Seeing Darkness, Hearing Silence: Student and Teacher Metaphors in the Context of Visually and Hearing Impaired

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to describe the teacher and student conceptual metaphors of the teachers of the hearing and visually impaired special education students. Participant teachers of the hearing impaired (N = 27) completed the prompts such as "The teacher of the hearing- impaired student is like… because…"., "The hearing - impaired student is like…because…. ". Participant teachers of the visually impaired students (N= 23) completed the prompts such as "The teacher of the visually-impaired student is like… because…", "The visually-impaired student is like…because….". The elicited teacher and student metaphors through the qualitative analysis of the data in the study indicated that the participant teachers conceived teacher and student roles in the realm of the educational context they teach, and these roles had strong connections with the specific deficiency of the students and they mostly reflect humanistic approach of teaching. While the role of the teacher as a "guide", "parent/caregiver" or "protector/help giver" receive priority for the teachers of the students who can not see, the teachers of the hearing impaired students emphasized the teacher's "being patient" and "being a problem solver"on the basis of the communication problems with the hearing impaired students. As to the student metaphors of the teachers, they considered the students mostly as "a discovery", as "a growing being", as "a nurtured being", as "a discoverer", and the like which reveal that the teachers conceptualized the learners as whole persons.

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Introduction

Metaphor studies conducted in the field of education in recent years have gained a significant place in the identification of mental representations considered to be important variables in learning and teaching processes. A wealth of research done in different disciplines demonstrates that metaphor as an imaginative structure has a shaping effect on thought, language, and science in general, as well as on how people express themselves in everyday life (Morgan, 1998). In their Conceptual Metaphor Theory, Lakoff and Johnson (1980; 1999) explore the pervasive and constitutive nature of conceptual metaphor in human thinking. They point to the unconscious and automatic properties of metaphorical thought in everyday experience.

A large number of studies attempt to uncover implicit teacher belief and conception about teaching and learning through identification, classification, and analysis of personal or predetermined metaphors. Most of them compiled data from elementary and/or secondary school with experienced and/or pre-service teachers (Inbar, 1998; Mahlios&Maxon, 1998; Martinez, Sauleda,& Huber, 2001; Ben-Peretz, Mendelson,&Kron, 2003; Saban,Koçbeker,&Saban, 2007; Saban, 2010) coming from a variety of school subjects such as science teaching (Seung, Park,& Narayan, 2011) and second language teaching (Oxford et al., 1998; Guerrero &Villamil, 2002). A very few studies (e.g., Wagner &Nückles, 2015) explore university teachers' metaphors of teaching. Inbar (1998), in a large-scale study, collected and categorized 7000

metaphorical images of teacher, learner, principal and school. According to the results of the study, while about 18% of educators conceived of students as "empty receptacles", only 7% of the students preferred images derived from this conceptualization. 10% of the educators envisioned students as "clay in the potter's hands," and only 3% of the students' metaphors reflected this image. 33% of the students and 8% of the educators viewed students as "captive beings," such as slaves or prisoners. Mahlios and Maxson (1998) asked entry-level pre-service teachers to write teaching metaphors. Four dominant themes emerged from their data, which is that teachers viewed themselves as explaining to, nurturing, stimulating, or guiding students. Martinez, Sauleda, & Huber(2001) investigated the teaching and learning metaphors of 50 experienced elementary school teachers and 38 prospective teachers in Spain. Their findings showed that a majority of the teachers were in line with the traditional metaphors describing teaching and learning as "transmission of knowledge." A small number of teachers employed "constructivist metaphors." A very few experienced teachers perceived the learning and teaching process as a "social process."Ben-Peretz, Mendelson, &Kron(2003) investigated the connections between occupational metaphors, the achievement level of the students the teachers taught, and the teachers' self-image using pictorial metaphors. Findings indicated that teaching context had a significant influence on teachers' professional self-images. Saban,Koçbeker,&Saban(2007) showed that conceptions of teaching/learning of prospective teachers varied in terms of their subject areas. When 1142 Turkish pre-service teachers' teacher metaphors were analysed, it was seen that prospective primary school teachers formulated "shaping-oriented" metaphors, prospective English teachers generated "facilitation-oriented" metaphors, and prospective computer science teachers produced "transmission-oriented" metaphors. In a recent study, Saban (2010) explored 2847 prospective teachers' view of learners. Findings revealed significant associations between the conceptual themes and prospective teachers' gender, the program enrolled in, and the status in the program.

In the second language classroom context, Oxford et al. (1998) provided one of the most theoretically comprehensive classifications of teacher/learner metaphors. The study obtained data from a range of sources (narratives of teachers, oral and written open-ended questions, and case studies conducted by other researchers) and cultural contexts (United States, Brazil, and Argentina). Then, it sought to find correspondences between the fourteen distinct teacher-formulated metaphors and four different philosophies of education, namely Social Order (e.g., teacher as manufacturer), Cultural Transmission (e.g., teacher as gatekeeper), Learner-Centred Growth (e.g., teacher as nurturer), and Social Reform (e.g., teacher as learning partner). Owing to cross-cultural similarities observed in conceptualizations of teaching/learning processes, the four-theory model developed by Oxford et al. was employed in teacher/student-generated metaphor research conducted in different cultural contexts (e.g., Zapata &Lacorte, 2007; Nikitina&Furuoka, 2008). In another language classroom study, Guerrero and Villamil (2002) asked experienced ESL teachers in Puerto Rico to provide metaphors with which they most readily associated with their students and teaching/learning process. The teachers' views of ESL learners and the teaching/learning process indicated by their metaphors were also asked. Nine conceptual metaphors representing the ESL teachers in classical roles (e.g., leader, provider of knowledge, nurturer, agent of change) were found.

