THE INTERCONNECTION OF THE VISUAL IMAGES AND THEMES FOUND IN CHILDREN'S NARRATIVES OF WAR THOUGH DRAWING

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ABSTRACT

The study of children's drawings has long been an interesting filed in linguistic research. Children's drawings are an indication of their developmental progress, it is a gateway that offers a window into the children's internal thinking and attitude. The present study focuses on unveiling the relationship of the images and themes found in the children's drawings of the Marawi Siege, a war that occurred between the government forces and terrorists in the Southern Philippines in 2017. This study includes 40 drawings of the child-respondents who are residing in the temporary shelters in Boganga and Rorogagus, Lanao del Sur. The interconnection was based on two perspectives, namely: realistic and artistic. In realistic perspective, the drawings were analyzed based on realistic representations of the children of the visual images, in which themes were embedded. In artistic perspective, the attention shifted away from what the children were drawing to the creation process of the visual images and themes. Thus, this study propounds that the children's psychological process played a significant role in how they drew the scenarios in order to gain an understanding of the reality.

Keywords: Children's Drawing, Visual Images, Themes, Conflict

INTRODUCTION

Through the years, it is discovered that children have their own esthetic sense, and contrary to what is widely believed, abstract art does not necessarily imply a lack of development or a shortcoming of the child (Jolley, 2009). Zlateva (2019) cites the significance of researching on children's drawing, accordingly, children's drawings are an indication of their developmental progress; that they offer a window into their internal thinking and their attitude on what goes on around them; and that they are a general and powerful way of communication among kids and adults. As discussed by Quaglia et al. (2015), children have the endless eagerness to realize

themselves and do so by employing all the tools they have in their possession. They have the necessary resources, at every level of development, to recreate their own existence on paper in a satisfying manner. Understanding that drawing and theory is intrinsically related which have resulted in the continuous reflection on the relationship between thinking and drawing, or, more abstractly, on how the specific means of representation relate to specific concepts. Quaglia et al. (2015) provide different perspectives in analyzing a child's drawing, which they describe realistic and artistic.

Realistic perspective analyzes an art as a representation of real-world objects which is represented by their physical-geometrical qualities. There is no emphasis put on feelings, emotions or ideas expressed by the artist in this analysis. This assumes that drawings are but attempts at reproducing a realistic copy of things. On the other hand, artistic perspective is further explained as an approach that shifts its focus from the graphical productions to the mental processes actuated by children in order to acquire a deeper understanding of these mental processes. Furthermore, this also puts emphasis on the pleasure that children experience while drawing, in relation to the traces they leave on paper. Pinto et al. (2011) add that in order for children to create graphical products, they draw inspiration from their internal model, and that it is not possible to reduce it to something of a merely intellectual nature. Also, esthetic perspective which is part of the artistic perspective, primarily draws from the explanation of the scholar Kellogg (1955, 1969). Kellogg (1955) notes that among the numerous graphical products of the children - scribbles, diagrams and combinations as such, what appeared more frequently are those that have good visual form or proportion. These visual orders are attracted by nature, meaning, there is primary visual order that exists in the minds of every human. This further connects this perspective to the previous one, the artistic perspective. Hence, in the discussion, although these perspectives see the child's drawing in a different point of view, one cannot just ignore the close relationship of each to the other.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES

Freeman (1980) describes drawings as instruments of representation and by Cox (2005) as a cultural resource to share meanings, while Brooks (2009) defines the terms as a product of mental abilities of the artist. Drawing is a personal expression, but it can also be a way of communication. Children do not have enough ability to express themselves in abstract language, but they do have methods of symbolic communication, such as this tool. Children can communicate with familiar people through pictures; life skills development, etc. It is believed that children can communicate with people they trust, develop life skills and develop a sense of trust. Farokhi and Hashemi (2011) document that children's drawing has a development process that accompanies the development of emotion, social psychology and perception. The children draw what they know in their own style. This means there is a process of functioning and interacting of perception, sensibility, emotion and motor skills. Furthermore, they establish that child art has long been an object of study for researchers in many fields.

