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The Use of Visual Learning Media to Improve Student Learning Outcomes in Social Studies Lessons in Elementary School

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A B S T R A C T

Social studies (IPS) instruction in elementary schools is frequently delivered through lecture based methods without instructional media, contributing to low student learning outcomes. This study aimed to describe the planning, implementation, and outcomes of using visual learning media to improve third grade students' learning outcomes on the topic of "Denah Tempat Tinggalku" (home location map) at SDN 3 Sedong Lor, Cirebon. This research employed classroom action research (CAR) based on the Kemmis and McTaggart model, carried out in two cycles, each comprising planning, action, observation, and reflection. The subjects were 23 third grade students consisting of 12 boys and 11 girls. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and learning achievement tests, then analyzed descriptively and quantitatively. The results showed that the percentage of students achieving the minimum mastery criteria (KKM) increased from 34.78% at baseline to 73.91% in Cycle I, and reached 100% in Cycle II, with the class average rising from 63.26 to 85. Teacher performance and student activity scores also increased consistently across cycles. These findings indicate that systematic use of visual learning media effectively improves students' understanding of spatial concepts and their learning outcomes in social studies.

1. Introduction

Education is a deliberate and conscious effort to transform human beings so that they may grow into competent, characterful, and intelligent generations who continue the values and culture passed down from the previous generation (Rahman Abd, 2022; Subekti, 2022). Achieving this goal is not solely the responsibility of schools; it requires the collaborative involvement of all elements of the education system, including teachers, the curriculum, learning facilities, and the surrounding community (Purwaningsih, I, 2022). One element that plays a decisive role in the success of classroom instruction is the use of appropriate learning media. Media

function as the channel through which messages, knowledge, and skills are transferred from teacher to student, and their use is considered indispensable for effective teaching and learning (Hasan, M, 2021; Yusup et al., 2023).

Among the various school subjects, Social Studies (Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial / IPS) is particularly dependent on the support of concrete and visual representations because much of its content concerns abstract spatial and social relationships that are difficult for young learners to grasp through verbal explanation alone (Isa, S, F, P., Rustini, 2023). In practice, however, social studies instruction at the elementary level tends to remain teacher centered: teachers explain the material verbally while students passively listen and record notes, a pattern that frequently leads to boredom and declining interest (Sulistyosari et al., 2022). This condition was clearly observed at SDN 3 Sedong Lor, Kecamatan Sedong, Kabupaten Cirebon, where teachers had not optimally utilized technology based learning media. The school lacked adequate visual teaching aids, and teachers had limited opportunities to attend training on the use of digital instructional tools. As a result, the teaching and learning process tended to be monotonous and unengaging for students.

(Saleh. S. M., 2023) explaining that media is a service that combines advanced technology and communication with a big role in the education world, especially in modernizing conventional learning activities into more innovative learning through a combination of various methods that require internet network support. Effective use of visual media includes: simple forms so they are easy to understand, explaining text information, providing repetition and engaging students, distinguishing concepts with images, including outline captions, and using realistic colors. (Ichsan et al., 2021).

The impact of this condition was evident in students' learning outcomes. Based on the baseline data obtained by the researcher, 15 of the 23 third grade students (65.22%) scored below the Minimum Mastery Criteria (Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal/KKM) of 70 on the topic of "Denah Tempat Tinggalku" (home location map), a core competency in the third grade social studies curriculum that requires students to read directions, identify spatial positions, and interpret simple maps. From the perspective of Piaget's cognitive development theory, third grade students are generally situated at the concrete operational stage, in which logical reasoning is still strongly tied to tangible, observable objects rather than abstract symbols . Consequently, materials that involve spatial orientation, such as reading a map and determining cardinal directions, are best introduced through concrete visual representations rather than verbal description alone.

When teaching, teachers should use approaches that engage students in following the instructions given in class. This approach consists of a series of assumptions that correlate with the nature of language, the nature of language teaching, and the nature of what is being taught. (Isa, S, F, P., Rustini, 2023) Currently, social studies learning in elementary schools is still largely teacher centered, so students are more often listeners rather than actively involved in learning, even though social studies is a subject related to broader social life.

