

Teaching Portfolio

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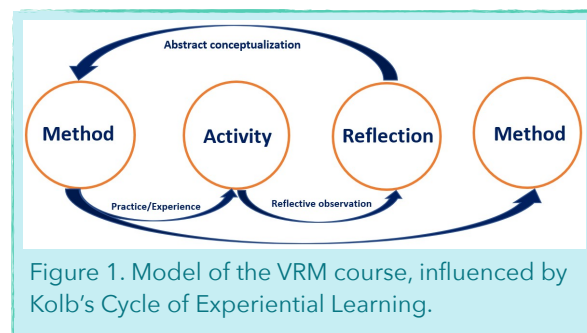
Teaching Portfolio

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1. Approach to teaching and learning

Teaching brings me joy and excitement. I am always looking forward to each teaching episode, wondering what knowledge and experience my students will bring to the classroom. I respond to their individual interests by choosing case studies and topics. For example, in autumn 2022 in the course *Visual Cultures and Technologies*, we discussed issues related to gender representations in visual cultures, using examples of print advertisements and cartoons — as this was the topic, which I noticed was of high interest to that particular group of students.

I believe that teaching is about learning from each other through active and respectful exchange of ideas. Following the principles of dialogic pedagogy and a student-centered approach, I ask students to choose the topic and focus of assigned projects (so giving them a free hand in learning about what they are the most interested in). I also believe that learning occurs most efficiently through practice. In the *Visual Research Methods* course, following Kolb's experiential learning theory, students learn the principles of a particular research method through hands-on activities (see Fig. 1) — they conduct auto-driven visual elicitation interviews in pairs; they learn visual rhetorical interpretation by identifying visual rhetorical figures in print advertisements and press photographs.¹



I aim to create learning atmosphere that enables students to freely express their thoughts, ask questions, and put forward new ideas. Learning is about who we are as individuals and what drives our thinking, and so, I encourage students to use their experience and cultural background as learning resources. In the course *Visual Cultures and Technologies*, students in small groups work on visual case studies of their choice, i.e., anything that is of interest to them from a broad topic of visual cultures. I guide them by encouraging them to think boldly and creatively while looking for their topic. After the presentation, the group receives short written feedback from each classmate and from me; each student in the group also writes a reflection on learning while completing the assignment.

The visual case study assignment illustrates what I believe education is about — learning together and from each other, finding your interest and exploring the topic under teacher's facilitation, finding your own way to present your learning, giving and receiving feedback, and reflecting on learning. My approach met with students' acceptance:

*I enjoyed the classroom activities. It was nice that we were able to pick our own topic for the case study and that Joanna was ready to discuss and give feedback about the topic any time.*²

¹ More about my approach to **teaching visual research methods** in the chapter: Kędra, J., & Žakevičiūtė, R. (2022). As visual as possible: The pedagogy of visual research methods in a Finnish university. In J. Kędra (Ed.), *Visual Pedagogies in Higher Education: Between Theory and Practice*, pp. 27-43. Brill.

² This and other student's statements included in this portfolio are direct quotations from the course feedback forms, which I always collect in the last class of each course (in order to improve it for the next time).

I believe that higher education should aim at creating open-minded and curious lifelong learners. For that reason, my courses are designed as a point of departure that would inspire students toward further learning discoveries.

I appreciate how lectures weren't only listing facts and research but invited us to think and question ourselves. I like the picture examples, they were good and challenging enough. I also enjoyed the variety in tasks.

The course was very interactive. The examples used were always relevant and current. I also liked that the teacher pressed us to be really critical in thought.

I liked the atmosphere created in the class, the free floor to think about things together, the discussions we had.

University should equip students with tools to help them explore what they are curious about and serve as inspiration for learning. In teaching, I am always very enthusiastic about the material, methods, activities, innovative assignments. Students appreciate this in the course evaluations:

What do you think are the greatest strength of your instructor?

- *Creating a safe space for discussion.*
- *Enthusiasm and the way she encouraged us to voice our thoughts.*
- *She is enthusiastic and very engaging, knows how to work the audience.*
- *The simplicity, in which she managed to explain complicated materials; positive and helpful attitude.*

2. Teaching experience

I have been teaching researched informed, cross-disciplinary courses for Bachelor, Master and doctoral-level students in different fields across humanities and social sciences. In addition, my colleagues often invite me to give thematic expert lectures in their courses, for example, on photography, visual communication, or visual literacy.

I usually teach international groups of students. Hence, my teaching language is English with an occasional mix of other languages, e.g., Finnish, if that helps the students. I have years-long experience in collaborative teaching, including co-planning the course content and assignments, and dialogical co-teaching in the classroom (with me and the other teacher always present in each class). The format of co-teaching, which we have developed over the years is very beneficial to students' learning — in collaboration we are more creative in planning the course and activities, and students see how each topic can be approached from different perspectives, regarding the academic background of their teachers.