Barraza (1999) adds that drawing skills are important factors to be considered when analyzing children's drawings. Children's information about environmental issues is crucial to their mental image. Therefore, children's drawings can provide valuable information about the development of children's perception of the environment. The analysis of drawings is seen as an interesting field of study not only because it allows analysis of children's art more satisfactorily, but also because they provide an opportunity to improve the understanding of master planning and organizational skills development. Pioneers of disciplines such as Ricci (1887) cited by Quaglia et al. al (2015) begin their research in the late 19th century and regard children's graphic works as valuable information about their intellectual life and cognitive development. At that time, scholars focus on studying the development of painting from what they believe to be the primitive stage (i.e. child art) and the intellectual

enlightenment stage (i.e. adult art). Pinto et al. (2011) indicate that these theories rely to a large extent on the comparison between children's works and adult paintings. At this early stage, no attempt has been made to explore deeper structures, such as children's personality or aesthetics.

Furthermore, Analyzing works of art thematically permits for the critical examination and improvement of those topics that go beyond historic eras. Themes permit people to apprehend that sure subjects are not absolutely difficult to understand and may be as applicable nowadays as they have been hundred years ago. Prior research has thoroughly investigated themes in visual arts, such as that of Jabbar and Betawi (2018) who identify prevalent themes in children's peace drawings. It is revealed that there are themes of peace, contentment and tranquility as a contribution of religion that are shown in figures of going to church, image of cross or Jesus, resurrection and crucifixion. Moreover, other themes identified in their work is peace as a negative space. Here, the children describe peace as the absence of war and conflict, the end of Isis, the absence of death and destruction where children draw pictures of idle houses, figures and cars.

The Maryland State Department of Education (2013) states in the book Creative Connections: Young Children and the Art that when children participate in the artistic process, children learn to observe, organize and explain their experiences; they can make decisions, take actions and control the impact of these actions; they can create forms and meanings that do not exist before. Art experience becomes a source of communication and interaction between children and adults. An artistic experience that recognizes the active role of children in learning provides them with many opportunities to construct and process the meaning conveyed through language and other means of expression. In addition, children's solitary exploration on open source materials and the stimulation process of participating in creating their own artistic expressions can be a meaningful experience for children.

On a much similar study, it was agreed that research on children's drawings is important, as cited by Zlateva (2019). Children's drawings are an indication of their developmental progress and provide a glimpse into their internal thinking and attitude toward the world around them, as well as a way for kids and adults to communicate in general and effectively. Moreover, the stage of development of every activity depends on the conditions of development of the individual, the specific historical conditions, as well as the cultural and scientific achievements in combination with the individual's psychophysiological and genetic constitution. It is important to characterize the features of art activity that appear during a free, unguided art process, and those which appear in the conditions of an effective learning process. As postulated by Quaglia et. al (2015), there are several perspectives one has to consider in interpreting a child's drawing, which are the following:

1. The realistic perspective

Early researchers in children's art focus on comparing the performances of children and adults, wondering why the former makes mistakes. Any loss is regarded as evidence that the child is not mature enough to accurately reflect reality. Jean Piaget (1956 as cited by Quaglia, et. al 2015), is one of the first to study children's art from a scientific point of view. Piaget (1956) discovers that his four-step development model can also be applied to drawing, and that children's cognitive development and skills develop almost in parallel. Moreover, Luquet (1927), as cited by Quaglia, et. al (2015), believes that graphic activities gradually evolve from simple exercises to a structured game form. In his opinion, the appearance of graphic traces is spontaneous, but is affected by adults. The child observs satisfaction in each motor discharge and traces created, which have been considered as an imitation of adults' output. The transition from scribbling as a motor activity to controlled scribbling and, subsequently, to actual drawing, where there is the expression of a representative purpose, happens spontaneously.