Another branch of research utilized metaphor as a tool to detect changes in teacher belief and conceptions towards self-identity and teaching and learning practices, particularly among pre-service teachers (Leavy, McSorley, &Bote, 2007; Alger, 2009; Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011).

A small number of studies are designed to understand the relationship between metaphorical beliefs and teaching practice. Patchen and Crawford (2011), for instance, showed the incongruity between the epistemological positions and teaching practice metaphors of 32 working teachers through multilevel, qualitative analysis.

Taken together, previous research mostly conducted on elementary and secondary school in-service and pre-service teachers demonstrated that teacher and student-formulated metaphors help teachers understand their implicit beliefs and improve their professional knowledge and self-image. To the best of our knowledge, no educational metaphor study has been conducted in the special education context, specifically with hearing and visually impaired students and their teachers.It is clear that special education context has its own characteristics which differs from other educational contexts. Thus the teaching-learning environment in this specific context may attribute different roles to the teachers and the teachers' conception of their students may be rather different than the ones who teach to the students with no deficiencies. As is

well stated in Oxford et al. (1998) metaphor studies have the power of reflecting the "teacher's voice" which will be helpful in understanding educational problems, widening perspective consciousness and thus give insights for what is required for the enhancement of teaching to special-needs students.

The Context of Hearing and Visually Impaired Education in Turkey

In order to clarify the context of hearing and visually impaired education in Turkey, we find it necessary to give a brief overview of how the teachers of hearing and visually impaired students are educated. In the Turkish system of teacher training, four-year faculties of education offer programs for impaired-learner education teachers. Unfortunately, the number of these departments in the faculties of education is precious few. Hearing-impaired teacher education programs that the student-teachers can enter via the student selection and placement system exist in only five universities (Anadolu University, Karadeniz Technical University, OndukuzMayıs University, Near EastUniversity and Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University). Only Gazi University offers teacher-training program for visually impaired students.All of the graduates of the abovementioned departments are certified as classroom teachers (http://www.osym.gov.tr).

Unfortunately, there is not any hearing and visually impaired teacher-training program for secondary or high school subject (history, math, etc.) teachers. The graduates of the subject teacher-training programs are appointed as hearing/visually impaired secondary or high school teachers without any extra requirements such as sign language or Braille literacy certifications. Since all of the teacher-training faculties in Turkey follow standard curricula prepared by the Higher Education Council (YÖK), all of the four-year curricula of the secondary school teacher-training programs offer only a two-credit course, namely Special Education to Fourth-Year Students (http://www.yok.gov.tr).

The interviews we have performed with the teachers working at the schools for impaired students pointed to the fact that there exist in-service teacher-training programs for special education, but attending these programs is not a requirement. Moreover, they mentioned that whether or not these in-service programs meet the specific needs of the teachers is a controversial issue. They added that most of the subject teachers teaching hearing and visually impaired students have to face many problems, which present serious challenges for them. For example, for many of the subject teachers, communication with their impaired students is a salient problem. In order to solve this problem, the teachers of hearing-impaired students reported that they received help from upper-grade students who were skilled in lip-reading during their classes. İlkbaşaran (2013) also underscores the same issue by focusing on the importance of teaching sign language to classroom teachers who are specializing in teaching hearing-impaired students. She maintains that, "new teachers arrive at deaf schools with no sign language skills to communicate with deaf children, let alone teaching academic content using sign language" (p. 32).

The administrators of hearing and visually impaired schools are also subject teachers (http://www.meb.gov.tr). Since their educational background and qualifications are no different from those of the teachers, the school administrators also struggle with the same problems the teachers are confronted with.

Today in Turkey, there are 44 secondary schools for the hearing-impaired, 17 secondary schools for the visually impaired. The number of students enrolled in these schools is 2030. The number of teachers working in these institutions is 891 (http://www.meb.gov.tr).

Since the number of the schools for hearing and visually impaired is so few in Turkey, they are boarding schools that accept students from different regions of the country. However, if the families of the students live in the same city where the school is located, and if they do not want to benefit from boarding facilities, the students can attend schools during regular school times and live at home. Since there are many boarding students, after regular class hours, a female and a male teacher are on-duty to look after the students until the next school day.

This article deals with the metaphors that teachers in the Turkish special education context use to depict their self-images and the images of their students. More specifically, the purpose of the study isto identify and investigate:

(i) teacher conceptual metaphors generated by visually and hearing impaired special education teachers,

(ii) student conceptual metaphors generated by visually and hearing impaired special education teachers.

