

Observation Record/Journal

Observer/Date	Eileen Rakowitz / November 20, 2001
Setting/Context	The 5 th grade class at St. Elizabeth of Hungary Catholic Grade School. The class has 22 kids in it, and the majority of them are boys. There are a variety of races as well. The teacher's name is Mrs. Johnson and the Vice-Principal, Mrs. Clem is also present for the experiment. It is a very comfortable classroom setting in mid-afternoon.
Description of children	The kids just got back from music class, and they know they are having a speaker come. However, they do not know what to expect, so they are very anxious to find out what I am going to make them do. They are SO well behaved, and they raise their hands every time they want to ask a question. They seem to be a very bright group of kids too because they knew A LOT about the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11 th . In this observation journal I am going to do an overview of a few different drawings from various kids in Mrs. Johnson's class.
Observation Notes	<p>There were many pictures that struck me, so I want to do an overview of some of them that were my favorites. (Some that I haven't talked about in previous journals)</p> <p>Brent pictures were among my favorites because his first two pictures were similar drawings with different emotions expressed. You saw his initial reaction as anger towards America being attacked. After hearing the sad music, he drew the same drawing of a boy watching what happened on the television. However, this time, the boy was sad and crying. The last picture was different after he heard the patriotic music. The patriotic music was the most influential because he changed his drawing scheme to a man dressed in military uniform in front of an American flag backdrop. A lot of the kids used the flag backdrop. 20 out of the 22 students used flags as symbols on the last pictures in response to the patriotic songs.</p> <p>There were other reactions to the patriotic songs that caught my attention. A lot of them focused on "Go America" themes, but there were a few that focused on the glory of war. Some seemed vengeful like Brandon and Michael's. Michael actually showed vengeance throughout his pictures. I thought the patriotic music had a positive effect on him because the picture shows a person saying "God Bless America" but the figure still looks mad like the previous picture (sad song drawing) where the "American" is actually choking Bin Laden. That is pretty intense.</p> <p>Mark drew in his first drawing one of my favorite pictures. It was the Statue of Liberty saying "oh my gosh." That just shocked me. How amazing is that. My whole idea for doing this project was because I saw a news special where a child drew the twin towers crying. The child had actually drawn arms from each building and they were trying to hold each other up. This touched my heart, but I could have never imagined that I would find drawings in my simple experiment that were just as good and emotional.</p>

Reflection/Analysis

In your reflection, you must name a theory/theorist and connect "specific" details of the theory to specific instances within the observation.

The theories that all of my pictures have followed is Werner's theory of Physiognomic Perception. This is the unity of self and objects. The children ALL did this in their own way. They either personified the objects or they did the other way of expressing physiognomic perception in facial/bodily expressions. They always showed a connection between the figure and the objects in the background. It may have been consciously or subconsciously, but each child showed a very high level of perception. There were a few that showed very abstract thought. Many were symbolic in their facial expressions, patriotic expressions and their bodily expressions.

Physiognomic perception is based on Synesthesia. You see it in their different reactions in each picture. The majority of first pictures were varied from sad, mad, scared, and confused. In the second pictures, most of the students presented some sort of sad picture, or they said after that their pictures were sadder looking because when they heard the sad song, it made them feel sad. The patriotic song made all of them express more patriotism. All the children who wrote patriotic phrases especially showed concrete physiognomic perception. I was surprised to see the anger rise again too, but I understand because the patriotic song was aimed on battle and marching into war.

My favorite drawings were the ones I mainly went over individually, but the ones I mentioned above express many of Werner's ideas. They show synesthesia in that they change feelings towards the terrorist attacks in relation to the music they hear. There is a connection between inner and outer world in almost all of the drawings. This is self/object differentiation.

My first limitation that I thought I would have was that the children would not understand what was going on. I learned that I was VERY wrong once I asked if someone would raise his or her hand to tell me what happened on September 11th. They immediately raised their hands. This proved that none of them would fall into egocentric thinking because they could understand the outer world and express the physiognomic thinking in their drawings. They could reproduce images on paper from the slideshow and even from their own memory of the terrorist attacks from prior occasions. This was proof of eidetic imagery because they were so intensely affected by some pictures like Bin Laden or people jumping out of the buildings that they used those to express how they felt. Eidetic children exaggerate the size of things too to express where their feelings lie in the picture. This is why most of the pictures were so detailed on the face and expressive in their emotions.

These children absolutely shocked me, but what shocked me more was the longer I looked at the pictures the more and more Werner's theory applied to them.