

## Chapter 2

# INVESTIGATING PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS' CONCEPTIONS OF THE CHILD THROUGH METAPHOR ANALYSIS

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### Introduction

Metaphor, in its simplest form, can be regarded as indirect speech and can be described as explaining and embodying one concept with another.

Different terms have been used to characterize metaphor: “analogy” in sociology and philosophy; “trope,” “borrowing,” and “figure of speech” in literature and linguistics; and “simile” in educational sciences. However, “metaphor” is preferred here since none of the terms above is able to completely explain metaphoric thought (Yapıcı Kösterelioğlu: 2016: 666).

Metaphor has been described as two thoughts that are not related to each other but are used together, their meanings overlaid, and one lends its definition to the other. The metaphor is a model of communication that can use words, images, symbols, emotions, attitudes, and physical movements. Metaphors draw power from this richness, and are widely used as allegoric expressions in daily life (Amunndsen, Huestis as cited in Piştöf, Şanlı, 2013: 183).

Metaphors strengthen and reinforce meaning beyond simply embellishing language; they embody abstract concepts and are effective in explaining concrete concepts with abstract expressions. When language is inadequate, metaphors help individuals to explain their emotions and innermost thoughts.

It is hard to make a distinction between language and thought. From the cognitive perspective, metaphors go beyond language. Behind words, there is a hidden image to be discovered. The latent thought hidden in the metaphor is more important than words. As the latent thought is revealed, the individual takes on the meaning ascribed to a higher cognition and becomes ready to gain a new perspective. The metaphor emerging from a dialogue is a tool of creative cognition and has attractive features such as enabling one to see images through the eyes of the mind, conveying a meaningful whole, improving comprehension skills, and developing more profound insight (Piştöf, Şanlı: 2013: 183).

Metaphor has recently been studied by both national and international researchers (e.g., Kuyucu, Şahin, and Kapıcıoğlu, 2013; Pesen, 2015; Soydemir, 2011; Kösterelioğlu, 2016; Kuyucu and Kapıcıoğlu, 2013; Büyüköztürk and Diğerleri, 2011;

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dicates that children are viewed as the future of society and the nation, and as the continuance of life (15.6%) with metaphors such as hope, life, and the sun. Ercan (2014) reported that the metaphor of the child as a source of happiness and laughter represented 30.78% of the sample with 41 metaphors. Some of these metaphors were life, peace, friendship, and the meaning of life. These refer to the importance of children to the family and to the fact that children are regarded as a source of happiness in Turkish society. In this study, metaphors such as happiness, the sun, energy, sugar, and the joy of the home were placed in the category of the child as a source of happiness and laughter (13.8%). Demirbaş (2015) included metaphors such as the sun, pomegranates, the world, the sea, and paradoxes in the category of the child as an unknown mysterious being. In this study, metaphors such as enigmas, the world, and miracles were included in the same category.

In conclusion, while most metaphors were included in the category of the child as a raw material that can be shaped (22.9%), only two were included in the category of the child as a being who shapes and teaches us (1.8%). When these two categories are considered as two opposing statements, it can be seen that the prospective teachers looked down on children and considered it within their power to change and shape them. Only two metaphors in the category of child who shapes and teaches us indicate a one-way perspective of the child.

Another conclusion to be underlined is that the child is considered a source of happiness and laughter (13.8%) and as a figure of innocence and purity (15.6%). This highlights that the child is beautiful and innocent and a source of happiness for us, a delightful tiny toy in a sense.

The child is a being that has certain needs according to its age group, thinks, and tries to perceive the world with his own logic and expectations. A failure to notice or ignoring these characteristics can harm the child and cause serious damage to his personal development.

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