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The relationship of the traditional drawing education with technology and graphic design

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Abstract

Drawing, one of the basic disciplines that are used in all fields of plastic arts, is an important step consisting of the applications related to drawing in the process of art training. One who has gained the ability of analysis/solution, synthesis/unity and systematic thinking through drawing education reflects this skill in the works he/she created in all areas of plastic arts. Drawing education, described as a mental process that is based on seeing and in which an idea is designed and shaped, and whose visual side is dominant, improves the skill of shaping what he/she has perceived as well. In order for the messages that are wanted to be conveyed to be given in an effective and proper way, it is necessary to know the principles of designing and to apply them in the process of designing. In this process, drawing design plays an important role in the process of designing and application of the idea. Because drawing and designing create a natural unity. Day by day, due to the fact that the usage of the mouse has increased and that the usage of pencil has decreased as a result of the facilities that technology has presented, drawing that have been ignored in terms of time and value have been thought to be an important point to be regarded and not to be left out. From this article written in order to raise consciousness on this subject, the conclusion that “behind the successful works done in the graphic designing field lays a strong knowledge and education of drawing” can be drawn.

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1. Introduction

Drawing is the description of a seen or imagined object, concept, feeling and thought through lines and stains or the transformation of it into a lineal depiction. In other words, it is a form of depiction in which even a line may have a feeling (Mendelowitz, 1993), may gain a meaning and which reflects the inner world of the artist. As for line (just like paper), it is defined as the trace formed through the movement of the spot on the surface (Chalet, 1983). One of the important steps of art training is drawing education. According to some researchers, *drawing is divided into 3 categories: symbolizing concepts and thoughts, vivifications of the imagined figures and expression of what is seen* (Mendelowitz, 1993). Drawing education not only improves one’s skill of perception, vivification and

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reflection but also is thought to be very important in the process of art training and art experience of the students of art and graphic design as it improves the level of sense, sensitivity of perception, brilliance, coordination among hand-brain-eye, and increases the awareness on this subject. One who has gained the ability of analysis/solution, synthesis/unity and systematic thinking through drawing education reflects this skill in the works he created in all the areas of plastic arts. The aim in drawing is not looking at the figure in the angle of sight but perceiving it and creating a visual style. Edwards, with his words, “*one whom you can teach seeing can draw a drawing. In fact, what is taught is not the drawing but seeing*” (Edwards, 1986), and Degas, with his words, “*drawing is not the form but the style of seeing the form*” (Bulut, 2003), have drawn the attention to the importance of learning how to see in design training.

Students of graphic design can improve their skills of expressing their thoughts visually in a proper way only when they have the power of perceiving what they see, reflecting and drawing it. Drawing education is an important key figure in the interpretation of the form and in improving his/her aesthetic approaches. One whose aesthetic taste and approach have improved can express “himself/herself” effectively in the designs that he/she is going to create with the help of the style that he/she has made up. In terms of sensitivity of perception and gaining awareness, drawing provides the proper ground for one to be able to express himself/herself. Drawing is important in terms of awareness, seeing what one looks at, interpretation, observation, analysis/solution and creating a style for himself/herself in the area of plastic arts.



Figure 1. Examples of drawing: Leonardo da Vinci, *Virgin and Child with Cat-1*; *Academie de Lena*, Jean Guiffrey-2; Michelangelo-3; *Academie de femme*, Jean Guiffrey-4; Raphael, *The Virgin and Child-5*; Banu Bulduk-6.

2. Method

Drawing education is a mental process based on seeing and in which an idea is designed and shaped and whose visual side is dominant. In this sense, drawing education improves the ability of shaping what he/she perceives in a great scale. Michelangelo stated that “*drawing is the root of all arts and is the soul or real source of all paintings. What I am going to say for the one who has been learning how to draw and who succeeds in it is that this person is a real treasure because, via his/her brush, he can form higher figures than any stone tower*” (Gollwitzer, 1976). Ingres’s words, “*drawing is the honour of the art*” (Fleming, 1995), suggest that he supports the view that drawing is necessary in all the branches of art. In this respect, drawing education can be said to be one of the most important processes or even maybe the most important process in art education.

Drawing is one of the basic principles that could be applied in all the areas of plastic arts. Sculptors draw what they imagine before starting the working process and painters before painting, highlight what they imagine with lines. This way, they express their drawing understanding and make preparations in order for the subject matters that they deal with to create a strong composition. Drawing was regarded as the preliminary preparation of painting and sculpture before the 16th century; after that period, however, it has been regarded as a separate art in itself.

