

# THE IMITATION CONCERN OF CHILDREN (9-12 YEARS OF AGE) IN REALISM STAGE

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## ABSTRACT

In this research, the focus was on the portrayal of an imaginary character which children in pre-adolescence period created in their paintings on the basis of a conceptual realism rather than an effort to establish a visual similarity. The paintings of the children were examined and the processes in which children go through while painting were observed. The obtained data were analyzed via content analysis technique. The sample of the research consisted of 37 children between 9-12 years old. In the first study, the children were requested to portray someone from their immediate surroundings. In the second study, the children were asked to portray the main character of a song called "Pala Remzi" which did not have any representative visual but included an imaginary character. The process and results of two studies were observed separately and then compared. As a result, it has been concluded that the main factor for children to find their paintings successful or unsuccessful was related to the similarity of the images used in the paintings to the reality. It was also observed that the imitation concern could be prevented when there has not been the probability of comparing between the images and reality.

**Keywords:** Realism stage, child paintings, creativity, imitation concern

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# GERÇEKÇİLİK DÖNEMİ (9-12 YAŞ) ÇOCUKLARINDA BENZETME KAYGISI

## ÖZ

Bu araştırmada, ergenlik öncesi dönemdeki çocukların görsel benzerlik kurma çabası yerine kavramsal bir gerçeklikten yola çıkarak yaptıkları resimlerinde yaratacakları hayali bir karakterin betimlenmesi istenmiştir. Çocukların resimleri ve resimlerini yaparken yaşadıkları süreç gözlemlenmiştir. Elde edilen veriler içerik analizi ile çözümlenmiştir. Çalışmanın örneklemini 9-12 yaş aralığındaki 37 çocuk oluşturmaktadır. Çocuklara önce yakın çevresinden birinin portresi yaptırılmıştır. II. çalışma olarak da temsili bir görseli olmayan ve içinde imgesel bir kahramanı olan “Pala Remzi” isimli bir şarkı sözünün ana karakterinin portresini yapmaları istenmiştir. İki uygulamanın süreci ve sonuçları izlenerek karşılaştırılmıştır. Sonuç olarak, bu araştırmada çocukların yaptıkları resimlerini başarılı ya da başarısız bulmalarındaki en önemli etkenin, resimde kullanılan imgelerin gerçeğe benzerliği ile ilişkili olduğu yargısına ulaşılmıştır. Resimlerdeki imgelerin gerçeğe karşılaştırılması olasılığı ortadan kalktığında benzetme kaygısının da engellenebileceği görülmüştür.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Gerçeklik dönemi, çocuk resimleri, yaratıcılık, benzetme kaygısı

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Art education aims to enable a person/child not only to see, understand and analyze objective reality but also to gain skills to reveal their emotions, senses and interpretations related to this reality. The first condition to reach this objective in the most correct and effective way is to recognize the artistic power and abilities of the person who will be educated. In other words, it is crucial to learn the artistic development line which has a special place in the growth and development processes of a child (Kırıçoğlu, 2002, p.54).

The artistic development of a child changes depending on his/her physical and sensory development. These changes are examined in certain stages. These mentioned stages accepted as the artistic development stages of a child are grouped in accordance with some characteristics in the paintings of children. The characteristics of each stage are different. At first, Lowenfeld examined the artistic development of a child in 6 stages. According to him, the scribble stage is between 2-4 ages, the pre-schematic stage is between 4-7 ages, the schematic stage is between 7-9 ages, the transitional stage is between 9-11 ages, the stage of the reasoning is between 11-13 ages and the adolescent crisis occurs at the age of 12 and beyond (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1966). Considering the developmental stages of Piaget, it is stated in the later researches conducted by Lowenfeld and Brittain that the scribble stage is between 2-4 ages, the pre-schematic stage is between 4-7 ages, the schematic stage is between 7-9 ages, the realism stage is between 9-12 ages and the pseudo-naturalistic stage is between 12-14 ages (Schirmacher, 2002, p.127). Artut stated that the approaches of Lowenfeld (2013, p.238) were approved by many modern theorists such as Coster (2005), Isbell and Raines (2003). It is also accepted in this research that the realism stage is between 9-12 ages.

