What Kind of Sociality Do Pre-service Teachers Discover Through Photograph Taking and Dialogue?

Koichi Kasahara
Tokyo Gakugei University
kasahara@u-gakugei.ac.jp

Abstract

The research examined what kind of knowledge on “sociality” pre-service teachers find through the process of a workshop conducted using photographs and dialogue. Twenty-seven pre-service teachers participated in a workshop, took photographs of events or phenomena they thought had sociality, sent the photographs via email to a professor with comments and explanations, and then discussed the photographs with other participants. They discovered various aspects of sociality: (1) types of sociality, (2) social function, (3) social existence, (4) social feeling, (5) metaphorical recognition of sociality, (6) associative development of thinking of sociality, (7) media regarding sociality, (8) symbolic and metaphorical development of sociality, and (9) provocative action for or against sociality. Furthermore, based on a questionnaire analysis, the pre-service teachers were able to understand the possibility of dialogue with visual methodologies using photographs. These methodologies and practices can enhance learners’ views, perceptions, and recognition of their environment and world.
Keywords

Photo-Based Educational Research, Photograph, Art-Based Inquiry, Dialogue.

Introduction

In recent years, as artificial intelligence and international economic competition have intensified, the competencies and skills required by workers have been diversifying and advancing (Trilling & Fadel, 2009), and educational policy has shifted to competency-based education. Art education can employ various media and devices for visual expression and communication. The action of taking photographs using digital devices has become ordinary today. By using photography as a visual art-based inquiry of our life and environment, we can develop a sensibility and awareness of life. These common digital devices can be used in class activities and teacher training as well. Using such technology and devices might help learners effectively generate a new knowledge individually and collaboratively in teacher training.

As Marín and Roldán (2010) mentioned, “photographs are being used extensively in visual arts-based educational research; however, explanations of the methodological criteria for their use are rare” (p.8). Leavy (2015) stated that the power and role of the image cannot be underestimated, and visual imagery can create perspective and develop context. Today, students can take photographs using their cell phones easily. We need to rethink the power of images as a tool of visual research methodology in education for not only self-expression but also knowledge generation.

Using photographs for arts-based inquiry to expand students’ perspectives

Photography is a powerful means of arts-based research (Leavy, 2017), and the practice of taking photographs with cell phones can be said to almost be looking through the eyes of today’s
youth. However, this practice does not necessarily mean that the youth can see the world more carefully and critically. Marín and Roldán (2010) asserted that “the images are the most important and decisive element of the investigation” (p.8) in photo-based educational research. This may be because the inquirer not only takes photographs but also “define[s] the problem, describe[s] the context, provide[s] and interpret[s] the data, argue[s] a case for the findings, and reveal[s] conclusions (p.8). Similarly, art-based inquiry is different from just arts, natural science, and social science. It intuitively grasps things and phenomena in an environment using the senses and reflects on what was sensed, thus obtaining deep insights into it. Conducting art-based inquiry through photograph taking and reflection can enable students to see and imagine what is hidden within the environment and the world.

Finley (2008) shed light on the possibility of creating a deep understanding of problem recognition through art expression from the viewpoint of social justice in art-based inquiry. Using aesthetic and reflective inquiry may help learners develop a deeper awareness and heuristic knowledge production. According to Grisoni (2012), the practice of art-based inquiry creates the opportunity to become aware of how we are living in organized framework unconsciously and subconsciously. Developing an effective use of photographs may create powerful practices and strategies for pre-service teachers. Furthermore, photograph taking may help enhance their outlook, thinking, and engagement with the world. Therefore, this research demonstrates the possibility of photo-based educational research.

**Objectives and research design**

In this research, a workshop on photograph use was conducted with pre-service teachers of art education. The purpose was to clarify the following:

1. What kind of sociality do pre-service teachers find?
2. What kind of knowledge and understanding were created through the workshop?

This workshop encouraged the teachers to explore hidden phenomena and relationships among themselves and others and among themselves and society by using photographs and dialogue within their close environments and circumstances.

