOVOICE-BASED SELF-REFLECTION IN WRITING CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

Integrating photo voice-based self-reflection strategies with high school students enhances the engagement and significance of English classes. This approach encourages students to actively participate in writing activities, engaging secondary school students in photo voice-based self-reflection in writing classroom. While previous studies have explored the use of photo voice in language learning, limited research addresses its role in mediating secondary students' reflection, specifically in writing narrative paragraphs. This case study, conducted in a Banyuwangi high school with 11th-grade Language Class students, employs qualitative methods. Data collection involves classroom observations, critical incident captures, in-depth interviews with audio transcripts, and document analysis. Four key findings emerge: uncertainty in pre-writing tasks, challenges during writing, the impact of feedback, and teacher empowerment. Photo voice emerges as a valuable mediator for student self-reflection, benefiting both students and teachers. Integrating photo voice into writing classes enriches the learning experience, fostering improved writing skills and overall personal growth.

Keywords: Photo voice, Reflective Practice, Writing Skill

1. INTRODUCTION

Mastering writing skills is crucial for English learners, given the interconnected nature of writing and other language skills. The principle of cohesiveness emphasizes the consolidation of various skills across subjects through reading materials related to the topic. Writing is a multifaceted activity that requires early practice to develop effective writing skills Cheung, (2016). Despite the array of subjects in primary school, writing stands out as one of the most pivotal for students. Understanding the writing process, as outlined by Zemach, (2005) and Harmer, (2001), is essential for students to navigate writing effectively. Informing students about the steps involved pre-writing, drafting, reviewing, revising, editing, and producing a final version ensures they grasp the intricacies of writing. By focusing on the writing process, students not only enhance their writing skills but also gain self-awareness and avenues for improvement.

Learning to write poses challenges that demand knowledge and experience. In high school, mastering essential techniques pre-writing, writing, and editing becomes imperative for improving writing skills Applebee et al., (1981) Teachers play a crucial role in breaking down assignments into manageable stages, aiding students in simplifying writing tasks. By incorporating these techniques, students can structure their writing effectively and enhance their proficiency.

Reflective practice emerges as a cornerstone of effective teaching and learning to write. Sunra et al.,(2020) highlight

reflection as a crucial quality for educators, facilitating their ability to handle challenges in teaching writing. Reflective practice, encompassing reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, supports professional development. Engaging in reflective practice enables instructors to identify weaknesses, fostering continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

Photo voice, a reflective practice integrating photography into writing classes, provides unique learning experiences. Wang et al., (2000) outline its three purposes: recording and reflecting on concerns, fostering critical understanding through group discussions, and reaching policymakers. Defined as a participatory action research method by Draji et al., (2020), photo voice encourages self-reflection, knowledge sharing, and problem-solving. Incorporating photo voice into writing projects enhances students' critical awareness, as demonstrated in studies by Sari & Sultan, (2022) and Nisa, (2021). This study seeks to bridge the gap by integrating photo voice into learning reflection in writing classes, encouraging students to critically reflect and diversify their learning through engaging classroom activities and field study experiences.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Photo voice media as self-reflection

Photo voice media serves as a powerful means of self-reflection, encouraging individuals to express their personal insights through the lens of a camera. This method entails distributing cameras to participants and tasking them with capturing images that depict

various aspects of their daily lives and experiences. In the realm of education, employing photo voice as a tool can prove invaluable in empowering students. By allowing them to visually document their learning journey, students gain a unique platform to articulate their perspectives on education and the learning process. This process fosters a reflective practice that not only enhances self-awareness but also contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the diverse ways in which students engage with their educational experiences. Qualitative researchers utilize this method to gather insights, prompting participants to visually document their lives through digital photography for qualitative data collection Caroline. Burris, (1997) ; Adams et al., (2014). In the realm of education, photo voice has been employed to foster student engagement and critical thinking, creating an effective and captivating learning atmosphere for both educators and learners Wang et al., (2000) The utilization of photo voice methods prompted individuals to critically reflect on their experiences and community, enhancing reflection, social awareness, and critical thinking skills. Consequently, this photo voice approach empowers teachers and students to articulate their experiences, acknowledging their identity.

