

Integrating Digital Photovoice in Reflective Teaching Practice in Kampus Mengajar: A Case Study of Indonesian Pre-service English Teachers' Experiences

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ABSTRACT: The Kampus Mengajar program in Indonesia provides pre-service English teachers (PSETs) with a platform for teaching practice, yet little is known about how they can effectively reflect on their experiences using digital tools. This qualitative case study explores the integration of Digital Photovoice (DP) as a reflective teaching tool among eight Indonesian PSETs participating in the Kampus Mengajar batch 7 program in 2024. Drawing on Farrell's five-level framework of reflection (philosophy, principles, theory, practice, beyond practice), data were collected through semi-structured interviews, digital photovoice documents, and teaching journal reflections. Thematic analysis revealed three main findings. First, participants held positive perceptions of DP, citing its alignment with the digital era, its utility in documenting both strengths and weaknesses, and its engaging creative process. Second, PSETs implemented DP through a systematic process: recording classroom activities, identifying areas for improvement, and creating multimodal reflections using applications such as CapCut, Canva, and Lightroom. Third, most participants demonstrated reflection primarily at the practice level (reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action), with only a few reaching the beyond practice level by critically examining sociocultural and ethical issues such as pronunciation modeling and student engagement. Challenges included device limitations, classroom management issues, and initial difficulties in identifying pedagogical weaknesses. Overall, DP served as an effective reflective tool that enhanced PSETs' self-awareness, lesson planning, and professional growth. This study contributes a novel integration of digital photovoice into reflective teaching within a service-learning context and offers practical implications for teacher education programs seeking to foster reflective practice through technology-enhanced methods.

KEYWORDS: Digital Photovoice, reflective teaching, pre-service English teachers, Kampus Mengajar, teacher reflection, Indonesian teacher education

I. INTRODUCTION

Reflective teaching has long been recognized as a cornerstone of effective teacher education, enabling educators to systematically examine their practices to enhance professional growth (Farrell, 2018; Shandomo, 2010). For pre-service English teachers (PSETs), reflection bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge acquired in university courses and the realities of classroom practice (Suphasri & Chinokul, 2021). In Indonesia, the Kampus Mengajar (Teaching Campus) program—a flagship initiative of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) policy—provides PSETs with opportunities to engage in teaching practice in under-resourced schools, with a focus on improving literacy and numeracy (Maipita et al., 2021). However, the program does not systematically integrate structured reflective tools, leaving PSETs to rely on informal, often undocumented, reflection.

Photovoice, originally developed by Wang and Burris (1997) as a participatory action research method for community health advocacy, has recently been adapted for educational purposes. Photovoice enables individuals to document their experiences through photography and then critically reflect on those images individually or collectively (Latz et al., 2016). With the advancement of digital technologies, Digital Photovoice (DP)—which uses smartphones, digital cameras, and editing applications—has emerged as an innovative pedagogical tool (Jamiludin & Darnawati, 2022). Previous research has explored photovoice for self-reflection among EFL students (Armin & Siregar, 2022), for teacher professional development (Drajati et al., 2019), and as a reflection tool during service learning (Ferdiansyah et al., 2022). Nevertheless, few studies have systematically integrated Digital Photovoice into the reflective teaching practices of pre-service English teachers within a structured service-learning program like Kampus Mengajar.

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This study addresses that gap by investigating how Indonesian PSETs integrate Digital Photovoice into their reflective teaching during the Kampus Mengajar program. Specifically, it seeks to answer: (1) What are PSETs' perceptions of reflective teaching using DP? (2) How do they implement DP in their reflective practices? (3) What levels of reflection do they demonstrate? (4) What factors determine different levels of reflection? and (5) How does DP help them become reflective practitioners? By answering these questions, this research contributes to the growing literature on technology-mediated reflection in teacher education and offers practical insights for integrating DP into service-learning contexts.

Reflective teaching originated from the work of Dewey (1933), who defined reflection as active, persistent, and careful consideration of beliefs and practices. Schön (1983) extended this by distinguishing between reflection-on-action (after teaching) and reflection-in-action (during teaching), later adding reflection-for-action (planning for future teaching) (Killion & Todnem, 1991). For pre-service teachers, reflection is particularly critical because it helps them develop autonomy, confidence, and a deeper understanding of their professional identity (Noormohammadi, 2014).