Courses taught (see also Appendix 1)

Visual Research Methods and Methodologies (20h, Sept. 2023, Univ. of Jyväskylä, doctoral-level). The course introduces selected visual methodologies, relevant for qualitative studies in humanities, social and educational sciences. The key objective is to promote innovative, experimental, and ambitious research ideas that utilize images and visual imagery of various kinds and nature.

Visual Cultures and Technologies (25h, 2022 & 2023, hybrid, Tampere University), a new Master-level course for students in the program Sustainable Digital Life. The course introduces histories of visual cultures and technologies, with the aim of providing students a better understanding of the variety of today's visual media. It is based on related literature in visual studies and visual cultures, as well as close examinations of selected empirical cases. The course covers: introduction to visual culture studies (politics of representation, gender and visual cultures); photography and

photographic seeing; introduction to visual interpretation; advertising, consumer culture and visual rhetorics; visual ethics. Students work on visual case studies in pairs/groups and reflect on the learning process, both in writing and through video reflection (see Appendix 2 for course syllabus).

Visual Communication as a Way to Improve Working Life Skills (24h/5 days, 2021-online, 2022 & 2023- in-person, co-teaching, University of Jyväskylä Summer School), intensive international course, Bachelor-level. Students develop skills, which will help them to become strong visual communicators and powerful and intelligent visual consumers. The course includes visual activities and collaborative group work (course project), complemented by the introduction to visual culture studies, visual literacy, image interpretation, presentation of visuals, and elements of visual ethics.

Visual Research Methods (24h, 2016, 2018, 2019, University of Jyväskylä), Master-level; developed as an intensive summer school course (24h/5 days) and as a semester-long one; co-teaching with a colleague from sociology; providing a cross-disciplinary perspectives. The course covers introduction to visual culture studies, participatory visual research methods, visual interpretation (e.g., visual rhetorics, visual discourse analysis), and visual ethics. Students conduct a small-scale visual research projects and participate in visual activities.



Samples of students' collages, created as a group activity to sum up the Visual Research Methods course.

Press Photography: Theory, Practice and Interpretation (24h/5 days, 2016-2018, University of Jyväskylä Summer School), a one-week intensive course. The course covers history, theory and practice of (press) photography and photojournalism. Students work on three creative photographic assignments for their learning portfolio. Photographs are shared and used in the classroom activities. Students improve their photographic skills and critical visual thinking.

Successful Online Presentations (3h online workshop, 2021, Language Campus Doctoral Spring School, University of Jyväskylä), doctoral-level intensive training on how to succeed in scientific virtual conference presentations; with special emphasis on visual communication strategies.

Teachers' training development

In the University Pedagogical Studies, I gave a **guest lecture**: "Visual Pedagogies in the University Classroom: Teaching *with* and *about* Visuals" (25 Apr. 2018, Univ. of Jyväskylä).

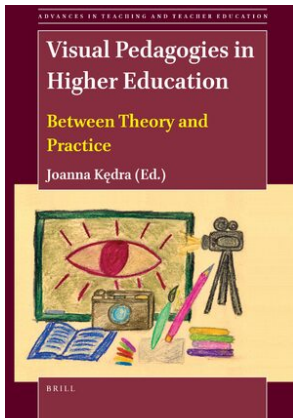
Experience in supervision

For one year (Oct. 2018-Nov. 2019), I acted as a **mentor to six doctoral students** in the mentoring program at the Department of Language and Communication Studies, University of Jyväskylä. I am also providing informal individual **supervision sessions** for Master and doctoral students, who search for guidelines in using visual research methods in their projects.

3. Curriculum development and educational leadership

Development of teaching materials

With an aim to popularize visually informed teaching in the university, I co-edited a double special issue of the *Journal of Visual Literacy* (38/1-2) — *Visual Literacy Practices in Higher Education: What, Why and How?* (2019) In addition to traditional research articles, the issue includes shorter texts with innovative visual teaching ideas. The special issue's editorial is the second most-read article in the journal (with 14.450 views to date).



In my research, I aim to popularize the concept of visual literacy in university education. Thus, when reviewing visual literacy theory, I identified these visual literacy skills, which can be developed in university teaching (see: *What does it mean to be visually literate?*³ — my most read and quoted research). My interest in visual education developed further through international collaboration with other visual scholars and enthusiastic teachers. In Oct. 2022, I published an edited volume — *Visual Pedagogies in Higher Education: Between Theory and Practice* in Brill series “Advances in Teaching and Teacher Education”. The book brings together various perspectives in an emerging field of visual pedagogies, including photomedia literacy, object-based learning, drawing and video pedagogies. In an extended Introduction, I compiled the principles of visual pedagogies, with an intention to help other educators to implement these in their teaching.

In addition, my other work on visual literacy was recently accepted for publication in a four-volume *Teaching Communication Series*, primarily **intended for instructors in the North American higher education**. For the volume *Pedagogical Resources*, I submitted an activity in visual interpretation of journalistic photographs⁴ (see Appendix 3) and for *Teaching Journalism and Media*, I introduced the concept of visual literacy as an important education in communication studies.⁵

Development of learning environments

In 2019, I co-created the **Teachers’ Chat Room** (TCR; see Appendix 4), informal recurrent meetings for the faculty to share teaching experience and to provide peer-support in teaching-related issues. In addition, the TCR has its online space in social media. The online forum is actively engaging the university faculty in the discussions on teaching and learning, especially in the context of online education.