In graphic design, which is the way of visual depiction of communication, the aim should be to increase the communicative and aesthetic quality of the message to the highest level. In order for the messages that are wanted to be conveyed to be given in an effective and proper way, it is necessary to know the principles of design and to apply them in the process of designing. Knowing the principles and digestion of them are only possible when the basic art education process is lived effectively. Drawing, which is an important part of this process, enables making observation, analysis, synthesis and systematic thinking ability; it also enables one to distinguish the activities of

looking and seeing as well as providing with a sensitivity in the action of internal seeing and also building a visual memory/accumulation. Because drawing and designing make up a natural unity.

It is accepted that drawing has entered life in different ways. These are regarded as designs that are created to support and improve life and make it easier (Heller, 2001). Moreover, it is possible to define technology as the innovations developing/developed to make the life of human beings easier. Designers use technology in the areas of application where they create the graphic design products in order to make life easier. Improving technology is felt especially in the computer field. The designs which are created in the area of graphic design are made in the numerical areas with the programs being used and with soft wares. Dimensioning with these kinds of programs, character modelling and animations are carried out on the screen. Designers using the computer technologies, have to follow the developments in the soft wares they use and the developments in them. Technology in this sense can be regarded as innovation/improvement/developments which should be updated when new versions of available programs are launched into the market. In order to catch up with the improvements, for visual communication designers who use technology as an agent it is important to follow up the innovations closely. Thus, the more the opportunities that technology presents develop the more designers who are supposed to follow these developments can give shape to their creations made up through using technology. Because of the fact that design is present in our daily lives, it can be even in an ordinary arrangement in our daily routine that we make in our houses. Witnessing a well established organization and, in this, realizing how to bring the convenient parts for this together constitutes a part of our designing consciousness. Just as we cannot understand without reading, similarly, we cannot draw without designing (Edwards, 1986). Reading activity starts through learning the components made up of letter, letter sounds, syllables and linguistic units and similarly design is enabled through drawing education which is the vivification of the thought via lines. When one looks at something, his/her brain immediately starts to arrange/define the similarities and differences in a probable complexity in order to create an order. Hence when a drawing is made in order to describe a subject matter, messages which are conveyed by the perceived arrangement are recorded at the same time (Peters, 1990). Changeability of the seeing style from people to people and its quality are shaped as a result of the processes of art training. Seeing is an activity that requires selection, concentration, interpretation and thinking on it. Actual seeing and perception is seeing the things that others cannot see, perceiving and turning it to visual depiction (Pekmezci, 2001).

3. Results (Findings)

Design is an action which has a structure within itself and which has a planning behind this structure, which covers all kinds of activities related to the organization of the structure that is going to be created; it is a creative action with a certain aim (Becer, 2002). In other words, according to Elizabeth Adams Hurwitz “Design: to search for the necessary”. Design training is continuous. As for the drawing education, which is one of the stages of the design training, increases the level of the perception and reflection of the person/student/individual. This level enables the applications used in other fields of graphic design to be successful. Illustration and animation are in this field. The process of the designer’s training his own eye by drawing provides him with the ability to create high drawings with aesthetic concern. In illustration which is done to describe an opinion, form and feeling with a picture technique and interpretation and also in animation, which is the art of vivification drawing, drawing education plays an important role during the process of the creation of a character design. Storyboard, which is called as the art of animation of the script through being drawn, can be defined as the visual map of the animation formed through the illustrative expression. At the same time, it can be said that it is the way of expressing a story or a script in a clear and simple way. In other words, it is the draft drawing works that tell how the plans will be recorded in order to visualize the written scenery (Parramon, 2004).

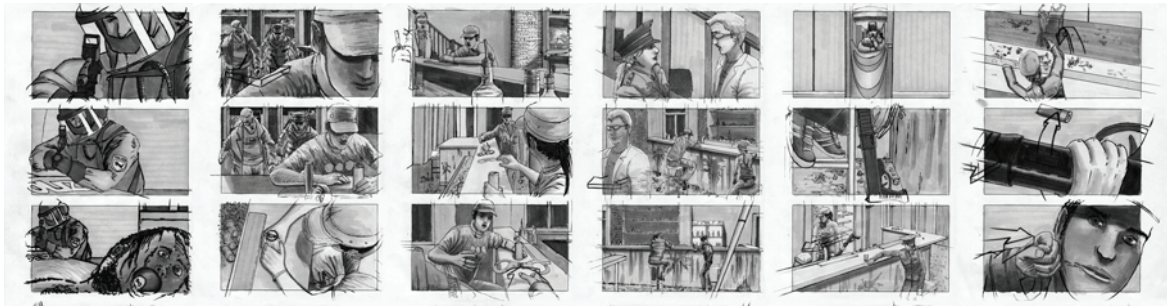


Figure 2. Storyboard, arresting clete (illustrator: alien mat, <http://alien-mat.deviantart.com/art/Storyboard-quot-arresting-clete-quot-19779876>)

As can be seen in Figure 2, in these studies, when the figures are drawn, their movements should be reflected in a proper way. Imagining a figure as three dimensional and drawing it on a two dimensional surface but creating a three-dimensional effect shows the importance of the drawing education and knowledge. In order to move the figure that he/she has imagined while drawing it, one has to illustrate the motions that he/she is going to give to the figure square by square. In this stage, the figure can be successful as long as it is imagined three dimensionally in mind. In Figure 3, stages of animating a person are shown. In the application of this study vivification of the imagined form requires a memory which is gained through observation. Depiction of the figures in mind can be obtained only with the power of sharp observation and accumulation of perception (Pekmezci, 2001).