Outline of workshop:

- **Date:** December 19, 2017, 16:10–17:40
- **Venue:** Department of Art Education at Tokyo Gakugei University.
- **Participants:** Twenty-seven pre-service teachers (undergraduate students)

Procedure of workshop:

1. Instruction

2. **Fieldwork:** Taking photographs and sending comments by email

3. Presentation and discussion

4. **Questionnaire survey**

Data collection:

1. Photographs

2. Comments by email

3. **Observation of dialogue/discussion**

4. **Questionnaire survey**
Data analysis

First, all photographs and their corresponding comments were discussed. Next, codes were generated as short descriptions representing the sociality that the photographs captured and offered. Subsequently, the questionnaire responses were reviewed and considered with the data materials. Last, the conclusions were determined based on the purpose, results of this workshop, and discussion.

Results of the photographs

Twenty-seven students took photographs and commented on them. These short descriptions were coded, and the kinds of sociality the pre-service teacher were discussed. The following section shows the kind of sociality that were found.

Messages to those who are not present

The following three photographs captured facilities and functions for social actions and behaviors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 1: An emergency exit</th>
<th>It is designed to be understood by anyone, whether they are visiting the place for the first time or whether they are illiterate.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Announcement and message to someone who is not present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 2: A notice</th>
<th>“After using the classroom, turn off the lights and close the windows.” Multiple societies convey messages urging precaution in this way.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Announcement and message to someone who is not present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Please help yourself.” The person who wrote the message does not know who will take the items.

a) Announcement and message to someone who is not present

c) Non-face-to-face communication

Figure 3: Please help yourself

The writer created a title that conveys the necessary information to readers at a glance.

a) Announcement and message to someone who is not present

Figure 4: Notices

“Beware of suspicious persons.” This is a public location, and there may be many dangerous items and people around.

a) Announcement and message to someone who is not present

Figure 5: Beware of suspicious persons

“Notice of a meeting for a graduation exhibition.” People need to communicate information. The sign was placed on the bulletin board in a way that made it stand out. Even though you cannot talk directly to the sign, the way it is displayed shows the thought and sociality of those who want to communicate information regardless of their current location.

a) Announcement and message to someone who is not present

b) Instructions to someone who is not present

Figure 6: Notice of a meeting for a graduation exhibition
These six photographs focused on messages to others who were not present. They had the following features:

a) Announcement and message to someone who is not present

b) Instructions to someone who is not present

c) Non-face-to-face communications

These signs and notes guide, request, and caution people; convey information; and provide information on schedules. These are social functions and do not require face-to-face meetings. The students who took these photographs made the features of sociality hidden within signs, environments, and public spaces visible. Furthermore, they understood the possibility of utilizing these features within their works.

Facilities and functions for social activities

The following three photographs captured facilities and functions for social activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 7: Lockers</th>
<th>“Lockers used by individuals as well as groups.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d) Facilities and functions used by people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e) Functions as a way to help others adapt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f) Metaphor of the collective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 8: Clock</th>
<th>People mostly act by looking at the “clock,” and they move at the same time according to the clock. Thinking objectively, this is known as moving collectively.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d) Facilities and functions used by people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e) Functions as a way to help others adapt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“A place where a vast amount of information is provided.” For others to view the information with ease, the items are displayed neatly side by side. This may be considered sociality through the sharing of information and utilization of public places.

d) Facilities and functions used by people

e) Functions as a way to help others adapt

These three photographs focused on “facilities and functions for social activities.” They have the following features:

d) Facilities and functions used by people

e) Function as a way to help others adapt

f) Metaphor of the collective

These facilities are utilized by numerous individuals for their convenience and adaption to their schedules. Additionally, “lockers” are regarded as a representation of collectiveness because they have a collective form. The photographers highlighted the social functions of the facilities, and the function of the facilities that are used to control and affect others. Students views these functions and forms metaphorically.

**Mixed things and circumstances**

The following two photographs focused on mixed things and circumstances.
“A large painting in a university.” It is set in a location inside a heterogeneous society.

g) Mixed things

Figure 10: A large painting

The members of the Creative Auditory Culture Study Group (CACSG) and the Manga Study Group (MSG) are using a kotatsu, a Japanese foot warmer. The students are playing mah-jongg and communicating while in the kotatsu. They will also hold meetings and read manga while under the kotatsu. Although this space belongs to the CACSG, the members of the MSG are included in it.

h) Mixed circumstances

Figure 11: Playing students

These photographs had the following features:

g) Mixed things

h) Mixed circumstances

These photographs highlighted mixed things and circumstances. The large painting within the university attracted the attention of various onlookers. The people in the painting were surrounded and situated within mixed things (Figure 10). This photograph thus highlighted the multiplicity in the environment.