In the academic year 2019/2020, I was engaged in the activities of the **First-Year Experience working group** in the Department of Language and Communication Studies, Univ. of Jyväskylä. Among other tasks, I was leading the sub-group responsible for developing informative website and online materials for the first-year students.

Multidisciplinary cooperation, internationality and leadership

- Nov. 2019-Dec. 2022, serving as **Chair of the International Presence Committee, International Visual Literacy Association (IVLA)**; organizing international conference — IVLA 2022 to discuss pedagogical research in the field of visual (literacy) education;
- since Sept. 2021, serving as **Chair of Visual Cultures Section, European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA)**; — among the members of the section, we often discuss issues related to visual teaching, we share good practices and collaboratively look for solutions in challenging pedagogical cases;
- Cross-disciplinary co-teaching; publishing multidisciplinary pedagogical research (*Journal of Visual Literacy* special issue, *Visual Pedagogies* edited book);

³ Kędra, J. (2018). What does it mean to be visually literate? Examination of visual literacy definitions in a context of higher education. *Journal of Visual Literacy*, 37(2), 67-84. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1051144X.2018.1492234>

⁴ Kędra, J. (forthcoming). Teaching visual literacy: Activity in visual interpretation of journalistic photographs. In B. N. Frisby & R. Kaufmann (Eds.), *Teaching Communication Series: Pedagogical Resources*. Cognella Publishing.

⁵ Kędra, J. (forthcoming). Teaching visual literacy. In S. Keith (Ed.), *Teaching Communication Series: Teaching Journalism and Media*. Cognella Publishing.

helps me to revise the course content, activities and assignments. I also observe the learning dynamics during the course — if possible, I make immediate revisions and adjustments to respond to students' interest and educational needs.

Peer feedback to my teaching practice in the Professional Teacher Education Program:

I think Joanna does a good job in facilitating learning – she asks students' opinions about the content; even when a student responds, Joanna seeks for other opinions as well. She gives students an opportunity to think and explore their previous knowledge (and her teaching material does a great job in that). This creates a level of engagement in the classroom.

I do find Joanna's explanations and illustrations very easy to follow. The visual aspect of Joanna's pedagogy is also a very good way to enhance understanding and I think that the visuals are very illustrative and good. I have never taken a visual rhetoric or method class. Joanna's class is basically my introduction to it, and I am really enjoying it. I feel like I am in the class.

More examples of the peer-feedback to my teaching practice conducted in the Program is included in the Appendix 6. The feedback is based on the video-recorded 3h-class of the intensive summer school course on visual research methods and was provided by two fellow teacher-students and the instructor in the Program. The session included careful planning of the content, materials, methods and timing.

Awards received for good teaching



Education Development Award for 2019 for collaborative and diverse development of teaching and learning at the department; awarded by the Vice-Rector of the University of Jyväskylä.



2021 International Visual Literacy Association Research Award in recognition of active involvement in outstanding research that furthers the cause of visual literacy and for achievement in advancing knowledge within the field.

Appendix 1: Overview of courses taught

TABLE 1. Teaching experience: overview of selected courses and guest lectures.

Year(s)	Name of the course	University/ organization	No of enrolled students	My role in the course	Status of the course / no of credits	Contact teaching hours
Bachelor's level courses						
2023 2022 (Forthem) 2021 (online)	Visual Communication as a Way to Improve Working Life Skills	Univ. of Jyväskylä / Summer School in Human Sciences	15 25 15	responsible co-teacher	optional (summer school course) 2-3 ECTS	24 / 5days
2018 2017 2016	Press Photography: Theory, Practice and Interpretation	Univ. of Jyväskylä / Summer School in Human Sciences	18 19 10	responsible teacher	3 ECTS	24 / 5days
2018 2019	Introduction to Visual Research Methods	Univ. of Jyväskylä / Summer School in Human Sciences	18 13	responsible co-teacher	optional 3-4 ECTS	24 / 5days
2012	Visual Literacy: Press Photography as a Medium	Univ. of Jyväskylä / Department of Communication	20	responsible teacher	optional 4 ECTS	18
2011	Press Photography as a Medium for Intercultural Com.	Univ. of Jyväskylä / Department of Communication	15	responsible teacher	optional 3 ECTS	12
Master's level courses						
2023 2022	Visual Cultures and Technologies	Tampere University	31 18	responsible teacher	optional hybrid 5ECTS	25
2022 2021 (online)	Visual Literacy	Univ. of Jyväskylä		guest lecturer	compulsory 1-2 lectures	4 2
2019	Visual Research Methods for Humanities and Social Sciences	Univ. of Jyväskylä / Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	12	responsible co-teacher	optional 3-5 ECTS	24
2016 2015	Visual Methods in Analysing Imagery	Univ. of Jyväskylä / Department of Communication	15 11	guest lecturer	optional in a compulsory methods course	4
Doctoral level courses						
2023	Visual Research Methods and Methodologies	Univ. of Jyväskylä / Methods Center	10	responsible teacher	optional 3 ECTS	20
2021 (online)	Successful Online Presentations	Univ. of Jyväskylä / Spring School for doctoral students	18	responsible teacher	optional no credits	3

Appendix 2: Sample course syllabus

This syllabus was presented to students upon the introduction class to the course *Visual Cultures and Technologies*, Sept-Dec. 2022 at Tampere University.

