Drama and dreams: Looking through a Cultural-Historical and Semiotic Lens at the Graphic-Dramatic Interplay of a Young Adult with Down Syndrome

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This study foregrounds Vygotsky's cultural-historical theory and semiotic analysis to attend to graphic and dramatic interplay of a young man with Down syndrome as a rich source for meaning-making. The role of art as a social, multimodal and semiotic resource is well described. To date, little is known about the role of art in mediating the meaning-making processes of individuals with Down syndrome or others with a cognitive disability. With selected examples of a young man with Down syndrome this investigation traces the source of his visual meaning-making. It provides a detailed analysis of the social and semiotic nature and evolving meaning-making processes associated with the ensuing artefact. While the findings cannot be generalized, the investigation directs attention that pedagogies and other practices of marginalized populations can be reshaped in important ways by understanding how the social and semiotic nature of arts drives the holistic act of creation and gives shape to the lived experience.

Keywords: Cultural Historical Theory; Semiotics; Meaning-making; Visual Arts; Down syndrome; Graphic-Dramatic Interplay.

Introduction

This study features the artistic meaning making process of a Billy, a young man with Down syndrome. He is one of the many young adults with a cognitive disability who seeks entry into the community (Brown, 2003; Jobling & Moni, 2000). Despite a growing attention to the need to create spaces for expression, little is known how people with a cognitive disability live their lives. Indeed, difficulties in verbal communication have made it difficult for many to express themselves (Jobling & Moni, 2000). For years people with Down syndrome and others with a cognitive disability have been neglected in the discussion of meaning-making and little is known how they live their life and experience their social world.

Not being able to speak has to equate to having nothing to say (Thomson, 2008) or a story to tell. Stories come in many forms, in visuals, in the narrative and in the embodied, or in a variety of combinations and whether fiction or real life accounts or in combination allow individuals to make meaning of their social context (Egan, 1999; Wright, 2010). The arts provide unique opportunities to give shape to individual experience and involve thinking, perceiving and feeling processes that allow tapping into the imagination and alternative ways of knowing about the world (Greene, 1995; Wright, 2010).

There is a growing interest in Vygotsky's cultural-historical perspectives to explain the symbolic nature of human expression and how the arts gives shape to the lived experience (Cathrene Connery, John-Steiner, & Marjanovic-Shane, 2010; Vygotsky , 1925/1971). From a Vygotskian perspective, the artwork is not just a stand-alone product but a symbolic manifestation of the artist's social world (Cathrene Connery , 2010a). For Vygotsky (1925/71) the art is the social within us and makes visible our most intimate and important experiences, emotions, and feelings of the soul (p. 249). Vygotsky (1925/1971 also noted the empowerment of the arts and how by taking on another role (1971) something inside him or herself they really become that person (p. 246). Examples of research show how the arts provide a complex playworld, in which transformative processes allow participants to develop a response to the social settings (Ferholt, 2010; Haas Dyson, 1997; Haas Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Hakkarainen, 2008; Wright, 2007, 2010).

For the longest of time, research methodologies involving people with a disability show an adherence to quantitative methods and medical models that consider the body as a fixed system of muscle, bone and organ that transcends history and culture with little attention

to identity and agency (Rogers Cherland & Harper, 2008). Debates underpinning research in disability studies are in search for new platforms for opportunities for participation, learning, agency and active citizenship (Brown, 2003; Ferguson, 2008).

The production of meaning through art of people with a disability remains largely uninvestigated (Taylor, 2005). The limited studies available show that the arts either in the form of drama or the visual enhances communicative abilities and provide opportunities for insights how people with a cognitive disability live their life (Raphael, 2004; Taylor, 2005). Personal experiences with people with Down syndrome have provided insights that although hampered by lack of communicative skills, they are narrators 'par excellence', who use every opportunity to express their experiences (Joosa, 2008, 2011)

In this paper I argue the importance of merging Vygotsky's cultural historical perspectives to address these «old silences» and provide opportunities for new insights and hopes by investigating the role of the arts (Greene, 1995). With examples from Billy, a young adult with Down syndrome, this ethnographic study explores why art is important to him and how the cultural historical theory and semiotic analysis provides a lens that gains insight into the complex nature of meaning-making process.

