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Interpretation of Journalistic Photographs as an Instrument of Visual Literacy Education

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Cover photo by Joanna Kędra.

…photography is the language of the twenty-first century and being able to think critically about and analyze photographs is an essential twenty-first century literacy.

Michelle Bogre (2015, p. 3)

ABSTRACT

Images are produced, used and distributed on an enormous scale. However, the skills of understanding, interpreting and using images as well as thinking and learning in terms of images are taken for granted, and thus, they are not sufficiently taught and developed, especially in higher education. The need for introducing visual literacy into the curriculum was identified in late 1960s, but no concrete guidelines have followed. This study proposes to apply interpretation of journalistic photographs as an instrument of visual literacy education. The main focus is on the image interpretation process and the kinds of meanings viewers apply to a photograph in the interpretation process. In each of the four articles included in this study, a model or approach to photography interpretation is proposed. The first method is the model for press photograph story analysis, immersed in visual semiotics. This model was simplified and improved and became the model for the interpretation of journalistic photographs. Both models were created as a synthesis of some of the visual research methods, including classical theories (elements of visual semiotics, visual rhetoric, Barthes' concept of studium and punctum), approaches having their roots in the analysis of paintings (Barrett's principles for interpreting photographs, compositional interpretation, iconological context analysis), methods dedicated to analysis of photographs in the press (quantitative content analysis). The concept of context of journalistic photographs is also critically discussed, indicating a context of production, context of medium and page context, and arguing for the decontextualized interpretation of journalistic photographs (proposing an intertextual approach) with a context limited to the caption. In addition, the study compiles the genre typology of journalistic photographs as an instrument for visual education. The study calls for changes in a largely textual higher education curriculum towards a more visually oriented one, which can serve as a start point for future research on the assessment of visual literacy skills.

Keywords: context, interpretation, intertextuality, journalistic photograph, photo genre, press photography, visual literacy, visual research methods, visual studies

Author's address Joanna Kędra
Department of Communication
University of Jyväskylä, Finland
joanna.kedra@jyu.fi

Supervisors Professor Epp Lauk
Department of Communication
University of Jyväskylä

Professor Emeritus Raimo Salokangas
Department of Communication
University of Jyväskylä

Reviewers Professor Emeritus Terence Wright
Ulster University, United Kingdom

Assistant Professor Ilija Tomanić Trivundža
University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Opponent Professor Emeritus Terence Wright
Ulster University, United Kingdom

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I started photographing when I was twelve. Thus, I belong to the generation that discovered the mystery of photography in the darkroom. I learnt to respect each single frame. Even before I got a (borrowed) camera and could start taking pictures, I have learnt *photographic seeing* by walking around with a frame cut out from a piece of paper. Looking back, I learnt a lot about photography without actually photographing much. Whenever I saw something that in my eyes was worthy of being photographed, I remembered it as a frame by making a little rectangle from my fingers, as I had been taught to do. Thus, I perceived the arrival of digital photography as a violation towards photography itself. Interestingly, I noticed that since owning a digital camera, I take fewer pictures. I am also not able to accept the act of *photographing* as the one made with a usage of camera phones. I know. I am old-fashioned. However, I have observed that the more people photograph – the less they are able to see. And *seeing* is crucial in the times when high volumes of information are mediated to us visually. Thus, I decided to conduct the study, which, in a longer perspective, should help to come back to the basics of learning how to *see*.

I began this research under the guidance of Professor Emeritus Raimo Salokangas, my supervisor, who taught me that although I should consider all the critique that I receive, I am the person under whose name the study will be finally published. I want to thank Professor Emeritus Raimo Salokangas for giving me the freedom that pushed me to build international networks of scholars, attending conferences, summer schools and seminars. I met people there that truly influenced my way of thinking.

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LIST OF ORIGINAL ARTICLES

I.   Kędra, J. (2013). To See More: A Model for Press Photograph Story Analysis. *Journal of Visual Literacy 32*(1), 27-50.

II.   Kędra, J. (2016). Does the journalistic photograph need a context? Rethinking contextual interpretation. Manuscript submitted for publication.

III.   Kędra, J. (2016). Enhancing visual literacy through interpretation of photo genres: toward a genre typology of journalistic photographs. *Journal of Media Practice, 17*(1), 28-47.

IV.   Kędra, J. (2016). Acquiring visual literacy skills: Interpretation of journalistic photographs as a tool for contemporary education. Manuscript submitted for publication.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The ability to understand paintings or critically approach music, or know how to dance, or play an instrument, is not necessary for every person to have, but each individual should be able to read images. Contemporary society becomes increasingly visual or even multimodal (but with pictorial representation as the predominant mode). Interpreting and creating images, and thinking in terms of images are essential skills "in order to engage capably in a visually-oriented society. Visual literacy empowers individuals to participate fully in a visual culture" (ACRL, 2011). Thus, individuals should be able to understand communication that is depicted everywhere: in road signs and picture-based instructions and diagrams, and in various types of still and moving images, including photographs in the press.

Images are produced, reproduced and displayed on an enormous scale for various purposes from aesthetics, entertainment and advertising to news and information. By using the advantages provided by online platforms and the digital environment, images travel easily between different media (Rose, 2015), appearing in changing contexts that often require intertextual reading. Interestingly, in these visually stimulated environments, skills of interpreting, understanding and using images are often taken for granted, and thus, are rarely taught and developed in formal education. This educational gap has been identified and discussed by educators and scholars since the late 1960s, when the movement of visual literacy (hereafter VL) emerged. Bleed (2005) indicates that because visual media became prominent in our daily routines and communication, both at work and socializing, competence in VL is essential. Thus, the call for the introduction of teaching about visuals has been put forward at different educational levels (Fransecky & Debes, 1972; Adam, 2001; Barrett, 2003, 2010; Bleed, 2005; Riddle, 2009; ACRL, 2011; Brumberger, 2011). Nevertheless, this call does not go in line with sufficient guidelines, or ideas for exercises that include interaction with images. Fostering visual education is also

challenged by the difficulty, even impossibility of assessing its development among learners (Avgerinou, 2001). In addition, interest in particular VL skills varies greatly between individual learners (Brumberger, 2011), who are eager to improve certain VL skills, but ignore others.

In this study, I suggest using journalistic photographs in VL education. Journalistic photographs are easily accessible visual materials of a polysemic character that can be approached on two different levels of interpretation: the basic that focuses on what a picture is all about, and the advanced that explores intertextual connections and visual symbolism.

The method for photography interpretation can be either a compilation of various visual research methods, or a kind of simplification of some of the most popular visual approaches that are often used to analyse journalistic images (for instance, visual semiotics, rhetoric, or content analysis). Pauwels (2010, 2011, 2012, 2015) repeatedly indicates that there is a need for "better theoretical and methodological grounding and a more sophisticated analytical set of tools" (Pauwels, 2015, p. 313) in visual research. This study aims to fill this gap by contributing to the theory of visual research methods, putting particular attention to the methods of interpretation of journalistic photographs. However, the study also considers that "visual methods (…) seem to be reinvented over and over again without gaining much methodological depth and often without consideration of long-existing classics in the field" (Pauwels, 2011, p. 3). Thus, although the study proposes four new methods and approaches for photography interpretation, it is grounded both on classical theories of visual analysis and on their critical evaluation. The result generates approaches that are both adjusted to the interpretation of journalistic photographs and are sufficiently simplified for educational purposes, in order to train visually literate viewers.

1.2 Disciplinary foundations

Although claiming that we live in an overwhelmingly visual era is already a cliché, and working with visual material is no longer novel, the scholarship that focuses on images is constantly struggling with gaining its identity and disciplinary recognition. Elkins (2003), in a skeptical introduction to visual studies, points out that visual studies is actually a term often mixed up with cultural studies or visual culture (studies), or even used as a synonym to those two. Visual studies, that started in the early 1990s, are the most recent of these three (Elkins, 2003, p. 4). Their initial aim "was to complement art history's interest in fine art with new interest in television, advertising, photography, and mass media, using methodologies and concerns from other fields, especially cultural studies" (Elkins, 2013, p. 3). Practices of visual studies have several different scripts about their historical and thus also disciplinary origins. One is by juxtaposing visual studies with a "pictorial turn" that Mitchell (1995) proclaims as a kind of continuum of a "cultural turn", which gave birth to cultural studies.

Currently, visual studies are of a wide interdisciplinary character that involves even more complexity in regards to its theory and disciplinary identity.

The distinction between visual studies and visual culture is, therefore, still indistinct. Mitchell (2002) proposes to regard visual studies as a field and visual culture as its object of enquiry, but simultaneously, he suggests to "let visual culture stand for both the field and its content, and to let the context clarify the meaning" (Mitchell, 2002, p. 166). This point of confusion in Mitchell's work, Smith (2005, p. 247) criticizes as "misleading". Smith does, however, also see Mitchell's initial distinction as very useful, especially in higher education, both for creating a curriculum and for students to learn within particular subject frames. In this study, I favour the term visual studies, because I want "to stress the generality of the field and its commitment to visuality" (Elkins, 2013, p. 8), instead of emphasizing cultural origins of vision or visuality in using the term visual culture.

Furthermore, there is also a state of confusion in regard to methodology that is applied in visual studies. Handbooks that provide guidelines to image interpretation (see, for instance, Stanczak, 2007; Margolis & Pauwels, 2011; Rose, 2012) usually use a term "visual research methods" to classify the subject they depict, while in reality the topical field belonging to the methods they describe is blurred and mixed up with the name of the discipline. Thus, expressions that most commonly occur in this context are not only visual studies or visual culture, but also visual communication or visual research, or even image studies. This tendency portrays the field as quite open towards possible (inter)disciplinary influences. In addition, individual researchers bring their own scholarly identity that makes the field even more complex to define, but also more interesting to explore. Visual studies is still quite a young field, lacking clear disciplinary boundaries that could help to position particular research that explores visual methods, image interpretation or visual representations.

The point of departure for this study was journalism studies. However, over time, it has become more multidisciplinary in its scope, borrowing, combining and sometimes also clashing with definitions, concepts and approaches, including, but not limited to the fields of visual communication, photography theory and history, photojournalism, education, visual research methods, visual sociology and visual culture. As a consequence, I also faced many challenges related to the multidisciplinary character of the work, such as trying to find a publication forum for the articles included in this study. In the same vein, Pauwels (2012, p. 253) observes that "the in-depth study of the visual typically requires a more integrated and consequently a truly interdisciplinary approach". Thus, the solution that I have finally applied was to agree to a multidisciplinary character for this study, while simultaneously, trying to situate it in the field of visual studies, bearing in mind ongoing debates about an appropriate name of the field/discipline and its object (just to mention one of such discussions, referred above, between Mitchell [2002] and Smith [2005]).

Furthermore, VL is "an interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and multidimensional area of knowledge" (Avgerinou & Pettersson, 2011, p. 7). Hence, VL

is defined in various possible ways by scholars each representing different discipline. Even though the VL movement is already more than fifty years old, only a few attempts have been made to develop any pertinent theory (see, for instance, Avgerinou & Pettersson, 2011). Instead of formulating one more definition of VL that adds confusion to the already complex field, this study situates itself within a palette of existing theories and definitions of VL. It mostly looks at the VL movement as a call for change of contemporary education that is still searching to be put into practice by reformulating higher education curricula.

1.3   Aims of the study and research questions

The focus of this study is on the interpretation process of images, and journalistic photographs in particular. The photograph includes a message (information, news, etc.) that is received by the viewer, who further attributes meaning(s) to the photograph (see Figure 1) in the interpretation process. The meaning(s) that the viewer attributes depend on their cultural background, knowledge and VL skills. My particular interest lies in the methods and approaches that should be applied to guide the image interpretation process, especially in the teaching context. As an object for image interpretation process, I chose journalistic photographs due to their dual characteristics: artefacts of popular culture and their aspiration to become a semi-artistic visual representation. These features make journalistic photographs a stimulating visual material to work with in VL education.
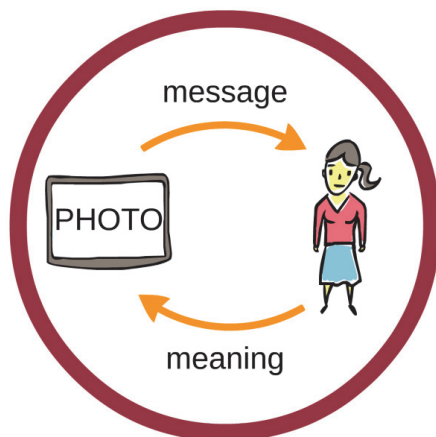
FIGURE 1   The image interpretation process.

Visual literacy includes the notion of interpretation, which is a learned skill (Avgerinou, 2001). The study also assumes that the interpretation of journalistic photographs can be quite easily learnt if it is sufficiently guided. Therefore, the aim of this study is to create and introduce models and guidelines for

photography interpretation that can be later utilized in VL education. I argue that the requirement for development of VL skills among learners should be immediately put into practice, because "if we accept that visual literacy is an essential ability for the 21st century, we must teach our students to be visually literate, just as we teach them to be verbally literate" (Brumberger, 2011, p. 46). For this purpose, I critically evaluated particular visual research methods towards their use in the interpretation of journalistic photographs. In addition, two aspects of press photography, its context and genre, were reviewed in order to determine their role in the image interpretation process.

My study is mostly theoretical in its scope, but it includes some empirical evaluation (visual material analysis, educational experiments with students) that was conducted to design the models for photography interpretation and to illustrate more complex concepts such as photo-genre, or intertextuality. The study was guided by the two main research questions that were approached in relation to more precise questions, specified in each of the four articles included in this dissertation (see Table 1). The main research questions are:

(i)   Which are the methods to interpret journalistic photographs?
(ii)   How can the interpretation of journalistic photographs be used as a learning and teaching tool in visual literacy education?

The first objective of this study was to clarify why journalistic photographs can, or should be used for learning visual interpretation, and thus also, what kind of photography interpretation I see useful for teaching-learning purposes. This objective was realized by an extensive evaluation of the concept of photographic context, putting forward an argument that it is possible to interpret journalistic photographs with applying minor attention to its context. The discussion was facilitated by the following research questions:

1)   What is meant by the context of journalistic photograph?
2)   Does the journalistic photograph (always) need a context for interpretation?
3)   How else, instead of contextual interpretation, can a journalistic photograph be interpreted?

Furthermore, in aiming to define and describe the object of this study, the journalistic photograph, an evaluation of the concept of photo-genre was undertaken. As a result, the genre typology of journalistic photographs was created, indicating the main features of particular photo-genres and photo-types that can be further used in photography interpretation. The following research questions were formulated for this study:

4)   What is meant by the journalistic photo-genre?
5)   What kind of genre typology of journalistic photographs can be created?
6)   How can the concept of journalistic photo-genre and its typology facilitate visual literacy education?

Finally, the objective of creating a tool for photography interpretation was realized by proposing a Model for Press Photograph Story Analysis (hereafter PPSA) that can be applied in VL exercises (for the clarification of usage of the

terms *journalistic photograph* and *press photograph*, see subchapter 1.4). The model was partly inspired by visual semiotics. Empirical evaluation of the model was guided by the following research questions:

7) How was the PPSA model used by students for the interpretation of journalistic photographs?
8) Which elements of the model should be improved for the further development of the model?

The objective of simplifying the model for photography interpretation by introducing elements of other visual research methods (not limited to visual semiotics as in the case of the PPSA model) was facilitated by the research questions:

9) Which visual research methods can be applied for the interpretation of journalistic photographs in visual literacy education?
10) What kind of model for interpretation of journalistic photographs can be used in visual literacy education?

Consequently, the articles provide four approaches that can be used for the interpretation of journalistic photographs in VL education, which are: (i) PPSA model, (ii) intertextual approach, (iii) genre typology of journalistic photographs, and (iv) a model for interpretation of journalistic photographs (see Chapter 3).

TABLE 1   Research articles included in the study.

Article	Research questions
I Kędra, J. (2013). To See More: A Model for Press Photograph Story Analysis. *Journal of Visual Literacy* 32(1), 27-50.	*Research questions 7-8:* 7 How was the PPSA model used by students for the interpretation of journalistic photographs? 8 Which elements of the model should be improved for the further development of the model?
II Kędra, J. (2016). Does the journalistic photograph need a context? Rethinking contextual interpretation. Manuscript submitted for publication.	*Research questions 1-3:* 1 What is meant by the context of journalistic photograph? 2 Does the journalistic photograph (always) need a context for interpretation? 3 How else, instead of contextual interpretation, can a journalistic photograph be interpreted?
III Kędra, J. (2016). Enhancing Visual Literacy through Interpretation of Photo-Genres: Toward a Genre Typology of Journalistic Photographs. *Journal of Media Practice* 17(1), 28-47. doi: 10.1080/14682753.2016.1159451	*Research questions 4-6:* 4 What is meant by the journalistic photo-genre? 5 What kind of genre typology of journalistic photographs can be created? 6 How can the concept of journalistic photo-genre and its typology facilitate visual literacy education?
IV Kędra, J. (2016). Acquiring visual literacy skills: Interpretation of journalistic	*Research questions 9-10:* 9 Which visual research methods can be

| photographs as a tool for contemporary education. Manuscript submitted for publication. | applied for the interpretation of journalistic photographs in visual literacy education? |
| | 10 What kind of model for interpretation of journalistic photographs can be used in visual literacy education? |

1.4 Short introduction to the articles

This dissertation consists of four research articles and the cover text. Two of the four articles were published in international peer-reviewed journals (Articles I and III); the other two are under the review process (Articles II and IV). They all contribute to achieving the objectives of the study, while each article addresses particular issues related to journalistic photographs and their interpretation, visual methodologies and VL. The articles and their specific research questions are assembled in Table 1, while short introductions are presented below. Article I is a report of the empirical study that presents analysis of students' interpretation of photographs, written using the PPSA model. Article II is essentially focused on the theory and literature concerning photographic context and its role in the interpretation process of journalistic photographs. Articles III and IV combine theoretical discussions and empirical evaluations, and propose two tools that can be used in exercises in VL education. Article III proposes the genre typology of journalistic photographs, and Article IV, along with a critical review of some of the visual research methods, introduces the model for interpretation of journalistic photographs.

Article I was the first study and my understanding was clearly influenced, primarily, by the tradition of visual semiotics (of which I am critical in Article IV), and by the disciplines of communication and journalism studies. Thus, the article uses Jakobson's communication model (1960, p. 353). Although quite basic and linear, Jakobson's model serves as a framework to design the PPSA model that is further elaborated through the trial test with international university students. The PPSA model's validity test serves as an illustration of its application in teaching, rather than as its evaluation. However, I do come back to the PPSA's trial test results in Article IV, when I designed a simplified version of it. Some of the concepts and theories that I see important in creating a method for photography interpretation, such as photographic context and photo-genre, or intertextuality, are emphasized in Article I, but are elaborated in the other three research articles.

Furthermore, the usage of some of the terms within Article I might be confusing in regard to the concepts referred to in the other three articles, as well as in the cover text. Thus, for instance, when referring to the study's main object (journalistic photograph), I use the terms of either press photograph or press photography. In later studies, as my understanding during the research process

improved, I narrowed the terminology to the more precise concept of journalistic photograph, defining press photography as a field of inquiry. This approach also helped me to clearly name the object of my study, i.e., a journalistic photograph, including all its features (see subchapter 2.1) that I see important when using journalistic photographs in visual education. Similarly, after investigating the concept of genre in Article III, I decided to use the term photo reportage instead of press photograph story, because the latter one refers to categories of the World Press Photo annual competition. In addition, by having quite high expectations towards the PPSA model and by assuming that it "could be used to analyze most press photograph stories" (Kędra, 2013, p. 28), I use the term analysis of photographs instead of interpretation, while the latter term is more appropriate in the teaching/learning context. The research reported in this article is situated in the field of communication, even though I later position my study as a whole within visual studies and visual research methods.

The main focus in Article II is the photographic context and its role in the reception and interpretation process of journalistic photographs. The article distinguishes, and further discusses, three types of context: context of production, medium context and page context. The study argues, in particular, for a decontextualized interpretation of journalistic photographs, which rejects the notion of photographic context as being a crucial factor in the image interpretation process. Instead, the article suggests intertextuality as an approach to photography interpretation that situates the visual content of a photograph and a viewer's relation to it in the centre of the image interpretation process.