The next photograph (Figure 11) chose a circumstance in which people belonged to different groups. A Japanese foot warmer called a kotatsu was located in the space of the Creative Auditory Culture Study Group (CACSG), close to the space of the Manga Study Group (MSG). This photo focused on in-between spaces where people can come together and communicate in a re-
laxed atmosphere. The photograph depicted the multiplicity of mixed things and circumstances within close environments.

**Ambivalent feelings of sociality within ordinary actions**

The following three photographs focused on sociality within unconscious ordinary action.

- **Figure 12: Trashcans**
  
  Even when not instructed to do so, everyone sorts discarding garbage into the designated trashcans.
  
  i) Sociality that appears in ordinary action
  
  j) Indication/representation of Japanese sociality

- **Figure 13: The arranged bicycles**
  
  The arranged bicycles represent the sociality of contemporary Japan. The arranged bicycles seems rigid, as indicated by the matching direction and spacing, as well as the efficiency and formalization. Although it was mentioned earlier that “society communicates,” that claim does not refer to this photograph.
  
  i) Sociality that appears in ordinary action
  
  j) Indication/representation of Japanese sociality
  
  k) Cooperation or rigidness

- **Figure 14: Different books**
  
  Even though we do not need to choose different items, it is because of this framework of sociality that we try not to choose the same things as much as possible.
  
  i) Sociality that appears in ordinary action
  
  k) Cooperation or rigidness
  
  l) Contradictory feelings of disliking being compared to those with the same view and having synchronicity and a cooperative mind-set

These photographs highlighted an “ambivalent feeling of sociality within ordinary actions.”

They had the following features:
i) Sociality that appears in ordinary actions

j) Indication/representation of Japanese sociality

k) Cooperation or rigidness

l) Contradictory feelings of disliking being compared to those with the same view and having synchronicity and a cooperative mind-set

As stated above, we place waste in designated trashcans without direct instruction and conform to social manners (Figure 12). This is an aspect of sociality in our ordinary and unconscious actions. When we arrange bicycles “beautifully,” we conform to manners and unconscious sociality as well (Figure 13). Students may think this is autonomous cooperation, but it is rigid as well. It is a formality that binds people at an unconscious level. Students bring books to class. They are not concerned with indicating their uniqueness by choosing different books. At the same time, they unconsciously choose books that are different from the ones others have (Figure 14). They have ambivalent feelings and perform ambivalent actions unconsciously.

**Sociality as a metaphor for non-human animals and plants**

The following three photographs express sociality metaphorically using non-human animals and plants.

“Networked things.” The tree diagrams associate the shape of the trees with network as sociality.

Figure 15: Networked things
It is in the nature of birds to excrete waste in a fixed place as a group. They are not usually conscious of doing so.

The tree diagram is associated with the network as sociality (Figure 15). Meanwhile, the photo of bird excrement makes students think it was intentional because it was concentrated in a small area (Figure 16). As we saw in the photograph of the arranged bicycles (Figure 13), students metaphorically associated this collective behavior with social action.

**Associated sociality related to people’s existence and relationships**

The following three photographs represent sociality related to the existence and relationships of people.

---

**Figure 16: Excrement**

---

---

---
The photograph of the class shows a professor in a classroom through a window (Figure 17). A class is a social space and activity. The photograph focuses on a person through a window. The classroom and the professor are restricted from view by the window frame, indicating the various kinds of sociality behind the window. The next photograph shows three students (Figure 18) who are the photographer’s friends. The photograph of the building lights highlight the activities of the people in the building (Figure 19). The lights symbolize human activities. All three photographs indicate the social nature of meetings conducted by people in class, in campus, or in a building. The photographs show an associated sociality related to the existence and relationships of people within a place where they meet and conduct activities. The photographs thus have the following feature:

m) They capture the social nature of a place where people meet and conduct activities.

Information and communication media and equipment

The following two photographs convey information using communication media and equipment.

The photograph of the “Twitter” logo from a student’s cell phone is a symbol of “social media,” which closely represents today’s youth (Figure 20). This is thus the new media of sociality. Further, another student took a photograph of a television as a symbol of sociality (Figure 21). These photographs focused on sociality as information and communication mediated by new
“Social media.” I believe Twitter acts as a social element.

