

VISUAL LITERACY AND CHARACTER EDUCATION FOR ALPHA GENERATION

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Abstract

Technological development creates a new culture of cyberculture. Manifestations of cyberculture include various human interaction especially in terms of the communication on the visual aspect of his life. Slowly but surely the development of communication technology in the visual aspect is increasingly massive and most consumed by "Y" generation. Nowadays, the visual hedonism in the digital age is getting uncontrollable social deviation from many aspects, ethical and moral values that occur at the "Y" generation. Bad attitude of "Y" generation will be inherited to Alpha generation, namely the smartest generation. Addressing the very things, we need to prepare the strategy or the concept of education in accordance with technological developments so that it leads to the positive. One of the ways that can be done is with the right digital education, for example, with the application of visual literacy or visual literacy and character education since every generation certainly has different traits and characteristics which are influenced by social, cultural and development of technology. This qualitative descriptive nature paper, which builds upon the educational discourse in framing a visual culture, to know the application of visual literacy strategy on alpha generation. Based on the results of the analysis, understanding the character of learners depends on how the educators themselves in understanding the messages of visual digital era and should really go diving in deeply so that what was delivered is capable of accepted students well according to the way they are. Therefore, prospective educators are required to be able to offset the developments that occur and are experienced by learners especially in the field of technology with visual literacy as an introduction in directing alpha generation to educate good character as a thing that is very fundamental.

Keywords: visual literacy, character, alpha generation

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development in information and technology, especially the existence of internet and its various websites and the content therein, has caused the change of mindset and behaviour in society. In the era of post-industrial society, the development of cyberspace has been very massive especially in the field of visual communication. The popular term is the visual culture. It is because all aspects within includes the use of visual elements. The apparent evidences are computers, gadgets or smartphones which are affordable among people. As the result, there are at least three changes in the community point of views levels: (1) level individual; (2) social interaction; and (3) at the community level. (Piliang, 2004).

For the individual level, cyberspace has created a fundamental change towards our understanding of identity. Every individual in the virtual world can split into infinite numbers of identities. Those fake identities can be used for numbers of unethical behaviour such as: having edited photo, spreading hoaxes anonymously, taking peoples' pictures without permission and share it in social media, etc. Those actions can be considered as cybercrimes. (Ramadlani, 2016:45). Second, the level of social interaction, the presence of cyberspace has created social deterioration, meaning that it is not done in one territory. As an example, a person can be very intimate with somebody even they have never met before. Thirdly, at the community level, the presence of cyberspace can create one model of a community known as the digital and open democratic community. Rheingold coined this as the "imaginary community". Therefore, the chances of the emergence of radical democracy is difficult to stop because there are uncontrolled idea, an expression of desire, demands, social criticism, and many more.

This phenomenon rises to the existence of the younger generation, especially the *net* generation. We know that there are three generations in this world after the era of World War 2 i.e., X, Y, and Z generations. Generation X is commonly known as the generation of Baby Boomers. This generation is

referred to those who are born during 1960 to 1980. The next is the Y generation. Those who are born between 1980 to 1995 are also called the millennial generation. After that, the Z generation come into existence. This generation refers to those who are born between 1995 to 2010.

At least there are five types of generations that can be identified. In relation to the generation theory, they are: (1) the Baby Boomer generation, born in 1946-1964, (2) the X generation, born in 1965-1980, (3) the Y generation, born in 1981-1994, (4) Generation Z, born in 1995-2010, and (5) Alpha Generation, born 2011-2025. Generation Z is also called as the I-Generation, The Net or the internet generation that was born from X and Y generations (Tapscott, 2009).

The change of each generation's mindset also triggers their behaviour shift positively or negatively. Eliza t. Dresang and Koh Kyungwon (2009) examine the typology of information behavior among young people in the digital era, where they are actively seeking for information. From the results of the study conducted, Dresang found that the information searching among young generation is not viewed as a single activity. They are, in fact, actively developing new behaviour in reading. It is the new habit of turning conventional to digital reading. It is characterized by the appearance of new various graphics and non-linear organization in the literature, and multiple meanings. In the theory of radical change related to the previous information changes, it can be said that there is a change of behavior on the Net generation, such as; (1) changes in learning, (2) changes of perspective, (3) and changes in limits (Sugihartati, 2009:110).