2. The artistic perspective

Lowenfeld (1952), as cited by Quaglia, et. al (2015),) is the author who most comprehensively describes children's art from the perspective of artistic expression. He believes that the overall development of children is also related to their creative development. The artistic method shifts the attention of scholars from the "what" that children draw to the "how" they draw, that is, the resources that appear in the creative process. Jolley (2009) and Lange-Küttner (2011) substantiates that the subject of the investigation shifts from the graphic works to the psychological processes activated by children in order to understand them more deeply. Compared with the traces they leave on paper, the artistic perspective also considers the children's enjoyment of painting. It is no longer just pure sports pleasure, but an aesthetic pleasure that has nothing to do with any expressive intentions. Furthermore, Callaghan (1999) utilizing the works of Read (1958) argues children's kinesthetic imagination cannot be reduced to pure motor behavior, and can be associated with facial and descriptive motion in the sense of Arnheim (1954).

According to Read (1958 as mentioned by Quaglia et. al 2015), children draw inspiration from dark themes and there is a need to determine the nature of this independent activity.

METHODS

This present study includes child survivors of Marawi Siege aged ten to twelve years old who are presently residing in two temporary shelters namely Boganga and Rorogagus, Lanao del Sur. This made use an analytical research design to investigate the drawings drawn by the participants situated in the two temporary shelters of Marawi last September 2020. The drawings of the child survivors served as the main instrument of this study where the researcher got 30% sampling of the population of each mentioned transitory shelter. The researcher met the participants in the transitory shelters and instructed them to draw their memories of what transpired during the Marawi Siege.

The researcher used the following instruments be able to answer the research

questions posed: 1) Drawings as the main instrument in this research, the drawing or drawings were collected as outputs of the respondents which the researcher utilized in order to deduce prevalent themes present in the drawings and to better understand respondents' expression of terror and survival during the siege; 2) Interview Schedule was also utilized to the child victim-respondents to serve as the guide for validation of the researcher in relating the abducted themes of the drawings to the actual explanations of the respondents on their drawings of the Marawi Siege; 3) Counselling Activity was used as an intervention for counselling purposes through an activity where respondents were able to freely say what they felt and thought about the activity.

The researcher conducted the gathering of data needed for this study at the two temporary shelters of Marawi, namely: Boganga and Rorogagus Phase 1 and 2. The researcher followed several procedures during the gathering of date, such as: entry protocol, drawing process, drawing collection, counseling to the respondents

and interview. Also, this study was conducted with high regards to ethical considerations on the following: 1) Voluntary Participation where participants were free to opt in or out of the study at any point in time should they feel uncomfortable with any of the data gathering procedures. The researcher also explained to the respondents, along with their parents or guardians and the shelter head, the purpose of the study and how the gathered data are treated.; 2) Informed Consent where the researcher made sure that before the participants were sent to the meeting area, a letter of consent was received by the parents, whereby agreeing to the participation of the children to the study. Participants knew the purpose of this study where consent was dutifully sought to the participants' parents or guardians; 3) Confidentiality of the identity of the respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In discussing the relationship of the visual images and themes found in the drawings in relation to the children's

experiences of Marawi Siege, this study uses two perspectives, namely: realistic and artistic. Furthermore, the author included only the translated version of the interview to the child-respondents for easier understanding and discussion of the findings.

Realistic Perspective

In realistic perspective, the drawings are analyzed based on realistic representations of the children of the visual images, of which themes are embedded. In this perspective, Drawings No. 1-6 as well as the interview with the participants are utilized. As seen, the posters include images of the social actors, shattered place, battle aircraft and weapons. In Poster 1, the researcher asks the respondent as to the story behind the drawing, according to the respondent:

This is me (pointing to the people in the paper), my mother and my father. This was when we were running away and the only thing my mother had was a small bag. That (pointing to the building on the paper) was the school at Banggolo on fire and

those (pointing to the battle aircraft on the paper) were the soldiers dropping bombs.