Figure 20: Twitter

© 2018 Twitter, Inc.

“Television.”

Figure 21: Television

and old media and equipment. Both of the old and new media and equipment are symbols of sociality.

Symbolic and metaphorical development of the thought of sociality

The following four photographs developed the thought of sociality based on things in the environment.

My idea of the thought of sociality is that all people living in this world should help and support each other to live. I think it is very important for society to care for things other than itself and to think about the many problems in society.

Figure 22: Tactile tiles
“Sociality” for me means “crowded.” Chairs of the same type represent people who share the same time in the same space. In other words, people belonging to the same society are similar. The edges of the chairs are peeling off, indicating that humans who are worn out. I thought of the sociality of humans who are crowded was represented by these chairs, so I took this photograph.

Figure 23: Twitter

“A sign of cooperative closure.” We emphasize meaning by gathering a lot. In the same way, people can gather and cooperate to become stronger.

Figure 24: Signs

I found something symbolizing the problem that society seems to have only two sexes, either male or female. The colors of many toilets are blue for men and red for women. Did we unconsciously decide on these colors?

Figure 25: The colors of the toilet

The photograph of the tactile tiles led to the student’s thoughts on sociality (Figure 22). The student not only found these forms or representations of sociality but also developed her thinking based on the intended use of the tiles. In the next photograph of the chairs, the student associated an image of sociality with the crowded collectiveness and identical formalism of the chairs (Figure 23). She thought the crowded chairs represented people belonging to the same society. The peeling fabric of the chairs reminded the student of people who are worn out. “A sign of cooperative closure” is a unique title (Figure 24). This student noticed that the collection
of signs indicated power and sent a stronger message of prohibition. He then developed his thoughts on the similarity between signs and humans. There is strength in numbers. This is a humorous viewpoint as well. Finally, the colored signs used by toilets inspired another student’s thoughts on sexuality (Figure 25). The blue and red colors simplify sexuality. In the space between the red and blue, there are a variety of colors. Perceiving and searching for this physical in-between space can stimulate the development of thinking.

Based on things in the environment, all these students developed their thinking about sociality as follows: a more inclusive life, metaphorical representations of humans in contemporary society, strength in numbers, and the diversity of sexuality. If there was a follow-up workshop, the students could develop their thoughts further and generate further artistic action.

**Provocative actions to make unconscious sociality visible**

The following two photographs revealed the unconscious sociality within our typical actions. They did this in a unique way, indicating that provocative actions make unconscious sociality visible. Walking on the right side is something Japanese people do unconsciously every day. It is a part of the social nature of Japanese people (Figure 26). They go up the stairs on the right side and go down from the left side. This student took a photograph of someone going up a flight of stairs from the middle. This was a provocative action. It was a small action, but the student resisted the ordinary actions, rules, and homeostasis of everyday life.
The practice of walking on the right side is unconsciously dictated by the social nature of the Japanese.

Figure 26: Walk on the middle

We wear clothes as a form of sociality. Even if we do not wear clothes at home, we wear clothes outside because we care about others’ perceptions. I think that paying attention to other people’s eyes is one aspect of sociality.

Figure 27: To take off clothes

The next photograph is also a provocative work that views wearing clothes as an aspect of sociality (Figure 27). When we put on clothes, we are conscious of other people’s eyes on us. To indicate this, the student took off her clothes and placed them on the floor to create a human figure. She thus left the sociality of clothes on the floor. Every day, we put on layers of sociality, and the student attempted to escape them by taking off her clothes. She conveyed this idea in a provocative way in the photograph. These viewpoints and ways of provocative presentation are quite artistic.

The twenty-seven photographs and comments shown above depict the invisible and unconscious sociality within our ordinary lives and environments.
Results of the questionnaire

In this section, I will discuss the questionnaire results. Twenty-two out of twenty-seven participants completed the questionnaire form. The results from the data were as follows. It can be said that this workshop generated

- Multiple meanings and possibilities of interpreting sociality
- Efficacy of the use of visual methods of photographs and generative dialogue along with visual images.
- Awareness of commonality and differences of self/others’ viewpoints.
- Possibility of using art as a research tool via concrete examples for teacher training.

The details of the questionnaire are provided below (Table 1).

Question-1: How was workshop today?