What is this course about?

The course introduces histories of visual cultures and technologies, with the aim of providing students a better understanding of the variety of today's visual media. It is based on related literature in visual studies and visual cultures, and close examinations of selected empirical cases.

Topics that will be covered in the course:

- introduction to visual culture studies
- ways of seeing, look as a medium, spectatorship, panopticon;
- politics of representation; gender and visual cultures; male/female gaze;
- invention of photography; photographic seeing; remembering visual technologies and image reproduction;
- consumer (visual) culture; advertising and visual rhetorics; visual analysis and interpretation;
- visual literacy
- ethics and visual culture



Learning outcomes

Upon completion of the course, the student

- knows important key moments in the development of visual media,
- understands reasons why visual cultures and visual media inform each other,
- recognizes the relations between embodied seeing and visual media, can identify key approaches to studying visual media,
- has the insight on how to analyze visual cultures and technologies.

Mode of study

- lectures and seminars (25 hours contact teaching) — at least 80% attendance; online classes only in exceptional cases;
- active participation in contact teaching!
- homework, readings, preparing for the class discussion; preparing a case study to be presented during the course;
- individual (final) course assignment —> a reflective video;

Completion mode

- active participation
- homework/readings
- preparing a visual case study for the class
- completing a video reflection (final assignment)

Evaluation

This is a 5 ECTS course (5x 27h studying) of which 4x27h is for individual and group work. Numerical grade: 0-5 (0-fail / 5-excellent), calculated as follows:

attendance + homework/readings + active participation (discussions, activities)	a visual case study (pair/group project)	a reflective video (final assignment)
20%	40%	40%

Preparing a visual case study for the course:

Learning is not a spectator sport.

(Chickering & Gamson, 1987, p. 4)

- a pair/group work/project;
- the more specific the topic — the better! (recommended: choose a topic on visuality that is related to your culture/sub-culture);
- prepare a **case study** related to visual cultures and technologies (preferably outside of the Anglo-American context); you can choose a medium or a particular event, an object, or an ongoing discussion related to visual cultures — anything that is of interest to you and can be interesting to discuss in the class (and is related to the course content!);
- look at your topic from critical visual culture perspective;
- feel free to discuss your topic with the teacher (before you decide to work on it!)
- when to present: 28.10-18.11 (four classes, two case studies per class)
- choose your pair and decide on the time slot when you want to present your case study (sign up on 2.9 or 9.9);
- there will be **40 min** for each case study; you may divide it, e.g.:
 - 10-15 min presenting the case
 - 25-30 min discussing it with your classmates

But it is up to you what you will do during your 40 min — the only rule is that you cannot talk yourself for too long!

- feel free to prepare activities, discussion points, texts to read or something to watch beforehand (send your material in advance to the teacher so that your fellow classmates have at least a week to prepare);
- feedback: by your fellow students in the class (a form with questions provided) and by your teacher; each presenting student will need to fill in a **reflective report** (about 1 page) within a few days from the presentation;

Final assignment: A video reflection

- an individual course project;
- aim: the video reflection should **demonstrate your learning** about various topics related to visual cultures and technologies;
- this is not about your skills in video recording or editing, but **ONLY** the slides/pictures with the voice over are not allowed either;
- **use your creativity; show visual cultures around you and comment on that by using knowledge you gained and ideas you developed during the course;**
- length: ~10 min

A video reflection - What to include?

- You can start from introducing yourself, mentioning your background and possible previous knowledge in visual cultures and technologies (max 30s).
- You can make short videos after each class by reflecting on what have you learned and how differently you may perceive visuality around you. Use examples of relevant visuality.
- Alternatively: make the reflection notes after each class (in writing, drawing, doodling), so that you don't forget what you want to include in the final video; —> learning diary
- Ideally, your video includes reflections from all or most of the classes (including the ones with the visual case studies).
- Do not include the lecture materials, e.g., lecture slides, but your reflection on what you learned.
- Be creative!

Appendix 3: Sample classroom activity

An activity in visual interpretation of journalistic photographs, which I frequently use in my courses. It is a revised and simplified (for teaching purposes) version of the model I developed for research to analyze press photographs. The version presented here is the full manuscript approved for publication as follows:

Kędra, J. (forthcoming). Teaching visual literacy: Activity in visual interpretation of journalistic photographs. In B. N. Frisby & R. Kaufmann (Eds.), *Pedagogical Resources*, Vol. 4 of *Teaching Communication* (D. D. Sellnow & M. G. Strawser, Eds.). Cognella Publishing.