Several frameworks guide reflection in teacher education. Gibbs' (1988) six-stage cycle (description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, action plan) is widely used. However, for analyzing the depth of reflection, Farrell's (2015, 2020) five-level framework is more comprehensive. The levels include: (1) Philosophy—examining the “teacher-as-person” and core beliefs; (2) Principles—assumptions and beliefs about teaching and learning; (3) Theory—understanding how to put principles into practice; (4) Practice—reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action during and after lessons; and (5) Beyond Practice—examining ethical, political, and sociocultural issues affecting teaching. This study adopts Farrell's framework to analyze PSETs' digital photovoice reflections.

Photovoice has three primary goals: (1) to document and reflect on community strengths and concerns, (2) to foster critical dialogue, and (3) to reach policymakers (Wang, 1999). In educational contexts, photovoice has been used to promote self-awareness among social work students (Mulder & Dull, 2014), to teach qualitative research methods (Komaie et al., 2018), and to support transformative learning (Younis, 2021). Digital photovoice extends this by integrating technology, allowing users to capture, edit, and share images using digital applications such as Canva, CapCut, and Instagram (Jamiludin & Darnawati, 2022).

Recent studies have explored photovoice for teacher reflection. Sari et al. (2019) investigated its use in Indonesian classrooms to support reflective practices. Drajadi et al. (2019) encouraged teachers to reflect on multimodal literacy through photovoice. Ferdiansyah et al. (2022) examined photovoice as self-reflection during service learning. Lin (2025) highlighted how photovoice promotes responsive teaching by connecting educator perspectives with student experiences. However, no study has systematically integrated Digital Photovoice into the reflective teaching practices of PSETs within Indonesia's Kampus Mengajar program, making this research both timely and necessary.

Launched in 2021, Kampus Mengajar is a MBKM initiative that places university students in elementary, middle, and vocational schools to assist teachers in improving literacy and numeracy (Hamzah, 2021). Students receive 20 credits for their participation and are expected to develop 21st-century competencies such as problem-solving, leadership, and creativity. For pre-service English teachers, the program offers authentic teaching practice experience. However, reflective components are not embedded systematically, highlighting the need for structured tools like DP to support professional growth.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative multiple-case study design (Yin, 2018). The “case” was each pre-service English teacher's experience of integrating Digital Photovoice into reflective teaching during the Kampus Mengajar program. A multiple-case design was chosen to capture variations across participants from different universities.

B. Participants and Context

Eight Indonesian pre-service English teachers (PSETs) participated in this study. They were students from four universities in East Java (two state universities, two private universities), all enrolled in the Kampus Mengajar batch 7 program in 2024. Participants met two criteria: (1) at least fourth semester enrollment, and (2) a minimum GPA of 3.00. None had prior formal teaching experience before the program. Each participant was placed in a different school for four months (February–June 2024).

C. Data Collection

Data were collected through three techniques:

1. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): Two FGDs were conducted via Google Meet (2 March and 2 April 2024). The first FGD introduced research objectives and obtained consent. The second FGD provided training on creating digital photovoice.

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2. Semi-structured Interviews: Individual interviews were conducted with all eight participants between 23 May and 11 June 2024. Interviews explored perceptions, implementation processes, challenges, and how DP supported reflective practice.
3. Documentation: Participants' digital photovoice products (videos, photo collages, flipbooks, PowerPoint slides) and their teaching journal reflections were collected for analysis.

D. Data Analysis

Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was employed across all data sources. For interview data, transcripts were coded inductively to identify themes related to perceptions, implementation, and challenges. For digital photovoice documents and teaching journals, deductive coding was applied using Farrell's (2015, 2020) five-level reflection framework. Each digital photovoice was analyzed to determine the level(s) of reflection demonstrated. Member checking was conducted with two participants to verify interpretations.

E. Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the researchers' university. All participants signed informed consent forms, were assured of anonymity, and were informed that participation would not affect their Kampus Mengajar evaluation. Pseudonyms are used throughout this report.

III. RESULTS

A. Perceptions of Digital Photovoice

All eight participants expressed positive perceptions of using Digital Photovoice for reflective teaching. Three main sub-themes emerged.

Interest in DP: Participants valued DP because it aligned with the digital era and their high screen time habits. As P1 stated: "Now is the digital era, so every line of our life is integrated with technology... young people like us have very high screen time; one way we can take advantage is by using digital photovoice." Participants also appreciated DP's utility for documenting both weaknesses and strengths. P5 noted: "I can find out the response of the students and what I lack when teaching."

Creativity Enhancement: Participants reported that creating DP improved their creativity in using digital applications. P1 explained: "We first have to learn technology related to digital photovoice, such as how to take good photos, how to make good videos, and then how to arrange the words." Common applications used included Canva (8 participants), CapCut (6 participants), Lightroom (3 participants), and Flipbook (2 participants). Products included infographics, video slides, flipbooks, and photo collages.

