CIDADES, Comunidades e Territórios
53 (Jul/2027) e20270742683

https://doi.org/10.15847/cct.42683
Received: 19/08/2025; Accepted: 26/03/2026

ISSN: 2182-3030 ERC: 123787/2011
Funding: UID/3127/2025

© 2026: Author(s).
Licensed under CC BY

CIDADES
Comunidades e Territórios
CITIES Communities and Territories

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Using photography as a tool for critical urban diagnosis: an undomestication strategy

Oscar Preciado-Velásquez[1]

Abstract

This research describes a teaching experience of urbanism using photography as a critical pedagogical strategy of educating the look to raise awareness among undergraduate students about the problems of their context, employing the objective worldview of each participant regarding their perception of the city and understanding their role as knowledge builders. This was a descriptive field research, based on participant observation methodology, structured in four stages, through a process of categorizing photographs taken by the attendees, shaping positive and negative aspects of the experience. Information obtained was correlated on a database for visualizing the study data through opensource software, with the final identification of the main phenomena. Through this process, a significant disparity was detected in the perception of the observers; therefore, the importance of promoting other educational practices that can raise awareness among architecture and urbanism students about the different urban singularities present in the built environment of developing countries.

Keywords: critical pedagogies, labelling, photography, relations, urbanism

1 Universidad Politécnica Salesiana, Ecuador, opreciadov [at] ups.edu.ec

1. Introduction

How should an urbanism class in countries of the global south with contexts of inequality be taught? Is there a way for students to demystify the narratives associated with the growth of their cities? This contribution aims to address these questions by synthesizing a pedagogical practice in urbanism, focusing on the experience of students as knowledge builders.

As part of a teaching experience in urban planning at a Latin American university, and especially in developing countries, it was important to begin to unravel, that is – to address more critically – processes of urban growth inherent to an environment with these particular characteristics, branded primarily by an urban development model that seeks to reproduce, in the spatial realm, ideas originated from countries with dissimilar demographic and territorial contexts, whose most tangible result is the urban fragmentation of cities from a process of socio-spatial segregation and urban sprawl (Espino, 2008; Brau, 2018).

Based on the idea of development described by Esteva (2010), many of the cities in Latin America whose governments were ruled by the Alliance for Progress doctrine (Aravecchia-Botas, 2019) developed state-subsidized housing plans[1] to meet the growing demand for popular housing in major cities, under the ideals of progress, change and, above all, emulating a territorial growth model with a prevalence for the vehicle use as the main transportation system (Brau, 2018), while promoting the proliferation of peripheral neighborhoods to dwell populations from low income sectors (Espino, 2008). This situation was further strengthened with the change from a state-subsidized model to a housing financialization model described by Rolnik (2021), which, at least in cities like Guayaquil, continues to promote a dispersed city model with monofunctional zoning that is widely outdated and questioned today.

As a result of a decades-long process, in terms of the production of built urban space, a binary process emerges regarding its formation: on the one hand, there is the so-called formal city, governed by the doctrines of the real estate market arising from urban and territorial planning instruments; and, on the other, the informal or self-produced city, made from the needs of its inhabitants, mostly from migrations from rural areas to the city, in the search for a roof over their heads in a growing global south city (Sánchez Gallegos, 2015). From this perspective, there are two sides of the same coin. On one hand, the dominant urban discourse seeks to consolidate itself through narratives of progress and urban regeneration as the ultimate solution to all problems. On the other hand, issues such as poverty and social segregation are relativized and gradually normalized, becoming integral components of the discursive strategy that constructs the urban narrative aligned with neoliberal models of development. This duality of the discourse about the city and its associated visual representations has been described by authors such as Zerega (2007) in what she describes as a *postcard image*, that is, what seeks to be transmitted, as part of a strategy of social domestication that seeks to depoliticize and discipline citizens (Andrade, 2013) about the socio-territorial problems of their environment, reproducing the dominant discourse of elite groups over framing strategies[2] through various audiovisual media, which in recent years had counter-spaces of resistance[3] in the city (Amnesty, 2024).

In this sense, for the construction of a contemporary curricular scope of urban planning through a critical approach, a strategy already described by López (2014) is proposed, which seeks to "educate the look" of students, using walking as a didactic tool to identify and recognize urban space, through the power of images and particularly, of the photography as a generator of critical thinking and social change.

1 Notable examples, in chronological order, include the Chilean Workers' Housing Act of 1906, the Inter-American Housing Center in Colombia (CINVA) in 1951, the Workers' Bank in Venezuela in 1928, the Housing Corporation in Chile (CORVI) in 1957, and the Operational Center for Housing and Settlement in Mexico in 1962, among others.

2 "To frame is to select some aspect of a perceived reality and to make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation moral evolution, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (Entman, 1993, p. 52).

3 Currently, feminist organizations such as CEPAM stand out, as do organizations that defend public space and city improvements, such as Masa Crítica Guayaquil, among others.

From a scientific perspective, photographs are recognized as primary sources of information (Salazar & Laurent, 2025) and serve as key elements for analyzing and interpreting empirically obtained data, containing unique and highly personal information about a particular study. In this sense, authors such as Salama (2006, 2015) describe the importance of bringing students closer to the reality of their context: something he called "Experiential Learning", that is, bringing students closer to the "primary sources" of their context, which allows learning based on firsthand experience with the main object of study in the architectural and urban planning discipline; thus, the work of the architecture lecturer is to prepare and train students to work in the real world.

The article is divided in two sections with theoretical foundations and a historical review on the object of study, leading to a description of the methodological and empirical approach described in the final sections of the research. The first section, entitled "The use of photography for teaching and urban research", chronologically recounts various historical processes and key figures involved in photographic recording and its consideration within urban research experiences, primarily in the Global North and later in Latin America. The second section, "Photography and the fragmented city in Ecuador," describes the process of photography's arrival in Ecuador and its relationship to the interpretation of the phenomenon of urban fragmentation in Guayaquil, the country's largest city in demographic terms.

2. Photography as a research and pedagogical tool in the urban field

To develop this section, it is necessary to initially understand the relationship between some key concepts that underpin the teaching experience described in the next section. The first concept is visual literacy, understood as specific skills developed by students in the area of visual perception of the city and its phenomena, and the predominant role of visual sociology as an interpretive and constructive framework for knowledge associated with the architectural and urban field. In this sense, visual literacy is understood as a set of skills acquired through sight and the integration of other sensory experiences (Debes, 1969). Regarding the concept of visual perception, there are multiple approaches; however, for this study, it will be understood as the process of acquiring knowledge about the environment through sight (Palmer, 1999) and particularly through photographs as mediated observation tools by technological instruments (Mosterín, 1998) that facilitate learning processes based on the critical reading of built space (Kammerer & Kirkpatrick, 2025).

Based on the idea of making everyday life visible, which often goes unnoticed, the construction of a genealogy of the use of photography in the urban sphere as a pedagogical and investigative device was proposed, starting from four transversal thematic axes based on documentary research: Photography as a scientific instrument for urban memory; Photography as an early instrument for civic education and urban reforms; Photography as an instrument for theorizing critical urban perceptions and visual analysis in academia; and, Photography as an instrument for active pedagogies and contemporary perspectives.

2.1 Photography as a scientific instrument for urban memory

In France, the use of photography began to form a fundamental part of the work of historians and researchers of architectural and archaeological heritage from the mid-nineteenth century, after being officially recognized as an important form of information gathering for scientific work, with initial support from figures such as François Arago (1786-1853) who served as General Secretary of *L'Académie Nationale des Sciences* (the French Academy of Science) and considered its importance as a reliable and objective instrument for gathering information for scientific research, developing technologies for this field that also had state subsidies (Trachtenberg, 1980; Newhall, 1982) and it was officially presented as an innovative technique in 1839 (Lequeux, 2015).

Regarding documentary photography with an emphasis on urban space and the city, it began to be documented in a pioneering way around 1840 in Paris by the photographer Hippolythe Bayard (1801-1887) with the creation of images with a direct relationship to urban space (Fields, 2022) and

later as a part of the Mission Heliographique[4], as well as the work of Charles Marville (1813-1879) and Eugene Auget (1857-1927), when documenting the urban dynamics of the city before, during and after the major interventions carried out by Baron Haussmann in the city, in order to establish a heritage archive. Although they were not part of academic research at the time, they were part of the French government's heritage archive to document those processes (Rizov, 2021). After his death, Atget's work was widely disseminated in the United States by photographer Berenice Abbott (1898-1991) who acquired a large part of his personal archive for informational purposes, with the help of artist Man Ray[5] (Monje & Ortegón, 2016). Berenice Abbott was also noted for her extensive documentary photography of the changing urban space of New York in the late 1920s and early 1930s, with the publication of her eponymous photographic album in 1929 (Abbott, 1997).

However, as early as 1833, Hercules Florence (1804-1879), a versatile French-Brazilian photographer and inventor, carried out a first experiment using image engraving and chemical substances, which he pioneered called "*Photographie*" (Kossoy, 1980). Florence is considered, along with Joseph Niepce (1765-1833) and Louis Daguerre (1787-1851), one of the main inventors of photography. During this period, photography became part of the prevailing positivist paradigm and began to contribute to research based on the observation of verifiable facts.

2.2 Photography as an early instrument for civic education and urban reforms

Following this line of research concerning the use of instruments to gather information about the territory, it would be impossible not to mention, especially if associating pioneering critical approaches with a humanist or culturalist focus on the place, the work of Patrick Geddes (1854-1932), standing out for the incorporation of photographs, surveys and tours of the place within his diagnostic methodologies on the territory, with appropriate visual representation techniques (Young, 2017; Díaz Garrido, 2017), making famous his phrase "Survey Before Plan" (Meller, 1994), a continued source of inspiration for past, present and future generations of professionals and researchers in the spatial, urban and territorial fields.

