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## The narrative content of preschool children's drawing

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**THE NARRATIVE CONTENT OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN'S DRAWING**

**By**

**Wendy Philippa Candy**

**A Dissertation**

**Submitted To The Faculty Of Education  
In Partial Fulfilment Of The Requirements  
For The degree of Bachelor of Education (Honours)**

**Edith Cowan University**

**March 2000**

## USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

## Abstract

The narrative content of preschool children's drawing is the focus of this study. The purpose of this study was to raise educators, preschool teachers and parents awareness of the narrative content of preschool children's drawings and to alert them to how children of this age communicate through their drawings.

A school with an operational pre-primary class was selected from the Northern Metropolitan education district of Perth. Twelve pre-school children were selected on the basis of their participation in drawing activities. The researcher observed the children at work over a period of eight sessions.

A qualitative descriptive research method was used to gather information for the study. Data collection included the children's drawings, taped discussions with the children and the researcher's observations of the children at work. The researcher's observations and document analysis (e.g. teacher's programmes, timetables) were utilised to formulate a description of the classroom context. The presentation of data follows the five levels of representation suggested by Riessman (c1993) of (a) attending to the experience, (b) telling about the experience, (c) transcribing, (d) analysing and (e) reading the experience. The children's drawings were analysed using Duncum's (1992) Spontaneous Drawing Model in conjunction with the WA Ministry of Education's, (1990) elements of a narrative framework (K-7 English Language Syllabus). Labov's (1982) framework (cited in Riessman, 1993c) was employed to analyse the narrative structure of children's verbal accounts.

The findings of this study have provided a fuller understanding of the ways in which preschool children use their drawings to construct verbal narratives to communicate their thoughts and feelings. Among the twelve children studied, a variety of individual differences were identified. In spite of these differences, some recurring patterns and relationships became clear. The findings of this study highlight four main ways in which drawing and verbal accounts are related. The four broad categories are (a) narrative drawings that *are supported* by verbal narratives, (b) narrative drawings that *have no* verbal narrative, (c) separate object drawings that *have* a verbal narrative and (d) transformational drawings.

## **Declaration**

*I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:*

- i. incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;*
- ii. contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or*
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*Signature*

*Date* 29-5-2000

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# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Background**

As an early childhood practitioner, the researcher is concerned about the low educational status of the visual arts in the preschool setting. As Dyson (1990) suggested, educators should allow children many unencumbered opportunities to experience the arts by drawing, playing, writing, dancing and singing. Children should investigate their worlds through imaginative creations to express their ideas and feelings. According to Dyson (1990), preschool children do not need work-sheets but play corners, blank sheets of paper, crayons, markers, paints and other constructive material with which to invent their worlds.

Parents and other adults have normally been captivated by children's visual art work, but there are other non-aesthetic reasons for attending to their work. Developmental psychologists, educators and parents have studied children's visual art making and their drawings in particular, as a means of mapping children's cognitive and affective development and to not only learn what their interests are, but what they know and what they think.

Children's mark making and graphic symbol making appears to be a universal phenomenon. As an early childhood educator and mother, the researcher is inquisitive about "why children make art?" Hurwitz and Day (1995, p. 57) suggested that through extensive and careful observation of children and the application of useful psychological theory, it is possible to speculate about children's reasons for making art.

Children use their art to deal with many of life's concerns, joys, and trials. Research by Wilson and Wilson (1979a, p. 6), emphasised the narrative dimension of children's drawings. According to Wilson and Wilson (1979a) drawings are produced to tell a story, to relate an event, or to tell what some object was like:

We think that visual narratives are told as part of the process of making personal symbolic models of the world - actually not just *the world*, but *worlds* .... To understand himself or herself or his or her environment, the child makes drawings that serve as models for how things might be. Thus the drawings provide a means for constructing, testing, and prophesying what can be .... In their fantasy worlds, children are able to create all the characters, all the settings, all the rules. (p. 8).

## 1.2 The Significance of this Study

It is the narrative content of children's drawing that is the focus of this study. Gallas (1994, p. xiv) argued that "communication is not confined to spoken and written language. From early childhood children tell stories in dramatic play, in their drawings and paintings, in movement and song. Through these stories children make the world they inhabit sensible". Similarly, Wilson and Wilson (1979a, p. 8) stated that the nature of narrative drawing attracts attention and gives voice to young children's stories. However, non-verbal communication and the contribution of "graphic narrations" has not been regarded with favour because as Arnheim (1974, p. 2) argued "our entire educational system continues to be based on the study of words and numbers ... More and more the arts are considered as a training in agreeable skills, as entertainment and mental release." Lummis (1986, pp. 8-9) suggested that the reason many Western education systems are based on the study of numbers and words is due to "passive opposition to change", and "Pythagorean traditions" (where mathematics and science are frequently viewed as a superior epistemology). Therefore knowledge acquired through visual arts is commonly viewed as subjective and consequently questionable. Furthermore, Gallas (1994) suggested that a reason for this preoccupation with words is because adult communication relies on spoken and written language. Classrooms also model this orientation and direct children's narratives into a very restrained environment of expression.

Furthermore, it is unfortunate that teachers often use an adult model with its emphasis on production (art making) to teach art to children. In this model the art product (often a template activity yielding identical articles) is of more importance

than the process. Another detrimental outcome of the focus on product was identified by Duncum (1995, p. 33-34) who stated through these "dictated arts" children learn there is a clear right way and equally definite wrong way to produce works of art. These "rules governed" activities undermine children's confidence of their own observations, thoughts and creative abilities. Wilson and Wilson (1982), Herberholz and Hanson (1985) and Lowenfeld and Brittain (1987) all recommended that young children should be provided with a learning environment that promotes playfulness, flexible thinking strategies which extend the imagination. Such approaches would encourage spontaneous and free art activities (including drawing) where children can communicate in graphic form and tell their stories.

### **1.3 The Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this research is to increase educators', preschool teachers', and parents' awareness of the narrative content of preschool children's drawings and to alert them to how children communicate through their drawings. It is anticipated that by completing this study that the researcher will add to the limited body of research in this field that has been completed and published. It is anticipated that this research will attract and stimulate other educators to examine the use of children's drawing in classroom settings.

### **1.4 Research Question**

The proposition to be explored is that preschool children's drawings may contain graphic narrations which may also provide a basis for verbal narratives.

The research question to be addressed is:

What is the relationship between preschool children's drawings and their accounts of these drawings?

## 1.5 Definitions of Terms

The definitions that follow are presented to clarify the meanings of significant terms used throughout this thesis.

*Developmental Theories.* These are accounts of how children learn and develop as explained by such theorists as Piaget, Vygotsky, Bruner, and Erikson.

*Drawing.* According to Perry (1992, pp. 89-90), drawing may be regarded as both process and product. Further, Perry argued that drawing is an activity which produces a great variety of outcomes; it is making marks on a surface, with or without line, with or without colour, with or without black and white, with tools and selected surfaces or dispensing with them, with or without prior aim and purpose.

*Painting.* Painting has been identified as one of the "pictorial arts" (Cox, 1992, pp. 8-9) and as an activity which uses specific media (Hurwitz and Day, 1995, pp. 175-176). In this study the distinction between painting and drawing will be made on the basis of the medium used by the children.

*Spontaneous Drawing.* This term refers to drawings that have come from the child's own desire to create. Spontaneous drawings are not commissioned by a teacher, or other adult (Wilson and Wilson, 1982, p. xv).

*Narrative Drawing/Visual Narrative/ Graphic Narrations.* Gallas (1994) suggested that in recognising the importance of narrative functions, the definition of narrative must be expanded to include broader fields of communication and expression. Wilson and Wilson (1979a, p. 6) defined "narrative drawing" as a drawing that tells a story, relates to an event, or tells what some object is like. Luquet (1924/1985, p. 47) believed that a narrative drawing must represent dynamic, temporal scenes that have the intention of representing an action, of telling a story. For the purpose of this study the definition proposed by Wilson and Wilson (1979a) defines narrative drawing.



1.6 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework (Figure 1) was developed by identifying the influences believed to impact on children’s drawing in the Pre-primary classroom. The framework also establishes the links between all aspects of the study. When using a qualitative descriptive method, it is critical to locate the research within a set scene, time, plot and to acknowledge the relationship between the child, the classroom context and the social context.

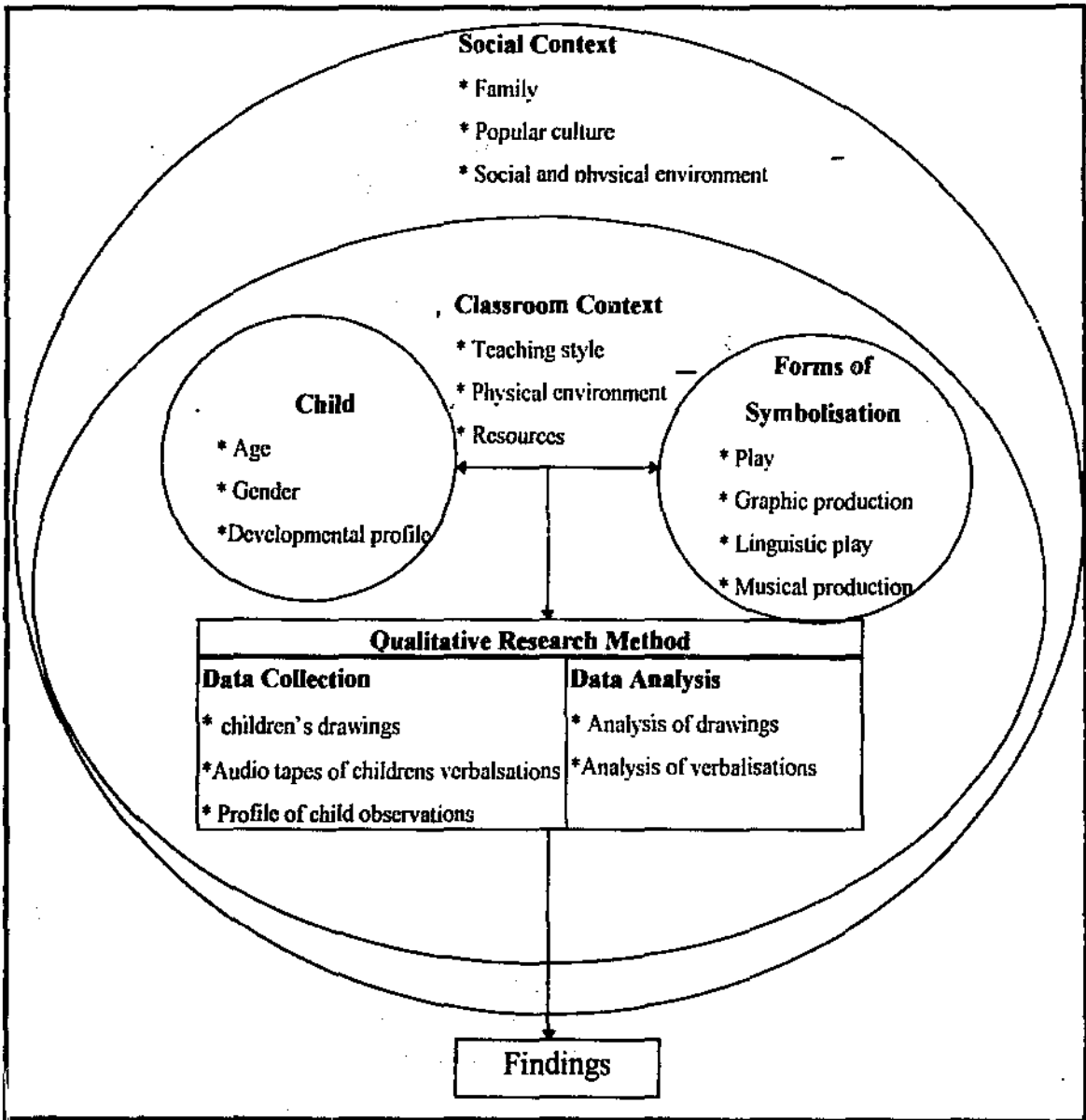


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

## **Chapter 2**

### **Review of Literature**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter the literature on three areas will be outlined. A review of the general literature on children's drawings will be followed by a brief account of the previous studies in this field and research methods. In covering the general literature relating to children's drawings.

#### **2.2 General Literature**

The following topics are considered (a) symbolic representation, (b) graphic narrations, (c) spontaneous drawing and (d) gender differences in children's drawings. The literature on children's drawings reveals a continuing interest from psychologists, and educators in the nineteenth century to present time.

##### ***2.2.1 Symbolic representation***

Between the ages of two and five years children in Western society are devoted to developing and using symbols to depict meaning (Gardner, 1980). For young children, meaning is often attained through play. Young children use their imaginations to act out personal experiences, explore, experiment and manipulate objects and construct a framework of the world in which they live and establish their place in it. The learning process at this period of a child's development involves representational thought, where one object or action can stand for another or represent another (Wright, 1995, p. 39).

There are at least four ways suggested by Wright (1994, pp. 186-221) in which children can express ideas or attitudes through the use of symbols (a) graphic production, [i.e. drawing, painting and clay construction], (b) linguistic play-often involving self talk and talk to real and imagined objects, (c) musical production and (d) dance and gesture. Wright (1991, pp. 141-164) also advised that these symbols

may not be applied according to adult “rules”.

According to Wright (1993, p. 23) graphic symbolisation of objects or scenes can communicate meaning in at least two ways. First the content can be related literally through the use of familiar images (i.e. a picnic scene that includes a sunny landscape, a picnic basket and people sitting in the sun). Alternatively, the message may be conveyed through expressive means, where the viewer of the art work gains a subjective impression through the artists expressive use of colour, shape, style and composition. The expressive qualities of the art works may reveal psychological moods (such as joy or depression), or sensory qualities (such as rumbling thunder).

In addition to young children using symbols to express their own ideas and attitudes it is essential that they also learn to decipher the symbols of others, particularly those used by adults. Wright (1995, p. 40) suggested that children not only learn to read words but children also learn to read symbolic messages found in pictures and on television. Through this exposure to aesthetic and socially relevant images young children learn new symbols that they can incorporate into their visual art and other symbolic forms of expression. Wright (1995) argued that “regardless of ability, most Western children in their early school years have an interest in the arts as a medium for communication and, hence, aim to create clear, symbolic images” (p. 40).

The internationally recognised daycare centre Reggio Emilia (near Milan, Italy) offers an exemplar of how art may be used as a medium for communication. There is an exhibition of children’s art work from the school called “The 100 Languages of Children” touring the United States (Schiller, 1995) which illustrates the success of the Reggio Emilia program.

Embedded in the Reggio Emilia philosophy is the notion that children’s interactions and relationships with other children and adults are a vital component of their learning. There is great emphasis placed on children’s symbolic drawing and art making to represent their language and to implant concepts more firmly (Schiller, 1995, pp. 45-46). The relationship between language development and drawing has

also been explored by Katz (1983). Katz (1993, p.27) argued that children may use drawing and other art making as “graphic language”, instead of writing:

The visual arts are integrated into work simply as additional ‘languages’ available to young children not yet very competent in conventional writing and reading; the arts are not taught as a subject, a discipline, as a discrete set of skills, or treated in other ways as a focus of instruction for its own sake.

### ***2.2.2 Graphic narrations***

Preschool children relate and explore events in their lives that are emotionally important to them. Wolf and Smith (1982, pp. 114-115) suggested that within the boundary of psychoanalytic theory, drawing is considered a process by which children come to terms with their social emotional life (i.e. relationships with parents, crises of the past few weeks, goals and fears). Children frequently integrate the worlds of fantasy, imagination and reality in their artistic creations. Sometimes children’s understandings of how parts of the “real” world function can be seen as they draw family members engaged in activities.

Whenever children produce two (or more) symbols related in thought within the same composition, they have demonstrated an advance in visual communication because they have realised that a relationship of objects and events exists in the world. It has been well documented in research (Luquet, 1924/1985, Wilson and Wilson, 1979a, Kellman, 1995), that children may draw graphic scenes that portray the same features as a written composition. For example, some children concentrate on the setting, others on creating characters, others sketch hundreds of episodes void of settings. When a drawing is finished all its elements are simultaneously visible. For example, in a drawing titled “shopping with mum”, the child may see themselves driving in the car; making purchases; unpacking at home. Here we have as it were, three paragraphs in a story with all the items placed on one drawing surface.

The link between narrative and visual expression begins early. As children develop individual graphic symbol systems, visual art production becomes a personal language for many of them. Kellman (1995, p. 18) commented that narratives may yield information about the child's experiences; "By examining the drawings of children and listening to what they have to say, it is possible to see the importance of narrative in their art making and to see the roles stories play in children's various engagements with experience." However, as Luquet (1924/1985) stated, the connection between narrative and visual expression may be difficult to discern. Adults need to encourage children to describe more than the objects mentioned in the title of the picture. In addition to this Freeman (1980) stated that "any analysis of children's drawing cannot ignore the effects which result from the drawing process itself" (p. 16). Such factors as the order in which objects are drawn, their placement on the page, relational coding (simultaneous comparison between two elements), and performance biases may all have some influence on the final product. It is pointed out by Freeman that children are not simply creatures expressing their essence through drawing, they are also novices who are learning how to draw.

### ***2.2.3 Spontaneous drawing***

As well as discussing graphic narration it is also important to acknowledge and discuss the different circumstances that encourage children to draw. Lark-Horovitz, Lewis and Luca (1973) classified children's drawings into four distinct categories (a) "spontaneous drawings" made on their own initiative as a play activity or in pursuit of individual interest, (b) "free or voluntary drawings", made on request but with the children choosing their own subjects, (c) "directed pictures" for which the topic is proposed and (d) "copied pictures" or to be completed drawings. Lark-Horovitz et al (1973) suggested that of these four types, spontaneous and free drawings are the most significant for understanding children's interest in drawing. Dyson (1990) supports this position and suggested that it is important to allow children the interactive space to pursue their own agendas. Dyson (1990, p. 56) stated that "the transforming and elaborating upon experience through symbol making is one of children's major ways of learning about their world and about each other as well."

Duncum (1992) proposed a model for the analysis of children's spontaneous drawing to develop a fuller understanding of the subject matter of children's drawing. He hypothesised that what children drew may be a reflection of why they drew. Duncum's model of spontaneous drawing types consisted of three elements. The first element, "narrative - separate object drawing", may have a story created around a drawing or there may be a drawn object without a narrative dimension. The second element, "factual - fictional drawing", may be based on real events or invented by the child. The third element, "self generated - borrowed drawings", may be generated independently or borrowed or copied from another source. Duncum's (1992) model argued that in their spontaneous or unsolicited drawings children act more like artists by creating views of their worlds which have meaning for them.

#### ***2.2.4 Gender differences in children's drawing***

According to Speck (1995), gender differences in children's drawings has been a recurring theme in research findings. Wilson and Wilson (1982) noted that boys' drawings contained an abundance of violence, villainy and vehicles, whereas girls' drawings were full of benign animals, bugs and blooms. Speck (1995) stated that many researchers of children's drawings have noted similar characteristics to those identified by Wilson and Wilson concerning the content of boys' and girls' drawings. Speck (1995) argued that "art, even of young children, is not neutral in regard to gendered visual communication" (p. 42).

Gender differences were not only noticed in terms of content but also in terms of the drawing approach. Wolf, Gardener and Smith (cited in Speck, 1995) reported that drawings produced by three year old boys were more active and showed a collision of forms in dramatic and heavy lined arrangements, while girls' drawings were less complex in form and used softer lines.

Researchers including McNiff (1982), Ecker ((1985), Feinburg (1977) and Reeves and Boyette (cited in Speck, 1995) have examined the differences in what boys and girls draw. McNiff (1982) suggested that the differences in subject matter were a reflection of innate, essentially different orientations to the world. From an

equal opportunity perspective Feinberg (1977) suggested that the path to gender equality requires a change in behaviour of boys and girls. Reeves and Boyette (1983) suggested that the environment, including parenting style, teaching, language, school, toys and dress were possible causes of the differences (cited in Speck, 1995).

Speck (1995) stated that there are gender differences in what children draw. However, there seems no innate reason to believe that there ought to be such frank, stereotypical differences. Achieving successful masculinity and femininity is central to the children's sense of who they are and visual representations of self and others are a part of this larger process of social positioning.

### **2.3 Literature on Previous Findings**

There is limited current research done on the topic of children's narrative drawing. Research by Luquet (1924/1985), Wilson and Wilson (1978), a four part series by Wilson and Wilson (1979a; 1979b; 1979c) and Wilson and Olson (1979), Wolf and Smith (1982), Clark (1994), Kellman (1996) and Mallan (1998) provide a foundation for the study.