Article III compiles a genre typology of journalistic photographs, based on a review of various classifications of journalistic photographs (Lester, 1999; Wolny-Zmorzyński, 2007, 2010, 2011; Kobré, 2008; Pienimäki, 2011, 2012, 2013). It also examines visual material from one of Poland's most successful opinion dailies, "Gazeta Wyborcza", with its supplement "Duży Format". As a result, the study proposes the genre typology of journalistic photographs and discusses its application in VL education. In addition to the concept of photo-genre, the article briefly differentiates between the terms press photography, as a name of the field and, a journalistic photograph as its object of investigation.

In Article IV, I return to some of the ideas already introduced in Article I, especially to semiotics, intertextuality (which is also a core of Article's II discussion), visual rhetorical figures and symbols. The article is a critical review and evaluation of several visual research methods and approaches in an attempt to compile them into a model for interpretation of journalistic photographs that can be used in VL education. The model proposed in this article is highly simplified in order to provide a tool for interpretation that would not require any adjustment or introductory teaching. Application of the model is illustrated by an in-class experiment with university students who used it for interpretation of journalistic photographs.

2 THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK, AND KEY CONCEPTS

Due to the multidisciplinary character of this study, particular terms and concepts used here, require some clarification. Firstly, I define the study's main object, *journalistic photograph*, accompanied by the concepts of *iconic photograph*, *photographic context* (discussed more broadly in Article II) and *photo-genre* (the concept is elaborated in Article III). All these terms are equally important both to define a journalistic photograph, and to design a method for its interpretation.

In this chapter, I also attempt to define the concept of VL, emphasizing its multidisciplinary character and supporting the claim that it is an essential teaching and learning tool for contemporary education. I suggest that VL can be developed in exercises, which are based on the interpretation of journalistic photographs. In order to support this claim, the study explains particular features of journalistic photographs that characterize them as an interesting visual material in terms of learning visual interpretation.

Furthermore, this chapter combines criteria that were used, in studies reported in the Article I, II and IV, to select visual research methods for their evaluation towards development of models for journalistic photography interpretation. Visual pinning of the proposed models (further elaborated in Chapter 3) to the conceptual map of this study is presented in the Figure 2. The map juxtaposes the key terms and concepts used in this study and attempts to provide visual understanding of the relationships between them and the research problem.
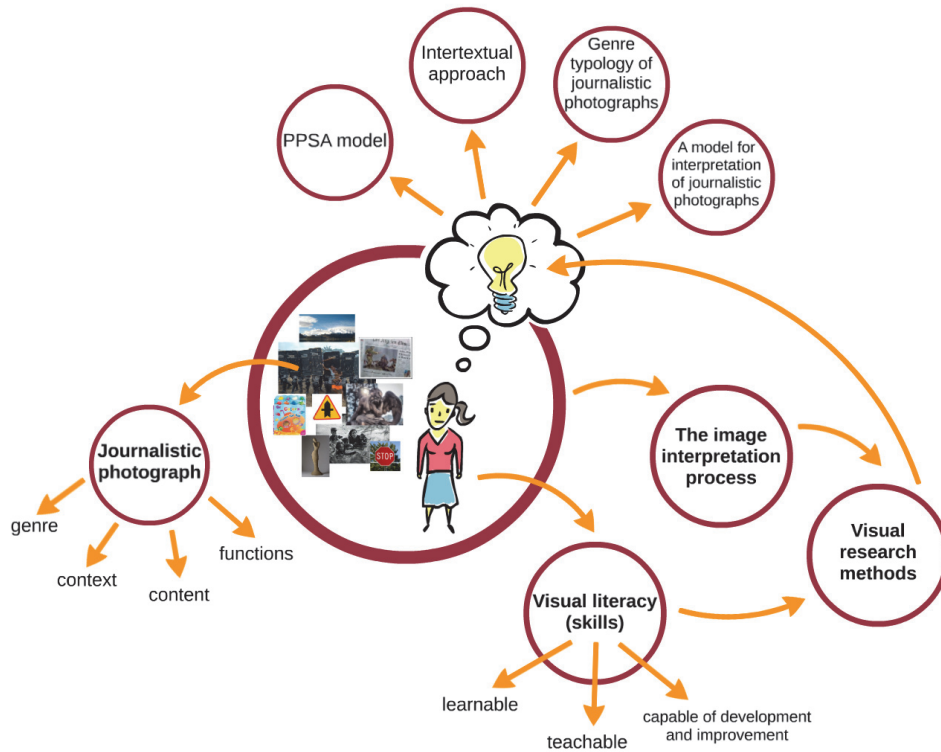
FIGURE 2   Conceptual map of the study.

2.1   Journalistic photograph

The term *journalistic photograph* should immediately bring into focus specific features of this type of photography: photograph created by a journalist to report news or event of particular interest to the public, or to illustrate a journalistic text. Journalistic photographs should be also distinguished from other photographs in the press, for instance, from advertisements, and the notion of a photo-genre can be helpful (see Article III, and the subchapter 2.1.2 below). Nowadays, the press, and especially online news providers, are often popularized by amateur photographs (i.e., photographs taken by non-journalists), or even stock images used to illustrate journalistic texts (for more on stock photography see Frosh, 2001). These kinds of images can be considered as journalistic photographs if the purpose of displaying them is to inform about events or to illustrate events or to show certain people. In such cases, especially for the purpose of photography interpretation, the authorship of a picture is of secondary importance. Instead, its visual content or cultural significance are the focus.

The other commonly applied term, in regard to photographs of journalistic origin in the press, is *press photography*, which the literature understands as

either a genre of photography (Becker, 1995), or a field of scholarly enquiry (Becker, 1996), or as a synonym to photojournalism. Also the term *press photograph* is used frequently to refer to a type of photograph, which appears in the press or in competitions of photojournalism, and was taken by a journalist or for journalistic purposes. Indeed, Article I uses the term press photograph. However, since this study argues for a decontextualized interpretation of photographs, i.e., interpretation, which suggests minor attention to photographic context, usage of the term *press photograph* could easily raise the critique that I have tried to separate *press* photographs from the press. Therefore, by focusing on the purpose of a photograph, rather than on the place of its display (i.e., its belonging to the press), this study uses the term *journalistic photograph*. Consequently, press photography is as a field of enquiry, while a journalistic photograph is its object. This distinction does not yet clarify the terminology used in this study, because journalistic photographs have their types, such as iconic photograph (see subchapter 2.1.1), or genres: news, reportage, portrait and illustrative photography (see Article III, and subchapter 2.1.2). In addition, photographic context is an important aspect that helps to define journalistic photograph and ought to be discussed in greater detail.

2.1.1 Iconic photograph

Barthes (1973, p. 119) indicates that "a photograph will be a kind of speech for us in the same way as a newspaper article". Indeed, journalistic photograph is a medium of communication, which conveys visual information, or illustrates a journalistic text. In addition, as a cultural artefact, it is often embedded in intertextual connotations and symbolic meanings that can be discovered in the interpretation process. Sontag (2008, p. 106) points out that "some photographs right from the start refer us to other images as well as to life", while others need some more in-depth, or guided interpretation. Due to their intertextual and symbolic features, journalistic photographs create societal visual memory. They freeze history into memory (Pease, 2007), often earning a status of visual icons of important events. The journalistic photographs that are named iconic photographs are either visually powerful, or have been frequently displayed through various platforms, and thus, they are easily recognized as part of popular culture. Furthermore, iconic photographs can appear without context, or just with a caption. When displayed, they are visually decontextualized by, for instance, changing or removing the caption, or placing them into an art gallery. Simultaneously, iconic photographs are packed with contexts, in which they were produced, distributed and received by certain viewers, but these kinds of contexts or connotative meanings can be further discovered in the interpretation process. Iconic photographs are intertextually powerful, often deeply immersed into viewers' culture, full of symbols, visual tropes and other types of connotators.

In their recent study, Hariman and Lucaites (2015) indicate that although the term *iconic image* is frequently used, it gains strong criticism in academia. Iconic photographs are accused of being repetitive, creating stereotypes of race, gender and class, or even being responsible for a kind of fetishization of culture

that turns viewers into consumers (Hariman & Lucaites, 2015). On the other hand, they also have the status of highly connotative images, which is of crucial importance for the image interpretation process that aims to develop VL.

The purpose for singling out iconic images in this study is to emphasize that the concept of a journalistic photograph is a very broad one, and includes all types of images, although classified by one definition that I have already indicated in the previous subchapter (2.1). Due to their features, iconic photographs can serve as suitable material for interpretation, especially for beginners, whose VL skills are not yet well developed, or for those more advanced learners who would like to test their intertextual visual thinking. Therefore, by discussing here the concept of iconic photography, I do not claim that iconic photographs are the only ones suitable for interpretation, but I do argue that they can provide possibility for more in-depth interpretations than any other types of journalistic images. However, photographs' perception as *iconic* is highly related to the viewer's culture. In addition, journalistic photographs can be also classified on the basis of their genre (see Article III, and the following subchapter).

2.1.2 Genre

Genre is a concept that helps to define the study's object of interpretation, a journalistic photograph and provides certain frames that assist in classifying photographs. In Article III, the concept of photo-genre is understood as a set of certain conventions of form and content, common to other texts of the same type (Chandler & Munday, 2011). The notion of genre helps to organize different types or kinds of work into a category (Barker, 2004; Bate, 2009). However, the concept of photo-genre has not been yet widely applied to journalistic photographs, with some exceptions (Wolny-Zmorzyński, 2007, 2010, 2011; Pienimäki, 2011, 2012, 2013), to whom I refer in Article III. One reason behind this tendency might be that genres often merge and create hybrids, and thus any attempt towards their typologisation can either fail or lead to certain generalizations. Therefore, the genre typology of journalistic photographs that is compiled in Article III is an ideal model, classifying genres in isolation, by providing clear frames for each photo-type. Nevertheless, the genre typology is proposed to assist in VL education, for instance, in exercises that concentrate on learning to identify differences and similarities within particular collection of photographs from the press (more about this in the subchapter 3.3).

Photo-genres can be recognized and named on the basis of a set of conventions in regards to their content, context, functions fulfilled (informative, expressive, impressive, aesthetic, marketing, illustrative), number of images and layout of display. Using these criteria, and a review of photo-genre classifications as well as by analysing, in Article III, journalistic photographs from the Polish daily "Gazeta Wyborcza", I proposed the following four genres: news photography, reportage photography, portrait photography and illustrative photography, with related photo-types. The genre of news photography includes the photo-types of news photo and photo-chronicle; the genre of reportage photography covers photo reportage and historical photo reportage; the

genre of portrait photography identifies mug shot, journalistic portrait and small portrait; while the genre of illustrative photography includes a photo illustration, cover photo, photomontage and video-still. Each of these types is a model, or pattern that may, however, break conventions of the particular phototype, to which it is ascribed in the proposed genre typology.

The two main objectives for compiling the genre typology were (i) to describe more precisely what types of photographs are covered by the term *journalistic photograph*, and (ii) to provide a tool for VL exercises that is not a typical interpretation model, but a form of engagement with journalistic images that aims to familiarize learners with this type of image. Hence, the genre typology applies criteria that can be easily identified by viewer-learners, and further ascribed to distinguish and name particular photo-genres and -types. The concept of photo-genre is used in this study as a learning tool that indeed, leads to certain generalizations.

2.1.3 Context

The journalistic photograph is not inextricably bound up with the press, even though it has information and news values and was taken for journalistic purposes, of informing about events, illustrating certain issues, showing particular people. The current tendency in mass-mediated communication is to use visuals as sole mode for transferring information. Thus, also journalistic images often appear without context, or their context is limited to captions. They appear in a variety of platforms, initially being published in the press and later displayed at photographic exhibitions, screenings, and online in social media. Sometimes, photographs can appear at festivals such as *Visa pour l'Image* Festival of Photojournalism, and later in the press that gains them a status of *press photographs* with particular genre and context ascribed.

Scholarly claims concerning the definition of photographic context and its role in the reception and interpretation process of journalistic images are either contradictory to each other, or confusing. For instance, Becker (1995) does not view the matter of context as being as simple as he initially claims. He points out that "leaving the context implicit does not make a photograph art, while a full context makes it documentary, social science, or photojournalism" (p. 89). He argues that thanks to context and contextual information, viewers are able to recognize a type of photograph they are looking at. Becker also indicates that perception has a contextual nature, whereas this study argues, especially in Article II, that looking for contextual information in the interpretation process is a convention viewers tend to apply (see, for instance, Chaplin, 2006, on the convention of captioning). Indeed, context plays an important role in the interpretation process, but it usually leads interpretation towards one particular direction that is indicated, for instance, in a caption. Thus, context can strip photographs of their visual ambiguity.

This study distinguishes the following three types of photographic context (based on the review in Article II):
  (i)   context of production,

(ii)   context of a medium,

(iii)   page context.

A fourth type, the context of reception was identified but only discussed in relation to the aforementioned three types of context. In regard to the study's aim of creating methods for photography interpretation for VL education, one outcome is the recommendation of including a caption as the only element of photographic context. This kind of approach provides viewers with freedom of attributing various meanings to the photograph, and thus respecting its poly-semic character.

2.2   Visual literacy as an essential learning

Contemporary literacy is no longer simply the ability to read and write, but is determined by multi-literacies, including digital, visual, multimodal, and many other literacies. Literacy is also "multidimensional" (Riddle, 2009, p. 4), which means that information and knowledge come from various directions, among which visual imagery often plays an important role. Thus, effective teaching should not focus solely on traditional literacy, but includes various activities that employ all possible modes. This study concentrates in particular on VL, seeing it as especially important for contemporary society and puts forward a need for VL training in higher education, because

> [l]iving in an image-rich world (…) does not mean students (…) naturally possess sophisticated visual literacy skills, just as continually listening to an iPod does not teach a person to critically analyze or create music. (…) With training and practice, people can develop the ability to recognize, interpret, and employ the distinct syntax and semantics of different visual forms. The process of becoming visually literate continues through a lifetime of learning new and more sophisticated ways to pro-duce, analyze, and use images. (Felten, 2008, p. 60)

As Felten indicates, everyday encounters with images are not sufficient condi-tion for becoming visually literate, but any kind of visual training can help to develop VL skills. Indeed, Brumberger's (2011) study on VL skills of digital na-tives confirms this observation. She discovered that the majority of participants in her study, despite being recognized as *digital natives*, and thus also *natives* of visual orders, failed to interpret photographs, even when the interpretation cri-teria were simplified. Brumberger (2011) concludes that it is essential to teach VL, because of the mistaken assumption that constant exposure to visual mate-rial, or a frequent usage of a camera, are satisfactory activities towards devel-opment of ones' VL.

Felten (2008) suggests that an important pre-requisite about VL is the con-tinuity of visual education that leads towards the development of VL skills. Training in VL should be systematic and occurring at all educational levels. This study focuses on higher education, but it recognizes the importance of vis-ual learning in both preschool and primary school education, because otherwise,

individuals will lack even basic skills in visual communication. Images need to be discussed, evaluated, linked with other cultural artefacts, and divided into modes for interpretation. First and foremost, individuals should learn how to undertake all these activities related to visuals. Thus, Elkins (2008a) argues that because knowledge about images is such essential teaching, it should be already incorporated into the basic, common curricula for the first-year students among all disciplines:

> Since the 1980s the rhetoric of images has become far more pervasive, so that it is now commonplace in the media to hear that we live in a visual culture, and *get our information through images*. (…) It is time to consider the possibility that *literacy can be achieved through images* as well as texts and numbers. (Elkins, 2008a, pp. 4-5, author's italics - JK)

An aspect of VL that Elkins (2008a) emphasizes is that not only can VL occur in line with, but is also more than equal to, traditional literacy. In the era of visual orders and visually mediated information, VL should become one of the prerequisites of any basic curriculum in higher education.

Interestingly, the requirement for VL training is not a new phenomenon. The concept emerged in the late 1960s as an answer to the growing anxiety arising from children's increasing exposure to television. Early guidelines for VL education were proposed by Fransecky and Debes (1972). They were followed by other scholars, who addressed VL theory, teaching and learning in a context of rapid changes in the media landscape and the development of new technologies. Visual literacy was at first understood as learning how to see (Turbayne, 1970), or as a teaching of visual thinking (McKim, 1972). Nevertheless, since the VL movement emerged, no consensus regarding VL theory, its definition and methods of measurement have been achieved (with some exceptions by Pettersson 1993; Avgerinou, 2001; Avgerinou & Pettersson, 2011). In addition, each discipline understands and defines VL from its own disciplinary perspective (for some examples of this tendency, see the anthology of VL texts in Elkins, 2008b).

Furthermore, some disciplines, like journalism studies, force the concept of *media literacy* instead, suggesting that the term covers VL. Aufderheide (1993, p. 1) indicates that media literacy is about understanding, producing and negotiating meanings in the audio-visually and textually stimulated environment, while Buckingham (2003, p. 36) focuses on the essential skills and knowledge that need to be acquired in order to use and interpret media. Buckingham (2003, p. 49) emphasizes that the abilities to interpret and produce media are core elements of media literacy. Indeed, skills of reading and interpreting journalistic photographs can be covered by media literacy. However, this kind of classification labels journalistic photographs predominantly as a medium, and can possibly marginalize their visual character. In a similar manner, Seppänen (2006) initially questions the legitimacy of VL in reference to the interpretation of images. However, he later acknowledges that VL is related to learning and studying, and thus, helps to understand visual reality. Seppänen (2006, p. 6) concludes that "visual literacy forms a core part of media literacy (…), but media

form only one area of visual literacy". Thus, when discussing skills associated with photography interpretation, I favour usage of the concept of VL.

Media literacy is not the only concept used in the context of visual learning. One of the recent discussions in visual studies proposes to use *visual competence* as a paradigm for studying visuals (Müller, 2008), or *visual competencies* as a necessary addition to media literacy (Griffin, 2008). Müller (2008) claims that as VL has been constructed as parallel to traditional (lexical) literacy, its theory is also built on a textual approach that "misses out on many aspects of visuals that the new paradigm [i.e. visual competence] covers" (Müller, 2008, p. 102). However, I argue that both concepts have slightly different interests: for VL it is visual education, while a visual competence is "a paradigm for conducting basic research" (Müller, 2008, p. 103) with images. Thus, although VL and visual competence are not exclusive terms, visual competence should not have privileged in usage simply because it covers a wider scope of practices (including VL to certain extent).

On the other hand, Griffin (2008, p. 115) argues quite strongly that "it has become fashionable to invoke the term 'visual literacy' to loosely describe twenty-first-century habits or propensities of the young". However, his further argumentation to support this claim fails, when he poorly tries to define VL, ignoring recent scholarship on VL theory (for example Avgerinou, 2001; Avgerinou & Pettersson, 2011). Indeed, defining VL is challenging due to the lack of agreement on its definition (Avgerinou, 2001). Almost every discipline and field have their favoured definitions, based on which, recommendations for research, study or curriculum are constructed. Thus, instead of adding one more new perspective to VL theory, current study evaluates and tries to adjust existing definitions of VL, in respect to this study's purpose and object.

The International Visual Literacy Association, in 1989, offered four definitions of VL, which although quite descriptive can be easily linked to some crucial aspects of the interpretation of journalistic photographs in terms of VL development. As Pettersson (1993, p.140) indicates, the definitions state that VL is:

> 1. a group of vision competencies a human being can develop by seeing and at the same time having and integrating other sensory experiences;
>
> 2. the learned ability to interpret the communication of visual symbols (images), and to create messages using visual symbols;
>
> 3. the ability to translate visual images into verbal language and vice versa;
>
> 4. the ability to search for and evaluate visual information in visual media.

The first definition refers to seeing being a multisensory experience (Becker, 2004) that requires a degree of reading, listening, as well as smelling and touching. The multisensory character of seeing also connects to the point stated earlier that contemporary literacy is multidimensional (Riddle, 2009). Thus, when proposing the tools for photography interpretation, I particularly focus on intertextuality and intertextual connections that a viewer can discover. I ar-

gue that a journalistic photograph is not just a visual content understood in close relation with a (lexical) context, but it is often a constructed entity. By *constructed*, I mean its multisensory character that requires interpretation, which will include all possible aspects of seeing experience. And *seeing* is not just looking by using the eyes, but also trying to hear, smell and feel, which requires some experience in visual analysis. The constructed character of journalistic photographs reflects Mitchell's (2005, p. 260) claim that "there are no visual media", and thus, "all media are mixed media", meaning that they employ various senses, but in different proportions.

