Making Sense of Children's Mark-Making: Children's Artwork as Marking to Make Meaning Vs. Marking That Expresses Style

Emily Brown, '12 and Alyssa Shaw '13 STRIDE Project
Peter B. Puffall, Emeritus Professor of Psychology, Advisor

Summary

Conserving our predictions:
- Children of all age levels who view a single example of a picture may either repeat the style or change it in a way that is significantly different from the style they viewed.
- Children who are exposed to single pictures of a certain style may express their own personal style in their artwork, whether or not that style was identical across studies.
- Children may be more difficult to change if there are multiple variations in a single picture.
- Children may be more difficult to change when there is more overlap between the styles in a single picture.
- Children may be more difficult to change when the anchor of OS is more visible in the picture.

Four Predictions

1. Children will make pictures of houses and buildings that are similar to the houses and buildings in the pictures they view. Children who view a picture of a house will make pictures of houses.
2. Children will draw in distinctive styles in each study, i.e., each study may be significantly different from other studies. Children may change their styles in each study.
3. Similarity ratings will be significantly higher than Difference ratings for each Instruction and Study, averaged over Grade Levels. Children will draw in distinctive styles in each study.
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Methods

Content Study

Participants: Eight 2nd-, 4th-, and 6th-grade children who attended a private day school. Each child was tested in a group of 6 to 7 children.

Results

Figure 1: Content Study. Two marks of different drawing styles for a 7th and bottom of a 6th grade child.

Table 1: Aspects of Drawing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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Difference between Children who invented new ways of marking to express style vs. Conserving their personal style:
- Children who invented new ways of marking to express style did so in the Content Study, but not in the Genre Study.
- Children may change their styles in each study.

Figure 2: Genre Study. The two marks of different drawing styles for a 7th and bottom of a 6th grade child.

Genre Study

Participants: Twenty 2nd-, 4th-, and 6th-grade children who attended a private day school. Each child was tested in a group of 6 to 7 children.

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Figure 3: Content Study. Two marks of different drawing styles for a 7th and bottom of a 6th grade child.

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