First, the changing learning happens due to the influence of the progress of IT where the media convergence has led to a situation which forms multiple media, such as obtaining system information and sharing data sources, exposing the references in forms of visual graphics, and multitasking. In the digital era, young people prefer or explore more on the information graphic that either true or hoax. It also imposes on the world of education. The adaptive educational institutions will incorporate the practice of Information technology in their educational behaviour. However, there are still few numbers of the schools moving toward the future type of education. The reason is that the existence of X generation as the authorities that drive the education regulation. As a result, we can still find conventional methods and approaches applied among institutions. As the result, copyright and intellectual right violence are commonly found nowadays.

Secondly, the change of perspective happens generally because the young people or generation Y and Z have chances to express their own opinions, such as; (a) expressing their opinions through social media, (b) showing the identity by creating information, whether in the form of text or images for example *meme*. Viral pictures and videos have turned into incorporating bad conducts. Porns videos are easily accessible for under ages. The existence of social media have been misused to promote self-identities by updating personal pictures or status as in instagram, facebook, twitter, etc., (c) flexibility and multiple identities, and (d) facing various perspective of different signs and media that lead to the self-comprehension without previously learned contexts.

Third, change the general limitation. The corresponding characteristics are: (a) obtaining instant access on the availability of extensive information, such as google. Considered as professors, teachers often suggest their students to access the site ignoring the importance of citing sources (b) searching information sharing, such as wiki, e-mail, video conference, (c) the establishment of a new type of social networking, such as social media, and the (d) participation in the community.

Based on the explanation above, the changes of behaviour and attitude among generation may lead to positive and negative values. In the educational frame and visual culture perspective, some notions can be proposed as follows; (1) **Baby boomers**. This generation is said to be adaptive, easily accept and adjust changes due to experienced life. (2) **X generation**. This generation experienced the birth of PC (personal computer), video games, cable tv and the internet. No matter its data storage using a floppy disk or a floppy disk. MTV and video games are very popular this time. According to the results of research conducted by Jane Deverson, most of this generation have a negative behaviour such as not respecting old people, getting to know the music of punk, and tried to use cannabis (3) **Y Generation**. This generation is also known as generation Millennial doctrines or the Millennium. Y Generation phrase begin to reach its popularity among US in August 1993. This generation a lot of instant communication technology such as email, SMS, instant messaging and social media like facebook and twitter. They also love playing online games. This generation is also known as lazy generation. It shows cyber violence, fake news, manipulate data, upload porn content, etc. (4) **Z Generation**. This generation is also known as iGeneration, generation net or the internet generation. They have in many things in common with Y generation, but they are able to apply all the activities in a time like tweeting using smart phones, browsing with PC, and using the headset to listen to music. Anything that is done mostly related to cyberspace. Since childhood they have

known technology and familiar with advanced gadgets that indirectly affect their personality. This generation try to show themselves in social media, seeking recognition of public and educational inheritance involuntarily negative from generation Y like trying porn sites etc, (5) **Alpha Generation**. It is a generation that is born after the Z generation. The alpha generation is also mentioned to be the highly educated generation because it entered the school earlier and much to learn.

Generation X was still dominating, and we can see the trend of the leaders of the developed countries and companies that either comes from generation X. Generation Y Meanwhile are still stretched, looking for established conditions in the field of work as well as personal, not denied some already became Chairman of a company since a young age. Generation Z are descended from generations X and Y, it is now young kids whose average still search for identity, some of which already have their own sizable income is mainly from the fields of art and design. This is positive in terms of how the downside? Because of this negativity spreads more easily in cyberspace especially on Generation Y and Z tips, what should we do for this generation? In order for their successors, namely Alpha-generation can be a personal characteristic and both in the previous generation of technology? Yes, the answer is to apply the approach to education that suits his era.

Visual Literacy

Visual communication is the process of sending and receiving messages using pictures. Visual literacy can be defined as "the ability to construct meaning from visual images" to make meaning from images, ' the reader ' using critical skills of exploration, critique and reflection. Lapp et al (1999) used the term "intermediality" to describe the combined literacies needed to read in a multimedia world. They stressed the importance of active reading, based on information visualization and the importance of visual communication to capture attention, reinforce knowledge and improve the response of the audience.

