Investigation of Game Perception of Syrian Refugee Children Attending to First Grade of Primary School by Using Picture Drawing Method

Raziye Pekşen Akça[1] and Prof. Dr. Gülen Baran[2],

[1](Erciyes Üniversty/Develi Hüseyin Şahin Vocational High School, Kayseri,Turkey)
[2](Ankara Üniversty/Health Sciences Faculty, Ankara, Turkey)

ABSTRACT: *Drawing picture is an expression tool that enables us to meet a child in terms of psycho-pedagogical assessment and it reveals clues about child's intelligence level, personality characteristics, internal world which is related with intimate environmental characteristics. Additionally, this enjoyable method allows child to maintain a communication between him/her and external world. In this context, 20 immigrant children (M=10; F=10) from the first grade of primary school whose family had been living in Kayseri for 6 – 12 months were evaluated by the way of drawing picture which is known as a projective method. Sample of this study consisted of children attending to first grade at Kayseri Temporary Education Facility in spring term of 2014-2015 academic years. Study group was determined according to criterion sampling method. In this context, those criterions were identified as following: Immigration from Syria due to civil war, Inhabiting in province of Kayseri, Living in Kayseri within last 6-12 months and willingness to participate. Children were provided a drawing paper with 12 color crayons and they were instructed to draw a picture about favorite play activity that they used to play before they immigrated to Turkey. In conclusion, it was found that children used national symbols such as flag (10) and Arabic alphabet (5), and drew war materials as bigger.*
Keywords: Play perception, ımmigrant children, picture, play, and children

I. INTRODUCTION

It is observed that certain phases of life formed critical importance in terms of psychological and physiological development. One of those critical phases is early childhood period which include the ages between 0-8 years old (Özmert, 2006; Bertan, et. al., 2009). Early childhood period is the period in which the child is affected significantly by the environment. Social and environmental factors that influence a child are also effective on physical and mental development. Negative factors involved in this period influence child's development negatively and resulted in developmental hesitations.(Bertan vd.2009).Playing games take an important part in children's life in this period.

It is known that games supported and contributed to all developmental phases (Gmitrovaa, Podhajeckab & Gmitrovc, 2009), including language and communication skills as well (Aral, Gürsoy & Köksal, 2001; Tuğrul, 2013; Durualp & Aral, 2014). The game which was thought as the most characteristic concern of childhood period is considered as the element of childhood period both in home and school settings (Kennedy ve Barblett, 2010; Wood 2013; Fleer, 2014). Child personality is shaped as he or she played games in those settings (Egemen vd.; 2004).Power of the game is derived from contribution that is provided to integrative development. In addition, certain characteristics of the game such as security, accessibility, participation, versatility, quality, continuity, functionality, pleasentness make playing game powerful(Tuğrul, 2014) and it is used as the most effective way by children in order to express emotions like love, jelousy, happiness (Oktay, 1999; Kaugars ve Russ, 2009). Game is an universal language that provide more opportunities to children in terms of learning and development and since then it is more effective and persistent than other resources (Tuğrul, 2014; Copple ve Sue2009). It can be said that a child who failed to respond need of game would lost his phsical and mental health (Dönmez, 2000; Hirose, Koda & Minami, 2011). Becuse game is like a medicine for child's development (Dönmez, 2000; Ulutaş, 2011).

Drawing picture is the specific and simple way that has an important place and itreflects child's inner world and thoughts, opinionsabout facts(Aksoy ve Baran, 2010). It is suggested to use picture drawing method as a projective method that reveals information among the children with verbal disabilities (Johnson, 1990; Clatworthy, Simon &Tiedeman 1999; Matthews 2003; Artut 2004; Skybo, Ryan- Wengwe & Su 2007). Yavuzer (2007)considered picture as an indicator of child's perception of indicator World. A drawing reveals information about developmental, emotional and mental progress and also help to determine unclear and contradictory feelings, perceptions related with trauma (Malchiodi,2005). Children express themselves by using symbols in those pictures. Their symbols are related with what they had experienced, perceived or thought. Those symbols are fulfilled with hidden meanings and recalls. Therefore, it's possible to access children's inner World and

understand their psychic condition (Aydemir, 2011).While drawing picture facilitate emotional expression, on the other hand it reveals clues related with child's himself such as self-esteem.(Abdi, Jalili, Tavakoli &Naderpour 2004; Dizman, Gültekin ve Akyol 2005). Creativity of children's pictures show diversity by interacting with location, socio-economic structure, cultural elements and local characteristics and form a different synthesis (Teker, 2009). Child's Picture is influenced by so many factors such as family, parents, education level, job, economic level (Dizman, Gültekin &Akyol 2005), neglect and abuse, natural disasters, war, immigration and so on.