### **Realism Stage (9-12 Years of Age)**

The stage identified as the realism stage in the artistic development of a child corresponds to the pre-adolescence period and it is the stage in which the realism perception of a child begins to be formed. The point of view of those children are to see everything as it is and the better children explain a subject, person or an environment, the better paintings they believe they make (Malchiodi, 2005, p.135). In these circumstances, the children who have the characteristics of this stage compare the subjects in their paintings with real subjects and question the similarity between them. Since they are concerned about their paintings' similarity to the reality their enthusiasm to paint may tend to decrease. One of the reasons for this decrease is the concern of perfection. "Many children between 9-11 years old are passionate for realistic painting. They criticize their paintings strongly, begin to repeatedly paint certain subjects they like and try to make their images perfect. Anything without perfect reality is accepted as a failure (Edwards, 2011, p.69)."

Realism perception experienced intensely during this stage may influence creative abilities of children in a negative way. between 9-12 ages.

Many researchers have examined the paintings of children that belong to Malchiodi and they found out that the paintings made at this age are less free and less pleasant than the ones made at the previous stages. As a matter of fact, Malchiodi restated that children start to become more conservative in expressing themselves with paintings because they would like to have 'a photographic effect' in their paintings (Malchiodi, 2005, p.134).

The children who run into a contradiction between the desire of reflecting characteristic features through painting and the tendency of sensory transference experience the concern of imitating reality intensely when they transfer their observations into paintings at this stage. With the contribution of the educational environment which is information-oriented, it is observed that children avoid from painting.

As Lindstrom (1957) stated: "An individual who is not satisfied with his paintings and has the concern to satisfy others with his paintings gives up on his divergent thinking and creativity and also expressing his/her personality... At this point, the development of visualization powers, divergent thinking and the capacity of expressing himself to the environment with personal emotions can be blocked. Many adults could not overreach this critical point (cited in Malchiodi, 2005, p.139)."

An education process designed with the approaches which decrease the imitation concern that is estimated to affect the creative and divergent thinking process negatively enables children to paint with joy and express themselves freely while they transfer their dreams into paintings. "Sometimes a piece of music or a painting can take the child from the time he lives to far away and bring him into a new life. This becomes the work of the everlasting imaginary world of the child. In this case, the child shows a living personality with the studies which he has created with his dreams (Öztürk, 2007, p.68)." Artut (2013, p.254) indicated that drawing natural or imaginative paintings could provide children to gain different perspectives and a vast amount of information.

When he turned down the painting of Picasso and asked the children to draw it, Edwards (2011, p. 7-8) mentioned about his astonishment due to the perfect result in the preface of his book in which he questioned the reason why students could not transfer a subject in front of them to the paper properly. When he asked the students how they could manage it, he received the answer that "we did not know what we drew when it was upside-down," and stated his astonishment. Children's imitation concern and fear of painting what they see properly or improperly disappeared suddenly with the changed condition when the painting was turned down.

This research which identifies the subject mentioned above as a problem estimates that children will get rid of imitation concern hindering the painting desire by evoking their creative abilities. This research aims at fostering children's creativity by portraying of an imaginary character which children in pre-adolescence period created in their paintings on the basis of a conceptual realism rather than an effort to establish a visual similarity.

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Research Design**

This study was conducted as a case study and it was based on the qualitative (interpretative) research paradigm. The key feature of a case study is to investigate one or a few cases deeply. The factors related to a case are handled with the integrated approach and it is concentrated on how the factors affect the case and how these factors are affected by the case (Yıldım & Şimşek, 2011, p.77). Within this context, the children of realism stage who are between 9-12 years old were asked to perform two portray studies and they were also asked to describe an imaginary character which they would create in their paintings based on a conceptual realism rather than an effort to establish a visual similarity.

### **2.2. Research Population and Sampling**

The target population of the research is composed of the children between 9-12 years old, who live in Adana. As it was not possible to reach the entire study group in terms of time limitation and economic situations, appropriate sampling techniques were implemented in the research. As the research had a qualitative dimension, convenience sampling and criterion sampling techniques included in the qualitative research paradigm were applied. Accordingly, the sample of the research consisted of 41 children in a secondary school of Adana. However, 4 children did not participate in the second study. Therefore, the sample of the research consisted of 37 children in total. Verbal and written permissions were received from the institution where the research was carried out. Moreover, verbal permissions were also taken from the parents of children who accepted to participate in the study.

### **2.3. Data Collection Tools**

Interview, observation and the paintings of the participants were used as data collection tools in the study.