Luquet's (1924/1985) paper titled *Children's graphic narrations* was first published in French as "La Narration Graghique L'Enfant." The first published transcript in English appeared in 1985. Luquet's paper provided the basis for subsequent research on children's drawing. Luquet (1924/1985) defined graphic narration as a drawing that represents dynamic, temporal scenes. Graphic narration represents a scene with lines, shapes and colours just as narration represents it with words (either written or spoken). One drawing is completed and all its elements are simultaneously visible. Luquet (1924/1985) justified the use of an experimental research method by stating that the best means of assuring that the drawer had the intention of representing an action, of telling a story is to rely on drawings that have been requested as representations of stories.

Luquet outlined why he chose an experimental research method, however he did not discuss how he collected his data, the procedure he followed, or how he

analysed the data. Luquet (1924/1985) identified four basic kinds of narrative drawing used by children (a) symbolic, (b) epinal or comic strip, (c) repetition and (d) juxtaposition or successive. He described and discussed the normal appearance and disappearances of features of children's drawings according to chronological age. Throughout his article Luquet discussed difficulties in categorising drawings and he emphasised that it is often only by referring to the drawer that an identification can be made. He also demonstrated that for children, drawings are often merely an outward manifestation of a rich world of fantasy.

Research by Wilson and Wilson (1978) titled *Cultural recycling*, used a quantitative research method to compare the narrative drawings of American and Egyptian children in the first, third and sixth grades. Wilson and Wilson examined the relationships between innate and cultural factors in children's drawings. The procedure they followed consisted of giving children a sheet of paper on which a series of frames had been printed. Each child was asked to tell a story through the pictures they drew. Hundreds of pictures were collected from an urban - suburban community in the north western United States. The Egyptian drawings came from a middle class area of Cairo. The children corresponded in school grade to the American children. An analysis made use of eighteen categories, to determine the kinds of meaning children incorporated in their drawings. Wilson and Wilson concluded that at a very early age children's drawings are influenced by their culture.

Wilson and Wilson (1979a, 1979b, 1979c) and Wilson and Olson (1979) published a four part series of papers on children's narrative drawing. The first paper discussed how children tell stories through their spontaneous drawings. In this article Wilson and Wilson's (1979a, p. 6) stated that they thought "virtually all of the spontaneous drawings of young people have a narrative dimension." The authors cited Piaget, to provide a theoretical basis for why children create visual narratives. Through the analysis of the spontaneous drawings completed by children ranging from seven to sixteen, Wilson and Wilson (1979a) concluded that children's narratives often exist in separate elements.



Wilson and Wilson's (1979b) second paper illustrated the themes of story drawings used by children to develop ideas about reality. They designed this study to see the whole and not parts of stories that they believed remained in the children's heads. To achieve this, Wilson and Wilson encouraged children to draw stories on paper divided into frames and made a request for the child to draw a story. Wilson and Wilson (1979b) defended their data collection procedure by suggesting that in their first study it was found that children often only drew fragments of their stories. The researchers' analysis of children's graphic narrations found about twenty different themes, ranging from space to mountain climbing; trials of strength, contests, conflicts between individuals and groups engaging in battle, fights; sports, survival, love, death, to growth and daily routines.

Wilson and Wilson's (1979c) third paper showed the graphic vocabularies and grammar needed to draw visual stories and how they might be developed by the teacher in the visual art classroom. Wilson and Wilson (1979c) suggested that drawing is like speaking and has vocabulary and grammar. Drawing an object is similar to speaking a word and the rules for depicting objects in space are like the grammatical rules for placing words in a sentence.

Wilson and Olson's (1979d) fourth paper described a visual narrative program that was piloted during 1978-79 in the Baker School of the Brookline Massachusetts Public Schools District. The program required that all visual art class activities for the year were based on either visual story telling or upon developing graphic vocabulary or grammatical skills. Visual art was also integrated across the curriculum and as Wilson and Olson (1979) stated, visual art was now taught where it belonged, along side written words and numbers. It was suggested by the authors that through integration, the visual narratives became the focus of the classroom and all the curriculum areas reinforced each other. This approach also permitted more time to be allocated to the development of children's visual story telling, graphic vocabulary and grammatical skills.

Wolf and Smith (1982) conducted research into the early symbolic products of children with an aim of investigating each symbolic medium separately and to

integrate the cognitive and affective approaches of developmental psychology. The four symbolic media under investigation were (a) language (story telling), (b) symbolic play (acting out scenes with geometric blocks), (c) two dimensional depiction (drawing with markers) and (d) three dimensional (modeling with play-dough).

A pilot study using a mixture of qualitative and quantitative paradigms was used to investigate each symbolic medium. Twelve children ranging from two and a half to five were randomly selected for the study. The participants were observed over several months as they engaged in daily preschool activities and as they played spontaneously with various symbolic media. Each child was also seen in a series of approximately four sessions within a month in a more controlled environment. A researcher probed each child's approach and recorded their responses to a number of experimental demands. Each child was asked to work with the four separate symbolic media under investigation (a) language, (b) symbolic play, (c) two dimensional depiction, and (d) three dimensional depiction. Then within each of these four media, the child had to perform four tasks: produce a work or symbolic product spontaneously, complete a work which had been left incomplete by the researcher, assemble a work from several parts supplied by the researcher, and copy or reproduce a work or performance exhibited by the researcher.

Through analysis, Wolf and Smith (1982) discovered that there were great individual differences among the twelve children studied. They classified the children into various groups (a) some were verbalisers (or dramatists), while others were visualisers (or patterners); (b) some children were classified as self-starters, while others were classified as completers; and (c) some children were person-centred, while others were object-centred. Wolf and Smith (1982) also proposed that there were differences in the narrative strategies employed by boys and girls.

Clark (1994) conducted a study of children's spontaneous drawing. The main purpose of this study was to determine within the context of the classroom, what children drew, when given a free choice of subject. Clark also investigated the social influences that are believed to affect children's drawing and whether gender was a

significant factor in the production of different drawing types.

Clark used a sample of twenty-six, year three students, from a North Metropolitan State Primary School. The researcher used a mixture of both qualitative and quantitative paradigms. The children were given thirty minutes to complete a drawing of their own choice, followed by a short, semi-structured interview. The drawings were analysed in conjunction with the interview transcripts to discover what subject matter children chose and what influenced their drawing. A scale constructed from Duncum's (1982) grid was used to rate drawings and non-parametric procedures were conducted to determine any significant differences between drawing types produced by girls and boys.

The results indicated that the subject matter most popular with children studied was games (a category of drawings based on the computer game format). The major influence identified by children was the family, a factor not covered in detail in the literature on children's drawing. Other influences identified were personal experiences, peer influences, popular culture and school experiences. Non-parametric tests were conducted in an attempt to discover any significance between boys and girls on the Narrative-Separate Object, Factual-Fictional, Borrowed-Self-generated dimensions of Duncum's (1992) model of spontaneous drawing types. There was a significant difference ( $p=0.0063$ ) in the narrative dimension, with boys producing more narrative drawings than girls; a finding that contradicts assertions by other researchers. Further research is necessary in the areas of influence of popular culture on children's drawings and the narrative dimensions of boy's drawings. A larger sample of children may reveal the trends identified in this study more clearly (Clark, 1994).

Kellman's (1995) research used a narrative method to describe the importance of narratives in children's lives. The author cited Bruner and Coles who posited that the function of narrative as a method of thinking, of sharing experiences and assigning meaning, is as important to the lives of children as it is to adults. Kellman suggested that by examining children's drawings and listening to what they have to say, it is possible to see the importance of narrative in their visual art making and to

see the many roles that stories play in children's various engagements with experience. Kellman stated that she examined the stories children told about their visual art and categorised them according to three criteria (a) invention, (b) communication, and (c) problem solving method. However, Kellman did not discuss her method of data collection or the procedure used to analyse the stories the children told about their art. Therefore, it could be assumed that Kellman used these stories to substantiate her own theory. Kellman stated that through these categories it was possible to account for the importance of narratives in children's lives.

In conclusion, Kellman (1995) suggested that children have a particular world to imagine, state, investigate and to make real through their visual images. As Bruner (cited in Kellman 1995, p. 22) stated, "art provides a place where negotiation between people can take place, where new meaning in relations becomes possible."

In a study with a similar focus, Mallan (1998, p. 16) examined the narrative nature of children's play by investigating the interrelated elements of story, imagination, language and visual expression. Mallan discussed the importance of storytelling in children's lives and cited Paley (1990, p. 10) who stated that play and storytelling provided a "universal learning medium for young children." Mallan (1998, p. 16) asserted that the context shaped and constrained the conditions of play and story making. Mallan drew on research by Fox (1993) to substantiate this view. In her research Mallan used qualitative research method to examine one child's spontaneous story told during voluntary play to illustrate her theory. Mallan did not explain her method of data collection, but she did provide a full transcript of the child's narration and copies of two of the drawings completed after the initial story telling. Mallan (1998, p. 20) concluded that her research emphasised the importance of storytelling in children's lives, "when children engage in storytelling as part of their imaginative play they weave a pattern of images into a narrative discourse which often employs inventive forms of language." Mallan suggested that there needs to be more time allocated for children's oral storytelling and more children should be encouraged, to share their stories. Mallan was primarily interested in the oral stories told by the child rather than the relationship between the drawings and verbal narratives. However, as Mallan (1998) found, by examining young children use oral

stories you can uncover knowledge about the child's world, their ability to assemble the elements of stories previously experienced, as well as their understanding of narrative conventions and structures.

## **2.4 Literature on Research Methods**

For the purpose of this study the researcher followed a qualitative descriptive research method where analysis is presented in narrative rather than numerical form. The selected research method accommodated the requirement that attention be given to the social context in which the events occur. Alternative qualitative research methods considered for the study included ethnography and grounded theory. However, according to Burns (1994) ethnographic methods are better suited to longitudinal studies that are culturally bound and therefore such methods were not suitable for this study. Hutchinson (1988) suggested that grounded theory is a useful approach to research in education because it focuses on theory generation instead of verification. Although this study uses literature as a basis for its design and focus, no new theories are generated or existing theories verified.

Prior to applying a qualitative descriptive research method it is important to (a) define qualitative descriptive methods of research, (b) discuss methodological issues, and (c) consider some of the potential difficulties embedded in such an approach.

### ***2.4.1 Qualitative research***

Qualitative research differs from traditional quantitative research in a variety of ways. Erickson (1985, pp. 119-161) used the term "interpretive" to refer to the whole family of approaches to participant observational research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) referred to this type of research as "naturalistic inquiry". Marshall and Rossman (1989) suggested that qualitative research offered opportunities for conducting exploratory and descriptive research that assumes the value of context and setting and searches for a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences. All of these positions affirm the necessity for the researcher to have first hand experience

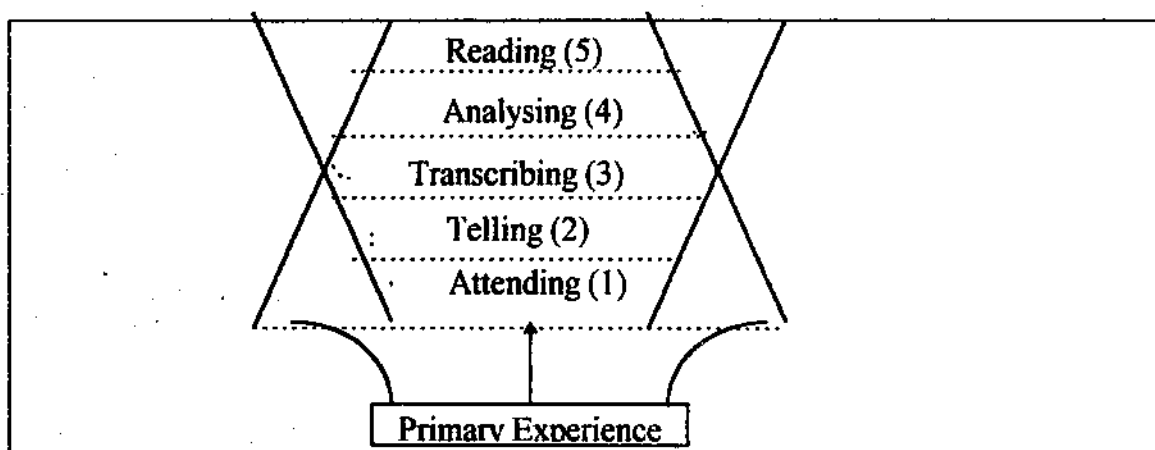
of the context in order to develop a fuller understanding of the participants actions and the context.

Six assumptions of qualitative research are suggested by Merriam (cited in Best and Kahn, 1998, p. 240). Qualitative research is characterised by a number of features (a) it is descriptive, (b) involves field work, (c) is concerned primarily with process rather than products, (d) is inductive in that researchers' build concepts, theory and hypotheses from details; (e) the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis and (f) the researcher is primarily interested in meaning - how people make sense of their lives, experiences, and their structures of the world.

#### ***2.4.2 Methodological issues***

Qualitative research should occur within a caring relationship among researchers and participants. Riessman (c 1993) suggested that researchers must provide a facilitating context, ask open-ended questions, allow respondents to construct answers and have some control over the conduct of the research.

Riessman (c1993) suggested that the research process consists of five levels or kinds of representation, which have porous boundaries between them. These levels of representation are (a) attending to experience [level one], (b) telling about experience [level two], (c) transcribing [level three], (d) analysing [level four], and (e) reading [level five]. These levels are represented diagrammatically in Figure 2.



***Figure 2: Levels of Representation in the Research Process***

In the first level of representation (*attending the experience*) the researcher reflects, remembers and recollects experiences in the form of written observations. Here, choice determines what is noticed because the researcher actively constructs reality in new ways at this first level.

The second level of representation (*telling about the experience*) is self representational and gives a descriptive account. Settings, characters, and plot are combined to create a story that makes the interpretation of events clear. In telling there is a gap between the experience as lived, and any communication about it.

In the third level of representation (*transcribing*) it was suggested by Riessman (c 1993) that it was best to begin a first draft of the entire interview that gets the words and other features on paper (i.e. laughing, crying, long pauses). Following this, selected portions should be retranscribed for detailed analysis. Once the boundaries of a narrative segment are chosen, retranscribing the narrative into numbered lines is useful. Riessman (c1993) used Labov's framework to reveal how simple narrative is organised, an essential first step to interpretation. According to Labov's framework, well-formed stories, are made from a common set of elements and every clause has a function. These functions are to provide (a) an abstract for what follows, (b) orient the listener, (c) carry the complicating action, (d) evaluate its meaning, and (e) resolve the action.

The fourth level of representation (*analysis*) cannot be easily distinguished from transcription as described above. As Mishler (cited in Riessman, c1993) noted, how researchers arrange and rearrange the interview text in the light of their discoveries is a process of testing, clarifying and deepening their understanding of what is happening in the discourse. Close and repeated listenings, coupled with methodic transcribing, often leads to insights that in turn shape how researchers choose to represent an interview in the text.

In the fifth level of representation (*reading*) it is necessary that early drafts are read by colleagues and the participants since they may or may not recognise their experience in it, or approve of how they are portrayed. Translations of the original

narrative about an experience and subsequent analytical work will be read by others who will bring their own meaning to the story.

### ***2.4.3 Problems associated with qualitative research***

There are certain problems associated with the conduct of qualitative research. The two most obvious difficulties concern the issues of validity and generalisability. Validity is a critical issue in research because what is fact for a qualitative researcher may be fiction for a natural scientist. All research can therefore be seen as either fiction or fact or a mixture of both (Eisner, cited in Packwood and Sikes, 1996).

Qualitative methods of research however, may be validated through triangulation. Burns (1994) stated that this method is commonly used to improve internal validity. Triangulation may be defined as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspects of human behaviour. In educational research, there is also justification for the use of at least three different view points in analysis. Each point of the triangle stands in a unique position with respect to access to relevant data about a teaching and learning situation.

In the case of narrative studies validation of findings becomes even more of a problem because it is impossible to make use of a fixed set of fixed rules or standardised procedures. There is no authorised approach in interpretive work, no recipes or formulas with different procedures being better suited to some research problems than to others.

Best and Kahn (1998) suggested that in carrying out qualitative research due to “context sensitivity” (e.g. the social, historical and temporal context in which the data was collected), data cannot be generalised to other social, spatial or temporal contexts. Wolcott (1985, pp. 196-197) suggested that even the best qualitative research portrays only part of the total way of life they profess to describe. In spite of this problem Carter (1990), argued that it is possible to construct patterns with respect to certain themes. Patterns or generalisations of this nature are not laws to which someone must conform, but explanatory proposals with which researchers can make



## **Chapter 3**

### **Method of Investigation**

#### **3.1 Overview of Chapter**

In this chapter a brief description is provided of how the sample was determined and the procedures which were followed for the data collection and data analysis processes. Further consideration is given to attempt to ensure that the findings are reliable and valid. Finally, ethical issues and limitations of the research are considered.

#### **3.2 Sample**

For the purpose of this research it was essential to locate a school with an operational pre-primary class. The school which was used for the study was located in Perth's Northern Metropolitan school district. The pre-school children were selected on the basis of their voluntary participation in drawing activities. In many ways, the students were self-selecting because of their willingness to produce drawings which were not requested by the classroom teacher or the researcher. The researcher observed the children at work over a period of eight sessions.

#### **3.3 Design**

A qualitative descriptive research method was used to gather information for analysis in search of an answer to the research question. Riessman's (c1993) model of representation was followed in analysis of data stage because it allowed the researcher to attend to the story of each individual and permit their voices to be heard.

#### **3.4 Instruments, Material and Equipment**

The teacher had a writing/drawing station already set up in the classroom. The station consisted of three tables joined together, with a notice board acting as a

divider. Pictures cards and word cues were displayed on this board. Before the commencement of the first drawing session, blank A4 paper and drawing implements including crayons, textas and coloured pencils were provided. An audio tape recorder was also used to record the children's commentary about their drawings.

### **3.5 Procedure**

In this section not only are the strategies used to collect and analyse data explained, information is provided about the context for the research.

#### **3.5.1 Data collection**

The researcher spent eight sessions, (two days a week for four weeks) in the classroom as an assistant helper to gain the children's confidence, acquire a feeling for the running operations of the classroom and observe the children within their own classroom environments. Data collection included the children's drawings, taped discussions with the children and observations of the children at work. First of all, it was important to establish the context for the research. Observations and document analysis were utilised to formulate a description of the classroom context. An existing work-station (setup by the classroom teacher), was utilised for the collection of the data. All worksheets (e.g. dot to dots and colouring in) were removed from the work-station and blank A4 paper, crayons, pencils and textas (and tape recorder) were added prior to the commencement of the first session.

The children were able to choose the activity during the morning activity time. The researcher observed the children as they drew and these observations included (a) sequences in drawing, (b) the child's verbalisations, (c) choice and changes in implements, and (d) the child's attention span. A tape recorder was used to record any verbalisation the child made while completing their drawings. The researcher talked to each child about their drawings. The work-station remained set up for the duration of the data collection process.

### 3.5.2 Data analysis

Data analyses and reflections are presented within a qualitative descriptive framework to allow for a comprehensive description and telling of the social context of the classroom. Representation in this research followed the five levels suggested by Riessman (c1993); attending to the experience, telling, transcribing, analysing and reading the experience.

Duncum's (1992) model of spontaneous drawing types (Figure 3) was used in conjunction with the Ministry of Education's (1990, p. 62) elements of a narrative model to analyse the children's drawings.

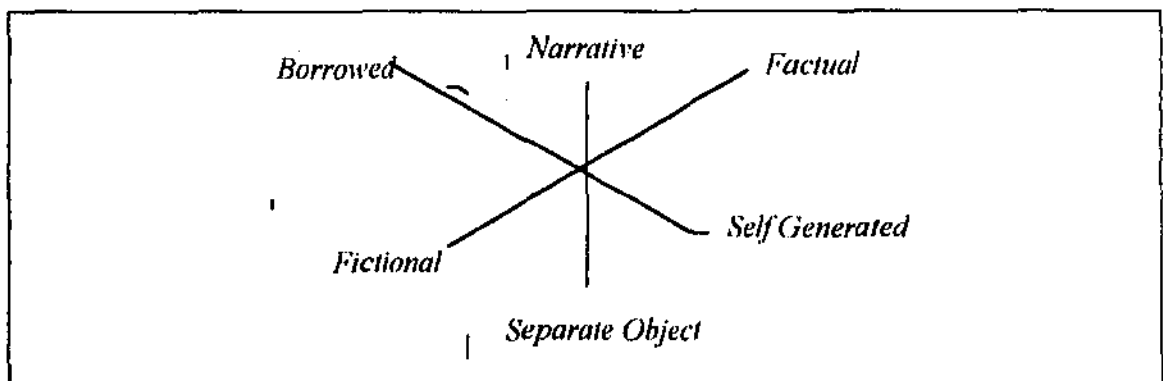


Figure 3: Duncum's Model of Spontaneous Drawing Types

Analysis of the children's drawings initially employed Duncum's (1992) model of spontaneous drawing types which established three elements. The first element, "narrative - separate object drawings", can have a story created around them or can be an object with no narration. The second element, "factual - fictional drawings", may be based on real events or events invented by the child. The third element, "self generated-borrowed drawings", may be generated independently or borrowed or copied from another source.