While respondent 2 explained:

I drew what happened during the Marawi Siege. This was when we escaped, there I was with my father, mother and my three siblings, that is our youngest I was bringing with. While escaping, we saw dead bodies on the street, those were the dead bodies pointing to his drawing), they were many gentlemen. Our neighbors who did not have cars too went to the masjid and stayed there. We left our house while on fire because a bomb was dropped by that (pointing to his drawing) helicopter.

On another note, the respondent of the Drawing 3 narrated:

We were in a car with my sister when we escaped, this is us in red car (pointing to his drawing). My sister drove fast because we were going to our grandmother at Basak, my sister was playing the Qur'an recital while we were in the car. We went across with that lady who wanted to hop off because she did not have a car, good thing my sister allowed and pitied her because she is a Meranaw. There were also a lot of other

cars going out of Marawi that time because a lot of houses were on fire. This (pointing to the house with blue color) was the house of my friend Ameena, while on mobile I saw that house on fire because of a bomb that was dropped from above. While on our way, I saw a policeman fired a man in red, my sister said that man didn't have his ID and was thought as a member of ISIS.

Respondent 4 also recalled his story with:

We were walking with my mother and father as we tried to escape. My father was waving his hand to the cars passing us by in hopes that we got a ride too. Thank God, our neighbor gave us a ride because when we were getting inside the car, we saw the "blacks" bringing a lot of guns, my mother and I were crying a lot.

While respondent 5 explained his drawing by:

We were at Ramain that time. I heard from my uncles that there were a lot of Meranaws in our barangay who died because they were shot by ISIS, the Tausug members, and big bombs were dropped by the soldiers too. In fact, my uncle's house

was burnt down (pointing to the house in his drawing) because of a bomb dropped by the military.

Finally, respondent 6 narrated:

We escaped through the lake Lanao. I was with father and my older sibling. While escaping, the masjid near us was full of Christians who were crying. I also saw the ISIS on the streets and a house that was on fire, here (pointing to the burning house in his drawing.

The participants narrate their story of experience of the Marawi Siege while pointing to their drawings as if relating themselves to what they have drawn. Here, respondent 1 is directly describing the social actors on his drawings as his mother, father and him. Similarly, respondent 4 is also pointing out to his family members on the paper while narrating, giving emphasis to the youngest he is bringing with while escaping. Similar to respondent 5 who is also pointing to her sister on the driver seat and her at the backseat, same with participants 4 and 6. The participants make use of key characteristics in order to differentiate their presentation of family

members, such as the hair length to differentiate a male from a female; and height to define each of his siblings, as well as the position they are in that situation. This representation is a realistic illustration of their knowledge of their family members as well as a realistic narration of the war, faith and migration they experience during the siege.

Moreover, respondent 2 added that he saw many dead bodies of men on the streets while they were escaping, when asked about the number of dead bodies he saw, he said "about eight to ten". When compared to his drawing, the number of dead bodies he had drawn was analogous to his answer, which implied that the respondent had provided a realistic representation of what he really experienced during the siege given the details mentioned. The same respondent was also asked why did he write the word "ISIS" right beside the battle aircraft, the researcher thought he was giving reference of ownership of the battle aircraft to the ISIS. However, the respondent answered that the word ISIS on his drawing was actually a

vandal he saw on the buildings. Furthermore, the respondent narrated that he saw people inside the battle aircraft, the same reason he used the color green to his illustration of the aircraft is because he saw men in green inside the aircrafts, he added "those were the soldiers".

In addition to that, respondent 1-3 were also asked why did they color the battle aircraft, military and "policeman" with green, they answered "almost similar with "that was what we saw, their uniform, and they look cool but intimidating". Also, respondent 3 was asked what are the red strokes on the houses he drew meant, he answered "those were the fire that burnt down the houses I saw while were leaving the place". Lastly, respondent 6 also answered when asked why did he color the airplane with black "that is supposed to be green, but I did not see my color green a while ago". As discussed, the participants, when asked, did not associate any emotional attachment with their choice of visual elements in illustrating the visual images. As a matter of fact, what the participants had on hand are narrations of they had drawn on

paper. Hence, these narrations insinuated that the participants were actually drawing their experiences by choosing words, shapes, colors and other visual elements base on what they had witnessed in reality and not in reference to artistic nor aesthetic perspectives.