Methodology

This ethnographic study is staged against my work as a visual arts educator with the Adult Enhancement Program (AEP) of the Down Syndrome Association in Singapore (DSA). The focus is Billy, a young man in his early twenties who has Down syndrome, who is part of a group of six young adults with Down syndrome which is at the center of my current PhD research. Within the sheltered context of the AEP, Billy spends his daytime in a small community of other young adults with Down syndrome. Although he and his peers are bound by a commonality, caused by a trisomy in chromosome 21, the effect of Down syndrome is different for each individual (Stratford & Gunn, 1996). Billy, is just like any other person a unique individual, and in search for a place in this world.

The investigation took place over a period of six months and investigated in-situ video recording and the collection of the participants' artwork. With its visual nature it draws on visual ethnography and anthropology (Pink, 2001). This study is not meant to bring forward generalizations about Billy or people with Down syndrome butt considers the uniqueness and social nature of individual life experiences and its symbolic relationship between arts, meaning-making and influences and interactions of the social world. The focus on a single participant, or on someone familiar, is not unusual. For instance, Kress (2003) used extensive single examples from his own children's artistic development to clarify semiotic concepts.

Over the past few decades, cultural historical theory has made a considerable impact on the study of human development and the nature of thought (Daniels, Cole, & Wertsch, 2007). Development is a complex process of qualitative reorganization and happens throughout the lifespan and is inspired by dialectical and critical moments which find their origin in the social (Veresov, 2010; Vygotsky, 1978, 1986). Throughout his work on development Vygotsky had a great affinity research of people with a disability and believed in a positive resource oriented approach that looked beyond the limitations of quantitative diagnostics (Gindis, 1995). The search for a method brought this study to Veresov's (2010) notion of Vygotsky's forgotten methodology who highlights that in order to understand development in any form one needs to restore the whole process so as to identify the sources, the influences of the moving forces, moving forces, directions and specific features.

For Vygotsky (1978), semiotics or the study of the sign, played a crucial role in understanding development. Semiotics has seen many different applications and interpretations (Danesi, 2006; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006; Van Leeuwen, 2005). In this study semiotics is not considered a theory, but as a way to analyze and to strengthen the culturally and historically specific features and the role of the sign as a resource within practice and interaction (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006). Sign-making is a complex interactive and goal directed process whereby the external sign tools become internal ones, and are converted into internal symbols, which then lead the way into higher psychological functions (Wertsch, 1998; Valsiner, 2001; Vygotsky, 1978) . Anything and everything has semiotic potential and can become a sign system, from the gestures we make, the clothes we were, and to the position we prefer to sit (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). As tool it has the possibility to change its purpose, and as such the possibility to reorganize the whole structure of psychological functions (Valsiner, 2001). This makes the concept of the sign, and semiotic analysis ambiguous as from this perspective there are no universal signs because they are developed cooperatively within a given culture, and are the result of the (inter) actions and social practices of people (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006; Valsiner, 2001).

Signs are not to be confused with symbols or icons. Van Leeuwen, 2005 explains how there are three kinds of signs, differentiated by the relationship between signifier and signified. The icon (or iconic sign) represents the signified by having a likeness, such as a heart for love and a smile for happiness. The indexical sign are schematic pictures such as outlines of a male or female, the third is the symbol which has a conventional but arbitrary relationship between signifier and signified.

The process of semiotic analysis

The investigation was not a traditional Vygotskian experiment, such as the carefully staged examples of Ferholt (2010) and Hakkarainen (2008). From a cultural historical semiotic perspective the analsysis required more than just viewing. The process of analysis was divided into several steps and was a deconstruction and reconstruction of six months of video observations and other visual data but to work towards understanding

«the source of his art-making experience». Semiotic analysis is a multi-faceted task (Van Leeuwen, 2005). From a cultural-historical perspective it required attention to the uniqueness of the individual, as well as the context such as interaction with peers, environment, interlocutor and other factors such as attendance to the specific graphic strategies used, the semiotic features and communicative intentions of the participants and the features of the artworks.

The first step was to sort all the images according to date added with field notes and images about established routines, themes and special happenings. All art works were placed in a chronological order so as to gain insights and in particular to its features, such as materials, object and form and are based on an overview of the artworks which includes the total collection of drawings, paintings and written narratives produced during the period.