Visual learning media refer to instructional tools that rely on the sense of sight, including still images, diagrams, maps, charts, photographs, and moving visual displays such as instructional videos (Ar et al., 2022). Several scholars have emphasized the importance of visual media in supporting comprehension; visual media are said to strengthen understanding, reinforce memory retention, stimulate interest, and connect instructional content with real world experience (Badruzaman, A, 2015). Functionally, visual media serve at least four purposes in instruction: an attentional function that directs students' focus toward the content, an affective function that generates enjoyment in learning, a cognitive function that facilitates comprehension of information, and a compensatory function that accommodates students who struggle to absorb verbally delivered material (Mahmuda, 2018). The importance of vision as a primary channel for acquiring knowledge is also affirmed in the Qur'an, Surah An-Nahl verse 78, which states that Allah has granted human beings hearing, sight, and conscience as means to understand and to be grateful, underscoring that the visual sense has long been recognized as central to the process of learning.

Empirically, the effectiveness of visual media in improving learning outcomes has been demonstrated across various subjects. (Slamet, 2020) found that the use of visual media in fifth grade social studies increased student mastery from 37.9% at baseline to 75% in Cycle I and 90.7% in Cycle II. Similarly, a study on the use of YouTube based visual media in Indonesian language instruction reported improved comprehension, motivation, and higher order thinking skills among students (Dila Rizki Amanda, 2024). In the context of economics instruction at the senior secondary level, (Sari, 2019) demonstrated that classes using visual media achieved a significantly higher average score (81) compared with classes without visual media (68.5), with visual media accounting for approximately 29% of the variance in learning outcomes. These studies consistently affirm the positive contribution of visual media to learning outcomes; however, they were largely conducted in different subjects, grade levels, or research designs, including a quasi experimental comparison rather than classroom action research, leaving a gap in classroom based evidence specific to lower grade elementary social studies instruction on spatial map reading topics. This gap provides the empirical rationale for the present study, which is situated explicitly within an actual classroom setting using a collaborative action research design.

Social studies education aims to teach and provide basic skills so that someone can develop themselves according to their talents, interests, abilities, and environment, as well as various preparations to continue education to higher levels. Social studies is one of the subjects taught at the primary and secondary education levels. (Hopeman. T. A., 2022). Through social studies education, students are introduced to fundamental concepts regarding society, culture, and the environment, thereby gaining a greater awareness of their roles and responsibilities within the broader social system. Furthermore, this subject plays a vital role in shaping students' attitudes and values such as tolerance, cooperation, and respect for diversity which are essential for living harmoniously in a pluralistic society.

According to Suprijono in (Dakhi, 2020), learning outcomes are patterns of actions, values, understandings, attitudes, appreciation, and skills. The learning outcomes that students gain through education will enable them to compete in various social life activities. The learning outcomes students achieve through education will enable them to compete in various spheres of social life. These outcomes encompass not only cognitive aspects such as the mastery of knowledge but also affective aspects related to the attitudes, interests, and values instilled in students, as well as psychomotor aspects concerning physical skills and the ability to act. These three aspects are interconnected and develop concurrently as a result of the continuous learning process.

Based on this background, the researcher considers it necessary to undertake a classroom action research to address the low learning outcomes of third grade students in social studies at SDN 3 Sedong Lor through the systematic application of visual learning media, including instructional videos and Canva based visual presentations of home and school location maps. This study aims to (1) describe the planning of visual media use in social studies instruction on the topic of "Denah Tempat Tinggalku," (2) analyze how the use of visual learning media improves students' learning outcomes on this topic, and (3) determine the improvement in students' learning outcomes after the application of visual learning media in third grade social studies instruction at SDN 3 Sedong Lor.