Certain problems such as large number of family members, crowded population of household, economic difficulties, unemployment, malnutrition, lack of heat, lack of knowledge about diseases and health issues, difficulty in adapting urban life, mental disorders occurred as a result of reaction to unusual situation and violence, depression and anxiety are frequently observed problems among immigrant individuals (Gün ve Bayraktar, 2007; Ponizovky, 2009; Aslantaş ve Adana; 2010). Since the immigration is a problem accompanied by sudden and rapid environmental change (Rousseau ve Nadeau, 2003) it is considered as a factor that interrupts a consistent and critically important developmental in children's life (Gün, 2002). The most common problems among immigrant children are reported as conduct disorder, identity confusion, low self-esteem, anxiety disorder, depression, somatic disorders, bilingualism problems, enuresis, low academic success and generation clash. (Gün ve Bayraktar, 2007).

İmmigration is defined as an incidence which had been to have a long history as the history of humankind. It is identified as geographic movement of an individual or large groups in a certain social structure from one place to another because of social, economic, political and cultural reasons (Kızılçelik, 1996; Gündüz ve Yetim,1996;Nyberg-Sorensen, Nıcholas & Poul, 2002; Gün, 2002; Özer, 2004)(Mutluer,2003; Demir,1996).Refugee is defined as a person who left their own both material and moral property in their homeland as a result feeling under pressure because of race, religion, social status, political opinion or national identity(Akyurek, 2007) and applied to other countries for being taken as refuge inby that country(Taneri,2012). Underlying reasons behind the immigrations are listed as economic problems such as demand for labor power, increasing life standards, poverty, unemployment; psychological, social and political factors such as war, political pressures, adventure seeking, Reunion of families; natural disasters such as earthquakes, flooding, volcanic eruption, desertification and drought (Mutluer,2003). Moreover, immigration is categorized according to reasons, such as voluntary immigrations, compulsory immigrations, refugee immigrations, immigrations of natural disasters, immigrations of terror and violence events (Erjem,2009).

Unlike a simple movement, the process of immigration makes a profound impact over the society (James vd., 1998; Haas, 2006).In addition, immigration involves in economic, social (education, language, adjustment, shelter, family problems), health and psychological problems (Beter,2006) and particularly children and youngsters are influenced more seriously(Seydi,2014).Those problems lead to experience difficulties in both family life and academic success at primary school. Immigration leads to certain problems in school such as increased student population in classroom, inability to benefit from education materials, inadequacy of school stuff due to increased population, increasing problems among students (Karakuş, 2006), communication problems, language problems, interruptions in national development. Furthermore, refugees may have lack of knowledge about how to benefit from education service, governors of the schools might be unwilling to register refugee students, refuge students might experience problems with other students and those students might experience difficulties to get graduation certificate(Beter, 2006). Those problems influence children negatively. Moreover, traumatic events that experienced by refugees previously in their homeland is combined with the adjustment problems that occurred as a result of adjustment difficulties in a new culture and this problematic combination influence refugees until they turn back to their home (Beter,2006). This problem may influence children who experienced immigration process and chaotic situation that experienced just before this process and leave a n obvious and permanent scar on identity.

II. METHOD

This study has aimed to examine game perception of child refugeesby using drawing picture method which is also known as a projective method. This study emphasized on research design, study group of the research, data collecting instruments, method of data collecting and data analysis.

Research Design

A qualitative research method which is known as case study was used as research design in this study. Case study method is an attempt for "focusing on a current event, incidence, situation, individual and groups" to make an inclusive investigation (Ekiz, 2003). A specific situation should exist in order to conduct a research. Factors which belong to a situation are investigated interdependently in an integrated framework. More than one data collection method is used and it is expected that data would be examined and supported by each other data.