Duncum's (1992) model of spontaneous drawing types distinguished between narrative drawing and separate object drawing. However, for a more in-depth analysis it was essential to identify the different components of a narrative. The Ministry of

Education (1990, p. 62) elements of a narrative model suggested that preschool children should be developing an understanding that a narrative has (a) a beginning, (b) a setting, (c) characters, (d) events, (e) an ending.

The children's verbal responses discussions were analysed according to Labov's (1982) framework. First, the children's responses had to be transcribed into a first draft that included all the words and other features on paper (see chapter five for copies of these transcripts). Following this, the discussions were re-transcribed (into numbered lines) according to Labov's (1982) framework (cited in Riessman, c1993). It is important to establish that the Ministry of Education's (1990) elements of a narrative model corresponds to Labov's Framework because both involve (a) an abstract [beginning], (b) an orientation [characters, setting], (c) a complicating action [events] and (d) an evaluation and resolution [ending].

The findings from analysing the children's drawings and dialogues were categorised and summarised and the data was divided into broad categories and subsequent sub- categories (see chapter six for results).

### **3.6 Reliability and Validity**

Reliability was attempted by writing a full description of events. Validity was attempted through triangulation of the researcher's observations, interviews and analysis of the children's drawings. Discussions with the classroom teacher and the provision of further anecdotal information also assisted in maintaining the validity of the research findings.

### **3.7 Ethics**

Information about and an explanation of my study was provided both orally and in written form for the School Principal, classroom teacher and the children's parents or guardians. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Confidentiality and anonymity of participants and the school was guaranteed by the researcher at all times.

The names of participants, or any information that may identify teachers, school or children was not used. All data and inferences were openly discussed with the classroom teacher. A summary of the findings are to be furnished to the school Principal, the class teachers, and parents.

### **3.8 Limitations**

It is acknowledged that there are a number of limitations connected with this study. The research is situated within a time and place and is concerned with the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories. The findings of this research cannot be generalised to other contexts or situations.

A further limitation relates to data collection. Interviewing young children can be difficult. At times it was difficult to be exclusively an observer, because the children wanted to report important information and at other times the researcher initiated interactions, usually for classroom management purposes. Every effort was made to limit the effect of the researcher being seen as a stranger, (and the children who participated in the study appeared comfortable in the presence of the researcher) however, it would be unrealistic to suggest that the children responded to the researcher in precisely the same manner they did with their class teacher.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

In this chapter information about the methods of investigation have been outlined. Some of the information has of necessity been brief because in the next chapter the data which were collected are contextualised within the day-to-day running of the classroom and the circumstances surrounding the production of the children's drawings.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Presentation of Data**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

In this chapter the data collected during the study are presented to describe the experience and communicate the essence of what the data reveal. The data includes the children's drawings, taped discussions about their drawings and the researcher's observations of the children at work. Observations and document analysis have been utilised to formulate a description of the classroom context. The presentation of data follows the five levels of representation suggested by Riessman (c1993) which are (a) attending to the experience, (b) telling about the experience, (c) transcribing, (d) analysing and (e) reading the experience. Analysis of the data and "reading" of the data will be presented in the next chapter.

Small black and white illustrations of the children's drawings and copies of their discussions have been included to help illustrate the data. Colour copies of all the drawings and discourse analysis are provided in Appendix B.

#### **4.1 Setting the Scene**

The entrance to the purpose built Pre-Primary School (adjacent to the primary school) was difficult to locate in the bustling morning traffic. A 1.8 metre high wire fence separated the Pre-Primary centre from the neighbouring Primary School. The Pre-Primary School had two operational classes, each with its own teaching area. The classes shared a kitchen and a communal room that was set up as a library. Although the two classes ran autonomously, the teachers planned around common themes and collaborated on preparation tasks.

For the duration of the study the researcher was welcomed by the classroom teacher and assistant in a warm and friendly manner. The parents who were introduced to the researcher seemed interested and supportive. The children were very

keen to show the researcher around and invited her to observe and often to participate in their activities.

The simple and open layout of the classroom, with its colourful displays, created a friendly and warm atmosphere in which to work. The classroom had clearly defined working areas including (a) a home corner, organised as a post office, (b) a writing table equipped with various writing implements and worksheets, (c) a block corner, (d) easel painting, (e) computer, (f) collage table, (g) jigsaws, (f) playdough, and (g) a mat area. Well-presented pieces of children's work were displayed and most of the work consisted of individual designs. Template activities were rarely used in the classroom and environmental print in the form of charts and posters were displayed.

Twenty-five children were enrolled in the class, fifteen boys and ten girls. The children ranged in age from four years and nine months to five years and eight months. The Pre-Primary School was running a full-time programme. The children attended four full days (Monday to Thursday) from 8.45 am-3.00 pm. The children had to be "dropped off" and "collected" by a parent or guardian unless other arrangements were made with the classroom teacher.

The teacher planned integrated, thematic programmes and in the week prior to the researcher's visit the theme was "Book Week." For the duration of the study the theme "people who work in our community" was under way and the occupations under investigation included (a) the post office, (b) Firefighters, and (c) people who work at the school. Fathers Day also fell within this time period.

The classroom teacher was operating a fairly formal and structured programme with a strong emphasis on language development. A pre-reading programme called "Letter Land" was being implemented in the classroom.

The children were involved in whole group and small group activities throughout the day. During the activities session there were structured, teacher-initiated activities and free choice, child-initiated activities. The overall impression,

however, was that there was a distinctive emphasis placed on the teacher-initiated activities. During the week all the children took part in a music lesson given by a specialist teacher.

A daily timetable was displayed on the parents' notice board and is reproduced in Figure 4.

8.45 - 8.50	Greetings
8.50 - 9.10	Mat Session
9.10 - 10.10	Activities
10.10 - 10.20	Games
10.20 - 10.30	Fruit
10.30 - 11.30	Outdoors
11.30 - 12.00	Music
12.00 - 12.40	Lunch
12.40 - 1.00	Story
1.00 - 1.20	Puzzles
1.20 - 2.00	Table Activities
2.00 - 2.10	News
2.10 - 2.20	Fruit
2.20 - 2.45	Outdoors
2.45 - 3.00	Packaway/ Home

*Figure 4: Daily Timetable*

For the duration of the study, the researcher's status in the classroom altered from that of an outside observer to a member of the class community. Children who were initially hesitant to approach the researcher began to actively seek more time at the drawing table where the researcher stationed herself. At first, the researcher tried to keep out of the children's play and observe from a distance. However, after a short time the children were inviting the researcher to engage in their play and participate in their discussions.

The morning timetable was structured and followed a routine beginning with the opening of the classroom at 8.45 am. Parents were encouraged to bring their child into the classroom and help settle them before saying their goodbyes. At 8.50 the



children were called over to the mat area and following the formal greetings, the children discussed the day's weather and established who the "daily helpers" were. The short mat session was followed by a description of the morning activities. The teacher usually planned two or three structured, teacher-initiated activities which she supervised with help from the assistant. The children were also able to choose from a variety of unstructured, child-initiated activities. The teacher selected the children who would start at each of the structured activities. During the morning other children were directed to the structured activities. The overall impression gained from these early visits to the Pre-primary centre was one of a friendly and supportive atmosphere that was well organised where the programme was well adapted to the needs of the children.

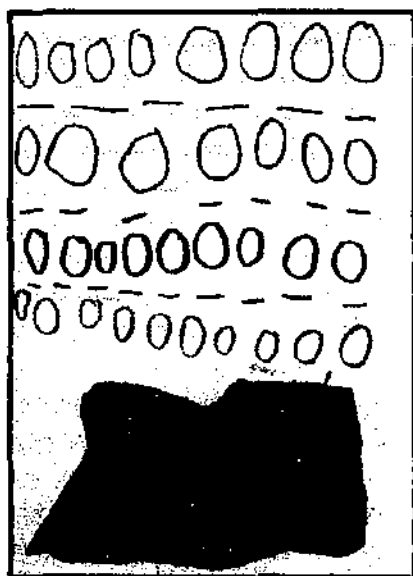
#### **4.2 Visit One**

There was a short mat session making patterns with coloured shapes. The children sat in a circle. Children were invited to complete set patterns (i.e. red square, yellow square, red square). The structured activities for the day were (a) writing a letter to be posted home, and (b) drawing a picture to illustrate a story "What I want to be when I grow up". At the completion of the mat session eight children were selected to take part in the two structured activities. During this session five boys were engaged in building in the "block corner", one boy was painting. Other children were very busy working in the post office, writing labels, wrapping parcels and weighing and posting. The common room was set up as the library and a few children were sitting in bean bags reading and looking through picture books.

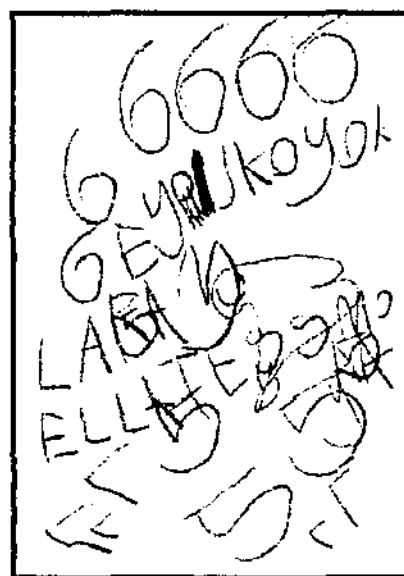
The drawing table consisted of three desks and six chairs positioned at the far end of the classroom. The table faced a window overlooking the outside play area. A partition was placed in front of the tables so that the children could only access the table from the sides. Textas, crayons and coloured pencils were available in containers in the middle of the desk and the table top and the back of the partition were covered with environmental print (including a copy of the alphabet). Drawing was a free choice activity for the children.

It was 9.30 when Carly and Ellen approached the table and selected seats next to each other. Carly and Ellen each took a piece of paper. Carly quickly proceeded to write the letters *Y, E, J, O, Y, O, K* with a purple crayon, reciting each letter name quietly to herself. Ellen had chosen a red texta and was drawing circles across the top of her page. She stopped and changed to a blue texta before commencing another line of circles. Ellen looked over at Carly's drawing. "What does it say?" she asked. "dolphin," replied Carly.

Ellen turned her attention to her own drawing and completed her pattern of circles and lines. Ellen put her texta down and held up the drawing, looking very closely at what she had drawn. Ellen put the drawing down and drew a colourful pattern at the bottom of her page. Carly was singing the theme song to "Heart Break High" as she worked. Ellen joined in with the song. Carly paused and looked at Ellen before writing their names on her page. The class teacher, looked over and asked both girls to join the activity she was running.



*Figure 5: Ellen's "Pattern"*



*Figure 6: Carly's "Writing"*

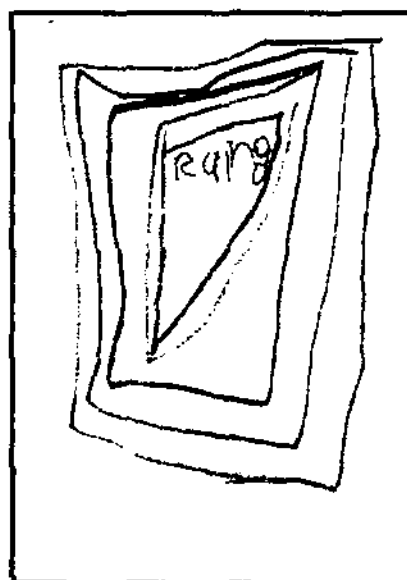
The table remained empty for about ten minutes. Emily quietly approached the table at 9.50 and Ivy joined her about five minutes later. Emily was soon busy drawing a rainbow but Ivy took a long time to get organised. She observed Emily drawing for a while and then looked around the room. Ivy picked up a red texta, then hesitated, changing to an orange texta. Ivy looked at Emily and announced, "I'm going to draw a rainbow on mine" (Emily smiled). Ivy drew an orange border around

the edge of the page. She stopped and said "I don't like this one" and put the paper to one side and took another piece. "What shall I do?" Ivy asked, as she picked up the red texta, "I know, ice-cream." Ivy turned the paper around and drew a red outline and coloured it in. "Doesn't look like an ice cream" she announced, as she turned the paper around slowly. "Make it into a ducky." She used the same red texta to put eyes on the duck shape. To complete the drawing she added a wavy blue sea.

Ivy took another piece of paper. She drew a pink line around the edge of the page and smaller red, orange and pink squares inside one another. She added a blue triangle in the middle and wrote RAINBOW.



*Figure 7: Ivy's "Ducky"*



*Figure 8: Ivy's "Rainbow"*

The researcher invited Ivy to discuss her drawings.

**Researcher:** What is your picture about?

**Ivy:** It's about a duck swimming in the ocean.

**Researcher:** Mmm, yes, swimming in the ocean.

**Ivy:** You can keep this one. I don't want it.

**Researcher:** Thankyou. What is this picture?

**Ivy:** Umm (pause), A rainbow.

**Researcher:** What have you written on it?

**Ivy:** R-ai-n-b-ow (sounding out the letters). Up in the sky.

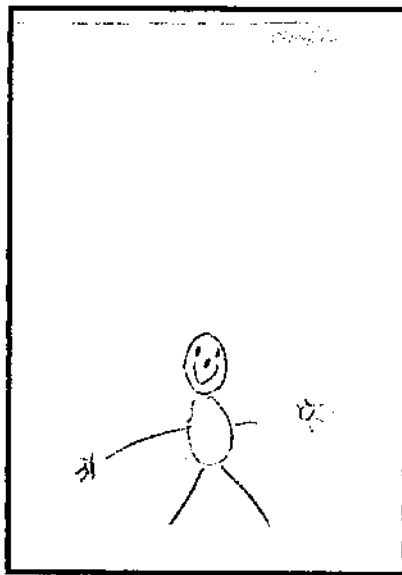
**Researcher:** Up in the sky?

*Ivy:* (pause) When it rains and the sun is out.  
*Researcher:* That's terrific.

### 4.3 Visit Two

The children were greeted, and quickly assembled at the door to go to the library. After this the children attended a twenty minute music session to practise for assembly. The structured activities planned for the day were (a) drawing firefighters in their song books and (b) drawing a picture of people who work at school for a class booklet.

It was 9:40. Ellen was alone as she approached the drawing table. Ellen worked silently and did not shift her gaze away from her drawing. She drew a yellow sun in the top right hand corner of the page and a simple red figure with yellow hair in the middle of the page. Ellen looked at the researcher. "I think I've finished," she said.



*Figure 9: Ellen's "Photograph"*

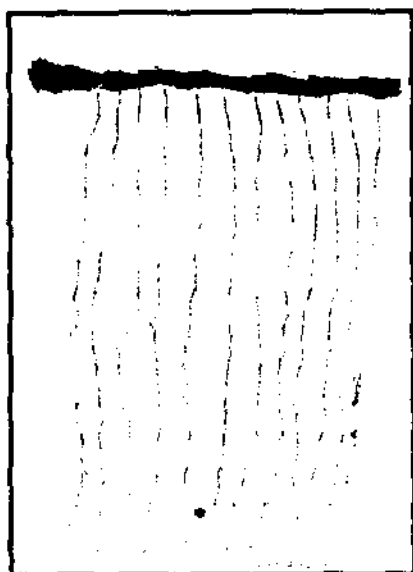
*Researcher:* Ellen, tell me about your picture?  
*Ellen:* I'm under the sun having a photo by my dad.  
*Researcher:* Having a photo taken by your dad?  
*Ellen:* Yeah (pause).  
*Researcher:* Where are you having the photo taken?

*Ellen:* At the Park.  
*Researcher:* Yes, mmm, at the park.  
*Ellen:* I am having a picnic (long pause).  
*Researcher:* Is anyone else with you?  
*Ellen:* My brothers going to work.  
*Researcher:* Thankyou, Ellen.

Luke had been making towers in the block corner. He came and sat at the table at 9.40. Ellen was discussing how she was at the park with her dad. Luke sat and listened quietly to Ellen. Luke took a piece of paper and said, "This picture is for my dad. My Dad was away at work. Did you know, I picked my Dad up at night time. "Really, where from?" asked the researcher. "From the airport," replied Luke.

Luke sat quietly and with slow and deliberate strokes drew the sun in the top left hand corner of his page. He took a green crayon and drew a thick base line. He stopped working and watched some girls playing dominoes on the floor.

After this short interlude, Luke drew a green stem and leaf. He outlined the petals yellow and coloured them in red. He carefully chose a black crayon, turned the page sideways and coloured a line next to the sun. He studied the picture for a while, and looked around the room. Luke did not talk. After a small hesitation, to choose a blue crayon, Luke slowly drew lines down the page. Each line containing several small sections. He turned the paper up the right way and watched the other classroom activities. Luke did not speak to anyone while he was drawing. He finished his drawing at 10.00.



*Figure 10: Luke's "Rain"*

Luke looked over to the researcher.

*Researcher:* Luke, what is your picture about?

*Luke:* Rain (pause).

*Researcher:* About rain? (pause), Where is it raining?

*Luke:* Mmm, where snow is.

*Researcher:* Yes, it looks cold.

*Luke:* Cold (pause) cold, really cold. So there all the rain drops and rain makes snow.

*Researcher:* It can.

*Luke:* We put water in the freezer and then it makes ice, square ice. Then we melt it and it is really really cold.

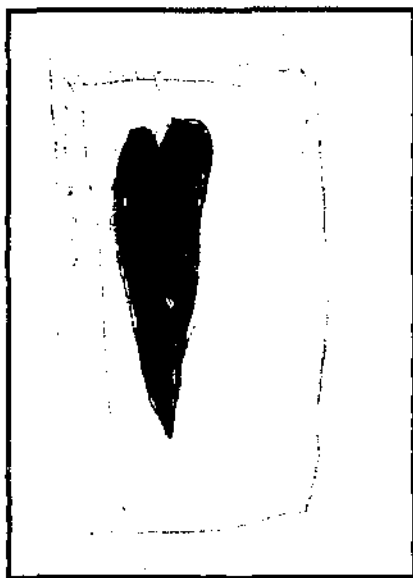
It was 10.00 when Kate, Brittany, Rikki-Lee, Ivy and Molly arrived at the table. It took them a while to determine the seating arrangements. Eventually, Rikki-Lee who was very assertive, directed everyone to their "correct" seats.

Kate drew a pink line around the edge of her page, like a frame. She drew another square inside the first. After changing to a green pencil she drew small circles between the two pink lines down the left hand side of the page. Kate drew small love heart shapes between the top two lines from left to right and one large love heart in the middle of the page. Molly and Brittany had been watching Kate draw. They both

started drawing love hearts. Kate looked at the researcher and said "I'm only four and a half. I know how to draw love hearts."

"You are clever," replied the researcher.

Kate changed to a red pencil and coloured in the large love heart. First with soft controlled movements and then with firm faster strokes. She changed hands and continued colouring the love heart. "That is hard," she acknowledged.



*Figure 11: Kate's "Frame"*

As Kate finished the researcher asked Kate to talk about her picture.

*Researcher:* Kate, tell me about your picture?

*Kate:* A frame with a love heart.

*Researcher:* I see.

*Kate:* I am putting it on the wall (long pause). No, it's for you.

*Researcher:* What are these? (Pointing to the circles.)

*Kate:* Part of the frame (pause), but some fell off, it's an old frame.

*Researcher:* I see.

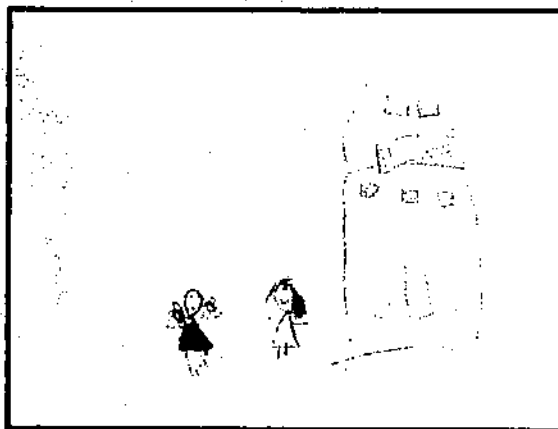
Meanwhile, the other girls had been discussing their families.

Kate took a second piece of paper. "This is my family. This is my family, I love my sister. She has got blue eyes," said Kate.

She took a blue pencil and drew a figure of a person. While Kate drew she continued

talking to herself "sister, dress, eyes."