2. Methodology

Research Desain

This study employed a classroom action research (CAR) design following the spiral model of Kemmis and McTaggart, which consists of four interrelated stages within each cycle: planning, action, observation, and reflection (Pahleviannur et al., 2022). This design was selected because it allows the researcher, in collaboration with the classroom teacher, to identify a concrete classroom problem, implement a pedagogical intervention, and refine that intervention iteratively across cycles based on reflective evaluation, rather than relying on an experimental comparison between separate groups. The research was conducted at SDN 3 Sedong Lor, located in Desa Sedong Lor, Kecamatan Sedong, Kabupaten Cirebon, over a period of six months from December 2025 to May 2026, covering the stages of preparation, instrument validation, field implementation, and reporting.

The subjects of this research were 23 third grade students, consisting of 12 boys and 11 girls. The action was implemented in two cycles. Cycle I was carried out over two meetings (7 and 9 May 2026), and Cycle II was carried out over two meetings (21 and 23 May 2026), each meeting lasting 2 × 35 minutes. In each cycle, the teacher implemented a problem based learning approach supported by visual media, namely instructional videos displayed through a projector and Canvabased digital presentations depicting home and school location maps, cardinal directions, and spatial symbols. Students worked in small groups of four to five members to

complete worksheets Student Worksheet before individually practicing spatial orientation skills using the interactive map displays.

Instrument

Three instruments were used for data collection. First, an observation guide was used to assess teacher performance and student activity during the learning process, covering aspects such as opening the lesson, mastery of content, use of media, and classroom management, each rated on a four point scale. Student activity was observed based on three indicators: motivation, active participation, and cooperation. Second, an interview guide was used to explore the perceptions of the classroom teacher and students regarding the use of visual media before and after the intervention. Third, a learning achievement test consisting of multiple choice, short answer, and essay items was developed based on indicators aligned with the topic of "My Home Layout," validated separately for Cycle I and Cycle II.

Data collection techniques in this study included direct classroom observation, semi structured interviews with the classroom teacher and selected students, and written tests administered at the end of each cycle to measure student learning progress. Observations were conducted collaboratively by the researcher and the classroom teacher acting as an observer to directly monitor student activities and participation during the learning process, particularly when visual media were utilized. Meanwhile, interviews with the teacher and selected students were conducted to gain deeper insight into their perceptions, experiences, and responses regarding the use of visual media in learning activities, thereby ensuring that the data obtained complemented and reinforced the findings from the observations and written tests.

Data Analysis

Data analysis combined quantitative and qualitative descriptive techniques. Quantitatively, student test scores were compared against the school's Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM) of 70, and the percentage of students achieving mastery was calculated using the formula: percentage = (number of students in a category ÷ total number of students) × 100%. The mean, highest, and lowest scores were also calculated for each cycle. Qualitatively, observation and interview data were analyzed descriptively to capture changes in teacher performance and student engagement, with triangulation conducted across the perspectives of the teacher, the students, and the observer to ensure the credibility of the findings. The action research was considered successful when all 23 students achieved scores at or above the KKM, representing 86,96% classical mastery; if this target was not met after Cycle II, a subsequent cycle would have been planned using the same procedure.

3. Results and Discussion

Based on the actions that have been carried out, here is the data on the learning process and the observation results summarized in Table 1 below. This table brings together three interrelated dimensions of the classroom action research, namely the

process of using visual learning media during instruction, the results of teacher performance observation, and the results of student interest observation, each documented separately for Cycle I and Cycle II. Presenting these three dimensions side by side makes it possible to examine the relationship between the instructional activities carried out, the quality of teaching delivered, and the resulting engagement of students before the numerical learning outcomes are discussed in detail in the following subsections. The information summarized here therefore serves as the empirical foundation for the more detailed cycle by cycle discussion of the baseline condition, Cycle I, and Cycle II that follows.

