

Project Proposal

Statement of Problem:

Major Premise:

Does combining the sense of hearing and sight cause a child's reaction to a certain situation in a drawing to be more uniform and expressive of a particular emotion?

Minor Premise:

Should the news networks broadcasting the "War on Terrorism" use "sad songs" or "patriotic songs" in connection with pictures? Which affects the children of America more negatively/positively?

Guiding Questions:

1. After children have watched the slideshow of 9-11 photos combined with sad/patriotic music, will they draw pictures that express Werner's idea of physiognomic perception? In other words, will the music bring the distant reality of Terrorism to some kind of "nearness" in their phenomenal world?
2. Will the "control drawings" which the children constructed after having seen the slide show with no music be varied enough to show the centralization of emotions that occurs in the drawings after the children have watched the slideshow of pictures with music?
3. Will the drawings made without the music lack intersensory experience since the senses are not being connected to one another? Will adding a sad/patriotic song back up Werner's assertion that intersensory experiences can be expressed more when a child can *feel* the experience instead of being detached from the reality?
4. Werner realizes that children are more problematic to study because they rely on action and emotion, so will the project work properly in the control group and the tested group?
5. Will the child's phenomenal world be revealed when the drawings are connected to the sad/patriotic songs? How will it show that children react a certain way to real life traumatic events and that news networks should take this into consideration?
6. Will the drawings express Werner's assertion that children have perceptual-motor-affective thinking while adults think more abstractly when exposed to the "outer world"?
7. Will the low pitch/high pitch of music affect the children as well in association with the category of sad/patriotic music?

Hypothesis:

I believe it is possible to see the child's phenomenal world and their primitive thought process through their drawings of the real world. I also believe that their basic artistic abilities will show their reaction to what happened on September 11th. In addition, I think that adding musical influence to their visual perception of a slideshow of pictures will cause them to form a particular emotion that will be detectable in their drawings. This test will show Werner's idea of children having an intersensory experience that causes a radical transformation of emotion or "vital sensation" caused by strong stimuli. I also believe that this experiment will show that sad songs have more of a negative affect on children because the tragic events that happened on September 11th are hard enough for them to understand, but to add a "sad" song makes it more intense on their physiognomic perception.

Preliminary Annotated Bibliography:

Werner, H. (1948). *Comparative Psychology of Mental Development*. New York: International Universities Press, Inc.

This book will act as my main source of knowledge in connection with Werner. This book covers all of his studies, experiments and theories, and it also includes other psychologist's studies in connection with Werner's idea. It covers the idea of developmental psychology and perceptual organization of a child in sensori-motor and primitive thought stages. He goes into detail a lot about research on children's drawings, perception and conceptual abilities with the outer world. This book is extremely helpful!

Werner, H. (1965). *The Body Percept*. New York: Random House.

This book includes information about Werner's experimentation, which will help in me finding the "perfect" way to perform my experiment. He realizes that body perception varies greatly between people, so he manipulates the environment or the outer image that the body perceives to find an affect. This helps in my experiment because I will receive a variety of reactions relating to September 11th, so it will be easier to control the effects knowing I must have a control reaction and then test each individual child with the music added to the picture slides.

Werner, H., & Kaplan, B. (1963). *Symbol formation: An organismic developmental approach to language and the expression of thought*. New York: John Wiley.

Werner goes into much detail about what physiognomic expression is and how it is depicted or represented in drawings or emotions. There is also more information about sensory reception, which will help in determining the reactions of the children. There is also information on the interpretation of symbols and their meaning. This may help in judging the meaning behind symbols the children's drawings of the terrorist attacks after they see the slide show with no sounds and then drawing another picture after they see the slideshow with sound weaved in.