The second definition, by Pettersson (1993), indicates that VL is an ability to interpret and create images and can consequently be learnt. The third definition sees VL as a translation, or better – a *communication* process between visual and verbal, through which images can be converted into textual forms and vice versa. Thus, a visually literate viewer should be able to convert images into text, by providing either their verbal or written interpretation. The fourth definition links to the notion academic librarians are currently raising when elaborating the need for VL development: VL can help learners to search for and use images with respect to copyright and ethical standards.

Each of these four definitions raise particular features of VL and describe certain abilities that any visually literate viewer should demonstrate. Thus, they are also quite broad in their scope. In Articles I-IV, I mostly refer to the VL definition proposed by Avgerinou (2001) and based on her extensive review of VL theory. In comparison to the previous four, this one is more concise, and set in the educational context. It reads that

> In the context of human, intentional visual communication, **visual literacy** refers to a group of largely acquired abilities, i.e. the abilities to understand (read), and to use (write) images, as well as to think and learn in terms of images. (Avgerinou, 2001, p. 142)

The abilities specified by Avgerinou should be fostered in VL education. However, not all of them can be always equally represented and developed in exercises with different types of visual material. Thus, when working with journalistic images, a viewer can start from learning to understand (i.e., to interpret) photographs, followed by more conscious usage of them. Finally, the viewer develops skills of visual thinking that often leads towards creating better photographs. Avgerinou identifies the process of learning in terms of images as one of the VL abilities. This aspect of her definition is especially important in the light of this study, which created and introduced tools for photography interpretation, aimed to be used in visual education.

One more attempt to define VL that I would like to bring into focus is formulated in the "Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education", published in 2011 by Association of College and Research Libraries. It locates the need for VL training in a wider context of contemporary education, indicating that

> Visual literacy is a set of abilities that enables an individual to effectively find, inter-
> pret, evaluate, use, and create images and visual media. Visual literacy skills equip a
> learner to understand and analyze the contextual, cultural, ethical, aesthetic, intellec-
> tual, and technical components involved in the production and use of visual materi-
> als. A visually literate individual is both a critical consumer of visual media and a
> competent contributor to a body of shared knowledge and culture. (ACRL, 2011)

This is not a definition per se, but is formulated as a goal to be achieved in higher education. It describes an intensive process of learning that includes all possible activities based on interaction with images (interpretation, evaluation, usage and creation of images) as well as results of visual learning (becoming a critical consumer and competent participant of contemporary culture). The need for VL training, argued by Felten (2008) and referred to earlier in this study, is developed here by explaining what VL education means and what its goals are.

John Debes, one of the key figures in the history of VL (Fransecky & Debes, 1972) and who was the first to propose a definition as early as 1969, characteriz-es VL as a fundamental, learned competence that helps in everyday communi-cation and gives joyful when looking at arts (Debes, 1969, p. 27). Debes points out the importance of learning towards development of VL skills. Similarly, Avgerinou (2001, p. 120) emphasizes the need for VL training and Felten (2008) insists on VL education having a longitudinal characteristic. Thus, this study suggests interpretation of journalistic photographs as a one kind of practice among many others in visual learning that can help to develop, or even ad-vance students' VL skills in higher education.

Fransecky and Debes (1972) suggest that theorizing and reading about VL may only raise an individual's curiosity about it, while the real experience may actually expand the sense of VL's validity and value. Fransecky and Debes (1972) call for some real action towards VL development that is required for comprehensive understanding of the concept. Thus, this study proposes practi-cal guidelines for the interpretation of journalistic photographs. In a longer per-spective, the work is aimed to contribute towards development of students' VL skills.

2.3 Visual methods and the interpretation of journalistic photo-graphs

A variety of methods of visual analysis seemed to be only partially suitable when creating guidelines and constructing models for the interpretation of journalistic photographs. None of them was perfectly suited to both the object (a journalistic photograph) being interpreted and the purpose (the development of VL skills among learners) of the interpretation. Thus, I decided to review those visual research methods that I consider suitable for the interpretation of journalistic photographs in the context of visual learning (see Table 2). In addi-tion, I aimed to challenge the visual methodologies by particular features of

journalistic photographs, that are: genre, context, layout, function fulfilled by a photograph (informative, expressive, impressive, aesthetic, marketing and illustrative; see Article III for descriptions of each function), and any symbolic, connotative or intertextual meaning of a photograph. These elements are often unmentioned in the interpretation, being too complex and polysemic (such as the concept of genre), or individually marked by the viewer's cultural background (for instance, intertextual connotations). Thus, my attempt in this study was to include these aspects into the guidelines for interpretation of journalistic photographs, and to propose models, built as a combination of different visual research methods or their essentials. The research methods that were reviewed for this purpose, were distinguished and based on the following criteria (see also Table 2):

- their characteristics seem applicable for the interpretation of journalistic photographs,
- they are classic theories or methods for analysis of photographs (especially visual semiotics, or Barthes' connotation/denotation, *studium/punctum*),
- they have already been used in contemporary scholarship to analyse journalistic photographs,
- their focus is on visual content of an image and on particular elements within this content,
- they pay special attention to certain aspects of a photograph (for instance, to the photographic context that I discuss in the Article II),
- they are the closest possible approaches to an *ideal* method for photography interpretation that can serve VL education.

The last criterion can be seen as a highly subjective and intuitive. It is indeed, but I attempt to support it by related scholarship and my teaching experience, or experiments conducted with students who were asked to interpret particular photographs (see the reports in Article I and Article IV).

TABLE 2   Visual research methods reviewed and discussed in the study, along with the selection criteria.

Category of a method	Method reviewed	Selection criteria	Related article
classic, well established methods and theories	elements of visual semiotics	• classic theory/method for analysis of photographs • frequently applied to analyse journalistic photographs	I and IV
	visual rhetoric	• its characteristics seem applicable for the interpretation of journalistic photographs • classic theory/method for analysis of photographs • frequently applied to analyse journalistic photographs • the closest possible approach to an	IV

		ideal method for photography interpretation	
	Barthes'(1993) phenomenological approach (the concept of *studium* and *punctum*)	• its characteristics seem applicable for the interpretation of journalistic photographs • classic theory/method for analysis of photographs • frequently applied to analyse journalistic photographs	I and IV
having their roots in the analysis of paintings	Barrett's (2010) principles for interpreting photographs	• its characteristics seem applicable for the interpretation of journalistic photographs • its focus is on visual content and particular elements within this content • the closest possible approach to an *ideal* method for photography interpretation	IV
	compositional interpretation (Rose, 2012)	• its characteristics seem applicable for the interpretation of journalistic photographs • its focus is on visual content and particular elements within this content	IV
	iconological context analysis (Müller, 2011)	• its focus is on photographic context	II
dedicated to analysis of photographs in the press	quantitative content analysis (Bock, Isermann, & Knieper, 2011)	• frequently applied to analyse journalistic photographs • its focus is on visual content and particular elements within this content • its focus is on photographic context	II
	integrative model, combining iconology with psychophysiological and eye-tracking methods (Müller, Kappas & Olk, 2012)	• frequently applied to analyse journalistic photographs • its focus is on photographic context	II

The visual research methods that I chose to evaluate in this study, meet some but never all of the criteria. Using these criteria, the visual research methods explored in the articles (especially in Article IV, but also in Article I and II) can be further divided into three categories:

(i) classic, well established methods and theories: elements of visual semiotics, visual rhetoric, Barthes' (1993) phenomenological approach (the concept of studium and punctum);

(ii) having their roots in the analysis of paintings: Barrett's (2010) principles for interpreting photographs, compositional interpretation (Rose, 2012), iconological context analysis (Müller, 2011);

(iii) dedicated to analysis of photographs in the press: quantitative content analysis (Bock, Isermann, & Knieper, 2011), a new integrative model, combining iconology with psychophysiological and eye-tracking methods (Müller, Kappas, & Olk, 2012);

Some of the classic visual approaches, such as visual rhetoric (discussed in Article IV), provide useful tools that can be applied in the model for photography interpretation. Among these tools are especially denotative and connotative dimensions, or visual rhetorical figures. Methods that are used for analysis of paintings (for instance, compositional interpretation [Rose, 2012], or principles for interpreting photographs [Barrett, 2010]) can be also applied to photographs. They are especially suitable when working with iconic photographs that often have artistic aspirations, and are constructed in a way, which creates difficulties in distinguishing between aesthetic and informative values. One of the main characteristics of iconic photographs is a very poetic way of presenting the subject by, often brilliant usage of photographic techniques (framing, lighting, visualizing emotions) that affects viewers. These features seem to form of convergence between journalistic photographs and art. Thus, visual research methods that are dedicated to paintings or art photography can be also adjusted to the interpretation of journalistic photographs. Simultaneously, visual research methods that are traditionally ascribed to analyse journalistic photographs, such as quantitative content analysis, are often insufficient for visual education, which requires methods that challenge viewer's perception and intertextual thinking. In addition, the method chosen for exercises with visual material should not be too difficult to either understand or use.

Thus, although visual semiotics is a kind of a "first-choice-method" when coming across interpretation of photographs, it is too complex to be applied in VL education without a comprehensive introduction to its vocabulary. The PPSA model presented in the Article I is deeply immersed into semiotics (referring to Charles Sanders Peirce's Theory of Sign), with addition of some sociological aspects of visual analysis. However, as the study indicates (see subchapter 3.1), the PPSA model was used in visual exercises with prior introductory teaching, including basics of semiotics. The Article IV comes back to the semiotic tradition of visual analysis, referring not only to Peirce, but also to Ferdinand de Saussure's sign division into signified and signifier. However, it mainly criticizes insufficient and too complex apparatus of visual semiotics that is not able to provide guidelines for interpretation of journalistic photographs.

Nevertheless, as VL theory and definition(s) derive from the traditional (lexical) literacy, it might be difficult, if not impossible, to entirely "escape" from semiotic tradition. One such attempt to leave visual semiotics approach is to apply *multimodality*. I came across this concept mostly through the work of Bateman (2008, 2014), getting tremendously fascinated by it, and thus, willing to adjust it for the tools for photography interpretation. Indeed, van Leeuwen (2008, p. 130), who also writes on multimodality, but from a bit different angle than Bateman, indicates that "the move towards multimodality is necessary, not as some sort of corrections to earlier theories, but because visual communication itself has

changed". Müller (2008, p. 102) ironically claims that multimodality is a "cure" for insufficient approach to visuals, offered by media or visual literacies that are grounded in linguistics and semiotics, and that operate with tools based on traditional (lexical) literacy. Although I agree with Müller's remark, and hence my argument for excluding semiotics as a method for visual analysis, I do not see multimodality as a salvific solution. Indeed, to some extent, multimodality can solve the problem of approaching images with an appropriate visual vocabulary, but multimodal analysis does not exclude semiotics either. Contrary, the method is based on *semiotic modes* that ought to be identified in multimodal artefacts in the interpretation process (Bateman, 2008). In addition, it provides same complex apparatus, insufficient for basic VL education.

The current study moves away from visual semiotics towards visual rhetoric, suggesting denotation and connotation (Barthes 1977; 1983) as one of the simplest ways to initiate interpretation process. These two concepts are widespread among visual methodologies (see, for instance, Barrett, 2003) and it is difficult to classify them under one visual research method. Therefore, I used them in the models for photography interpretation, first, as a part of visual semiotics approach (PPSA model in Article I), and later as a part of visual rhetoric approach (Article IV). I foster the second classification as more appropriate. Looking at a photograph from denotative and connotative perspectives means to identify particular elements that belong to each of the two dimensions, even though they are not disconnected, but interrelated. Denotation is mainly based on a simple description of who or what is in the picture, while connotation leads to more advanced analysis, looking at visual connotators (symbols, tropes, visual rhetorical figures, intertextuality). The division into denotation and connotation is easy to follow by learners in visual exercises, although it is not necessary to clearly indicate it in the model for interpretation (see the model introduced in Article IV).

The interpretation of journalistic photographs, intended for use as a tool in VL education, is a unique process, both due to its object and purpose. Journalistic photographs are often packed with emotions and intertextual meanings. Barrett (2010, p. 149) indicates that they "carry more credibility than other kinds of images and especially require interpretation". Thus, a journalistic photograph is not just a news that is communicated visually, but instead, it is a visual representation of reality that can be read (interpreted) both on very basic (denotative) and more advanced (connotative) levels.

In the current study, the term *interpretation* is understood in relation to the image interpretation process, in which a viewer attributes certain meaning(s) to the photograph. Avgerinou (2001, p. 122) claims that "to interpret pictures an individual must understand that a picture is a symbol representing, *not itself being*, an object, concept or event". The meaning of a photograph does not only depend on what or who is framed, but also on a particular way of presentation of a subject. What is more, the meanings attributed to the photograph can differ in time and between viewers. This tendency prompt that the meaning of a photograph is polysemic, often not matching with actual intentions of the origina-

tor of a photograph (photographer, photojournalist), or photo editor or image broker (term from Gürsel, 2012). Hall (1997, pp. 32-33) emphasizes this tendency by underlining the need for interpretation:

> The meaning we take, as viewers, readers, audiences, is never exactly the meaning which has been given by the speaker or writer or by other viewers. (…) So interpretation becomes an essential aspect of the process by which meaning is given and taken.

In Hall's understanding of interpretation, the meaning is *given* and *taken*, rather than *discovered*, while the interpretation process of journalistic photographs is heavily based on viewer's active role in the attribution of meanings (see Figure 1). In the interpretation process, meaning(s) attributed to the photograph do not only reflect reality and message(s) implied in the photograph, but for most – they mirror viewer's own perception and understanding of particular events. Understanding of visual messages develops through visual training. Thus, this study's focus is on the learning process that occurs within an image interpretation process. Approach to visual education presented here favours the joy of photography interpretation, rather than any final result of such interpretation. In other words, in the context of VL education, by interpretation, I mean the process of learning how to read and understand photographs, with minor focus on any kind of material result of this practice (except of development of VL skills, which is, however, of quite immaterial nature).

Due to the visual character of its object, each process of photography interpretation is unique. In addition, individuals never approach a photograph twice from the same perspective, because their skills in VL evolve, as well as their personal experience and knowledge that are brought to the interpretation process, differ in time. Thus, the meanings attributed to the photograph differ significantly, based on:

(i)   viewers' experience in visual interpretation (and thus, their VL skills),
(ii)   type of journalistic photograph that is interpreted (consider various photo-genres, or iconic photographs)
(iii)   method used for interpretation.

This study emphasizes in particular the third aspect, aiming to compile guidelines for photography interpretation that can be applied in teaching/learning context, without any need for additional adjustment. Thus, the model for photography interpretation that I introduced in the Article IV does not require any pre-knowledge of visual studies or visual methodologies, or their specific vocabulary (although it derives from an extensive review of particular visual research methods). However, the PPSA model proposed in the Article I, or intertextual approach to photography interpretation proposed in the Article II, or the journalistic photo-genre typology as a tool for interpretation, introduced in the Article III, may all require some facilitation from the teacher who aims to apply them in VL education. The kinds of additional instructions that these methods require are indicated in the articles and further elaborated in the following chapter that reports findings of this study by presenting tools for the interpretation of journalistic photographs.

3 FINDINGS: TOOLS FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF JOURNALISTIC PHOTOGRAPHS

Four different models and approaches to the interpretation of journalistic photographs that can facilitate VL training were compiled and introduced in this study. Below, each of them is discussed in brief. Models can be used both in an individual or group-work assignments. They can be adjusted for particular learning purposes or topics if needed. However, some of the models or approaches require introductory teaching (except for the model introduced in the Article IV), intended for those learners who are less familiar with particular terms, or have less experience in visual analysis. The kind of introductory teaching that is needed is indicated in the subchapters that follow. Suggestions for exercises based on the models are described with an aim to develop certain VL skills, in particular, reading and understanding of images and learning to think in terms of images.

The models proposed in the articles and reported here, were mainly tested with highly connotative, if not iconic, images (except for Article III) to exemplify models' implementation in the most illustrative manner. At the beginning of visual education, learners' VL skills can be quite weak, assuming that they have not had any previous experience in purposefully analysing images. Thus, even though the tools for photography interpretation that I introduce are not solely dedicated for iconic images, I do recommend working with this type of journalistic photographs first, because they are sufficiently connotative for beginners who are not yet fluent in discovering visual references. Iconic photographs are condensed visually, and thus, advanced, multilayered interpretation is possible. Simultaneously, in-depth visual interpretation can facilitate development of learners' visual sensitivity that helps them to acquire VL skills. On the other hand, any set of journalistic photographs from the press can be used when applying the genre typology of journalistic photographs as a tool for interpretation (see Article III).

The choice of a method that is used for photography interpretation is crucial, because it influences the learning process that should lead towards development of VL skills. This claim has acted both as a starting point for this study

and its main goal, and it has been considered in each of the studies reported in the articles.

3.1   Press Photograph Story Analysis (PPSA) model

The PPSA model was grounded on two traditions: semiotics and communication theory. In both cases, necessary simplifications for the purpose of the model were made. Thus, in semiotic terms, the model applies Charles Sanders Peirce's Theory of Sign (as described in Mrozowski, 2001, pp. 271-273), in particular, the trichotomy of sign, object and interpretant. The PPSA model also uses Barthes' (1983) concept of photograph as an analogon, as well as his idea of photographic *punctum* (Barthes, 1993). In the trial assessment of the PPSA model with students, it appeared that semiotic references made in the model were unnecessary for the interpretation process, in that they did not help to add any extra information. The only exception was *punctum* that students tried to identify in analyzed photograph stories. Similarly, the framework for the PPSA model, built on the basis of Roman Jakobson's communication model (1960) assisted only in separating particular steps of the interpretation process.

The PPSA model applies Barthes' division into denotation and connotation, which the students confused in the trial assessment of the model. Indeed, these two parts of the interpretation process should not be separated as they often interfuse. Thus, the clear division was later abandoned in the model for interpretation of journalistic photographs, reported in the Article IV. Nevertheless, for teaching purposes, it is good to make students aware of both the denotative and connotative aspects of the image interpretation process. Understanding this division can enhance students' ability to conduct more in-depth interpretations with more complex models. According to the PPSA model, a denotative interpretation consists of the basic observation of who is in the photographs, what kind of visual techniques were used and how the caption helps to understand each picture's theme. Connotation, the next level of interpretation, aims to explore denotative observations. Connotation is a stage, at which learners' skills in VL are either applied or can be developed through repeated usage of the model in the interpretation process with various photographs. The PPSA model was initially dedicated to press photograph stories (photo reportages; see Article III for the genre typology). However, it can equally facilitate the interpretation process of single photographs as opposed to a series.

From the point of view of this study, the aim to design tools for VL education, one of the most interesting elements of the PPSA model is the idea of looking for, describing and explaining *interpretants* in the photographs. By interpretants, I mean visual rhetorical figures, symbols and intertextual connotators. In the trial test of the model, this part of students' interpretations was sufficiently well developed, which can suggest that without both the PPSA model and some prior introductory teaching, students will be unable to provide such in-depth interpretations that indicated various connotations.

The last part of the model that contains additional questions can be freely modified by the teacher, regarding the aim of the photography interpretation conducted with the model. Based on the trial test, I see particular relevance in the second question: "What can you learn about the world from these photographs?" (Kędra, 2013, p. 31). In the interpretation process of journalistic photographs these kinds of questions should be always asked, in order to encourage learners' attention to move from abstract thinking about images to reality. In other words, this last part of the model provides a summary of learning that occurred during the interpretation process.

The trial test of the PPSA model was conducted after several relevant visual exercises that aimed to help learners to understand the vocabulary used in the model (especially some of the semiotic terms, or the concept of the visual rhetorical figure). As a result, I later decided to develop a simplified version of the PPSA model that would not need any introductory training. The revised version is proposed in Article IV as a model for interpretation of journalistic photographs. The new model borrows from the PPSA model a few elements, which do not require any pre-knowledge from learners. However, as the PPSA model requires introductory teaching leads to the conclusion that visual interpretation is a learning process that is more effective when applied step-by-step, through various visual exercises. These exercises can, for instance, train learners' intertextual thinking.