Visual literacy is about interpreting images of the present and the past and produce images that communicate a message effectively, and to an audience, this is very good if applied in children from an early age, namely the age of alpha started learning communicate since the age of KINDERGARTEN – primary, either with conventional media, using digital media, because the daily life of the child is currently closer to visual, such as games and tv.

Visual literacy is developed as a set of skills necessary to be able to interpret the contents of the visual image, examining the social impact of the pictures and discuss objectives found in the pictures. This includes the ability to visualize and communicate visually with, how to read and interpret visual imagery. In addition, students should be aware of and use as image manipulation, or can develop appropriate images his imagination.

Visual literacy also involves an assessment of the accuracy, validity and value of the image, or be familiar with the process of appreciation. People who are literate and able to distinguish visually make sense of visual objects and images; make visual; understand and appreciate the visual created by others. In today's world, a person must be able to interpret, create and select an image to convey a variety of meanings

There are many forms of visual communication including gestures, objects, signs and symbols. Visual sign systems are abundant on the internet. For example, dance, film, fashion, hairstyles, exhibitions, public monuments, interior design, lighting, computer games, advertising, art, architecture and photography are just a few examples of visual communication. Visual literate person should be able to understand the subject matter of the image, especially in today's digital era because the images are absurd and need special explanations or mentoring of teachers to their students.

Why is visual literacy important?

Contemporary culture has become increasingly dependent on the visual especially the ability to communicate instantly and universally. A very high percentage of cognitive theory to improve the visual sensory abilities. "a wise man once said that a picture is worth 100 words. But when the visual symbols are used, then more of the millions of words to express an idea or to evoke a feeling or mood in us and more so to be able to understand the message of a visual symbol in it. Visual literacy is needed to provide understanding and enhance the ability of individuals to be able to read the image in a way that is meaningful (Bamford, 2003:2).

Character education

Hendarman et al (2016) defines characters as attitudes, behavior, motivation, and skills as the application of moral values and the capacity to confront the difficulties and challenges. To realize the civilized nations through the strengthening of religious values, honest, tolerant, disciplined, hardworking, creative, independent, democratic, curiosity, passion, love of the fatherland, to appreciate the achievements, communicative, peace-loving, an avid reader, care for the environment, social care, and responsibility, the government looked at the need for the strengthening of character education. To that end, on 6 september 2017 President Joko Widodo has signed a presidential Regulation number: 87 years 2017 about Strengthening character education. Strengthening character education is the responsibility of the educational unit to strengthen the character of learners through the harmonization of sports heart, think and exercise with the involvement of a joint venture between a unit of education, family, and celebrated as part of the national movement of mental revolution. Presidential regulation aimed at preparing the golden generation 2045 stated that strengthening character education carried out activities on integrated intrakurikuler (learning activities), kokurikuler (intrakurikuler enrichment), and extracurricular (deepening and intrakurikuler appropriate enrichment charge or kurikulum). This rule is also a response from the school's five-day conflict phenomenon suggested the Minister of national education. With the application of this regulation five school days is not something mandatory.

Hendarman, et al (2016) states that there are five main character value of interconnected network values need to be developed as a priority the strengthening of character education Movement. The main value of the fifth character of the nation in question is as follows:

1. Religious
Is the value of the relationship of human connectedness with God the creator. Three main factors in it is the relationship between the individual and God, the individual with a fellow, and individuals with his creation.
2. The nationalist
It is the way of looking, thought patterns and attitudes which uphold the interests of the country above personal interests or groups.
3. Self help
It is the attitude not to rely on others, using all the potential for reaching the hopes and ideals.
4. Mutual
It is the ability of working together to resolve the issue, establish communication and provide assistance to each other.
5. Integrity
The value of character integrity was the value of the underlying conduct that is based on the effort of making himself as someone who can always be trusted in the word, action, and employment, have the commitment and loyalty on human values and moral (moral integrity).

Application of Reinforcement of the key principals of education Character it is teachers, principals, School Committee, or all adults associated with the world of education. They simply must have a teacher as digugu (followed) and imitated (follow).