The use of photography has been widely disseminated as an approach method in ethnographic research within fields such as anthropology and sociology (Banks, 2001; 2010), in the field of urban studies, one of the pioneering works that combines statistical data with documentary photography[6] as a key element to support these data, is the book *How the Other Half Lives*, a study of property ownership in late 19th-century New York, carried out by Jacob Riis (1849-1914), a Danish photojournalist and migrant in New York City since 1870 (Romero Escrivá, 2013). Riis, even drawing on his own life experience as a migrant in the city, documents through the use of halftones[7] in a masterful and unprecedented way, the living conditions of the city's poorest population, using a pioneering flash powder[8] to take night shots of different sectors of the city inhabited mainly by migrants and lower-income population groups in Manhattan, information that until then, had remained overlooked in traditional media, amidst the great economic boom of the city, thus contrasting and describing an alternative vision of the city produced by economic capital (Pincelli, 2015).

Throughout this publication, architectural representations are used to describe the characteristics of these settlements and buildings that served as shelters for these inhabitants (Figure 1), in addition to statistics provided by local authorities of the time. From this moment on, Riis focused his work on collecting photographic documentation of other phenomena associated with precarious work in the city, such as child labor, with the publication of the book "The Children of the Poor" in 1892.

4 It was a commission from the French government in 1851, led by several photographers including Hippolythe Bayard, Édouard Baldous, Gustave Le Gray, Henri Le Secq and Auguste Mestral to document monuments in a historical heritage archive (Álvarez, 2015).

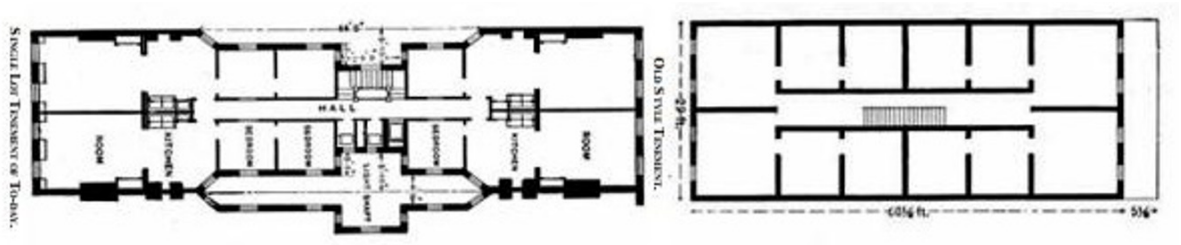
5 Berenice Abbott was an assistant to the American photographer and artist Emanuel Radnitzky, known as Man Ray (Monje and Ortegón, 2016).

6 The quality of authenticity implicit in a photograph can give it special value as evidence or proof (...) "an original and official document used as a basis, proof or support for anything else, in its broadest sense, including any writing, book or other instrument that transmits information." (Newhall, 1982)

7 Raster images, also called "halftone pictures", are based on an optical illusion: that, at a certain distance, the human eye perceives a grouping of points and spaces as if there were a single continuous tone formed by the average tone and contrast of spaces and points (Sánchez, 2006).

8 Magnesium compound, launched with a gun for that purpose (NPR, 2025).

Figure 1. Plan of buildings that housed migrants and low-income population groups in NY, in 1890



Source: Riis (1890).

This type of approach[9] was later continued by Lewis Hine (1874-1940), a prominent sociologist and *Muckraker*[10] which contributed significantly to denouncing this type of situations in the American urban environment. A few years earlier, in 1851, Henry Mayhew had already produced a similar publication using daguerreotypes in "London Labour and the London Poor" (Brown, 2001), and also, in this same period of time, similar mention should be made of "Life and Labour of the People of London", a work carried out by the social researcher Charles Booth (1840-1916), related to the widespread use of a research methodology that involved conducting surveys of inhabitants of different sectors of London, taking into consideration factors such as their workplaces, working conditions, their homes and the urban environment in which they lived. He also mapped areas of London based on statistical data from carried out surveys. (Vaughan & Geddes, 2009).

2.3 Photography as an instrument for theorizing urban perception and visual analysis in academia

From the perspective of urban sociology, a genealogy of the perception of built space could be established, taking as a starting point of this framework of knowledge the concept of *blasé attitude* described by George Simmel (1903) in his essay *The Metropolis and Mental Life* (*Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben*). This is precisely one of the main problems frequently encountered by many urban planning students: indifference to the problems and inequalities in the city. In this sense, the need to "undomesticate" arises, that is, to unlearn what we know about something, as opposed to the concept of the domestication of knowledge, revealing the apophatic view of this situation (Breilh, 2004).

Regarding photography and its theoretical implications for the perception of urban space, the contributions of Walter Benjamin are fundamental. Developed throughout various texts[11], he reflects on the emergence of the photographer as a new professional figure, the perceptual transformations associated within the modern Paris, and the act of wandering as a form of urban experience. In this context, the *flâneur*[12] appears as a central literary and critical figure through which Benjamin examines new forms of observation and symbolic appropriation of the urban space (Benjamin, 1999; 2006; 2008). This attitude, the *flânerie*, is frequently used as a didactic device in academic settings to better understand urban space from other dimensions, particularly those associated with the senses, and with the body as a mediating device of the experience of moving through the city, experiences that can hardly be pointed out in a traditional urban diagnosis under a technicist and

9 Within this field of work, it is necessary to mention socio-documentary photography or Concerned Photography, which would be mainly focused on the dissemination of images that relate the latent social crises in urban and rural environments, and that focus mainly on showing the way of life of those most socially disadvantaged, a term coined by the North American photographer Cornell Capa (1918-2008) alluding to the possibility of achieving social changes through the reproduction of images that evidence all these problems in different areas of the world (ICP, 2025).

10 A group of American writers identified with reformist and denunciatory literature. These journalists provided detailed and accurate journalistic accounts of political and economic corruption, as well as the social hardships caused by the power of big business in the United States (Guerrero Yoacham, 2012).

11 For Benjamin, the *flâneur* and the photographer represent two moments in the modern urban gaze. In *The Arcades Project* (1927-1940) and *The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire* (1938) the flâneur wanders throughout the city, engaging in a contemplative visual appropriation. In *A Short History of Photography* (1931) and *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (1935-1936), the photographer transforms this relationship: where the flâneur contemplated, the photographer captures and reproduces mechanically, revealing the "optical unconscious." Both observe the city with analytical distance, but the photographer technologizes the flâneur's aristocratic gaze, marking the shift from individual experience (*erfahrung*) to the mass reproducibility of the image (Benjamin, 1999; 2006; 2008).

12 Term coined by the poet Charles Baudelaire in his book *Fleurs du mal* (1857) to describe a typical character of the modern French city walking aimlessly through the city, awakely exploring every corner of the city.

functionalist approach. The experience of wandering serves as a starting point for the situationist dérive proposed by Guy Debord (1956) and which are frequently used as a pedagogical exercise in many higher education centers globally.

These paradigms proposed by Simmel and Benjamin could pioneer an early critical dimension of urban perception, and it is precisely on this approach that the pedagogical experience described in the next section seeks to be established. The following experiences propose the curricular incorporation of photography as a methodological tool in urban teaching and research within university programs of architecture and urbanism.

Likewise, the work carried out by the Viennese urban planner Otto Wagner (1841-1918) is of notable interest, using photographs in his academic works to exemplify or describe protomodern buildings in the urban space of Vienna (Wagner, 1989). This work is complemented by some other publications[13] by the architect and urban planner Camilo Sitte (1843-1903) who also contributed in a pioneering way to critical urban analysis from an aesthetic point of view (Collins *et al.*, 2006).

In a nearby geographical space, Walter Gropius (1883-1969) actively used photographs to disseminate the activities carried out at the Bauhaus in Weimar (Bauhaus, 2025) as a fundamental competence in architectural education. Of notable interest is the participation of the Hungarian artist László Moholy-Nagy (1895-1946) in the consideration of photography as a didactic instrument at the Bauhaus (1923-1928). In this sense, he integrated it as a method of perception and visual analysis by incorporating experiments with photograms, photomontages and new techniques of visual representation (Fiedler, 2006). In the introductory course, *Vorkurs*, he promoted a New Vision that allowed students to understand spatial and material reality from unconventional perspectives (Blocona Redondo, 2014). Also actively involved were László's wife, Lucia Moholy (1894-1989) who was in charge of the systematic documentation of the workshop products and daily life at the school, and Walter Peterhans (1897-1960) who was in charge of the direction of the official photography workshop (1929-1933) with the promotion of technical and compositional aspects of the photographic medium (Sachsse, 1995; Haus, 2006).

An element that marked a before and after to record the evolution of the built environment in contemporary cities, is aerial photography, which also plays a leading role in urban studies to this day, alongside the development of satellite imagery. The work of William Garnett (1916-2006), an American landscape photographer, specialized in aerial photography, highlighting his contribution to the study and urban evolution of different sectors of the metropolitan area of Los Angeles in California (Garnett, 1994). Towards the 1950s, he made a series of documentary photographs of urban development in areas such as Lakewood in Los Angeles, highlighting the diffuse growth of this city, characterized by its low-density and monofunctional land use. These records were first published in the *Fortune* magazine in 1954, and as a contribution to the book of Nathaniel Owings *The American Aesthetic (1903-1984)*, in 1969. He also taught at UC Berkeley where he influenced students with his work (Waldie, 2013). Garnett's photographs became invaluable teaching materials in American schools of architecture and urban planning, enabling a visual understanding of phenomena that were difficult to observe at ground level, thus his contribution provided a framework for interpreting complex urban processes by transforming photography into a tool for the critical study of built environment in postwar American cities.

