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Understanding Children's Paintings in Psychological Counselling with Children

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Abstract

Children paintings carrying therapeutic value are important in understanding for the child's feelings and thoughts, unconscious desires and inner world. Paintings based on therapeutic cooperation may be perceived as a way of communicating with the child. The primary aim of the present study is to explain the significance of children paintings which help abstract experiences to provide a concrete basis for therapeutic cooperation while counselling children. The importance of the use of paintings while working with children is examined the titles of the linear development of the child, colour in children's paintings, the use of children's paintings in psychological counselling with children, the phenomenon of the family and interpersonal relationships in children's paintings, the interpretation of the child paintings of his family. Finally, the study is intended to encourage and increase the use of children paintings in the practice of school counsellors and other mental health professionals.

Keywords: Children, psychological counselling with children, children paintings.

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1. Introduction

First studies on children's paintings had begun in 1921 when Burt used drawing a human painting as one of the elements of a few intelligence tests. Then, in 1926 Goodenough, in 1963 Harris, in 1948 Buck, in 1949 Machover, in 1968 Koppitz and in 1958 Hammer also carried out studies on children's paintings. Making use of family paintings for understanding children is practiced since 1930s. In 1931 Appel and in 1942 Wolff had emphasized that family paintings are helpful in understanding personalities of children (Malchiodi, 2005).

Drawing paintings is an indispensable tool of children psychology during pre-school stage and since they are products created by children's own feelings and thoughts is quite important. Paintings are manifestations of child's own inner world, sub-conscious desires and feelings. Paintings enable the child to express its secret feelings in its own inner world and an experienced incident. Children draw paintings depending on its mental, sensory and motor development stages (Samurcay, 2006).

Child's inner world is absolutely rich however, since its expression power is limited, child uses games and paintings aiming to express itself; providing very meaningful and valuable information to adults who are trying to understand child's language (Cihanoglu, 2015).

Human paintings are an important dimension in 4-6 year group children. Children at these ages place their mother and father, brothers and sisters and other individuals who are important for them in the paintings they draw. Family paintings drawn by the child reflect family's attitude towards individuals, their roles in the family and how it perceives itself in the family; in other words, its point of view about itself and interpersonal relations between the members of the family (Yalcintas, Taranci and Darica, 1999).

Child displays subconscious feelings and behaviours when it draws paintings of its family. It reflects its perception of itself in its family to the painting. For example, if it feels himself rejected by the family, it draws itself at a place separate from its family. If it thinks of itself separate from its family it puts dividing elements between family members. Dominant parent, or the parent valued by the child is drawn bigger, regardless of its physical characteristics (Di Leo, 1983).

Pictorial representation is a projective technique in psychology. It enables getting to know children in a psycho-pedagogical process. Painting is an expressive tool that enables child to reflect its intelligence, personality, characteristics of its inner circle and its inner world. Painting enables us to understand family problems, communication problems and emotional problems child is faced with (Serin, 2003).

Painting therapy is a type of psychotherapy in which creative methods such as painting, drawing, collage, sculpture, and sand work are used. Painting helps counsellor to overcome the difficulties faced in establishing communication with the child. Child having difficulties in telling its story in words, reveals information about itself, its circle and its family by drawing and colouring (Yavuzer, 1992).

Paintings provide a potential for children to present their points of view by telling stories, communicating metaphors and responses existing both in the description itself and also with their responses to their own descriptions. Narrative properties of children's paintings and interest shown by children to tell these present therapist the ways of viewing things from the perspective of the child (Malchiodi, 2005).

2. Child And Painting

There were studies related to children's paintings always; however official studies in this line came into view with the growing interest in paintings of mental patients and rising fame of the studies of Freud and Jung. Cooke had written an article in 1885 in which he defined the stages of artistic

development. In 1887 Ricci had published his observations on Italian children's paintings and brought into being the first children's paintings collection. In 1921 Burt had used drawing human paintings as a part of a few intelligence tests. In 1926 Goodenough and in 1963 Haris had studied norms related to age of drawing human figures by relating them to mental age. In 1968 Koppitz argued that human figures made by children reflected child's spirits (Malchiodi, 2005).

Painting is one of the most effective and important ways of communication. Painting and child are dynamic phenomena that complete each other and constantly change. Comprehension by the child of some artistic symbols is closely related to personal and social needs of the child. Stains, lines and shapes created by child's drawing and colouring are signs of communication (Artut, 2004).