The concept of strengthening character education movement in the world of education mandated learning also provides students with 21st century skills i.e., critical thinking, creative thinking, communicative skills, and collaborative learning. In fact, very little explanation that touch the concept of interconnectedness of technology and its influence on the millennial generation. In fact, knowledge of the millennial generation or character traits indispensable to create a prototype concept of education is to prepare the future generation of intelligent and character.

Alpha Generation

Nagy (2017) describes the emergence of the term alpha generation. According to him, Mark McCrindle, expert on demographics Australia held a national survey in the year 2015 on behalf of generation after generation Z. Result, the generation of "alpha" is the name that most respondents. The characteristics of this generation are dependencies with display screens and touch screen world. This generation was born in the period 2010-2025. They are the millennial generation in truth since birth and honed in the 21st century. They are interlinked with each other so it got the title "digital native". Although there has never been a clear definition in scientific studies, the appearance of this generation, it was not impossible that it will have an impact on changes in the world of education considering this generation is the generation that have the skill of collecting information its fast and multitasking. Carter (2016) stated

that google had anticipated the trend of this generation who prefer to communicate visually through image and audio compared to type a message. He added that this generation needs more attention due to its overly pampered while growing. Note however, they are a very literate generation technology.

Barkowitz (2016) ethnographic research on an alpha generation. Research conducted with various aspects including the interaction with his group, the time of family gatherings and a ballet class on race. As a result, he gives the characteristics of alpha generation as follows:

- they do not like the principle of sharing economically. Is a boon for the economy because it shows behavior generation anti share.
- they are very agile, except when in a position of stationer. A generation that is actually very active this could be a very silent group proved on babies 0-6 month experiment trailing.
- they ignore privacy. They have a tendency to take off my shirt or one of the legs. More leads into the exhibitionist.
- they don't like the rules. Everything that shaped raw rules usually violated due to incompatible as they want.
- they break away from any form of restriction. They don't like the space has been limited with proven behavior break away from the baby's diaper, chairs, blankets, swimwear, etc.
- prefer natural milk. They tend to be aware of the function of health so choose milk that is fresh and natural.
- Liked the biscuits, pasta, rice, cereal, and vitamins.
- Rebel in religious rituals. In an official religious ritual, they had a tendency to break away or make noise.
- Innovate with items that can be used. They could be interested and experimenting with stuff in the past owned by her parents.
- What's better than a touch screen? The screen slightly. This generation likes to lick things to feel sensation. Process technology developments likely to develop touch-screen is transformed into being the screen slightly.
- Liked the same things to be enjoyed over and over again. They don't like something both rambling like drama or soap opera series. The more they like is the last spectacle that they see, and play them over and over.
- they live in his time. Forget the past, and have no concept of the future. They wanted everything at that time. The principle would be very well known at the time they are YOLO (You Only Live Once/live only once), FOMO (Forget Tomorrow/forget about the future), GITMOE (Give it to Me, or Else./give to me, otherwise ...)
- they continue to thrive. He thought patterns are rapidly changing, making them very difficult to guess. They are the generation that is so creative.

In contrast to the more distinctive Barkowitz alpha generation with a negative point of view, Schawbel (2014) more predicted alpha generation as the generation that has more opportunities and challenges. In 2050, the population of Alpha generation has reached 35 million in America alone. Five traits of alpha generation is as follows:

- they are a generation that has more entrepreneurial soul. Due to the ability to access the information, people, and the power age member early. Many of those who started his business at the age of less than 10 years. Although there are some that fail, they have more opportunities and become more successful over the expansion of the age.
- they have more intelligence technology and rely heavily on social media. Technological change in his evolving toward smart phone applications. Its existence will turn its domination of the PC, laptop, or tablet. This generation is heavily dependent on the sophistication of smart phone features.
- they prefer to shop online and more rarely do physical contact in communicating with the opponent's interlocutor. Consequently, psychologically they will be troubled by the behavior of solitude even though they can still communicate through social media.
- they will be more pampered and influenced by their parents who are generation X and y. married Behavior in older age, making the presence of the next-generation successors be more special and more pampered. X pamper pampering Y Y, Z, and likewise the existence with Z who will treat alpha. Dampakanya, businessmen should also consider the presence of the parents if they make the alpha generation as the target.