#### **2.3.1. Interview**

The interview is a type of communication made verbally. It provides rich and thorough information about the subject of the research (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011, p.119). For this study, two different structured interview forms which consisted of 5

questions in total including 1 common question were created to be administered after first and second paintings of children. Literature review was made to prepare the interview forms considering the goal and sub-goals of the research. The questions were revised in the light of the feedbacks received from an art education expert about the content and order of questions and the comprehensibility of statements for the sake of the content validity of the research. In the interview, the emphasized points were all related to why children found certain paintings successful, which paintings they made more willingly, whether it was important for their paintings to resemble to the person portrayed.

### **2.3.2. Observation and the Paintings of the Participants**

During the research, two different portraits were studied by participants. First, the children were asked to portray someone they knew and then the main character in the song called "Pala Remzi" (Shaggy Remzi, a man with a handlebar moustache). The lyrics of the song listened by the children while they painted are as follows:

*I took a rifle and went partridge hunting, I came all the way  
from Urfa to Botan creek, the tribes are talking proudly about  
a brave man, they call him Shaggy Remzi wow wow Remzi,  
everyone is pleased with Remzi's way,*

*I asked and they said it is the 'fame,' They said shaggy Remzi,  
shaggy is not his beard, they said it is his heart,*

*Remzi, looks from highlands, and every now and then starts a  
revelation, the God is the only commander "He" is almighty,  
look what kind of hearts he created wow wow wow  
Remzi, everybody is happy with Remzi's way,*

*I asked and they said it is the 'fame,' They said shaggy Remzi,  
shaggy is not his beard, they said it is his heart.*

During two studies in which the participants made paintings, observations were made and the experiences of children and the points that they mentioned were recorded by note-taking. Afterwards, the results of these two studies were compared.

### **2.4. Data Collection and Analysis**

In the process of two studies, data from observations and interviews were collected, using two-hour weekly courses (40+40 minutes). First of all, the children were asked questions in order to find out their prior knowledge on the portrayals; afterwards, they were informed about the studies that they would do.

The same researcher made similar explanations in each class in a way that the children could understand. The papers on which they would paint were given by the researcher. The children were free to choose painting materials. They were given

equal time to paint. After paintings were completed, the researcher made one-to-one interviews with children on their paintings. Observations were recorded by taking notes. The permission of teachers for the research was obtained verbally. The data obtained from the children during the research was not used for any other purposes but for the research purposes only.

The content analysis was utilized to analyze the obtained data. Strauss & Corbin (1990) made use of open and selective coding processes which are the first and most important stages of the content analysis (cited in Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011: 227). Accordingly, all answers given to each interview question were gathered together. This provided the researcher to see the similarities and differences between the views of different people about the same issue. Besides, this made it possible to define the common and different themes. Data from observations and interviews were written down and some notes about the possible codes were taken. In the coding process, the related literature and research questions were taken into consideration. Furthermore, some concepts and expressions used by children and some other concepts discovered by the researcher with the guidance of an art education expert were also used as codes. Afterwards, themes which could combine the codes were revealed and a list including the relevant codes and themes was made. At this point, the researcher identified which codes would belong to which theme. Similarly, the paintings were grouped, considering the related literature, to unravel similarities and differences between them. Then, the paintings were categorized under appropriate titles. For the presentation of concepts and themes revealed after the coding process, tables were made use of. Thus, findings obtained from the analysis of data became ready to be described.

Quotes from observations and interviews were given so as to reflect on the perspectives or paintings of the children. The children were assigned coded as C1, C2, C3, C4...and so on.

### **3. Findings and Comments**

#### **3.1. The Findings Obtained as a Result of the Analysis of Interview Data**

After the first and second paintings of children, two different interview forms consisting of 5 different open-ended questions in total, one of which was a common question were created by the researcher. Interviews were conducted with 37 children with an aim to obtain information about the characters in the paintings and children's experiences. The results are given under relevant themes.

- The opinions of children about the question "Do you find your painting successful? Why?"

Firstly the children were asked whether they found their paintings successful or not and they were also asked to explain the reason for this. While 22 children found their first paintings successful, 15 children told that they found their first paintings

unsuccessful. Another important finding was that almost half of the children found their first paintings which they made with an effort to establish a visual similarity unsuccessful. Examining the reasons why the children found their paintings unsuccessful, they expressed their negative thought resulting from the imitation concern by stating that “I could not, it did not resemble, it is not like that.” This situation changed in the second study because the majority of children (f:32, 86,5%) found their second paintings made based on the conceptual realism successful. Only 5 children out of 37 pointed out that they found their second study unsuccessful.