Challenges: Six participants encountered challenges, including device limitations (insufficient memory, hot phones), classroom management issues (students turning off cameras), and initial laziness in editing. P3 shared: "Kids like to be curious... when they enter the camera, they don't look like they're fully learning. Sometimes the camera was turned off by the children." Four participants also struggled with identifying weaknesses and strengths from their photos and videos.

B. Implementation of Digital Photovoice

Participants followed a systematic process in implementing DP as reflective teaching:

Step 1 – Recording: All participants documented their teaching activities using smartphone cameras, producing photos and videos. P1: "I have recorded my teaching activity using my cell phone to create some photos and videos."

Step 2 – Identifying weaknesses and strengths: Participants reviewed their recordings to identify areas for improvement. P2 reflected: "There's a video where I asked students to work on a problem, and suddenly one of them asked, 'Miss, what's number 5?'... Oh, it turns out I should have explained the question first."

Step 3 – Selecting digital applications: Participants chose applications such as CapCut (ease of use, templates), Canva (presentations, collages), Lightroom (photo editing), and Flipbook (digital diaries). P8 explained: "CapCut makes it easier to edit photos and videos. There are more menus that make it easy to edit my video. I can insert music, songs, and interesting effects."

Step 4 – Adding narration: Participants added written or spoken narration to their DP, describing what was happening and what they learned. P6's flipbook included reflections on obstacles and strategies to overcome them.

All participants effectively applied the SHOWED analysis framework (What do you See? What is Happening? How does this relate to Our lives? Why does this Exist? What can you Do about it?) in their DP narrations, although not all were aware of the acronym.

C. Levels of Reflection

Using Farrell's (2015, 2020) five-level framework, analysis of digital photovoice products and teaching journals revealed that most participants (6 out of 8) demonstrated reflection primarily at the Practice level (Level 4). This included both

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reflection-on-action (after teaching) and reflection-in-action (during teaching). For example, P1's digital photovoice showed him analyzing student engagement during a poster-making activity and adjusting his explanations in real-time.

Two participants (P7 and P8) demonstrated reflection at the Beyond Practice level (Level 5), examining sociocultural and ethical issues. P7 noticed that students had acquired incorrect English pronunciation from their regular teacher: "When I teach and I mention a word like coffee, they answer 'copy'... This means that the English teacher there does not correct the correct pronunciation." P7 then reflected: "So I have to teach English in the future, if possible, using English and also using the correct pronunciation." This demonstrates critical reflection on the broader educational environment and the PSET's ethical responsibility as a language model.

No participants consistently demonstrated reflection at the Philosophy, Principles, or Theory levels independently. However, elements of these levels were occasionally embedded within practice-level reflections (e.g., P1 occasionally connected his actions to his belief that learning should be student-centered).

D. Factors Determining Different Levels of Reflection

Interviews revealed three factors that distinguished participants who reached higher levels of reflection:

1. Prior exposure to reflective practices: P7 and P8 had participated in reflective journaling activities in their university courses before Kampus Mengajar. In contrast, participants who struggled to identify weaknesses had no prior structured reflection training.
2. Disposition toward critical inquiry: Participants who naturally asked "why" questions during interviews (e.g., "Why do students respond this way?") demonstrated deeper reflection. P7's questioning of pronunciation errors stemmed from a habit of questioning underlying causes.
3. Support from cooperating teachers: Participants placed in schools where cooperating teachers provided specific, constructive feedback (rather than general praise) were more likely to reach beyond practice reflection. P8 noted: "My mentor teacher asked me, 'Why did you choose that activity? What did you want students to learn?' That made me think deeper."

Participants with unsupportive environments or limited prior training remained at the practice level, focusing on what happened rather than why it happened or what it meant socioculturally.

E. How Digital Photovoice Helped PSETs Become Reflective Practitioners

All eight participants reported that DP significantly supported their development as reflective practitioners. Four key functions emerged:

1. Enhanced memory and documentation: P6 explained: "Sometimes we forget events. With Digital Photovoice, we remember what our teaching practice is, what the weaknesses are, and what the advantages are." DP provided concrete visual evidence, overcoming the limitations of memory-based reflection.
2. Focused evaluation: P2 noted that DP helped her focus on specific moments: "It greatly helped me identify what I was lacking in during the lesson. I could see which parts needed to be fixed." Visual documentation allowed participants to pinpoint exact teaching behaviors requiring improvement.
3. Improved lesson planning: Participants used DP reflections to plan subsequent lessons. P3 stated: "I track my teaching that way so that students do not get bored. I vary several learning media, and digital photovoice helps me plan my next teaching." P5 added: "It's quite helpful for my future planning... I know what kind of learning plans to make, what kind of methods and what kind of materials."
4. Increased motivation for professional growth: P4 captured this well: "From the reflections that I have documented from photos and then given captions, we will definitely find a new motivation for how we should be better in the future." DP transformed reflection from a passive to an active, motivating process.

