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The pre-school teacher candidates' metaphorical thinking about the concept of music learning

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Abstract

In recent years, metaphors became the subject and center of the increasing interests in educational sciences. In this study, the purpose is to determine metaphorical thoughts of pre-school teacher candidates' about the concept of *music learning*. The data were analyzed by qualitative method. To analyze the data, content analysis method was employed. Data was collected through the use of the phrase "*Music learning is like . . . because . . .*" and analyzed through the following stages: *In the first stage*, all of the metaphorical images supplied by the participants were simply coded (e.g., sun, etc.). *Second*, the coded metaphorical images (n=52) were scrutinized to choose a sample expression that represented each identified metaphorical image best. *Third*, 5 major conceptual categories were classified and all the metaphors were grouped around common themes. According to the results, totally 52 valid metaphorical images were identified and they are collected under 5 different conceptual categories.

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1. Introduction

Metaphor is a language form that a concept or a term is applied to a different content to state a specific similarity (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). According to Lakoff metaphor is "not a figure of speech, but a mode of thought" (Lakoff, 1993: 210).

Metaphor enables us to enlighten some of the situations which is not noticed before and see in different aspects and reconceptualize by connecting an object and event to another network of concepts belonging to semantic field (Taylor, 1984:103). Figures of speech carry cases to another field, measure the reality and define in a simple way (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). Metaphors can be used in different fields of education. It's consulted to promote learning in education or develop creative thinking. The metaphors in teacher training field is used to process teaching practices and it's a tool which determines the teachers' places in modern education sense (Vadeboncoeur & Torres, 2003:88).

The contribution of music to child development in the period of pre-school education is an indisputable truth. When positive contributions of music activities to the students' developments that pre-school teachers made with the children are considered, it has great importance that teacher candidates have "music learning" concept.

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Although an increase is seen in the researches that metaphors used in different fields of education, it has been seen that there isn't any research made to reveal the metaphors that the pre-school teacher candidates have concerning "music learning" concept. When the attitudes of pre-school teacher candidates to music lessons are considered, it has been thought that many students are anxious about learning music.

The purpose of this study is to reveal the perceptions of Pre-school teacher candidates on the concept of music learning through metaphors. The study specifically looks for answers to the following questions:

1. What are the metaphors that pre-school teacher candidates have on the concept of music learning?
2. Which conceptual categories can be grouped under the common features in terms of these metaphors?

2. Method

This research has been carried on with the participation of totally 80 students from 3rd grade students who completed their music education and the students who already have education in Pre- School Teaching Program of Faculty of Education in Mersin University in 2010-2011 academic years.

Each of the students is asked to complete the sentence "Music learning is like.....because....." to introduce the metaphor they have regarding the music concept of the students who participated into the research.

According to Saban (2009), in the researches that metaphor is used as a research tool, the term "like" is generally used to definitively associate with the connection between "the subject of metaphor" and "the source of metaphor" and the term "because" is used to show a reason (or a logical reference) for the participants' own metaphors. These compositions that the students put down on paper have been used as data source in this research becoming one each "document" and "paper".

The data obtained have been used by using content analysis technique. The basic aim in content analysis is to reach the relationships and terms to explain the data gathered. The data summarized and commented in descriptive analysis is processed to deeper procedure and the terms and concepts which couldn't be noticed through descriptive analysis can be discovered in consequence of this analysis. For this purpose, the data obtained should firstly be conceptualized then organized according to the terms occurred and the terms which explain the data should be determined (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011:227).

Throughout the process of analysis of the data, a temporary list has been made according to alphabetical order. For this reason, the metaphors that the students wrote have been coded (life, sun, etc) and the papers which do not include any metaphor and empty papers (2 numbers) have been eliminated.

In the second step, after the papers which include weak metaphor image have been eliminated, valid metaphors have been obtained. The common subjects of metaphors have been determined after the properties have been analyzed in terms of the subject of metaphor and the source of metaphor. In the next step, the metaphors that their common points are determined have been categorized in terms of their properties.

To provide the validity of the data, all the metaphors created and their meanings have been explained in the research report as original statements. Reporting the data collected and explaining the research results have one of the important parts of validity in a qualitative research (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011:257). In this research, data analysis process has been explained in a detailed way and the metaphors collected, metaphor list and metaphor images that are thought to symbolize any category have been given place in findings part.

3. Findings

According to the results, totally 52 metaphors were identified by participants and they are collected under 5 different conceptual categories. These metaphors and categories were as follows.

Table 1. Metaphors of Pre-school teacher candidates' about the concept of "music learning

Metaphors	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Metaphors	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
A nice meal	1	1,25	Laughing	1	1,25
An enjoyable work	1	1,25	Law of nature	1	1,25
A new lease of life	1	1,25	Learning life	1	1,25
Ballet	1	1,25	Learning math	2	2,5
Being a mother	1	1,25	Learning to walk	4	5
Breathing	1	1,25	Life water	1	1,25
Cat	1	1,25	Life	7	8,75
Chocolate	2	2,5	Looking in the mirror	1	1,25
Climbing to the fruity limb of the tree	1	1,25	Love	3	3,75
Climbing stairs	1	1,25	Mountaineer	4	5
Childs' learning to speak	1	1,25	Puzzle	2	2,5
Discovery	1	1,25	Rainbow	1	1,25
Distress	1	1,25	Rings of chain	1	1,25
Drinking water when you are thirsty	2	2,5	Sun	3	3,75
Experiment	1	1,25	Shaping the field	1	1,25
Enjoying	2	2,5	Swarm up a tree	1	1,25
Entertainment	1	1,25	Sweet	1	1,25
Flying	1	1,25	The childs' growth	1	1,25
Funny trip	2	2,5	The color of life	1	1,25
Game	1	1,25	Torture	1	1,25
Get to know somebody	1	1,25	To simulate	1	1,25
Ghost	1	1,25	Tree	4	5
Growing flowers	4	5	Theater	1	1,25
Homework	1	1,25	Using a computer	1	1,25
Hot water	1	1,25	Water	1	1,25
Jumping clouds to clouds	1	1,25	Walking in the forest	1	1,25