Students thought this was a very interesting way to approach sociality, which is difficult to see and think about in everyday life. They noticed the diversity of the viewpoints of others and understood that they could sense and find invisible kinds of sociality in our usual environments. The following comments show their opinions (refer to Table 1):

I was able to look back on my daily life from various perspectives and to hear the opinions of others. (6)

I thought it was a very difficult theme, but when I actually looked at the photographs, I realized that there are various types of sociality around us. (17)

However, there was room for improvement. For example, there was insufficient time to discuss and think about the works and ideas. Many students appreciated the workshop’s theme
Table 1: Details of the questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. How was the workshop taught?</th>
<th>2. What did you think of the workshop on &quot;sensibility that is not common sense&quot;?</th>
<th>3. What about understanding social aspects through photography?</th>
<th>4. What is the benefit of using a dictionary about a place and a photograph?</th>
<th>5. Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place. In the second place, I was able to understand the viewpoints described in the material.</td>
<td>Disagreement is expected by following up on material that is easy to understand with second place. By taking the time to really understand what is different, I was able to understand the viewpoints.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was an opportunity to think about social issues, which state around me, I learned from people's opinions. It was worth considering the possibility of others having different views.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place. In the second place, I was able to understand the viewpoints described in the material.</td>
<td>Disagreement is expected by following up on material that is easy to understand with second place. By taking the time to really understand what is different, I was able to understand the viewpoints.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was able to enjoy the emotional response while peeling my thoughts. There is no communication gap between people and me.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place. In the second place, I was able to understand the viewpoints described in the material.</td>
<td>Disagreement is expected by following up on material that is easy to understand with second place. By taking the time to really understand what is different, I was able to understand the viewpoints.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative ideas and ways of thinking that were not common sense. When you were presented with the idea that you would like to visualize the world you were not common sense.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place. In the second place, I was able to understand the viewpoints described in the material.</td>
<td>Disagreement is expected by following up on material that is easy to understand with second place. By taking the time to really understand what is different, I was able to understand the viewpoints.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was a big difference in the themes of the world. There was a big difference in the theme of the world.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place. In the second place, I was able to understand the viewpoints described in the material.</td>
<td>Disagreement is expected by following up on material that is easy to understand with second place. By taking the time to really understand what is different, I was able to understand the viewpoints.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was able to use the theme of &quot;social&quot; in my own way.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place. In the second place, I was able to understand the viewpoints described in the material.</td>
<td>Disagreement is expected by following up on material that is easy to understand with second place. By taking the time to really understand what is different, I was able to understand the viewpoints.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was able to use the theme of &quot;social&quot; in my own way.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place. In the second place, I was able to understand the viewpoints described in the material.</td>
<td>Disagreement is expected by following up on material that is easy to understand with second place. By taking the time to really understand what is different, I was able to understand the viewpoints.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was able to use the theme of &quot;social&quot; in my own way.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place. In the second place, I was able to understand the viewpoints described in the material.</td>
<td>Disagreement is expected by following up on material that is easy to understand with second place. By taking the time to really understand what is different, I was able to understand the viewpoints.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was able to use the theme of &quot;social&quot; in my own way.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place. In the second place, I was able to understand the viewpoints described in the material.</td>
<td>Disagreement is expected by following up on material that is easy to understand with second place. By taking the time to really understand what is different, I was able to understand the viewpoints.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was able to use the theme of &quot;social&quot; in my own way.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place. In the second place, I was able to understand the viewpoints described in the material.</td>
<td>Disagreement is expected by following up on material that is easy to understand with second place. By taking the time to really understand what is different, I was able to understand the viewpoints.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was able to use the theme of &quot;social&quot; in my own way.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place. In the second place, I was able to understand the viewpoints described in the material.</td>
<td>Disagreement is expected by following up on material that is easy to understand with second place. By taking the time to really understand what is different, I was able to understand the viewpoints.</td>
<td>Thought that the presentation was somewhat boring by being easily understood in the first place.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

823 Synnyt / Origins | 2 / 2019 | Non-peer reviewed | Full paper
of visualizing and thinking about invisible sociality, and the deep dialogue made them more conscious of social existence and relationships.

Question-2: What did this workshop teach you about “sociality that is not conscious to you in ordinary life?”