Particularly in language learning, photo voice proves to be a valuable tool for comprehending engagement through self-reflection. Photo voice was implemented in a study investigating students' emotions during the writing learning process Sari & Sultan, (2022). In this research, students engaged in a photo voice

assignment where they carefully selected and organized photos to depict their emotions in a short story following a writing task. Additionally, Nisa, (2021), through observational study guided by Showed analysis, examined the use of photo voice activities in teaching writing to middle school students. Results indicated that sound photos proved valuable for teachers to incorporate self-reflection into writing projects, gaining deeper insights into students' learning processes.

In the realm of learning to write, Juniarti et al., (2022) documented the use of photo voice as a project-based learning approach to enhance students' viewing and exposition writing skills. The findings revealed that this method was well-received by students, positively impacting their active participation, enthusiasm in class, as well as their writing and viewing skills. Furthermore, Anwar, (2021) discovered that students taught with video and photo voice achieved higher scores in writing. Building on this empirical evidence, the current research aims to explore how photo voice can mediate students' reflections in the practice of writing.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research applied a qualitative case study adapted from Showed Analysis by Caroline. Burriss, (1997) the study investigated how photo voice mediated students' reflective practice in writing classes, utilizing qualitative data to explore students' self-reflections as the primary dataset.

The case study focused on assessing the potential enhancement of students' writing skills through photo-sound-based self-reflection at a high school in Banyuwangi, East Java. Ethical procedures were followed, and necessary permissions were

obtained from university authorities, the principal, and parents/guardians. The study involved 16 to 17-year-old girls in 11 language classes, exploring the integration of illustration with photo-sound techniques to foster critical thinking skills.

In the instructional procedures, the first stage comprised group discussions, where each group of three students performed specific tasks, fostering collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. The teacher provided explanations to strengthen their understanding, and students worked together to determine the object for their assignment. This learning activity aimed to provide a basic understanding of narrative texts through group discussions, developing skills for constructing their own narratives.

Moving to the second stage, students were tasked with writing a narrative essay, involving a pre-writing process of collecting photographs during field studies and group discussions. The writing process incorporated sharing findings and composing descriptions using the sound photo method. The post-writing process focused on reviewing and proofreading to meet the three-paragraph requirement. Each paragraph addressed specific questions, extending the initial assignment and providing feedback on the writing process using the sound photo method.

The final stage involved a self-reflection exercise, examining students' strengths and weaknesses in utilizing the photo-sound approach. Initial reflection concentrated on writing narrative texts, evaluating creativity during the writing process. The second reflection assessed students' activities throughout the learning process, encouraging creativity and critical thinking. Students also reflected on their experiences and emotions during the application of the photo-sound method, aiming to develop creative thinking skills and improve writing abilities.

For data collection, the research employed various techniques, including direct observation, learning artifacts analysis, and in-depth interviews with students. These methods aimed to deepen understanding, assess learning effectiveness, and uncover aspects that could not be observed directly. The combination of these techniques allowed for a comprehensive collection of data,

providing a deeper understanding of the learning process and its outcomes.

Following data collection, the research conducted thematic analysis and transcription to systematically organize, integrate, and examine the collected data. Thematic analysis adapted from Milles & Huberman, (1994) involved identifying patterns and themes in the data, while transcription facilitated the conversion of audio recordings into written text for easier analysis Widodo, (2014). Qualitative coding played a crucial role in structuring the research project and presenting data effectively.

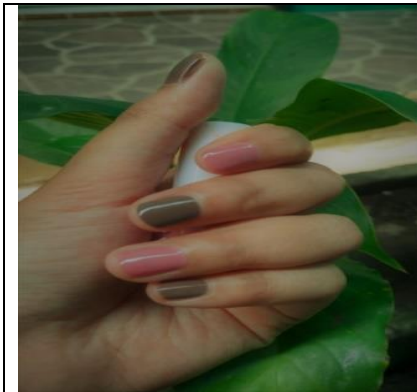
In conclusion, this research applied a comprehensive approach to investigate the impact of photo voice on students' reflective practice in writing classes, emphasizing qualitative data analysis to gain deeper insights into the learning process and its outcomes.

4. RESULT

This chapter consolidates the key findings and discussions presented in the preceding chapters, providing a comprehensive overview of the research on the role of photo voice in facilitating students' reflection during narrative paragraph writing exercises. The study aimed to explore students' experiences throughout various stages of the writing process and how the integration of photo voice influenced their self-reflection.