Kate finished drawing the person and looked at her picture and said " Now me." Kate drew a second person with a triangle shaped dress. She added green eyes. She put her pencil down and paused. She stood her drawing up and looked at it and announced "I've got brownish yellowish hair, I'll put yellow in it too." She added purple legs and arms. Kate stopped to tell every one that she could spell her name. She stood up and moved to another seat. She remained standing while she finished her drawing. Kate continued to talk to herself as she drew a house. "I build a house. We are making a garden, a pond, not a real frog or duck. There is the eyes and nose (as she points to the windows and door). It's like that. I live in the Summer roof (she pauses, looks over to the researcher and waits for a reply)." "In the roof?" echoed the researcher. "Yeah, cos we open two doors and there is a roof. This is my room (pointing). Emma is a little funny." Kate recommenced drawing and sang "Stairs going up, a little room, a door, a very lovely door." She took her time completing this part of the drawing and finished at 10.20.



*Figure 12: Kate's "House"*

Kate instigated a discussion with the researcher.

**Kate:** I'm playing outside with Emma and this is my house and we're in the backyard.

**Researcher** What's up here?

**Kate:** That's the bed (pointing), that's the stairs, that's the door and a toy room and you have to squish and squish.

**Researcher:** So there is a bedroom and a toy room?

**Kate:** Yeah and Mum and Dad are inside (pause) sitting having a coffee.



#### **4.4 Visit Three**

It was raining heavily when the children arrived at school. The classroom arrangement had changed. A hospital had been setup in the common room and the class library had been relocated in the classroom.

During the mat session the children discussed people who work in hospitals and they were given an opportunity to discuss their personal experiences. At the conclusion of the discussion the teacher advised the children of the morning activities. These were (a) drawing a picture titled "My Dad", (b) making a key-ring, and (c) marbling paper.

It was 9.20. Matthew and Ellen sat opposite each other at the table. Matthew quickly picked a brown crayon and started to draw a tree in the middle of his page. Ellen sat quietly and watched Matthew. "What shall I draw?" asked Ellen. She took another look at Matthew's drawing and drew a similar tree in the middle of her page. Ellen talked to herself as she coloured in the tree. "It's black, it looked like brown".

Matthew changed to a yellow crayon and drew a yellow oval shape in the bottom left-hand corner of his page to represent the head of his lion. He added a body, tail, four legs. Matthew stopped drawing and carefully scanned the container of coloured pencils in search of the right colours. He took an orange and brown pencil to colour the mane. Ellen had stopped drawing and was watching Matthew again. Matthew looked up at Ellen. "It's a lion," said Matthew. "You can use the yellow and orange. "I'll do the grass," stated Ellen as she took a green texta. "I'll do sand instead," answered Matthew. "Should I draw with texta? Next time I'll draw in texta."

Both children proceeded to draw base lines on their drawings. Ellen asked Matthew for the dark blue pencil which he passed to her. Ellen drew a line across the top of the page. She was fully engrossed in her own drawing and quickly drew a human figure with a brown texta. First the body, next the head and single lines radiating from the body for arms and legs. Facial features were added last. Ellen proceeded to draw clothes on her person, red trousers, purple top, a black scarf and

yellow hair. Ellen stood up and held up her drawing. She began to draw orange dots over her picture. "It's snowing! Look at my snow man, Matthew," asked Ellen. Matthew stopped, looked over and smiled. "Strange day, I'm going to do a sun when it is snowing" laughed Ellen and looked over at the researcher.



*Figure 13: Ellen's "Snowman"*

*Researcher:* Tell me about your picture?

*Ellen:* It's a snow man, (pause) and the snow is coming down. I knocked him over.

*Researcher:* You knocked him down?

*Ellen:* Yeah, (pause) I'm going to read a book now.

Ellen got up and left the table and went to play with Molly in the home corner. Matthew continued to work. He added two eyes, a nose and a mouth to his lion. He stopped and leaned back on his chair. He was smiling as he scanned the room. He observed Ellen talking to Ivy and watched some girls doing puzzles. After a few minutes he returned his attention to his drawing. He chose colours very carefully. He worked methodically, adding a background to his drawing. "Needs mountains in it," said Matthew to himself. He added three mountains. He completed the picture by colouring the sky blue with white clouds and a yellow sun. The researcher invited Matthew to discuss his picture.



Figure 14: Matthew's "Jungle"

- Researcher:* What a wonderful picture. You have been working really hard (pause). Tell me about this wonderful picture?"
- Matthew:* One day I escaped from home to the jungle, cos' I wanted to see a lion cos it was rainy day and cos, (pause) cos' wanted to be warm.
- Researcher:* Mmm, you wanted to be warm. What happened when you saw the lion?
- Matthew:* I climbed up the tree.
- Researcher:* Were you safe up there?
- Matthew:* Yes, and then I went up the mountain.  
I'll draw another one for you, *Godzilla*. I'm an artist.
- Researcher:* Do you draw a lot?
- Matthew:* (Nods his head.) Mmm, I have a brother.
- Researcher:* Is he an artist too?
- Matthew:* No, he's a football player.

Matthew returned to his seat and drew a picture of *Godzilla* to take home. While Ellen was absent from the table Ivy came over and sat in Ellen's seat. Ellen returned to the table and picked up her drawing. "Oh My God! Funny day, snowing in the sun" she said in a surprised voice. Ellen was laughing, as she turned around to show her picture to the girls making muffins.

Ivy had started drawing a rainbow. She followed the same formula she had adopted in her rainbow picture drawn on visit one. She started drawing in the top left-hand corner of the page. She drew a pink square close to the edge of the paper, in a clockwise motion. She drew a blue square inside the pink square. As she drew she said to Ellen "pink and blue makes purple."

Ivy picked an orange texta and drew a triangle inside the blue box. Ivy drew a purple triangle inside the orange triangle, a pink triangle inside the purple triangle and finally a yellow shape inside the pink triangle. Ivy wrote her name and called Ellen's attention to her drawing.

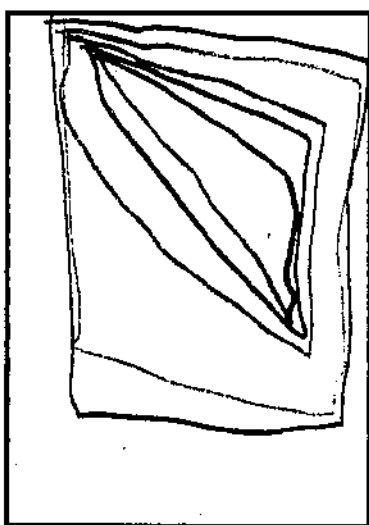


Figure 15: Ivy's "Special Rainbow"

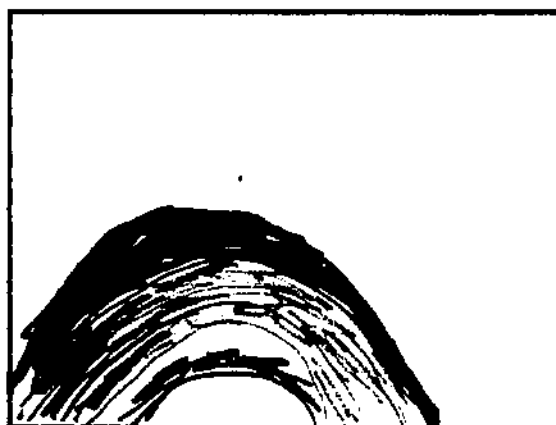


Figure 16: Matthew's "Rainbow"

- Ivy:** Look at my drawing. One day I found a shell. I found it at my Grandmas. I don't know where it is now.
- Ellen:** That's a nice pattern. (Ellen looked at Ivy's picture)
- Ivy:** It's my special rainbow picture. Red, blue, purple orange.
- Ellen:** I've seen lots of rainbows.
- Emily:** I'm going to draw a nice drawing. (Emily and Molly had just sat down at the table.)
- Researcher:** Ok, Hello Molly.
- Ivy:** I'm going to draw another rainbow.
- Matthew:** I'm going to use crayons to draw a rainbow.
- Researcher:** Have you been talking about rainbows at school?
- Matthew:** No.

- Emily:* There's my rainbow. Oh I've got magic paper. I could draw another rainbow. I'm going to draw a love heart. How do I draw a love heart?
- Matthew:* There's a love heart (pointing to a love heart on a Fathers Day picture).

#### **4.5 Visit Four**

The children attended the library and had a music session with the specialist teacher before returning to the classroom to begin the usual morning routines. The children were extremely excited. All of the children had invited their Fathers (Grandfathers, Uncle, etc.) to the Pre-Primary class for a special breakfast the next day. The children made Fathers Day cards and muffins for their fathers' breakfasts.

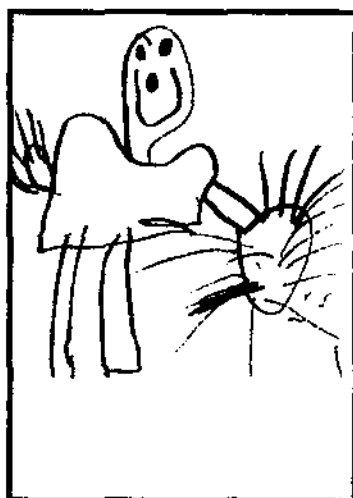
Zac, Jonathan and Michael had been sitting together during the mat session. At 10.30 they approached the table together. Michael sat down first. Zac sat next to him. Jonathan moved to the other side of the table and sat opposite Michael. They were very excited and were talking. "Look at my new boots," said Zac, as he pointed to his feet.

Jonathon gave a piece of paper to each boy. Jonathon and Michael were looking at the notice board. Jonathon was pointing to the display of photographs, where the children were dressed up as a character from their favourite book. Jonathon pointed to a photo. "Look a photo of Michael" said Jonathon, "Winnie the Pooh". The two boys discussed Michael's costume. Both Michael and Jonathon started drawing pictures of "Winnie the Pooh."

Michael worked quietly. He took an orange texta and drew a face, body and arms. He added blue legs and an orange honey pot, which he later coloured in blue. He drew great big black claws. He returned his attention to the face and adds two eyes, a nose and a mouth. He worked slowly and added a tree to each side of the figure.

As Jonathon drew his "Winnie the Pooh" he continually re-checked the photograph. He drew the head first followed by the body and legs. He added two eyes, a nose and a mouth. He paused and looked around. He drew arms and two large hands with many claws. Jonathon put his pen down and announced, "I just drewed it."

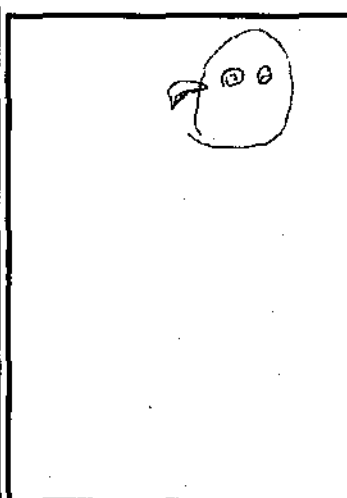
Meanwhile, Zac had been busy drawing a parrot. Zac spoke to himself as he worked. "Pirate, parrot, what do first?" he said. "I can't draw a parrot." "I know a different parrot" he said as he drew a circle in the top right-hand corner of the page. "I know, a beak and eyes" he said as he drew the beak and eyes. "What if I put wings on him?" he asked himself. Jonathon got up from his seat and approached the researcher to talk about his drawing.



*Figure 17: Jonathon's  
"Winnie the Pooh"*



*Figure 18: Michael's  
"Winnie the Pooh"*



*Figure 19: Zac's "Parrot"*

*Jonathon:* I've drawn a picture!

*Researcher:* Tell me about it.

*Jonathon:* Well, (pause) I just drewed a photo of Michael with honey.  
(Pointing to the photograph.)

*Researcher:* Who's Michael dressed up as in the photo?  
*Jonathon:* Winnie the Pooh. I just drew it, see? The end.  
 (Zac joins in the conversation.)  
*Zac:* I did a parrot. Just a parrot. What if I put some wings on?  
*Researcher:* What would happen if you put wings on?  
*Zac:* It might fly away. (Pause) No (very definite tone).  
 Can you write my name?  
*Researcher:* Can you?  
*Zac:* OK.

It was pack-away time and Michael was still drawing.

*Michael:* Look (pause), Winnie the Pooh  
*Researcher:* I like his big claws.  
*Michael:* Winnie the pooh.  
*Researcher:* What is he doing?  
*Michael:* Walking in the woods. (A long pause, pack-away was disruptive and Michael was looking around the room.)  
*Michael:* This is a honey pot, he is looking for honey.

#### **4.6 Visit Five**

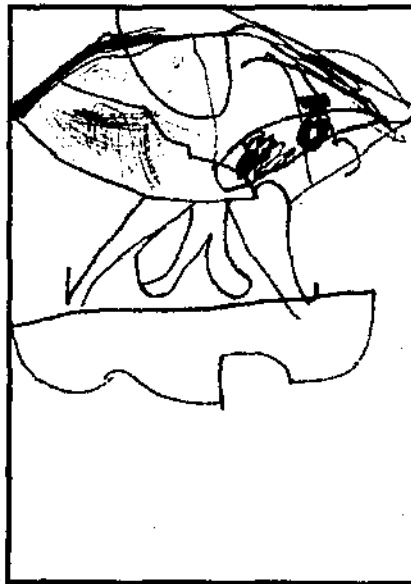
The Fathers Day theme had finished and the children were beginning to show more interest in the hospital theme. After the usual greetings the teacher commenced a mat session on bones. She read a book and had a skeleton to show the children. The children are very excited. The structured activities for the day included (a) plaster casts on little fingers. (b) Language book "When I grow up I want to be..." (c) Letter Land workbook: letter "P". Children were selected to begin the structured activities and a large group of children promptly rushed over to the hospital corner. A few boys moved over to play with the blocks.

It was 10.15 when Kate and Brittany who were holding hands and giggling, sat down at the drawing table. Kate chose an orange texta. She drew a very random shape and coloured it in with a blue pencil. Kate changed positions regularly, from sitting,

to standing and finally lying across the table. Kate sat down when she had finished her drawing.

Meanwhile, Brittany had chosen a green texta and had drawn a border around her page. She drew one line at a time, returning to start each line in the top left-hand corner of the page.

Brittany drew a detailed scene of a dog and a human figure in a park with a flower. Brittany kept checking on Kate's progress. Kate finished drawing and the researcher called her over to discuss her drawing.



*Figure 20: Kate's "Diamond House"*

*Kate:* It's a (pause), it's a diamond house.

*Researcher:* A diamond house?

*Kate:* Yeah.

*Researcher:* Does any one live in the house?

*Kate:* A girl and boy.

*Researcher:* What's happening?

*Kate:* I just made it up.

*Researcher:* It is a special house. What are all of these?

*Kate:* That's, that's the hallway. That's the swirly, swirly machines.

*Researcher:* What do the machines make?



*Kate:* They make swirly lollies.

*Researcher:* Yum

*Kate:* The people who lives in there in the house get to eat 'em. (She points to the roof.) That's the roof and that's the door.

Kate handed the drawing to the researcher and walked away from the table. Brittany watched Kate leave the table. She stopped drawing and looked over at the researcher.



*Figure 21: Brittany's "Dog"*

*Researcher:* You have been working hard. What is your picture about?

*Brittany:* I don't know.

*Researcher:* What's in your picture?

*Brittany:* A dog.

*Researcher:* Who's this?

*Brittany:* I don't know, it's a pretend dog. It's pretend.

#### **4.7 Visit Six**

It was raining heavily as the children arrived. The children were very noisy as they entered the classroom. The classroom teacher was at an in-service course. The relief teacher had been in the class before and the children appeared to be comfortable in her presence. The children were gathered together for the morning

mat session. This mat session did not follow the children's usual routine and they were a little unsettled. The relief teacher conducted a session on listening skills. The game requires the children to listen to instructions and respond with the correct actions.

The activities for the morning were explained and children were allocated to different tasks. The supervised table top activities were: (a) plaster cast fingers, (b) drawing a picture in their song book for "Suzy Had a Baby", (c) matching game.

Matthew eagerly approached the drawing table at 9.55 immediate after the mat session. Matthew scanned the table before choosing a seat. Ellen, Sarah and Amy ran over to the table. Ellen sat opposite Matthew. He looked over at the researcher and said "I'm thinking about what to draw. You know, I like drawing because I'm an artist. You know, some artists paint and draw what they can see, they do. Maybe I'll draw Ellen."

He chose a piece of paper. "MMM" he looked around. "What to do?" He looked closely at Ellen. He picked up a brown pencil. Matthew constantly looked up and observed Ellen as he drew her face. Matthew changed to a brown crayon and added two eyes, a nose and a mouth. Matthew took great care in choosing the correct colours to draw Ellen. He stopped, picked up a green crayon, paused and changed it to a brown crayon. He looked closely at Ellen and copied the pattern on her shirt.

He stopped and listened to the girls talking. After this short break, he finished drawing Ellen's top and added a pink triangle skirt. Matthew stopped and turned the page sideways. He recommenced drawing and added yellow and purple legs. Next he added brown feet. He changed from a pencil to a brown crayon and drew big shoes. The researcher asked Matthew if he had finished. Matthew nodded and handed the drawing to the researcher.



*Figure 22: Matthew's "Dancer"*

- Matthew:* (pause) That is you, it is. You are dancing (pause) You are (pause) dancing on the stage"
- Researcher:* Mmm.
- Matthew:* You are dancing on stage, with big boots on.
- Researcher:* Yes, I can see the big shoes.
- Matthew:* Yes, (pause), people are watching you. I might draw some people watching.
- Researcher:* OK.
- (There is a long pause while he adds the people brown, green, red, orange, blue dots.)
- Researcher:* Are they the people?
- Matthew:* (Nods his head) I've done the people. I'm going over there.
- (Matthew went over to the collage table.)

Ellen and Amy and Eva are called away from the table to go to a supervised activity. They hand the researcher their drawings before leaving.

At 10:15 Molly and Kate joined Victoria at the table. Molly sat next to Victoria. Kate and Victoria both began to draw patterns containing letters and numbers. Molly asked the researcher "Is it spring yet?" "Yes" replied the researcher.

Molly took a green texta and drew a green stem starting from the middle of the page. She added a blue flower with an orange centre. Molly looked up. "I can draw tulips" she said. Molly glanced over at the researcher and saw her writing in a note book. "What are you writing?" she asked.

"Just writing about people's drawing" replied the researcher.

Molly returned to her drawing without any further explanation. She chose a brown crayon and drew a stem and brown and green triangular petals. Victoria paused and was studying Molly's picture. Molly stopped and gave Victoria instructions on how to draw tulips. Molly completed her drawing by adding a red flower, using the same formula as before and then added a yellow sun. She hesitated before finally adding a smaller blue flower. Molly said to Kate "I'm playing with..." Victoria interrupted "Well so, I'm playing too." The researcher asked Molly about her picture, but before Molly could answer Kate and Victoria had put their pictures in front of the researcher.

*Kate:* Look, a round thing, that has patterns, circles and lines.

*Researcher:* Yes, I can see the shapes.

*Kate:* No, patterns.

*Researcher:* Yes, it is great pattern.

A girl who was sitting doing a puzzle invited Kate to play.

"Kate, Kate, Kate, do you want to play with us?"

"I'm playing with Emma," replied Kate.

Victoria had been waiting to show the researcher her picture.

*Researcher:* What is your picture about?

*Victoria:* Umm, swirly, whirls and colouring in.

*Researcher:* Did you make a pattern?

*Victoria:* Oh yeah, I done, I done some ummm...

*Molly:* Look it is raining.

(Victoria and Molly got up and looked out of the window. After a minute they returned to the drawing table.)

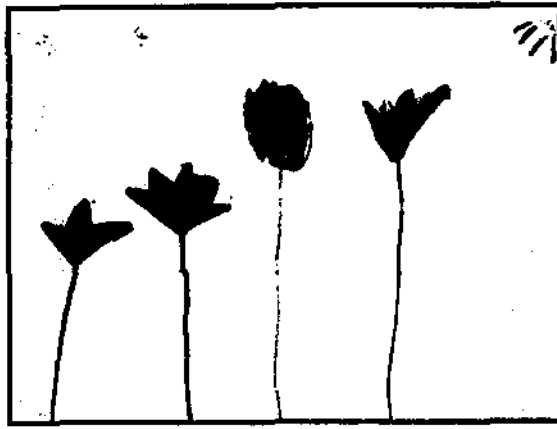


Figure 23: Molly's "Tulips"

Molly asked the researcher to look at her picture.

*Researcher:* Yes, you have been busy. Tell me about your picture.

*Molly:* There's some tulips in the sun. See 1 2 3 4 (pointing to each flower as she counts).

*Researcher:* Where are they growing?

*Molly:* In my garden. You can pick them.

Molly took another piece of paper and began experimenting with letters of the alphabet. At 10.20 Ivy sat down next to Molly. Victoria and Molly were looking through the container of textas together. "Can I play with you guys?" asked Ivy.

"No." said Molly, as she shook her head.

"Yes you do. I'll get my sister," threatened Ivy.