For this investigation, the next step comprised the multimodal transcription of four selected sessions, which were selected from beginning, middle and end. The transcripts were analyzed based on verbal and non-verbal interaction such direction of the speaker and response of the listener, type of speech such as offering/requesting/initiation/response of information. The transcripts included other information such as position, non-verbal interaction and movement within the social context. The last step focused on specific actions of Billy. Segments were selected to provide examples of individual actions and to emphasize specific developments within his individual text. Subsequently all information was pieced together so as to trace the source and directions.

Multimodal transcription conventions from Wright (2010, p. 51) were used. For scripting the first letter of the pseudonym was used. Square bracketing depicts interpreted words and indexes, while italicizing in round bracketing indicate embodied communication. Capital letters indicate emphasis. To address issues of privacy the Billy and all other participants were given Anglicized pseudonym. DSA was informed about this paper and special consent was sought from Billy and his caretakers and their agreement is much appreciated.

The findings

Billy did not come to me as a stranger and had been in my program for nearly four years. Many of his practices were established and marked by a mastery over the material processes involved in his art making. These previously established routines allowed an almost «invisible synchronicity» between Billy and me (Cathrene Connery, 2010b, p. 89).

From the earliest beginning, Billy's visual language carries recurring features and themes. From the earliest beginnings he has shown his profound admiration for Spiderman and his abilities to «shoot a web». During the six months of observation Spiderman remained a regular returning feature in his themes, but also s other heroes ranging from Harry Potter and Rush hour to High School Musical, Batman and X-men. The attrac-

tion to superheroes in stories is not uncommon (Egan, 1999; Haas Dyson, 1997). Powerful attributes of these heroes find their origins in ancient myths and legends and for the longest of time have served as symbols of honesty and justice (Wright, 2010).

Fig. 1. Examples of Billy's artwork

Figure 1 shows the artworks from 4 different events, 29 August, 6 September, 3 October 2008 and 31 January 2008. For Billy his images are icons in which a range of different meanings are invested (Pink, 2001). The positions of the images in his artwork carry a variety of connotations (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). Although Billy has a focus on a specific superhero character as the main actor, his images often include more than one character The slightly larger form, often position on the left, draws attention to the position of the main actor (Kress, 2003). The whole figures of the characters are positioned his artwork at a close social distance, which find correspondence to traditional definitions film and television (Bell, 201). With almost similar sizes, there is a certain demand and equality within each of the images with the characters directly looking and smiling at the viewer (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). In the background icons such as houses, musical notes and hears carry additional symbolic information about the setting and a relationship with the storyline. The use of hearts and musical notes indicate a focus on love and happiness and with their «all over» position are submerged in the text (Wright, 2010). The highly saturated colours of Billy's images carry a strong sensory modality and show both realism and fantasy (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). This is not unusual taking into account that superheroes wear costumes which are bright and often in primary colours. His themes appear to coincide with the screening of movies either in the cinema or in the AEP program, with cultural festivals and with events that carry a personal significance. The last artwork, painted just before Chinese New Year shows a focus on orange and red, colours which are strongly related to this cultural festival.

Although the provide a wealth of information, they do not provide insight into the process. A comparison between events showed Billy as a man of routines with a meticulous focus on his planning, self-determination

and choice. Without fail he brought along a stack of movie magazines. His verbal interactions evidenced that Billy knew the value of my response. He was keenly aware that in my role as the «gatekeeper» or interlocutor I had a strong say in what happened in the art room (Wright, 2010). Throughout each session, Billy ensured that I remained aware of his intent. His interest was not only focused on his current theme. Whenever possible he included his expectations and mental preparations for the next session. In this example from 29 August 2007, Billy stopped with his drawing on karaoke and his gaze focused on an article on the movie 'Rush Hour'.

B: Next week I want to draw this one (his gaze is directed at me while he points at his magazine)

E: (*while attending to some clean up*) Ya Ya

B: ...ESTHER! With a loud voice he ensures to get my attention and points at the picture and explains ... Kung Fu artist.

E: Oh the Kung Fu artist, what movie is that? (*I move closer to him*)

B: Fighting.

E: Mmm (*as I read the subtitle, I clarify*)... I thought it was Rush Hour?

B: (*looks at the picture and realizes I am correct*)... Also can.

B: (*Quickly he changed topic and points with his pencil at one of the photos and explains his role division*) This is me, this is William, this is Henry, this is Jeremy

E: (*to draw attention to the only female member of the group I probe*) and where is Gwenda?

(*Billy has to think about this. As he flips through the pages to find another movie, he finally finds a suitable image and points at two females which are Gwenda and Jill*).