Teaching Visual Literacy:

Activity in Visual Interpretation of Journalistic Photographs

For this activity in visual interpretation, I suggest using journalistic photographs, particularly the award-winning images (see Resources), which are often visually rich, and thus, provide excellent material to practice visual reading skills. Journalistic photographs (also: press photographs) are easily accessible images of a polysemic character that can be approached on two levels of interpretation: (i) the basic one that focuses on what the image depicts and how, by using which photographic techniques and (ii) the advanced that aims to explore intertextual connections, symbol(s), or visual rhetorical figures. The proposed activity can be implemented with any group of students, even without any prior experience in visual interpretation and visual learning. It can be used in the classroom as a group/pair exercise or as a homework assignment.

Goal

The activity aims to develop students' visual literacy, and specifically, their skills in visual perception, interpretation of the visual, ability to translate an image into a text or narration, and gaining knowledge of basic visual vocabulary. These are the skills in visual reading (see the three categories of visual literacy skills as outlined in the chapter "Teaching Visual Literacy", Vol. III).

Rational

Guided by the series of questions in Table 1, students learn to interpret a journalistic photograph. They train visual perception by looking carefully at all elements in the photograph (describing image content) and by identifying technical aspects of an image (composition, usage of colors, light, etc.). With the instructor's help, students can learn basic visual vocabulary about composition, perspective, framing (long-shot, close-up, detail, etc.), and more advanced: denotation and connotation, intertextuality, symbol. By verbalizing the interpretation process, either orally or in writing, students develop their skills in translating images into text(s).

Outcomes

Using the guidelines for teaching visual literacy in media and communication courses as outlined in Vol. III, the following learning objectives can be formulated for this activity:

- students comprehend visual information in journalistic photographs;
- students can conduct basic interpretation of the visual (here: a journalistic photograph);
- students demonstrate a critical understanding of visual communication through the medium of press photography;

To achieve these learning objectives, students may need to conduct the interpretation process several times of various photographs or a series of photographs (a photo reportage). Learning can

be enhanced by first conducting the interpretation process in pairs or groups and later individually with another photograph, for example, as a homework assignment.

Procedure

The model for interpretation (see Table 1) can be used as it stands, that is, without any introductory lecture on visual interpretation. Tough, if the course design allows, the instructor can familiarize students with some basic concepts used in the model and illustrate these with relevant visual examples.

The model was created on the basis of selected visual research methodologies for the analysis of found images. It compiles elements of visual rhetoric (Barthes, 1964/1977), visual content analysis, compositional interpretation (Rose, 2012), and intertextuality. Although the model includes terms that may sound unfamiliar to students, the questions included in the model should facilitate the interpretation process without any need to define the terms.

First, students are provided with copies of the interpretation model (Table 1). The photograph, selected beforehand by the instructor, is displayed on the screen. Students can start by interpreting the image in pairs or small groups, collectively answering the questions included in the model. Following the given order of questions is recommended, because it increasingly engages learners in the interpretation process, starting from denotation toward connotation.

Next, students share their interpretations with the whole group while the instructor facilitates the process by taking a few answers for each step in the model. While hearing diverse responses to the same question(s), the instructor may focus students' attention on the polysemic character of images, and on the fact that visual interpretation is just... interpretation, that is, the meaning of the image depends on who is looking at it. The instructor may further expand on this issue by discussing with students how the reception process of visibility depends on who is looking and at what, bringing here Berger's words: "We never look just at one thing; we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves" (Berger, 1972, p. 9). For the development of students' skills in visual reading, the instructor must search for more elaborated responses from students, i.e., encouraging learners to justify their interpretations in connection to the image or its elements.

Table 1. Model for interpretation of journalistic photographs.

1	basic denotation	What does the image show? Describe. What kind of story does it present? What is known about the image content based on its caption?
2	compositional interpretation	Describe image composition, usage of colors and light(ing). What is their role in relation to the image content? What can you see in the foreground, and in the background, which elements are centered? What is the atmosphere of this image?
3	emotions, feelings	What kinds of emotions and feelings does the image raise in you? Try to connect them with concrete visual elements (e.g., colors, composition, image content, something else?)
4	symbol	Are there any elements in the image which seem to symbolize something? Explain their meaning in connection to image content.
5	intertextuality	To what other (visual) texts does the image refer? Does it remind you of some other cultural artifacts, photographs, art, film, etc.? Explain the connection.
6	visual communication	An image is a form of communication. What is the message that this image carry? What argument is made through the image?

Appraisal

This activity should be regarded foremost as training in visual literacy rather than an assignment that would require grading. Therefore, it is important to assure students that any responses to the questions included in the model are welcome. Learners' visual perception and their experience in visual interpretation may vary significantly. For that reason, this activity may at first require some facilitation by the instructor, especially with students with no prior experience in visual interpretation.

