

Conference Paper

See Photography as a Visual Art Storing

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ABSTRACT

Photography in today's era is a device that is always there and used by every human being. Before the emergence of photography techniques, the media was dominated by illustration techniques used for story media with graphic novels or comics. However, over time, photography was also able to perform digital engineering schemes to create visual models and illustration techniques, but it was not popular. To support the development of photography techniques in various fields, a continuous discussion is needed so that each research can define photography as a technique to convey messages, especially in media that require pictorial stories. This research stage will reveal the initial stages and the factors that can be applied in further research. Therefore, this research is classified as a descriptive study as the initial discussion of the research. This study will use a qualitative approach by collecting literature observation data and comparing selected visual samples.

Keywords: Photography, visual, comic photography

Introduction

Photography is one of the design techniques that has changed so rapidly and is stable in several decades. Some things that have not changed in photography, even with the advancement of media and changes in the function of images, are "photography as a messenger" (Vand Djick, 2008). Photography is a messenger in persuasive means, information, and today's popular culture (Huang, 2001). According to Roland Barthes, photography is always faced with three things, first the photographer, second as the spectators (who sees the photo), the third as the spectrum (what is seen) (Barthes in Ajidarma, 2016). Photography in the current era can be interpreted as a factor producing a sign and meaning; this can be seen from the popularity of photography in advertising, media to the dimensions of social media sites (Zappavigna, 2016).

Meanwhile, before photography appeared, the media was dominated by illustration techniques. Illustration techniques are often the prima donna in conveying messages to the public. According to Geraci (1984), illustrations appear in the media as an allusion to a social problem. Illustrations also appear in the form of "political satire comics" in newspaper media (Nuriarta & Wirawan, 2019). This has led to widespread illustration techniques, until the emergence of comic books telling folk tales, from the 1930s to the present (Kurniawan, 2017). In the comics sector, there have been many visual styles based on local stories that have been found to date, and this factor is still rarely developed in photographic techniques. Why should it be developed with photographic techniques? Fairey and Orton (2019) say that photography is a dialogue. So who created the dialogue? David Davies said, who created it was the photographer himself (Walden, 2008).

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Figure 1. Rio motret photography
(Source. Pinterest.com)

The development of the transformation from illustration to photography is not new. Since the era of digital cameras replaced analog cameras, photographic techniques were able to convey information in an authentic way. In visual storytelling, photography techniques can also be applied and comic illustrations or graphic novels, but they are not yet popular. However, in 2015, a photographer “Rio Motret” (see picture 1) depicts folklore through photography, with the title of the visual work “Al-Kisah,” then makes this visual element into the exhibition. This is unique because the visuals of folklore, which were previously illustrated, are now able to explore them. This means that photography should function as a visual book or graphic novel (Arsita & Aji, 2020). The urgency in this research is to describe that photography also has a role as a technique that can tell an event and perform digital engineering such as comic illustration or graphic novel. This research is important so that the basic descriptions in research in Visual Communication Design with interest in photography are increasingly open and broad.

This research is classified as a descriptive study, aiming to provide a starting point for thinking patterns in research findings. The research findings will later become the basis for other research models, namely applied or experimental research models. It is hoped that with the continuity of each gradual research in a photographic model that tells a story, a new definition of the photographic method will emerge. Therefore, this research aims to parse the factors and points of view that can provide insight and create new developments in storytelling photography techniques and what points can be sustained in visual photography research.

Material and Methods

Collecting data in this study will use qualitative methods, with data collection approaches in the form of literature, visual photography book sources, and observations (Sumartono, 2017). Many researchers have undoubtedly carried out descriptive photography research; therefore, this research takes samples from visual books with photography backgrounds and photographic comics. The data sources sampled in this study are the visual works of a Spanish photographer who examines Indonesian culture, namely Diego Zapatero in book form, and Laszlo Bonar, a professional photographer in Hungary who shoots pre-weddings in comic style photography. This visual sample data will be analyzed through visual analysis to see the layout, typography, and perspective trends presented in the visual.

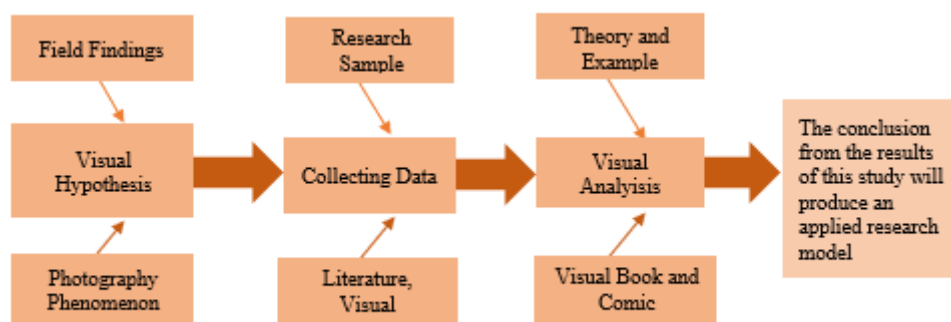


Figure 2. The flow of research methodology

Results and Discussion

Photography and stories were not the first to be researched and emerged as a topic of discussion, previously the work of W. Eugene Smith, with a photographic essay entitled "Country Doctor" in 1948, which tells about the Doctor's journey in America during the post-World War II era. This work is interesting because it dares to portray a profession seen from another point of view. Visually, it appears that the doctor profession is not only someone who understands health science and medicine, but doctors also have an emotional side when the results are not optimal in assisting the community. This photography resulted in a new style of storytelling in journalism; almost the pattern of photography by Eugene Smith's model was then adopted to describe a story to this day.