As a final observation, it was also observed that all of the participants make some erasures with their drawings, when asked about these erasures, participants 31-3 answered that these were just mistakes and they wanted to make their posters more beautiful, hence, erasing some parts; while respondent 4 said "because I drew my father far from us at first, but actually he was just near us"; on the other hand, respondent 5 explained "I want to show dead people and I did not draw it right at first". This action could speak of the characters of the participants to be perfectionist in nature. Which means, creating these erasures could also be a reflection of their intellectual abilities and as well as the mental processes that took place while they were drawing.

Widlöcher(1965), as referenced by Quaglia et. al (2015), infers that drawing is characterized by multiple points of view adopted by children, and each object is portrayed in its exemplarity, which is to say, its key characteristics. As a result, they identify each shape as an exemplary form by selecting a specific perspective for it, which has served as the primary focus of this theory on realistic perspective. This is in cognizance with the findings of this study where participants model their illustrations based on their existing knowledge and real-life experiences. According to Widlöcher(1965), exemplarity is an emblematic particular, representing the essential characteristics that make an object easily identifiable, similar to the vertical lines conveying an image of hair on a boy's head or leaves in a field (Einarsdottir, Dockett, & Perry, 2009).

In the realistic perspective, Quaglia et. al (2015) conjectures that all of the analysis of child art is based on the organization of graphic elements. It is added that it is more useful for recent authors to observe the moment of composition on paper and assess the importance of graphical activity in determining final

compositions. By doing so, they study the executive coefficients without changing their understanding of drawings as expressions of mental images and knowledge. Similarly, the child-participants create the drawings in general, the visual images and themes in particular, as a product of their mental images and knowledge of the Marawi Siege. However, Jolley (2009) counteres the idea when he proffers that the first logical error of many children's art researchers is to assume that children have an innate desire for realism. Most early scholars firmly believe that young people tend to be very clear about reality because of their qualities of being unique and natural; however, the failure to illustrate reality according to some researches was because of the cognitive limitations and immaturity of children.

Yet in recent researches, this thinking is changed, and researchers began to realize that there is more art for children than what people usually think. They find that children have their own aesthetic consciousness, and the preference for abstract art does not necessarily mean the child's developmental defects or absence. Anning & Ring (2004) substantiate that many "defects" (such as transparency, tilt, size difference, etc.) in children's drawings are actually solutions to problems assumed by young artists to overcome any limitations. As Morra (2002) explains that when children start out to note a few shape of analogy among the lines that they have left of the paper and the shapes of actual objects, it leads them to not forget their drawings as true representations of the world. Such a discovery is owed to a natural inclination of the children toward figurative drawing, or the reproduction of real objects.

In addition, Thomas & Silk (1990) conclude that child art is viewed from a realistic perspective as a representation of real-world objects based on their physical and geometrical characteristics. A graphic gesture is not considered from the perspective of feelings, emotions, or ideas expressed, which are all elements that may transform it into an art form. Correspondingly, the narrations of the participants are all in parallel with their outputs. Their use of colors, shapes and

other key characteristics are not a testimonial of what they are feeling but much more of what they realistically experienced. In theory, children draw in an attempt to reproduce a realistic image of something. Thomas & Silk (1990) propose a theoretical framework for explaining the reasons for children's imperfect drawings. To this day, scholars are still investigating these motives.