3.2 Intertextual approach

The concept of intertextuality was introduced and popularized by Julia Kristeva (1980), who combined elements of linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure with Mikhail Bakhtin's theories. Indicating the concept's origin in the analysis of text, which both Fairclough (1992, 2003) and Wodak (2001) use in critical discourse analysis, I further looked at the concept of intertextuality and its application in visual studies and visual research methods. I referred, in Article II, in particular to Burgin (1982) in the field of photography, Rose (2012) in visual discourse analysis and Barrett (2010) in the principles for interpreting photographs.

The intertextual approach to photography interpretation, as described in Article II, is a prerequisite for learners to conduct more systematic interpretation, or to use multi-layered models, such as the PPSA model, or the model for interpretation of journalistic photographs, proposed in Article IV. Both these models include intertextuality as an important element of the interpretation process. Thus, visual exercises that apply intertextuality can help to prepare learners for next steps in visual analysis.

Contemporary texts, whether visual or textual, do not only have meaning of their own, but their meaning can also occur in relation to other texts. In this case, "the text becomes the inter-text", as Allen (2000, p. 1) suggests, and reading becomes a process of moving between various texts, investigating relations between them. Allen (2000) further indicates that the intertextual approach to

texts also influences thinking about photographs, interpretation of which depends on certain conventions and codes that ought to be recognized by viewers. Allen's focus is on art photography, but his observation can be equally applied to journalistic photographs.

In visual research methods, *intertextuality* is an infrequently mentioned concept (see Burgin, 1982; Barrett, 2010; Rose, 2012) and not sufficiently elaborated or used as an approach to photography analysis. Furthermore, intertextuality is usually applied to literary arts, but not restrictively, because intertextuality can be "found in discussion of cinema, painting, music, architecture, photography (…) It is possible to speak of the 'languages' (…) which involve productions of complex patterns of encoding, re-encoding, allusion, echo, transposing of previous systems and codes" (Allen, 2000, p. 174). Interpretation of particular cultural artefacts can occur in relation to artefacts from the same group, or from the other groups. In intertextual interpretation of journalistic photographs, context is of secondary importance, because, primarily there is a viewer who attaches meanings to the photograph that are based on individual experience, knowledge and VL skills. Thus, the photographic content, i.e., the visual representation of events and emotions, is in focus of intertextual approach.

Intertextuality, as a name and form of a visual exercise, is as I propose in this study based on a question about any connotations of a particular photograph (or its elements) to other images, or cultural artefacts that the viewer can identify. The more pictures that viewers see and interpret, the more they can read *in* and *between* them. Intertextuality concerns training learners' individual perception and visual sensitivity. Thus, when used in educational settings, intertextual exercises with photographs should be guided in the beginning, especially with students who have less experience in visual analysis. Showing couple of examples of what is meant by intertextual connotations of a particular photograph to other cultural artefacts can be a good starting point of such visual training.

In this study, intertextuality is proposed as a way of thinking *outside the box* that insists on looking at journalistic photographs as we see them – not as they have been contextualized for us. Thus, intertextual exercises should help to develop learners' visual thinking, and thus, contribute to the development of learners' VL skills. Intertextual interpretation is a never-ending, constant learning process: the more connections are seen, the more there is to find out and link to.

3.3 Genre typology of journalistic photographs as an interpretation tool

The genre typology of journalistic photographs was created by analysing differences and similarities in photographic content, context, place and role of a photograph in a newspaper layout, the number of images (single and series), and

function fulfilled. These kinds of criteria are often used to initiate interpretation process of journalistic photographs. Thus, the study proposes the genre typology as a tool for VL education. The typology can be easily adjusted for exercises that introduce students to visual material they are going to interpret, and familiarize them with a concept of genre.

Although the proposed typology was not simplified for educational purposes as in the case of Pienimäki's (2013) "genre tool", it still includes certain generalizations. One of these generalizations is a lack of indication that genres merge and create hybrids. This feature of genre can be mentioned by a teacher, but the information itself is not necessary for using the genre typology in visual exercises. The aim of the typology was to clearly describe photo-genres, indicating particular features of each of the related photo-types.

The typology opens several possibilities for VL exercises. Firstly, students can choose particular photographs from newspapers (preferably), but opinion weeklies and online press can be also used as sources, and try to identify the photograph's genre and type, according to the typology. The exercise should follow with an explanation of the genre-choice made by learners, by describing content, context, layout of display, and dominant function of the interpreted photograph. Furthermore, after naming, for instance, a news photo and photo reportage (both single and series), learners can try to identify differences in story-telling of these two photo-types. Similar exercises, based on comparison of images, can be made between all four photo-genres, and may focus on just one particular aspect of photographs, such as their content. Although the concept of photo-genre along with its typology may require some introductory teaching for less experienced learners, the genre tool proposed in Article III can be immediately used for the above mentioned exercises, or for any similar ones.

The central aim of applying photo-genre and its typology in VL education is to raise learners' understanding of the kind of images they are going to interpret. Ability to recognize particular photo-genres in the press can lead to a better understanding of a journalistic photograph as a visual medium. It can also prepare learners for the interpretation process of journalistic images with the aid of the models proposed in this study. Moreover, for those learners who would like to develop their VL skills in creating images, knowledge of genre and awareness of differences between various types of photographs can equip them with better imagery tools.

The thematic-driven categorizations of journalistic photographs (for example, Lester, 1999; Newton, 2001; Kobré, 2008), to which I also briefly referred in Article III, are usually less attractive for teaching purposes, because their focus is limited to a picture's theme. By contrast, the proposed typology also covers other aspects of journalistic photographs, such as context, layout, and photographic functions. Analysing these kinds of elements in a set of photographs can help to develop the practice of looking, and foremost, seeing.

3.4   A model for interpretation of journalistic photographs

The model for interpretation of journalistic photographs proposed in Article IV is a synthesis of various visual research methods and approaches, or their essentials, including an improved version of the PPSA model introduced in Article I. The main improvement concerns its simplification for educational purposes, which was possible after removing references to visual semiotics. The eight-step model is a collection of questions that should be answered in the interpretation process of a journalistic photograph. They are compiled in an order of interpretation, and thus the viewer is expected to first describe what they see in a photograph and later read a caption for additional information. The sequence of questions is built on Barthes' division into denotation and connotation that was also observed in other approaches to visual analysis, such as the first and second level interpretant in Peirce's semiotics, or the first- and second-layer of interpretation in Barrett's (2010) principles for interpreting photographs. Reference to the denotative-connotative division, although not indicated in the model itself, means that the viewer starts from the basic description of an image (including photo-content, information depicted from the caption and photo-techniques) and follows with more advanced interpretation, based on intertextuality, symbolism and visual rhetorical figures as well as looking for punctum and identifying viewer's emotional reaction to the photograph.

The model can be instantly applied for visual exercises. However, questions about symbols or intertextual connotations can pose some challenges to viewers that have little experience in visual analysis. The only element of the model that may require prior introductory explanation from the teacher is the one that concerns visual rhetorical figures in photographs. Thus, the model can be applied either in the version presented in Article IV (including introductory teaching; interpretation process is facilitated by a teacher), or as it was used in the visual exercise with students of the course "Media Analysis and Criticism", reported in Article IV (analysis of visual rhetorical figures excluded, short introduction about how to use the model).

Although the model for interpretation of journalistic photographs was initially constructed on the basis of the PPSA model, its aim differs significantly by moving away from visual semiotics and constructing a more accessible tool for educational purposes. In the current model, the main focus is on photographic content and image-viewer relation, i.e., on kinds of meanings a viewer attaches to the photograph. These meanings can concern the viewer's emotions toward the content of a photograph (Step 4 in the model), photographic punctum (Step 5), visual symbols depicted in the photograph (Step 6) and intertextual connections made by the viewer (Step 7). I recommend using the model for interpretation of journalistic photographs to support VL education by constructing exercises with the model as a tool for interpretation. However, for the purpose of a more advanced, in-depth interpretation, it is suggested that usage of the model will be facilitated, at least in the early phases of visual learning.

4 CONCLUSION

4.1 Theoretical and practical contributions of the study

Contemporary communication occurs through online platforms and new media and is heavily transmitted visually, with overwhelming usage of photographs taken and distributed on any possible occasions by any individual armed with portable camera. However, although vision seems to be the dominant mode, the more images are used for communication, the less they are understood, valued and critically approached (see, for instance, the study on VL skills of digital natives by Brumberger, 2011). Skills of reading, understanding and creating images are taken for granted, both by individuals who communicate visually and by educators who are responsible for developing these skills among their students.

The current study provides models for photography interpretations that can be applied in visual education in order to increase the level of VL among viewers. As an object for these models, the study uses the journalistic photograph – a cultural artefact that is characterized as either a visual report about an event, or a compilation of intertextual references to other cultural artefacts. The importance of studying photographs is indicated by Bogre (2015, p. 3) in the introduction to his teaching guide for photography educators: "photography is the language of the twenty-first century and being able to think critically about and analyse photographs is an essential twenty-first century literacy."

This study is a voice in the discussion that fosters VL education and calls for changes in a largely textual higher education curriculum towards a more visually oriented one. The study provides concrete tools for studying visuals that can be used for development of VL skills. In addition, it complements the theory of press photography by elaborating on photographic context and journalistic photo-genre typology, iconic photograph and definition of a journalistic photograph. The study also makes a contribution to visual methodologies by reviewing, juxtaposing and adjusting both classical visual theories and some newer approaches that together form the basis for the models for interpretation of journalistic photographs, introduced in this study. As indicated in the Intro-

duction, the study has crossed various disciplinary borders in order to find sufficient ways to realize its aims and to answer its research questions. As a result, the study contributes to visual studies by providing a multidisciplinary perspective on the image interpretation process, with particular interest in journalistic photographs. Furthermore, the introduced methods of photography interpretation are not solely applied from traditional perspectives such as visual semiotics or quantitative visual content analysis. Instead, the study brings new solutions to visual analysis of photographs that combines elements of various visual research methods. The models for interpretation are adjusted for educational purposes, being created according to specific features of journalistic photographs.

The study addresses the need for introducing VL into the curriculum, especially at the higher education level that still concentrates mainly on texts, rarely incorporating visuals (Elkins, 2008a). Photography education is important for all students, irrespective of discipline or major, because "studying photography teaches the skills to think critically, independently, and creatively" (Bogre, 2015, p. 4). Also one of the Barrett's (2010, p. 149) principles for interpreting photographs that "we ought to teach people to carefully think about what they consume" should be seriously taken into consideration. Images are part of popular culture, and thus, it is impossible to escape from visual orders and visually mediated communication. Individuals need to learn how to live and *smoothly* move between images, being able to understand and evaluate particular visual artefacts. The "pictorial turn", proclaimed by Mitchell (1995) already more than two decades ago, has unfortunately been followed with limited implications to pedagogy. Hence, this study aims to contribute towards changes in teaching guidelines, especially in higher education that usually lacks interaction with any type of images (except slideshows that are often more textual than pictorial). The guidelines that aim to facilitate reading and interpreting, rather than only *viewing*, of journalistic photographs are proposed as an end result of this study. Each of the models and approaches can be applied for visual exercises both in formal teaching context and for individual learning, and modified according to needs. Elkins (2008a, p. 3) argues that moving college education towards being more visually oriented is "the most important and potentially revolutionary problem in current curricular theory". Thus, the practical contribution of this study is by providing concrete tools that can be used towards development of more visually oriented higher education.

In addition, the study also attempts to introduce visual methodologies into journalism studies that usually *use* images in research to investigate certain topics, rather than solely focusing on them as cultural artefacts. By referring to the journalistic photograph as a purely visual medium that contains only one semiotic mode – pictorial representation, this study attempted to introduce a new kind of thinking about press photography to journalism studies. Thus, my suggestion for photography interpretation that is radically detached from any type of context (context of production, medium and page context), including only a caption. This kind of approach identifies journalistic photographs as a

purely visual and decontextualized medium that is also accordingly interpreted. However, this study is not in violation of press photography theory, but it proposes a fresh approach that tries to combine journalism studies with visual research methods, visual education and visual studies. In addition, the study provides discussion on photographic context, distinguishing its various types and role in the interpretation of photographs.

Introducing a genre typology of journalistic photographs is another important, both theoretical and practical, contribution of this study. Although the typology is constructed on the basis of a small sample in a particularly national context (the review of journalistic photographs from the main Polish daily "Gazeta Wyborcza") and it is not free from certain generalizations, it provides comprehensive descriptions of particular photo-genres and -types that can be applied to photographs in the press of any origin. The genre typology of journalistic photographs compiled in Article III is the first of this kind of systematic approach applied to the concept of photo-genre.

4.2 Limitations of the study

Although every effort was made to restrict the potential limitations of the study, there remain a few that require acknowledgement. The most important limitation lies in the predominantly theoretical character of this study. This may raise the objection that even though the proposed tools for photography interpretations are well described, explained, developed and immersed in contemporary scholarship about visuality, they were not applied in real educational settings. Indeed, the intertextual approach and the genre typology for journalistic photographs as tools for photography interpretation were not tested in visual exercises. The study also contains just a few explanations as to how these two approaches can be used in visual education. In contrast, the PPSA model underwent a small-scale validity test in classroom settings with university students. The conclusions of this trial assessment were later used in the research process to improve the interpretation model reported in Article IV. The first version of that model was also verified in the trial test with students, even though this was not reported in Article IV, which focus was predominantly on the review of visual research methods.

Related to the above mentioned limitation, another issue that was not addressed in this study was whether the proposed models for photography interpretation can actually help to increase level of VL among learners. As already indicated, development of VL is difficult, if not impossible, to measure (Avgerinou, 2001). Indeed, some attempts have already been made to design tools, such as the VL Index (Avgerinou, 2001), which can help to verify individuals' VL skills. However, it was not the aim of this study to present empirical verification, except for some trial tests that were conducted to illustrate how particular models can be used in visual exercises. Thus, this study does not contain sufficient empirical evidence that can confirm or reject the assumption that the pre-

sented tools help to develop VL skills. The only possible way to overcome this limitation would be to design a large scale research program that focuses on creating appropriate measurement tools that help to investigate VL development. However, this lies beyond the scope of the current study, and should rather be seen as a direction for future research. In addition, one of the study's main arguments is that any effort made towards more visually oriented education by promoting teaching that includes visuals as objects of investigation, is already a step forward towards VL development.

Furthermore, being limited to the review of particular visual research methods, this study may lack some interesting approaches to visual analysis that could have been added to the models for journalistic photography interpretation. Visual methods chosen for review were selected on the basis of particular criteria (see subchapter 2.3) that helped to narrow the scope for the review. However, the proposed models for photography interpretation are still open for further development and improvement, and thus, can include elements of many other visual research methods, reviews of which were not considered here.

The argument for excluding context as unnecessary for the interpretation of photographs can be seen as another limitation to the models proposed in this study. In addition, the context of reception was also not discussed here. Nevertheless, the main interest of this study lies in the interpretation process, not in its final product. Thus, the exclusion of context (or inclusion of a caption only), which may not please many scholars, especially those that perceive journalistic photographs as mainly *press* images deeply immersed into context.

Furthermore, one of the findings of this study, i.e., the genre typology of journalistic photographs proposed in Article III, has its limitation in terms of the material, on which it was created. For purposes already explained in the article, the typology was developed by reviewing mostly Polish scholarship about genre and using visual material of Polish daily "Gazeta Wyborcza". Therefore, the proposed typology may require some further verification, including journalistic photo-genres from other cultural press-contexts.

Finally, this study should have posed the question whether or not photography interpretation can be taught at all. I have repeatedly argued here that the image interpretation process is highly individualized and interconnected with the viewer's cultural background, experience and knowledge in visual analysis. Thus, as VL development is almost impossible to measure, it might be assumed that teaching photography interpretation is also difficult due to the variations in the learning outcomes. However, thanks to their openness towards diversity, visual learning and teaching are so interesting.

This study's interest was in the image interpretation process that occurs with the usage of the suggested models. I tried to observe and verify those elements of the proposed models, which can facilitate the interpretation and learning process, and how to advance the level of photography interpretation to guide it towards more intertextual and connotative. Thus, the question is not if teaching photography interpretation is possible, but how it should be realized

in practice. Therefore, the mainly theoretical character of this study can serve as a great opening for future research towards more visually oriented education.

4.3 Directions for future research

First and foremost, future research on the topic introduced in this study, should focus more on assessment how VL skills are developed among learners, through what kind of activities and exercises. In other words, it is recommended to design appropriate methods for measuring VL development. It would also be interesting to investigate how the proposed tools for journalistic photography interpretation can actually facilitate VL education.

Although this study does not provide any proofs of the usefulness of the proposed models for photography interpretation, it puts forward concreate solutions in the discussion about changing higher education curriculum towards being more visually oriented. Thus, any future research should also focus on promoting visual education by developing visual exercises, models and tools for visual interpretation that can be easily applied in classroom settings. It would also be interesting to create some online platforms that could support visual learning and teaching. In this context, making educators and educational decision makers aware of the need of VL training should be a primary goal.

Furthermore, one direction of future research is to continue to review visual research methods towards their application to the interpretation of journalistic photographs. This kind of revision can include visual methods that were not discussed here, or even try to apply multimodality as a method, but with its proper adjustment for educational purposes. The cross-disciplinary or multidisciplinary approaches to visual methodologies should be further promoted in order to finally establish and gain appropriate recognition to visual studies (or visual culture) as a field. Revision of various theories, concepts and methods within visual studies is necessary to systematize, a still quite young, field of inquiry. It would be especially useful to unify its vocabulary, even though it may seem impossible in the context of the multidisciplinary character of visual studies.

Further research on the press photography theory is also necessary. The concept of photo-genre should especially gain more scholarly attention as it seems to be marginalized in journalism studies. Although, these studies discuss journalistic genres, they do tend to forget about photographs in the press (with some exceptions in Polish by Wolny-Zmorzyński, 2007, 2010, 2011; and in Finnish by Pienimäki, 2011, 2012, 2013).

Finally, future studies should promote VL as an essential component of 21st century education. The models for interpretation of journalistic photographs proposed in this study are just one tool towards developing a more visually oriented education. Photographs demand interpretation, because they "get their meaning from the way the people involved with them understand them, use them, and thereby attribute meaning to them" (Becker, 1995, p. 5).

Thus, interpreting photographs can be a key towards understanding visual culture and visually mediated communication. Nevertheless, higher education can also discover and apply other types of visual material, or possibilities offered by visual research methods and visual studies.

SUMMARY

Introduction

In a visually stimulated environment, where images are produced, used and displayed on an enormous scale, skills of reading and understanding visual communication are taken for granted. Thus, they are rarely a part of higher education curriculum, while developing students' visual literacy (hereafter VL) skills can help them become conscious consumers of visual culture. The need for visual education was identified in the late 1960s, when the VL movement emerged and since has been constantly repeated in regard to all levels of education (Fransecky & Debes, 1972; Adam, 2001; Barrett, 2003, 2010; Bleed, 2005; Riddle, 2009; ACRL, 2011; Brumberger, 2011). However, the call has not been followed by concrete guidelines, or ideas for exercises that could form the core of teaching VL. In order to fill this gap, this study suggests using journalistic photographs and their interpretation as an instrument of visual literacy education. As Felten (2008) relates, everyday encounters with images are not a sufficient condition for becoming visually literate, but any kind of visual training can help to develop VL skills. This study, by proposing four models for photography interpretation, provides concreate solutions within the discussion that fosters VL education. It also contributes to the theory of press photography by discussing the concept of photographic context and definition of journalistic photograph, and by suggesting the genre typology of journalistic photographs.

Scholarship that focuses on images is constantly struggling to gain both identity and disciplinary recognition. The two competing terms are visual studies that is fully dedicated to visuality, and is more general in scope (Elkins, 2013), and visual culture that underlines cultural character of vison. Thus, bearing in mind the ongoing debates (Mitchell, 2002; Smith, 2005) regarding the name of the field and its object of investigation, this study favours the term visual studies in order to position the multidisciplinary research that it presents.

The focus of this study is the image interpretation process and on the methods that can be applied to guide journalistic photography interpretation in VL education. The photograph includes a message (information, news, etc.) that is received by the viewer, who further attributes meaning(s) to this photograph in the interpretation process. The meaning(s) that the viewer attributes differ in time and depend on viewer's cultural background, knowledge and VL skills as well as on the type of interpreted photograph and method used for this interpretation. As an object for the image interpretation process, the study uses the journalistic photograph – an artefact of popular culture that is often a semi-artistic visual representation of reality, which has a polysemic character. The meanings that a viewer attributes to the photograph may not match with actual intentions of the originator of the image (the photographer, photo editor, image broker), but they mirror the viewer's own perception and understanding of an issue framed in a photograph. The study assumes that the interpretation of journalistic photographs can be quite easily learnt if it is sufficiently guided.