According to literature, the process of creating an art product require more than simple cognitive and motor processing factors. At the base of having resort to painting in professional media lies the opinion of "Emotional and communicative components are included in the drawing". Several studies have been conducted in order to prove that child's personality and state of mind at that moment can be understood on the basis of child's drawings and that subject's drawings of which are made by child may express several meanings for children (Burkitt, Barret and Davis, 2005).

Many scientists and researchers have examined the new technological visual age. They tried to learn how modern visual age will affect education systems and therefore the methodology of art education for the disabled. As a result, many studies have shown how new technologic age has effected and will effect art education methodology for the disabled (Salderay, 2015). Computer is accepted as a useful tool that encourages students and for drawing their attention. Taking these features into consideration, promoting use of computers in art education efficiently is very important (Zor and Tepecik, 2015). In philosophy for children, concepts like art and beauty can be taken into consideration. In fact, philosophy, besides having an ethics dimension where epistemology and concepts like justice and rights, also has an aesthetics dimension where beauty and art concepts are accepted. With art in philosophy, children can think how to conduct an art work and may be interested in approaching to concept of beauty from different perspectives (Cayir, 2015). Art education in early childhood stage has a very important effect in children's gaining aesthetic perception, attitude and skills. Early childhood educators and teacher candidates must have knowledge and skills in planning and implementation process of art activities and must be able to make this process entertaining and effective for children (Gonen, Aydos and Erdem, 2014). Every culture has unique values. Every society continues its existence with its own values. Understanding a society is perhaps the greatest virtue; because in order to understand a society it is important to have either empathy or knowledge power. Of course individual is important in order to create such awareness. The way to create awareness is directly through education. In this study, visual education was approached (Akin, 2015). In this study determination of the views of visual arts educators with 1 year experience on use of waste materials in sculpture workshop classes has been attempted. It is thought that students using waste materials in education and learning process will be effective in raising their awareness towards environmental issues. Besides artistic production, use of waste materials is also important for their becoming more sensitive to people and their environment (Demir, 2015).

Many 3-4 year old children are equipped with the necessary skills in observable symbolic forms for presenting their opinions on reality. Children draw paintings aiming to explore their own world symbolically. A painting drawn by a child shows child's environment, its experiences and things that are important for the child. According to cognitive theory children can establish communication between outside world and their own world when they are drawing what they know and these reflect child's personality (Collado, 1999).

Children draw people, houses, trees, green fields and sun. These themes are observed in the works of children from all countries and cultures. This verifies the basic universality of mind and feelings. A

small child can ignore the reality or use its imagination to turn it into a subjective world. For example, it is observed that children living in cities draw country type houses rather than houses they live in. Moreover, children who do not have their own houses and live in shelters which they hope to be temporary would tend to draw houses they desire. People, houses, trees are important factors in children's lives because they are located in child's environment. When drawing these paintings children tell more about themselves than what they have drawn about themselves. House represents the place where affection and security in family life is looked for. Animals are included in paintings as a part of the family. Trees, flowers and sun are signs of the need for a world limited by light, nature and house (Di Leo, 1983).

Nature paintings with forests, mountains, sun set, lakes and rivers that depict environment as clean and beautiful are focused on a good world. Animal and people figures are also included in these paintings. Paintings that depict environment pollution such as exhaust smokes of vehicles, waste materials from factories spread on sea or land are paintings focused on a bad world. Most student paintings are focused on a good world (Yardimci and Kilic, 2010).

Generally speaking, socio-cultural influences affect children's attitude and motivation drawing paintings. Culture may influence the contents of the paintings children draw. Another element that influences contents and style of children's paintings is the environment. Children use paintings not only for completing their inner experiences and perceptions but also with the intention of connecting their experiences with the external world and their perceptions of it with their inner world which help understanding and acknowledging its relationship with themselves, with their environment and even with the society. With symbols like neighbourhood, house, school children tell themselves or their relationship with their environment, their feelings and their experiences. Children reflect its view of itself according to its relationship with others. In order to understand interpersonal relationships of children it is necessary to examine paintings depicting their families and home paintings depicting the house, environment, society and interpersonal relations. Moreover, since gender reflects how children regard themselves with respect to others, it is an important factor (Malchiodi, 2005). When a child transposes itself together with its friends or teacher, it is reflecting their relationship with itself, his relationship with the group and the dynamic connection with others by means of painting (Yavuzer, 1993).