Furthermore, Barraza (1999) adds that drawing skills are important factors to be considered when analyzing children's drawings. Children's information about environmental issues is crucial to their mental image. Therefore, children's drawings can provide valuable information about the development of children's perception of the environment. The analysis of drawings is seen as an interesting field of study not only because it allows analysis of children's art more satisfactorily, but also because they provide an opportunity to improve the understanding of master planning and organizational skills development. It is also believed by Pahl (1999) that drawing shows the personal

mentality of children by externalizing concepts, thoughts and idea, thus is viewed as an important part of children's meaning-making. Children draw or paint to give meaning and convey it to others. Drawing is part of the young children's playful, meaningful and multimodal interaction with the world. As a matter of fact, it supports their ability to remember ideas and communicate them to others and within themselves. All else being equal, Ring (2010) conveys that these multiple processes are occurring at the same time, such as constructing ideas and knowledge, and communicating these through drawing. Therefore, drawing could be used to make meanings of an experience where the child reaches a level of understanding.

Finally, the child's use of the rubber is another important factor noted by Edwards (2011) in analyzing children's drawing. Accordingly, there is a need to take a look at in the event that they use it to make their output better or if the use is out of compulsiveness. In the primary case, the erasures are spontaneous and cautious and this further advise that children are inclined

to perfectionism, as studies show that this is normally found in children with high intellectual abilities and good scholar performance; while the kid's compulsive use of erasure without the purpose of enhancing their drawing shows relation to insecure emotions and deprivation of inner control.

Artistic Perspective

In this perspective, the attention is shifted away from what the children are drawing to the creation process of the visual images and themes prevalent to the drawings. Here, Drawings No. 7-11, as well as the interview to the participants are also utilized. Firstly, respondent 7 recalled:

When the siege happened, we were at our Province. My mother was bringing my younger sibling when my uncle called us and informed us about the battle in Marawi. My mother kept on crying, worried about our relatives and the house of our grandfather. This (pointing on the right side of his paper) was what we saw in the television, destroyed houses and masjid. Most of our relatives hid in the masjids. These were the soldiers (pointing to the

battle aircraft) dropping bombs in Marawi according to my father and this ((pointing to the black flag) was the flag of the "blacks" (militants).

On another narration, respondent 8 recollected:

My mother prayed hard to Allah and was crying. The house beside ours, according to my mother, was full of ISIS, they went upstairs and were firing at the soldiers. I was also crying because we had nowhere to run to. My father was not in Marawi that time because he purchased goods in Iligan, and when people were leaving, my mother said that we had to wait for my father but he did not come after how many days. We heard the helicopters above and every time they went near, we heard explosions too. The workers of my uncle also went to the masjid in front our house.

Meanwhile, respondent 9 was asked to narrate his experience based on his poster, he *recalled:*

I remembered there were many people inside the masjid near our house, where most of them were non-Meranaws, in fact, the salesmen of my uncle hid there. I

was with my mother inside the house, she saw from the window that there were many ISIS outside our house who were holding guns and there were many people running out of fear. This (pointing to his drawn person near the front yard) man was crying. While, my mother and I did not really get scared because my mother said they were Meranaws and Muslims and that they would not harm us.

While respondent 10 narrated:

This was how I remembered the battle in Marawi. I saw houses burning which were burnt down by the "blacks" (referring to the militants) according to my mother. On the other hand, there were also soldiers I saw while we were leaving the place, they were also entering Marawi because they would shoot the "blacks". At first, my father said we would not leave the place because this is ours and the soldiers should leave because he said the ISIS would not destroy Marawi. Yet, after few days when the exchanges of fire did not stop, my father finally decided that we should leave. We also saw the helicopter of the soldiers above.

In another narration by respondent 11, he recalled:

What I could remember was there were many people leaving Marawi. I saw some of them were crying and were really scared. In fact, others fled thru the ranao, for us who were in Tuca our neighbor who was a policeman with his family escaped thru there. And I also heard from my parents that there were many houses burnt because the soldiers bombed them. My father said we would hide inside the masjid and we were there for ten days.