- they are able to fulfill his needs on its own, more educated, and more ready to face greater challenges. The development of highly sophisticated technology in their era, providing the opportunity for them to become more independent and ready to face global challenges such as global warming, free trade and competition. On education, the existence of the concept of free, online education is preferred. At the same time, the rich family will be more invested the cost of education for his son.

Holroyd (2011) describes the generation of alpha from the educational point of view. He mentioned that Alpha generation is the generation that most teredukasi formally, attended early on, and learn a lot longer due to the concept of online learning. However they are also flanked as materialistic generation.

Based on the above concept, alpha generation is the generation that has more challenges and personal skills. The influence of technology will give you the opportunity of growing very fast, but it could be an impact on the problems of personal character. Therefore, to answer the issue is character education reduces the negative things and optimize personal potential is absolutely necessary

Visual Literacy and character education as an educational approach for the generation of digital Alpha

1. The role of the Visual in their Learning

One role of the visual in their learning is as a means to provide or provide concrete BGG about an idea, words cannot represent and voice the objects because of the iconic nature of the visual (without the word already indicates meaning) Therefore, every word has a similarity with the object referred to.

Some of the benefits of visual learning in visual, among others, can motivate learners with how to attract their attention, maintain attention and emotional response-response.

In addition, it can also simplify the visual information that is hard to describe with words, in other words, the role of the visual in their learning is important to support the information included written and oral information. The main approach in the development of visual literacy include:

- a. Input Strategies, helping learners to decode, or "read" visual are proficient with visual analysis skills practice. (For example, through the analysis of pictures and discussion of the film and video program).
- b. Output Strategies, Helping learners to encode, or "writing ' ', visual, to express themselves and communicate with others. (For example, through planning and producing presentations of photos and video)
- c. Decoding, By looking at a display visually does not automatically guarantee that the students will learn from the display. Learners should be guided to can represent a clear and correct thinking about the visual appearance. One aspect of visual literacy is a skill to interpret and create meaning from the stimuli around it, so the impact is as follows:
 - 1) Effect of development-many variables affecting learners to be able to interpret a visual display.
 - 2) Effect of culture-in teaching, it should be realized that the ability of learners to interpret a visual display can be updated by the background of culture
 - 3) Visual Preferences-in selecting the visual, the teacher must make the right choice between the kinds of visuals that favored and most effective.
- d. Encoding, creating visual literacy visual Aspect is the creation of learners through the visual presentation. Just as writing can stimulate reading, producing media can be very effective in understanding media.

2. Variations in the Visual elements

There are many forms of visual graphics to enhance understanding by way of visual literacy that incorporates illustrations as well as text to describe the concept of patterns and ideas serve as a frame of mind in the process of learning (Tarquin & Walker, 1997). Framework to assist students in visualizing how ideas and knowledge/explanations are interconnected with information from other sources. Using graphics as a language for identifying complex problems and challenges by expanding the traditional linear style used in teaching and learning to the non-linear format which expands the information processing.

3. Make learning fun with images
Using visual education, consistently shown to aid in the learning process by directing students on aspects that are interesting or entertaining as part of this presentation may be used as an opening than it directly encourages students to in-depth analysis.
4. Use the visual with the good and true
That the visual should be properly used in the setting of visualization because education alone does not serve to maximize student achievement. Research by Williams and Dwyer effect metaphoric strategy in the achievement of learning objectives indicates that the use of verbal and visual metaphors that are visualized is not always effective in learning.
5. Give priority to thematic or integrated learning with pictures
Thematic learning concept at this point is already applied in primary schools. However the use of the media still tend to the non electronic media. Highly recommended that education in the elementary school principals prefer the use of electronic media. With this transition, the concept of visual literacy for the millennial generation will be stronger. Teachers will also have the capability of studying and adapting the concept of future education and provide for their students.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Using visual elements in learning produces positive results. Teachers must have skills which include language teaching techniques also image visually; Therefore, guidance in the field of visual literacy is essential. The results of the visual impact of literacy in the classroom can be explored more through teachers with the use of visual elements and comparing the visual content lessons with student achievement. Additional research to develop tools that measure the level of visual literacy, including individual skills to create and interpret visual language is important in evaluating the overall impact student learning. In addition, the identification of likely relationships between factors such as learning styles and demographic characteristics desired for a comprehensive study of the concept of visual literacy.

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