3. Linear Development Of The Child

In line with physical and mental activities of the child, several changes take place in its art activities. Meaningless scribbles made by children in the beginning develop into an art stage and continues until adolescence. Amount of details in child's drawings increases depending on its age and cognitive development. In studies carried out by Brown in 1990 and Cox and friends in 2001 it has been determined that when asked to draw a painting of a person, older aged children and girls use much more details in the paintings they draw compared to younger aged children and boys (Kindap, 2005).

Lowenfeld assumes that artistic development stages may overlap and that all students will display a development in line with "natural formation of artistic ability". Accordingly, child's artistic development is discussed in 5 stages (Alakus, 2004).

3.1. Scribbling Stage (2-4 years of age)

Scribbling stage covers 2-4 years range. Children begin drawing with a style defined as "scribbling". This is a stage when eyes and hands are not completely coordinated to each other, drawings are not directed to any special object or idea, subject of drawing is not named by the child and drawing is not defined by teachers or families. This is a stage where muscular coordination develops and children try to make hand and eye activities comply with each other (Collado, 1999).

In line with child's development of small muscles, child begins to take its drawings under control. Kellogg, in his 1969 study, pointed out that meaningless scribbles 1.5 to 2 year old children make in the beginning later turn into regular shapes and become distinguishable in stages and first symbolic drawings made at 3-4 years of age transform into various complex forms (Artut, 2004).

In his 1969 study Kellogg analysed scribbles of children 2 and 3 years old and reached to 20 basic scribbles. Later, in his 1981 and 1990 studies Golomb reduced Kellogg's detection to two; as curves and circles and parallel lines. Children can connect their signs on the paper to the world around them. Even if paintings made by children of this age don't mean anything for adults, child can talk about its painting (Malchiodi, 2005).

Every child interprets its environment in different ways. Different cultures and bringing up circumstances, environmental conditions and individual differences cause differences in children's paintings too. However, these differences begin to be seen after scribbling stage. During scribbling stage linear characteristics of children show similar characteristics all over the world (Artut, 2004).

When a child succeeds in drawing the first line it has randomly found with a pencil, it repeats this action until turning this action into a skill. Child's hand muscles develop in the course of time and from vertical lines pass to horizontal lines and then curves. After these stages child will begin drawing circles with a turning movement. At this stage, there is no relationship between the meaning definitely given randomly and the painting. For this reason Luquet names this stage as "random realism". With the influence of the environment child feels that everything must have a name; however at this age it has not reached to the level to succeed in understanding form-meaning unity (Samurcay, 2006).

3.2. Pre-Schema Stage (4-7 years of age)

This stage is a part of pre-processing period. Symbolic thinking, seeing and classifying relationships and understanding numbers skills are developing in the course of time. At this stage child begins to see itself as a part of the environment and establish identification with the objects and persons in its environment. According to Lowenfeld child begins to explore the relationship between thinking and reality by drawing paintings (Malchiodi, 2005).

When drawing a human figure, a 5 year old child may draw a head, arms and legs coming out of the head or may draw some organs bigger or hands without fingers. Its control on its hands develop as it approaches its sixth year and begins to add to its paintings details such as neck, fingers, ears and pupils.

Paintings of children begin to have themes as they come to six years of age. At this stage they like to draw human figures (Yavuzer, 1993). Drawing paintings of themselves and their families are their most favourite themes (Malchiodi, 2005).

Children add elements to their paintings according to the type of painting they are drawing. There are no limitations in paintings of a child who has a subjective view. They act entirely with their feelings and imagery. They draw paintings as they feel. Therefore figures are schematic. Body proportions do not reflect reality. There is no perspective in their paintings (Yavuzer, 1993).

They can place objects at anywhere on the page, regardless of their size. When a child wants to emphasize the importance of something it draws, it makes changes in its size. For example, it can draw itself bigger than a house or wants to tell about brushing teeth, draws teeth bigger than original size to tell the subject. Child may neglect unimportant details related to the subject (Malchiodi, 2005).

From six years on, artistic skills begin to develop. Its indication is the development of reel schemas. For example they draw a circular head, forms of hair, arms and legs in a human figure. Trees with brown trunks, green leaves, a yellow sun on the corner of the page, a house with a pointed roof is

generally standard in many paintings drawn at this age. In the paintings there is a line depicting the floor. This line is either drawn as a line or bottom edge of the page is used as floor line. There can be a skyline in paintings. Generally, they colour it as a blue stripe. There is no sense of depth. For example, when they draw a table they draw the view of the table from the side. They can draw 4 wheels of a car, 4 legs of a chair (Malchiodi, 2005).