The first objective of this study is to clarify why journalistic photographs can, or should, be used for learning visual interpretation, and thus also, what kind of photography interpretation is seen as useful for teaching-learning purposes. This objective is realized by an extensive evaluation of the photographic context. Although the study proposes photography interpretation that is almost detached from photographic context, it is not in violation of press photography theory, but it rather aims to provide fresh view by combining journalism studies with visual research methods, visual education and visual studies.

Furthermore, the study discusses the concept of photo-genre and, based on the literature review and visual material analysis of the Polish daily "Gazeta Wyborcza", it creates and introduces the genre typology of journalistic photographs. In the typology, the main features of particular photo-genres and photo-types are indicated for their further usage in visual exercises. Finally, the objective of creating a tool for photography interpretation is realized by proposing a Model for Press Photograph Story Analysis (hereafter PPSA). The PPSA model is later simplified in the model for interpretation of journalistic photographs, which is created on the basis of a critical review of certain visual research methods. As a result, the study proposes four different tools that can be used in exercises in visual education. Each of these models is reported in one of the four articles that this study comprises, along with the cover text that indicates the links between particular elements of this study.

An empirical research that presents analysis of students' interpretation of photographs, written using the PPSA model, is reported in the Article I. Article II is more theoretical and literature-centred study of photographic context and its role in the interpretation process of journalistic photographs, while Article III and IV are both a combination of theoretical discussions and empirical evaluations, suggesting two tools that can be used in exercises in VL education. Article III proposes the genre typology of journalistic photographs, and Article IV, along with a critical review of particular visual research methods, introduces the model for interpretation of journalistic photographs. The study is mostly theoretical in its scope, but it also includes some empirical research (educational experiments with students, visual material analysis) that was conducted to design and evaluate models for photography interpretation and to explain more complex terms related to photography (photographic context and photo-genre). The two main research questions, addressed in this study, along with more specific and detailed research questions in each of the dissertation articles are:

(i)   Which are the methods to interpret journalistic photographs?
(ii)   How to use the interpretation of journalistic photographs as a learning and teaching tool in visual literacy education?

Theoretical and methodological framework and key concepts
The study's main object, i.e., journalistic photograph is considered as a photograph created by a journalist to report either news or an event of particular interest to the public, or to illustrate a journalistic text, or to show certain people. Thus, press photography is regarded as a field of enquiry (except for Article I,

in which press photograph was used as a synonym to journalistic photograph, which was further verified as the study has developed). The journalistic photograph is a medium of visual communication, which as a cultural artefact, is often embedded in intertextual connotations and symbolic meanings, possible to be identified in the interpretation process. Due to these particular features, journalistic photographs often become a part of societal visual memory, which earns them the status of visual icons of particular events. Iconic photographs are intertextually powerful, rich in symbolic meanings, visual tropes and other types of connotators. The reason for singling out iconic images in this study is to emphasize that a journalistic photograph is a very broad term that includes various types of images. In addition, the study suggests that iconic photographs are sufficient material for visual exercises, especially for beginners, who have less experience in visual analysis. However, all other types of journalistic photographs can be equally suitable to apply the interpretation models proposed in this study.

Furthermore, the study discusses the concept of photo-genre that is understood as a set of certain conventions of form and content, common to other texts of the same type (Chandler & Munday, 2011). The notion of genre helps to organize different types or kinds of work into a category (Barker, 2004; Bate, 2009). Genre is a concept that has been quite extensively used in various disciplines, but without receiving sufficient attention in regard to photographs in the press. Thus, after reviewing and comparing existing typologies and categorizations of photo-genres (Lester, 1999; Wolny-Zmorzyński, 2007, 2010, 2011; Kobré, 2008; Pienimäki, 2011, 2012, 2013), and analyzing visual material from the Polish daily "Gazeta Wyborcza", the study proposes the genre typology of journalistic photographs. The typology sets out four photo-genres: news photography, reportage photography, portrait photography and illustrative photography, with related photo-types. The photo-types are distinguished based on differences in the visual content of photographs, their context, layout of display, number of images, and their fulfilment of informative, expressive, impressive, aesthetic, illustrative or marketing functions.

Furthermore, the attention is turned to the concept of photographic context that is especially important in this study, which argues for decontextualized interpretation of photographs, i.e., an interpretation with minor attention to context (including only a caption). The study indicates and further discusses three types of photographic context and their usage in the methods of visual interpretation: (i) context of production, (ii) context of medium, and (iii) page context. The context of reception, although identified, is not discussed separately, but only in relation to the other types. However, in order to provide potential users of the models for photography interpretation with the freedom of attributing various meanings to photographs, the study recommends including the caption as the only element of photographic context.

Finally, the study addresses the concept of VL and the need for its development in contemporary education. Contemporary literacy is not solely seen as the ability to read and write, but is superseded by multi-literacies, among which

VL should gain more attention due to its importance in a visually stimulated environment. Lacking a clear, comprehensive definition, VL is often included in descriptions of media literacy, or placed in contrast to the concept of visual competence (Griffin, 2008; Müller, 2008) that is favoured as a term more relevant to visuals (Griffin, 2008). This study uses the concept of VL and refers to exceptional efforts in providing its theory and definition by Pettersson (1993), Avgerinou (2001) and Avgerinou and Pettersson (2011). Thus, VL is defined here as an ability to understand, interpret and use images as well as thinking and learning in terms of images (Avgerinou, 2001, p. 142).

In order to design models for photography interpretation, the following visual research methods and approaches, divided into three groups, are evaluated:

(i)   classic, well established methods and theories: elements of visual semiotics, visual rhetoric, Barthes' (1993) phenomenological approach (the concept of studium and punctum),

(ii)   approaches to visual interpretation, having their roots in the analysis of paintings: Barrett's (2010) principles for interpreting photographs, compositional interpretation (Rose, 2012), iconological context analysis (Müller, 2011),

(iii)   methods dedicated to analysis of photographs in the press: quantitative content analysis (Bock, Isermann, & Knieper, 2011), a new integrative model, combining iconology with psychophysiological and eye-tracking methods (Müller, Kappas, & Olk, 2012).

The study attempts to challenge visual methodologies by analysing particular features of journalistic photographs: genre, context, layout, function fulfilled by a photograph (informative, expressive, impressive, aesthetic, marketing and illustrative), and symbolic, connotative and intertextual meanings. Thus, the study results in approaches to photography interpretation that include these elements and that are a combination of particular visual research methods. However, it also excludes visual semiotics from the final model for interpretation of journalistic photographs due to its complexity and requirement of comprehensive introductory teaching.

Tools for the interpretation of journalistic photographs
Findings of this study present four models and approaches for interpreting journalistic photographs that are aimed to facilitate training in VL. They were mainly tested with highly connotative, or even iconic, photographs (except for the photo-genre typology) to exemplify each model's implementation in the most illustrative manner. Both the choice of the method and a set of photographs are crucial to the learning process, in which learners should develop their VL skills.

The PPSA model, grounded in semiotics and communication, comprises three sections: denotative, connotative and additional questions. The interpretation process begins with a description of what is seen in the photographs (as the model was initially dedicated for the interpretation of photo reportage, which is

a series of photographs), a selection of photographic techniques used and analysis of the caption. The next stage is the connotative part that includes (hermeneutic) interpretation of the photographer's relation to the presented story and a description of the viewer's feelings towards the analysed photographs, and the Barthian punctum. The most interesting element in the PPSA model is the idea of looking for and explaining interpretants in the photographs: visual rhetorical figures, symbol and intertextual connections. In the trial test of the model, this part of students' interpretations was well developed, while most of the semiotic references appearing in the model were unnecessary. There is also not any need for separating denotation and connotation as these two often interfuse in the interpretation process. The last part of the model, i.e., additional questions, can be freely modified by the teacher, according to the aim of interpretation for which the model is applied. Usage of the PPSA model requires some introductory teaching that can also lead to the conclusion that visual interpretation is a learning process, which is more effective when introduced step-by-step, through various visual exercises that can, for instance, train learners' intertextual thinking.

Indeed, the intertextual approach to photography interpretation that is proposed in this study can serve as a prerequisite for more advanced interpretations. It is based on the question concerning the kinds of connections that a viewer can make with a particular photograph (or its elements) to other images, and cultural artefacts. Intertextuality is proposed in this study as a way to think outside the box, i.e., to look at the photograph as it is, not as it was contextualized for us. This kind of interpretation is a never ending process, the more that is seen – the more connections can be made.

The following instrument (explained below) for VL education is aimed to raise learners' understanding of a kind of images they will work with in the interpretation process. The genre typology of journalistic photographs opens several possibilities for VL exercises. It provides clear descriptions for each photogenre and related types. The descriptions can be used by students in classifying any set of journalistic photographs, or to discuss differences between particular images.

The key finding of this study is a model for the interpretation of journalistic photographs that is proposed as both a synthesis of particular visual research methods and as a simplified version of the PPSA model. The main focus in this model is on photographic content and image-viewer relation (as in the image interpretation process), i.e., on kinds of meanings viewer attaches to the photograph. The model is an eight-step collection of questions, compiled in order of interpretation, starting from a basic description of the photographic content, reading and analysing the caption, describing photographic techniques, viewer's emotions and feelings related to the photograph, identifying punctum and intertextual connotations along with visual rhetorical figures, and indicating a message implied in the photograph. Although the model is built on the denotative-connotative division, this fact is not directly specified, but it is visible in a sequence of questions that leads from basic to more advance interpreta-

tion. The most important feature of this model is that it can be applied straight away in visual exercises (except for visual rhetorical figures, a notion which may require some prior explanation). However, for the purpose of more in-depth interpretation, it is suggested that usage of the model is facilitated or introduced with some visual exercises.

The predominantly theoretical character of this study can serve as a great opening for future research that can focus on assessment of VL skills and its development. The models proposed here can be further reviewed both through empirical studies in visual education and by adding elements of some other visual research methods that this study did not elaborate. Future studies should also focus on promoting VL education by proposing concrete instruments that can be used for developing the skills of reading, understanding and using images as well as visual thinking skills.

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ORIGINAL PAPERS

I

TO SEE MORE:
A MODEL FOR PRESS PHOTOGRAPH STORY ANALYSIS

by

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To See More: A Model for Press Photograph Story Analysis

Joanna Kędra
University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Abstract

This article presents and evaluates an interdisciplinary model for press photograph story analysis. The research comprised two stages: (i) familiarizing study participants with the interpretation model and (ii) qualitative content analysis of the participants' interpretations of samples of press photograph stories. The result is that the model could be used in the educational context to develop the skills of visual literacy among students. Although the study opens new directions in visual methodologies, the model requires further development.

Keywords: press photograph story, photography analysis, intertextual connotation, visual literacy, World Press Photo

Introduction

The past two decades have experienced increasing interest in studies on visual communication. Although scholars in sociology (e.g., Sztompka, 2005; Bohnsack, 2008), anthropology (e.g., Banks, 2001; Olechnicki, 2003) and ethnography (e.g., Pink, 2001; Chaplin, 2011) emphasize the use of photographs as an additional research material, scant attention has been paid to press photography interpretation. Recent approaches to analysis of journalistic images concentrate on content analysis: quantitative (Bock, Isermann & Knieper, 2011) and rhetorical (Wright, 2011). As press photography plays a central role in communicating news in newspapers and magazines, research focuses on how press photographs affect recipients (Rössler, Bomhoff, Haschke, Kersten & Müller, 2011), rather than moves towards the dynamics of the perception and interpretation of images (Holsanova, 2012). Nevertheless, Barrett (2000) emphasizes the importance of photography analysis in that "all photographs – even simple ones – demand interpretation in order to be fully understood and appreciated. They need to be recognized as pictures about something and for some communicative and expressive purpose" (p. 36).

In accordance with this statement, my aim was to formulate a basic, interdisciplinary model for Press Photograph Story Analysis (hereafter PPSA), which could be used to analyze most press photograph stories, and subsequently to evaluate the model's validity in a trial assessment. Suggested end users of the PPSA model are teachers of photography classes who would like to develop visual literacy skills among students. Avgerinou and Ericson (1997) suggest that "as teachers we should concentrate and exploit the visual sense through the nurturing and development of visual literacy" (p. 287). Also Brumberger (2007) points out that "the fact that we are surrounded by, and rely on, visual information does not mean that we automatically acquire visual literacy" (p. 397). Therefore, this study introduces the PPSA model and demonstrates how to apply it in the educational context.

In the World Press Photo competition the term *press photograph story* refers to the sequence of images, usually from 8 to 12, by one author, on one topic. As a subgenre in photojournalism, the term *photo story* is applied by Kobré (2004), whereas as the *picture story* – by Lester (1999). Wolny-Zmorzyński (2007, 2010) uses the term photo reportage as a synonym for a press photograph story. He describes *photo reportage* as at least three photographs, ordered sequentially, of which one indicates the place where the event happened, the second specifies the time, and the third one presents the photographer's (visual) commentary to the event.

Press photography is a medium in visual communication and, therefore, frames for a model of analysis should be based on a communication model. Jakobson's (1960) model is linear and quite basic, but still sufficient for the purpose of this study, and consists of six elements: sender, message, code, context, contact and receiver. In the context of press photography – a photographer is the sender, the message is an image and the receiver is a person who views or interprets picture. Jakobson's model includes all the necessary elements of communication to be applied to the PPSA model. However, as McQuail (1997) argues, *contact* between sender and receiver does not have to occur at the same time: "unlike the case of face-to-face contact, mediated (and especially mass-mediated) communication always involves a spatial and social distance between the participants" (p. 109). Similarly, the process of reading images may take place long after a particular picture was published. Therefore my PPSA model does not include contact.

Although *context* has a broad variety of meanings, this article uses just one particular comprehension – the page context, i.e. the relation between a photograph and the text (Marsh & White, 2003; Westman & Laine-Hernandez, 2008). The page context is the way in which the photograph is presented to the viewer, either alone or within the text (title/headline, caption, articles) and other images (Zelizer, 2005). For the purpose of the PPSA model the page context is limited to the analysis of the caption as a central element of the page context in photography reception (see for instance studies by Müller, Kappas, & Olk, 2012).

Barthes (1977) claims that the photographic image "is a message without a code" (p. 17) and associates this idea with the statement that "image is not the reality but at least it is its perfect *analogon*" (p. 17). This means that the process of denotation is sufficient to perceive photographs, because "images are thought to provide depictions of the world as 'it is', offering a concrete and grounded depiction of the events underlying the news" (Zelizer, 2005, p. 172). However, the process of connotation, which makes a use of code, is indispensable to interpret press photographs. Barthes (1977) calls this division a *photographic paradox* – "the co-existence of two messages, the one without a code (the photographic analogue), the other with a code (the 'art', or the treatment, or the 'writing', or the rhetoric, of the photograph)" (p. 19). The code could be defined as "a set of conventionalised ways of making meaning" (Rose, 2012, p. 128). The photographic code, therefore, provides the receiver with intertextual connotations as Barrett (2006) points out in the definition of interpretation: "to interpret is to make meaningful connections between what we see and experience in a photograph and what else we have seen and experienced" (p. 804).

Interpretation of photography is immersed in culture, therefore, factors such as age, sex, cultural competence, familial and social background, and level of education play important roles. These factors mainly concern the receiver, as Durrer (2004) points out: "to read photographs is personal, and inevitably so. Such reading depends on one's upbringing, culture, interests, preferences as well as dislikes" (para. 1). While asserting the individualistic aspect of each photograph's interpretation, Durrer does not indicate the need for a method of analysis.

A photograph is not only a message, but also a solitary sign and a collection of signs (objects within the frame of the image). Peirce's Sign Theory is sufficiently apt for press photograph story analysis. Peirce (as discussed in Mrozowski, 2001, pp. 271-273) divides a sign (*sign relation*) into three connected parts: a sign, an object and an interpretant. A sign is either a single element or a (mass) medium in communication, which in the case of a photograph story, infers that a sign is either a single image or an entire photo story that represents or means something. The object exists either in reality in the image or just in the viewer's imagination. The interpretant gives a meaning for both the sign and the object. According to Pierce's Sign Theory, each sign to become *the* sign needs an interpretant, i.e. another sign.

The Press Photograph Story Analysis Model

The PPSA model (see Figure 1) is comprised of three sections: (i) Denotative; (ii) Connotative and (iii) Additional questions. The process of analysis begins with denotative analysis of the key features of the press photograph story (A1), which leads to analysis of the caption (A2) and finally the sociological analysis of the content of images (A3).

The connotative analysis is more complex than the denotative analysis, as viewers of images need interdisciplinary knowledge of cultures, art and contemporary societies to enable them to decode the signs in the image. In order to analyze the sender's relationship to the story framed in the photographs, first-hand information from the sender is of great value but is rarely available. A possible and viable solution is hermeneutic interpretation, which emphasizes the sender and their intentions (B1). One of the tools of hermeneutic interpretation is empathy, which the Polish sociologist Piotr Sztompka (2005) describes as:

> Empathize with photographer's situation, social position and perspective from which he is taking photographs.Unavoidable problem, which we meet at this point, is fact, that each of us is a subjective entity, with own intensions, motivations, knowledge, superstitions, stereotypes, resentments, biographical, experiences. Totally liberate from them, is impossible. (pp. 77-81)

SENDER	MESSAGE & CONTENT/CODE	RECEIVER
	DENOTATION	
(A1) Photographer's selection of characters, scenery, black & white/color technique, framing, lighting.	(A2) What kind of information do you receive from the caption? What does it tell you about the topic of this press photo story? ANALOGON $\longrightarrow$ OBJECT $\xleftarrow[\text{influence}]{\text{context}}$ caption (photo/s)	(A3) Sociological analysis. Description of characters: appearance, sex, age, behavior, activities, political sympathy, nationality/ethnicity.
	CONNOTATION	
(B1) Sender's relation to presented story and characters (this information is obtained from the photographer or being a result of hermeneutic interpretation).	(B2) Find and describe the interpretant/s in the photograph/s: visual rhetorical figures, symbols, intertextual connotations to art, contemporary culture, etc. SIGN $\xrightarrow{\text{connotation}}$ OBJECT $\xleftarrow{\text{connotation}}$ INTERPRETANT (photo/s)	(B3) What kind of emotions and feelings are combined with an analyzed photo story; think about single photographs and the whole photo story. Press photo story's punctum.
ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS (C) What theme or information does the press photograph story communicate? What can you learn about the world from these photographs? What would be the topic of your research if you intend to use this press photo story as an illustration or source?		

Figure 1. Press Photograph Story Analysis

Empathy relies on sensitivity, which becomes sufficiently stressed if a great many emotionally sensitive images are analyzed, to the point of making the analyst insensitive as Sontag (2008) explains:

> To suffer is one thing; another thing is living with the photographed images of suffering, which does not necessarily strengthen conscience and the ability to be compassionate. … Once one has seen such images, one has started down the road of seeing more – and more. Images transfix. Images anesthetize. (p. 20)

Consequently, it might be difficult for PPSA researchers to describe the emotions and feelings inherent to particular images, as well as to the whole photo story (B3).

A photograph story in the denotative part of the model is an analogon (A2), but in the connotative part is a sign that requires an interpretant (B2), such as a visual rhetorical figure, symbol or intertextual connotations to art or contemporary culture. Burgin (1982) argues that "the 'photographic text', like any other, is the site of a complex 'intertextuality', an overlapping series of previous texts" (p. 144). The term *visual rhetorical* figure is an

analogy for figures of speech in poetry, such as visual metaphor, hyperbole, simile, anaphora, oxymoron, metonymy and personification. Lindekens (as cited in Nöth, 1995) refers to this photographic analogy as "an iconic code whose semiotic structure even justifies its being defined as a language" (p. 462). Eco (1987) classified types of codes of an image, among which he discerned rhetorical codes, which can be divided into visual rhetorical figures, visual rhetorical premises and visual rhetorical arguments. Interpretation of the code of photography (B2) is highly individualized and depends on the viewer's (receiver) culture, background, knowledge and sensitivity. Kress and Leeuven (2006) stress this relationship in comparison to language: "Like linguistic structures, visual structures point to particular interpretations of experience and forms of social interaction. … Meanings belong to culture … and the way meanings are mapped across different semiotic modes … is also culturally and historically specific" (p. 2). Photographs, besides containing information, also have symbolical meanings (Zelizer, 2005). As Szarkowski (2007) points out "if photographs could not be read as stories, they could be read as symbols" (p. 8). Therefore, symbols among other intertextual connotations are indeed important in the process of press photography analysis, as they help the viewer to *perceive more* in the picture.