Study Group

This research was conducted in the academic year of 2014-2015 and between the dates of 09.05.2014 and 30.04.2015 in Kayseri Temporary Education Center which is found in Kayseri. Study group of this research was determined in the frame of qualitative research approach by using purposive sapling methods and typical situation was determined according to school that study would be conducted in and study group was determined according to criterion sampling method. A series of criterion that determined previously was used for the selection of study group. In this context study group was shaped according to following criteria: *"Being emigrated from Syria due to war", "Living in Kayseri", "Being lived in Kayseri in last 6-12 months" and "willingness to participate in this study".* In this context, 20 child refugees(M=10, F=10) immigrated to Kayseri formed the study group.

Table 1. General Characteristics of the Children Included In Study

Demographic Information	Female	Male	Total
	f	f	f
Sex	10	10	20
Birth Year	10	10	20
• 2007	4	4	8
• 2008	6	6	12
Mother's Vital Status			
• Alive	9	9	18
• Dead	1	1	2
Father's Vital Status			
• Alive	9	7	16
• Dead	1	3	4
Number of Sibling			
• One	1	1	2
• Two	3	2	5
• Three	2	7	9
• More than four	4	-	4
Family Life Style (In Turkey)			
• Nuclear	1	-	1
• Extended	9	10	19

In the light of the information obtained from the general information form it can be seen that number children born in 2008 (12) is more than those born in 2007 (8). Every children had at least one sibling and most of the children (9) had 3 siblings. Almost all of the children (19) lives in extended families with different family relatives. A research conducted by foundation of MAZLUMDER (2013) revealed that 70% of Syrian refugees lived in refugee camps and 30% lived in different cities independently. It was reported that families living out of the camps rented houses by themselves, extended families had to live in the same household, child population was higher in those families, average age of those children was lower and those children spent most of their time in the streets wheretheir houses were found in.

Method of Data Collection

Translators who were confident in Arabic and Turkish languages were assisted in this research in order to establish a clear communication with children and collect data. General information about children was obtained by searching personal files of the children. Before the Picture drawing process children were invited in a meeting in the classroom and they were instructed to carry a name card on their neck which was formed by referring personal files. Researchers also carried their own cards.

Information about whether children liked or disliked playing game and reasons about it was asked to the children by the support of translators. A classroom in which children draw pictures was provided with comfortable seats and desks and those desks were designed as preventing interaction among children. Children were given pastel crayon and A4 size paper and asked to draw a Picture that they used to play before they lived in Turkey. Children were taken in the groups that consists five participants and there was no time limit in drawing process. Stories about the pictures drawn by children were recorded completely by the assist of translators and eventually those stories were separated according to codes (eg. M1, M2, F2, F4) given to children. Obtained data was analyzed consistent with content analysis by using QSR N-VIVO 10 program. In this process, obtained data was classified according to encoding and other themes were regulated. Findings were identified end interpreted after this process. Descriptive analysis was used as the analysis method.

A code list was formed according to the responses given to instruction of drawing a favorite that children used to play before the immigration and seven basic themes were identified by the way of analysis of this instruction. Those themes are identified as "Giving place to family members in Picture", "Giving place to children in

Picture", "Giving place to one's himself in the picture", "Giving place to national elements", giving place to home and school", "Giving place to game tools and toys". The model of this instruction is given below.