Transparency characteristic is observed in children's paintings. These are also called X-ray paintings. This characteristic is mostly seen in drawings of children 5-7 years of age. Children at these age draw things inside or behind an object that cannot be seen are drawn as if they are being seen. For example, they can draw a house and people and objects inside the house. In other words they make the house transparent (Yavuzer, 1993).

Researchers who examine artistic development of the child have determined that children of this stage represent "the golden age of their expressing with paintings" and that children are very creative and in a way, their paintings resemble the paintings of modern painters (Malchiodi, 2005).

3.3. Schematic Period (7-9 years of age)

Luquet describes this period as "visual realism". Child begins to have a view of its own about people and the environment. They begin to use specific symbols in their selection of human figures. They describe parts of the body according to their interest (Yavuzer, 1993).

After several trials, child generates a human schema of its own. Therefore, in a class various different human paintings can be seen. At this stage, parts of the body that are important for the child are exaggerated. Parts of body which are not important for the child might not be drawn at all. Differences arising from sex factor can be seen in human figures (Kirisoglu, 1998).

M. V. Cox, in his 1992 study pointed out that while children in 5-6 age groups took dimensions of the object into consideration in order to reflect information about distance to the painting they begin to use upper and lower parts of the page when they are 7-8 years old. Moreover, when they become 7, children can draw objects that are far away small and objects that are close by bigger. Freeman, in his 1980 study, pointed out that although taking dimensions into consideration begin at 7 years of age, producing realistic paintings display a slow development based on the age (Kindap, 2005).

In paintings of children of this age there is a certain pattern in spatial relations. Child is beginning to perceive itself as a part of the environment and this reveals itself with the floor line. Generally there is a floor line at the bottom part of the page and figures are placed on this floor line. There is a skyline too. Sky is a horizontal line drawn on upper part of the page. The section between the floor line and skyline is called "air". In a study carried out on 5000 children paintings 1% of 3 year old children has drawn floor line. The number of six year old children who has not drawn floor line is greater. Of 8 year old children 96% has drawn a floor line (Yavuzer, 1993).

Children displaying the development of beginning to colour the sky up to the horizon line without leaving any air space in their drawings begin between 8-10 years old. In 1987, in a study he carried out on 3-14 year old children, Golomb has determined that reach the competency to create a composition with the objects drawn and establish a meaningful integrity when they are 9 years old and that there was not any development in planning the drawing after this age. Ives, in a study carried out in 1984 has observed that strategies used to express feelings changed based on the age. He has pointed out that while feelings were being expressed in a concrete manner at 5-7 years of age, number of abstract expressions used in drawings increased after 9 years of age (Kindap, 2005).

3.4. Realism Period (9-12 years of age)

In this period, children are in a critical period with respect to physical and psychological development. They approach drawing with a realistic understanding. In figures, proportions between parts of the body are realistic. Differences between paintings drawn by boys and girls are observed. Girls tend to draw paintings of babies and dresses while boys tend to draw paintings of airplanes, cars, etc. (MEB, 2001).

In this period, it is possible to come across criteria based on observations characteristic of adults. Children compare the drawing it has made with the original ones in the nature and wants to make exactly the same, however, might feel desperate when fails to do so (MEB, 2002).

3.5. Naturalism Period (12 – 14 years of age)

Most adults cannot reach this stage, because in the previous stage, child who thinks that it cannot draw the reality as it actually is sinks into despair and quits drawing. However, in paintings of children who continue drawing paintings when they are 13-14 years of age, it is observed that perspective is used completely and efficiently. Details in paintings increase. More emphasis is given to colour and pattern. They begin to create abstract images (Malchiodi, 2005).

4. Colour In Children's Paintings

Children at pre-school period begin to recognize three main colours when they are 4-5 years of age. Before that, child uses colours in its paintings without making a colour differentiation and without deciding colours. After 4-5 years of age they begin to use colours gradually. They use colours they like very enthusiastically. For example, they would make a red sun, a blue dog, a green person. When a child wants to make the painting of a person that he or she loves very much, would prefer his or her most favourite colour. Colours used by children have psychological meanings and these meanings may change from one child to the other. Therefore, it is very difficult to deduce meanings and try to reach definite judgments. Child must be set free while using colours because child uses colour with the enthusiasm coming from inside. He or she can make a blue dog and trees with brown trunks and green leaves. This selection is made with definite unconsciousness. He or she uses both decorative and also realist colouring (Yavuzer, 1993).

