

Understanding how the photographic/teacher-researcher can enable students to demonstrate higher order thinking using critically reflective e-journals in a tertiary e-learning environment

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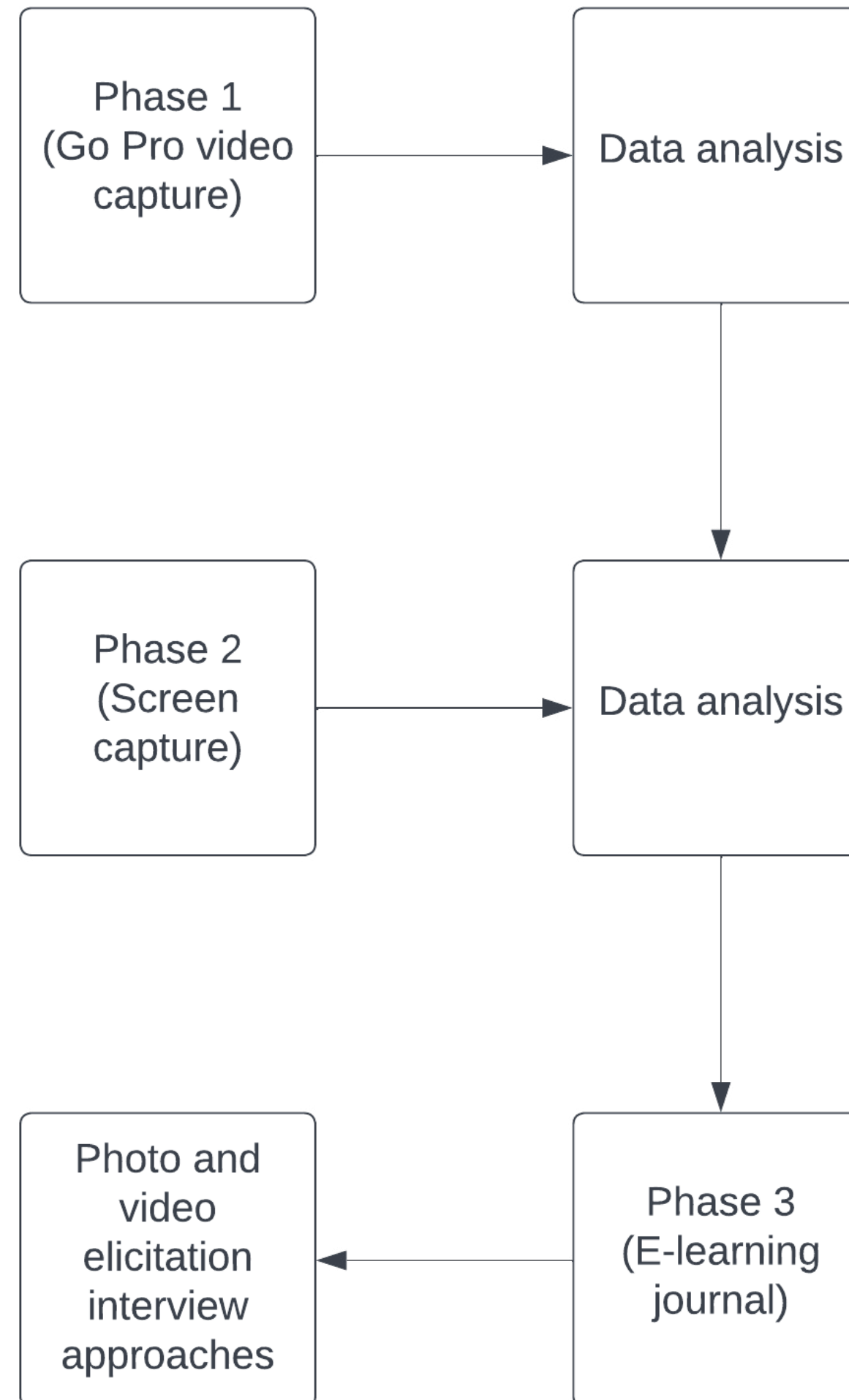
Rationale

Stemming from my own experience working in a tertiary e-learning environment, an investigation into higher order thinking skills and how these are related to the effective use of technology was initiated.

After coming across an influential arts based research methodology called a/r/tography, it was found that academics had already responded to this with action research specifically centred on the use of e-learning journals in a photomedia environment. An arts-based method titled the Photographic Participatory Inquiry sought to critically discuss data captured as digital artefacts using multimedia tools.

Aside from looking at how to build up critical reflective skills of digital generation learners across each phase layer, there is also an emphasis on how the researcher/photographer-educator can investigate productive, personalized and participatory pedagogical methods compatible with this teaching and learning environment.

Flow chart displaying three phases of pre- and post-visualization followed by the e-learning journal



Findings

Analysis of two e-learning journal case studies found that the students exhibited multiple levels of critical self-reflection. When material and virtual environments were bridged on a personal and participatory level higher order thinking skills were demonstrated.

As a method, Photographic Participatory Inquiry is useful for the development of pedagogies in a tertiary e-learning environment. Within this, the e-learning journal can facilitate independent learners through a recursive learning process where observation, analysis and manipulation can be flexibly managed.

Crucially, students were able to advantage of democratically accessible digital tools to explore social, emotional and intellectual dimensions in ways that were richly interconnected. Through an embodied poetics of inquiry, students can creatively engage with their own qualitative data in a way that makes it tangible.