Table 1 Details of Learning Activity Processes and Descriptions of Learning Outcomes

Activity	Activity process	Result
Use of visual media	Both teaching modules (house plans and school plans) use the same steps for using visual media: the lesson starts with the teacher showing a learning video through a laptop connected to a projector as a starter, then the teacher explains the concept of a plan and cardinal directions while doing a Q&A, followed by ice breaking and dividing into small groups that work on worksheets as a written practice medium. Next, some students present their results; after that, the teacher shows plan images through PowerPoint slides (made in Canva) to explain the room layout, reinforced with interactive activities where students take turns pointing the cursor on the plan image according to the cardinal direction mentioned by the teacher. At the end of the lesson, the plan images are used again as media for evaluation questions, remedial exercises, and enrichment to measure students' understanding.	In Cycle I, students' learning outcomes had an average score of 75, with the highest score being 95 and the lowest 55. In Cycle II, learning outcomes improved with an average score of 85, the highest score 100, and the lowest 70. This improvement shows that using visual learning media is effective in boosting students' learning outcomes in social studies.
Teacher activity observation	Teacher observation activities are carried out using the Teacher Observation Sheet, which covers seven assessment aspects: the ability to start the lesson, the participant's attitude during the learning process, mastery of teaching materials, implementation of learning steps according to the scenario, use of learning media, evaluation, and the ability to close the lesson. The observer directly watches the learning process in the classroom and then gives a score ranging from 1 to 4 for each indicator based on	Based on the observations that have been carried out, the average score in cycle I was 3.18, which then increased to 4.00 in cycle II, so it can be concluded that there was an improvement in the teacher's performance or ability in the learning process from cycle I to cycle II after reflection and improvements were made based on the findings from the previous cycle.

	the actual conditions observed. Next, the scores are summed and averaged to get the final observation score for each cycle.	
Observation of students' interests	The observation of learning interest was carried out by the researcher on themselves as a form of self reflection during the learning process, using an observation sheet with three indicators: motivation, activeness, and cooperation, each scored from 1 to 3. The researcher honestly assessed themselves at each meeting, added up the scores from the three indicators, then calculated the average for each cycle and interpreted it into categories of good (G), fair (F), or poor (P). This step was done in cycle I and cycle II to see the improvement in learning interest after improvements were made to the learning actions.	Based on the observations that were conducted, the average score of learning interest in cycle I was 7.04, which shows that learning interest was still in a less than optimal category and needs improvement in the next learning implementation. After making improvements in cycle II, the average score of learning interest increased to 10.23, indicating a significant improvement compared to the previous cycle. This increase in scores from cycle I to cycle II suggests that the applied improvements successfully boosted learning interest noticeably.

Overall, the data presented in Table 1 illustrate that the three components of the intervention, namely the use of visual media, the quality of teacher performance, and the level of student interest, developed in a mutually reinforcing manner across the two cycles. The consistent use of instructional videos and Canva based digital maps in both cycles provided a stable pedagogical structure, while the refinements made to teacher performance and classroom management in Cycle II created more favorable conditions for student engagement. The steady increase in scores across all three dimensions, from 3.18 to 4.00 for teacher performance and from 7.04 to 10.23 for student interest, suggests that improvements in one dimension supported gains in the others rather than occurring independently. These combined improvements provide the necessary context for interpreting the quantitative learning outcome data discussed in relation to the baseline condition and each research cycle in the sections that follow.

Baseline Condition

Prior to the intervention, social studies instruction at SDN 3 Sedong Lor was conducted using conventional lecture methods, with the teacher writing and explaining material on the whiteboard without any supporting visual or concrete media. The baseline test administered before the action showed that students' understanding of the "Denah Tempat Tinggalku" topic was still low, as summarized in Table 1. This baseline condition reflects a common pattern in elementary social studies instruction, where reliance on verbal explanation alone often fails to accommodate young learners who are still situated at the concrete operational stage of cognitive development and therefore depend heavily on visual and tangible representations to grasp spatial concepts such as directions and location maps. Without concrete visual support, students found it difficult to translate the teacher's verbal description of cardinal directions and spatial relationships into an accurate

mental representation of the "Denah Tempat Tinggalku" topic, a difficulty that was subsequently reflected in their performance on the baseline assessment summarized below.