Notably, P7's experience demonstrated how DP could lead to critical awareness beyond individual practice: recognizing systemic issues (incorrect pronunciation modeling by regular teachers) and developing a commitment to ethical language teaching. This suggests that DP, when combined with guided questioning, can facilitate higher-order reflection.

IV. DISCUSSION

This study investigated how Indonesian pre-service English teachers integrated Digital Photovoice into reflective teaching during the Kampus Mengajar program. The findings extend existing literature in several important ways.

First, participants' positive perceptions of DP align with previous research on photovoice as an engaging pedagogical tool (Komaie et al., 2018; Latz et al., 2016). However, this study uniquely reveals that PSETs value DP specifically because it bridges

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the gap between their daily technology use (high screen time) and professional development. This suggests that teacher educators should leverage preservice teachers' existing digital literacies rather than introducing reflection as an additional, disconnected task.

Second, the systematic implementation process identified—recording, identifying, selecting applications, adding narration—mirrors the SHOWED analysis framework (Wang & Burris, 1997) and demonstrates that PSETs can effectively adapt photovoice for self-reflection without extensive training. This is practically significant for large-scale teacher education programs where individualized coaching may not be feasible.

Third, the predominance of reflection at the practice level (Level 4) rather than higher levels is consistent with previous research on pre-service teachers' reflection, which often remains descriptive rather than critical (Farrell, 2015; Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005). The fact that only two participants reached beyond practice level suggests that reaching higher-order reflection requires more than just a tool like DP; it requires guided questioning, prior training, and supportive mentoring. This finding extends Farrell's framework by showing that digital tools alone do not automatically elevate reflection levels—scaffolding is essential.

Fourth, the factors distinguishing higher-level reflectors (prior training, critical disposition, supportive mentoring) echo Zeichner and Liston's (1987) argument that reflection is both a cognitive and social practice. DP provided the cognitive "hook" (visual evidence), but social interaction (mentor questioning, peer discussion) was necessary for deeper analysis. Teacher education programs implementing DP should therefore embed it within communities of practice, not as an isolated activity.

Fifth, participants' reports that DP helped them overcome memory limitations and plan future lessons addresses a practical problem in teacher education: pre-service teachers often cannot remember specific classroom events accurately (Yunus et al., 2010). DP offers a low-cost, accessible solution. Furthermore, P7's critical awareness of pronunciation modeling demonstrates that DP can surface systemic issues (e.g., inadequately trained in-service teachers) that might otherwise remain invisible. This aligns with Wang and Burris's (1997) original goal of using photovoice to reach policymakers, suggesting that aggregated PSET reflections could inform school-based professional development needs.

Finally, this study makes a novel contribution by integrating Digital Photovoice into Indonesia's Kampus Mengajar context. Previous research on photovoice in Indonesia focused on writing instruction (Nisa, 2021; Sa'adah & Munir, 2023) or general teacher reflection (Drajati et al., 2019), but not within a structured service-learning program spanning multiple universities and schools. The findings suggest that Kampus Mengajar administrators should consider embedding DP as a required reflective component, potentially offering micro-credentials for digital reflection skills.

V. CONCLUSION

This qualitative case study explored the integration of Digital Photovoice into the reflective teaching practices of eight Indonesian pre-service English teachers participating in the Kampus Mengajar batch 7 program. The findings demonstrate that DP is a feasible, engaging, and effective tool for supporting PSETs' reflection. Participants held positive perceptions of DP, citing its alignment with digital-era learning, its utility for documenting teaching strengths and weaknesses, and its capacity to enhance creativity through multimodal design. Implementation followed a systematic process of recording, identifying areas for improvement, selecting digital applications, and adding critical narration. Most participants reflected at the practice level (analyzing what happened during lessons), while two reached the beyond practice level by critically examining sociocultural and ethical issues such as inaccurate language modeling. Factors determining higher-level reflection included prior training in reflective practices, a disposition toward critical inquiry, and support from cooperating teachers. DP helped PSETs overcome memory limitations, focus their evaluation, improve lesson planning, and increase motivation for professional growth.

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