

Judit BERGMANN

***Visual Representation as Self-Expression in Pedagogical Practice:
Possible Explanations of Adolescents' Symbol Drawings***

In my presentation I am going to elaborate on visual representation as a tool of self-expression with the help of the theoretical background of the 5-symbol drawing task series developed by myself. This projective art task series is especially made for pedagogical practice. Pictures – in this case the pupil's drawings – are natural bearers of meanings and are able to convey more complex content than words can. (Kristóf Nyíri, *Kép és idő [Zeit und Bild]*, 2011) During the application of this art task series I consider visual representation as a channel of communication. The system of signs used for socializing and communication by humans consists not only of verbal but nonverbal components too. (Istvan Nagy, *21. század és nevelés [21st Century and Education]*, 2002) Visual language as a channel of communication can be used in pedagogical practice particularly during adolescence, when symbolic picture language can become an important tool for self expression. “In the teenage years, representation often shifts from simple depiction to expression hidden behind symbols.” (Andrea Kárpáti, *A kamaszok vizuális nyelve [The Visual Language of Adolescents]*, 2005) The subject of this task series is to draw 5 given symbols (ship, house, heart, tree, and an optional symbol). In line with the sociological approach of the understanding of symbols, I regard symbols as reflections of the inner world in a concentrated way. (Ágnes Kapitány and Gábor Kapitány, “Jelbeszéd az életünk...” [“Our life is a sign-language...”], 2002) In this context the creation of our own visual symbols is a tool for self-knowledge, the recognition of our emotions and thoughts, and getting to know other people better. I will also discuss the possible understanding of symbolic drawings. For the presentation of my theme I will use drawings collected by myself.

Judit BERGMANN is an arts and visual culture teacher, and a PhD candidate at Eötvös Loránd University (Budapest). E-mail: judit.bergmann@gmail.com.