"No, I've got a big sister too" asserted Victoria.

Molly got up and moved away from Ivy and sat opposite Victoria. Ivy was left sitting on her own.

Molly continued talking to Victoria "My name starts with *M*. *M* for Molly." Molly started to write her name. Ivy watched Molly drawing the letter *M*. Ivy picked up an orange texta and started drawing the letter *M*. She commenced drawing in the bottom left hand corner of the page. She paused twice during the drawing to check Molly's "*M*". The letter "*M*" took up most of the page. Ivy traced over the letter *M* before drawing a flower on top of the first "*hill*", and a stem and leaves in the "*valley*".

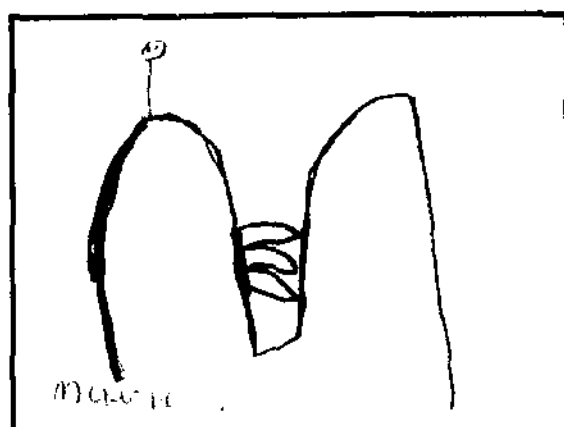


Figure 24: Ivy's "Big M"

Ivy finished drawing at 10:30. The researcher asked Ivy about her picture.

*Researcher:* Tell me about your picture?

*Ivy:* (Long pause)

*Researcher:* What have you drawn?

*Ivy:* It's a big M of letter land.

*Researcher:* Yes, it is the big M.

*Ivy:* MMM. Can you stay for other activities?

*Researcher:* Yes. What is this? (Pointing to her picture.)

*Ivy:* It's a, umm some leaves.

*Researcher:* I see.

*Ivy:* Yep, and that's a (pause) a stem for the flower and leaves for the flower (long pause) on the hill.

*Researcher:* And what have you written at the bottom?

*Ivy:* A word with M in it. Can I go now?

## 4.8 Conclusion

Data has been presented as a narrative following Riessman's (1993c) recommendations that attending to the particulars of the experience and telling about the experience are important strategies. The narrative provides information about (a) the context and the pattern of the students' day, (b) the social nature of much of the children's drawings, (c) drawing sequence, and (d) the children's verbalisations. Any reduction of data would have involved the selection of statements which would have presented an incomplete picture.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Analysis of Data**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

The previous chapter presented data in a narrative form. In this chapter, the data are analysed and discussed. The following topics provided a framework for the analytical process (a) consideration of the research question, (b) contextual influences, and (c) the role of visual and/or verbal narratives. Conclusions and recommendations will be addressed in chapter seven.

#### **5.1 The Research Question**

***“What is the relationship between preschool children’s drawings and their accounts of these drawings?”***

To answer the two-part research question, a framework for the analysis of narrative components of children’s drawings was designed (Figure 25). This framework shows the four different components used to analyse the children’s drawings (a) Duncum’s (1992) spontaneous drawing model, (B) Luquet’s (1985/1922) types of visual narratives (produced by children) model, (c) WA Ministry of Education’s (1990) elements of a narrative framework and (d) Labov’s (1982) discourse analysis framework (cited in Riessman, 1993c).

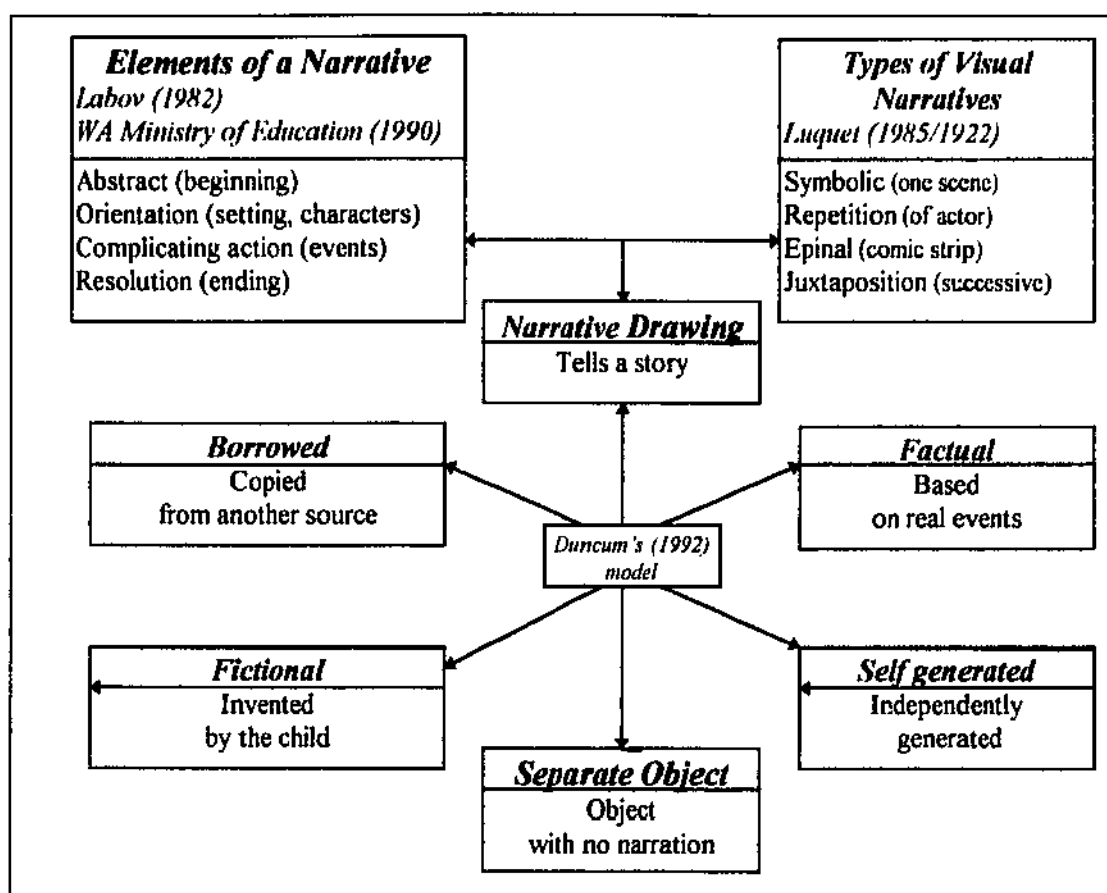


Figure 25: Framework for the analysis of narrative components of children's drawings

## 5.2 Analysis of the Children's Drawings

Twenty five children attended the Pre-primary school, over the period of the study (four weeks). Twelve children, eight girls and four boys, voluntarily participated in the study. Of these twelve children, four children completed more than one drawing. In all, twenty drawings were collected, although two of these drawings were not accompanied by a discussion and therefore could not be included in this analysis.

Research completed by Luquet (1985/1922) suggested that there are four types of visual narratives produced by children (a) symbolic, (b) repetition, (c) epinal and (d) juxtaposition. All of the drawings produced during this study however, were of the symbolic (showing one scene) type of visual narrative. There are many possible reasons for this outcome. First of all, it maybe related to the young age of the participants in this study or secondly, it may correlate to the era the data was collected (1922 not 1998) and different social contexts (e.g. popular culture in 1998: television,



videos, computer games). Finally, the research methods used for data collection may have influenced the types of visual narratives produced by the children. Luquet (1985/1922) asked the children to draw a story, whereas in this research the children were given no directions and drew spontaneously.

To assist in the data reduction process, the drawings (supported by the children's verbal accounts) were sorted into three broad categories and subsequent sub-categories. The three broad categories are (a) narrative drawings that *are supported* by verbal narratives, (b) narrative drawings that *have no* verbal narrative and (c) separate object drawings that *have* a verbal narrative. As might be anticipated, three of the drawings did not fit any of these three categories; these have been classified as transformational drawings.

#### ***5.2.1 Category One: Narrative drawings that are supported by verbal narratives***

This broad category contains ten of the sixteen drawings analysed. These drawings all contained some or all of the elements of a narrative and were supported, and/or extended by the child's verbal narrative.

##### ***Narrative drawings that depict the setting and characters (or objects)***

The drawings and verbal narratives in this sub-category complemented and supported each other. Generally the drawings gave the viewer an understanding of the setting and the main character or characters. This aligns with the claims of Luquet (1924/1985), Wilson (1979a), Kellman (1995) and Mallan (1998) who all posited that graphic scenes portray the same features as a written composition (setting, characters, action). The verbal narratives in this sub-category have a distinct narrative structure which supported, extended or enhanced the details already present in the drawing. The visual and verbal narratives are seen as "equal parts" of the whole story.

Matthew's "Jungle scene" and Ellen's "Snowing in the sun" are examples of drawings from this sub-category. Both of these drawings are dynamic, containing a detailed setting and a main character. Both children composed a well-structured verbal narrative (including setting, characters and action) that supplied other story

information. For example, during the orientation section of Matthew's verbal narrative he displayed his knowledge of narrative by using a conventional opening "One day ..." Matthew added a new character (himself) and gave details about the setting "from home to the jungle," he added action to his story " 'Cos I wanted to see a lion ... I climbed a tree." Matthew resolved the action with a happy ending "I escaped and went up the mountain." Ellen also introduced her character "It's a snowman," elaborated on the setting "the snow is coming down" and gave a dramatic resolution to her story "I knocked him over."

### ***Drawings that depict the setting or character***

In this sub-category, generally the drawing provided the viewer with an image of either the character (or characters) or the setting. This supports Wilson and Wilson's (1979a) conclusions that children's narratives often exist in separate elements. The verbal accounts not only supported the image depicted in the visual narrative but also supplied the listener with the "hidden" elements of the story. In this sub-category both the visual and verbal narratives are needed to see the whole story. As Luquet (1924/1985) stated, the connection between narrative and visual expression is difficult to discern and adults need to encourage children to discuss more than the objects mentioned in the title.

Kate's "Diamond House" and Molly's "Tulips" are both examples of this sub-category. Kate's drawing contained an elaborately designed setting (a house), while Molly's drawing contained objects (tulips). Both Kate's and Molly's verbal narratives supported the main subject in their drawings and added other key elements vital to the "whole" story. Kate's drawing provided the viewer with an orientation for her story. Kate's verbal narrative was rich and colourful. She introduced the two characters "a boy and a girl" and gave a detailed description of the house. She added complicating action and discussed the "swirly swirly machines ... that make lollies" before resolving the action successfully with "the people in the house get to eat 'em."

### ***5.2.2 Category Two: Narrative drawings with no verbal narrative***

In this category there was one narrative drawing that contained no verbal narrative, for although the drawing contained all the requirements of a narrative (setting, characters, events) there was no accompanying verbal narrative to support the drawing. This category is supported by the findings of Wolf and Smith (1982) who stated that some children draw highly active scenes where the drawing tells all.

In the only example of this type of drawing, Courtney produced a very elaborate narrative drawing that contained a setting “in the park”, two characters “a girl with a dog” and an event “going for a walk”. It could also be determined that because the drawing indicated the action of going for a walk, it also had a beginning and an end. Courtney gave no verbal account of her drawing other than it is about “a pretend dog.” A possible reason for the lack of verbal narrative is due to the fact that Courtney told the complete narrative in her drawing.

### ***5.2.3 Category Three: Separate object drawings with a verbal narrative***

The drawings in this particular category depict separate objects (characters) and the story is communicated through a verbal narrative. In the case of separate object drawings it is important that the children be given opportunities to discuss their drawings and express their opinions. Wolf and Smith (1982) suggested that some children use the drawings primarily to provide a backdrop for their narrative abilities. Therefore as Dyson (1990) stated, it is the accompanying talk that makes the drawing meaningful.

In this category, the children typically drew one object on his/her page and constructed a story around the object, usually a character. Ellen’s, Jonathon’s, and Zac’s drawings are examples of this category. The drawings produced in this category were usually simple in design.

Ellen drew a simple design of a girl that was accompanied by a rich and complex narrative. Ellen orientated the listener by describing the setting and the

character's in her first sentence, "I'm under the sun having a photo by my dad." During the narrative she discussed the events of the day "having a picnic in the park" and made references to her brother's absence "my brothers going to work".

Jonathon's and Zac's drawings were of single characters. Both of these drawings were created with simple contours. Jonathon's bold, large scale outline of "Winnie the Pooh" with large exaggerated claws was accompanied by a short narrative that conveyed the character and his actions "a photo of Ben ... Winnie the Pooh ... with honey". The drawings in this category support the research of Wolf and Smith (1982) who stated that some children draw uncomplicated outlines that are activated by a rich story line, filling out their simple drawings with dramatic play and narrative.

#### ***5.2.4 Category Four: Transformational drawings***

In these transformational drawings the initial drawings and verbalisation combine to form narratives providing a platform for transformation to a new subject and a new story.

##### ***Narrative extension***

In this sub-category, the separate object drawing was extended after the child constructed a verbal narrative that was different to the initial purpose of his/her drawing.

Initially Matthew's drawing was a separate object drawing of a girl. When Matthew came to the drawing table he said "Maybe I'll draw Ellen." During this observed drawing stage he constantly referred back to Ellen to check his accuracy. When Matthew discussed his drawing with the researcher he announced "that is you, you are dancing on the stage." During the discussion Matthew stopped and added more details to the drawing. Matthew's drawing was self-generated and commenced with factual elements. Matthew's verbal narrative differed from his initial intention (to draw Ellen). Matthew told an elaborate story and all of Labov's structural

elements were present. He orientated the listener and described the setting and the characters "That is you, it is...on stage...people are watching you". Matthew included action, "dancing" and evaluated "yes" and resolved the action "I've done the people. I'm going over there."

It would have been impossible to categorise this drawing if the researcher had not observed the drawing process. Without this additional information the drawing might have been categorised as a narrative drawing that had a supporting verbal narrative. This aligns with research findings by Luquet (1924/1985) and Wright (1995). Luquet (1924/1985) stated that it was difficult to categorise drawings and he emphasised that it is often only by referring to the young artist that an identification of the content can be made. Furthermore, Wright (1995, p. 39) suggested that the "learning process involves representational thought, where one object or action can stand for another or represent another." It is only by discussing the drawing with the child that the meaning of the representational symbols becomes clear.

***Changes which occur during the drawing process (prior to the verbal account)***

In this sub category the children's "final" version of the drawing had a supporting verbal narrative. However, the original images were modified during the drawing process.

Ivy's "M" and "Ducky" drawings are both examples of this sub-category. Ivy's completed drawings contained a setting and characters and her verbal narratives contained details of who was included and where the stories took place. Ivy's "Ducky" drawing also contained action; "swimming." Hence, the final versions of Ivy's drawings and her verbal accounts of these drawings contained supporting information. However, the finished products did not show the viewer the changes that occurred within the drawing process. In the "M" drawing Ivy began by copying the letter "M" from "Molly's drawing. She then changed the image into "hills with a stem for the flower" and "leaves for the flower." This corresponds with research by Kellogg (cited in Dyson 1995) who suggested that letters of the alphabet often appear as art

forms in children's drawings. In Ivy's other drawing she is undecided about what to draw. Ivy announced that she was drawing "an ice cream" but after looking closely at what she had drawn said "It doesn't look like an ice cream. Make it a ducky." This sub-category aligns with research by Freeman (1980, p.16) who stated "any analysis of the children's drawing cannot ignore the effects which result from the drawing process itself."

### **5.3 Contextual Issues**

There appeared to be a number of contextual influences that impacted upon the children's drawings. These included (a) the peer relationships and friendships, (b) the classroom context, and (c) the social context. These influences will be discussed to shed more light on the children's drawings as process and product.

#### ***5.3.1 Peer relationships and friendships***

For the duration of the study, it was evident that the drawing process occurred within a social context. The children who were involved in this study appeared to have firmly fixed friendships. This aligns with the research by Howes (1987) who stated that in the preschool period, children start to make friendships and research by Hazen and Brownell (1999), who suggested that young children's friendships are not all based solely on proximity and should not be thought of as "momentary playmates" relationships. During the study it was interesting to note the organisation and dynamics of different friendship groups. It was found that children approached the drawing table in groups ranging from two members to a large group of five. During the sessions other children tried to enter these friendship groups and although drawing was the primary reason for coming to the table there were times when drawing played a secondary role to the children's relationships.

Howes (1987) examined relations between friendships and successful entry to a group. Coraro (cited in Howes 1987, pp. 7-8) suggested that children use temporary friendship status as a means of obtaining play group entry. This strategy supports observations recorded during this study. For example, Ivy tried to gain entry to a

“group” by means of “temporary friendship status” (Can I play with you?). Ivy was rejected by Molly (the leader of the group) and was refused entry to the group. Ivy moved to the other side of the drawing table and tried to re-enter the group by creating a drawing that was based on a borrowed image from Molly’s drawing (“M” for Molly). In spite of these actions Ivy was unsuccessful in joining Molly’s group.

Matthew and Ellen had a close friendship outside school and this friendship was sustained within the classroom context. It was interesting to see Ellen and Matthew seeking each other out and working together at the drawing table. Matthew and Ellen’s relationship was supportive and considerate. For example, Matthew and Ellen shared the textas and discussed correct colours in one drawing episode and Matthew did an observed drawing of Ellen in another. This observation is supported by Howes, (1987, pp. 7-10) who suggested that preschool children form both stable and temporary friendships. Understandably, stable friendships play a more complex and responsive manner than temporary friendships. Stable relationships serve the affective needs of the child, whilst temporary friendships, in contrast, centre on shared interests and activities (Howes, 1987, pp. 7-10). During the study, “temporary friendships” that revolved around the shared interests of the drawing activity were observed. One example of this was when Luke overheard a discussion between the researcher and Ellen regarding Ellen’s father. Luke entered the “group” successfully and made connections between Ellen’s story and his own life-story about his dad working away. Luke stayed at the drawing table to “draw a picture for his dad.”

### ***5.3.2 Peer interactions***

Throughout the study the children had a lot to say about their own drawings and often looked at and discussed other children’s drawings. This behaviour is supported by Copple, Waxman and Cocking (1981, p. 6) who suggested that “children look at each others drawings and question or criticise what they saw.” Research by Copple, Waxman and Cocking (1981) proposed that there were four categorises of peer interaction (a) child 1 questions or criticises drawing of child 2, (b) child 1 and child 2 identify the same picture differently, (c) child 1 hears child 2 asking how to draw something or find fault with his/her drawing, (d) child 1 hears child 2 comment

on or express an aspect of the nature of drawing or the drawing process.

These peer interaction categories helped the researcher identify the types of peer interactions that occurred within this study. There were examples of the children asking questions about each others drawings (category a). For example, "What does it say? ... Dolphin." There were several examples of children commenting on an aspect of the nature of drawing or the drawing process (category d). For example, "I've got brownish yellowish hair, I'll put yellow in it too"; "I'm thinking about what to draw. You know I like drawing because I'm an artist. You know, some artists paint and draw what they can see, they do;" "Pink and blue makes purple." Many children found faults with their own drawing (category c). For example, "Doesn't look like an ice-cream. Make it a ducky." Sometimes the children identified the same picture differently (category b). For example, "That's a nice pattern. It's a special rainbow picture;" "I can see the shapes. "No, patterns."

Children's verbalisations may demonstrate their conceptual understandings of drawing (Coppie, Waxman and Cocking, 1981). It was interesting to listen to the children talk to themselves during the drawing process. It is suggested by Krafft and Berk (1998, p. 637) that "private speech" occurs universally among preschool children accounting for 20 to 60 percent of their spontaneous utterances as they go about their daily activities.

There were many examples of the children in the study using private speech. Vygotsky (cited in Krafft and Berk, 1998, p. 638) described this type of speech as "a tool for thought" used to communicate with one's self and guide one's own thought processes and actions. Examples of this type of speech were evident when Matthew asked himself "Should I use textas or pencil?" and in Zac's conversation "pirate, parrot, what do first? I can't draw a parrot. I know a different parrot. I know, a beak and eyes. What if I put wings on him?"

For the duration of the study the researcher recorded high levels of "private speech". This corresponds with research by Krafft and Berk (1998) who suggested socially interactive situations and open-ended activities provide young children with



opportunities to use self-directed language to master their own thoughts and behaviours.

### ***5.3.2 The classroom context***

Analysis of data showed that the classroom context did impact on the subject matter depicted in the children's drawings. Some themes and activities studied in the classroom were assimilated into the drawings produced by the children (Book Week, the Post Office, Fathers Day, Patterns).

In a similar way, the teaching style imprinted on the children's drawings. Prior to the study, the children had experienced creating individual art works and the children were regularly encouraged to draw "directed pictures" for which the topic was proposed (language book and song book). Daily opportunities to draw and write were also provided. This program created an environment in which the children felt at ease with the task of drawing. The teacher also encouraged the children to discuss their drawings when they were produced as part of a teacher-directed activity.