A few years later, the work of Kevin Lynch was quite emphatic in using visual urban diagnostic methods such as photography, mental maps and sketches of the place for his research Perceptual form of the City, carried out between 1954 and 1959 in Los Angeles, Boston and Jersey City, culminating with his most famous publication: The Image of the City (Lynch, 1960). Similarly, in 1961, activist Jane Jacobs published The Death and Life of Great American Cities, which, despite not using photographs directly in her publication, has inspired many urban planners, especially in the teaching field, to create urban walks to identify everyday dynamics in the city. A clear example of this are the Jane's Walks, which are held in various cities around the world inspired by the vision of this North American activist. Along the same lines, Gordon Cullen (1961) addresses the concept of serial vision as a methodology for understanding and analyzing the pedestrian experience in cities. Using photographic sequences taken from the pedestrian's point of view, he reveals how architectural elements, chan-

13 Among them, his famous work, which stands out for the use of photographic records for its analysis, *City Planning according to Artistic Principles*, first published in 1889 (Collins *et al.*, 2006).

ges in level, turns, and perspectives allow for the study of the temporal and cognitive dimensions of the city, emphasizing the phenomenological experience, that is, the subjective experience of the individual while moving through the city.

The contribution of Professor John W. Reps can be seen in the creation of an extensive visual library of different forms of representation of North American urban space, with an emphasis on documentary photography and historical mapping as pedagogical tools for teaching urban analysis. This allowed his students to understand various morphological transformations over time and develop analytical skills by examining photographic records as a primary source of information. (Reps, 1965; Fikes & Witten, 2020).

Taking into account other methodologies of visual analysis in the urban field, it is worth mentioning the work of sociologist William Whyte (1917-1999), with the aim of analyzing the dynamics of the use of public space in New York City in 1980, where he conducted a study called “Social Life of Small Urban Spaces” (Whyte, 1980). It stood out for its use of direct observation methods on the urban environment through photographic recording techniques such as the time-lapse, a method that continues to be used to this day.

Allan Jacobs (1928–2025) was a professor of urban planning at UC Berkeley and developed his own methodologies for the visual analysis of urban space, combining direct observation and graphic representation. In 1985, he published the book Looking at Cities, which highlights his pedagogical techniques based on pedestrian observation, sequential photographic documentation, and perceptual mapping, indicating that urban planners should “learn to see” the city before intervening in it (Jacobs, 1985; 1993). He used original photographs and copies in his classes and research at the College of Environmental Design at UC Berkeley (Jacobs, 1985; UC Berkeley, 2011). He continued this methodological approach in his book Great Streets, published in 1993.

2.4 Photography as an instrument for active pedagogies and contemporary perspectives

The experiences described below are initially mapped within the field of visual sociology or based on the use of photography as a tool for community participation, a tacit strategy for educating, decolonizing, and raising awareness about the problems ocurring in the territory. Some are methodological strategies, while others marked pioneering experiences in the teaching of architecture and urban planning in the region.

In Latin America, this type of approach between the urban domain and photography has gained relevance since the emergence of several photographers[14] who documented the urban space from a socially situated perspective, showing everyday tensions and aspects previously not evident such as social segregation or the rapid modernization of urban space. Predominantly in the field of university teaching of urban studies, the contribution of Karl Brunner in Chile and Colombia since the end of 1929 stands out as one of the pioneering figures, with the ground-breaking use of aerial photographs in his urbanism seminars at the University of Chile, in 1930, and in Colombia which, at that time, was the first prelude to postgraduate studies of urbanism in the region. Brunner had a particularly important influence as a professor of Urbanism, Landscape Architecture and Theory and History of Architecture at the National University of Colombia in Bogotá (Álvarez, 2022). In 1939 he published the Urban Planning Manual, a product of the compilation of his professional experience in Europe and Latin America, in which he makes particular use of urban photography and aerial photography as part of his contribution to urban studies in the region and widely used in higher education centers.

Although the use of photography is not explicitly cited in the references used for this work, the pedagogical experience of Alberto Cruz Covarrubias at the University of Valparaíso in Chile in 1955 can

14 Organized by country, we could mention: Manuel Álvarez Bravo (Mexico), Marc Ferrez and Augusto Malta (Brazil), Martin Chambi (Peru), Horacio Coppola (Argentina), Antonio Quintana (Chile), Alfredo Boulton (1908-1995, Venezuela), Manuel H. (Colombia).

be mentioned. He led a particular methodology for "architectural observation", in which he encouraged his students to take urban walks in "El Curso del Espacio" with the aim of identifying spatial conditions resulting from observation of the city. The method consisted of outings to the city with the students to observe, describe, and record everyday activities that gave rise to architectural and urban phenomena (Braghini, 2020; Barrera et al., 2025).

In the field of participatory photography, a visual research methodology in which participants, generally a specific community, make photographic records of their daily experiences or a specific theme, and which has been used in various pedagogical or research experiences in urban studies, the experience of the "TAFOS – Taller de Fotografía Social" in Peru is a noteworthy example. These workshops were carried out from 1986 to 1998, amidst the economic crisis and armed conflict that was taking place in this country. In these workshops, German photographers Thomas Müller and Helga Müller trained rural communities on the use of photographic cameras, so that they themselves could record their environment from their lived experience, deliberately inverting the role of the traditional photographer from the figure of observer towards a self-representation that is built from within the community (Müller, 2007).

This technique of teaching rural communities how to use the camera as a mediated observation device was already being used by North American photographers like Wendy Ewald in her experiences with Innu communities in Canada (Hajjaoui, 2019). However, the TAFOS experience, which methodologically foreshadowed participatory or community photography tools documented in the Global North, such as Photovoice described by Wang and Burris (1997), had one of its precursors a decade earlier in rural Peru. This tool has recently been used in pedagogical and research experiences linked to urban settings (Erfani, 2021; Gómez Varo et al., 2023; Kammerer & Kirkpatrick, 2025).

It is important to mention that after Brunner, the use of photography as a pedagogical tool became fragmented and poorly documented, at least in Latin America. While it is very likely that each architecture faculty and each individual teacher could conduct learning experiences based on the use of photography, there are few documented cases of its use as a practice oriented towards teaching urban planning, particularly until the 2000s, when the field of visual ethnography formally became part of the curriculum of many universities.

More recently, several documented experiences from 2013 onward have systematically linked both areas. Iturra Muñoz (2013) proposes this as a methodological transfer strategy for understanding the particular experiences of observers of the urban phenomenon, their problems, and their questions regarding the city, considering that it is the inhabitants themselves who construct this particular ethos, and allowing us to see how "the other" might observe that same city. Conord and Cuny (2014) describe the importance of this type of approach between photography and urban studies, as they are intrinsically related to knowledge production, and they warn about the growing use of photography as a scientific method for recording contemporary phenomena in the urban sphere. This publication highlights various methods of ethnographic analysis and their specific use in the field of contemporary urban studies (Ballif, 2014; Schoepfer, 2014). This construction of knowledge from the subject is described by Augustowsky (2017) in what he calls "Investigación Basada en las Artes" (Arts Based Research), a type of qualitative research in which participants actively participate not only in the photographic record but also in the interpretation of the obtained documentation.

In Egypt, Elshater (2018) describes a pedagogical experience sustained over 4 years of a module called "Site Photography and Documentation" implemented at Ain Shams University in Cairo since 2013, which involves five phases of study in which students learn from basic camera handling to critical documentation of urban space with techniques used by classical authors, and highlighting the importance of including a specific visual literacy program within urban studies with the aim of preparing students for the specific demands of the profession.

Finally, the investigative and pedagogical work carried out by Professor Ashraf Salama (1995, 2006, 2015) on innovative pedagogies in architecture and urban planning should be mentioned, as it has been a line of research developed by this architect since the eighties, influenced by teachers whose scope is based on the relationship between participation and design such as Henry Sanoff or Nikos Salingaros. Recently, some other experiences carried out and published in academic sources with similar approaches have also been reported. (Hollanda, 2012; Goltara & Mendonça, 2015; Martínez Gutiérrez et al., 2024).

3. One pedagogical experience in Guayaquil, Ecuador

In Guayaquil, Ecuador, it is estimated that the first daguerreotype arrived in 1841, on a Belgian steamship. After that, the mass printing process began with the establishment of various photographic establishments. However, it was not until 1864 that Rafael Castro Ordoñez, official photographer of the Spanish royal house, took the first documentary photographs of urban spaces in the city as part of the Spanish Scientific Commission of the Pacific (Hidalgo, 2012). From 1892 onwards, various albums were published which documented the changes that had taken place in the urban appearance of the city. After 1950, the city went through an expansive dynamic of territorial growth, initially encompassing the estuaries at the southern end of the city, mostly through occupations by popular sectors, and to the north of the city, urbanizations were developed by the private sector and land seizures that were subsequently regularized by municipal entities (Sánchez Gallegos, 2020). However, at the same time, this growth dynamic has intensified in the northern end of the city with the proliferation of private complexes of gated communities called *ciudadelas* that seek to make up for the housing deficit in the city, while solving the prevailing need for shelter and security for its inhabitants (Pérez & Orejuela, 2023).