Variations of the activity

The interpretation model in Table 1 can be used for other than journalist images, for example, print advertisements. In this case, I suggest adding questions about visual rhetorical figures: *What kind of visual rhetorical figures can you identify in the image? What is their role in constructing an argument?* The 'argument' refers to the rhetorical function of images. Examples of visual rhetorical figures can be introduced to students before the interpretation process.

Resources

Photographs for this activity can be searched from the databases of the following international competitions in photojournalism:

- World Press Photo: <https://www.worldpressphoto.org>
- Pictures of the Year: <https://www.poy.org/index.html>

Students should be provided with the photograph and its caption.

References

- Barthes, R. (1964/1977). Rhetoric of the Image. In: *Image Music Text* (trans. S. Heath). Hill and Wang, pp. 32-51.
- Berger, J. (1972). *Ways of Seeing*. Penguin.
- Rose, G. (2012). *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Appendix 4: Collaborative development of teaching

Collaborative development of learning environments — The Teachers Chat Room organized at the University of Jyväskylä.

The Teachers' Chat Room (TCR) is a learning community, which started out as a series of informal meetings, inspired by the ideas and feedback from teaching and research faculty of the Department of Language and Communication Studies, where I currently work. The main idea behind the TCR is to create an informal meeting-place for sharing, peer-support and learning from each other, to develop university teaching and pedagogy in a community spirit. TCR is co-organized by Joanna Kedra and Judit Hahn. In March 2020, we also created a multilingual "Teachers' Chat Room" Facebook group to offer a virtual space for peer and professional support across departments and units.

The TCR provides a space and time for all JYU colleagues who teach or are interested in teaching to share their ideas, good practices, excitement, frustrations, accomplishments, and questions related to teaching and education. The TCR is a place for both junior and senior members of the university community interested, or involved in teaching.

During the on-campus TCR meetings we have opened up the following topics:

- the first lesson: lesson planning, icebreakers, tips and tools for a good start;
- digital tools in teaching;
- object-based learning and visual literacy, presented by our guest Dr. Olivia Meehan, Melbourne University, Australia;
- trial lecture: preparation, performance and evaluation;
- *Russian cultural evening as an experiment* — teaching experience shared by Vera Zvereva and Alexei Lobski;

Education Development Award for 2019



We are a team of two: a passionate lecturer, specialized in virtual exchange pedagogies, Judit Hahn, and a researcher of visual literacy and visual pedagogy, Joanna Kedra.

Both of us work in the Department of Language and Communication Studies. Our aim is to bring the importance of teaching to the forefront. We work to achieve this goal through the actual practices that promote peer-support and community spirit of teachers (the Teachers' Chat Room), the best of students (the First-Year Experience working group), and the visibility of teaching and pedagogical development work (making teaching visible on the Department's website).



Joanna Kedra and Judit Hahn received The Education Development Award 2019 for collaborative and diverse development of teaching and learning at the Department of Language and Communication Studies. It was awarded by the Vice-Rector of the University of Jyväskylä, Prof. Marja-Leena Laakso, in cooperation with the University Educational Council.

Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success.
Henry Ford

Appendix 5: Key learnings from pedagogical studies

Examples of some key learnings from my pedagogical studies and teaching practice, published in a form of the blog posts on my personal professional website: <http://joannakedra.com>

23
Sunday
MAY 2021

Seeing an online teaching as a place to growth (as a teacher)

POSTED BY JOANNA IN #ONL211, TOPIC 5: LESSONS LEARN – FUTURE PRACTICE

≈ 1 COMMENT

Tags

growing up as teachers,
ONL211, online
teaching, reflection,
teacher's development



Photo by Emmanuel Mbala on Unsplash

I am in a privileged position: I was not under (pandemic) emergency to move my teaching online (mostly due to the fact that I have been teaching on an hourly basis). Thus, I have had time to plan and prepare, or even more — to first educate myself in pedagogies for online and blended learning and teaching. One of such courses that I have recently participated in was the [Open Networked Learning](#) (ONL211) — an international open course on e-learning in higher education. My good friend, Dr. Judit Hahn, recommended me this course as she herself completed it earlier.

Since the beginning, I have had rather mixed feelings about it. This was mostly due to the pedagogical approach, on which the course was designed, that is, the problem based learning — approach, which was completely new to me. For each two weeks, following a specific topic related to online education, we were confronted (i.e., eight learners and two facilitators) with a scenario, based on which we created our learning. In addition, once per week there was a lecture or workshop by an expert, organized to support our thinking within the given topic.

At first, I did not like a relatively unstructured way of learning — a learning that each group and each individual learner have had to create. However, the longer the course lasted, the more I have been enjoying being my own facilitator of learning, taking agency with peer-learners in the process. I must admit, I have always been rather skeptical to asynchronous online courses, not really experiencing learning in such contexts. However, my main take-away from the ONL is that learning, indeed, can happen in such format if only the course is well-designed and if learners are sufficiently motivated. Our motivation as learners was high. Thus, I think that as a teacher in online environment, I should even more work on the course design, because I may not always be able to influence students' motivation.