During the study the teacher called children away from the free choice drawing activities to complete the teacher-directed activities. It is acknowledged that it is difficult, as a teacher, to know when to move children from one activity to the next. However, it was frustrating for the researcher and those children who did not have the opportunity to complete their drawings or discuss their work. The importance of child initiated activities needs to be highlighted.

### ***5.3.3 The social context***

The children were very interested in the changing weather patterns and this was reflected in their drawing and play. At one point, all the children left the drawing table to look out of the window at the rain. Rainbows became a very popular theme with several of the children. Ivy appeared almost preoccupied with the production of rainbows. This behaviour supports Wolf and Smith's (1982) findings that there is a prevalence of certain fixed ideas, themes, trademarks with some children.

Other children appeared to be heavily influenced by their family. For example, Matthew had stated to his teacher (the previous week) and to the researcher that he was an artist. The researcher discussed this with the classroom teacher. She suggested that Matthew's mother was encouraging Matthew's artistic talents and told him he was an artist. This may imply that Matthew has been assigned a "role" in his family as an artist and his brother, who was good at football the "role" of athlete. By sharing her drawing Ellen was able to talk about her personal life and talk about her father. Luke was also able to use Ellen's story to initiate his own story about his own father working away. Ivy tried unsuccessfully to enter Molly and Victoria friendship group by using the threat of retribution by her "big sister" as ammunition.

#### **5.4 The role of visual and/or verbal narratives**

The narrative content of children's drawing is the focus of this study. Wilson and Wilson (1979a) stated that the nature of narrative drawing attracts attention and gives voice to young children's stories. The preschool children in this study used their drawings to act out personal experiences, to investigate and design settings for their worlds. This aligns closely with research conducted by studies by Wright (1995), Kellman (1995), and Mallan (1998). This study shows that there are many individual differences in how the preschool children (who participated in this study) use their drawings as "graphic languages" to communicate their stories (Katzs, cited in Schiller, 1995). Some children use their drawing to express themselves with imaginative or "invented" stories (e.g. Matthew's "Jungle"), while others "communicated" personal stories, or describe their daily lives (e.g. Ellen's "Photograph"), while others were drawn to "negotiate" or communicate with other children (e.g. Ivy's "M"). Other drawings were driven by the drawing process (e.g. Ivy's "Ducky"). These findings support the study by Kellman (1995) who examined children's drawings and listened to what the children told about their visual art and categorised them according to three criteria (a) invention, (b) communication, and (c) negotiation/problem solving method.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the four broad categories and the sub-categories into which the children's drawing and verbal accounts fall have been described. These four broad categories have shown that the preschool children's drawings and verbal accounts are related in a number of different ways. There were also notable individual differences among the twelve children studied. The production of these narratives was influenced by the context in which they were created. In the following chapter conclusions and recommendations will be provided.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the researcher will draw out and discuss the main issues to have emerged from the study. The main topic for discussion concerns the relationship between preschool children's drawings and their accounts of these drawings. A brief review of research methods used in the study is carried out and suggestions for further research are indicated. Finally, recommendations for teaching are provided.

#### **6.2 The relationship between preschool children's drawings and their accounts of these drawings.**

This study has provided a fuller understanding of the way pre-school children use their drawings to construct verbal narratives to communicate their thoughts and feelings. Among the twelve children studied, a variety of individual differences could be identified. In spite of these differences, some recurring relationships became clear. The results of this study highlight four main ways in which drawing and verbal accounts are related.

First of all, the most common relationship is that the drawings contained some or all of the elements of a narrative and were supported and/or extended by the verbal narrative. The drawing and verbal accounts complemented each other and both contributed specific elements to the narrative. This relationship is apparent in Category One drawings (see Appendix C).

Secondly, this study shows that a narrative can be conveyed through the drawing alone. One child produced a narrative drawing that was not accompanied by a verbal account. The drawing contained all the story elements (characters, setting, events). This relationship is apparent in Category Two (see Appendix C).

Thirdly, this study shows that a separate object drawing, (usually created with simple designs) can be used as a backdrop for a verbal narrative. Three children in this study produced drawings and offered verbal accounts which confirmed this relationship. Category Three (see Appendix C) contains examples of this type of relationship.

Finally, this study found that three drawings did not fit among these other categories and have been classified as transformational drawings. In this category the initial drawings and their verbal accounts combine to form narratives, which together provide a basis for transformation to a new subject and a new story. Category Four (see Appendix C) contains examples of this type of relationship.

As outlined above, this study demonstrated the strong relationships that can exist between children's drawings and storytelling. The results of this study are significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, they support other studies showing that children tell stories through their drawings (Mallan, 1998; Kellman, 1995; Luquet, 1926/1985; Wilson and Wilson, 1979a; Dyson, 1995; Wolf and Smith, 1982). This study reveals that some children tell stories entirely through their drawings, while others through a combination of picture and verbal communication and yet others use their drawing as backdrop for a verbal narrative. This study also emphasises the social nature of children's drawings and the importance of doing research in a naturalistic setting. Although the incidence of peer interaction was not of immediate concern in this study the amount of peer interaction that occurred during the drawing process calls for the researcher to examine this phenomenon more closely at some time in the future.

### **6.3 Review of research methods**

A qualitative, descriptive research method was used to collect data for this study. It is essential to consider the positive influence and the limitations associated with this method.

The researcher was interested in showing how the children in the study, made sense of their lives, experiences, and their worlds by completing drawings. By following Riessman's (c1993) model of representation and presenting analysis in a narrative rather than numerical form, the researcher was able to give an account and display the whole story. This allows the reader the opportunity to bring their own meaning to the story and reach their own conclusions. By using a qualitative, descriptive method it was possible to identify the contextual influences that impact on children's drawing in the pre-primary classroom. However, (as discussed in chapter three) because the study was located within a set scene, time and plot, the findings of this study can not be generalised to other contexts or situations.

This method of research required the researcher to observe and talk with the children. As suggested by Murfin and Butterworth (1999) interviewing young children can be difficult and there were occasions when there was confusion over the researcher's role (as a non- participant observer during the drawing process and friendly interviewer). For example, the children wanted to talk to the researcher not only about their work but also their personal lives. At other times the researcher choose to interact with the children, generally for classroom management and safety reasons. Therefore, as the study progressed it became increasingly difficult for the researcher to remain uninvolved and a mere observer. The researcher became a member of the classroom and consequently one of the characters involved in the process, thus influencing the findings of the study. For example, data collection for the study involved the children self-selecting the activity and drawing spontaneously. Yet as the study progressed, the children were stimulated by the presence of the researcher to communicate and share their drawings. This behaviour suggested that by giving the children an "audience" for their drawings the researcher may have influenced the children's attendance at the drawing activity. As Reissman (c1993) stated, the researcher actively constructs reality in new ways and in telling about the experience there is a gap between the experience as lived and any communication about it.

Finally, this study was bound by the context within which the data were collected and the time constraints associated with an honours degree. It is also

acknowledged that there was a small sample used to collect data for the study. If the study were to be repeated, the researcher would seek to examine a different classroom context (e.g. a school that operated a play-based curriculum) and observe the children for a longer period and attend the whole days activities (not just during activity times) to see if the children's play provided further stimulus for their drawings.

#### **6.4 Suggestions for further research**

Like other research in this area, this study has uncovered more questions than it has answered. The following suggestions would further clarify the results of this study.

These include:

1. Conducting a longitudinal study over a school year in different contexts. For example, different schools (private/public), different socioeconomic areas, different teaching styles eg Montessori/play based curriculum).
2. Research other forms of symbolisation (play, linguistic play, music production, other graphic productions such as painting and clay) to see if the same relationships apply.
3. Undertake a study to determine how peer interactions affect pre-school children's drawings.
4. Examine the gender role differences in preschool children's drawing.
5. Examine the different types of stories preschool children tell through their drawing.
6. A longitudinal study following one preschool child's development of his/her drawing and storytelling.

#### **6.5 Recommendations for teaching**

This study has provided an insight into the way preschool children tell stories through their drawing and has raised some important implications for teachers of young children. The following recommendations have been made on the basis of the findings from this study.

First of all, teachers of young children should understand that there is a significant relationship between children's drawings and their verbal accounts. Young children use their drawings and associated talk as a way of communicating to each other and adults. It is not only important to provide opportunities for children to create spontaneous art and listen to their stories, but also to observe children as they draw. Sometimes it is only through attentive observation, coupled with sensitive questioning that a sound interpretation of the child's story is possible. If children are not supported and encouraged to share their stories, this vital means of communication could be limited or lost altogether. Teachers must recognise and respect the individual differences in how children arrange and comprehend their world.

Secondly, the social nature of the drawing process needs to be acknowledged. Context plays a significant role in the type of art work produced by young children. This study highlights the need for children to be encouraged to participate in spontaneous and free art activities (including drawing), where they can communicate and tell their stories. Young children need more time to be creative and less time completing teacher-directed worksheets and template artworks. It is the teacher's role to create a supportive learning environment that will provide young children with many opportunities to explore and investigate their worlds. If we as educators and parents open our eyes, invite discussions and listen closely we may locate children like Ellen (in her photograph) who have untold stories waiting to be heard or to children like Matthew who are "artists, you know" who can tell stories for themselves and others and perhaps children like Jonathon who "just drewed it."



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## Appendices

## **Appendix A: Letters of Consent**

Wendy Candy

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

11th August 1998

[REDACTED]

Dear Principal,

I am an early childhood-trained teacher in the process of completing a Bachelor of Education (Honours) at Edith Cowan University. I am conducting research into the narrative content of preschool children's drawings for my honours thesis. I would like to arrange an interview with you to discuss the possibility of collecting my data at your school.

I would be conducting my research in one preschool classroom. A maximum of ten preschool children would be selected on the basis of their participation in drawing activities. I would need to observe the children at work over a period of six morning sessions.

The children will be observed within their usual classroom environment and there will be no disruption to the classroom's routine. The results will provide a fuller understanding of the way in which preschool children may use drawing to construct verbal narratives. This is a descriptive study and therefore the children will not be tested or graded.

I will contact you next week to arrange an interview to discuss the possibility of conducting my research in your school. Thankyou in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

Wendy Candy

Wendy Candy

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

11th August 1998

[REDACTED]

Dear Parents/Guardian,

I am an early childhood-trained teacher in the process of completing a Bachelor of Education (Honours) at Edith Cowan University. The university and your child's school have given approval for this study. I am conducting research into the narrative content of preschool children's drawings for my thesis.

I will spend six morning sessions in the classroom, as an assistant, observing the children within their own classroom environment. A work station will be set up with drawing paper and a variety of pencils and crayons. The children will be able to self-select the drawing activity during the normal classroom procedures. I will then talk to selected children about their drawings.

This study is not testing or grading the children in anyway and all drawings completed by the children will be returned at the completion of my study. Confidentially and anonymity is guaranteed at all times. You can withdraw your child from the study at any time without prejudice and in this event, all data would be destroyed or returned to you.

The research data gathered for this study may be reported in a thesis provided that the children, teachers, school are not identifiable. If you have any further questions or do not wish your child to take part in the study please contact either the class teacher or me on

[REDACTED]

Your Sincerely,

Wendy Candy



**Appendix B: Colour copies of the children’s drawings and discourse analysis**

Figure 5: Ellen's "Pattern"

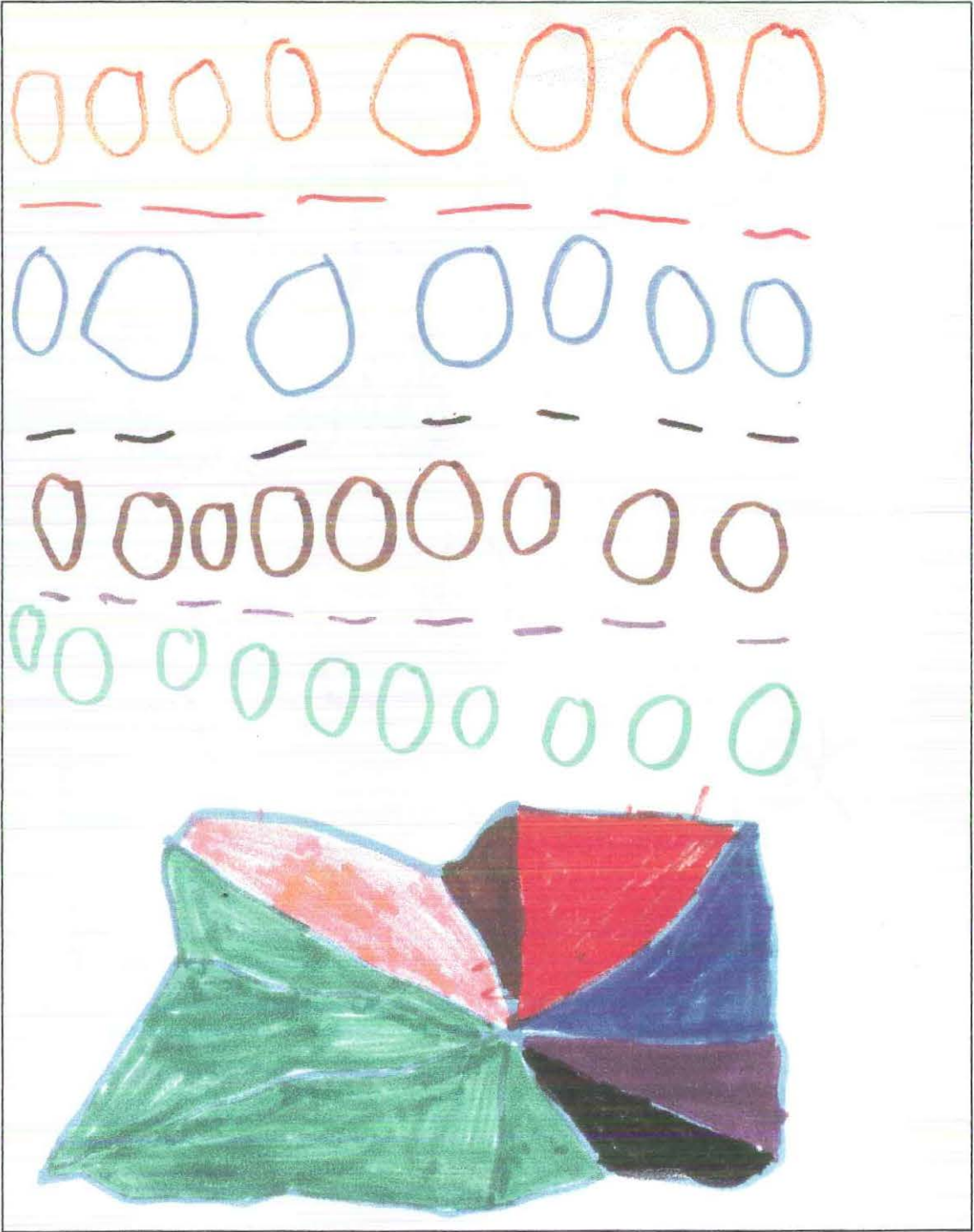


Figure 6: Carly's "Writing"

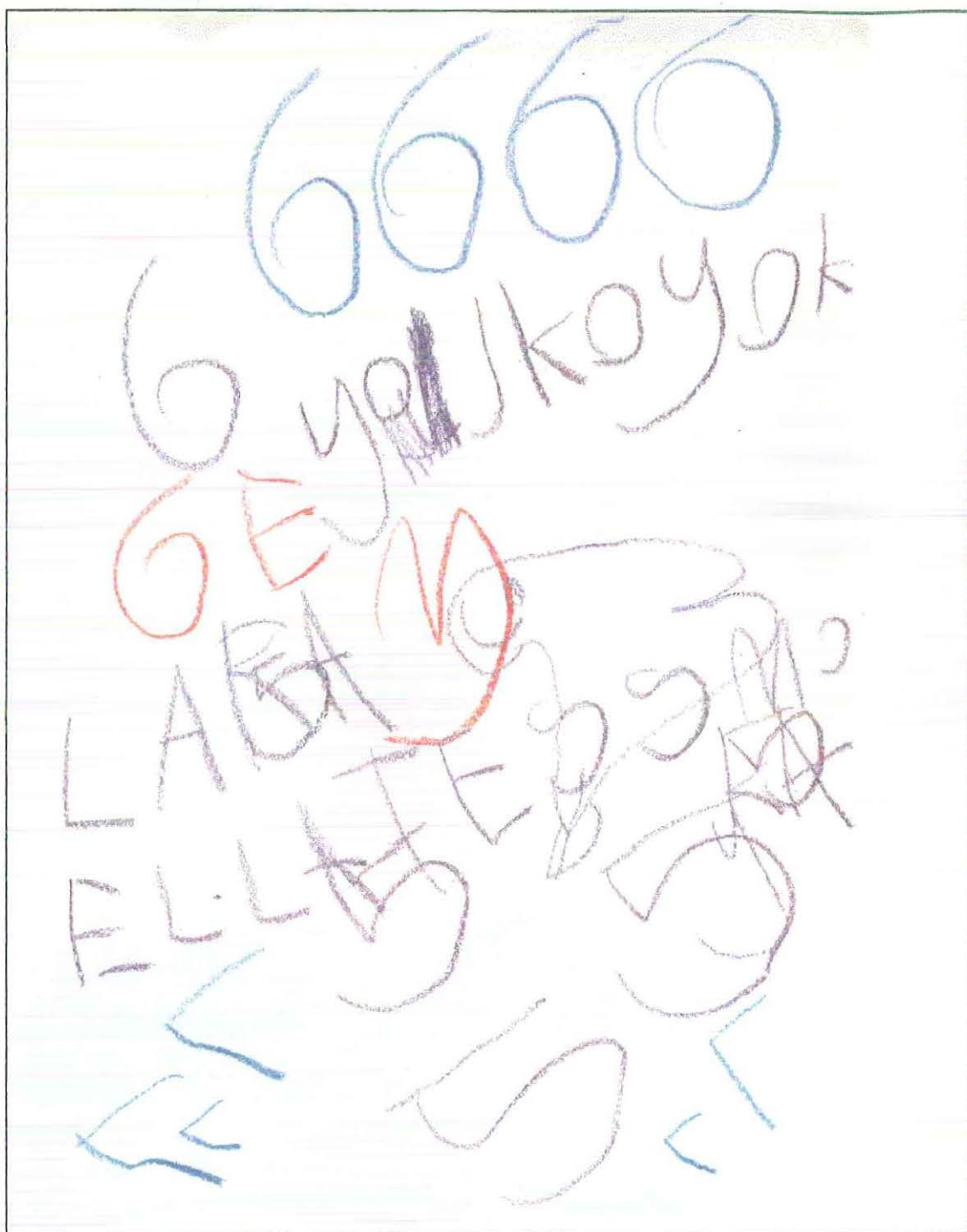


Figure 7: Ivy's "Duck"



**Figure 7: Ivy's "Duck" -Discourse Analysis**

	<i>(Abstract)</i>
1 Researcher:	What is your picture about?
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
2 Ivy	Its about a duck
3	swimming in the ocean
4 Researcher:	MMM yes
5	swimming in the ocean
	<i>(Coda)</i>
6 Ivy	You can keep this one
7	I don't want it
6 Researcher	Thankyou