Table 2. Recapitulation of Baseline Learning Outcomes

Category	Number of Students	Percentage
Achieved KKM (≥70)	8	34.78%
Below KKM (<70)	15	65.22%
Highest score	90	-
Lowest score	40	-
Class average	63.26	-

As shown in Table 2, only 8 of the 23 students (34.78%) achieved the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM) of 70, while 15 students (65.22%) had not yet reached mastery. This condition was attributed to three interrelated factors: students had limited understanding of basic map concepts and cardinal directions, the teacher relied exclusively on lecture and assignment based methods, and no variation of visual or concrete media was used to support comprehension. These findings confirmed the necessity of an instructional intervention using visual learning media.

Cycle I

In Cycle I, the teacher implemented a learning sequence that began with an explanation of the home location map topic, followed by instructional videos, small group work on worksheets, a presentation session, and individual practice using a Canva based digital map. The observation of teacher performance in Cycle I produced a mean score of 3.18 (out of 4), which falls within the “good” category, indicating that the implementation of the lesson plan, although still developing, was reasonably well executed. The observation of student activity, covering motivation, active participation, and cooperation, produced an average score of 7.04, categorized as “moderate,” reflecting that some students were not yet fully accustomed to learning with visual technology based media and required further guidance to stay focused during the session.

The results of the Cycle I learning achievement test are summarized in Table 3. This table reports the number and percentage of students who reached the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM) of 70 following the implementation of visual learning media in Cycle I, alongside the highest score, lowest score, and class average obtained 6on the achievement test. These figures provide a direct quantitative counterpart to the qualitative observations of teacher performance and student activity described above, allowing the improvement associated with the use of instructional videos and Canva based digital maps to be assessed not only in terms of classroom engagement but also in terms of measurable learning outcomes. The results presented in Table 3 are subsequently compared against the baseline data in Table 2 to determine the extent of improvement achieved after one cycle of intervention.

Table 3 shows a pretty big improvement compared to the initial condition before using visual learning media. Specifically, the number of students achieving the

minimum mastery score rose noticeably from the baseline condition, while the class average also increased in tandem with the more frequent and structured use of instructional videos and Canva based digital maps during the lesson. This improvement suggests that presenting the home location map material through concrete visual representations helped students translate abstract spatial concepts, such as cardinal directions and relative position, into a form they could observe, manipulate, and discuss more confidently during group work and individual practice, thereby contributing directly to the gains reflected in their test scores.

Table 3. Recapitulation of Cycle I Learning Outcomes

Category	Number of Students	Percentage
Achieved KKM (≥70)	17	73.91%
Below KKM (<70)	6	26.09%
Highest score	95	-
Lowest score	55	-
Class average	75	-

At the initial stage before using visual learning media, students' learning outcomes were still considered low, with the class average only reaching 63.26. Out of the total number of students, only 8 managed to meet the Minimum Competency Criteria (KKM), so the percentage of class mastery was only 34.78%. This situation shows that the majority of students, about 65.22%, were still unable to reach the set mastery standard, indicating the need for intervention in the form of using more effective learning media to improve students' understanding of the material being taught.

After implementing visual learning media in Cycle I, student learning outcomes experienced a fairly significant improvement. The number of students meeting the KKM increased from 8 to 17 students, so the percentage of classical completeness rose from 34.78% to 73.91%, or an increase of 39.13 percentage points. The class average also increased from 63.26 to 75. However, there are still six students who have not reached mastery, so the success target of 86,96% classical completeness has not been fully achieved and improvements are needed in the next cycle.

Cycle II

In Cycle II, the identified weaknesses were addressed: the teacher provided more detailed explanations, gave balanced attention to both active and passive students, applied firmer classroom management, and designed clearer guiding questions. The learning sequence in Cycle II followed a similar structure to Cycle I but incorporated an ice breaking activity to sustain motivation and a more structured sequence linking video viewing, conceptual explanation, group work, presentation, and individual practice with the Canva based map display. The observation of teacher performance in Cycle II reached a mean score of 4.00, the maximum on the four point scale, categorized as “excellent,” indicating that the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages of the lesson were carried out in full accordance with the lesson plan. The observation of student activity also improved markedly, reaching an average score of 10.13, categorized as “good,” reflecting a

substantial increase in students' motivation, participation, and cooperation compared with Cycle I.