The topics that I explored during the ONL course helped me to see that there is a lot of potential in online education. Challenging is, however, to come out of one's comfort zone in order to see this potential and to learn as a teacher. Still, isn't it that we should constantly develop our skills as teacher and broaden knowledge?

03
Monday
MAY 2021

Community and collaborative learning in an online classroom

POSTED BY JOANNA IN #ONL211, TOPIC 3: LEARNING IN COMMUNITIES – NETWORKED COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

≈ 1 COMMENT

Tags

assessment,
collaborative learning,
learning in community,
motivation, reflection in
learning

How to design an online course is such a way that it leads to the meaningful learning process for students? And how to make this process collaborative? — By collaboration, I mean here a truly engaging work throughout the course, not just a group work assigned to students.

I think that it all should start from making a distinction between two pairs of words, often misinterpreted: **cooperation** vs. **collaboration** and **group** vs. **community**. The first pair, cooperation and collaboration, are often used interchangeably in academic context, both in teaching and in research. I would say that collaboration is more meaningful, and thus, it requires more effort from all collaborating parties. In pedagogical practice, this can be a collaboration between teachers (challenging, but rewording) and collaboration between teacher(s) and students as well as among students. In the last case, a semantic distinction between group and community also comes to the forefront: in a group work, students need to, at least, cooperate, but in order to create a (learning) community —they need to collaborate.

How can the teacher help students to create a **learning community** and enhance learning collaboration? First of all, the course has to be designed around the idea of peer-learning, not simply as a (number of) group works with the divisions of tasks. The most efficiently, we learn from each other, because our human nature is social. However, in order for students to learn together, they need **motivation** and encouragement. Both of these can and should be generated and strengthened by a good facilitator of learning, namely, the teacher.

Finally, the aspect that requires the most re-thinking is **assessment**. In a community collaborative learning, there is a need to look at both the result and the process of learning. For the purpose to assess a result — a rubric can be created; but assessing a learning process is more challenging. An ideal option will be to collect peer-feedback and students' individual summative assessment of their learning. However, if students are not used to such forms, but are more familiar with exams or course essays, their reflection on the learning process may not be that meaningful. And yes, now I am coming to the key point: **reflection as a learning tool**. I am still discovering it, both as a teacher and as a student, a long-life learner. I have experienced it in its various forms, including student's learning diary, teacher's reflective diary, a blog post, and a reflection on my teaching practices through analysis of my video-recorded classes. Thus, I also know how difficult it is to reflect on one's own learning. However, the more conscious we are about our own learning, the more effective a community learning process can be — and so the collaboration will be more productive, when learners are more conscious about their learning goals.

Appendix 6: Peer feedback to teaching

Peer feedback to my teaching practice in the Professional Teacher Education Program; intensive summer school course: *Visual Research Methods*; feedback based on video-recorded 3h of teaching.

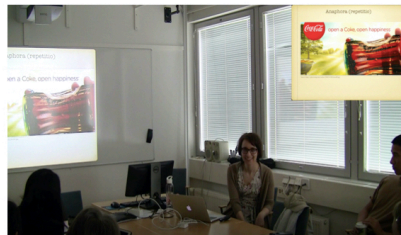
This lecture is not boring but very exciting. The atmosphere is relaxing and gives the opportunity to get as much as possible in the learning process.

I like the communication between students and a teacher.

Really interesting way of teaching, way of explaining the figures is thrilling. As stylistic devices is quite difficult topic and the way Joanna presented I can please.

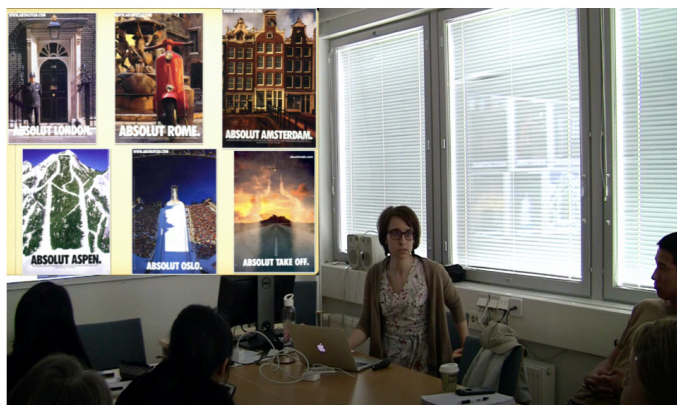
I think Joanna does a good job in facilitating learning — she asks students' opinions about the content; even when a student responds, Joanna seeks for other opinions as well. She gives students an opportunity to think and explore their previous knowledge (and her teaching material does a great job in that). This creates a level of engagement in the classroom.

It was a clear, interactive, well planned, and organized learning session.



I love how Joanna took some time to select very useful and relevant pictures for the lectures. The images, in my opinion as someone who is not very familiar with visual rhetoric, really facilitated understanding.