Girls give more emphasis to selection of colours compared to boys. Some children prefer yellow, red, orange colours and some prefer cold colours such as blue and green. Experts say that children who prefer hot colours are affectionate, adaptable, collaborative, whereas children who prefer cold colours are obstinate, grumpy and non-adaptive. Infant school children who always select cold colours tend to suppress and hide their feelings. According to studies carried out, children who use red colour a lot display aggressive and obstinate behaviour. It is observed that within natural development process, children's colour selections tend to change gradually from cold colours to hot colours. For example, children who are subject to suppression during toilet training tend to use brown and blue colours more in their paintings and begin to use other colours when suppression ended (Yavuzer, 1993).

There is a relationship between the colours children use in their paintings and their emotional reactions. In a study made by Burkitt, Barret and Davis (2003) have established that children use their favourite colours in pleasant and beautiful figures, their least preferred colours for ugly and bad figures, colours with average values for figures that are they are neutral, and the colour mostly used for bad and negative characters was black.

Colours children use in their paintings can reflect their physical characteristics. Perkins, in his study carried out on healthy and sick children, has determined that children with serious or terminal illnesses use colours that indicate that they are aware of their illnesses in their paintings. Colour mostly used for sick children is black. Red colour is used both by sick children and healthy children; however, sick children use it more than healthy children and it is determined that it is mostly related to blood. According to Bach, colours used by children in their paintings have specific meanings; but density of the colour is also important. Density expresses glossiness and liveliness of the colour. In children's paintings, although green colour generally express growth and development, whether it's dark green or light green is also important. Every colour used in children's paintings may carry various meanings depending on how it is used (Malchiodi, 2005).

5. Use Of Children's Paintings In Psychological Counselling With Children

Interest in children's paintings had come out after interest in mental patients' paintings arose at the end of 1800s and beginning of 1900s and works of Freud and Jung acquire fame. First studies on children's paintings had begun with uses for determination of intelligence level. Burt used drawing a human painting as one of a few intelligence tests. Goodenough in 1926 and Harris in 1963 studied age related norms in drawing human figures (Malchiodi, 2005).

Interest in emotional and psychological aspects of children's paintings is growing considerably, especially in the fields of psychology, psychotherapy and therapy by painting. Most therapists agree that paintings can be a treatment method, thinking that "it may help children to express themselves in situations where oral expression is insufficient" (Malchiodi, 2005).

Painting provides important information about the inner world of the child. If paintings spontaneously drawn by children are analysed properly, information regarding the development of the child can be obtained (Yavuzer, 1993).

Place where paintings are drawn must be in a secure environment. It must be an environment so secure that child must feel confident to make paintings that he or she doesn't want others to see freely. Most children who come to therapists are sad, timid and frightened; all types of new and unfamiliar environment are fearful for them. A place suitable and secure for expression with paintings must be place where child can be alone with the therapist, an alternative away from family's circumstances. Since therapy must be confidential by nature, space to be used for making paintings must be as private as possible (Malchiodi, 2005).

Child's relation with the therapist and the level of relation has an important effect on what child will draw and telling what will make child feel itself free. Depending on their experience and cultural background, children may regard therapist as a figure of authority, rule maker and consultant rather than a person who helps them freely share their feelings and ideas. Therapists who ask questions by ways that are not suitable for children's development or assigns activity duties or intervene too much might be regarded as imposing by children. No matter how caring and sensitive a therapist is, children might worry because of his or her presence and feel frightened (Malchiodi, 2005).

Phenomenological approach in understanding children's paintings emphasizes being open to various meanings, to the context they are created and to the world view of the maker. It depends on a child focused approach. It is important to understand children's paintings by being respectful to responses of children who try to find a meaning in images (Malchiodi, 2005).

Children convey to their paintings incidents such as earthquakes they went through and which had affected masses. For example, in the scope of psycho-social works carried out after 1999 Marmara Earthquake, first paintings drawn by children depicted ruined houses, injured people, rescue teams, ambulances, tent-towns, however, in the course of time these images were replaced by colourful

scenes from the nature, re-built towns, children playing games and happy faces. Drawing paintings give children an environment for expressing himself or herself and things he or she has experienced and provide opportunities for overcoming the difficulties he or she went through. First and one of the most important steps in therapy is being able to express him or her. Drawings are indispensable for expressive art therapies. It's important both to express himself or herself, and also to be understood and the feeling of being understood (Cihanoglu, 2015).