That Billy did not forget was clear as the main characters of Rush Hour materialized (the image at the top left corner in figure 1). Billy's interest in telling his story had been a recurring event. Each time, before leaving he provides a verbal account about the adventures of the protagonist in his drawing. His narratives and comments carry a certain emotional undertone. When commenting on his Harry Potter (8 August, 2007) theme, he mentioned «If I can have magic I can make Jill to love me». Early September 2007, I encouraged Billy to write his dream and to extend on his drawing. I told him that if he would write more often, he could make a book of his stories. The effect of Billy's response was his «drama» (dream) and the beginning of a new feature to his routine.

My Drama
One day spider barket [bit] me
I go home and sleep drama spider (dream of the spider)
When weak [wake] up I thank my spider cousion [costume] will behive
I go out and dry [try] my move to john (join) web
That I save the day
I go to AEP to wear my t-shirt cousion [costume]
I when to I saw my cousion and mark
People cill (call) my name is Peter Parket [Parker]
My family and friend cill me Peter Parket
Jill is my Mary Jarny (Jane)
Big out a lot big bad grdy (guys)

In a metaphorical way his spelling error of drama instead of dream pointed at Vygotsky's dramatic categorizations and Billy's source of meaning making (Veresov, 2010). By moving into the social world of Spiderman, he was able to act upon allegorical situation such fighting the bad guys and just as the real Spiderman and engage in an emotional relationship with his «Mary Jane».

The value of response and social interaction with his peers were powerful moving forces for Billy to continue to develop his stories. The usual routine for this group is to get ready by discussing the movie magazines and other resources. The open space in the center of the art room was designed to provide opportunities for group discussions, sharing of resources such as the magazine and flexibility. The use of this space was for Billy a critical feature for his interactions and responses of the group.. Billy would place himself in a central place and thus ensure that other participants were in close proximity. Within the group of six participants, Billy's verbal interactions are mainly with me and Henry. This is no surprise as two of the other participants, Don and Jeremy, who would partake in the group conversation are nonverbal. The other two participants, Gwenda and Ken, normally adjourned to their own 'private space' and seldom mixed with the group and their discussions.

Close up video images evidenced how Billy often sought an alliance with Jeremy about his themes on superheroes and of the semiotic powers of gestures such as are regular exchange of Spiderman's hand signs. Among the participants in the group there was a common understanding about the use of movie magazines and images of lead actors. It is with Henry he often had verbal disagreement. For instance, in this scene of the 3 October 2007, they discuss a poster of High School Musical

E: So High School Musical...

B: YES (loud emphasis)

E: What is nice in High School Musical...who are you going to be? (as I look at his poster)

H: (buds in) I know I know I know basketball players (points at the lead character) I want to be this,

B: (clearly disagrees) No this one is Henry (points at the male character on the left)

H: (moves closer) Excuse me Excuse me I want to be this one lah (points again at the center)

B: No, I want to play basketball

Disagreement like this were a regularly occurring feature among Henry and Billy. Sometimes, I would interfere but so as not to take sides, I told the two young men that « they would get old very soon if they would continue to argue and each can be a hero in his story». They were not adverse to humor and both of them laughingly accepted. Billy's individual actions, as to the positive outcome of the confrontation were marked by expressiveness through position and body language, gesticulations such as facial expression, vocalisms and, at times, dramatization of characters or events. Often, such as in this incident he showed his happiness with the situation by using his hands to gesture his excitement.

Deeper investigations and close up video shots illustrated how Billy's actions, visual texts were a complex

material interplay and different modes such as drawing, paint and writing played important complementary roles. Examples of the same High School Musical episode (3 October 2007) evidenced the intent and meticulous nature of his actions. It is clear that his drawing is not a haphazard act. Instead, it followed a sequential. As Billy started on his High School Musical, he drew his images from left to right, similar to writing (Kress, 2003). With a focus on placement outer appearance of each character, each details is neatly sequenced. Before painting his story, Billy pointed at his finished painting of High School Musical and explained.

B: This is Ramli behind [a male member of AEP]

E: Who are we missing, Jennie and Lenny? [two new members of AEP]

B: No they don't come to the dance

E: What about Mary? [a female member of AEP]

B: No, Mary is a Charlie's angels

H: (buds in) Mary can't walk. Last time she fell down [a female member who broke her leg].