Figure 3. Essay photography from Eugene Smith, with titled "country doctor"
(source: magnumphotos.com)

The definition of a story in photographic techniques does not stop there; it needs in-depth and continuous exploration to be developed as a solution to photography in the media. Another example in developing stories to photographic techniques is "ethnophotography." This technique comes from a photographer's natural approach by inhabiting an area and then recording the existing culture. Photography plays an essential role in making documentation in this area so that the data that is owned is not only visual but also text data resulting from direct discussions to the field. A photographer who takes this approach is Don Hasman, who recorded the Baduy tribe's life and then published his book entitled "Urang Kanekes".



Figure 4. Ethnophotography Baduy Tribe "Urang Kanekes"
(Source : destinasian.co.id)

Foster (2015) has initiated the effort to deepen and develop between photography techniques and visual storytelling techniques through his research, he said that folklore could be implemented through a photographic approach other than illustration. This opinion can be developed sustainably, seeing that photography in design is in synergy with various other disciplines. Therefore, this discussion divides the development of photography into two aspects: photographic comics and visual photography books.

The transformation of photography into a photographic comic

Photography is a popular digital recording device since the discovery of digital photo technology in the 19th century. Nowadays, this digital photography technique has an essential role in providing information to the media, but photography techniques have become necessary for everyone who uses digital hardware. Besides, according to Prasetyo (2014), photography has developed into a communication tool for humans. One of these developments is the photographic comic technique, the development of this photographic comic is not as popular as advertising photography, product photography, or others. The emerging photography comic signifies hyperreality in photography. This combination has created a storytelling style in a more active photography technique and created a new style of communication in photography.



Figure 5. Photography Comic (Sumber: mobgenic.com)

In the picture above, visually, it can be stated that the similarity with the illustrated comic. According to McCloud, the comic communication style tends to be active, prioritizing images supported by "text balloons" (1993). Photography comics also provide similarities in the arrangement of images between panels and the "text balloons" that appear in photographic comics. Typography in photography comics has a similarity with comic illustration style, which is using onomatopoeia typography style. This typographic style, called by McCloud is a letter style

that provides symbols of loud sounds, tone rhythm, association, and graphic integration. This can be seen in Figure 4; typography in photographic comics also provides an onomatopodia typography model. The visual style that has changed in photographic comics in the example is the color of the photos, which is not the same as comic illustrations in general, which tend to be monochrome or black and white.

Photography in visual books

Visual Panji tells the story of Raden Inu Kertapati, a Prince from the Kingdom of Jenggala, and Dewi Sekartaji. This story became popular in the Majapahit era, and writers developed other folk tales derived from the Panji stories. Since 2017, this Panji story has been known in several Southeast Asian countries, such as Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, to Myanmar. However, the characters are named by different names, but the story's concept is the same. Interestingly, Diego's work is when photography brings out vintage photo characters with powerful Javanese customs through cultural symbols and image characters. The visuals and frames that are implemented in the book differ in Panji's work, namely through portrait and landscape photos.

Visual panji

Galloway also conveys the development in photography if photography has contributed for decades by transforming technical functions and fully contributing to the world. This can be proven by the presence of photographs that are still known history in ancient times. There is much information in ancient times, through visuals that appear in photography and become authentic evidence over time to time. Photography at that time and now seems to make the era not much different. This vintage photography style was later used in the "folklore" photo technique by Diego Zapatero in his work entitled "Last Breath of the Prince". This photography takes the theme of folklore originating from the Javanese tribe, namely "Panji".



Figure 5. Visual photography in the panji book (diegozapatero.com)

The Javanese are known as a society closely related to traditions and maintains it to this day. This photographic technique's visual appearance illustrates a powerful Javanese identity, with symbols of masks and traditional clothing. When compared with vintage photos in the 19th century, Diego's visuals have similarities in their visuals. Photo color in Panji's visual photography is visual with a "Sephia" color tone, following the style of photos in the past. Besides, if you pay attention to the background of the image, it can be seen from the artificial background results being photographed so that it is the same as the visual identity of old-style photography. The visual that appears in a vintage style by Diego can be interpreted as an attempt to revive Javanese customs' popularity at that time. Besides, the text to inform in Diego's visual book is not displayed, so that the contents of the book only appear on photos on each page. This also represents that this

visual book invites the audience to see deeper into the Javanese culture, which is no longer popular in this modern era.

Photography in visual books

Diego Zapatero, in his book, places photography as an aesthetic element. The implementation of photography in the visual book is implemented not in a style that tells a story in general, but photography that appears in old photos or vintage style. If you look at Diego's book layout, this book invites the audience to imagine Panji's story. This visual book form differs from the comic style, which is active in its visual language. The visual models that appear are more likely to be passive but reveal a visual aesthetic. The visual book Panji is also equipped with graphic elements at the beginning of each photo, such as a mask image and a map of Java's island.



Figure 6. Visual photography in the panji book (diegozapatero.com)

This visual book's photos are Diego Zapatero's efforts to accentuate "folk tales" through vital concepts. Therefore, in addition to vintage photos, masks' visual choice always appears in his book and dominates every chapter. The appearance of illustrations in this book is, of course, related to the choice of photo style, as discussed earlier. Diego's visual book's terminology shows that a custom or folk tale can revive cultural wealth that is no longer popular in Indonesia through photography. The visual book design is presented in a box; the goal is to need images that appear to have a portrait and landscape tendency.

Conclusion

Photography in storytelling techniques has references in its technical aspects,

1. Perspective and storyline to be conveyed.
2. Selection of visual symbols that will appear in media elements to start a photography job.
3. The visual layout must work in synergy with the concept of photography

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