The final stage of the Sender-Receiver section of the model involves the viewer's choice of punctum, which Barthes (1979/1993) defines in the context of a photograph as:

> that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me).…In this habitually unary space … a "detail" attracts me. I feel that its mere presence changes my reading, that I am looking at a new photograph, marked in my eyes with a higher value. This "detail" is the punctum. (p. 27, 42)

Punctum is highly personal. In the context of a press photograph story, punctum might be one significant photograph of the whole photo story, or an element in a particular photograph. The next step for the viewer conducting PPSA is to explain why this photograph (or an element in a particular photograph) is a punctum.

The last part of the model – (C) *additional questions* – was specifically developed for the model's trial test to enable the participants to reflect on what they have learnt during the analysis. The *additional questions* could also help to provide summary for the analysis, or be formulated according to the specific research topic, such as social exclusion and gender understanding and representation in press photography.

Methodology

In the spring term of 2011, I delivered an English-language course called "Press Photography as a Medium for Intercultural Communication" at the Department of Communication, University of Jyväskylä. The students (n=12) who participated in the validity test of the PPSA model, came from Finland (5), Austria (2), Belgium (1), Hungary (1), the Netherlands (2) and Japan (1). The gender ratio of the group was (7F:5M) and their ages ranged from 20 to 32 years and their fields of study were: speech communication (2), organizational communication (5), intercultural communication (2) and journalism (3). A small sample was chosen because of the aim of this study, i.e. to illustrate the usage of the PPSA model in the educational context, rather than to provide an inclusive evaluation of it. Nevertheless, the sample offers a satisfactory variation in the participants' cultural and educational backgrounds, age and gender ratio. This variation was important due to the specificity of the PPSA model described in the previous section.

I provided the students with a copy of the PPSA model (Figure 1) and copies of three 'category award winning' photo stories at recent World Press Photo contests: Photo Story #1 Photographer: Zizola, F. 2007. Contest category: People in the News (see Figures 2.1-2.4). Photo Story #2 Photographer: Lindqvist, L. 2008. Contest category: General News (see Figures 3.1-3.4). Photo Story #3 Photographer: Herrmann, M. 2009, Contest category: General News (see Figures 4.1-4.4).[1]
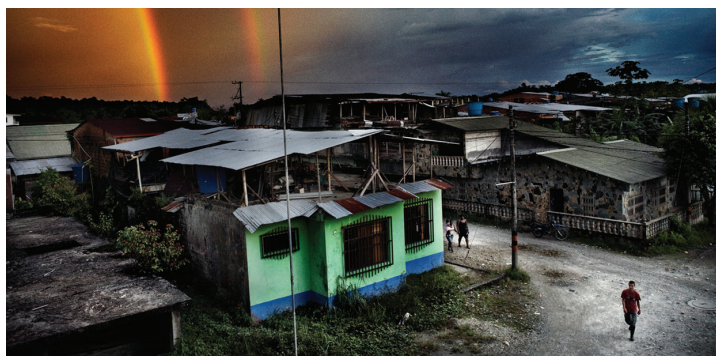
Figure 2.1. Photo Story #1

The village of Istmina, on the San Juan River, is home to many displaced and indigenous peoples. Violence has become endemic in Colombia, a country long ravaged by conflict between national security forces, outlawed armed groups and drug cartels. Women are particularly affected as victims of sexual assault. Marginal groups and aid workers suspected of helping guerillas have also been targeted. Copyright 2007 by Francesco Zizola/NOOR. Reprinted with permission.

Figure 2.2. Photo Story #1

A 13-year-old girl, raped by a neighbor, waits in a hospital for an appointment before having an abortion. Violence has become endemic in Colombia, a country long ravaged by conflict between national security forces, outlawed armed groups and drug cartels. Women are particularly affected as victims of sexual assault. Marginal groups and aid workers suspected of helping guerillas have also been targeted. Copyright 2007 by Francesco Zizola/NOOR. Reprinted with permission.

Figure 2.3. Photo Story #1

An eight-year-old girl undergoes counseling at a Médecins Sans Frontières care center after being raped by her mother's partner. Violence has become endemic in Colombia, a country long ravaged by conflict between national security forces, outlawed armed groups and drug cartels. Women are particularly affected as victims of sexual assault. Marginal groups and aid workers suspected of helping guerillas have also been targeted. Copyright 2007 by Francesco Zizola/NOOR. Reprinted with permission.

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[1] Due to the limited amount of space within this article, I could only provide samples of photographs of each press photograph story discussed here. For unabridged versions see the World Press Photo Archive (n.d.). All captions are quoted from the World Press Photo Archive (n.d.).

Figure 2.4. Photo Story #1

Violence has become endemic in Colombia, a country long ravaged by conflict between national security forces, outlawed armed groups and drug cartels. Women are particularly affected as victims of sexual assault. Marginal groups and aid workers suspected of helping guerillas have also been targeted. Copyright 2007 by Francesco Zizola/NOOR. Reprinted with permission.

I asked the students to choose one of the photo stories and to write a 2-3 page analysis based on the PPSA model. During the course I explained all the terms used in the PPSA model, especially the visual rhetorical figure, symbol and punctum, which are important for the deeper connotative analysis. The primary aim of this assignment was to challenge the students' visual sensitivities, and so I selected the photo stories to provide a variety of visual poetics and problems.

I received four essays on each photograph story, which I analyzed by qualitative content analysis (Ryan & Bernard, 2000) to evaluate students' visual literacy skills and to observe how they demonstrate visual sensitivity through the usage of intertextual connotations. Data was coding (Patton, 2002) according to the parts of the PPSA model (see Figure 1), and to provide answers on the following questions: (i) Did the students follow the model in the interpretation? Which elements, and which not? (ii) Which parts of the model should be improved for the further development of the model? and (iii) could the PPSA model be used to teach the skills of visual literacy and to develop visual sensitivity?

Results

Evaluation of the Model: Analysis of the Students' Essays

I divided data into thematic sections relating to the PPSA model: (A1)

denotation-sender, (A2) denotation-message and context, (A3) denotation-receiver, (B1) connotation-sender, (B2) connotation-message and code, (B3) connotation-receiver and (C) additional questions.

Denotation–sender. The participants' understanding of section A1 was well developed, although there was a tendency (discussed for instance by Sekula, 1982) to include connotative analysis in the denotative description of the sender's influence on the photograph. Despite the PPSA model requesting only the use of either black-and-white or color (i.e. deliberately omitting a description of any colors), the participants not only described but also analyzed color usage:: "the skin color is in a few pictures in contrast with the bright colors, in other pictures you almost cannot separate the skin color from the dark background" (female, 23, Netherlands); "some kind of desperateness is expressed by the use of colors" (male, 23, Belgium); "the impression of photo story is quite dark and cloudy with just few colors" (male, 32, Finland).

Parallel to descriptions of color usage were analyses of light usage, but interestingly, less frequently for either of the color photographs such as referring to #1: "used dark colors, the light focused only on the main characters" (female, 23, Hungary). By contrast, light usage in the black-and-white of #3 attracted a lot of comments: "uses only prevailing light, typical bright and harsh Mediterranean sunlight, which creates steep contrast and hazy views of the background" (male, 26, Finland); "the use of light is magnificent and it captures the feeling of old past life and the idea of the new upcoming era which seems to be far away" (female, 26, Finland); "the usage of light is very special; with the dark edges" (female, 29, Finland).

Participants comprehension of the types of framing was not well developed as the paucity of their descriptions concentrating on the contrast of distance and close-up and a central point of focus indicated: "there are different views – there are close-ups and there are long shots" (male, 24, Austria); "most of the time there are people in the middle of the picture; other times there are things that belong to the people in the middle" (male, 20, Netherlands).

Despite content analysis of this thematic section indicating a tendency to integrate denotative with connotative analysis, the PPSA model did at this stage seem to be useful for interpretation, enable students to develop their visual literacy skills throughout the basic observation of colors, light and framing.

Denotation–message and context. 'Context', (A2) in the PPSA model was confined to the interpretation of the caption's relationship to the photo story theme. The results indicated a high degree of confusion 0r misunderstanding about the definition of the term, for example: "some pictures caption is close up and personal and some of them feel like they are almost theatrical, setting and people in the pictures seem to tell a story" (female, 29, Finland). There was also the element of confusing the caption with the contest category – "the caption of the photo story is People in the News; it can mean anything, because every day there are people in the news; so in this way the caption is kind of mysterious" (female, 23, Netherlands).

Interestingly, several interpretations suggested that analysis of the caption was either useless or unhelpful, for example: "according to the caption the topic of the press photo story is violence and especially sexual crimes; before I read the caption I immediately had something like this in my mind" (female, 28, Finland); "the captions informs us that the Israeli attack on the Hamas militants … especially hit the normal people … the captions also tell what exactly happen, but sometimes this is not that useful because you can already see it" (male, 20, Netherlands).

By contrast there were also a few interpretations, which suggested that analysis of the caption was useful, although the participants did not conduct a correct caption analysis: "the information I receive from the caption is quite useful; it tells me where the conflict/war is situated … the origin of the conflict is explained as well as the group involved … also the period of time is mentioned" (male, 23, Belgium).

Denotation–receiver. The most striking observation to emerge from the analysis of section A3 was that students used metaphorical representation to describe characters in the photographs, for instance: "you could say that these people belong to the more poor of this planet, with all kinds of problems around them" (female, 23, Netherlands); "there are not these chaotic photographs, but 'quiet' ones in which you can see that the people are thinking" (male, 20, Netherlands); "one girl sitting on a hospital stool, looking straight to the camera; it feels like she is the one who gives a face to the sexual abuse and the rapes" (female, 28, Finland).

Some interpretations contained a description of characters based on visual opposites, for example: "we can clearly see the difference in pictures of warriors and pictures of innocent civilians; these warriors look combative, convinced that they are doing the right thing whereas the civilians look desperate, anxious and afraid of what might happen" (male, 23, Belgium);

"whereas the men look mostly severe and grim the women look very desperate" (male, 24, Austria). This finding may indicate that the PPSA enables students to develop their visual literacy skills. The essays also included some basic sociological descriptions of characters: "the people in the pictures have a dark brown skin, are male or female and are children or adults" (female, 23, Netherlands); "you see around 15 persons praying … on top of the destroyed mosque … it shows that they are very religious" (male, 20, Netherlands).

Interestingly, the majority of interpretations of Photo Story #2 contained similar observations about the ages of the characters: "characters in the photos are variable, you just don't see children" (female, 29, Finland); "all people in photos are adults or older people and there are no children at all" (male, 32, Finland); "in general you can say that there are no young people at all (male, 24, Austria).

Data analysis proved that this part of the model is sufficiently developed. The majority of interpretations consisted of sensitive descriptions of characters using both visual metaphors and visual opposites. However, interpretations of this kind come close to combining denotation and connotation processes.

Figure 3.1. Photo Story #2

Georgian soldiers travel near the city of Gori, close to the South Ossetian boundary. Following the escalation in fighting between Georgian forces and separatist militia in the breakaway region of South Ossetia in August, Russian troops intervened and for a while occupied parts of Georgia outside of South Ossetia. They later pulled back under a ceasefire brokered by President Nicolas Sarkozy of France. Copyright 2008 by Lars Lindqvist. Reprinted with permission.

Figure 3.2. Photo Story #2

Following the escalation in fighting between Georgian forces and separatist militia in the breakaway region of South Ossetia in August, Russian troops intervened and for a while occupied parts of Georgia outside of South Ossetia. They later pulled back under a ceasefire brokered by President Nicolas Sarkozy of France, which held the rotating European Union presidency at the time. Copyright 2008 by Lars Lindqvist. Reprinted with permission.

Figure 3.3. Photo Story #2

Following the escalation in fighting between Georgian forces and separatist militia in the breakaway region of South Ossetia in August, Russian troops intervened and for a while occupied parts of Georgia outside of South Ossetia. They later pulled back under a ceasefire brokered by President Nicolas Sarkozy of France, which held the rotating European Union presidency at the time. Copyright 2008 by Lars Lindqvist. Reprinted with permission.

Figure 3.4. Photo Story #2

Following the escalation in fighting between Georgian forces and separatist militia in the breakaway region of South Ossetia in August, Russian troops intervened and for a while occupied parts of Georgia outside of South Ossetia. They later pulled back under a ceasefire brokered by President Nicolas Sarkozy of France, which held the rotating European Union presidency at the time. Copyright 2008 by Lars Lindqvist. Reprinted with permission.

Connotation–sender. The sender's relations to the photograph story (B1) did not seem to pose any problems to the participants, some of whom included in their interpretations information about the photographer from external sources, such as the Internet. This aspect of external information influenced later stages of the interpretation process, as it opened a wider contextual perspective on the particular photo story, for instance: "when you know he has studied anthropology, then it becomes much more clear why he photographs these people in these situations" (female, 23, Netherlands); "he says that he wants to make people feel something when they look at his pictures" (female, 20, Austria).

Some interpretations were quite simple, with a short explanation of particular statements about the photographer: "the photographer's relation to the presented characters has obviously been very close; otherwise he wouldn't be able to take a picture of girls and women who have been raped" (female, 28, Finland); "the photographer's relation to the presented story is very close, because it was his first war … and you can also feel it when he speaks about the pictures" (male, 24, Austria). Or even without this explanation, for example: "the photographer has deliberately taken an observers role in the story" (male, 26, Finland); "he is very sensible and because of that people let him in" (female, 20, Austria).

On the other hand, the participants also tried to empathize with the

photographer. They used empathy specific words (i.e. related to feelings and emotions), for instance: "it seems, that the photographer enters into the character's feelings … we can imagine that in the next moment he puts his hand on the victim's shoulder" (female, 23, Hungary); "it feels like the photographer shares emotions with the characters and wants to let the audience experience the very same emotions" (male, 23, Belgium). These two examples indicate that the participants tried to use a basic form of hermeneutic interpretation.

Figure 4.1. Photo Story #3 Gaza - Landscape of Destruction

A boy walks through the entrance of the house where his family once lived in the Hai al-Salam neighborhood of East Jabaliya, Gaza on 25 January. The Israeli military campaign against Hamas militants in Gaza came to an end on 18 January, after 22 days. Israel completed its withdrawal by 21 January, but did not lift its siege on the Gaza Strip. Intense bombardment had left thousands of homes destroyed and tens of thousands of people displaced. Copyright 2009 by Meiko Herrmann. Reprinted with permission.

Figure 4.2. Photo Story #3 Gaza - Landscape of Destruction

A multi-level apartment building destroyed during the Israeli offensive on Gaza. The Israeli military campaign against Hamas militants in Gaza came to an end on 18 January, after 22 days. Israel completed its withdrawal by 21 January, but did not lift its siege on the Gaza Strip. Intense bombardment had left thousands of homes destroyed and tens of thousands of people displaced. Copyright 2009 by Meiko Herrmann. Reprinted with permission.Reprinted with permission.

Figure 4.3. Photo Story #3 Gaza - Landscape of Destruction

The Hai al-Salam neighborhood, just 3 km from the border, was almost completely destroyed during the Israel's attack on Gaza in January. The Israeli military campaign against Hamas militants in Gaza came to an end on 18 January, after 22 days. Israel completed its withdrawal by 21 January, but did not lift its siege on the Gaza Strip. Intense bombardment had left thousands of homes destroyed and tens of thousands of people displaced. Copyright 2009 by Meiko Herrmann. Reprinted with permission.

Figure 4.4. Photo Story #3 Gaza - Landscape of Destruction

Cows killed by heavy bombing lie strewn on the ground in East Jabaliya. The Israeli military campaign against Hamas militants in Gaza came to an end on 18 January, after 22 days. Israel completed its withdrawal by 21 January, but did not lift its siege on the Gaza Strip. Intense bombardment had left thousands of homes destroyed and tens of thousands of people displaced.Copyright 2009 by Meiko Herrmann. Reprinted with permission.

Connotation–message and code. While the majority of students revealed a basic understanding of the concepts of visual rhetorical figures, symbols and intertextual connotations (B2), there were few interpretations that correctly named all these elements. The exceptions were the uses of visual rhetorical figures, such as simile: "the little girl in front of a lighted wall seems like praying in the church, in front of the altar" (female, 23, Hungary) (Figure 2.2); hyperbole: "the colors can be seen as a hyperbole … the colors are so beautiful and bright that at first sight you may think it is a beautiful world because of the colors" (female, 23,

Netherlands), "the empty and surreal – almost moonlike – landscapes … emphasize the absurdity of war and destruction" (male, 26, Finland) Figure 4.3); a personification: "the high wall … anticipate massive barrier and hurdle that she [girl] is facing and surmounting in her future life" (female, 20, Japan) (Figure 2.2), an anaphora (repetitio): "she [a girl] is wearing white clothes as a lot of others in this photo story: the girl in bikini, little girls, waiting girl and women with candle" (female, 23, Hungary) (Figure 2.2-2.4), a metonymy: "picture … shows a hand covered with blood touching a car; this refers to death, wounded people and the unnecessary spill of blood" (male, 23. Belgium) (Figure 3.3), or visual metaphors (sometimes mistaken with a symbol), but frequently appeared: "… black cloud that connotes pungent dark force and face of city" (female, 20, Japan) (Figure 2.1), "a heard of dead cows visualize the lost without showing dead people" (female, 26, Finland) (Figure 4.4), "picture of the woman … she is alone and holding on the glass, something that you can see through, still you can't see her face; maybe this is a symbol for the situation of which everybody knows, but can't do anything about" (female, 29, Finland) (Figure 3.2), "as he [a boy] sits – with arms between legs – seems like provocative, that's why he seems like a scapegoat of every guilty man; he has common outlook, it means that the aggressor can be anybody" (female, 23, Hungary).

Although the interpretation of symbols in photographs depends on their identification, the participants did succeed in stressing common symbolic elements, for example: rainbow, white clothes and urban ruins. This trend suggests that press photography is associated with symbolism. The interpretation of symbols, however, depends on the receiver's culture and background. "It is commonly believed … that you can find a treasure at the end of the rainbow … it makes me feel like the treasure, better life and the hope is somewhere else, far away from the village" (female, 28, Finland) (Figure 2.1); "the last picture shows us hope; it feels like two women are lighting the candle in hope of a better tomorrow, wishing things would get better" (female, 28, Finland) (Figure 2.4); "in the background there is a gun; symbol of authority and some would say manhood, the gun pointing up like a phallus" (female, 29, Finland) (Figure 3.1); "women wear white … white mostly stands for purity … most of them [women] are being sexually abused; so there is no purity anymore with these girls and women" (female, 23, Netherlands) (Figure 2.2-2.4); "a man is walking through a door which is everything that is left from his home; the step through a door can be seen as a step to new life" (female, 26, Finland) (Figure 4.1); "On all photographs you see damaged buildings. But every time the foundation of the building is still there … You can see it as a symbolic message: you can damage everything

you want, but you can never destroy the foundation. And with people the foundation is their beliefs, religions, way of life; just who they are" (male, 20, Netherlands) (e.g., Figure 4.2).

The participants also described some intertextual connotations, for example: "some kind of strong connotations to Italian mafia movies came to my mind … the dark scenery, blood and gun in the first photo are powerful symbols used in many movies" (male, 32, Finland) (Figure 3.1). Two interpretations included own *cultural perspective* – an interesting approach to the intertextual interpretation, as it gives a different and unique perspective, based on national (cultural) proverbs and sayings: "In my country, we often say 'the back tells the story a lot' … thus, Zizola's two pictures of young girls are impressing for me because then we can afford to think about what they are shouldering in their lives" (female, 20, Japan) (Figure 2.2 & 2.3), "The photographer also manages to make the pictures a kind of 'quite' … in Dutch we have a saying 'Silence after the storm' … Now they [people] don't have to be scared all the time and think about how to survive; they finally have the time to realize what actually happened and how it will change their lives" (male, 20, Netherlands) (Figure 4.1-4.4).