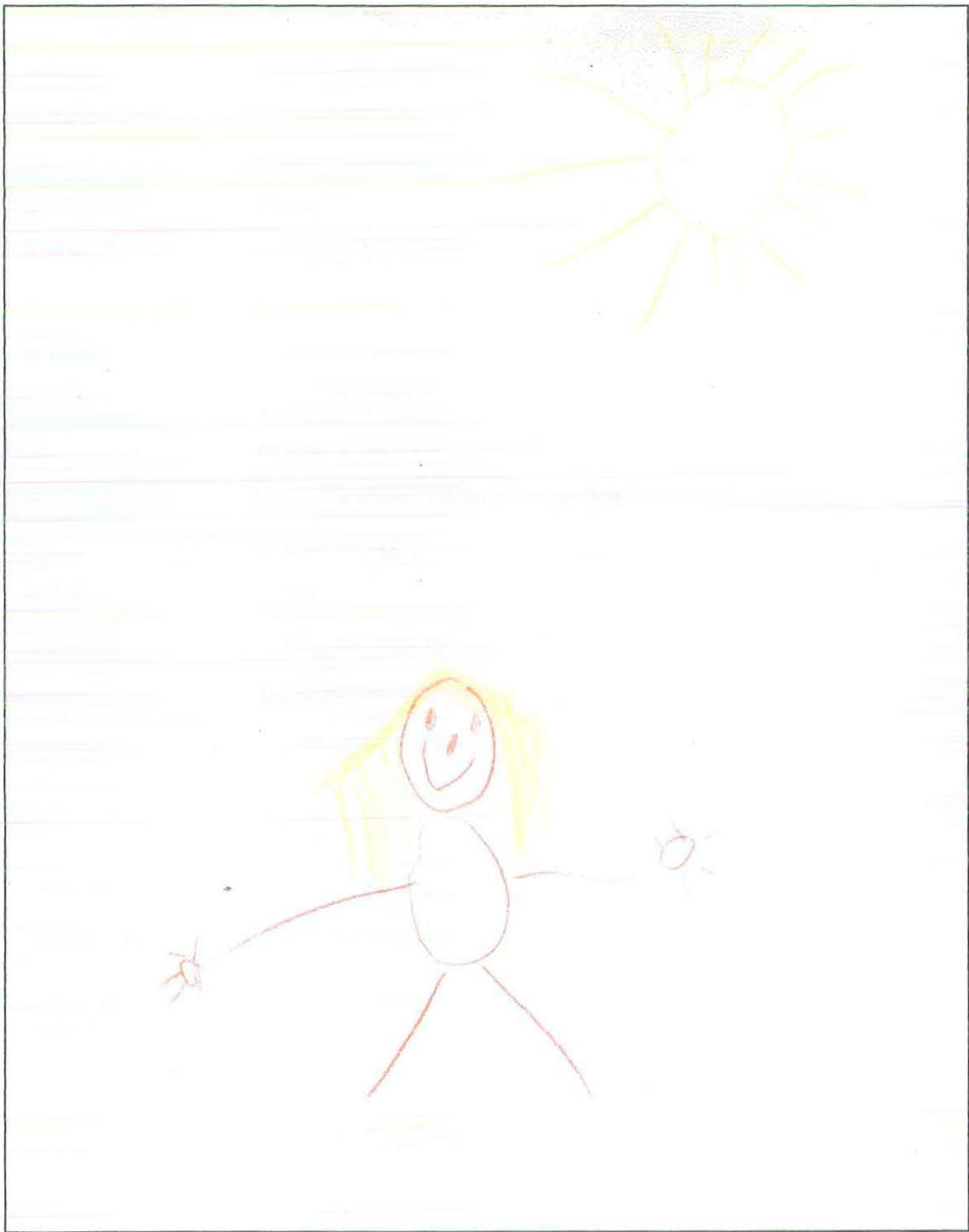
Figure 8: Ivy's "Rainbow"



**Figure 8: Ivy's "Rainbow" -Discourse Analysis**

	<i>(Abstract)</i>
1 Researcher	What is this picture?
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
2 Ivy	Umm (Pause) a rainbow
3 Researcher	What have you written on it?
4 Ivy	R-a-i-n-b-o-w
	(Says each sound very slowly as she reads of her picture R-A-I-N-B)
	<i>(Complicating action or Orientation)</i>
6 Ivy	Up in the sky
10 Researcher	Up in the sky?
	<i>(Evaluation / Resolution)</i>
11 Ivy	(pause) when it rains (pause)
12	and the sun is out

**Figure 9: Ellen’s “Photograph”**

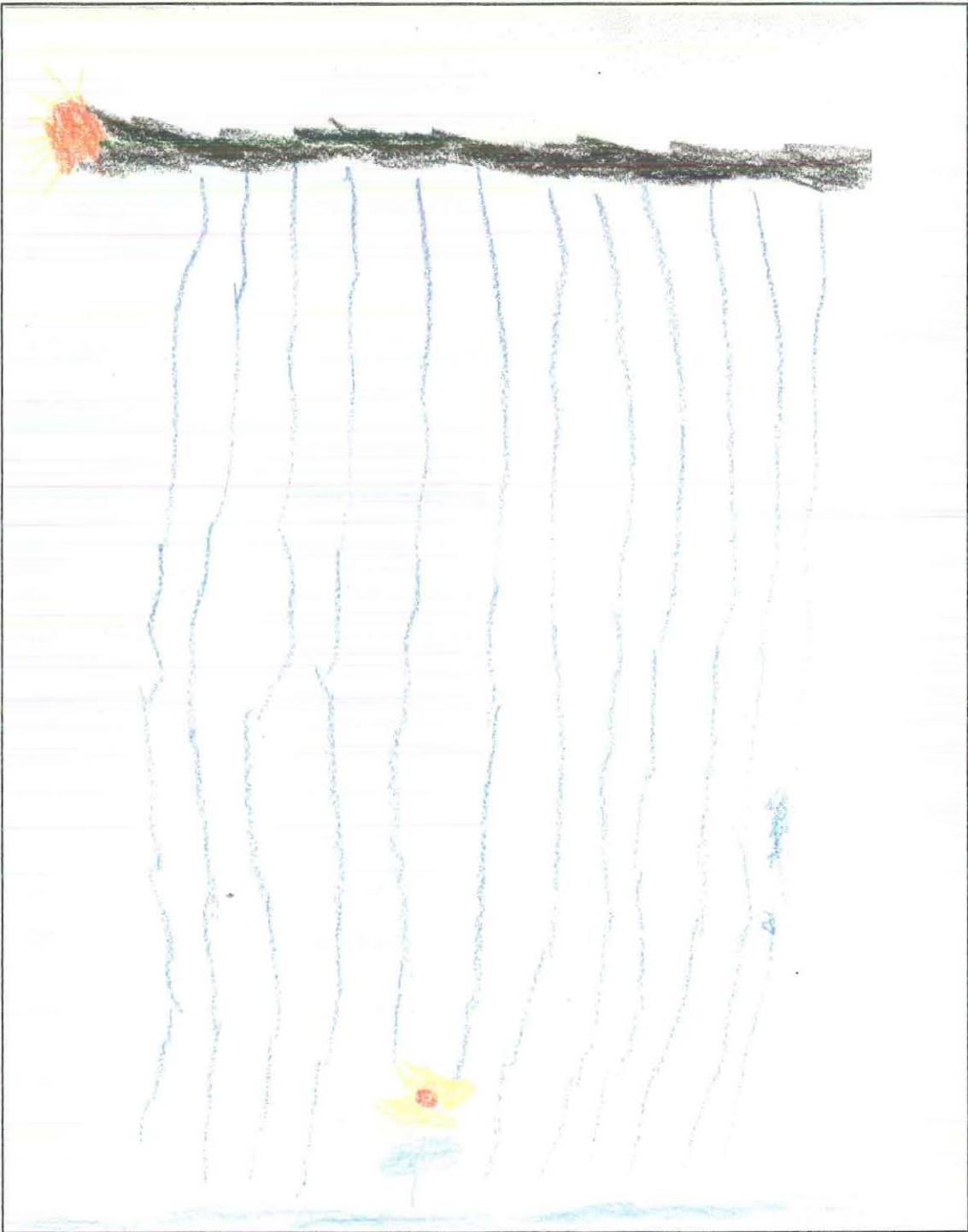




**Figure 9: Ellen's "Photograph" -Discourse Analysis**

	<i>(Abstract)</i>
1 Ellen	I think I've finished
2 Researcher	You've finished?
3	One more thing ( she finishes writing her name)
4	There
5 Researcher:	Lara, tell me about your picture.
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
6 Ellen	I'm under the sun
	<i>(Complicating action)</i>
7	having a photo by my dad.
8 Researcher	having a photo taken by your dad?
	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
9 Ellen	Yeah
10 Researcher	Where are you having the photo taken?
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
11 Ellen	At the Park
12 Researcher	Yes , mmm at the park
	<i>(Complicating Action)</i>
13 Ellen	I am having a picnic (long pause)
14 Researcher	Is anyone else with you?
	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
15 Ellen	(shakes her head)
	<i>(Evaluation / Resolution)</i>
16	My brothers going to work

Figure 10: Luke's "Rain"



**Figure 10: Luke's "Rain" -Discourse Analysis**

	<i>(Abstract)</i>
1 Researcher:	Luke , what is your picture about?
	<i>(Complicating Action)</i>
2 Luke:	Rain (pause)
3 Researcher	About rain? (Pause)
4	Where is it raining?
	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
5 Luke	mmm, where snow is
6 Researcher	Snow?
	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
7 Luke	cold (pause) cold,
8	really cold
9	so there all the rain drops
10	and rain makes snow
11 Researcher	It can.
	<i>(Complicating Action)</i>
12 Luke	We put water in the freezer
	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
13	and then it makes ice,
14	square ice
	<i>(Resolution)</i>
15	then we melt it
16	and it is really really cold.

Figure 11: Kate's "Frame"



**Figure 11: Kate's "Frame" -Discourse Analysis**

	<i>(Abstract)</i>
1 Researcher	Kate, What can you tell me about your picture?
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
2 Kate	A frame with a love heart
3 Researcher	Where are you going to put your frame?
4 Kate	On the wall,(pause)
	<i>(Resolution / Coda)</i>
5	No. It's for you
6 Researcher	Thankyou
	<i>(Abstract)</i>
7	What are These? (Pointing to the circles)
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
8 Kate	Part of the frame, pause,
	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
9	but some fell off,
10	<i>(Resolution)</i>
	it's an old frame
11 Researcher	I see

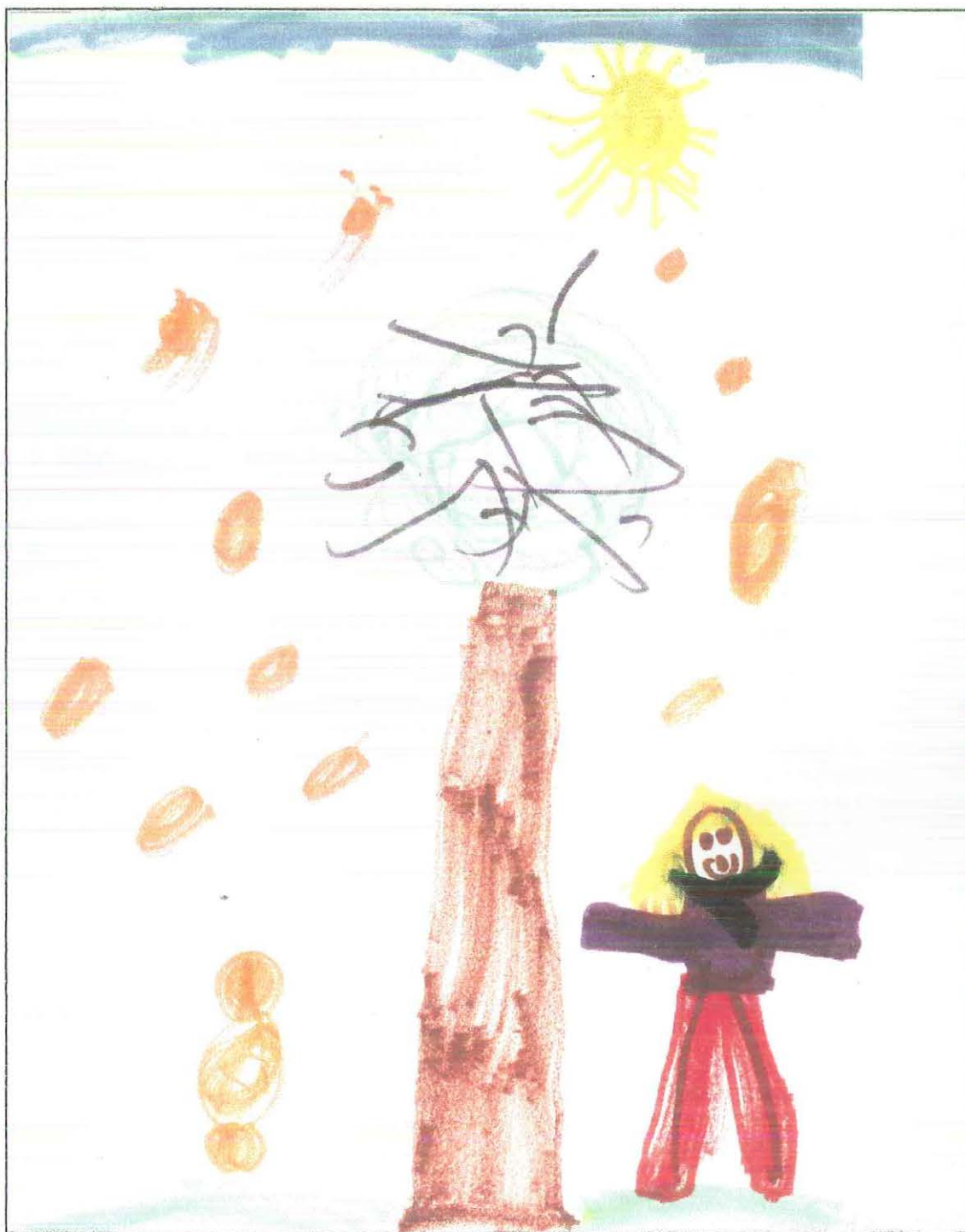
**Figure 12: Kate’s “House”**



**Figure 12: Kate's "House" -Discourse Analysis**

	<i>(Abstract)</i>
1 Researcher:	What can you tell me about this picture?
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
2 Kate:	I'm playing outside with Emma
3	and this is my house
4	and we're in the backyard.
5 Researcher	What's up here?
6 Kate	that's the bed(points),
7	that's the stairs
8	that's the door and a toy room
	<i>(Complicating Action)</i>
9	and have to squish and squish
10 Researcher	So there is a bedroom and a toy room?
	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
11 Kate	Yeah
12	and Mum and dad are inside (pause) having coffee.

*Figure 13: Ellen's "Snowman"*





**Figure 13: Ellen's "Snowman" -Discourse Analysis**

	<i>(Abstract)</i>
1 Researcher:	Tell me about your picture
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
2 Ellen	It's a snow man, (pause )
	<i>(Complicating Action)</i>
3	and the snow is coming down.
	<i>(Resolution)</i>
4	I knocked him down.
5 Researcher	You knocked him down?
6 Ellen	Yeah, (pause)
	<i>(Coda)</i>
9	I'm going to read a book now.

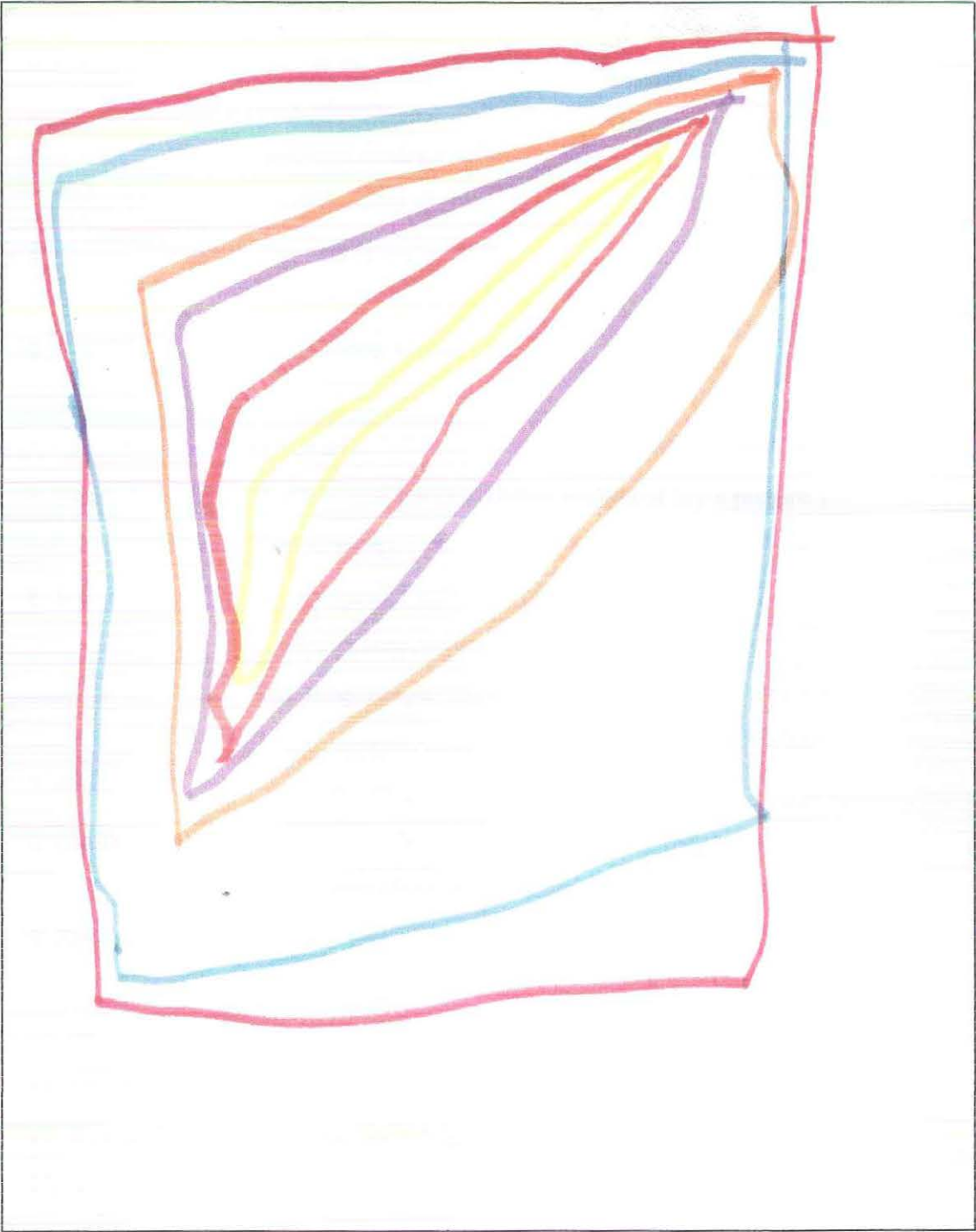
Figure 14: Matthew's "Jungle"



**Figure 14: Matthew's "Jungle" -Discourse Analysis**

	<i>(Abstract)</i>
1 Researcher	What a wonderful picture.
2	You have been working really hard. (Pause)
3	Tell me about this wonderful picture.
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
4 Matthew	One day
5	<i>(Complicating Action)</i>
	I Escaped
6	from home to the jungle.
7	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
	Cos' I wanted to see a lion
8	cos' it was rainy day
9	and cos', (pause) cos' wanted to be warm.(Pause)
10 Researcher	MMM you wanted to be warm
11	What happened when you saw the lion?
	<i>(Complicating Action)</i>
12 Matthew	I climbed up the tree
13 Researcher	Were you safe up there?
	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
14 Matthew	Yes
	<i>(Resolution / Coda)</i>
15	and then I went up the mountain.(Pause)
16	I'll draw another one for you
17	I'm an artist
18	"Godzilla
19	Do you draw a lot ?
20 Researcher	(nods head) MMM
21 Matthew	I have a brother.
22 Researcher	Is he an artist too?
24 Matthew	No, he's a football player.

Figure 15: Ivy's "Special rainbow"



**Figure 15: Ivy's "Special rainbow" -Discourse Analysis**

	<i>(Abstract)</i>
1 Ivy	Look at my drawing.
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
2	One day I found a shell
	<i>(Complicating Action)</i>
3	I found it at my grandmas.
	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
4	I don't know where it is now.
	<i>(Abstract)</i>
5 Ellen	That's a nice pattern. (Ellen looked at Ivy's picture.)
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
6 Ivy	It's my special rain bow picture
	<i>(Complicating Action?)</i>
	Red, blue, purple orange
	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
7 Ellen	I've seen lots of rainbows?
8 Emily	I'm going to draw a nice drawing.
	(Emily and Molly had just sat down at the table)
9 Researcher	OK.
	Hello, Molly.
10 Ivy	I'm going to draw another rainbow
11 Matthew	I'm going to use crayons to draw a rain bow
12 Researcher	Have you been talking about rainbows at school?
13 Matthew	No
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
14 Emily	There is my rainbow (Pointed to the page.)
	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
15	Oh I've got magic paper.
16	I could draw another rainbow.
17	I'm going to draw a love heart.