The answers of the children who found their paintings successful to the question why they found them successful were coded under 4 categories: The similarity of the concept is related to “convenience to conceptual realism”, the answers on the similarity of paintings to the person are linked to “convenience to objective realism”, the answers such as “I positioned it well on the paper” or “I painted well” are about “convenience to pictorial realism” and the answers such as “the person I drew was on my mind, there was nobody to resemble” are pertinent to “ Being unique and imaginary”. These categories are given in Table 1 with their frequencies and percentages.

**Table 1. The opinions of children about why they found their paintings successful**

	I. Painting		II. Painting	
	f	%	f	%
Convenience to conceptual realism	5	13,5	-	-
Convenience to objective realism	<b>11</b>	29,7	6	16,2
Convenience to pictorial realism	7	19,0	3	9,0
Being unique and imaginary	-	-	<b>10</b>	27,0

As it is shown in Table 1, children found their first painting successful as understood from the statements “it resembles a lot, it has a stick in its hand, it has a scarf like the original” and these are convenient to objective realism. Moreover, they found second paintings successful because they were unique and imaginary. In their first paintings, they thought that if the painting resembled to the original, it was successful; but this opinion changed into the consideration that it was successful as they painted it with their imagination in their second paintings. Why they found the paintings unsuccessful was because the paintings did not resemble to the people whom they would like to portray. This shows that children’s paintings may become more successful and unique when they do not have imitation concern. They told why they found their paintings successful or unsuccessful as seen in the following quotes:



*“Unsuccessful (Painting 1).Because I could not. I could not draw its body and arms. I think it is not beautiful, it does not resemble.” (C2).*

*“Unsuccessful (Painting 1).Because I tried to make it look like a human, but I could not. Its lips are so flat, but they must be wide, its nose is not like a human nose, its neck is short and its arms are long; it must be short compared to its body” (C25).*

*“Successful (Painting 2).Because we dreamt and drew what we dreamt about.” (C9).*

*“Successful (Painting 2).Because it is not necessary to make it look like someone. I drew someone as I wanted.” (C16).*

- The opinion of children about the questions “Is it important that your painting resembles to the person that it belongs? Which painting did you make more willingly? Why?”

The children were asked whether it was important that portrays in their first paintings resemble to the people that they belonged to. Most of them (f:34, 92,0%) stated that it was important for their portrays to resemble to the people that they belonged to. The imitation concern of almost all children was reflected on their enthusiasm in their first paintings and more than half of them (f:24, 65,0%) answered the question “Which work did you make more willingly?” that they made the second paintings more willingly. This situation can be interpreted that children constantly question the similarity of their paintings to the reality and this concern may cause their enthusiasm of painting to decrease.

When their answers to the question “Why” were examined, it is seen that most of them were of the opinion that they made paintings willingly because “it is imaginary (f:9), it is accompanied with music (f:5), it is entertaining and easy (f:4).” The related quotes selected from the interview analysis are given below:

*“Important. Because I do not want it to look ugly. I mean, I do not want my elder sister to look ugly. If she looks ugly, it means the painting is unsuccessful.” (C21).*

*“I made my second painting more willingly. It is like what I dreamt. I thought about Shaggy Remzi like this. It is like what I dreamt.” (C27).*

- The opinion of children about the question “Which features of the character did you draw in your painting? Why?”

The children stated that they brought not only the features related to the physical appearance of Shaggy Remzi character such as “mustached, shock-head, wearing tie, coat and shirt and having a beauty spot” but also his personality traits such as “kind-hearted, brave, rowdy and calm” into the forefront. In addition, they remarked that they also painted details related to his life in their paintings. (He is from Urfa, a city in

the southeast of Turkey, tribe) and the act or situation he was involved in (on the partridge hunting, a singer at the stage).

*“A man who is hunting partridge, mustached, powerful and fearless at the same time. He is from Urfa and has a rifle in his hand. A man who is bulky and as tough as nails.” (C27).*

*“He has a handlebar moustache, from a tribe and on partridge hunting. He is middle-aged, middle-sized and not so fat. I dressed him up like this as he goes to the forest.” (C21).*

*“As he is from Urfa, I dressed him in salwar and vest. I drew him as a little bit tough person. His shoes are brogan, his hair is bush and black.” (C29).*

• The opinion of children about the question “Which one of your paintings did you find more successful? Why?”

More than half of the children (f:25, 67,6) stated that they found the second paintings more successful than the first ones. Their answers to the question “why” were coded and given in Table 2 according to their frequencies and percentages.