In his art-making Billy followed strict routines. His drawing would without fail be followed by painting. With purposeful movements he would get his materials and make conscious decisions about the choice of colours and brushes. But with paint, he would not seat himself in the center. Instead he would retreat to a secluded spot and seats himself with his back against the others. In this process the importance of the material tools become visible. His sequence of painting is similar that of his drawing and with meticulous strokes he painted the two images on the left. Subsequently Billy drew and painted, the disco lights, the cool cd, the music, and finally the basketball players.

Fig. 2. High School Musical the process

One of Billy's last routines was to write his story. It is in this role that he would position himself lying down in the center of the art room. It is at this moment that the complex sequential event of Billy's thoughts, his social world and focus began to take on a material form. How embedded Billy's art-making is in intent and routines only becomes visible when piecing the process together (fig. 2). Each sentence followed the same order as his drawing and painting sequence.

One day we go to high school

We can get ready to dance [he drew and painted two images «we]

I on the disco lights [drew and painted the lights]

And I on the cool cd to dance [drew and painted the cd]

A lot the hip hop cd

We became a high school muilc [drew and painted more figures]

We love to dance

I will take basketball to play and dance

To play sport or I play basket ball

Basketball to leg my shower with swim [drew and painted the basketball players]

We stay star we go highschool muilc

Do you want to dance [painted more musical notes]

Yes to want to dance

Last dance together

I like to dance and the ruber (rap)

This is my story about high school muilc.

Each new episode dream carried a new source of emotional intent and need. In his visual world, Billy is a skillful negotiator between reality and make-belief. By starting «with one day»... he allows the transformation into a 'superhero' and thus take on qualities that allow him to make the right decisions and save the world. With the allegorical qualities of his heroes he transforms himself and is able to enact and act upon his own chosen theme. Billy's graphic meaning-making shows the central role of being good, relationships and togetherness with his peers. In the High School Musical episode he asked questions such as «do you want to dance» and invites his audience to join in. His complex graphic, narrative and embodied interplay, gave evidence self-determination, compliance and willingness to solve conflicts and aim to achieve a solution (Wright, 2010). By highlighting the end of his story he returns back to reality. In the last episode of this investigation, he borrowed from past events and existing relationships and future events.

One day we are be gangster together

We are good brother sister

We are celbrion (celebrating) Chines New year

We go for watch movie together

Diffant (different) movie we watch

Coming to be Henry's birthday

We celebraien (celebrate) together

We are x-men4 friend

Coming to be Gail's birthday We stay toether (together)

We use our superpower

Our AEP to make the last stand

We are happy coming to be chines

New Year we also celbrain vantatime day

Coming to be vantatime (Valentine) holidays is coming.

A comparison with the other featured dramas or dreams evidences recurring themes but also other subtle changes. In his writing this brings along a change in his orientation, in this episode he does not use the personal pronoun «I», instead he uses «we». This final episode shows pays attention to more than the here and now of prevailing cultural

trends within social contexts and the expectations of the future, With his focus on the future such as birthdays of peers and festivals related to popular and ethnic culture, he creates an anticipation of the future.

A discussion

When listening and looking at Billy's graphic-dramatic interplay, a complex playworld became visible. One that contained specific features such as filmic qualities, the role of allegories, intertextuality and different episodes (Hakkarainen, 2008). Throughout the sessions Billy weaves in and out of reality, while he takes on different identities he remains a member of the AEP. His scenes function in a similar way as a play and the plot acts as a frame in which he enacts his life (Wright, 2010). With the use of existing and the creation of new signs, Billy created a symbolic play world in which he was empowered to be the author, director, scripter, narrator and audience (Hakkarainen, 2008).

The investigation of image, interaction and individual actions provided an important way to understand Billy's social world but also the qualitative change over time. The analysis brought forward a complex multidimensional semiotic process that moved lateral as well as vertical and, over time, thickened in richness. Billy's narratives were more than routines and his complex visual texts were created with a purpose. The findings strengthen research of the concept and powerful role of sensitive responses in guided playworlds (Ferholt, 2010; Hakkarinen, 2008). The different session gave opportunities for his prototypical characters to take on new identities and characters which allowed him to alter his story (Wright, 2010, p. 5). Routines established in the past became powerful semiotic resources that (re) created new signs to mediate the needs of present and developed with expectations of the future. With his predictable plots of happy endings he established «do it again» expectations (Wright, 2010, p. 110).