Apparently, the narrations above have one common denominator in the way they recall their experiences of Marawi Siege. As observed, part of their narrations are actually told to them by another person, the father for respondent 7, the mother on the case of participants 8, 9 and 10, and the parents for respondent 11. However, despite some parts of their narrations are told to them by another person, they are still able to draw the situations that are told to them not based on their knowledge of the reality but is actually based on their mental abilities, just like the houses that are on fire,

helicopters dropping bombs, militants burning houses and a number of militants in the surrounding. Clearly, the child-participants may not have witnessed the aforementioned scenarios; however, they surely have a model from which they draw inspiration for their graphical products. Hence, there is a significant role of the children's psychological process of how the scenarios would look like when drawn in order to gain an understanding of the reality.

Moreover, artistic characteristics were displayed in the drawings in different ways as explained by the participants. In particular, the researcher asked respondent 1 of his choice of color for his parents clothes, he answered "because those were the favorite clothes of my parents. My father always wore his blue *thobe* and my mother wore her *mukna (*prayer dress) at home*"*. He was also asked of his choice of color of the flag of the militants, he said "that was how I saw it in the television, it scared me." The researcher also observed that respondent 1 placed the Philippine flag side by side with the militants' flag with an equal (=) sign on between, when asked to

explain this, the respondent answered "it means that during that moment, we did not know who would win".

On another note, when respondent 7 is asked what are the flower, plants and sun mean in his drawing, he cheerfully says "those were the plants of my mother and the sun is there to give light and I just find it beautiful to add those things in my drawing". In addition to that, respondent 7 also explains that the choice of color on the battle aircraft is modeled from his favorite toy bought by his brother, while adding the sun, with a smiling feature, on his drawing means "just to show a happiness because I am happy that you visited us in this shelter and I met my friends too". He also adds that the orange cars placed below are the cars of his neighbors which are all orange in reality, while he colors the militant as black because he is scared of him.

Hence, it appears from the previous narrations of participants 7-9 that the they model their illustration based on what they are feeling during the creation of the drawings and as well as based from their existing abilities to create ones. They add

images, a symbol and use colors as a reflection of what they are feeling during the time of creating the drawings. There is the role of expressiveness in their graphic gestures. Thus, these cases could tell that these drawings and narrations imply that the graphical representations of the participants of their experiences are also a product of their progressive acquisition of knowledge, that is recalling some realities in the past; their personal dispositions and emotional states, that is being happy at the moment; and specific abilities of being much more creative.

Critically, it is deemed necessary in this study to discuss how the child-participants inject several Meranaw norms in their narrations and drawings as an evidence of their artistic representation of their experiences. These are reflected in several scenarios, such as, first, when respondent 1 emphasizes that his mother keeps on crying because she is worried about their relatives and the house of her father in Marawi City is actually a footprint of the Meranaws' strong familial bond and love. Second, when respondent 2 recalls that

they are not able to leave the place earlier because her mother decides to wait for the father to come home mirrors that of the Meranaws being universally patriarchal, similar to the narration of respondent 7, where decisions of the father is highly respected and revered on whether or not to leave the city. Another, when respondent 6 also mentions that her mother tells him not to be scared of the ISIS because they are Meranaws and Muslims, it is actually an attestation of the *kambangsa* (kinship or clanship) of the Meranaws where weight is placed with significance to other co-Meranaws. Lastly, the Meranaw *maratabat* (pride) is reflected in the narration of Respondent 7 when he recalls that his father says they should not leave the city because they belong to it and that the soldiers should be the one leaving the city instead.

Essentially, Quaglia et. al (2015) based this perspective on the assumption that children have a model from which they draw inspiration for their graphical products, which cannot be reduced purely to intellectual ideas. A mental representation of reality is not only the result of the

knowledge about it, it is in conjunction with the mental abilities. However, as a physical reality, it also embodies the intellective and affective dimensions that all humans possess (Pinto et al., 2011). In this perspective, the focus shifts from graphical productions to psychological processes activated by children in order to gain a deeper understanding of the latter (Jolley, 2009; Lange-Küttner, 2011). When drawing, children experience a great deal of pleasure, which is expressed through their traces on paper. As a result, bodily pleasure is no longer the only form of pleasure, but also esthetic pleasure, which sometimes coupled with any kind of symbolic meaning.