The results of the Cycle II learning achievement test are summarized in Table 4. This table presents the number and percentage of students who achieved the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM) after the refinements introduced in Cycle II, including more detailed teacher explanations, firmer classroom management, and a more structured sequence linking video viewing, conceptual explanation, group work, and individual practice with the Canva based map display. As in Cycle I, the table also reports the highest score, lowest score, and class average, allowing the outcomes of Cycle II to be compared directly against those obtained in Cycle I and against the original baseline condition. This comparison makes it possible to determine whether the pedagogical adjustments made in response to the reflection following Cycle I were sufficient to bring all students to the required standard of mastery.

Table 4. Recapitulation of Cycle II Learning Outcomes

Category	Number of Students	Percentage
Achieved KKM (≥70)	23	100%
Below KKM (<70)	0	0%
Highest score	100	-
Lowest score	70	-
Class average	85	-

Table 4 shows a pretty big improvement compared to cycle 1, which hadn't been completed in terms of learning outcomes, teacher and student activities. Unlike the results of Cycle I, in which six students had not yet reached the minimum mastery criteria, the data in Table 4 indicate that every student in the class successfully achieved the required standard, reflecting the cumulative effect of the more detailed explanations, firmer classroom management, and more structured use of visual media introduced in Cycle II. Together with the parallel increase in teacher performance and student activity scores discussed earlier, this outcome indicates that the weaknesses identified after Cycle I were successfully addressed, allowing the research to reach its intended success criteria within two cycles rather than requiring a third round of intervention.

In Cycle I, the use of visual learning media successfully improved student learning outcomes, but it didn't quite meet the set success criteria. The number of students who met the minimum competency score increased from 8 to 17, with a classical completeness percentage of 73.91% and a class average of 75. Even though there was a pretty significant improvement compared to the initial condition, there were still six students who hadn't reached the standard, so the 86,96% classical completeness target wasn't achieved, and the study needs to continue to the next cycle. In Cycle II, students' learning outcomes improved even further, reaching the set success criteria. All 23 students managed to achieve the minimum competency criteria (KKM), which means the classical completeness percentage reached 100%, an increase of 26.09 percentage points compared to Cycle I. The class average also rose from 75 in Cycle I to 85 in Cycle II. Since all students achieved completeness

and the research success targets were met, this action research was stopped after two cycles.

Comparison Across Stages

To illustrate the overall progression of student learning outcomes, Table 5 presents a comparative recapitulation of the baseline data and the results of Cycle I and Cycle II. By placing the baseline, Cycle I, and Cycle II results side by side, this comparative table makes it possible to observe not only the magnitude of improvement in student learning outcomes but also the pace at which that improvement occurred across the two cycles of intervention. The percentages of students below and above the Minimum Mastery Criteria, together with the class average for each stage, provide a concise numerical summary of the progression described in detail in the preceding sections, and serve as the basis for the discussion of the underlying factors that contributed to this improvement in the paragraphs that follow.

Table 5. Comparative Recapitulation of Learning Outcomes Across Stages

Stage	Students Below KKM (%)	Students Achieving KKM (%)	Class Average
Baseline	65.22%	34.78%	63.26
Cycle I	26.09%	73.91%	75
Cycle II	0%	100%	85

Table 5 clearly shows a consistent upward trend in student learning outcomes across all three research stages, along with a parallel increase in teacher performance (3.18 → 4.00) and student activity scores (7.04 → 10.13) from Cycle I to Cycle II. This pattern indicates that the improvement in learning outcomes is not just a coincidence, but is closely related to the increasingly optimal and appropriate use of visual learning media in both cycles. This aligns with the characteristics of elementary school students who are at the concrete operational stage, making visually presented information easier to understand because it can be directly observed, simplifies abstract concepts, and matches their thinking style, which still relies more on real and visual experiences rather than just verbal explanations.