1. Uncertainty and confusion in pre-writing tasks

One student participant, A.R., described her experience through a photo and provided the following reflection: **See (Figure.4.1)**



About a month ago, while shopping for cosmetics, I faced a confused between choosing a nude brown or soft pink nail polish. This photo symbolizes the confusion I felt during the first writing class when I was asked to share a childhood story. Similar to selecting a nail polish color, I struggled to choose the right topic. The pre-writing activity focused on recalling childhood stories, teaching me flexibility in understanding and organizing material. The photo encapsulates the emotional experience of uncertainty and decision-making during that writing class, akin to the choices presented in a cosmetics store.

FIGURE: 4.1 *Uncertainty and confusion in pre-writing tasks*

During the interviews, participants expressed their confusion in finding a suitable topic for their writing. An excerpt from one of the interviews is provided below:

“At first, it is difficult to find a good topic for my descriptive writing. When I propose one title, my teacher said that the topic is too common. She suggested that I could write something like a tragedy in my childhood.”
(Interview with A.R. on Tuesday, March 14th, 2023)

The use of photo voice in exploring students' emotions during writing aligns with Sari & Sultan, (2022). Students, per the findings, grapple with uncertainty in the prewriting phase. Employing videos, PowerPoint, and assigning roles facilitates effective representation. Nisa, (2021) advocates combining photo voice with technology, citing its motivational impact. Teachers play a pivotal role in monitoring progress, emphasizing effective communication skills Fahmi et al., (2022). Vaccaro & Sabella, (2018) stress the

positive impact of direct interaction and feedback in student development, reinforcing collaborative strategies. This integrated approach, blending technology, collaboration, and effective teaching, enhances students' emotional engagement in writing classes.

2. Challenges and Emotional Struggles in the Whilst-writing.

Students use photo voice in while-writing, selecting reflective photos, compiling ideas, and writing based on group-generated topics. The teacher guides actively. Photo voice evidence on March 20th, 2023, showcases each group's response.

D.N selected a photo (**See Figure 4.2**) that encapsulates his experience of being under performance pressure. The snapshot of this drawing book was captured one year prior to the writing class, symbolizing his presence in the writing class." In her analysis, D.N expressed:



One year ago, accompanying my sister to drawing lessons evokes memories tied to the while-writing session. The photo captures my mindset, mirroring the pressure felt during the class. Observing my sister's incomplete coloring book revealed her struggle with color matching, paralleling my own unease with photo voice in writing class. As I guided her mindful painting, I grappled with worries about my narrative text reflecting similar shortcomings. The shared sense of unfamiliarity and pressure,

	mirrored in both activities, resonates in the photo, serving as a poignant reminder of that transformative writing experience.
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FIGURE 4.2 *Challenges and Emotional Struggles in the Whilst-writing*

The interview vignette can be seen below:

“At first, I felt unfamiliar with the photo voice technique, but when my teacher demonstrated it, I tried to understand the concept of the technique. When I attempted to write using that technique, I felt pressured because I hadn't fully grasped it yet, but the teacher suggested opening a dictionary to improve my writing.” **(Interview with D.N.)**

Another participant, N.S feels the pressure the interview vignette can be seen below:

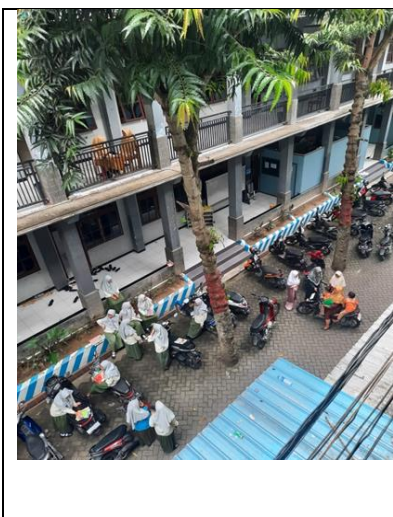
“When my group started writing, I felt an imbalance in task distribution among all of us. I felt frustrated when I hadn't completed my task yet, but some of my group mates were struggling. I felt an increased sense of responsibility and challenge. We all felt overwhelmed and seemed to lose our sanity. However, the teacher suggested that we individually complete our tasks according to our abilities first, and then at the end of the allotted time, we could collaborate and correct any mistakes we made in our writing.” **(Interview with N.S)**

The second theme focuses on during-writing activities employing photo voice to inspire and enhance students' writing skills. Sari & Sultan, (2022)found emotional challenges,

including vocabulary and grammar issues, during writing tasks. The study suggests systematic techniques, vocabulary memorization, and photo illustrations with narrative text examples to address these challenges collaboratively. Fahmi et al., (2022) advocate using emotion-depicting photo illustrations and stress the teacher's role in fostering a supportive environment. They emphasize personalized attention to students' psychological needs, ensuring a straightforward presentation of material. Such dedicated support not only improves academic performance but also nurtures confidence and motivation, contributing significantly to students' overall success and growth.

