

CHILD AND DRAWING

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the importance of the child painting is mentioned in psycho-pedagogical terms. Unlike adult painting, child painting is discussed as a means of communication and its significance for educators is emphasized. Painting has not only artistic value but also educational and clinical value. For specialists, it presents information about mentality of the child and contents of this mentality. Through his drawings, it is possible to find out the cognitive, affective and psychomotor development. Paintings constitute an important data source about the personality of the child, his relationship with immediate environment, attitudes, perception on external world, structure of feelings and thoughts. Painting presents significant information for educators and specialists as well as teachers when used efficiently with other methods.

Key Words: Child, Drawings, Education

ÇOCUK VE RESİM

ÖZ

Bu çalışmada, psiko-pedagojik açıdan çocuk resminin önemine değinilmiştir. Yetişkin resminden farklı olarak çocuk resmi iletişim aracı olarak ele alınmış ve eğitimciler için önemi vurgulanmıştır. Resmin sadece sanatsal değil aynı zamanda eğitsel ve klinik değeri bulunmaktadır. Uzmanlar için çocuğun düşünce yapısı ve içeriği hakkında bilgi sunmaktadır. Çizimleri aracılığıyla, bilişsel, duyuşsal ve psiko-motor gelişimini öğrenmek mümkündür. Resimler, çocuğun kişiliği, yakın çevreyle ilişkisi, tutumları, dış dünyaya ilişkin algısı, duyu ve düşünce yapısı hakkında önemli bir veri kaynağını oluşturmaktadır. Gerek eğitimciler, gerek uzmanlar gerekse öğretmenler için resim diğer yöntemlerle birlikte etkili olarak kullanıldığında önemli bilgileri sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çocuk, Resim, Eğitim

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1. INTRODUCTION

Drawings are often used to obtain an idea of children's conceptions. Drawings are one of the expression channels like words and letters enabling to establish communication. The marks left by the primitive man on cave walls are the finest examples of describing this effort. The difference between adult and child drawings is remarkable. Appearing before us as the language of thinking, child painting is a means of expression just as efficient as written language (Yavuzer, 2000). The word "learning to draw like a child has occupied my whole life" of Picasso is such as to support this view. The fact making child painting different and valuable is its being instinctively, purity, being uneducated and naturalness (İşler, 2004). The child has a holistic view in his drawings. He draws an object in most general terms, roughly. That he draws an object with its general features known by everyone makes it valuable.

Viewing and analyzing the drawings is considered as the most natural and convenient way of understanding human psychology (Arıcı, 2006). Drawings are also one of the valid and reliable means of data collection like tests. That the drawings are pure, instinctive and uncensored is one of the strong features of them. For many children, painting is considered as a playing event. According to (Altınkas, 2007), the child should be set free and not be limited in painting activity just like in playing. Thus, the child completes his personality development.

Aesthetic and artistic value of drawings differs by its educational and clinical side in child painting. Plainness, originality and uncensored expression in child paintings are strong sources in data collection and treatment for diagnosis and therapy.

According to Veltman and Browne (2000), manifestation experienced in paintings allows children to tell their negative feelings such as pressure, tension, and fear through lines instead of limited word repertoire. According to Thomas and Silk (1990), the child expresses not only the figures by paintings but also his feelings and thoughts. Doing so takes for granted an unambiguous relation between conceptions and their representations in drawings (Ehrlén, 2009)

Besides, drawings give information about cognitive, affective and psychomotor development of the child. For specialists, paintings constitute an important data source about the personality of the child, his relationship with immediate environment, attitudes, perception on external world, structure of feelings and thoughts. The children often mention the cases they care in their drawings. Dimension and enormity in the drawings usually result from the significance of the matter. Therefore the message wished to be given is brought forward or the figures wished to be emphasized are drawn enormously. When the children sometimes feel that they can't generate this significance sufficiently through their drawings, they carry the anxiety of giving message by also adding writing to their paintings.

Drawing is a view of the most natural images of the emotional and intellectual life that the child expresses originally and in plain manner. This feature of the child which is a reflection of his inner world and general development bears considerable resemblances to the emotional process that the works of major artists (painters) go through. Some lines, symbols and marks which the children acquire by perception are highly meaningful in terms of activity process and they may be considered as important factors reflecting their world directly, in a plain and pure manner. Richness of the expressions in the paintings of the child is closely related to good manners on life and the knowledge acquired. (Artut, 2004).

Every child draws, paints just like the fact that he speaks and walks when the time comes, child drawings begin to show common characteristics in the course of time (Kırısoglu, 2002). In accordance with the universal aspect of development, this explanation defines that common developmental features take place on paper in child painting. And another condition which is individual-specific and effects the principle of individual differences as well as this condition is that there will be differences depending on individual development, maturation and learning, based upon motivation. When the drawings of children are examined, it is seen in general through some clues that the relationships with immediate environment, attitudes, intelligence and personality traits are reflected in painting performance in content selection, composition, color preferences (Yıldız, 2012). It is seen that academic success is reflected in painting performance. It is observed in the paintings of participants defined as successful in their courses, having high grades that further enthusiastic tie is established with school, the matters such as classroom, telling lesson, teacher, friends, ceremony in school garden are reflected in the composition of the painting, coloring is very divergent, bright and vivid, details are given in paintings, academically successful subjects are good observers and they act more carefully and in a planned way while drawing pictures.

Piaget regards child drawing as an effort for mental representation of real world. He considers paintings as an important factor in emergence of mental images (Thomas and Silk, 1990). When child paintings are viewed from this aspect, representation of external world as well as knowledge acquisition on cognitive development of the child, repetition of accomplished acts in parallel with mental development, self-presentation of established schemes, ability of planning and forecasting present valuable clues to specialists about mental processes.