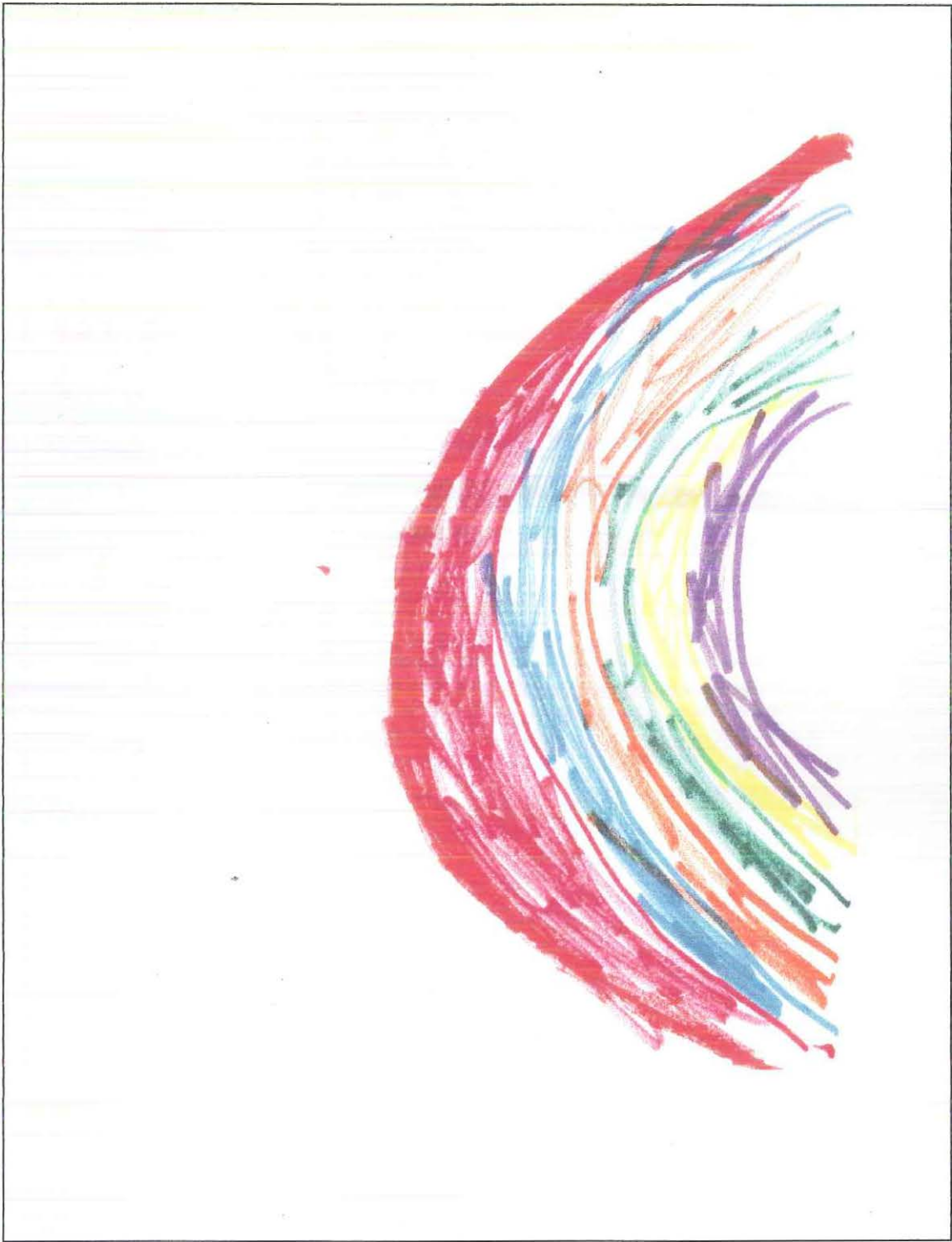
18

How do I draw a love heart?

19 Matthew

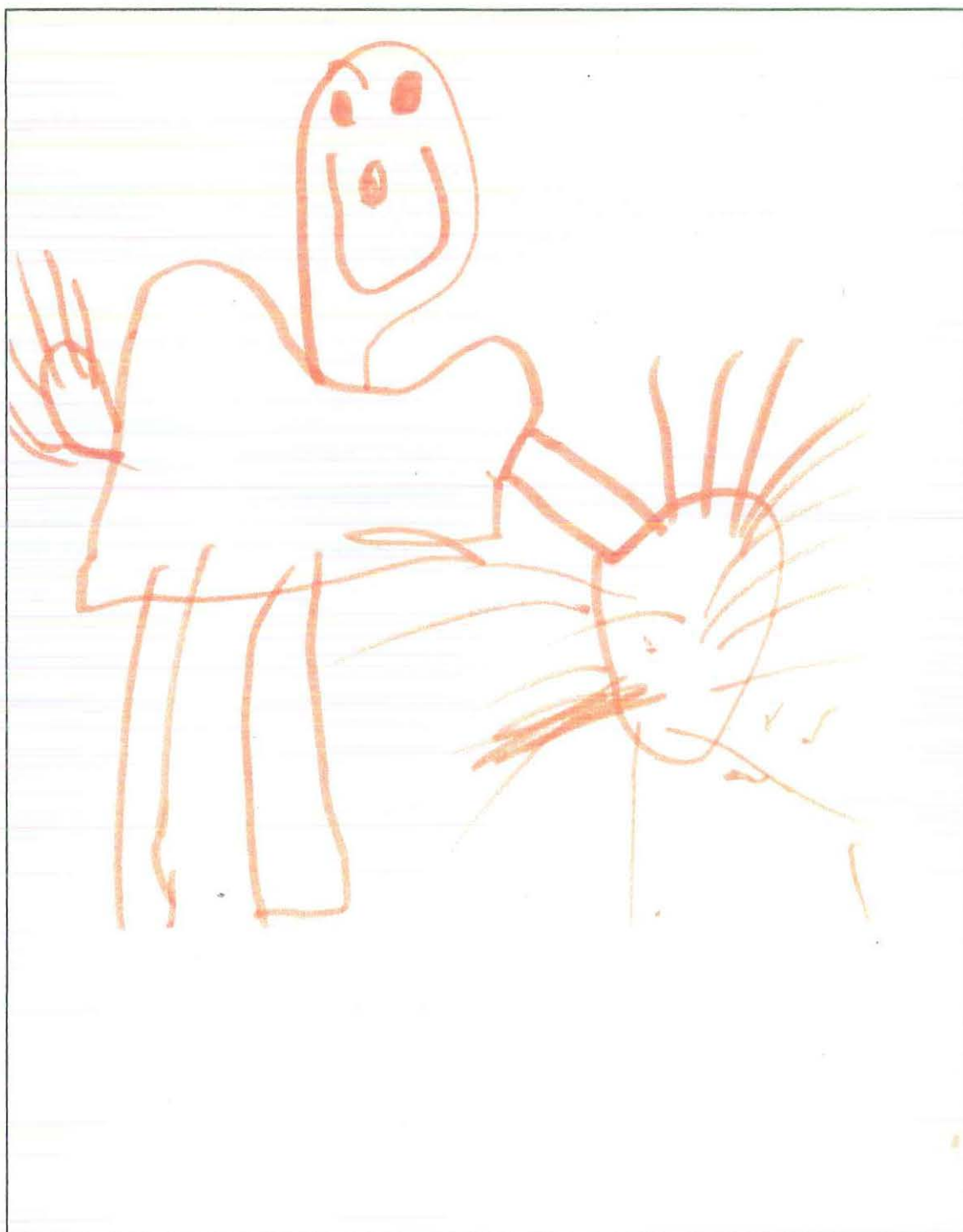
there's a love heart. (Pointing to a love heart on a fathers day picture.)

*Figure 16: Matthew's "Rainbow"*





*Figure 17: Jonathon's "Winnie the Pooh"*





**Figure 17: Jonathon's "Winnie the Pooh" -Discourse Analysis**

	<i>(Abstract)</i>
1 Jonathon	I've drawn a picture!
2 Researcher	Tell me about it
	<i>(Complicating Action)</i>
3 Jonathon	Well, (pause) I just, just, drewed a photo of Ben with honey.
	<i>(Pointing to the photograph)</i>
4 Researcher	Who's Ben dressed up as in the photo?
	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
5 Jonathon	Winnie the Pooh.
	<i>(Resolution / Coda)</i>
6	I just drewed it.
7	See ? (pointing)
8	The end

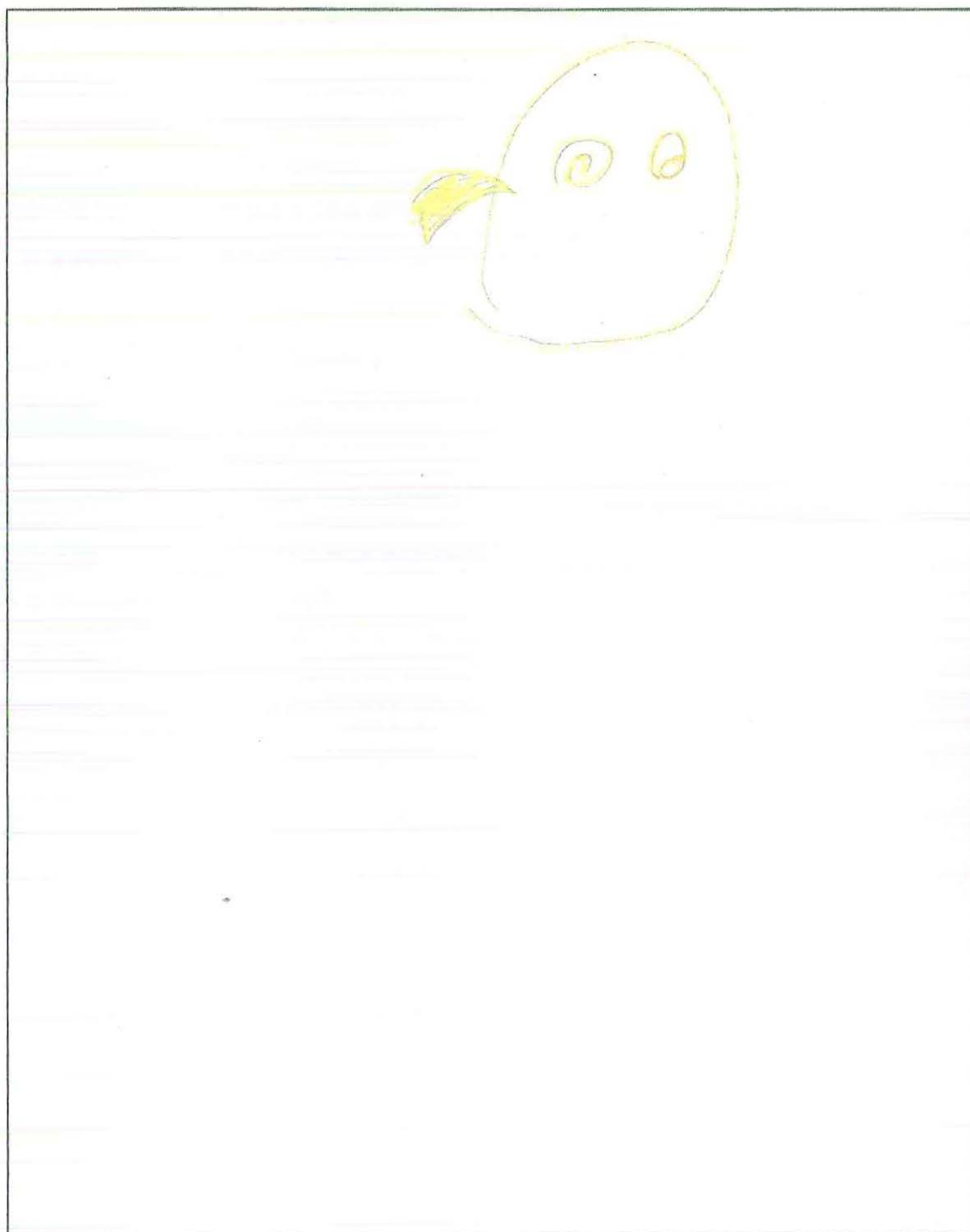
Figure 18: Michael's "Winnnie the Pooh"



**Figure 18: Michael's "Winnie the Pooh" -Discourse Analysis**

	<i>(Abstract)</i>
1 Michael:	Look (pause)
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
2	Winnie the Pooh
3 Researcher:	I like his big claws
4 Michael	Winnie the pooh
5 Researcher	MMM
6	What is he doing?
	<i>(Complicating Action)</i>
9 Michael	Walking in the woods (pause)
	(Packaway very disruptive and Ben is looking around the room.)
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
10 Michael	this is a honey pot (points to his picture),
	<i>(Resolution)</i>
11	he is looking for honey (long pause)

**Figure 19: Zac's "Parrot"**



**Figure 19: Zac's "Parrot" -Discourse Analysis**

	(Orientation)
1 Zac:	I did a parrot.
2	Just a parrot.
	(Evaluation)
3	What if I put some wings on?
4 Researcher:	What would happen if you put wings on?
5 Zac	It might fly away. (Pause)
	(Resolution)
6 Zac	No (very definite tone followed by a short pause).
	(Coda)
7 Zac	Can you write my name?
8 Researcher	Can you?
9 Zac	OK

**Figure 20: Kate's "Diamond house"**



**Figure 20: Kate's "Diamond house" -Discourse Analysis**

	<i>(Abstract)</i>
1 Researcher:	Come over here and tell me about this drawing <i>(Orientation)</i>
2 Kate:	It's a... (Pause) it's a diamond house
3 Researcher	A diamond house? <i>(Evaluation)</i>
4 Kate	Yeah.
5 Researcher	Does any one live in the house? <i>(Orientation)</i>
6 Kate	A girl and boy
7 Researcher	What's happening? <i>(Evaluation)</i>
8 Kate:	I just made it up
9	It is a special house.
10 Researcher	Why is it special? <i>(Orientation)</i>
11 Kate	that's, that's the hallway.
12	That's the swirly, swirly machines (very quietly as she points to lines
13	inside the house)
14 Researcher:	What does the machines make? <i>(Evaluation)</i>
15 Kate:	They make swirly lollies [E]
16 Researcher:	Yum <i>(Resolution)</i>
17 Kate:	the people who lives in there
18	in the house get to eat em.
19	(She points to the roof) that's the roof and that's the door

*Figure 21: Brittany's "Dog going for a walk"*





**Figure 21: Brittany's "Dog going for a walk" -Discourse Analysis**

1 Researcher	You have been working hard
2	Can I see your picture?.
3	What is your picture about?
4 Brittany	I don't know
5 Researcher	What's in your picture?
6 Brittany	A dog
7 Researcher	R: Who's this? (Pointing to person on the page)
8 Brittany	I don't know,
9	It's a pretend dog.
10	It's pretend

Figure 22: Matthew's "Dancer"



**Figure 22: Matthew's "Dancer"-Discourse Analysis**

	<i>(Abstract)</i>
1 Researcher:	Have you finished?
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
2 Matthew:	(pause) That is you , it is.
	<i>(Complicating Action)</i>
3	You are dancing (Pause)
4	you are(pause) dancing
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
5	on the stage
6 Researcher	Mmm
	<i>(Complicating Action)</i>
7 Matthew	you are dancing on stage
	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
8	with big boots on
9 Researcher	yes I can see the big shoes
	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
10 Matthew:	yes (pause)
11	people are watching you.
	<i>(Coda)</i>
12	I might draw some people watching
13 Researcher	: OK
14	There is a long pause while he adds the people
15	brown, green, red, orange, blue dots
16 Researcher	are they the people?
	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
17 Matthew	nods his head (pause)
	<i>(Resolution / Coda)</i>
18	I've done the people.
19	I'm going over there. James went over to the collage table.

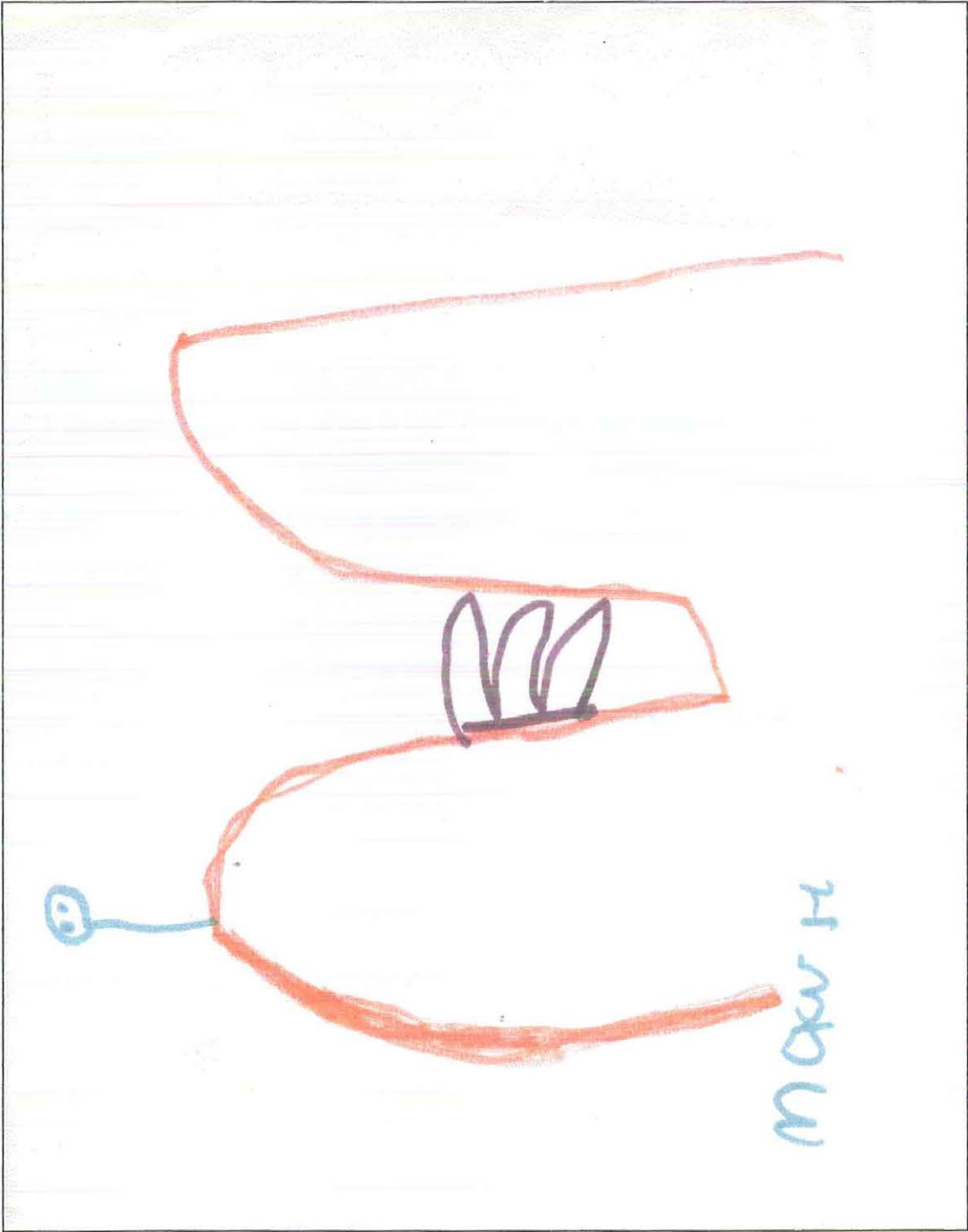
Figure 23: Molly's "Tulips"



**Figure 23: Molly's "Tulips"-Discourse Analysis**

.	<i>(Abstract)</i>
1 Molly:	look
2 Researcher	yes you have been very busy.
3	Tell me about your drawing?
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
4 Molly:	There's some tulips
5	in the sun
9 Researcher:	<i>(Evaluation)</i>
	See (points to them and counts out aloud)
	1 2 3 4.
	<i>(Abstract)</i>
10 Researcher	Where are they growing?
	<i>(Orientation)</i>
11 Molly:	In my garden
12	<i>(Complicating action)</i>
13	You can pick them.
	<i>(Resolution/ Coda)</i>
	Can I go now?

Figure 24: Ivy's "M"



**Figure 24: Ivy's "M"-Discourse Analysis**

- (Abstract)*
- 1 Researcher: Tell me about what you have drawn?
- 2 Ivy: (long pause)
- 3 Researcher: What have you drawn?
- (Orientation)*
- 4 Ivy: It's a big M of letter land
- 5 Researcher: yes it is the big M
- (Coda)*
- 6 Ivy: MMM. Can you stay for other activities?
- 7 Researcher: Yes. What is this? (Pointing to her picture)
- (Orientation)*
- 8 Ivy: it's a umm some leaves
- 9 Researcher: I see.
- 10 Ivy: Yep
- 12 and that's a( pause) a stem for the flower
- 13 and leaves for the flower (long pause) on the hill
- 14 Researcher: and what have you written at the bottom?
- 15 Ivy: A word with M in it
- (Coda)*
- 16 Can I go now?

## **Appendix C Children's Drawings by Category**

<b>Category One: Narrative Drawings That Have Supporting Verbal Narratives</b>
1. Ivy's "Rainbow" 2. Luke's "Rain" 3. Kate's "Frame" 4. Kate's "House" 5. Ellen's "Snowman" 6. Matthew's "Jungle" 7. Ivy's "Special rainbow" 8. Michael's "Winnie the Pooh" 9. Kate's "Diamond House" 10. Molly's "Tulips"
<b>Category Two: Narrative Drawings That Have No Verbal Narrative</b>
1. Brittany's "Dog"
<b>Category Three: Separate Object Drawings That Have A Verbal Narrative</b>
1. Ellen's Photograph 2. Jonathon's "Winnie the Pooh" 3. Zac's "Parrot"
<b>Category Four: Transformational Drawings</b>
1. Ivy's "Duck" 2. Matthew's "Dancer" 3. Ivy's "Big M"