The students had the opportunity to think about what sociality is and what preconceived ideas other students have. By viewing the environment more carefully, they found something different from the usual things they are conscious of. They took photographs and discussed them, leading to the understanding that sociality has multiple and diverse meanings and viewpoints. The following comment indicates this:

I had never thought about such a thing, so it was a very fresh and interesting experience. I have a negative image against “sociality,” while others have a positive image such as “cooperation.” Knowing that, my viewpoint was expanded. (13)

In addition to the possibility of visualization and generation of knowledge, another comment showed the restrictive mindset regarding using words and discussion:

The sociality that I am unconscious of is probably hard to see. It is naturally difficult to visualize it with photographs. So it is sociality that is unconscious. There were many cases in which the intention of the photograph was not transmitted to other people without an explanation. I thought it was harder than I had imagined, telling people what I wanted to express with just one photograph. (15)

In general, we tend to think that visual art should work without verbal explanations, and that an aesthetic experience cannot be fully verbalized. However, within the contemporary context of visual art and inquiry-based art education, using words together with art is useful and effective to conduct an inquiry and to expand the possibilities of art itself. Students’ desire to
transmit meaning rigidly might have made them think that taking “just one photograph” was insufficient. However, such “insufficiency” simultaneously opens room for dialogue and collaborative knowledge generation, leading to change, expansion, and transformation. As another student said,

Since the world in which we live is already a society, I felt that sociality exists everywhere, even if I am not conscious of it. I do not think about sociality in everyday life unless I go through such workshops. It was a good opportunity to hear the thoughts of others. (19)

Students believed that this workshop led to change, expansion, and transformation of their preconscious and the possibility of new interpretations of sociality. They expanded their understanding that an idea, a concept, and a phenomenon can have multiple or ambivalent and ambiguous meanings from different angles and contexts.

**Question-3: What understanding did you gain of social aspects through photographs and visualization?**

Contradicting the “insufficiency” of the meaning transmission in the responses to previous question, for this question, students described their further thoughts on the features of the workshop as follows:

At the beginning, when the professor raised the question “What is sociality?” opinions such as “cooperation,” “communication,” and “rule” were put forward by students. However, I thought that by taking a photograph, I could explain to others the vague parts that I could not express with words alone. Everyone seems to have found various meanings of sociality using different pictures; surely it cannot be expressed with only words. (4)
Even though there was no clear answer, I could deepen my understanding by using photographic media. (12)

These comments indicated the usefulness and possibilities of using photographs to express what only words cannot convey. The method enabled students to deal with the issue in an artistic way using inquiry. Engaging with things that have “no clear answer” is important for art-based methodologies:

It was very good because it became easier to understand sociality by visualization. It seems to be difficult to explain with words alone because the meaning of the word “sociality” is difficult to understand, but using photographs made my opinion clear to others and to myself as well. (17)

It is difficult to visualize vague words concretely. I wondered how I could express sociality with photographs. However, I thought there was a scene that would help me to see it because I could visualize it. (20)

**Question-4: What is the role of dialogue in a photograph?**

This question focused on dialogue. The problem with this workshop was there was insufficient time to talk to others. This was indicated by the comments “I could not know what other people thought about my opinion, so I wish I could have had more time” (16) and “I did not reach a dialogue with sociality” (8). The students wanted to know what other students thought about their photographs and ideas. Regarding the relationship between visuals and words, the comments “I was able to express the parts not being transmitted by words alone” (5) and “It was easier to imagine and understand by having photographs as well as words” (7) showed that using photographs and words together is helpful for students to express, discuss, and think about indescribable and invisible things.
As mentioned previously, students want to express the uniqueness in their subconscious. However, through the process of dialogue and collaborative inquiry, they understood that capturing the same scenes or photographs is not problematic because the considerations and criticisms of the same scenes or photographs can lead to meaningful, diverse, and rich interpretations through dialogue with other students. The next comment indicated this:

While going out and taking some photographs, I chose a photograph so that everyone can find a sociality in different way. However, by listening to the ideas of a friend, I was able to notice that there are diverse ways to see sociality differently in a photograph of the same scene. (18)

These comments illustrated the efficacy of the workshop and encouraged students’ consciousness of sociality. According to one comment, “I think that I can realize how close sociality is” (22).