While creating design supported by computer with the development of the technology, traditional drawing education is applied. Storyboards are studies of illustrated drafts which constitute background of advertisement films and video recording technology in which new media arts are used. In this stage, the process of the story is divided into squares and illustrated. Under each picture the texts will be used in the fiction and advertisement, plan of taking, camera details and technique details are written. In order to be successful in the drawing of the storyboard, a strong knowledge of drawing, trained/improved imaginative power and creativity are needed. In order to be able to draw storyboard, the illustrator has to have advanced drawing skills (Parromon, 2004). During the stage of art making process, line, tone, fabric, shade, colour elements which are called as elements of designs are used by the artist in order to provide an order. All elements' focusing on the aim in a formal and fictional harmony constitutes the unity of the art (Mehmet, 2006). Illustrating and animating a form which is three dimensional in a two-dimensional way successfully in a digital media will be a result of the training drawing process. Art Babbitt says that "if you cannot draw, forget about it. That means that you are an actor without legs and arms" underlying the importance of drawing (Williams, 2001). As for Richard Kelsey, who is the artist, designer and illustrator of Disney stories tells one of his students who is interested in animation art that "drawing comes first. Learn drawing first and then you can make animations." Drawing education, with its individual way of expression, is reflection what one sees through lines. In this sense, it may be stated that drawing education will make it easier to illustrate the accumulations which are obtained from the power of observation.

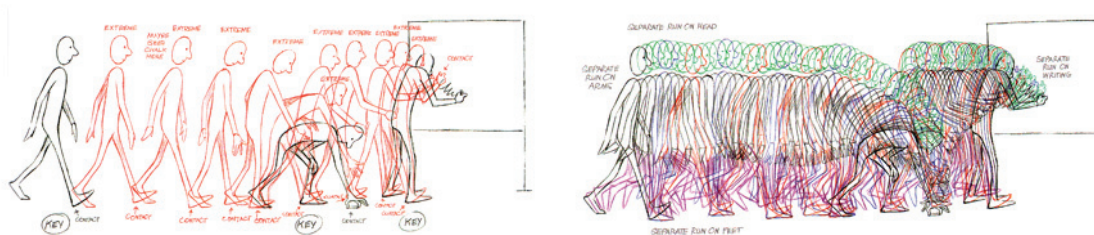


Figure 3. Drawing figures and their being set in motion in animation (Williams, R. (2001). *The Animator's Survival Kit*).

In universities giving graphic design education, curriculums are prepared regarding the importance of creativity and creative thinking improving together with technology and in accordance with the programs that that have been improved through information age. Together with the developments in technology, the programs and means that are used have changed as well. No matter how rapidly technology has been changing, it is argued that traditional art making methods must not lose its value and importance. Drawing the thought after giving a shape to it in mind is a point that should be given importance. In this respect, just like design training, drawing education should be continuous. According to Pekmezci, “*the aim in drawing should be drawing successfully rather than drawing well*” (Pekmezci, 2001). Drawing successfully can only be achieved through a disciplined and hard work. Michelangelo states that he achieved his present level “with 99% hard work and 1 % skill”(Mendelowitz, 1993). That a designer who has taken a good drawing education can be successful in the working areas which are based on new media arts that are presented by technology can be said as a result of observing the experiences/acquisitions that the students who have graduated from the department of graphic design have had in advertisement agencies and the problems and facilities they face. Drawing, which constitutes the basis of the traditional art education and which can be named as a distinct language in itself, shows its importance as a part of this unity.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

Computer technology, nowadays, has been developing rapidly as a result of the facilities that technology has presented. In relation to this, the increase in the usage of the mouse leads to the decrease in the usage of the pencil by designers. This can be interpreted as not paying much attention to drawing. This condition can be interpreted as reflecting the fact that the required value and time are not given to drawing. Drawing is thought to be an important point that should not be ignored before or after designing. It can be deduced that behind successful works there lies a strong knowledge and training of drawing. Improving the awareness in graphic design students that pattern has a basic importance in all the disciplines of art, evaluating through examples and making comparisons and contrasts will make it easier for them to draw the conclusion that the role of drawing education is really very important in terms of designing process.

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