Table 2. The opinions of children about why they found which painting successful between their two paintings

	I. Painting		II. Painting	
	f	%	f	%
It is easy to imitate something to what is seen/known	7	19,0	1	2,7
It is easy to dream	-	-	<b>16</b>	43,2
Other	3	8,1	9	24,3

As it is shown in Table 2, the reasons expressed by children about why they found their paintings successful were categorized. It is understood that 16 children out of 37 explained their reasons why they found their second paintings more successful by saying that “Because it is not necessary to imitate, it is difficult to imitate and it is easy to paint with imagination”. It can be interpreted that the imitation concern decreased in the second paintings and these paintings became more unique.

*“The second painting is more successful. I made it with imagination. I tried to draw a person I knew in my other painting, but it was not beautiful” (C2).*

*“My second painting. I made this painting in the light of my own opinions. I decided by myself. I drew the characteristics that came to my mind” (C10).*

*“Compared with the first one, the second painting is more successful because I tried to imitate in the first one. It was difficult. However, there is nobody called Shaggy Remzi so it was easy to draw him with my imagination” (C16).*

*“My second painting is more successful. We could select the characteristics and draw what is on our minds. We could select all the characteristics” (C26).*

*“My second painting is more successful. The dissimilar aspects may be found in the other painting, but they cannot be found in Shaggy Remzi” (C39).*

### 3.2. The Findings Obtained from Observations and Paintings

During the observations, children were given a brief description before their first studies in which they would paint someone they knew and their questions were answered. The first question was “Teacher, will it resemble?(C25)”. It was also observed that the children expected to have guidance of the teacher by asking questions such as “How will we hold the paper, shall we draw only the part above the shoulders?(C29)”. Before they started to paint, they asked the questions “How will we draw? Teacher, should it resemble?(C28)” and it was observed that most of them did not start to paint and looked around or paint a few times and erased what they drew. In the first study, it was also observed that the student (C4) who said “I cannot” gave importance to the lineaments of the person whom she/he painted compared to her/his friends. Children also asked questions such as “Teacher, is it going well, is its nose okay?”. All these findings support the prediction that the children have an imitation concern. That is to say, they worry about making something wrong and avoid from painting.

After the information was given about what would be done in the second study, the children listened to the song once and after discussing it, the song constantly played over the course of the study. Thus, it is thought that the character in the song could be painted better. The children were asked to paint “Shaggy Remzi” character in the song with the help of their imagination by taking the lyrics into account. The duration to start painting was not different from the duration of the beginning of the first painting. A student (C2) emphasized her/his need to see the real character by saying that “Teacher, I wish we could see the photo of the person that we will portray.” They were abstained from painting something which they could not see, test and compare by imagining. One of the students expressed the concern that education process caused, asking the question “Will our painting need to be correct?”. The fact that education system is always based on testing the knowledge on a scale of correctness or incorrectness increases children’s concern of making a mistake.

During the first study, there was silence in the class and the children were more concentrated on their paintings. In the second study, it was observed that even the energetic children were concentrated on their paintings.

- The findings obtained from the paintings

The paintings of the children were examined by an expert and a researcher. The children were willing to paint what they saw and knew and they were focused on the points which represented the physical appearance of the people they knew. However, they painted images which revealed the characteristics of people (Picture 1,2,3,4) in their second paintings. The fact that the children made their second paintings more willingly may have affected this situation.



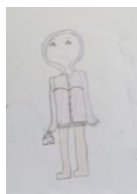
Picture 1.

I. Painting of C24



Picture 2.

II. Painting of C24



Picture 3.

I. Painting of C10



Picture 4.

II. Painting of C10

Considering the problem statement and objectives of the research, crucial points were identified in the children's paintings during the two study processes. Accordingly, results were revealed and categories were created.

#### o Using cultural codes

The children painted Shaggy Remzi character in their second paintings by drawing cultural codes such as rosary in his hand, salwar, shirt having buttons up to his neck, brogan shoes and calpac on his head, based on the lyrics "I came all the way from Urfa to Botan creek, the tribes are talking proudly about a brave man, they call him Shaggy Remzi".



Picture 5.

I. Painting of C4



Picture 6.

II. Painting of C4



Picture 7.

II. Painting of C29



Picture 8.