About its urban expansion, in morphological terms, the city has undergone a process of continuous fragmentation (Pérez & Orejuela, 2023), giving rise to many interpretations of urban space: on the one hand, there is the physical city that expands and is planned; on the other hand, there is a city that is inhabited and comes into tension with planning. There is a third city that is imagined from routes, conversations and media images, a city that is formed from interpretations of its everyday life (Zerega, 2007). In this context, the historic center maintains its particular morphology with the characteristic predominance of arcades (Santana, 2015) but as the city grows and abandons its initial limits, it gives rise to an expansive growth that seeks to imitate a North American model of a diffuse city, sustained by the private motor vehicle as the primary means of transportation, with its characteristic suburbs for middle and upper sectors of the population (Pérez & Orejuela, 2023) and the emphasis on establishing a generic image of the city (Andrade, 2006).

Gradually, the aspects that evoked the heritage and life in the historic center of the city have been modified by a daily dynamic articulated between a large avenue near a shopping center (Zerega, 2007), a situation that is easily verifiable in sectors far from the historic center of the city such as Samborondón, Los Ceibos or Vía a la Costa, an intense process that Kingman and Goetschel (2007) called “banalization of memory and other fields” or the “dehistoricization of urban memory”, in which the image of the city itself – its distinctive features and identity – would be constructed through the mere imitation of values external to its historical and cultural context. The city thus adopted a generic vision under a homogenizing aesthetic in terms of its urban planning (Muñoz, 2008) that seeks to imitate or that places as references, international contexts associated with global trade. It is important to mention that, at least in the city of Guayaquil, according to various sources (De la Sala y Villacrés, 2011; Sánchez Gallegos, 2015), at least 60% of the city’s urban area is made up of informal sectors; however, in the educational field, few pedagogical experiences focus their content on training professionals who are aware of this context and, primarily, on understanding the informal city as an area of professional activity (Klaufus, 2009; Carofilis *et al.*, 2018; Velásquez, 2020).

With the accumulation of situations indicated about the city, how can an urban planning pedagogy for students in the city be organized correctly? And what is the additional value of photography as a starting point for critically differentiating these phenomena? Finally, how can a domesticated subject recognize the presence of these phenomena from their own everyday experience? This pedagogical experience in higher education and its results will be briefly explained below.

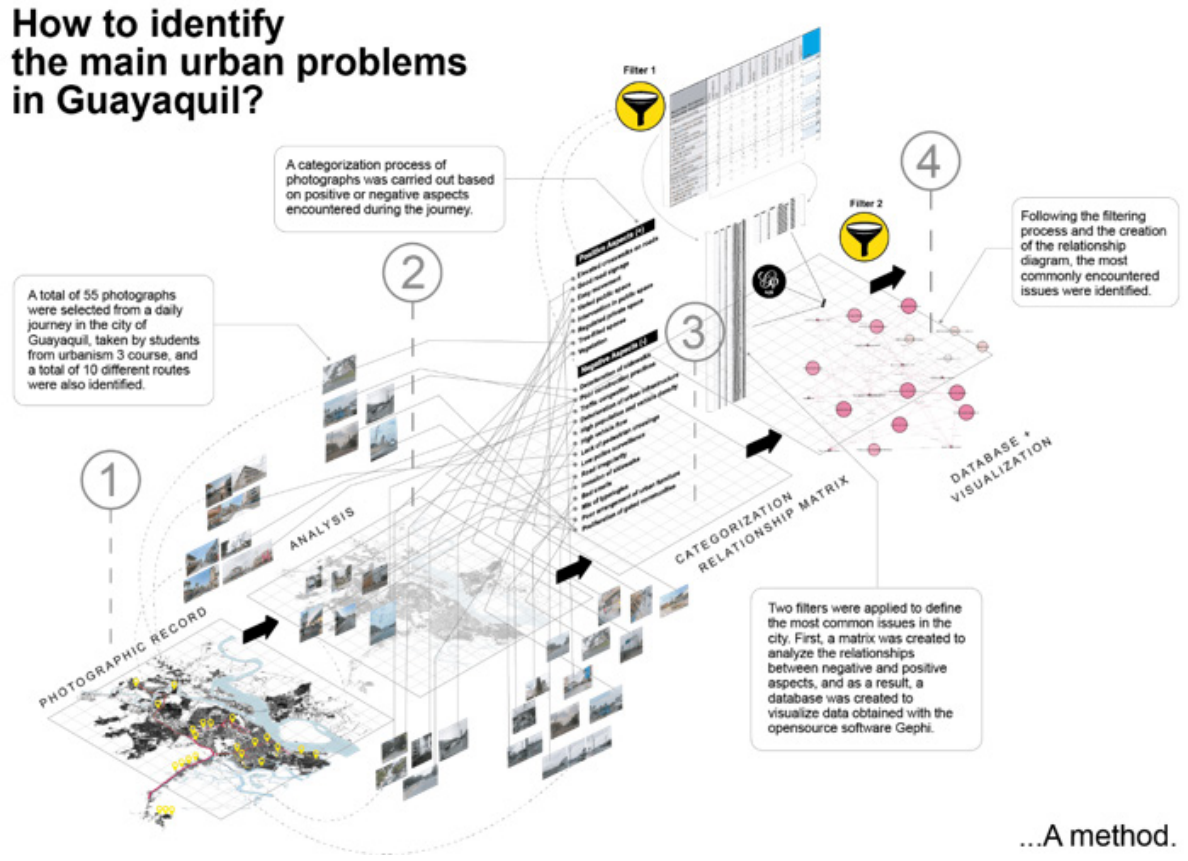
This experience with urban planning students, was conducted from December 5 to 15, 2024 in Guayaquil, Ecuador. To carry out this research, once the corresponding academic activities had begun, the students were presented with the work outline, and they unanimously agreed to participate. The initial activity, called “Photo Essay,” consisted of each student taking a photograph of their surroundings, describing positive or negative situations inherent to a specific route in their daily life. They were then asked to provide an oral account of the most frequently encountered problems. This activity was conducted individually. Its goal was to raise student awareness of their environment and being able to recognize first-hand the different urban phenomena present throughout a daily journey, as part of an exercise called “the experience of the flâneur around the city” which consisted of analyzing a daily route through the city to draw students’ attention to various problems inherent to urban space and its transformation over time.

The research was conducted using a descriptive field approach, based on participant observation methodology[15]. The population consisted of 23 students enrolled in the urban planning course, who comprised the entire universe of observers and producers of the empirical material. The research process was structured in four successive stages: (1) photographic documentation, (2) thematic analysis and categorization, (3) relational analysis, and (4) data visualization (Figure 4).

During each academic session, the facilitator guided the students through the progressive development of these phases, directing both the observation process and the criteria for analysis and presentation of results. The resulting images were subsequently examined using an inductive coding process, understood as an analytical procedure characteristic of qualitative research in which categories emerge directly from the analysis of empirical data, rather than being defined beforehand by the researcher. This approach is based in the Grounded Theory tradition, where analytical knowledge is progressively constructed from the identification of recurring patterns in observed material (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Charmaz, 2006). In this case, the descriptive labels emerged from urban phenomena identified by the students themselves during their daily commutes – primarily between their homes and the university – and were subsequently discussed and refined collectively in the classroom.

From this coding process, recurring patterns were identified among the visual observations, allowing for the analysis of thematic co-occurrence, understood as the simultaneous appearance of different urban conditions within the same photographically recorded spatial situation. This approach allows us to understand the urban environment as a system of interrelated phenomena that manifest themselves together in everyday experience (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Saldaña, 2016). Finally, the resulting categories were described, systematized, and presented by the students as part of the course's reflective process (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Methodological Abstract Diagram. Work phases



Source: Data from the study.

15 "Participant observation is a unique method for investigating human existence whereby the researcher more or less actively participates with people in commonplace situations and everyday life settings while observing and otherwise collecting information." (Jorgensen, 2015)

4. Results and discussion

4.1 First stage: photographic record

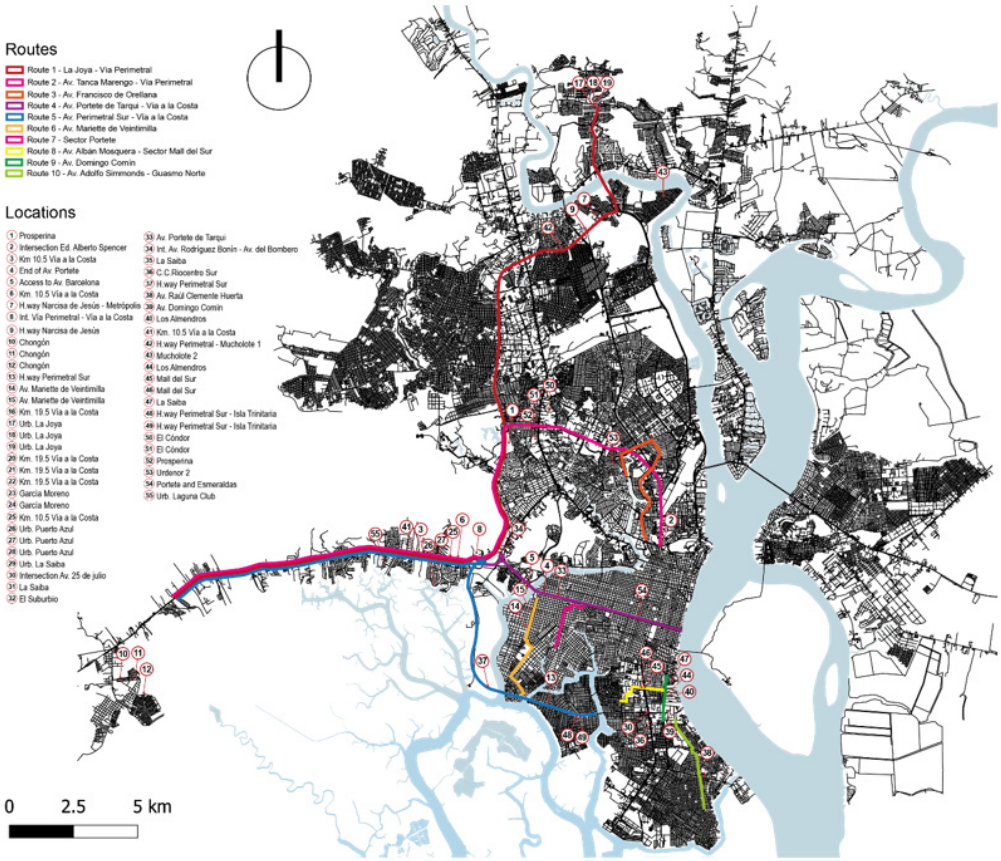
In the first stage, photographic documentation was carried out as a procedure for producing the empirical material for the study. Each of the 23 students was asked to select a route linked to their daily life, whether it was the journey between their home and the university, routes associated with weekend family activities, or any other movement they considered relevant for observing the urban environment. The purpose was to document, through images, urban phenomena previously addressed in the theoretical content of the course, promoting a situated approach to the everyday experience of urban space.