Model 1: Elements Related With the Games that Children Prepared
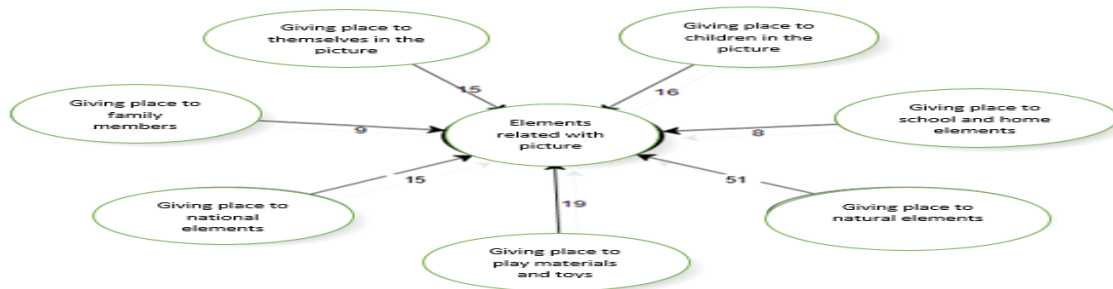
Model 2: Playing Game Preference and Liked-Disliked Games
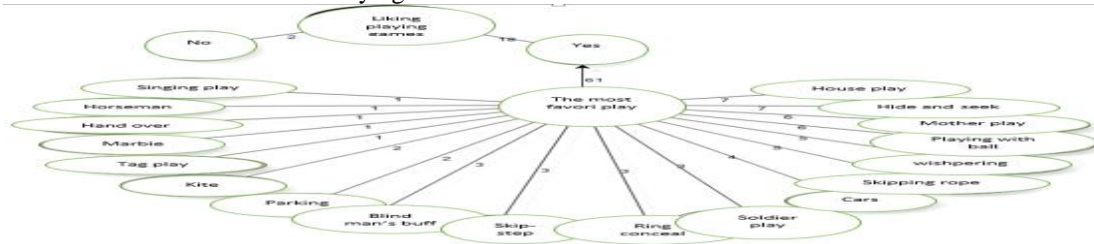
Game and play materials always take an important place in children's life. Factors such as social context, age, sex determine the game preferences of children. Moreover, playing game helps children to get away from the traumatic event and experience. Erbay and Saltalı (2012) conducted a study on place of the game among 6 years old children and their mother's game perceptıon and they reported that 91% of the children played game every day. Pilten and Pilten (2013) reported that female children at first grade mostly preferred playing house games, doctor games and p teacher games while other games such as skip-step, skipping rope, line games were preferred less frequently and they also reported that male children preferred to play with ball more frequently than any other games. Kahraman and Başal (2011) found that female children at primary school preferred playing house games (86.2%), playing with ball (65.5%), hide and seek game (46.5%), skipping rope (34.3%), skip step (6.9%) and male children preferred playing with ball (70.7%), hide and seek game (50%).

(M5)   (F10)
Picture 1: Favorite game playing pictures of the M5 and F10

Reference sentences about encoding are given below.
M5: "Very beautiful morning time. I'm flying a **kite** with my friends. My friends are playing with ball in somewhere close to our house. I'll go to them soon."
F10: "We are playing mother game with my friend. My friend had been a mother and she threw a ball to her daughter. We are having a picnic, but not in the Street, this is a fake picnic that we had at home."
Game has an important place in every child's life. Negative events experienced in war settings usually indicate that children punished themselves and triggered a mourning reaction in which they kept themselves away from favorite activities. If child loses a family member, family relative, friend or teacher then it would be inevitable to for him toengage into sadness and mourning period. Thus, since children coded as E7 has lost their father he told that: "I don't like playing games, games are bad. I have grown up;I'm abig brother now. Only babes and girls play games", namely he declared he was grown up and he should not act like children. E7 is another kid that experienced father loss in the war and he said that "I use to play with my father before the war, but I don't want to play anymore".

(M7)   (M8)
Picture 2: Pictures of the M7 and M8 about their favorite games

Reference sentences about those codes are given below
M7: "I'm **playing with the ball** in the garden. (Where are you?). I don't know, I'm at home and looking out from window."
M8: "I and my father used to travel with our car and **play with ball**. He was very powerful, he always catches my ball".

Model 3. A Detailed Model ofthe Favorite Game Pictures

Model shows that a big vast of children gave place to themselves and human-beings and those human being are characterized as family members such as sister, brother. It can be seen that majority of the children pictured playing games (18), almost all of them (19) needed a play material or toy and reflected this need into their picture. It is observed that children generally preferred outdoors as playing area (18). A detailed model of quantitative information indicates that children enjoyed playing in the park and generally draw play materials such as slide (9), swinger (7). Moreover, ball (9) which is an important play material for children was used more frequently by the boys. However, it is also observed that gun (3) was another play material used by children. Similarly, a research conducted by Erdoğan et. Al. (2004) revealed that children preferred to play in outdoors, swinger was the most preferred play material and slide, ball, rope, car, balloon, seesaw came after. Pictures of children about park environment are given below.