The topic of sexual abuse in Photo Story #1 acquired the most advanced interpretations, all composed by female participants. The level of development of analysis of a photograph depends on the picture's theme and the scale of sensitivity of the viewer. Nevertheless, sensitivity should develop *in*, and be developed *by*, the process of interpretation.

Connotation–receiver. Data analysis of section B3 indicated that the participants had difficulties with identification of their feelings related to the photographs and composed only generalized statements, for example: "there are many different emotions and feelings" (male, 32, Finland); "picture shows negative feelings: sad, disappointed, bereft of hope" (female, 23, Hungary); "it makes me feel sick … and made me feel horrible" (female, 28, Finland); "photo story is of course very sad" (female, 20, Austria). One of the reasons for this trend is that the interpretations were written in English, which was not the mother tongue of any of the participants and they were unable to fully express their emotions.

Further analysis showed that, as the students had asked rhetorical questions in the context of the punctum, for example: "Punctum for me is the little girl … After the bad memories what could she do in next year? Can she ever find the way out of this village? Can she ever forget, what happened? Can she ever smile?" (female, 23, Hungary) (Figure 2.3), they had understood the *punctum* concept. Despite the highly personal aspect of the *punctum,*

interpretations of Photo Stories #2 and #3 used the same photographs as the punctum of each photo story; image of man saying farewell to a weeping woman on a bus (Photo Story #2): "picture … with the man pushing his hand against the window of the bus, saying goodbye to his crying woman … my imagination starts to fly: I ask myself: … Who is he? What is she thinking? What does she think about the future?" (male, 23, Belgium) (Figure 3.4); image of boy walking through the entrance of a house (Photo Story #3): "the boy in the opening shot … he still has his life ahead of him; what kind of life, is another question … this boy, then, might be the punctum of the photo story" (male, 26, Finland) (Figure 4.1).

Additional questions. Press photography interpretation teaches not only visual sensitivity, but also general sensitivity towards other people and their problems. This attribute of press photography is visible in the participants' discursive evaluation of the situations captured by the photographers: "We should realize that the world has so many faces, and a lot of them are very negative. And problems are always relative, because when you see the problems these people have, you might think twice about your own so called 'problems'" (female, 23, Netherlands); "War has so much more consequences … But for what case? That is often a question difficult to answer" (male, 23, Belgium).

The participants also asked rhetorical questions, for instance: "why this destruction happened and did all the people in the village share the same ideology and were they willing to sacrifice all they had?" (female, 26, Finland) and came to conclusions such as: "it tells you that in wars you often have to say goodbye" (male, 24, Austria).

Discussion

The study was undertaken in order to evaluate the basic model for press photograph story interpretation and to present the usage of this model in the educational context. Data analysis indicated that two parts of the model requires further development: Denotation – Message and Context (A2) and Connotation – Receiver (B3). Instruction in A2 should contain more adequate and detailed questions, but in order to create a satisfactory model for context analysis – separate research on the context is required.

In the Denotative part of the model, in A1 and A3, the participants combined denotation with connotation. This finding supports the idea for a connotative model for press photography interpretation, with just some essential, introductory denotative elements. In order to implement this approach, a new model should be developed that would contain more

questions, which would lead to deeper connotative analysis as well as to rhetorical content analysis (Wright, 2011).

One unanticipated finding is that students had similar observations and conclusions about the characters, symbols and punctum. This result suggests that press photography interpretation is not always an individualistic and unique process, even on the level of connotation. Images in press involve a universal visual language. They are "associated with symbolism, universality and generic meaning, connotation is what allows images to contextualize concrete details and make them understandable" (Zelizer, 2005, p. 172). Furthermore, Sturken and Cartwright (2005) conclude "this combination of subjective and the objective is a central tension in camera-generated images" (p. 16).

Conclusions

As mentioned in the Introduction, the methodology of press photography analysis has attracted little research. Usage of Bock's et al. (2011) quantitative visual content analysis enables researchers to "answer the questions of who or what is represented by the media and count the number of appearances of actors or themes" (p. 266), but does not enable them to carry out connotative analysis. Despite Rössler et al. (2011, p. 420) proposing a model for the selection and effect of press photos, which concentrates on the process of reception, a comprehensive methodology model has yet to be created. The importance of the results using the basic model for press photograph story interpretation thus lies both in its introductory character and potential contribution to the field of visual studies.

The present study should be considered as an initial inquiry into the methodology of press photography analysis in the educational context. The results of the trial assessment might support the hypothesis that the PPSA model could be used to teach the skills of visual literacy and to develop visual sensitivity among students. However, to unambiguously confirm this assertion, comparative research with a similar group of students completing the same task without the PPSA model is required. Moreover, "equally problematic is obtaining proof of learning: irrefutable evidence that what has happened in a classroom is the result of a particular pedagogical strategy that can be isolated from other factors" (Brumberger, 2007, p. 398). Nevertheless, the PPSA model could be used as an interesting tool for photography interpretation both in the field of visual literacy and press photography methodology.

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II

**DOES THE JOURNALISTIC PHOTOGRAPH NEED A CONTEXT?
RETHINKING CONTEXTUAL INTERPRETATION**

by

Kędra, J.

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III

ENHANCING VISUAL LITERACY THROUGH INTERPRETATION OF PHOTO-GENRES: TOWARD A GENRE TYPOLOGY OF JOURNALISTIC PHOTOGRAPHS

by

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Enhancing visual literacy through interpretation of photo-genres: toward a genre typology of journalistic photographs

Joanna Kędra

Department of Communication, University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland

ABSTRACT

Although genre is one of the most extensively employed concepts in various disciplines, only a few attempts have been made to classify images in the press, providing either a palette of thematic categories similar to those of photography competitions or theory-based classifications, which often ignore certain types of photographs. In addition, no studies have suggested the genre typology as a tool for the interpretation of journalistic photographs. Based on a literature review and visual material analysis from the Polish daily *Gazeta Wyborcza*, this study compiles a typology that sets out four photo-genres: news photography, reportage photography, portrait photography and illustrative photography, with related photo-types. The criteria used to distinguish certain photo-types are based on differences in the visual content of photographs, their context, layout of display, number of images, and their fulfillment of informative, expressive, impressive, esthetic, illustrative or marketing functions. As a result, the study describes each genre and type separately, illustrated by visual samples. The conclusion is that although genres have a tendency to merge and create hybrids, and thus, any attempt at classifying them leads to certain generalizations, the typology can be applied as a tool in visual literacy education to facilitate students' interpretation of journalistic photographs.

Introduction

The concept of genre is commonly used in film, literature and journalism studies, but little attention has been paid to its definition and evaluation with regard to photography (Bate 2009, 3; Pienimäki 2013, 157–160). Dictionaries of media and communication (e.g. Barker 2004; Black 2006; Chandler and Munday 2011; Watson and Hill 2012) describe a complex concept of genre by providing various synonyms, such as type, category, kind or classification, whereas they should specify that genres organize different types or kinds of work into a category (Barker 2004, 74; Bate 2009, 3). A genre is a type of text, which is subject to certain conventions of form and content, common to other texts of the same type (Chandler and Munday 2011). Similarly, with reference to visual texts, it is the practice to classify images into certain groups, and thus, pictures which share the same features, belong to the same genres (Rose 2012, 23). However, genres of journalistic photographs are

CONTACT Joanna Kędra ✉ joanna.kedra@jyu.fi

sometimes confused with thematic categories such as news, sport or nature (see categorizations by Kobré 2008; Lester 1999; Newton 2001), similar to those used in photography festivals and contests, for example, by the World Press Photo (WPP 2014). In addition, only a few attempts have been made to provide a genre typology of journalistic photographs, applying, for instance, the classic typology of literature genres (Wolny-Zmorzyński 2007), later developed under the division of information and publicist journalism (Wolny-Zmorzyński 2010), or creating a genre typology as a pedagogical tool for media education (Pienimäki 2012, 2013).

Thus, this study aims to compile a genre typology of journalistic photographs, based on a review of various classifications of journalistic photographs, and on the examination of visual material from one of Poland's most successful opinion dailies, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, with its supplement *Duży Format*. I decided to extensively refer to Polish literature and analyze visual samples from the Polish press, because, in comparison to other countries, the tradition of genre studies in journalism is well established in Poland (Wojtak 2004; Wolny-Zmorzyński 2007, 2010, 2011; Wolny-Zmorzyński, Kaliszewski, and Furman 2006).

In this article, I argue that although an effort to create a genre typology of journalistic photographs may seem pointless, or even useless, for contemporary journalism studies, as it leads to certain generalizations, nevertheless it can serve as a tool for the interpretation of journalistic photographs for visual literacy education. The criteria used for visual material analysis, and thus to create the typology, are based on differences in photographic content, context, functions of images, their number and the layout of the display. These criteria are also important in the interpretation process. Hence, the typology gives guidelines on how to *interpret* visual statements and helps us to *think* visually, which are the main abilities of visual literacy (Avgerinou and Pettersson 2011, 10).

The study begins by differentiating between the terms: press photography and journalistic photograph. Furthermore, it reviews classifications of journalistic photographs to provide knowledge about photo-genres and types appearing in the contemporary press, with complementary definitions. Next, the review is integrated with an analysis of journalistic photographs from *Gazeta Wyborcza*. Finally, I offer a genre typology of journalistic photographs, which can serve as a tool for visual literacy education.

Throughout this article, the term *journalistic photo-genre* refers to genres and types of journalistic photographs published in the press, especially in daily newspapers, but also in magazines. The typology proposed here covers photo-genres and types, each understood as a model, or pattern or a set of conventions.

Press photography or journalistic photograph?

Press photography is a broad concept, sometimes referred to as a field (Becker 1996), or a division of photography, the aim of which is to inform readers (of newspapers and the Internet) about current, actual news or events (Pisarek 2006, 61), or to portray certain people, or to provide an illustration when it is more appropriate to use visuals rather than words, but excluding advertising photography. In the literature, the term press photography and photojournalism are often used interchangeably, whereas the definition of each is rarely explicitly formulated. Tomanić Trivundža (2010), for instance, argues that press photography covers all the photographs used by media outlets while photojournalism is just one of its genre. Hence, he points out that photojournalism describes more

informative and immediate images (i.e. spot and general news, background news or issues, features and sports news), while press photography includes portraits, illustrations and even picture stories, as well as stock photographs (Tomanić Trivundža 2010, 68–69). In this article, however, I understand press photography as a field of scholarly enquiry, and, following some other scholars (for instance, Pienimäki 2013; Wolny-Zmorzyński 2007, 2010, 2011), I apply the term *journalistic photograph* to cover a diverse and multi-genre group of photographs, excluding advertisements, published in the print and online press.

Method

Putting a journalistic photograph into the frame of a particular genre leads to certain generalizations, often without much application to reality. This study attempts to overcome this challenge by trying to combine theoretical perspectives on photo-genre categorization with some empirical material from the contemporary press. However, as the main objective for compiling a typology of journalistic photographs is to propose it as a tool for the visual literacy education, some generalizations are inescapable.

The analysis starts with a brief overview of recent studies on genre categorization in the field of press photography, which provides names and definitions of genres and types, which are then applied to the visual material analysis from the major Polish daily *Gazeta Wyborcza* and its Thursday supplement *Duży Format*. Sample photographs were found from 17 to 23 November 2014, which was a period without any special events that could have visually dominated the newspaper's layout, and thus, not provided a typical batch of photographs. The analyzed material includes five weekday issues (Monday–Friday), one of them with a supplement (Thursday), plus a weekend issue (Saturday–Sunday).

In addition to the literature review on genre typologization, visual material was looked at in terms of the following criteria: the content and context of a photograph, the role of a photograph in the page or newspaper's layout, the number of images, that is, a single image or a series, and the function fulfilled, that is, the function which overwhelmingly dominates. I argue that these are the basic criteria needed to initiate the interpretation process of a journalistic photograph, and thus, the photo-genre typology compiled below can serve as a tool for photo-interpretation practices in visual literacy education.

In the analysis that follows, a layout is understood as 'the way in which the page is designed showing the position of text, graphics and photographs' (Black 2006, 131). The position of a photograph in relation to other texts or visuals is indicated whenever it is important to classify a photograph under a certain genre or type. As for the functions, Wolny-Zmorzyński's (2007, 42–44) division into informative (communicative – cognitive), expressive, impressive and esthetic functions was applied, with the addition of marketing and illustrative functions. By conveying visual information, a photograph fulfills an informative function. An expressive function exposes the sender's (photographer's) involvement in the photographed events, and is accomplished by the choice of light, frame and characters. Photographs with a dominant impressive function (sometimes supported by an esthetic one) ought to make an impression on viewers (readers) and orientate their thoughts, feelings and emotions toward the photograph. Journalistic photographs that fulfill a marketing function aim to sell a newspaper or magazine, while all the others simply illustrate a journalistic text by fulfilling the illustrative function. Even though all

the functions may be performed in each journalistic photograph, usually one or two dominate the others, and often determine to which genre and type the photograph belongs.

Review of photo-genre classifications

Journalistic photo-genres can be perceived from the following three perspectives: dynamic, static and materialistic, as applied by Wojtak (2004) to (journalistic) press genres. The dynamic perspective describes genre as a communicative or cultural phenomenon. Indeed, a journalistic photograph is a visual communication and cultural artifact, that is, both the concept of photo-genre and convention of genre categorization is a kind of agreement between readers and media outlets. The static perspective indicates that genre is a type of text (or image, i.e. a visual text), a pattern which allows it to combine with other texts or images with similar features. In other words, the static perspective refers to the possibility of creating genre classifications. Finally, the materialistic perspective looks at genre as a statement or a compilation of statements, which are the best possible representation of a certain set (Wojtak 2004, 16). The materialistic perspective indicates that the genre is a stable concept, but in fact, it transforms into hybrids (Bate 2009, 4; Rose 2012, 23), according to the general tendency in the media to merge and mix genres in order to surprise the viewer (Branston 2006).

Studies on genre typologization of photographs contain a multitude of terms and theories, and thus, it is difficult to choose or formulate one classification that can be used as a tool for the interpretation of journalistic photographs. Pienimäki (2011, 2013), who developed photo-genre classification as a tool for education, argues for rejecting the thematic-driven categorization, saying that it generates too many genres and thus makes the reception and interpretation process complicated for the viewer. However, topic-based categorizations are often used by photography festivals and competitions, such as the WPP (2014), as well as by some scholars, for instance, Newton (2001, 5) who writes about sub-genres of photojournalism, that is: spot news, general news, features, illustration and sports news. Kobré (2008) highlights the following eight sub-genres in photojournalism: spot news, general news, issues, features, portraits, sports, photo story and illustration, while Lester (1999) writes that the photographer is assigned to cover news, features, sports, portraits, illustrations and picture stories (for the comparison of various photo categories, see Figure 1). Thematic categories are suitable for photographic assignments or competitions, which judge photographs based on their content, but they are not appropriate for learning about how to interpret journalistic photographs, because they ignore other important aspects of journalistic photographs, such as context, layout, number of images and functions.

Like Pienimäki (2011, 2013), I argue that we should concentrate on practice- or purpose-based classifications, instead of semantic, mainly topic-based categorizations, which may generate too many genres. However, Pienimäki's (2012, 2013) classification is quite limited in its scope, because of the pedagogical purposes for which it was created. Pienimäki identifies the following four genres of journalistic photographs: (i) news photograph, which she further splits into observational (hard news) and participatory (soft news), (ii) photographic illustration, (iii) journalistic portrait, among which she distinguishes realistic and performative portraits,[1] and (iv) an identification or index photograph, for instance a mug shot. Even though Pienimäki's (2013) classification was designed as a 'genre tool' for

World Press Photo 2014	Newton 2001	Kobré 2008	Lester 1999
Spot news			News
General news			
–	Features		
–	Illustration		
Contemporary issues	–	Issues	–
People: • observed portraits • staged portraits	–	Portraits	
Sports: • sports action • sports feature	Sports news	Sports	
–	–	Photo story	Picture stories
Daily life	–	–	–
Nature	–	–	–

Figure 1. World Press Photo categories and sub-genres of photojournalism.
Source: Compiled from Kobré (2008), Lester (1999), Newton (2001) and WPP (2014).

enhancing media literacy, it was neither tested in reception studies or in an analysis of the contemporary press. Instead, it is cross-disciplinary and literature-driven research, which overlooks some important types of journalistic photographs (for instance, photo reportage), because of the necessary simplifications and generalizations for pedagogical purposes.

While Pienimäki's classification may serve as a basis for further development, especially in defining photo illustration or photo-portrait, Wolny-Zmorzyński's (2007, 2010, 2011) classification is more comprehensive. It takes its roots from literature studies[2] where a journalistic photograph is a distinct genre within information and publicist journalism (Table 1). In the context of information journalism, Wolny-Zmorzyński (2010) distinguishes the press photograph (understood as a counterpart to the news photograph, but also including photo-portraits) and the photo-chronicle (a genre currently more common on the Internet than in the press). Within publicist journalism there is the photo-feuilleton/photo-essay, cover photo, photo reportage, photomontage, photo-cartoon, pictorial and photoblog. The main criticism of his approach is the use of the term press photograph to cover three different types of photographs, that is, news photographs, photo-illustrations and photo-portraits. In addition, Wolny-Zmorzyński lists the genre of a photo-feuilleton (as a synonym to photo-essay!), which is very rare in the contemporary press and

Table 1. Classification of photographic genres of journalism.

News journalism	Opinion journalism
• Press photograph: News photograph Illustration Portrait • Photo-chronicle	• Photo-feuilleton/photo-essay • Cover photo • Photo reportage • Photomontage • Photo-cartoon • Pictorial • Photoblog

Source: Compiled from Wolny-Zmorzyński (2010, 2011).

thus difficult to both define and identify. Wolny-Zmorzyński's (2007, 2011) typology also devotes too much attention to the genre of pictorial, which is nothing more than a picture with an erotic tinge and could be classified as a type of photo-portrait, displayed in certain types of magazines.

Even though, Wolny-Zmorzyński's typology is yet another catalog of photo-genres, it is more useful for image-categorization than, for instance, Becker's (1995) distinction into documentary photography, social science and photojournalism, or Bate's (2009) division into documentary and story-telling (including photojournalism), portraits, landscape, still life (referring to advertisements), and art photography. Due to the differences in how each photograph depicts reality, all images printed in the press cannot be labeled as one genre of photojournalism, and thus, a more careful approach is required.

Toward a typology of journalistic photographs

Below I propose a genre typology of journalistic photographs that consists of four genres: news photography, reportage photography, portrait photography and illustrative photography. Each photo-genre covers a group of photo-types (Table 2). In some cases, a short interpretation of a certain type is provided to illustrate how the typology of journalistic photographs can be used in visual literacy education.

News photography

The aim of a news photo is to provide visual evidence (information) of events of topical significance. Hence, the key aspect of this kind of picture is to capture the right moment (Freeman 2011), and to answer to the same five questions as news story should, that is, what (happened)?, where?, when?, how? and why? However, some news photos make use of text in addition to visual representation, providing extra information in a caption which explains the when, where and how something happened (Lashmar 2014, 58). Captions are usually added by photo-editors (instead of photographers), who also happen to crop images for a better frame (Freeman 2011). In *Gazeta Wyborcza*, news photographs mostly appear on the first few pages about current affairs, while those that are displayed on the newspaper's front page play a similar role to the cover photo in magazines (see illustrative photography). Although news photos may exist separately from the journalistic text, asking 'readers to "see for themselves", [and thus,] limiting critical inquiry of the story with which they are being presented' (Wardle 2007, 265), it seems that they almost always require a caption to transfer full information.

In the analyzed material, the news photograph (Figure 2) is usually the only photograph on a certain page, often displayed in the center, and accompanied by a news agency's

Table 2. Genre typology of journalistic photographs.

Genres	News photography	Reportage photography	Portrait photography	Illustrative photography
Types	• News photo • Photo-chronicle	• Photo reportage • Historical photo reportage	• Mug shot • Journalistic portrait • Small portrait	• Photo illustration • Cover photo • Photomontage • Video-still

Figure 2. News photo. Page section of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 17 November 2014. Reprinted with permission.