Presence of a helping professional, "secure area" and a positive interpersonal relation between adult and child provide an important therapeutic element. Therapist provides a supportive and secure environment to children by way of drawing paintings. When working with troubled children, therapist provides to the child an environment in which he or she is accepted without any condition while expressing him or herself. To be present during drawing paintings assignment, to participate in spontaneous conversations or answering questions if there are any are indeed very useful since it gives therapist a chance to intervene if necessary. Therapy sessions are between 20 minutes and 1 hour long and children must be told how much time they have and when session will end (Malchiodi, 2005).

Talking must be avoided since it would disturb the concentration of children during the process of drawing paintings. If child wants to speak while completing the painting, therapist may talk. Child may not answer questions asked, may be since being completely concentrated in the activity; may be since it is straining its mind and unsuitable for that particular period of the therapeutic relation or child may not have an answer for that question (Malchiodi, 2005).

Talking about completed paintings is necessary. There are two goals (Malchiodi, 2005):

1. To help the child to reveal his or her ideas, feelings, events and world views by talking about paintings and their stories.
2. To better understand child's feelings, ideas, beliefs and events and perception of environment in order to provide the most suitable intervention for the child.

There are many questions therapist can ask the child about completed paintings (Malchiodi, 2005).

- How can you name this painting? Tell me about your painting. What is happening in this painting?
- What do the people and animals in this painting feel?
- What does this colour feel like?
- What do the figures in the painting feel for each other? What would they tell each other if they could talk?
- May I ask something to the little girl, little boy, dog, cat, house ...?

These questions help creating stories about the painting. In most questions third person is used instead of facing directly. Most children are quite comfortable while telling stories about their paintings from the perspective of first person. An indirect approach will be useful when talking to some children receiving therapy because of a serious trauma or disturbance about their paintings. Telling stories using third person creates a certain distance and security (Malchiodi, 2005).

Instead of only being focused on interpreting the paintings, it is important to see how child has made the assignment, how he or she told it to the therapist and how he or she has reacted to the painting drawn. Determining "what is extraordinarily emphasized or what seems to be important" while looking at child's painting will open the door to a conversation between the therapist and the child (Malchiodi, 2005).

Children may resist to drawing paintings. Drawing and colouring materials provided may cause a resistance unintentionally. Personal reasons such as anxiety, distrust and depression may cause

resistance. Feeling insecure in his or her present situation, not knowing how or from where to start may cause resistance to drawing paintings. Telling children to draw anything they like may make fearful, anxious and unconfident children to have difficulty in deciding what to do. To break resistance, therapist may draw a stick man and child may add details and widen the painting (Malchiodi, 2005).

Therapist may ask the child to make a finger print on a small card and add details to it to create a special friend or mate. Finger prints encourages children to make a human figure freely. This figure may easily become the main figure among elements such as a house, other people or animals in a larger painting (Steele, 1997; cited by Malchiodi, 2005).

6. Family Phenomenon And Interpersonal Relations In Children's Paintings

Interpersonal is defined as "mutual interaction with a person or persons". Interpersonal relation is a situation where people and events are in mutual interaction. Human is a social creature and while evaluating someone, it is impossible to evaluate him or her separately from others and environment of his or her own. Behaviour of a person in family and in society is important (Malchiodi, 2005).

A child in socialization process is in a continuous interaction with those in his or her environment (mother, father, brother and sister, friend, teacher, etc.). These interactions are reflected in child's paintings. Problem solving skills related to problems among themselves or with adults may be reflected in their paintings (Yavuzer, 1993).

In 1952, Hulse examined family paintings made by normal children and children that have emotional disturbance comparatively and saw that children had reflected their feelings regarding their mother, father, brothers and sisters and interpersonal relations between members of the family to their paintings. Lately, symbols and signs used in paintings made by children depicting their families have become more important. Family paintings made by children to tell their interpersonal relations are very important. Professionals working with children ask them to draw their families in order to understand their relations with family members. Family paintings not only help understanding their ideas about themselves but also how they perceive themselves in their relations with persons who have an important place in their lives (Malchiodi, 2005).

Children's family paintings contain more than one human figure. Children place family members in different forms and sizes in their paintings and they may put visual borders between figures (placing figures in different compartments, use lines in order to separate them etc.). Separating figures in compartments mean drawing each figure in different boxes separately. Objects such as wall, table, television, etc. might be an indication of children's detaching itself from its family (Di Leo, 1983).