(F3)   (F8)
Picture 3: Sample pictures of F3andF8 about their favorite game activities.
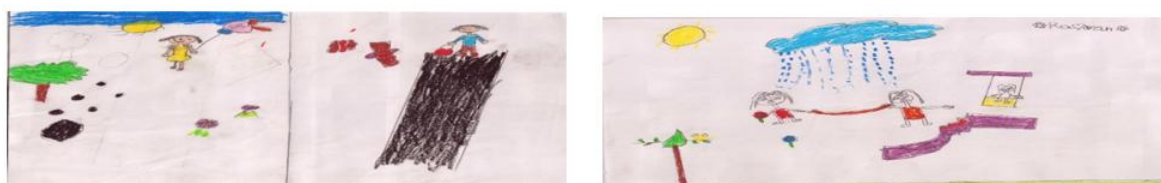
Reference sentences about these codes are given below.
F-3: "**I like so much to play games** with my friends**, e**specially in the **park.**My sister always cries and because of this my father always takes me to park."
F-8:"We all like **playing in the park.** I'm playing with my sister and friends. Look, I'm hiding myself into a box, son one can find me here. Children in the middle are playing with sand, other children are sliding, riding on seesaw."

Model 4: Martial Elements in the Pictures of Favorite Games
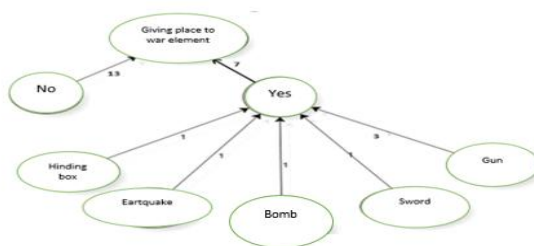
Model 4 indicates that 7 children gave place to elements related with war whereas 13 children did not. They draw martial elements such as gun (3), sword (1),bomb (1), hiding case (1) andearthquake. Martial elements drawn in pictures are given below.

(F2)   (F4)
Picture 4: Pictures drawn by F2 and F4 about their favorite games

Reference sentences about these codes are given below.
F-2: "A bomb fell on a park while a girl was playing. Despite she run she couldn't escape from the bomb. But this bomb will not hit me, because I'm in another park far away from there."
F-4: "We went out while it was raining. We had birds. We were skipping rope, my friend was in swinger and she did not come to us (When researcher asked her the gun mentioned in picture, she told that she had no idea but someone might forget it.)
Children are always the first people who affected by gun battle either directly or indirectly. Although children do not start the war they experience the most mortal effects of the war. Even they don't die or injured they generally experience negative events such as parental loss, losing their friends or family relatives, kidnapping, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, immigration, becoming deprived from the school and other social supports, poverty. Those negative events give rise to psychological and psychosocial injuries. There is no doubt that a trauma experienced by a child who witnessed dropping bombs and decapitated body parts would be harder than a trauma experienced by a child whose parents changed the channel while watching news about a gun clash.

III. RESULT

War and violence generally resulted in sorrow and trauma for the victim and this sorrow and trauma also influence relatives of victims including children as well and eventually make a profound damage on child's life. This study aimed to examine game perceptions of the children of Syrian refugees who were forced to emigrate from Syria by using drawing Picture method which is a projective method. In the light of findings following conclusions was made;
Almost all of the children participated in this study draw playing games and play materials, however it was also observed that elements related war also took place in the pictures about favorite game activities. It was observed that children used human, nature and house figures in their pictures and they drew those figures in a horizontal position. These figures appeared in the form of small and vague shapes. Regarding natural figures, it was observed that sun figure was used in almost all pictures ve contributed picture as a funny detail. Most of children gave place to them, positioned themselves in open air, also pictured play friends such as friends, sisters, brother and other family relatives. It was observed that children used national symbols in their pictures and they placed Turkish Flag either on the roof or somewhere close to house such as garden when they were asked to draw a Picture of their favorite game that they played in Turkey. Children used almost all of the colors in the picture. It was seen that black color was used more frequently in the pictures about war. Studies concerned with the relationship between colors and emotions revealed no significant evidence about the link between color use and emotions, however it was stated that pictures in which black color was frequent contained negative expressions (Büyükkarabacak, 2008). It was observed that children reflected their own gender characteristics on their pictures and identified themselves with their gender.

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