As can be seen in Table 1, students were identified totally 52 metaphors. 39 of them were mentioned by only one participant. Other metaphors are listed in descending order as follows; **“life”** (f: 7, 8,75 %), **“mountaineer”** (f: 4, 5 %), **“learning to walk”** (f: 4, 5 %), **“growing flowers”** (f: 4, 5 %) **“tree”** (f: 4, 5 %), **“love”** (f: 3, 3, 75 %), **“sun”** (f: 3, 3, 75 %), **“chocolate”** (f: 2, 2,5 %), **“drinking water when you are thirsty”** (f: 2, 2,5 %), **“ learning math”** (f: 2, 2,5 %), **“puzzle”** (f: 2, 2,5 %), **“enjoying”** (f: 2, 2,5 %), **“funny trip”** (f: 2, 2,5 %).

Table 2. Categories of the Pre-School Teacher candidates' Metaphors

Catagories	Metaphors	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Learning music requires patience effort, discipline and process	cat, childs' learning to speak, learning to walk mountaineer, learning life, the childs' growth, growing flowers, homework, puzzle, tree, shaping the field, climbing stairs, rings of chain, being a mother, climbing to the fruity limb of the tree , law of nature	27	33,75
Learning music is enjoying, gives happiness and enlightens .	an enjoyable work , a nice meal , jumping clouds to clouds entertainment, enjoying , funny trip , the color of life laughing , chocolate, sweet ,sun, flying, game , theater breathing , drinking water when you are thirsty, life water using a computer ,water	23	28,75
Learning music becomes beautiful within the process	love, swarm up a tree, get to know somebody life, tree	14	17,50
Learning music is full of surprises	discovery ,walking in the forest, rainbow, experiment to simulate , a new lease of life, looking in the mirror	7	8,75
Negative	torture, distress, sun, ballet, ghost, learning math, hot water	9	11,25

As can be seen in Table 2, “*Learning music requires patience, effort, discipline and process*” category makes up the widest group (33,75%). Although 33,75% of the students state that learning music requires patience, effort, discipline and process, it's remarkable that 28,75% of them state music learning is enjoying, gives happiness and enlightens. A few number of pre-school teacher candidates used metaphors with the negative meaning like *torture (f:1)*, *distress (f:1)*, *sun (f:2)*, *ballet (f:1)*, *ghost (f:1)*, *learning math (f:2)*, *hot water (f:1)*

The direct quotations of the 5 conceptual categories that were developed by participants include the following:

Conceptual Categories

1. Learning music requires patience, effort, discipline and process

“Learning music is like growing flower; because it is a demanding thing”

“Learning music is like mountaineer; because it's a process full of roughness and demanding patience and effort.”

“Learning music is like shaping the field; because it's both difficult and pleasant as you learn.”

“Learning music is like climbing to the fruity limb of the tree; because first you are tired, get out of breath, give effort but in the end you enjoy the tiredness when you reach to those fruits and you neither leave any of the fruits nor the tree.”

2. Learning music is enjoying, gives happiness and enlightens:

“Learning music is like flying; because you become happy like a bird. “

“Learning music is like chocolate; because it gives pleasure as you eat.”

“Learning music is like an funny trip; because you learn new things from the beginning and such learning give joy to the person...”

3. Learning music becomes beautiful within the process:

“Learning music is like life; because it’s difficult but beautiful despite everything.”

“Learning music is like love; because beginning is always difficult, it becomes more pleasant as you learn.”

“Learning music is like getting to know somebody; because you like as you learn.”

4. Learning music is full of surprises:

“Learning music is like walking in the forest; because it’s uncertain what you will come across.”

5. Negative

“Learning music is like torture; because I have not musical talent.”

“Learning music is like sun; because it sometimes burns.”

“Learning music is like learning mathematics; because it’s difficult.”

4. Conclusion

The individuals who have university education develop new perceptions for event, case and situations by adding their experiences obtained through the process of student days, observations they did, the teachers they came across during their university life to the perceptions that they brought through their prelearnings. These perceptions create their attitudes and professional perspectives. When it’s looked from this perspective, the perceptions and attitudes of the teacher candidates that they are responsible for teaching point how they transfer those concepts (Öztürk, 2007).

When the data of this research made to introduce the metaphors that pre-school teacher candidates have concerning music learning has been analyzed, the metaphors that the students create concerning music learning are mostly collected under the category of “learning music requires patience, effort, discipline and process”.

It has been determined that 33,75 % of 80 pre-school teacher candidates who participated in the research states “learning music requires patience, effort, discipline and process”, 28,75 % states “learning music is enjoying, gives happiness and enlightens”, 17,50 % states “learning music becomes beautiful within the process”, 8,75 % states “learning music is full of surprises” and 11,25 % perceives learning music as negative thing.

As a result metaphors can be used as a powerful research tool to understand the prospective teachers’ personal insights on the educational phenomena such as music learning.

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