

# Enhancing students' interpersonal communication skills through visual art photography appreciation

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**Abstract.** This article aims to elucidate the research findings on the implementation of the visual art photography appreciation method to enhance students' interpersonal communication skills. The study employed an experimental approach, conducting pre-tests and post-tests on a purposively selected sample of 35 students from a total population of 250 seventh-grade students at State Junior High School 14 in Bandung. The researchers were actively involved as instructors during three learning sessions. Data were analyzed using appropriate statistical methods. The research findings indicate that the significant use of visual art photography appreciation can improve students' interpersonal communication skills. This is evidenced by higher post-test scores compared to pre-test scores and the students' presentation skills during the visual art photography appreciation sessions conducted in front of the class. This activity has implications for students' attitudes toward the subject of Arts and Culture, specifically in the context of photography.

## 1 Introduction

The world of art education is dynamically evolving with technological advancements. Visual art creation has ventured into new media, one of which is photography. The creation of visual art is inseparable from the process of appreciating visual art photography, which is a positive interaction with connections to other fields of education. This research highlights causal issues involving the relationship between the application of visual art photography appreciation methods and the improvement of students' communication skills. Excellence in interpersonal communication is a crucial skill in everyday life and effective learning [1].

Various responses, ranging from emotional to formal intellectual analysis of artworks, can enhance communication abilities. Art appreciation stimulates active associations in creating new relationships between elements within the artwork, developing the ability to describe in words what they see and observe in art elements such as motifs,

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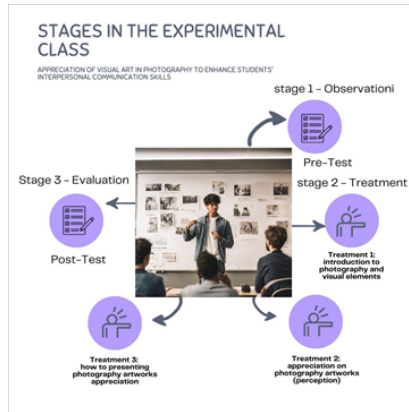
shapes, and colors [2]. The best approach to expedite learning specific subjects in absorbing facts and concepts in a broader and more relevant context to everyday life issues is by associating them with art because it is considered a subject that is more accessible and preferable.

The connection between learning and experience in art within the context of art education and scientific literacy is still at an adequate level, even in economically advanced countries. An integral aspect of the art experience, where inspiration arises from emotional experience, motivation appreciation, and aesthetic value appreciation of stimuli processed by deeper brain structure workings, such as the limbic system and frontal media structures [3]. Teaching and learning science using problem-solving and presentation methods can enhance communication skills, confidence, courage, and responsibility in students. Student-centered learning allows them to use their knowledge to solve their problems. Communication skills are vital in the 21st century [4].

Students actively learn through discussions, problem-solving, and presentations. Presentation skills are crucial for success in all aspects of everyday life [5]. Presentations should include these four basic elements: a. stating ideas clearly, b. explaining ideas, c. supporting ideas with evidence from other sources, d. summarizing/explaining ideas again [6]. It is crucial to prepare students to compete in a competitive environment, especially in communication skills [3,7]. Presentation skills can be enhanced using readily accessible technologies, such as visual, audio, and video media or multimedia [8]. In effective communication, linguistic skills, verbal skills, and body language skills are essential [9].

## **2 Research methods**

This research examines students' interpersonal communication skills through presentations in appreciating visual art photography [10]. The researcher plays the role of a facilitator and instructor in this experimental class, providing insights into photography and how to appreciate photographic works. This opportunity allows the researcher to view learning activities as reflective practice [11]. The subjects of this research are seventh-grade students at Public Junior High School 14 in Bandung, which has a population of 250 seventh-grade students. A purposive sample of 35 students, consisting of 19 male students and 16 female students, was selected from Class F. The research was conducted in a single cycle, comprising three stages: 1. Observation, which involved conducting a pre-test on the student samples; 2. Treatment, which included taking action by providing insights, knowledge, and skills related to photography, appreciating photographic works, and presenting the appreciation of artwork; 3. Evaluation, which consisted of conducting a post-test using the same instruments as the pre-test to measure students' abilities. This research was conducted over five meetings in five weeks. The model for this classroom experimental research is shown in Figure 1.



**Fig. 1.** Stages in the experimental class.

The measurement instruments provided in the pre-test and post-test used a five-point Likert scale (5-very capable, 4-capable, 3-moderate, 2-less capable, 1-very incapable) to assess students' presentation abilities. The content validity of the instruments was evaluated based on the items in the questionnaire to examine the consistency of the correlation between the pre-test and post-test results. The instrument was considered valid if the coefficient reliability categories were  $0.80 < r \leq 1.00$ , indicating very high reliability;  $0.60 < r \leq 0.80$ , indicating high reliability; and  $0.40 < r \leq 0.60$ , indicating moderate reliability.  $r >= r_t$  ( $N=35$ ,  $r_t= 0.344$ ,  $\alpha= 0.05$ ) [12]. The reliability was measured according to Cronbach's Alpha. The results are shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

**Table 1.** Validity pre-test questionnaire item.

No Item	r
1	.577
2	.615
3	.637
4	.471
5	.640
6	.628
7	.639
8	.493
9	.550
10	.501
11	.608
12	.538
13	.388
14	.628
15	.493
16	.608
17	.408
18	.577
19	.640
20	.628

**Table 2.** Validity post-test questionnaire item.

No Item	r
1	.841
2	.857
3	.817
4	.755
5	.866
6	.780
7	.686
8	.730
9	.733
10	.569
11	.676
12	.645
13	.681
14	.628
15	.579
16	.665
17	.591
18	.683
19	.657
20	.547

The instrument consists of twenty items. The data obtained from the instrument were validated through triangulation. The data were analyzed by comparing the initial scores and the final scores. If the final scores are better than the initial scores, an improvement has occurred.