It is known that the special signs and marks in drawing (Yavuzer, 2000) manifest themselves by means of enormousness, smallness, missing figures and exaggerated drawings and they are included in painting spontaneously by the child. Color selection and enthusiastic tie established with colors and positive-negative effect have the clue quality as much as the figures and symbolic expressions in the painting (Burkitt, Barrett and Davis, 2003). San (1979), mentions that significant changes may be observed in the drawings of the child between first year and last year of primary school. But, according to him, it is not so simple to be able to suggest such a difference. Because, thoughts and feelings of the child gets more complicated depending on growing.

Child paintings have been used in literature of foreign fields to obtain information in research for about twenty years. The titles of family relationships, death, environment, sports, migration, wars, peer victimization, use of technology attract attention (as cited in, Selwyn, Boraschi and Özkula, 2009). While in domestic studies, research findings suggesting the perception of concept of school in adult and child through metaphors (Saban, 2008), classroom and school environment related to pre-school period (Aksoy and Baran, 2010), the role of teacher (Daglıoğlu, 2011), environmental issues (Sadık, Çakan and Artut, 2011) and concept of school of primary school children (Yıldız, 2012) are found. Child painting is often handled in artistic works, art education and artistic creation activities (Artut, 2006; Isler, 2004; Kırısoglu, 2002; San, 1979). While psychology is clinically (Hamama and Ronen, 2009) interested in child painting as a projective means.

Except aesthetic and clinical discourse, the fact that the child painting is handled with its pedagogic as well as cognitive and affective features in educational sciences and educational

psychology indicates that it is a field of study required to direct attentions.

2. WHAT SHOULD EDUCATORS DO?

The symbols used by children in their drawings are the artistic-linear descriptions of the words, expression forms they have learned previously, the facts they have seen, known, touched, perceived and cognized. Ivarsson, Schoultz, and Säljö (2002) have objected to drawings being regarded as mirroring underlying conceptions (as cited Ehlén, 2009) The children manifest not only their visual perceptions on external world but also give clues about their own inner worlds expressing their images related to their emotional and intellectual lives, their dilemmas, wishes, disappointments, fears and joys related to real world (Sadık, Çakan and Artut; 2011). In a study, Sadık, Çakan and Artut (2011) determined that the children are sensitive to environmental issues, disasters and picture it by establishing cause and effect relationship. Therefore, it is thought that the teachers may also use painting as a teaching technique in experiences of learning in classroom environment, stimulation of thinking processes. The teachers who teach the ways of reaching the information, not developing the abilities held by individuals and helping the students to learn, giving them the information in ready form will be able to train free and creative individuals acting by themselves, feeling confident. By means of artistic activities in schools, the children are enabled to express themselves easily as well as they are allowed to grow as an individual with a developed personality who can think sophisticatedly, taking a different approach to events (Aykaç, 2012).

Gibson (1986) shows that images are always ‘arresting’ the natural flow of movements and changes in the world as we perceive it. Drawings can convey the invariant features of movements, yet the visual-graphic representation will always be an artificial ‘arrest’ of its dynamic quality (as cited Hopperstad 2008). Drawings are a technique. They are one of the projective techniques presenting clues about all developmental features including physical, mental, emotional and social ones and enabling us to know the child well. They provide reliable and valid data when used with other techniques serving to collect data such as observation, conversation. The colors used by the child in his paintings, composition and sequence of figures on paper are meaningful for specialists working with children. By means of his drawings, the child presents clues about his personality, attitudes, relationships with others, self-concept, immediate environment and cognitive development features. The fact making the painting valuable is that it allows the child to express himself with figures and lines due to limited words in limited world of child, in the early period in particular. He expresses himself in an uncensored way by his drawings on paper by means of figures instead of language. It is a spontaneous way and uncensored. When perceived as playing activity, it also allows to make a positive beginning in the establishment of the first relationship.

The children manifesting themselves by lines as a result of the motive of observation, discovery and curiosity on external world participate in learning process actively. Child drawings are defined as the expression of mental and conceptual maturity. It constitutes the source of the motivation required for learning. As it contributes to acquisition and development of skills such as attention, perceptual processes, planning and use of symbols together with memory, hand-eye coordination, figure-background relationship, muscle coordination, it also has a positive effect on academic performance. Pleasure of creativity,

creation is experienced through paintings. Gaining artistic and aesthetic view and developing sensitivity to external world is possible by paintings.

As cited by Wu, (2009); children can use drawing and painting to sort out relationships, experiment with concepts and communicate what they think. With regard to drawing as one form of symbolic representation, it has been argued that the ability to create symbols allows humans to become familiar with their environment and to communicate their knowledge. Symbols are the means by which humans express mental representations and images, and the emergence of symbolic representation in children is an important step in the development of cognition.

Child drawings can be seen as an expression of cognitive and conceptual maturity. As verbal and written means of expression, the drawings are also one of the pedagogic ways that enable children to manifest their feelings and thoughts and that information may be obtained with regard to their developments. Drawing presents significant information for educators and specialists as well as teachers when used efficiently with other methods. In Psychological Counseling and Guidance, child paintings will contribute to studies as one of the projective means for getting information within the scope of individual recognition techniques in educational and personal guidance studies. The paintings may be included in cases where tests can't be given to early age children in psychological diagnosis and while working with children having issues related to language. At this point, it is thought that the contribution of child paintings – not with artistic and aesthetic concerns but by enriching theoretical and applied studies – to Educational Sciences will be useful and meaningful psycho- pedagogically.

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