Psychiatrists, including Read (1958) as mentioned by Quaglia et. al (2015), argues that children possess a kinesthetic imagination, which cannot be reduced to pure motor behavior, but which can be linked to the physiognomic and descriptive movements. Farokhi and Hashemi (2011) also document that children's drawing has a development process that accompanies the development of emotion, social psychology

and perception. The children draw what they know in their own style. This means there is a process of functioning and interacting of perception, sensibility, emotion and motor skills. Callagha (1999) adds that Arnheim (1954) assumes that children draw for their own obscure motives, and the role is to determine the nature of their independent activity. The authors Lowenfeld and Brittain (1945), as acknowledged by Quaglia et. al (2015), evaluate children's drawings based on their artistic traits, however they do not differentiate themselves from the realistic approach in describing the development of child drawings. Even as graphical representation increases in similarity to reality, it still requires the gradual and progressive acquisition of knowledge, specific abilities, and executive strategies (Thompson, 2002).

Perceptive observation is the source of all general notions about objects according to Arnheim (1954). In his work, he goes beyond the distinction between perception and conception. Perception cannot be reduced to simply combining all

particulars while abstracting some aspect of it. For example, a dog could be perceived before its single defining characteristics (Longobardi, Pasta, & Quaglia, 2012). Moreover, Arnheim (1954) is not silent about the personal dispositions and emotional states of children in his analysis; he believes that they contribute to the expressiveness of graphic gestures. The hand movements, according to Arnheim, have a physiognomic and descriptive character (Arnheim, 1954).

CONCLUSIONS

The interconnection of the visual images and themes with the children's experiences of war revealed that participants are either representing their visions of war realistically or artistically. This further insinuates that aside from the visual images, the textual and verbal narrations of the children are of equal importance and of paramount aid in order to digest the drawings carefully. Without these, the researcher could have just jumped into conclusion and analysis just based on the visual space provided by the participants. Hence, this also implies that listening to what a child wants to share and say is indeed of the same significant of that of the adult.   The results of the present study imply that it is significant for the society to create an atmosphere where children begin to be interested in expressing themselves through different forms, such as drawing, beginning from the early childhood period. Children's creativity needs to be supported in terms of their interests and development. Child's own individual characteristics alone may not be enough for the development of theirs skills. Besides the child's own individual characteristics, environment is also very positive on child's expression through drawing. Considering the fact that children's drawings are originated from their own lives, children need to be guided in the best ways. For instance, children need examples of peace labeled for them. Helping children to see peace as something they can do may help them cope with events they cannot control. Furthermore, sharing their understanding of peace with other children and adults through drawings or

other forms of expression may help them visualize a world in which they feel safe and know peace. Finally, it is important that adults engage young children in conversations about their spontaneous drawings in order to fully understand their interests and intentions; and to also show that their drawings are valued.

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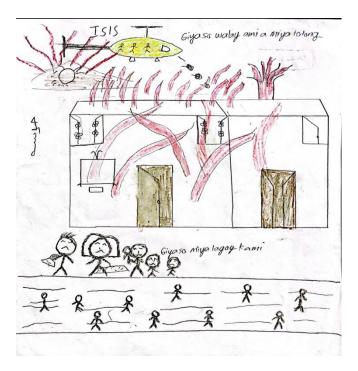Institute For Policy Analysis Of Conflict (Ipac), Marawi, *The "East Asia Wilayah" And Indonesia,* 21 July 2017, Www.Understandingconflict.Org/En/Conflict/Read/61/Marawi-The-East-Asia- Wilayah-And-Indonesia.

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APPENDIX
THE DRAWINGS

DRAWING NO. 1

DRAWING NO. 2

DRAWING NO. 3

DRAWING NO. 4

DRAWING NO. 5

DRAWING NO. 6

DRAWING NO. 7

DRAWING NO. 8

DRAWING NO. 9

DRAWING NO. 10

DRAWING NO. 11