The selected routes were located in different sectors of the Guayaquil Metropolitan Area, incorporating socioeconomic and geographic diversity. This area comprises three main cantons – Guayaquil, Daule, and Samborondón – located in the province of Guayas, the most populated region of Ecuador and the one with the highest national gross domestic product (BCE, 2020). The geographical distribution of the routes allowed for the construction of a heterogeneous visual *corpus* capable of reflecting different urban conditions within the same metropolitan system.

The routes documented by the students were: (1) La Joya – Perimetral Highway, (2) Tanca Marengo Avenue – Perimetral Highway, (3) Francisco de Orellana Avenue, (4) Portete de Tarqui Avenue – Coastal Highway, (5) Southern Perimetral Avenue – Coastal Highway, (6) Mariette de Veintimilla Avenue, (7) Portete Sector, (8) Albán Mosquera Avenue – Mall del Sur Sector, (9) Domingo Comín Avenue, and (10) Adolfo Simmons Avenue – Guasmo Norte (Figure 3).

Each route was considered a unit of urban observation, within which the students recorded significant spatial situations using digital photography. This process allowed the generation of an initial set of visual data that would later be analyzed using an inductive coding procedure, aimed at identifying emerging patterns and facilitating the analysis of thematic co-occurrences between the different urban conditions observed.

Figure 3. Map of the Guayaquil Metropolitan Area with routes and location of photographs taken by students of the Urban Planning course



Source: Study data.

Fifty-five photographs were selected to form a purposive sample of visual representations produced by all participants in the study. Each image was chosen by the students themselves based on its ability to highlight significant urban conditions in the observed context, prioritizing those that allowed for the recognition of spatial situations representative of the current state of the urban environment (Figure 4).

This set of images constituted the initial visual corpus for the analysis, which served as the basis for the subsequent inductive coding process, aimed at identifying recurring patterns and establishing thematic co-occurrence relationships among the different urban conditions recorded.

Figure 4. Photos taken by students of the Urbanism 3 course for a photo essay exercise and written information with reflections on the experience, demonstrating their acquired sensitivity and analysis based on the photographs taken during the exercise



Source: Study data.

4.2 Second stage: analysis and thematic categorization

In this stage, the analysis and systematic organization of the visual *corpus* was carried out through the identification, labeling, and grouping of the images according to recurring urban problems. This type of categorization of primary sources is a widely used procedure in qualitative research, particularly in studies that employ photography as a tool for social and spatial analysis (González Gil, 2008). Various authors have referred to this process as the identification of “expressions” (Opler, 1945), the construction of analytical categories (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), the generation of concepts (Strauss and Corbin, 1990), or the recognition of emerging themes (Ryan and Bernard, 2003), all aimed at detecting significant patterns within the empirical material.

The analysis was conducted using an inductive coding process, understood as an analytical procedure in which categories emerge progressively from the direct examination of the data, rather than being established *a priori* by the researcher (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Charmaz, 2006). In this case, the students analyzed their own photographic records and identified urban phenomena observed during their daily commutes, recognizing recurring patterns, contrasts, and signs of conflict taking place in the urban environment. Subsequently, these identifications were discussed collectively in the classroom and consolidated through a teacher-guided review process to ensure interpretive coherence among the records.

As part of the analytical procedure, each student was asked to georeference their photographs by assigning a numerical location to them on a map of the metropolitan area, thus linking each visual observation to its specific spatial context (Figure 5). Based on this analysis, each image was associated with a thematic category rated as positive or negative, according to predefined analytical criteria aimed at distinguishing urban conditions perceived as facilitating or limiting the everyday experience of urban space.

Figure 5. Students performing the exercise in class



Sources: Study data.

The students identified a total of seven categories as positive situations: 1) Elevated crosswalks on roads, 2) Good Road signage, 3) Adequate commute, 4) Varied public space, 5) Improvements in public space, 6) Regulated private space, 7) Tree-filled spaces 8) Vegetation. As negative phenomena, the following situations were identified: 1) Deterioration of sidewalks, 2) Poor construction practices, 3) Traffic congestion, 4) Damage of urban infrastructure, 5) High population and vehicle density, 6) High vehicle flow, 7) Lack of pedestrian crossings, 8) Low police surveillance, 9) Road irregularity, 10) Invasion of sidewalks, 11) Bad smells, 12) Mix of typologies, 13) Poor arrangement of urban furniture and 14) Proliferation of gated communities (Table 1).

These categories formed the analytical basis for the subsequent relational analysis stage, in which patterns of thematic co-occurrence were examined. Co-occurrence is understood as the simultaneous appearance of multiple urban conditions within the same photographically recorded spatial situation.

Table 1. Positive and Negative Aspects in the Urban Environment Encountered by Students of the Urban Planning Course 3. Guayaquil, Ecuador. December 2024

	Positive Aspects		Negative Aspects
1	Elevated crosswalks on roads	1	Deterioration of sidewalks
2	Good road signage	2	Poor construction practices
3	Adequate commute	3	Traffic congestion
4	Varied public space	4	Damage of urban infrastructure
5	Improvements in public space	5	High population and vehicle density
6	Regulated private space	6	High vehicle flow
7	Tree-filled spaces	7	Lack of pedestrian crossings
8	Vegetation	8	Low police surveillance
		9	Road irregularity
		10	Invasion of sidewalks
		11	Bad smells
		12	Mix of typologies
		13	Poor arrangement of urban furniture
		14	Proliferation of gated communities

Source: Study data

4.3 Third stage: relational analysis

Once the photograph categorization process was complete, a relational analysis was developed to explore the associations between the different urban conditions which were identified. To this end, a matrix of cross-relationships between the emerging thematic categories was constructed to examine how the positive and negative aspects of the urban environment appeared linked within the same spatial situations recorded by the students during their various routes. The established relationships were not conceived as causal links or statistical correlations, but rather as thematic co-occurrence relationships, understood as the simultaneous presence of multiple urban phenomena within a single photographic observation. This approach allows for the analysis of urban space from a systemic perspective, recognizing that different urban conditions manifest themselves jointly in the everyday experience of the territory (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Saldaña, 2016).

The relational matrix was developed using an ordinal scale of intensity, which allowed for recording the degree of recurrence with which two categories appeared associated within the set of analyzed observations. The scale used ranged from 0 to 3, where: 0 indicates no co-occurrence between categories; 1 corresponds to an occasional or weak association; 2 represents a recurring association observed in multiple records; and 3 indicates a systematic and clearly identifiable co-presence across different routes and student observations.

This matrix allowed for the analytical organization of the complexity of the observed urban interactions, providing the structural framework for the subsequent visualization of relationships through network analysis (Table 2).

Table 2. Relationship Matrix. Positive and Negative Aspects in the Urban Environment according to the photographical record of students. December 2024

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Positive Aspects / Negative Aspects	Elevated crosswalks	Good road signage	Adequate commute	Varied public space	Improvements in public	Regulated private	Tree-filled spaces	Vegetation
1	Deterioration of sidewalks	2	1	3	3	3	0	3	1
2	Poor construction practices	1	0	0	0	1	3	0	3
3	Traffic congestion	1	3	3	0	0	0	0	0
4	Damage of urban infrastructure	3	2	1	3	3	0	3	3
5	High population and vehicle density	3	1	3	0	1	0	0	0
6	High vehicle flow	3	3	3	0	3	1	1	1
7	Lack of pedestrian crossings	3	3	3	2	3	2	1	1
8	Low police surveillance	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	2

Note: 0=no relationship 1=low relationship 2=medium relationship 3=high relationship.
Source: Study data.