3. Teacher Feedback

In the next phase, students receive teacher feedback, offering a chance to revisit and revise their writing. The teacher acts as an editor, correcting errors. K.A. reacted to the teacher's input (**See Figure 4.3**).



One week before the writing class, I captured a photo of the disheveled school parking lot, visible from the third floor. The image perfectly mirrors the unspeakable horror I felt during the teacher feedback session. Comparing my work to the chaotic scene below, the feedback induces disorganization and emotional exhaustion. The view from above intensifies the pressure, tempting me to give in to weariness and abandon my efforts. The horror peaks when revisions are mandated, testing my resilience. Despite contemplations of giving up, the teacher's encouragement sparks motivation, reigniting excitement for growth amid setbacks and m

	transforming the daunting into an opportunity for progress.
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FIGURE 4.3 *Teacher Feedbacks*

The interview vignette can be seen below:

“When I heard the teacher giving feedback and instructing me to revise my writing for the next meeting's post, I felt my mind cluttered and my emotions unstable, as if I wanted to give up. I felt exhausted from the tasks given. However, my resilience was tested here as I struggled to produce good writing. I thought I was almost at my limit, but the teacher never ceased to motivate me, pushing me to stay enthusiastic in completing this writing project and inspiring us to grow despite making mistakes.” **(Interview with K.A)**

Teacher feedback, the third key finding, plays a pivotal role in fostering student reflection on photo voice in writing classes. Despite moments of frustration and contemplation of giving up during extensive revisions, students view this as an opportunity to enhance their work and commit to continuous improvement. Challenges in revising, as noted by Sari & Sultan, (2022), range from opting for complete overhauls to feeling demotivated. Echoing Keen, (2020), the revision process empowers novices to seek feedback actively, enhancing draft comprehensibility and

instilling a sense of ownership. Collaboration between students and teachers, as emphasized by Fahmi et al., (2022)), through effective communication, elevates self-confidence and motivation, cultivating a conducive learning environment.

4. Empowerment and Transformation through Writing Experience

As a result, they collectively decide to implement revisions in their writing. U.N. described her experience as action-oriented towards her preparation for the post-writing phase (See Figure 4.4). In her journal, she expressed:



While perusing my father's camera photos, I stumbled upon a potent image of a caged bird, serving as an unexpected catalyst for my writing assignment. Discovered during the initial phase of the photo voice project, this image profoundly impacted my creative process. Selected for its symbolic resonance with my writing journey, the caged bird mirrored the limitations and challenges I faced expressing myself in the classroom. The image evoked emotions of confinement and an inspiration, reflecting the struggles in finding the right photos for my writing experience. Though momentarily sapping my enthusiasm, it also became a powerful reminder to break free from creative constraints and unlock my

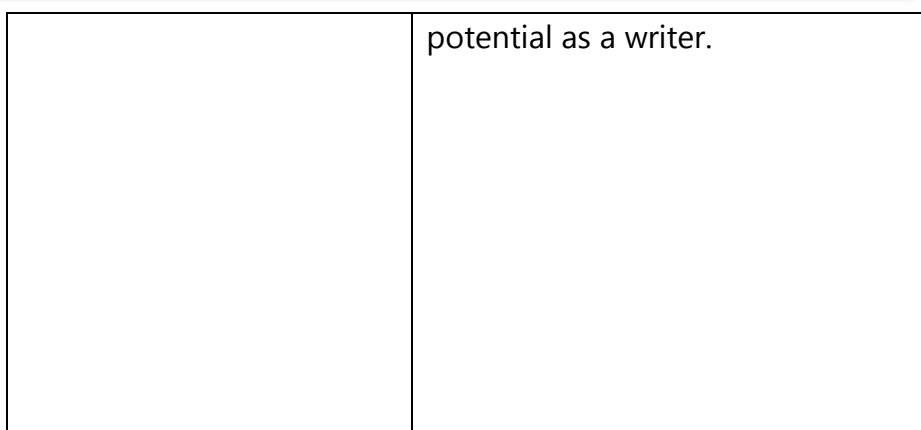
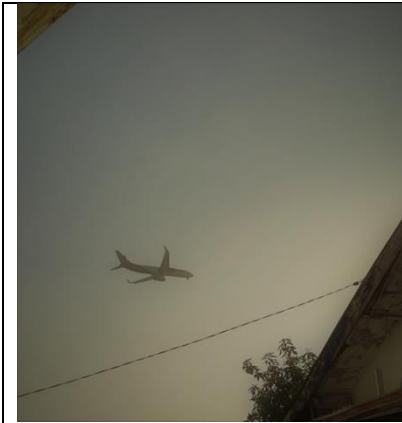