II. Painting of C2

#### o Combining physical appearance with character

It was realized that while the children in the realism stage tried to portray someone they knew in their first paintings, they were just concentrated on the details

such as “shawl and scarf” which they saw on the people whom they portrayed with this concern. In their second paintings, they gave place to the features revealing his imaginary characteristics. After their painting in which they drew a bulky man with broad shoulders and tough looking, they gave explanations in the interviews (Picture 5,6) as seen in below:

*“As I thought he was a tough man, I drew a rowdy. I drew a rifle in his hand.” (C36).*

*“As I listened and read, I found out he was a man with a handlebar mustache. I drew him. I also tried to reveal that he was a mild-mannered man as much as I could. It was obvious in his eyes” (C39).*

#### o Combining color with character

The children in the realism stage chose the colors appropriate to the reality in their paintings. While the skin color was convenient to the reality, the colors representing the clothing of the person might be chosen according to the age and life of the person. This was observed in both studies.



Picture 9.

II. Painting of C17



Picture 10.

II. Painting of C7



Picture 11.

II. Painting of C21



Picture 12.

II. Painting of C25

#### o Including more details

The children were concentrated on the details in lineaments of the person that they painted in order to make the painting resemble to the person. Most of them painted the clothing in all in one piece. However, while painting an imaginary character, they painted it in clothing constituted of many pieces and they revealed his life, age and characteristics. While children drew only a one piece clothing and shawl as in Picture 13 or a coat and a one piece clothing as in Picture 15; they gave place to a coat, a shirt, pants and a handkerchief in the pocket of the shirt as in Picture 14 and many details such as a coat, a shirt and a necklace were seen in Picture 16.



Picture 13.

I. Painting of C3



Picture 14.

II Painting of C3



Picture 15.

I. Painting of C20



Picture 16.

II. Painting of C20

o Details: Vest, coat, vest-coat pocket, the “V”-necked and buttons

As one of the characteristics of 9-12 years old children in the realism stage, giving importance to details is also valid for the sample group of this research. At this point, “vest-coat” (Picture 6-7-8), “V”-necked clothing (Painting 10,11) and button details (Picture 6,8,9,10,11,16) are evident in the second paintings of the children.

#### 4. Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

9-12 years old children are also accepted to be at realism stage which is an important time for the artistic development of children. Furthermore, it is a stage when children make deep questioning about the similarity of images to the reality. In this period, imitation concerns are at the forefront and children search for perfection in the objects they paint. “...Children are not interested in what is existent in the painting but they are more concerned with how it looks like (Malchiodi, 2005, p.136).”

37 children between 9-12 years old who were the study group of the research found their second paintings in which they painted an imaginary character successful. They indicated that they made them more willingly. Almost half of them told that they found their first painting unsuccessful because it did not have a resemblance to the reality. The complaints that “I cannot imitate, it is not like that” realized in the observations support this situation. This is observed in 9-12 years old children and Malchiodi (2005, p.139) argued that the statement “I cannot make it like real” is caused by the concerns of the children trying to imitate reality in their paintings. These experienced concerns and comparisons prevent a child from painting with pleasure and creating unique paintings.

In accordance with the observations and paintings of the children, it was demonstrated that the children did not act freely while making their first paintings due to the imitation concern. They separated their paintings into broad pieces and ended the painting process by giving place to fewer details. However, it was concluded that the children painted more details in their second paintings; in addition, they revealed the characteristics of people with the help of posture, color and strong expressions by

using cultural codes. Striker (2005, p.52) pointed out that not acting freely during painting causes children to avoid from painting. They even tend to give up on painting at later ages; and as soon as children accept that paintings must be beautiful, or “realistic” in other words, they give up on their effort to understand the world through painting.

In the second study in which children painted an imaginary character, the fact that children would like to see the person who they would portray emphasized that they needed to encounter with the reality. This highlighted that children hesitated to picture something that they would imagine without seeing, checking over or comparing. Moreover, the question asked by children such as “Will our picture be correct?” showed that they had concerns about making a mistake in their paintings and this influenced their creativity in a negative way. This situation can be explained with the proposition that our education system tested knowledge on a scale of correctness and incorrectness; consequently, children’s concern of making a mistake increased.

As a result, it has been concluded that the main factor for children to find their paintings successful or unsuccessful was related to the similarity of the images used in the paintings to the reality. It was also observed that the imitation concern could be prevented when there has not been the probability of comparing between the images and reality. The art education is important because it is a process enabling individuals to recognize and give a meaning to life and themselves and to reveal their free and unique ideas and emotions rather than evaluating them as being successful or unsuccessful. Therefore, creating an environment in which each child finds themselves successful is considered to be a crucial necessity. Self-confidence which is the prior condition for children to complete the artistic development healthfully can only be created in this way.

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