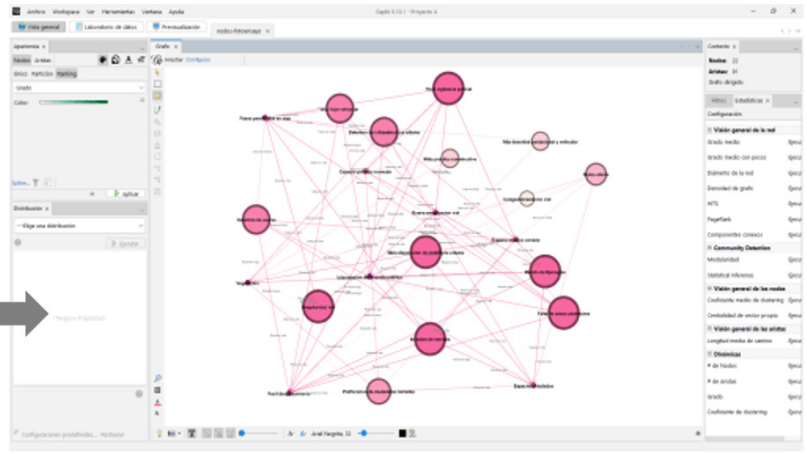
4.4 Fourth Stage: Data visualization

Based on the relational matrix constructed in the previous stage, a database in edge-list format was generated for processing using the open-source software Gephi® version 0.10.1, a tool specialized in the analysis and visualization of complex networks. In the network structure, each node represented a thematic category associated with an urban problem or quality identified during inductive coding, while the edges represented the intensity of thematic co-occurrence among these categories, according to the values defined in the relational matrix. The use of Gephi allowed for the visualization of emerging relationships among the observed urban conditions, facilitating the graphical interpretation of collective patterns of urban perception derived from student photographic records. In this sense, network visualization was employed as an exploratory analytical tool intended to represent the relational structure of the set of observations, and not as a model for causal or statistical inference.

The software applied network analysis algorithms, particularly measures of centrality and modularity, to identify thematic clusters and recognize relational hierarchies within the analyzed urban system. These procedures revealed how different urban problems tend to cluster in recurring perceptual configurations, uncovering patterns of association within the students' everyday experience of urban space (Figures 6 and 7). As a result of the inductive coding process applied to the photographic corpus, recurring patterns were identified in the observations of the students, allowing for the recognition of urban phenomena that appeared most frequently along the different routes analyzed. The identification of these recurrences was based on the reiteration of categories within multiple visual records and associated descriptions, which allowed for the establishment of shared perceptual trends among the participants.

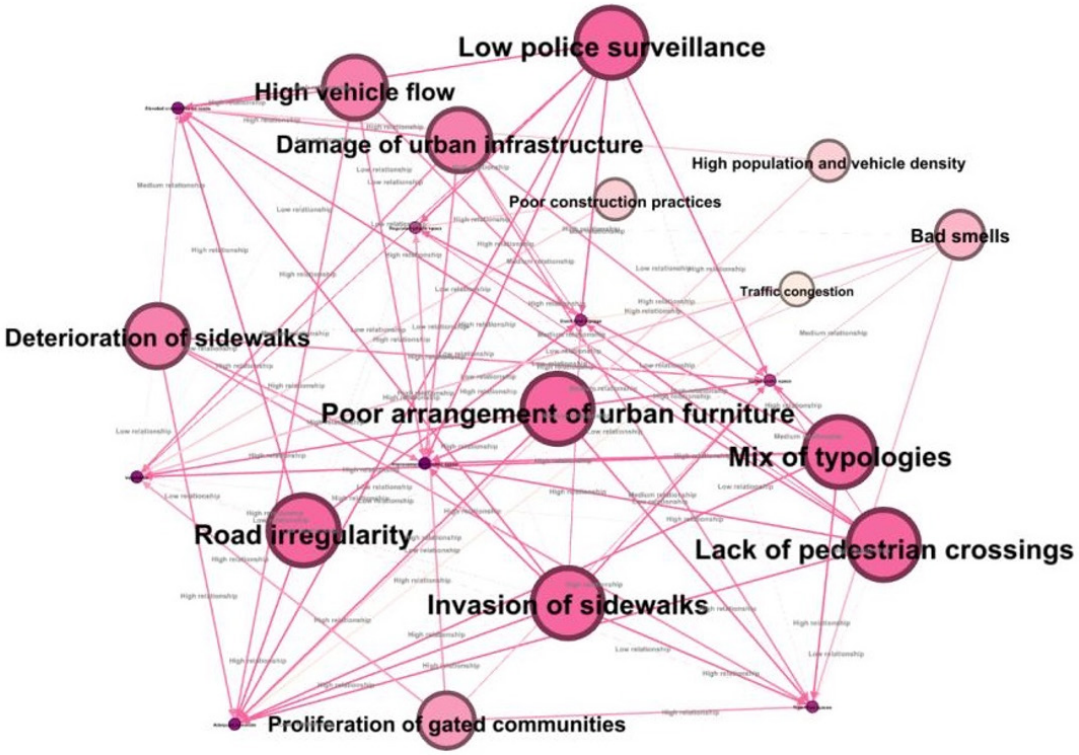
Figure 6. Database for creating relationship diagrams

Source	Target	Weight	Label	Type
1	15	2	Relacion media	Mixed
1	16	1	Relacion baja	Mixed
1	17	3	Relacion alta	Mixed
1	18	3	Relacion alta	Mixed
1	19	3	Relacion alta	Mixed
1	21	3	Relacion alta	Mixed
1	22	1	Relacion baja	Mixed
2	15	1	Relacion baja	Mixed
2	19	1	Relacion baja	Mixed
2	20	3	Relacion alta	Mixed
2	22	3	Relacion alta	Mixed
3	15	1	Relacion baja	Mixed
3	16	3	Relacion alta	Mixed
3	17	3	Relacion alta	Mixed
4	15	3	Relacion alta	Mixed
4	16	2	Relacion media	Mixed
4	17	1	relacion baja	Mixed
4	18	3	Relacion alta	Mixed
4	19	3	Relacion alta	Mixed
4	21	3	Relacion alta	Mixed
4	22	3	Relacion alta	Mixed
5	15	3	Relacion alta	Mixed
5	16	1	relacion baja	Mixed
5	17	3	Relacion alta	Mixed
5	19	1	relacion baja	Mixed
6	15	3	Relacion alta	Mixed



Source: study data.

Figure 7. Diagram of relationships between Positive and Negative Aspects found by students of the Urban Planning 3 course. Guayaquil, Ecuador. December 2024



Source: study data.

5. Conclusions

The literature review suggests the existence of a still insufficiently explored field surrounding pedagogical methodologies that explicitly employ photography as a learning tool in the urban context. Especially since the mid-20th century in Latin America, teaching practices and experimental approaches incorporating visual documentation as a means of observing the territory can be identified; however, these experiences remain largely scattered and scarcely systematized in the academic literature. In this sense, the present study contributes to making visible and documenting a relevant methodological niche within urban planning education.

The classroom experience revealed a significant disparity in the perception of the students on

the urban phenomena, demonstrating that the understanding of urban space is closely linked to everyday ways of inhabiting the city. From the photographic record and the inductive coding process, perceptual differences emerged, primarily associated with the residential context and the students' usual modes of transportation.

In general terms, two major perceptual configurations were identified. On the one hand, there are students who live in central and established areas of the city, whose urban experience is built on walking and direct contact with immediate public space. For this group, the city is expressed through elements such as the plaza, the bus stop, the city block, and the everyday social dynamics associated with these spaces. On the other hand, there are students who live in recently expanded areas, characterized by a fragmented and dispersed urban structure, whose experience is primarily shaped by vehicular travel. In these cases, urban perception is organized around road infrastructure, gas stations, shopping centers, and large facilities, shaping a different understanding of the urban environment.

The results suggest that the daily experience of mobility and residence directly influences how students identify and prioritize urban problems. The methodology based on photographic documentation made these perceptual differences visible, revealing how different ways of inhabiting the city produce equally valid but profoundly divergent urban interpretations. In this sense, pedagogical activity facilitated a process of deconstructing everyday experience, allowing students to recognize aspects of the urban environment that usually remain invisible.

From a pedagogical perspective, the findings confirm the potential of photography as a critical learning tool in urban planning education, fostering situated observation, collective reflection, and the recognition of urban complexity through direct experience. In this context, promoting pedagogical practices based on visual methods is particularly relevant in cities of the Global South, where complex urban dynamics are often normalized in daily life. Incorporating critical observation strategies expands the spatial awareness of architecture and urban planning students, strengthening their ability to interpret, question, and act upon contemporary urban conditions, so photography functioned not only as a means of recording urban space but also as a pedagogical device capable of transforming everyday observation into a conscious practice of critical interpretation, articulating experience, observation, and relational analysis as the foundations of urban learning.

Bibliographic references

Abbott, B. (1997). Changing New York. New Press, United States. Works Progress Administration. 399p.

Alvarez, S. N. (2022). El urbanista Karl Brunner en Colombia 1933-1948 : una revisión histórica de sus planes, proyectos y obras. Bogotá: Consejo Profesional Nacional de Arquitectura y sus Profesiones Auxiliares, 352 p.

Álvarez, T. M. (2015, mayo 31). Las misiones heliográficas de 1851. https://fotografiahistorica.com/2015/05/31/las-misiones-heliograficas-de-1851/comment-page-1/

Amnesty.org. (2024). Colectivos y movimientos al frente de la defensa de derechos humanos en Guayaquil y la costa de Ecuador. Amnesty.org. https://www.amnesty.org/es/latest/campaigns/2024/09/colectivos-y-movimientos-al-frente-de-la-defensa-de-derechos-humanos-en-guayaquil-y-la-costa-de-ecuador/

Andrade, X. (2006). Más ciudad, menos ciudadanía: renovación urbana y aniquilación del espacio público en Guayaquil. *Ecuador Debate, 68*. 161-198.