Terms to be defined:

- Physiognomic expression/perception
- Intersensory experience
- Phenomenal World of a Child
- "Nearness" in relation to egocentric thought
- Concept-formation
- Abstract thought
- Children vs. Indigenous people
- Form perception
- Comparative approach
- Synesthesia (unity of senses)
- High pitch/low pitch
- Bodily-organismic activity
- Motoric imitations
- Inner tones of symbols
- Perceptual-motor-affective thinking

Equipment:

For experiment:

- Computer/Laptop
- Slideshow presentation made up of online news network pictures
- Music:
 - Sarah McLachlan "In the Arms of the Angels" (Sad Song)
 - Boston Pops Symphony Orchestra "Battle Hymn of the Republic" (Patriotic Song)
- Television and Power point/computer connector
- Projector screen
- Tape recorder to record any verbal expressions of emotion that may be helpful in the final project

For drawings:

- ◆ 8½ x 11 drawing paper (white)
- ◆ Markers (any color)
- ◆ Colored Pencils (any color)
- ◆ Crayons (any color)

Methodology/Procedures:

- Go to a 5th or 6th grade class at a grade school and test about 20 students for the control group (the whole group will draw a pictorial representation of the slideshow with NO music)
- Then have the group of 20 watch the slideshow again with the “sad song” and draw a picture, and repeat the procedure again watching the slideshow with the “patriotic song” and draw a picture.
 1. Have the students sit in their desks in the normal comfortable class setting.
 2. Use the tape recorder to record any talking/verbal communication that occurs for later data information.
 3. Write the date “September 11, 2001” on the chalkboard and ask the children, “Do you know what happened to America especially in New York and Washington D.C. on September 11th”
 4. Allow the children to raise their hands to explain what they know so that everyone knows what they will be seeing pictures of. (When a child answers the question, ask what their name is as well because this verbal expression may be useful in interpreting their drawings as well)
 5. Tell the children, “Ok class, we are going to be watching a slideshow of pictures of the “Attack on America” that have been taken from the news, so I want you to all pay really close attention, okay? Alright, are there any questions?”

CONTROL GROUP

6. If there are no questions, turn off the lights and continue with showing the slideshow of pictures WITHOUT ANY MUSIC. If there are questions, answer them to the best of your knowledge.
7. After the slideshow, turn the lights back on and tell the children, “ok, now without talking to each other, I want you to get a piece of paper and get some markers/colored pencils/crayons to draw a picture that represents your **reactions** and **emotions** in relation to what you just saw.”
8. Tell them, “Just find a comfortable place to sit, whether in your desk or somewhere in the room. Remember, this is your personal

reaction and emotion to what you just saw and that no one else will see it so just draw whatever you feel.”

9. Allow the kids about 15-20 minutes to draw their reaction if needed, and make sure it is their own work. When they come to turn it in, ask them to put their name and birthday on their piece of paper.

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

10. Split the class in half (attempting to have even number of boys and girls in each group)
11. Have half the class leave for a moment, and test the first half of the class with the “Sad song” and test the other half that has left afterwards with the “patriotic song.”
12. Now tell the children, “Ok class, we are going to watch the slideshow again, and I want you to pay attention again, but this time I will be playing it with music.”
13. Turn off the lights and continue with showing the slideshow of pictures WITH the “In the arms of the angels” song.
14. After the slideshow, turn the lights back on and tell the children, “ok, now without talking to each other, I want you to get another piece of paper and get some markers/colored pencils/crayons to draw a picture that represents your **reactions** and **emotions** in relation to what you just saw IN CONNECTION TO WHAT YOU JUST HEARD.”
15. Tell them, “Just find a comfortable place to sit, whether in your desk or somewhere in the room. Remember, this is your personal reaction and emotion to what you just saw AND HEARD and that no one else will see it so just draw whatever you feel.”
16. Allow the kids about 15-20 minutes to draw their reaction if needed, and make sure it is their own work. When they come to turn it in, ask them to put their name and birthday on their piece of paper.
17. Now take the other half of the class that left, and have them come in and have the 10 of them watch the slideshow with the patriotic song, and REPEAT STEPS 12-16 (with the “Battle Hymn of the Republic” song)

Scoring/Concluding:

Werner says many times in his writings that children are very problematic and hard to test because there is such a huge amount of variability in their reactions to external things. It takes them understanding a reality and internalizing the information they have just received. I will have to score them on percentage basis using Werner’s ideas on symbols/colors/primitive perspectives. Because of the variability, I will more than likely compare the control 20 drawings to one another because they will probably have a lot of variation between them. Then I can also compare the experimental drawings and see how they

compare/contrast to one another. Then I can even take the individual child's control drawing and experimental drawing to see if they were greatly affected by the musical influence. I am hoping this will show according to Werner that a child's reaction is based on initial action and emotion to a situation or even in the external world. I agree with Werner, and that is why I feel news networks should take into consideration children's reactions to the way they present pictures with music.