**Question-5: Other**

It was a fun workshop! I think that it will be interesting if we target junior high school students or adults next time. By doing activities for children, I learned a lot, and I could grasp new perspectives. I think that was wonderful. (3)

I could not do such an activity in a short time. It was a very fulfilling activity. Although it may be difficult for primary school students, I thought it was a method that could be applied if I did it with different contents and secured enough time. I want to make use of it when I become a teacher. (18)

To sum up the results of the questionnaire, it is clear that this workshop needs to give more time and ways of dialogue to enable students to conduct sufficient discussion to generate deeper understandings and expansion of their knowledge. On the other hand, students felt that the
workshop gave them a new perspective on sociality and an awareness of their own viewpoints, as well as recognition of the possibility of photo-based visual inquiry and meaning-making generative dialogue.

**Discussion**

What knowledge did students obtain and generate from the workshop? The analysis of the twenty-seven photographs and categorizations generated nine points and some sub-features:

1. Messages to others not present
2. Facilities and functions for social activities
3. Mixed things and circumstances
4. Ambivalent feelings of sociality within ordinary actions
5. Sociality as a metaphor for non-human animals and plants
6. Sociality related to the existence and relationships of people
7. Information and communication media and equipment
8. Symbolic and metaphorical development of the thought of sociality
9. Provocative action to make unconscious sociality visible

These categories show the meanings and aspects of sociality in relation to (1) types of sociality, (2) social function, (3) social existence, (4) social feeling, (5) metaphorical recognition of sociality, (6) associative development of thinking of sociality, (7) media regarding sociality, (8) symbolic and metaphorical development of sociality, and (9) provocative action for or
against sociality. These results will help learners find and engage in social aspects among themselves and others in everyday life, the environment, and the world. If they attempt to conduct an artistic and educational inquiry, these results will be useful and helpful and will work as functions and methodologies. These results also provide conclusions to the question: “1) What sociality did the students find?” These sociality are situated in the context of this practice. The knowledge in this practice has a locality. However, the purpose of this workshop was to enhance students’ learning and promote their sensibility and awareness of the world, and to develop their artistic and educational inquiries. The understanding these approaches and diverse viewpoints of sociality collaboratively generated has important meanings.

Next, regarding the results of the questionnaire analysis, the students understood the usefulness of using photographs as/within visual inquiry methods. They found that dialogue and discussion facilitate mutual understanding, and they shared what they had not been able to in ordinary life. We can see this within the photographs and comments, and in the responses to the questionnaires as well. The students acknowledged that they have ambivalent and ambiguous feelings towards each other regarding the in-between of commonality and individuality. It is not easy to communicate a core part of themselves in an ordinary situation. It might be difficult for them to express the core directly using words either. Therefore “sociality” was a difficult word and concept for them to engage in because they knew that their differences would be disclosed in the workshop. It is necessary to conduct workshops using careful and sophisticated methods given the amount of peer pressure in Japan. Students tend to avoid expressing themselves to avoid actualizing their differences. Grisoni (2012) stated, “arts-based inquiry enables us to explore the hidden and beneath-the-surface meanings and understandings of organization life.” If we try to see the background of our society using photographs and imagery methodologies, we can be changed the "organization life". If we cannot see what is in the background of our society, we may think that there is no other way besides accepting an invisible sociality filled
with peer pressure and pretending not to notice it. This will preserve and reinforce invisible sociality. Sociality has an ambivalent meaning and function for students. As Leavy (2015) stated, visual imagery can create a perspective and provide a context to think of sociality. Students can become aware of such a possibility of visual methodologies for inquiry using photographs, comments and discussions, and reflection on questionnaires. This will enhance their views, perceptions, and recognition of their environment and world.

Conclusions

Photographs stimulate the vague sense of difference in an ordinary life filled with rules and peer pressure. That is how we live. However, through this workshop, students could approach, find, and think about “sociality” via photographs and dialogue, and they found and recognized the possibility of strategies using photographs and dialogue for invisible things. This will enrich their methodologies and help them engage in the environment and world visually as pre-service teachers of art education. In the next practice, it will be necessary to give them more time to work and develop their thoughts and to extend their inquiries individually and collaboratively.

Acknowledgements

I would like to show my greatest appreciation to all the participants in this workshop. This work was supported by JSPS KAKENHI, Grant Number JP18H01010, and SSHRC 890-2017-0006. We would like to thank Editage (www.editage.jp) for English language editing.

References