Andrade, X. (2013). La domesticación de los urbanitas en el Guayaquil contemporáneo. *Íconos - Revista de Ciencias Sociales, 0*(27), 51. https://doi.org/10.17141/iconos.27.2007.201

Aravecchia-Botas, N. C. (2019). Técnica y política en la producción de la ciudad latinoamericana: Ciudad Kennedy, Bogotá (1960-1963). *A&P Continuidad, 6*(11), 70–81.

Augustowsky, G. (2017). El registro fotográfico para el estudio de las prácticas de enseñanza en la universidad. De la ilustración al descubrimiento. *AREA. Agenda de Reflexión en Arquitectura, Diseño y*

Urbanismo, 23, 147–156. https://area.fadu.uba.ar/wp-content/uploads/AREA23/AREA23_Augustowsky.pdf

Ballif, F. (2014). Portraying the divide city: Photographing the Belfast peacelines. *Visual Ethnography, 3*(1). https://doi.org/10.12835/ve2014.1-0031

Banco Central del Ecuador, BCE. (2020). El 53,3% de la producción nacional se genera en Guayas y Pichincha. Disponible en: https://www.bce.fin.ec/el-533-de-la-produccion-nacional-se-genera-en--guayas-y-pichincha/

Banks, M. (2001). *Visual Methods in Social Research*. SAGE Publications.

Banks, M. (2010). *Los datos visuales en la investigación cualitativa*. Ediciones Morata.

Barrazueta, P. (2012). Orígenes del fotoperiodismo en Ecuador (Portada). En *Chasqui Revista Latinoamericana de Comunicación. Breves historias de los medios en Ecuador*, Quito : *CIESPAL*, 119. 17-22.

Barrera, P., Mancilla, L., & Moreno, M. (2025). Láminas del curso del espacio del año 1955 y su puesta en valor: una propuesta de aproximación patrimonial a la metodología de enseñanza. *Cuadernos del Centro de Estudios en Diseño y Comunicación, 276*. https://doi.org/10.18682/cdc.vi276.12638

Bauhaus. (2025). Photography - highlights - Bauhaus-archiv. Bauhaus.de. https://www.bauhaus.de/en/sammlung/highlights/212_fotografie/

Benjamin, W. (1999). *The Arcades project* (H. Eiland & K. McLaughlin, Trans.). Harvard University Press.

Benjamin, W. (2006). *Charles Baudelaire: A lyric poet in the era of high capitalism* (H. Zohn, Trans.). Verso.

Benjamin, W. (2008). *The work of art in the age of its technological reproducibility, and other writings on media* (E. Jephcott, R. Livingstone, H. Eiland, & Others, Trans.). Harvard University Press.

Betriu, V. (2022). ¿Arquitectura defensiva, preventiva, hostil o arquitectura tout court? Indemnidad, cálculo y hospitalidad en Jacques Inmaterial. *Diseño, Arte y Sociedad, 7* (13), pp.98-118.

Blacio, M. (2018). Lo público y lo privado en el espacio público Malecón Simón Bolívar: Relaciones de poder y ciudadanía. *DAYA. Diseño, Arte y Arquitectura, 4* (Diciembre 2017 - Junio 2018), 65.

Blocona Redondo, L. (2014). El Vorkurs de la Bauhaus. *Pastiche, 9*, 84–89. Recuperado de https://www.elboomeran.com/upload/ficheros/noticias/03.04_el_vorkurs_de_la_bahaus.pdf

Braghini, A. (2020). El concepto de espacio en la Escuela de Arquitectura de la Universidad Católica de Valparaíso (1952-1956). *Registros. Revista de Investigación Histórica, 16*(1), 63-83. https://revistasfaud.mdp.edu.ar/registros/article/view/369/297

Brau, L. (2018). La ciudad del coche. *Biblio3W Revista Bibliográfica de Geografía y Ciencias Sociales, 1*. https://doi.org/10.1344/b3w.0.2018.26485

Breilh, J. (2004). Domesticación de la ciencia y pensamiento crítico. Ponencia presentada en el VIII Congreso Ecuatoriano de Sociología y Ciencias Políticas, Encuentro de Ciencias Políticas de las Américas, Foro Social de las Américas, Quito, Ecuador. Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, Sede Ecuador.

Brown, N. (2001). Henry Mayhew, London Labour and the London Poor, 1861. CSISS Classics. UC Santa Barbara: Center for Spatially Integrated Social Science. https://escholarship.org/uc/item/8sg44362

Carofilis, N., Peek, O. & D'aurio, V. (2018). Alternatives for Contested Mega-projects: An Academic Venture into Activist Space: In *Neo-liberalism and the Architecture of the Post Professional Era*. 1. ed. [S.l.: s.n.]. pp. 279-298.

CEPAL. (2025). Informe portuario 2023-2024: señales mixtas en el comercio y los puertos y nuevas disrupciones en la logística internacional marítima de contenedores. Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe. https://www.cepal.org/es/publicaciones/81386-informe-portuario-2023-2024-senales-mixtas-comercio-puertos-nuevas-disrupciones

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Sage Publications.

Collins, C. C., Collins, G. R., & Sitte, C. (2006). *Camillo sitte: The birth of modern city planning: With a translation of the 1889 Austrian edition of his city planning according to artistic principles*. Dover Publications.

Conord, S., & Cuny, C. (2014). Towards a "visual turn" in urban studies? Photographic approaches. *Visual Ethnography, 3*(1), 1–6. https://doi.org/10.12835/ve2014.1-0028

Cullen, G. (1961). *Townscape*. London: The Architectural Press.

De la Sala, A. & Villacrés, C. (2011). Caracterización y definición socio espacial del barrio como unidad básica territorial para el desarrollo urbano: Los Barrios en Guayaquil. *AUC Facultad de Arquitectura y Diseño, 3*.

Debes, J. L. (1969). The loom of visual literacy. *Audiovisual Instruction, 14(*8), 25-27.

Debord, G. (1956). Theory of the dérive. *Les Lèvres Nues, 9*, 2–8.

Díaz Garrido, M. (2017). Pensamiento visual en Patrick Geddes. *EGA Revista de Expresión Gráfica Arquitectónica*, *22*(29), 256. https://doi.org/10.4995/ega.2017.7374

Elshater, A. (2018). The power of photography in urban design discipline: A module catalogue. International Journal of Architectural Research Archnet-IJAR, 12(2), 182. https://doi.org/10.26687/archnet-ijar.v12i2.1594

Elshater, A. (2018). The power of photography in urban design discipline: A module catalogue. *Archnet-IJAR: International Journal of Architectural Research, 12*(2), 182–208. https://doi.org/10.26687/archnet-ijar.v12i2.1594

Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *The Journal of Communication, 43*(4), 51–58. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1993.tb01304.x

Erfani, G. (2021). Visualising urban redevelopment: Photovoice as a narrative research method for investigating redevelopment processes and outcomes. *Geoforum, 126*, 80–90. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2021.07.021

Espino Méndez, N. A. (2008). La segregación urbana: Una breve revisión teórica para urbanistas. *Revista de Arquitectura (Bogotá), 10*, 34-48.

Esteva, G. (2010). Development. In W. Sachs (Ed.), *Dictionary of Development. A guide to knowledge as power*. Zed Books.

Fiedler, J. (Ed.). (2006). *Photography at the Bauhaus*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Fields, M. (2022). Traces of History. *Getty Research Journal, 15*, 43-66.

Fikes, E., & Witten, P. (2020, noviembre 19). John W. Reps, 1921–2020. Cornell University College of Architecture, Art, and Planning (AAP). https://aap.cornell.edu/news/stories/john-w-reps-1921-2020/

Forero, S. Fotografía y patrimonio. La Misión heliográfica de 1851 y la consagración del monumento histórico en Francia. *Ería 73-74*. pp. 273-280.

Garnett, W. (1994). *William Garnett: Aerial Photographs*. University of California Press. 159p.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Aldine Publishing Company.

Goltara, G. B., & Mendonça, E. M. S. (2015). O emprego da fotografia como método de análise da transformação da paisagem - o caso de Anchieta. *Paisagem e Ambiente, 36*, 119. https://doi.org/10.11606/issn.2359-5361.v0i36p119-136

Gómez-Varo, I., Delclòs-Alió, X., Miralles-Guasch, C., & Marquet, O. (2023). Youth Perception of Urban Vitality: A PhotoVoice Study on the Everyday Experiences of Public Space. *Journal of Planning Education and Research, 44*(4), 2196-2213. https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X231171098 (Original work published 2024)

González Gil, M. T. (2008). La fotografía como herramienta de investigación cualitativa. *Index de Enfermería, 17*(2), 118–122. https://doi.org/10.4321/S1132-12962008000200010

Gonzalez-Gil, T. (2008). El papel de la fotografía en la investigación cualitativa. *El Ser Enfermero, 5*. 5-11.

Guerrero Yoacham, C. (2012). Los testimonios fotográficos de Lewis W. Hine sobre el trabajo de los niños norteamericanos, 1890-1930. *Estudios Hemisféricos y Polares, 3* (1). p. 1-50.