Although the way children place figures and visual borders when they draw their families gives us an idea about how they perceive their family relations, it's still difficult to reach a definite conclusion. For example, drawing a figure at a place separate from others or to lock it into borders can be interpreted as the expression of staying away from others; however, for some children it is the expression of being free. In families in which abusive behaviours are observed, child may create borders in paintings with the feelings of protection and escape (Malchiodi, 2005).

Children who draw themselves in a more important position compared to its brothers or sisters in the family generally place themselves in places closer to their parents. If child feels itself different from its brother or sister and secluded; it will draw him or her in a corner, in a position not participating in family activities. A child drawing himself or herself near mother, by pushing a member of the family whom he or she thinks that mother loves more outside of the family circle may express his or her own desires (Gillespie, 1994).

In family paintings, child expresses its own value and the feeling of being a member of a family by the position he or she places him or herself in the drawing. If child doesn't include himself or herself in

the family painting, this is an indication of he or she perceives that he or she is not included in the group. Sometimes children may not include family members in the painting. Child might be a reflecting his or her feelings of anger, alienation or refusal against his or her brother or sister or a parent. Sometimes, a person who is not a family member can be included in the painting. This is generally the expression of the close relation child has established with that person. If a parent with whom child is not living together is included in the painting this is an indication that child cannot accept this situation after divorcing of parents. In such cases mother and father can be drawn side by side and hand in hand (Chandler and Johnson, 1991).

When children who are in rapport with their families are asked to draw a painting of their families they draw their mother and father and brothers and sisters very beautifully, with their personal characteristics and in a detailed and creative way (Malchiodi, 2005). Contrary to healthy children, children having family problems, feeling themselves under stress and pressure, thinking that life at home contains violence and chaos and having a negative family idea may resist drawing family paintings (Di Leo, 1983).

Children see and draw their mother, father, brother and sister and their relatives from their perspectives and convey their thoughts about them. By drawing their and their family's painting, children reveal interpersonal relations in the family. Children's paintings have the power of revealing feelings regarding social support and connections, changes that take place in the course of time regarding children's perception of belonging to a family. When children are asked to draw a painting, they don't immediately draw a family painting. However, children in 4-6 years of age group are an exception since human figure gain importance at this period. Children in this period draw paintings of mother, father, brother and sister and other close persons (Malchiodi, 2005).

7. Interpretation Of Family Paintings Drawn By Children

In education or for clinical evaluation, making children draw the painting of a person or his or her family in order to get to know him or her has a very long history. Directives given to children should not be guiding or directing, such as "Draw a human being", "Draw your family's painting". The purpose of making a child draw a painting is to enable the child to put his or her own perception on the paper without any intervention from any adults; to enable him or her to express himself or herself, his or her inner world freely, without any external influence. When children draw human paintings, they convey their feelings directed to themselves and their ways of perception (Cihanoglu, 2015).

An individual's inner and external worlds are connected to each other, they affect each other. How inner world is reflected to outside and how outside world influences inner world and the relation between these two can be seen in paintings in different ways (Furth, 2002).

Drawing of a child is an expression of its development and personality traits. Therefore, when paintings are being interpreted, developmental factors must be examined first. Developmental variables can be reflected in drawings within different units, such as integrity of the form, number of elements contained and perspective. As child develops, his or her drawings reflect the developments in his or her cognitive abilities. Therefore, before beginning to interpret children's paintings, it is necessary to have a good knowledge of development process. For example, one must not expect to see arms in drawings of children before they are 4 years of age. Absence of arms gains importance after 6 years of age (Di Leo, 1983; Chandler and Johnson, 1991).

Koppitz has determined 30 factors he has defined as "Emotional Indicators" which are statistically seldom seen in drawings of normal children. These factors are often seen in drawings of children who have emotional and psychological disorders. Emotional indicators are separated into 3 categories. First, qualitative characteristics are examined. For example, deficiencies in integrity of body parts, excessive symmetry and transparency drawings; secondly, unusual elements: clouds, birds, teeth, rain;

and third, deficiencies of elements such as eyes, hands and legs can be given as examples (Chandler and Johnson, 1991).

When family paintings drawn by children are being evaluated dimensions of individuals drawn, drawing sequence of figures, locations on the page, interaction between objects (who is near who, who is away from other members of family, who is looking at whom, who is touching who), body proportions (drawing as big or small), and original drawing properties of body organs are taken into consideration (Bahcivan-Saydam, 2004).