These findings reinforce the theoretical proposition that visual media are particularly effective for elementary level students who, according to Piaget's theory of cognitive development, are still situated at the concrete operational stage and therefore comprehend spatial and abstract concepts more readily when these are presented in concrete, observable form (Hanikah, 2021). The visual displays used in this study, comprising instructional videos and Canva based digital maps, functioned not merely as decorative aids but as cognitive scaffolds that transformed the abstract notion of spatial position and cardinal direction into tangible representations that students could observe, manipulate, and discuss collaboratively. This is consistent with the attentional, affective, cognitive, and compensatory functions of visual media described by (Mahmuda, 2018), all of which were observable in this study: students paid closer attention to the lesson, expressed enjoyment during the video and Canva sessions, demonstrated improved

comprehension of map reading concepts, and weaker students were able to keep pace with their peers through repeated visual exposure.

The results are also consistent with prior empirical findings. (Slamet, 2020) reported an increase in social studies mastery from 37.9% to 90.7% through the use of visual media in a different topic and grade level, while the present study demonstrates a comparable pattern of improvement (34.78% to 86,96%) specifically on spatial map reading content in a lower elementary grade. Likewise, the finding that visual media enhance motivation and active participation parallels the conclusion of (Dila Rizki Amanda, 2024) regarding YouTube based visual media in Indonesian language instruction, and the substantial score gap reported by (Sari, 2019) between visual media and nonvisual media classes in economics instruction. Taken together, this convergence across different subjects, grade levels, and media types strengthens the argument that the benefit of visual media is not subject specific but reflects a more general cognitive mechanism, namely the facilitation of concrete representation for learners at the concrete operational stage. The present study extends this body of evidence by demonstrating, through a classroom action research design, that the same mechanism operates effectively for spatial map reading competencies among lower grade elementary students, a context that had not been directly examined in the previously cited studies.

Using visual learning aids created with Canva and YouTube instructional videos can improve Grade 3 students' learning outcomes regarding the topic of floor plans; because floor plans are inherently visual spatial, they require concrete representations to be easily understood aligning with the cognitive development of third graders, who are in Piaget's "concrete operational" stage and thus grasp concepts more readily through images and tangible objects than through abstract explanations. Canva enables teachers to create engaging, colorful floor plan designs tailored to the students' context, thereby reinforcing understanding through a combination of text and imagery, while YouTube videos incorporate motion, animation, audio, and visuals to help students dynamically grasp directions and layout flow with the added benefit of being replayable to suit individual learning needs making this combination of media more effective than conventional teaching methods in boosting student motivation, engagement, and comprehension.

Interview results corroborated the quantitative findings. Students reported feeling more motivated and confident when presenting their work in front of the class and felt that the visual media helped them understand the map reading material more easily. The classroom teacher likewise confirmed that the use of visual media increased students’ confidence and classroom engagement. However, both the teacher and the researcher noted one practical constraint, namely time management and occasional unstable internet connectivity, which required the availability of a stable projector and internet connection to ensure smooth implementation. This constraint suggests that while visual media are pedagogically effective, their sustainable use in similar school contexts will depend on adequate technological infrastructure and teacher readiness to manage technical disruptions.

4. Conclusion

This classroom action research demonstrates that the systematic use of visual learning media can substantially improve third grade students' learning outcomes in social studies on the topic of home location maps. Planning was carried out by preparing lesson plans, worksheets, and visual media in the form of instructional videos and Canva based digital map displays, along with observation and test instruments. The implementation of visual media across two cycles improved teacher performance from a good to an excellent category and increased student activity in terms of motivation, participation, and cooperation. Most importantly, students' learning outcomes improved markedly, rising consistently from the baseline condition through Cycle I to Cycle II until all students reached the minimum mastery criteria. These results confirm that visual learning media are an effective instructional approach for helping young learners grasp spatial and abstract concepts that are difficult to convey through verbal explanation alone. Future studies are recommended to examine the application of visual learning media on other social studies topics and across different grade levels, as well as to investigate strategies for overcoming infrastructural constraints such as limited internet connectivity in similar school settings.

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