Within each episode, Billy tapped on these semiotic resources, which from mere physical instrument or tool, became his own unique source of meaning. Indeed, as true signs they operated on and became regulators in respect to one another but also motivators for the future (Valsiner, 2001). Each recurring event, gave insights into the strong emotional undertones of this young man's lived experience and his focus on response of a sensitive environment to listen to his story. It made visible his agentic abilities and potential and it is in this world that he is lifted above his current potential and able to achieve the 'unachievable' (Ferholt, 2010).

The value of his graphic dramatic make-belief play should not be dismissed as an important contributing factor for mental health. Young adults with a cognitive disability often experience the pressures of their limitations in everyday life (Brown, 2003). The arts provide a safe environment, to give empowerment both from societal constraints but also the opportunity to further develop individual potential (Raphael, 2004). Yet, despite the poten-

tial of the visual art, the investigation raises caution about the triadic relationship between Billy, his make belief world and his emotional needs. Billy's dreams are real and his fictional representation stories should not disguise to see the link between discourses and real life social actors and social practices (Van Leeuwen, 2005, p. 103). His attraction to superheroes and allegorical relationships such as love, power and relationships draws attention to the need for further investigation of the powerful semiotic messages of movies and the false realities and make-belief of the silver screen. The signifiers of superheroes in the advertisements are purposely designed to give a more than favorable and unrealistic image of societal relationships (Van Leeuwen, 2005).

The road ahead

This ethnographic study took on a social and semiotic lens to explore the graphic, narrative and embodied nature of Billy's interplay. This study was not a typical Vygotskian experiment with a staged environment (Veresov, 2010). Instead it was an investigation into an existing practice. It was through careful semiotic analysis that the process of drawing, painting and writing took on a tangible form and gave insight into the role of the arts. Taking on a particular interpretation such as cultural-historical theory is a humbling process. Vygotsky's insights are deep and not always straightforward (Veresov, 2010). As a new researcher, this investigation was a mere attempt to understand human thoughts and its social and semiotic origins of mind. I recognize that the explanations of many issues and application of theoretical perspectives on meaning-making and the process of understanding was inherently a qualitative experience. The subjective and individual interpretations of the examples are debatable and further investigations are needed. There are many issues still to be addressed such as the social situation of the art-room, the role of practice and the relationship of intent with Billy's development (Veresov, 2006). Taking on cultural-historical theory was also just one particular lens. As Pink (2001) notes that any experience, action, artefact, image or idea, whether in doing or in viewing (comments added), is never definitely just one thing but may be redefined in different situations, by different individuals and in terms of different discourses.

Despite many shortfalls, this study allowed understanding of the uniqueness of art to bring out the intimate personal and social nature of human expression (Vygotsky, 1925/1971). By viewing the graphic depiction, attending to the many influences, listening to the narratives, noting Billy's gestures and sequence of his expressive vocalisms, in writing, speaking, drawing and painting, this study gave insights how complex sign systems gave shape to his drama and dreams. The findings are just a tiny contribution to set the stage to further act upon the human experience as a holistic social and semiotic experience and for people with a cognitive disability to be included in the mainstream debates on meaning-making.

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Драма и мечты: взгляд на художественную деятельность молодого человека с синдромом Дауна сквозь призму культурно-исторической психологии и семиотики

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В данной работе предпринята попытка выдвинуть на передний план культурно-историческую теорию и семиотический анализ при изучении художественной деятельности и связанного с ней смыслопорождения на примере молодого человека с синдромом Дауна. В то время как роль искусства как социального, полимодального и семиотического средства хорошо описана, мало что известно на сегодняшний день о его роли в опосредовании смыслообразующих процессов у людей с синдромом Дауна и другими когнитивными расстройствами. В исследовании сделана попытка проследить источники визуального смыслопорождения на примере работ молодого человека с синдромом Дауна, подробно проанализирована социальная и знаковая природа и разворачивающиеся наряду с создаваемым продуктом творчества процессы смыслообразования. Несмотря на то что результаты исследования невозможно обобщить, важным итогом является привлечение внимания к тому факту, что работа с маргинализированными группами людей может быть пересмотрена на основании лучшего понимания, как социальная и знаковая природа искусства направляет целостный акт творчества и придает конкретную форму жизненному опыту человека.

Ключевые слова: культурно-историческая теория, семиотика, визуальные искусства, смыслопорождение, синдром Дауна, художественная деятельность.