FIGURE 4.4: *Empowerment and Transformation through Writing Experience*

The photo of a caged bird serves as motivation for students to begin their assignment preparations and aids in reducing their anxiety. The interview vignette can be seen below:

"During the phase of selecting photos again, I felt less enthusiastic because of my limitations in choosing photos that accurately depicted my feelings. I repeatedly matched photos that aligned with what I felt. However, I and my group still felt the need to adjust that. Then, the teacher guided us to create a table that served to understand the context of the story we were creating, so that we could apply photos that were suitable for our story."**(Interview with U.N)**

Another participant on her journal analysis M.M. shared her photo **(See Figure 4.11)** to reflect on her experience of publishing group work in the post-writing phase. She stated in her analysis:



While at my brother's house, the frequent sight of airplanes near the airport became a familiar backdrop, shaping a distinct ambiance. The photo I selected triggers memories of the final stage of the writing process, where my group and I eagerly published our narrative story on the school bulletin board. Inspired by the recent airplane sightings, we aimed to make our assignment visually appealing. As I affixed it to the board, a surge of emotion enveloped me a desire to soar high, symbolizing accomplishment and fulfillment. The integration of the airplane experience into our work sparked a profound sense of triumph and liberation in completing the writing assignment

FIGURE 4.5: *Empowerment and Transformation through Writing Experience*

Furthermore, the utilization of photo voice media aims to enable students to discover meaningful insights that can shape their future journeys. The interview vignette can be seen below:

“After revising and correcting the narrative text using the photo voice media, I and my group felt happy about our achievement. Supported by the bulletin board provided by the teacher to post our work, it made us even more interested and enthusiastic. The photo voice technique was something new for me and it overwhelmed me to understand it, but at the end of the meeting, I wanted to do it again. It was an exciting experience for me.” **(Interview with M.M)**

In post-writing activities, students exhibit an action-oriented approach, refining assignments based on teacher feedback, even under time constraints. Tasks include enhancing photos, reorganizing content, and presenting work on the class bulletin. Positive outcomes manifest in empowerment and transformative writing experiences. Wright et al., (2020) and Gibbs, (2013) support the idea that a positive attitude and reflective practices deepen engagement and enhance the learning experience cycle. Group-based follow-up questions and individual reflections empower students, fostering conceptual understanding and a growth mindset. Reflective writing, supported by Hussein, (2018)), aids in expressing thoughts on the learning process. While focusing on the positive impact of photo voice in narrative text reflection, future research should explore other writing skills and contexts beyond secondary education levels.

5. CONCLUSION

Drawing a common thread from the findings, the researcher concluded that photo voice functions as an effective mediator for students' self-reflection in writing narrative paragraph exercises. This allows students to capture and express their emotions and experiences during the pre-writing phase, especially when facing tension and confusion in selecting writing topics and analyzing texts. Collaborative group work and technology integration via photo voice further enhance this process by enabling students to

utilize their skills collaboratively. During the writing phase, examples of media photos with narrative text succeeded in stimulating students' feelings, helping them overcome their challenges and struggles to reflect on their emotions, thereby enhancing their ability to convey feelings through writing. In the post-writing stage, photo voice plays an important role by equipping students to revise assignments and rearrange ideas, cultivating a growth mindset through reflective practice. By integrating photo voice into writing classes, educators create a more meaningful and engaging writing experience, leading to improvements in students' writing skills and overall personal growth

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