(here: Reuters) or photographer's name. It is either self-explicit for the viewer, who knows the culture and political context, or with the addition of a caption. The main characters in the picture are people, especially politicians (here: Tony Abbott and Vladimir Putin), while the visual content covers current affairs (picture was taken just before the G-20 summit in Australia). The news photograph is usually closely related to the article and its title (here: 'Australian harassment of Putin'), while the caption gives the news in highlights:

> Tony Abbott and Vladimir Putin just before the beginning of the G-20 summit. The welcome was courteous, but the Australian Prime Minister was one of the leaders who later strongly pressed Putin in regards to the Russian aggression towards Ukraine.

The photograph, with the addition of a caption, answers the key questions of a news photo: (what?) Putin and Abbott meet before the G-20 summit, (where?) in Australia (see visual indicators of koala bears!), (when?) just before the G-20 summit, (how?) 'the welcome was courteous' and (why?) because Abbott is a Prime Minister of the host country, and Putin is the key person of the current political affairs.

This short interpretation of a news photograph attempts to show how the notion of photo-genre can be used in visual literacy classes. Students are asked to identify a news photograph in the press and to justify their choice by indicating particular features of a news photo-type.

Figure 3 shows one big and seven smaller news photographs from the week of 15–21 November 2014, displayed in *Gazeta Wyborcza* on two pages in the centerfold of a weekend issue (Saturday–Sunday), titled *Tydzień w obrazach* [a week in pictures]. All pictures, authored by different photojournalists, or press photo agencies, are captioned, but their visual contents are not linked to one another. Captions briefly describe the visual news, with the addition of an explanatory commentary, indicating where and

Figure 3. Photo-chronicle. Centerfold section of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 22–23 November 2014. Reprinted with permission.

what happened, but not exactly when. The news is told in short, with coherence between the visual and textual components. I suggest naming this photo-type a photo-chronicle (following Wolny-Zmorzyński 2010, 2011), the role of which is to visually summarize the most important events of a week, month or year in a selection of photographs, subjectively chosen by the newspaper's photo-editors. Each of the selected photographs may belong to a different genre and type, for instance, a news photo, photo reportage or a journalistic portrait, but when published together, they create a news report of a certain period of time. A photo-chronicle is, of course, less topical than a news photo.

Reportage photography

The subject of reportage photography is usually less topical than news photography, while its documentary character tends toward conveying an opinion or creating an atmosphere instead of delivering current news (Wright 1999, 130). Reportage photography has its roots in written reportage, first literary and then press. The genre is frequently discussed in the literature, but it appears under a variety of names, such as feature photography (Wright 1999), or simply features (Kobré 2008; Lester 1999; Newton 2001), a photo-essay (Freeman 2011) or a photo reportage (Wolny-Zmorzyński 2007, 2010, 2011). The World Press Photo applies the term *story* by dividing each thematic category into single photographs and stories (WPP 2014), which creates a distinction with regard to the number of images, rather than to their characteristics. This study uses the term reportage photography to name the genre that covers types of photo reportage (series or single) and historical photo reportage.

Freeman[3] (2011) observes that photo reportage stirs up viewers' emotions more than any other type of journalistic photograph. This characteristic might be because the main topic of photo reportage is a human being in a context of news and events (Freeman 2011; Wolny-Zmorzyński, Kaliszewski, and Furman 2006). Although some photo reportages only capture buildings, interiors or the human environment, rather than people as such, Wolny-Zmorzyński, Kaliszewski, and Furman (2006) seem to overlook these kinds of photographs when formulating the definition of photo reportage. In contrast, this study does not exclude any topics, or ways of visual representation from the definition of photo reportage, but underlines that photo reportage tells a story about people in a certain time and place.

Photo reportage (or the photo-essay) developed at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but got its status in *Life* magazine, where the *Country Doctor* (1948) by W. Eugene Smith was published as the first modern photo-essay (Freeman 2011). The subject literature states that photo reportage is usually a series of at least three photos (Wolny-Zmorzyński 2007), often without much textual commentary. It should be looked at as a series, because particular photographs have an effect on each other (Freeman 2011), and thus they compose a story told in a sequence of frames. A single photograph of an entire story may possibly exist independently, but this is usually the case with iconic images,[4] that is, images that provide symbolic meaning of particular events and are repeatedly used by media outlets (Zelizer 2005, 172). In addition, some photo reportages are intentionally created as single images, never being a part of a series. This trend has recently become more popular due to the limited space in newspapers that are not able to publish a series of photographs on several pages. Indeed, as Freeman (2011) claims, the ideal model is to report a news event, or tell a story, in just one picture.

The typical characteristic of photo reportage is the lack of an extended commentary, usually limited to either or both caption(s) and a short introductory article. This tendency was already noticeable in the 1960s when photo reportage developed from an almost non-textual to totally visual form of display in some magazines (Freeman 2011). The photo reportage used for this study is displayed on four pages (Figure 4) in the Thursday supplement to *Gazeta Wyborcza – Duży Format*, labeled on its front page as the 'reporters' magazine'. It publishes mainly reportages and longer articles, and at least one photo reportage (as a series). The analyzed photo reportage (Figure 4) is a series of five captioned photographs with a title (*A wife for a week*), lead paragraph and a short introductory article. The first photograph with a community's leader and his wives, children, grand- and great-grandchildren is an introduction to the story, which develops in the following photographs about the everyday life of the biggest family in the world. Although the photographs are related to each other and constitute a series, they could be viewed in any order. The accompanying article works as an extended caption, providing additional information about the community and its leader, but leaving readers with some doubts and some pressure to see and judge for themselves.

Due to the characteristics described above, photo reportages are especially interesting visual material for interpretation. Students can, for instance, discuss how similar and different, in the context of story-telling, single and series photo reportage are in relation to each other, or to the news photograph.

Figure 4. Photo reportage. Page sections of *Duży Format*, 20 November 2014. Reprinted with permission.

Gazeta Wyborcza publishes one more type of journalistic photograph, which seems to fit into the genre of reportage photography. I propose naming this historical photo reportage. Photos are usually displayed singly, with a caption and often in black-and-white or sepia. Historical photo reportage has similar characteristics to photo reportage, in that it

tells a story about people in certain historical circumstances. Quite often its main function is to illustrate a journalistic text, instead of developing an independent visual narration that is left to the article. The source of this photo-type is usually a newspaper's or other institution's archive, indicated by a picture's frame.

Portrait photography

The tradition of photographic portraiture dates back to the invention of photography, which in turn has followed the model of portraiture in art history. The publication of a photo-portrait in the press is motivated in two ways. First, to present visual evidence of a person and second, to tell a story about the person framed. The former is known either as an identification (index) photograph (Pienimäki 2013), or a mug shot (Lashmar 2014; Lester 1988), or *thumbnail faces* on the home pages of newspapers (Knox 2009). Thumbnail-sized images usually appear without any caption, but with someone's face displayed in a close-up. Although in the literature all photographs which present a person and aim to show what the person looks like are covered by the common term of portrait, I make a distinction into three photo-types of the portrait photography genre, that is, a mug shot, a journalistic portrait and a small portrait, because they correspond to visual material from *Gazeta Wyborcza*.

As observed in the analyzed material, commentaries are frequently published with mug shots of their authors (Figure 5), who are either well-known faces in journalism (Figure 5, bottom photo: Monika Olejnik, TVN 24, Radio Zet), or in politics, or who are the newspaper's commentators (Figure 5, top photo: Bartosz T. Wieliński, *Gazeta Wyborcza*). Despite the recognizability of the person framed, each mug shot is accompanied by the name, profession and place of work of that person. Typically, mug shots impudently address viewers, catching their attention with the person's gaze, directed toward potential readers. Passport-sized images, without the photographer's name, are situated in the left upper corner of a commentary, under its title. Mug shots are usually displayed in color, in a square frame, and sometimes also in black-and-white, or cut to a *person-shaped* size. They are visually explicit, working as both a signature and an illustration to the text.

Another type of the portrait photography, observed from the visual material, seems to belong to the journalistic tradition of providing news and views, and is referred to in the literature as the journalistic portrait (Pienimäki 2013). It is created not only to show what a certain person looks like, but also to tell something more about this person's life, character and so on. Hence, the photographer captures the sitter with an individual facial expression, or with some typical attributes related to their profession, activities, social status and position, and in a certain environment or background, which provides additional information about this person. Freeman (2004) indicates that this kind of photograph alludes to the tradition of portraiture for the press, the aim of which is to include a lot more information in the image than is usually the case, in order to tell the story of the person in a certain visual context. However, the journalistic portrait is less common in daily newspapers, compared, for instance, to magazines, in which the quality of print is higher. Magazines display a lot more of this type of photograph, often in a stylized form (thus, performing an esthetic function). Journalistic portraits appear either with a short caption, for instance, a quotation from an associated article, or as an illustration for an interview (or other journalistic text) as in the case of the photograph from the analyzed sample (Figure 6), displayed in *Duży*

Figure 5. Mug shots. Page section of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 21 November 2014. Reprinted with permission.

Format on an entire page, without a caption. However, the way a person is portrayed is highly related to both the article's title and content.

Visual material contains one more type of portrait photography, which is between a mug shot and a journalistic portrait in terms of its characteristics. I suggest naming this a small portrait. It presents a person either with or without attributes, but the person's gaze is not directed at the reader, as in the case of a mug shot. The caption only indicates the name of the person framed. A small portrait is usually only a little bigger than a mug shot, while the purpose of it is quite similar, that is, to provide a visual identification of the person mentioned in the associated article, instead of telling a story about that person, as in the case of a journalistic portrait. The placement of a small portrait within a newspaper depends on the page layout; hence, it is not as strict as in the case of a mug shot.

Illustrative photography

Illustration is the oldest visual genre in the press, and it developed long before the invention of photography, in the form of a lithograph. Later, it competed with photographic

Figure 6. Journalistic portrait. Page section of *Duży Format*, 20 November 2014. Reprinted with permission.

images, but soon became an independent and quite different genre with regard to its aim in the press (Wolny-Zmorzyński 2010). Since lithographs, and then drawings, or other graphical forms of images, have become satirical commentaries to events, some photographs have taken the role of illustration. Kobré (2008, 341) claims that illustration is a result of a combination of journalistic and advertisement photography. Indeed, the aim of a photograph on a magazine's cover is to catch attention of potential readers, and thus, to sell the magazine.

Based on the literature review and the analysis of the visual material, I suggest distinguishing four photo-types in the genre of illustrative photography, that is, a photo illustration, a cover photo, a photomontage and a video-still. As observed from the visual material, a photo illustration is neither news nor visual information, but instead it visualizes the content of the associated journalistic text. In *Gazeta Wyborcza*, a photo illustration is accompanied by a name of a stock photography agency, or other source, for instance 'press materials' rather than a photographer's name. As observed, illustration photographs are displayed in three ways: (i) as the background for a lead, without a caption or the photographer's name, (ii) playing with the page layout, for instance, a man acting as a doctor, standing partly behind the text while at the same time pointing at the title of the article (Figure 7); the source of the picture is shown, or (iii) by simply accompanying a journalistic text in a regular frame with a caption. The content of a photo illustration

Figure 7. Photo illustration. Page section of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 21 November 2014. Reprinted with permission.

always seems to be closely related to the journalistic text that it illustrates. It functions both as a visual aid for the reader and as an important element of a page layout.

The second type of illustrative photography is a cover photo, which traditionally appears in magazines, but only rarely in newspapers. Its content may refer to one of the topics described in the magazine, but its main role is to compose the cover's layout (Wolny-Zmorzyński 2007, 76–77) and to sell the magazine. Hence, it fulfills a marketing function. Frequently, this type of image comprises some graphical elements, or appears in the form of an intentional photomontage. Wolny-Zmorzyński (2007) observes that a cover photo is more often taken by an artist than by a photojournalist. The function of some front-page pictures in dailies is similar to that of the cover photo in magazines, that is, they intend to catch the attention of potential readers, and thus, to sell the newspaper. However, they should not be classified as cover photographs, because they are predominantly news photos or photo reportages.

Photomontage is a vanishing type of illustrative photography and I could not identify it within the analyzed sample, even though *Gazeta Wyborcza* sometimes uses it. Wolny-Zmorzyński (2007, 100–103) defines a photomontage as a photograph of high persuasive and opinion values, which consciously distorts the real world. I claim that a photomontage is a form of infographics that ideally combines only photographs, but may also contain a

few graphical elements. Hence, photomontage can be recognized not only as a type of illustrative photography genre, but also as a hybrid of journalistic photograph and graphics or drawings. Indeed, photomontage often appears in a form that combines a photograph or photographs with some symbolic graphical elements, and thus it assembles a lot more of the information included in the associated article than a traditional illustration photograph does.

One more type of illustrative photography is a video-still, a picture which is not a photograph per se, but a still taken from video footage. *Gazeta Wyborcza* usually uses it to illustrate a film review (as in Figure 8), which at first sight may look like a typical journalistic photograph in terms of its visual content and convention of captioning. Figure 8, for instance, is a frame from the Polish movie *Serce, serduszko* [Heart, tiny heart] with a caption related to the plot and the main character ('Marcin Dorociński [the film character] as an alcoholic, trying to be up to the role of father'). Sometimes, a video-still is not just an illustration, but may also play the role of news photo, if there is no suitable photograph available in the newsroom. In that case, it belongs to the genre of news photography.

Photo-genre typology and visual literacy

In a few places in this article, I have already suggested how the concept of genre and the genre typology of journalistic photographs can be introduced and used in visual exercises. I further propose to visual literacy, media and journalism educators to organize a class about photo-genre and ask students to observe what different types of photographs appear in the press (preferably in newspapers, but magazines or online press may also be used). Next, students can compare their ideas with the genre typology compiled

Figure 8. Video-still. Page section of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 19 November 2014. Reprinted with permission.

Table 3. Journalistic photo-types with criteria for their classification.

| Journalistic photo-type | Criteria | | | | |
	Content	Context	Layout	Number of images	Dominant function
News photo	Current, or unusual event, natural disaster, current political affairs	Usually self-evident with a caption; appears in relation to the article's content	Either on the front page (centered) or in the news section	Single	Informative
Photo-chronicle	Compilation of various contents (news, entertainment, nature, sport); photographs not related to each other within a series	Caption indicates where and what happened but not exactly when	A selection of photographs with captions; displayed on an entire page or two pages	Series	Informative
Photo reportage	Story about people in news, events, tragedies, everyday life situations, entertainment, etc.	Photos dominate over text; short introductory article with lead plus captions; photos self-evident visually	In almost totally visual form; displayed on few pages; size of photos may vary	Series or single	Impressive
Historical photo reportage	Story about people in historical circumstances	Text and caption play an important role in explaining the photo-content	In a black-and-white or sepia	Single	Illustrative
Mug shot	Newspaper commentators, well-known people in politics, journalism, who authored the accompanied text; person's gaze directed at the reader	No caption; the name and profession of the person framed are indicated	Passport-sized photo of the author of a commentary or other text	Single	Illustrative
Journalistic portrait	Portrait of a person in a certain environment, or background, with attributes related to their profession, activities, etc.	Illustrates the interview/other text, but often self-explanatory visually; sometimes caption as quotation from the associated text	Stylized; often displayed on full page; more common in magazines	Single	Esthetic
Small portrait	The person that the associated text is about; the person is sometimes portrayed with attributes	Caption indicates who is in the photo; associated text gives news about the person framed	Usually little bigger than passport-sized; place of display depends on the page layout	Single	Illustrative
Photo illustration	Content related to the accompanied text	Not always captioned; associated text may play a crucial role in reading a photograph	As part of the page layout, or displayed in a regular frame	Single	Illustrative
Cover photo	Refers to one of the articles; may include graphical elements	No caption; visually explicit	Typical for magazines; composes cover's layout	Single	Marketing
Photomontage	A combination of photographs, sometimes with graphical elements, to illustrate the content of an associated article	Stays in close relation with the associated text; often uses visual symbols to illustrate textual content	Displayed in a similar way as illustration photograph	Single	Expressive
Video-still	A still taken from the footage; illustrates, for instance, a film review; can also act as a news photograph	Caption explains what the film plot is about, or who is in the picture, or what happened	Usually displayed in a regular frame; adds visuals to the page layout, or appears in the news section	Single	Illustrative or informative

within this study (Table 2). Applying the criteria used for creating the genre typology, students should be able to describe the content and context of photographs, the role of particular photograph in the newspaper's layout, the number of images and the function fulfilled (see Table 3, which compiles all criteria in respect to each photo-type and reveals each criterion individually). The criteria will not only guide the students' interpretations of photographs, but will also help them to understand the concept of genre.

In addition, students can focus on just one genre or type and, by using the genre typology (Tables 2 and 3), they can choose to identify one photo-type in different kinds of newspapers or magazines. However, as the concept of photo-genre remains complex, it requires some introductory teaching that can be based on the study presented in this article.

Conclusion

The literature in mass media studies (Barker 2004; Black 2006; Branston 2006; Chandler and Munday 2011; Neale 1990; Watson and Hill 2012; Wojtak 2004) provides extended discussions, and formulates definitions, when approaching the concept of genre from subject-specific angles. However, the key feature of genres is their tendency to merge and create hybrids (Branston 2006; Rose 2012), and thus, any typology of journalistic photographs leads to certain generalizations. In a similar vein, Pienimäki (2013) argues that a genre is just a tool, and hence, not all journalistic photographs have to fit into particular genre-frames. Thus, some images cross the boundaries of the genres to which they were initially ascribed. For instance, the video-still, classified here as a type of illustrative photography, can be also labeled as a news photo, as, for example, the famous video-still of Neda Agha-Soltan from anonymous footage, which received a Special Mention in the WPP (2010). Nevertheless, the typology suggested within this study comes across same difficulties concerning the unambiguous classifications of certain journalistic photographs into genres and types.

In addition, it should be also considered whether it is possible to apply the typology to the online press, or information portals and vortals, where the boundaries between photo-genres and types are even more blurred than in the traditional press. Some photo-chronicles, for example, have recently moved to the Internet, due to limited space in the traditional newspapers, and transformed the best pictures of the week into a slide show. Also some other types, such as mug shots, are currently more typical in the online than the paper press (Knox 2009).

The typology of journalistic photographs introduced in this article is based on a review of existing classifications (Pienimäki 2012, 2013; Wolny-Zmorzyński 2007, 2010, 2011) as well as on an analysis of visual material from *Gazeta Wyborcza*. The major limitation of this study lies in its focus on only the Polish press and on the Polish literature. However, it should be underlined that the scholarship on journalistic genres is well established in Poland, compared to other countries, where photo-genres are often confused with thematic categories (Kobré 2008; Lester 1999; Newton 2001).

Even though newspaper readers have grown up in a certain environment that applies the concept of genre, not all of them are able to instantly recognize and name photo-genres and types. In addition, the interpretation of journalistic photographs relies heavily on a viewer's visual competence, and ability to read images that does require some training, because merely looking at pictures is not a sufficient condition to

become a visually literate viewer. Thus, this study addresses these challenges, providing a typology of journalistic photographs, along with particular criteria for their identification, complemented by short definitions and visual samples. The typology is proposed as a tool for visual literacy education. Based on the typology, various visual exercises can be created. However, as for every tool designed for educational purposes, it requires a teacher's assistance to facilitate the learning process.

Notes

1. This division into realistic and performative portraits links to the recently renewed categories of the World Press Photo (from the year 2014 onwards), where the category *People* was divided into observed and staged portraits (WPP 2014).
2. Based on the assumption that journalism originates in literature, Wolny-Zmorzyński, Kaliszewski, and Furman (2006) formulate the typology of journalistic genres, which derives from Aristotle's classical division into types and genres in literature studies. The authors propose four types of journalism, that is, press, radio, television and the Internet, which are then divided into information, publicist and information-publicist journalistic genres.
3. Freeman (2011) uses two terms with reference to what is called photo reportage here. He discusses photo essays, which may be a counterpart to photo reportage, and photojournalism, the characteristics of which fit partly to photo reportage and partly to news photographs.
4. See, for instance, Dorothea Lange's *Migrant Mother* (1936), which was initially a part of a series, or a more recent example of the World Press Photo of the Year 2009 by Pietro Masturzo, selected from the longer photo story.

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IV

ACQUIRING VISUAL LITERACY SKILLS: INTERPRETATION OF JOURNALISTIC PHOTOGRAPHS AS A TOOL FOR CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION

by

Kędra, J.