Hajjaoui, Z. (2019). *Art Project Summary: Holding Ice*. The Brooklyn Rail. https://brooklynrail.org/2019/06/criticspage/Art-Project-Summary-Holding-Ice/

Haus, A. (2006). *Moholy-Nagy: Photographs and Photograms*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Hidalgo, A. (2012). *La fotografía en Guayaquil. El Telégrafo*. Disponible en: https://www.eltelegrafo.com.ec/noticias/guayaquil/1/la-fotografia-en-guayaquil

Hollanda, C. (2012). Fotografía como instrumento de observação urbana: uma questão convergente em pesquisa sobre as cidades. *V!RUS, São Carlos, 7* (julho). http://www.nomads.usp.br/virus/virus07/?sec=4&item=2&lang=pt

ICP. (2025). *Cornell Capa: Concerned Photographer*. https://www.icp.org/exhibitions/cornell-capa-concerned-photographer

Iturra Muñoz, L. (2013). El uso de la fotografía para problematizar lo urbano: Transferencias metodológicas, etnografía visual en la enseñanza de arquitectura. *Revista de Arquitectura, 19*(28), 22–30. https://doi.org/10.5354/0719-5427.2013.37080

Jacobs, A. B. (1985). *Looking at cities*. Harvard University Press.

Jorgensen, D. L. (2015). *Participant Observation. In Emerging Trends in the Social and Behavioral Sciences* (pp. 1–15). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Kammerer, E. F., & Kirkpatrick, K. J. (2025). Picturing urban inequality: Using photography assignments to teach social equity issues. *Journal of Public Affairs Education*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1080/15236803.2025.XXXXX

Kingman, E. & Goetschel, A. (2005). El patrimonio como dispositivo disciplinario y la banalización de la memoria: una lectura histórica desde los Andes. En: *Regeneración y revitalización urbana en las Américas: hacia un Estado estable*. FLACSO Ecuador. pp. 97-109.

Klaufus, C. (2009). *Construir la ciudad andina: planificación y autoconstrucción en Riobamba y Cuenca*. 1. ed. Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala. p. 64-105.

Kossoy, B. (1980). *Hércules Florence: 1833, a descoberta isolada da fotografia no Brasil*. S. Paulo, Duas Cidades, 2ª ed.

Lequeux, J. (2015). *François Arago: A 19th century french humanist and pioneer in astrophysics*. Springer International Publishing.

López, S. (2014). Educar la mirada. El paseo, método para situarse en el mundo. *URBS. Revista de Estudios Urbanos y Ciencias Sociales, 4*(1). 79-93.

Lynch, K. (1960). *The image of the city*. MIT Press.

Martínez Gutiérrez, E. M., López Yáñez, A. D., Revilla Blanco, M., Gutiérrez Franco, Y. M., Garrido Ortola, A., & Martínez Moure, O. (2024). *Aplicación docente del foto-ensayo sociológico: diseño, documentación y análisis visual aplicado en el espacio público urbano*. UCM.

Meller, H. (1994). *Patrick Geddes: Social evolutionist and city planner*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203985366

Mena, P. (2015). Ecuador: las centenarias fotografías de Quito de las que borraron a los indígenas. *BBC News Mundo*. https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias/2015/11/151103_fotografias_quito_siglo_xx_indigenas_borrados

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.

Monje, D. & Ortegón, N. (2016). Eugène Atget, el cyborg de París y su relación doble vincular. *ASRI - Arte y Sociedad. Revista de Investigación, 11*, 1-7

Mosterín, J. (1998). Technology-mediated observation. *Society for Philosophy and Technology*, *4(*2). https://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/SPT/v4n2/MOSTERIN.html

Müller, T. (Ed.). (2007). País de luz: Talleres de Fotografía Social (TAFOS). Perú 1986-1998. https://www.thomasmullerperu.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Pais-de-Luz-Talleres-de-Fotografia-Social-TAFOS.-Peru-1986-1998-1.pdf

Muñoz, F. (2008). Contra la urbanalización: las políticas urbanas en la globalización de las ciudades. UOC Papers. *Revista sobre la sociedad del conocimiento, 7*, 12-15.

Newhall, B. (1982). *The history of photography: from 1839 to the present*. Completely rev. and enl. ed. Museum of Modern Art. 319p.

NPR. (2025). A Vintage Photography Flash Lamp In Action. https://www.npr.org/2008/06/30/92042960/a-vintage-photography-flash-lamp-in-action

Pérez, T. & Orejuela, G. (2023). Geografía de la fragmentación urbana: las urbanizaciones cerradas en la expansión de Guayaquil, Ecuador. *Rev. de Urbanismo, 48*. 110-134.

Pincelli, R. (2015). Memória Fotográfica: Jacob Riis. https://www.blogs.unicamp.br/hypercubic/2015/11/memria-fotogrfica-jacob-riis/

Reps, J. W. (1965). *The Making of Urban America: A History of City Planning in the United States*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Rizov, V. (2021). Eugène Atget and Documentary Photography of the City. *Theory, Culture and Society, 38* (3), 141-163.

Rojas Mosquera, M. (2020). El proceso urbano de Guayaquil del espacio portuario a la metrópoli. Dirección de Publicaciones de la Universidad Católica de Santiago de Guayaquil.

Rolnik, R. (2021). *La guerra de los lugares: La colonización de la tierra y la vivienda en la era de las finanzas* (1a ed.). Buenos Aires; Santiago de Chile: El Colectivo / LOM Ediciones.

Romero Escrivá, R. (2013). Las dos mitades de Jacob Riis. Un estudio comparativo de su obra literaria y fotográfica. *Cuadernos de Bellas Artes, 28*. 264pp.

Romero Salazar, F. S., Ascencio Burgos, K. A., Jara Molina, M. R., & Vallejo Leon, K. R. (2024). Análisis del Modelo de Transporte Aerovía y su Impacto Socioeconómico en el Cantón Durán en el Año 2021. *REVISTA ECONOMÍA Y NEGOCIOS, 16*(16), 1-17. https://doi.org/10.29019/eyn.v16i1.1359

Ryan, G & Bernard, R. (2003). Techniques to Identify Themes. *Field Methods, USA, 15* (1), 85-109.

Sachsse, R. (1995). *Lucia Moholy*. Düsseldorf: Marzona.

Salama, A. (1995). *New trends in architectural education: Designing the design studio*. ARTI-ARCH.

Salama, A. (2006). Learning from the Environment: Evaluation Research and Experience Based Architectural Pedagogy. *CEBE Transactions, 3* (1), 64-83.

Salama, A. (2015). *Spatial Design Education: New Directions for Pedagogy in Architecture and Beyond*. Ashgate.

Salazar, M. A. & Laurent, M. (2025). Guía básica de análisis de fuentes primarias. LEO Uniandes. https://leo.uniandes.edu.co/guia-basica-de-analisis-de-fuentes-primarias/

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Sánchez Gallegos, P. (2015). *Mercado de suelo informal y políticas de hábitat urbano en la ciudad de Guayaquil*. 1. ed. Quito: FLACSO.

Sánchez Gallegos, P. (2020). Informalidad urbana y políticas habitacionales en la ciudad de Guayaquil, Ecuador, 1990 y 2018. *CIVITIC Revista Ecuatoriana de Estudios sobre la Ciudad, 5*, 61-76.

Sánchez, G. (2006). Las imágenes de trama o semitonos. http://www.gusgsm.com/las_imagenes_de_trama_o_semitonos

Santana, C. (2015). Guayaquil, ciudad de soportales: Una reflexión acerca de su importancia y su uso actual. *PASOS. Revista de Turismo y Patrimonio Cultural, 13*(3), 681-696.

Schoepfer, I. (2014). Capturing neighborhood images through photography. *Visual Ethnography, 3*(1), 7–16. https://doi.org/10.12835/ve2014.1-0029

Strauss, A & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of Grounded Theory Methods*. 1. ed. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Sage Publications.

Trachtenberg, A. (1980). Classic essays on photography. New Haven, Conn. : Leete's Island Books. 328p.

UC Berkeley College of Environmental Design Visual Resources Center. (2011). Allan B. Jacobs slide collection [Archivo de diapositivas]. Universidad de California, Berkeley

Vaughan, L. & Geddes, I. (2009). Urban form and deprivation: a contemporary proxy for Charles Booth's analysis of poverty. *Radical Statistics, 99*, 46-73.

Velasquez, O. E. P. (2020). El arquitecto y la experiencia de trabajo con comunidades en Ecuador: un abordaje sobre metodologías. Dissertação de Mestrado. Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo. Brasil.

Wagner, O. (1989). *Modern architecture: A guidebook for his students to this field of art*. University of Chicago Press.

Waldie, D.J. (2013). Beautiful and Terrible: Aeriality and the Image of Suburbia. *Places*. https://placesjournal.org/article/beautiful-and-terrible-aeriality-and-the-image-of-suburbia/?cn-reloaded=1

Wang, C., & Burris, M. A. (1997). Photovoice: Concept, methodology, and use for participatory needs assessment. Health Education & Behavior, 24(3), 369-387. https://doi.org/10.1177/109019819702400309

Whyte (Jr.), W. (1980). The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces. Conservation Foundation. 125p.

Young, R. F. (2017). "Free cities and regions"—Patrick Geddes's theory of planning. *Landscape and urban planning, 166*, 27–36.

Zerega, T. (2007). La imagen postal de Guayaquil. De las imágenes regeneradas a las microintenciones de control estético. Íconos. *Revista de ciencias sociales, 27*, 1-16

How to cite this article:

Preciado-Velasquez, O. (2027). Using photography as a tool for critical urban diagnosis: an undomestication strategy. *CIDADES, Comunidades e Territórios, 53*, e20270742683. https://doi.org/10.15847/cct.42683

Oscar Preciado-Velásquez, Universidad Politécnica Salesiana, Ecuador.

E-mail: opreciadov [at] ups.edu.ec

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4044-0759

Contributions to the article: conceptualization, data curation, methodology, supervision, visualization, original writing, revision and editing.