The steps of the activity are presented nicely at the start. Relating previous knowledge with the beginning sentences is a beautiful way to recall previous sessions. Then, the discussion starts with a picture and an aloud question "What does the photograph show?" — loud enough to get attention and fill energy in students. The supervision of the learning process is excellent here. Helping students in a thinking process with supporting sub-questions.



I do find your explanations and illustrations very easy to follow even though I cannot really tell what the experience was for the students. The visual aspect of your pedagogy is also a very good way to enhance understanding and I think that the visuals are very illustrative and good. I have never taken a visual rhetoric or method class. Your class is basically my introduction to it, and I am really enjoying it. I feel like I am in the class. I agree that your colleague spontaneously interrupted you to interject at some points, but your response and attitude minimized the negative effects. For example, you are most times not talking when she interrupts, and you are very calm and appreciative of her input. I think you did a good job managing the situation.

The final activity was the most engaging segment of the lecture. It was a good way to get students to think and share their thoughts. Joanna also facilitated the conversation well by asking questions and guiding the discussion. Students were able to share what they thought about the subject. It's also nice that she made copies of the activity available to everyone. It shows how prepared Joanna was for her lecture.

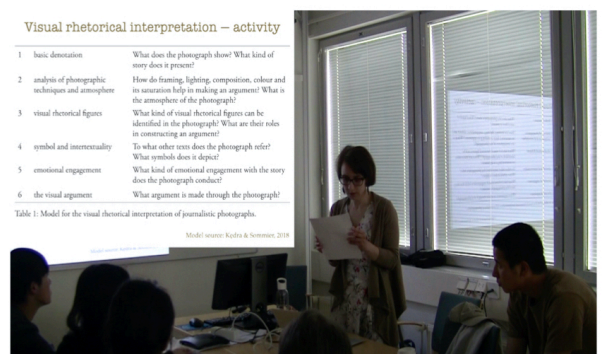
This was a good class in my opinion. Your materials were amazing. You engaged the students sufficiently even though some were not so excited to participate, and they came from diverse backgrounds. Your explanations were clear and simple to understand. The images you used were very illustrative and thought provoking.

Visual rhetorical interpretation – activity

1. basic denotation	What does the photograph show? What kind of story does it present?
2. analysis of photographic techniques and atmosphere	How do framing, lighting, composition, colour and its saturation help in making an argument? What is the atmosphere of the photograph?
3. visual rhetorical figures	What kind of visual rhetorical figures can be identified in the photograph? What are their roles in constructing an argument?
4. symbol and intertextuality	To what other texts does the photograph refer? What symbols does it depict?
5. emotional engagement	What kind of emotional engagement with the story does the photograph conduct?
6. the visual argument	What argument is made through the photograph?

Table 1: Model for the visual rhetorical interpretation of journalistic photographs.

Model created by Koolen & Smeetsen 2018



Appendix 7: Assessment of teaching competence

The assessment of teaching demonstration for the Title of Docent (Adjunct Prof.) in Visual Literacy.

Assessment of teaching competence

Teaching competence is assessed based on the teaching portfolio and teaching demonstration. Teaching competence is assessed by members of the Teaching Competence Assessment Pool in the Faculty of Information Technology and Communications Sciences. The assessment is completed by using assessment criteria of teaching competence.

Background information

Name: Kedra Joanna
Position applied: Title of Docent in Visual Literacy
Topic: Visual Literacy
Date: 1.12.2023

Teaching portfolio

The applicant presents and justifies her teaching approach well. The portfolio shows that the applicant has completed a lot of pedagogical studies. The applicant has a lot of experience in university teaching and little experience in supervising theses. There is no mention of supervision of other learning processes. The portfolio shows a strong track record of developing teaching methods, materials, and environments. There is evidence of systematic collection and use of feedback. There is extensive evidence of collaborative or community-based teaching development. The applicant has published pedagogical research internationally and uses this research in her teaching.

Teaching demonstration

The applicant's expertise is well demonstrated in the teaching demonstration. The overall presentation is appropriately structured in relation to the objectives of the teaching demonstration and the content is chosen and framed in a meaningful way. The teaching is well planned, structured, and delivered within the given timeframe. The applicant has good contact with the audience, is a clear performer and the teaching is easy to listen to. The applicant activates the students during the lesson, although there could have been activation in addition to the start and end of the lesson.

The applicant did not present the teaching and learning objectives at the beginning of the lecture. When asked specifically, the objectives presented were meaningful and worked as part of a broader framework, but there were too many target groups. The research orientation of the teaching is communicated, although the topic of the lecture could have been covered in more depth and with more emphasis on research. The use of teaching materials and the teaching methods chosen are pedagogically well thought out and support learning well.

The demonstration was carried out in a simulated teaching situation.

All over grade of the teaching competence

The teaching skills of the applicant were considered to be sufficient for a docent and for the field of the applied docentship. Overall, the teaching competence is at level 4 (very good) according to the Tampere University's teaching competence assessment criteria.

Teaching Competence Assessment Pool

Professor Kari Systä, University Lecturer Marja Kivilehto ja University Lecturer & Vice-Dean for Education Erja Sipilä.