7.1. Drawing sequence of family members:

Drawing sequence of family members is very important. Person drawn first on the leftmost part of the page is usually the person he or she loves most and hold dear; however, it can be the person he or she clashes most or have difficulties in being close relations. Family paintings reflect child's way of perceiving family members and family structure (Bahcivan-Saydam, 2004).

7.2. Positions of family members:

This dimension of painting gives important clues about interrelations, sharing and communication in the family. It is considered that family members drawn close or touching to each other are in a close relation with each other. On the other hand, individuals drawn far from the family are thought to have problems in their relations with the family, or could not create togetherness. On what part of the page figures drawn away from the family are placed and in which direction they look is important. Child may have a bond with persons drawn on the left part of the page and persons looking at the left side (generally mother and father). Person drawn on the right side of the page and looking at the right side (generally the child himself or herself) is thought to be in need of going away from the family and to gain individuality. This type of drawing is generally seen in adolescence period and gives important clues. According to Burns study concluded in 1982, family members', (especially father's) position against the child is effective on child's perception of social self (Bahcivan-Saydam, 2004).

7.3. Drawing forms of family members:

Children draw the person they consider powerful in the family, they identify with, the person who represents authority strikingly bigger. Some children draw themselves in the first row and bigger than others. These children are those who need support and acceptance of their individuality by their parents. Family member who is drawn as the smallest or drawn last may be a person who is ignored by the child or the person he feels irritated with its existence. Family member who is not included in drawings is generally a brother or sister child is jealous of and in conflict with (Bahcivan-Saydam).

7.4. Place of drawing on the page:

If human figures drawn vertically are placed on the left of the page, there is a regressive, dependent structure. This is mostly seen in children attached to their mother. According to Buck, placing of figure on the left side is mostly seen in persons who are seeking emotional satisfaction. According to Machhoover, placing figures on the left side of the page is a sign of egocentric personality, whereas, placing on the right side of the page is an indication of an environment centric personality (Di Leo, 1983).

Things drawn on the right side of the page are related to individualization and determination of setting a goal for him or her. Paintings drawn above emphasize impaired insight in evaluating reality and reactions that are not suitable for his or her age. Drawings made at the bottom of the page are

related to insufficiency, lack of self-confidence, depressive characteristics and introversion (Bahcivan-Saydam, 2004).

7.5. Use of page:

General opinion regarding placing of figures on the page is that figures placed on top of page bring forward optimism and phantasy and small figures drawn on the edges and at the bottom part of the page are outpouring of insufficiency, lack of confidence and depression. Bolander, in his 1974 study, interprets upper part of page as the future, middle part today and bottom part as the past (Di Leo, 1983).

7.6. Form of drawing:

Faint and discrete lines drawn by children in their paintings are related to their sensitive and fragile personality structures. Bold lines drawn by pressing reveal existence of aggressive impulses (Bahcivan-Saydam, 2004).

7.7. Drawing characteristics of family members body parts:

Drawing characteristics of body parts of family members in children's paintings provide important information regarding how child perceives family members and about its relations with them (Bahcivan-Saydam, 2004).

8. Conclusion And Suggestions

Painting reflecting a collaboration of the psychological counsellor and counselee may be regarded by psychological counsellor as a way of establishing communication with the child. Besides helping the child in interpreting things that it went through and gaining insight, drawing paintings has an accelerating effect on child's establishing a relation and communication with psychological counsellor. With the help of painting reflecting child's perception regarding incidents, child may create an opportunity to review his or her opinion regarding itself and its environment and question the same. May be child is trying to unite its inner world with outside world by drawing. While indirectly exposing its inner world by means of paintings, child may be letting someone else to understand things it lived through. One must not forget that child is the creator of its painting in pictorial representation it produced. Painting helps child to explore itself by means of the created therapeutic environment; in other words, the free and flexible environment. However, complete avoidance of directing while working with children sometimes might create disadvantages. For example, child may have difficulty in drawing when he or she is asked to draw a painting. In this case, minor supports that would make child to begin might be helpful. Can you draw a painting showing persons in your family while doing something?

In conclusion, painting is only a tool for the psychologic counsellor. Talking on paintings makes therapeutic communication and establishing relations with the child. Drawing paintings can comply with all types of theoretical frameworks. Other circumstances and theoretical knowledge required by psychological counsellor are necessary for establishing rapport with the child and exploring its inner world. Theoretically it is not possible to speak of a psychological counselling approach based only on use of paintings.

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