### 3 Result and analysis

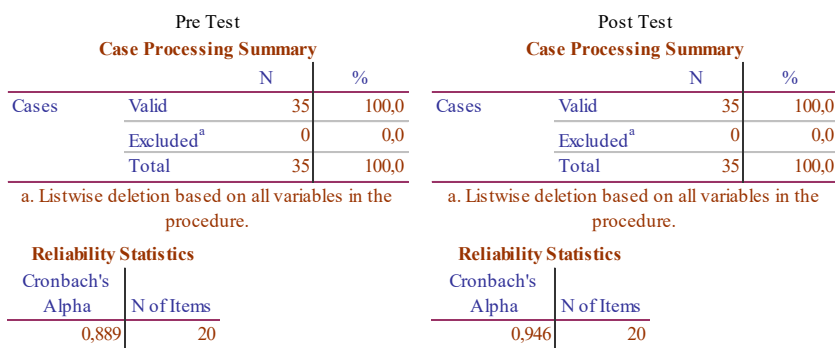
Table 1 shows the results of the data validity analysis of the pre-test and its correlation. Similarly, as shown in Table 2, the results of the data validity analysis of the post-test and its correlation. In these tables, it is shown that the items in the pre and post instruments refer to the same indicators when students are presenting their appreciation of visual art in photography, as indicated in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Indicators in the pre/post-test instrument.

No	Indicator
1	Speaking clearly with voice control
2	Speaking coherently using effective sentences
3	Speaking with intonation
4	Maintaining eye contact with the conversation partner
5	Using body gestures that support articulation
6	Using facial expressions that emphasize articulation
7	Mastering the conversation partner
8	Listening to questions and being able to respond
9	Carefully observing the photographic artwork
10	Conveying with confidence
11	Conveying ideas, concepts, meanings, or messages in the photographic artwork
12	Conveying visual elements in the photographic artwork (lines, colors, shapes, composition, and format of the artwork)
13	Expressing empathy or emotions present in the photographic artwork

No	Indicator
14	Conveying the setting, time, photo subject, object, and narrative within the visuals
15	Conveying the observed photographic artwork's theme
16	Conveying the visual context of the observed photographic artwork
17	Indicating the unique elements (creativity) within the photographic artwork
18	Explaining the photographic techniques used in the observed artwork
19	Conveying an overall impression of the observed photo artwork
20	Providing an opinion on the personality of the photographer who created the artwork

From item number 1 to item number 20 in Table 3, it shows a significant improvement in presentation skills. This improvement is evident in Figure 2.



**Fig. 2.** Results of data analysis between the pre and post tests in the experimental class.

The results of the analysis shown above include the number of valid cases, processing, and Cronbach's Alpha values for the pre-test and post-test. In the pre-test, the number of valid cases is 35, which represents the total data analyzed. No data was excluded (0% exclusion). The Cronbach's Alpha is 0.889 for the pre-test, indicating a good level of consistency or reliability. This suggests that the items in the pre-test are positively correlated with each other. Then, in the post-test results, it shows the same number of valid cases, which is 35, with no data loss in the post-test analysis and 0% exclusion. The Cronbach's Alpha increased to 0.946 for the post-test, indicating a very high level of consistency among the post-test items, which indicates excellent reliability.

In conclusion, both the pre and post-tests have the same number of valid cases, and no data was excluded from the analysis. The good Cronbach's Alpha values for both tests indicate that the items in the tests have a high level of consistency and can be relied upon to measure the tested variables. This data shows that the test instruments used in the study have good reliability and are suitable for use in statistical analysis.

Before starting the treatment, a lesson plan was created based on the results of the pre-test, which concluded that the students were not able to present effectively and were not familiar with visual photographic art. During the implementation of the treatment, students had to be continuously motivated and provided with appreciation so that they could stand in front of the class and make presentations. Even during the treatment, some students still had difficulty expressing their opinions when observing photographic art. Some also forgot to mention key aspects of appreciating photographic art, such as composition or types of photography. However, these issues could be addressed through

corrections from their peers who were listening. The researcher played a role as a facilitator to help students understand the importance of appreciating visual art and presenting as part of developing their public speaking skills, building confidence, and respecting others.

During the post-test, where students were asked to make presentations, those who did not have a turn to present were required to listen carefully to what their peers presented in front of the class. Students took turns to present in front of the class, with a limited time of only three minutes. They made presentations without taking detailed notes or cues; they were only asked to interpret the images based on the visual elements that reflected their perceptions.

During treatments, they were also trained to communicate with their groupmates and classmates (during presentations), which helped develop communication skills, confidence, courage, and self-responsibility [11,13].

## 4 Conclusion

The activity of appreciating visual photographic art in the Cultural Arts subject can enhance students' interpersonal communication skills when presenting in front of the class. This activity is focused on students who engage in perception and analysis of photographic art and effectively present their findings. It's not just about conveying visible ideas but also about expressing the impressions and emotions conveyed by the photographic art. This activity can inspire students to collaborate and solve problems.

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