Method

Qualitative research design was chosen for the present study since the purpose of the study is to elicit how the teachers conceptualize themselves and their students in a visually and hearing impaired educational context. For providing a fuller picture and in-depth analysis of the phenomena triangulation was used (Ritchie &Lewis, 2003, p. 43-44).

Participants

The participants for this study included 50 teachers who are working at special education schools for visually and hearing impaired students in Mersin and Adana, in Turkeyduring 2012-2013 academic year. 27 (10 female, 17 male) of the teachers participating in the study were working at the school for the hearing-impaired in Mersin. This group of teachers, aged between 25 and 56 included 12 classroom teachers for the hearing-impaired, 11 subject teachers, and 4 school administrators. 23 (13 female, 10 male) of the participant teachers were working at the school for the visually impaired in Adana. This group of teachers, aged between 25 and 59, included 9 classroom teachers for the visually impaired, 11 subject teachers, and 3 school administrators.

Data Collection Instruments and Process

The elicited data collection technique was chosen for this study (cf. Cortazzi&Jin, 1999; Nikitina&Furuoka, 2008; Martinez, Sauleda, & Huber,2001; Saban, 2010; Saban,Koçbeker,&Saban,2007among many other researchers for the use of similar technique). The elicited data collection technique was combined with a qualitative approach for metaphor analysis (cf. Wan & Low, 2015). In this respect, thought patterns embedded in the metaphorical expressions were identified by collecting samples of metaphorical images along with their entailments, upon which conceptual metaphors were generated. Accordingly, the classroom teachers, subject teachers, and administrators were asked to complete the following written prompts:

The teacher of hearing-impaired students is like… because…
The hearing-impaired student is like… because…
The teacher of visually impaired students is like… because…
The visually impaired student is like… because…

The data-collection process was conducted in Turkish. Both the participant teachers in the hearing-impaired and visually- impaired schools were given a brief explanation aboutthe task. Afterwards, the photocopied forms of the instrument were completed in 25 minutes. Along with written prompts, interviews were held with the teachers and they are transcribed.

Overall, the multiple elicitation method, which contains both questionnaire and teachers' interviews, is used for in-depth analysis of the small number of participants, and hence, "the validity of researchers' interpretations" (Seung, Park,& Jung, 2015, p. 59) is improved. The data compiled via two methods (i.e., questionnaire and interviews) help reveal the teachers' own interpretation of the metaphor and avoid researchers' subjectivity in the metaphor analysis which threatens research validity. Given that "any metaphorical interpretation is always a value statement and represents an individual viewpoint" (Koro-Ljungberg, 2004, p. 357), no single interpretation is possible for any metaphor (Armstrong, Davis, & Paulson, 2011). Therefore we use multiple sources for triangulation as recommended in the literature to increase the validity of metaphor analysis.

Analysis of the Data

The three researchers who conducted the study analysed the data. The backgrounds of these researchers are social sciences teacher, professor of linguistics, and professor of curriculum development and instruction.

Determining the source domains of the conceptual metaphors and their coding. On the basis of the related literature (Kövecses, 2010; Lakoff& Johnson, 1999; Cortazzi&Jin, 1999), the list of source domains used to create metaphors was determined. The list contains categories such as plants, animals, relations, etc. All the transcribed data obtained from the research instruments were analysed on the basis of the source domain list. Each metaphorical image formulated for teachers and students occurring in the original data was categorized under one of the source domains in the list without considering their entailments. To establish reliability, each researcher worked independently, read and categorized the data numerous times, with iterative verification. The categorized lists were shared and discussed to resolve any differences (Oxford et al., 1998).

Identification of the conceptual metaphor.The metaphorical expressions of each participant were analysed in terms of their entailments. The data-analysis process was performed following the criteria proposed by Steen (2007). After identifying the linguistic expressions, which are categorized as metaphors, thensub-concepts within the main source domains were determined considering the entailments of the metaphorical expressions. Finally, conceptual metaphors related to teachers and students were generated. Throughout this process, the researchers againfollowed an iterative procedure involving discussion and resolution (Oxford et al., 1998). Table 1 exemplifies the process.

Table 1. Stages followed in the data analysis

Student is like a *flower* because s/he needs to be watered.

1. Main source domain	Plants	Flower
2. Elaboration in the source domain	Plants that need special care (Entailment of the metaphorical expression is considered.)	Flower
3. The conceptual metaphor	STUDENT IS A GROWING BEING (Generated conceptual metaphor)	Flower

According to the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, the following stepsareapplied when determining the conceptual metaphors.*Flower* as a metaphorical image that manifests itself in the *plants* source domain leads us to draw various conceptual inferences from plants in order to understand the target domain concept of the student. Accordingly, plants need special care, and watering plants is essential for them to grow. This correspondence between the source and target leads us to generate the STUDENT IS A GROWING BEING metaphor, whose metaphorical basis is one of perceived similarity between the stages of a plant's growth and the stages observed in a student's academic progress in an educational context.

Findings and Discussions

In this article the aim is to find and investigate the metaphors generated by teachers in the Turkish special education context use to describe themselves and their students. For this aim in mind, we first introduce the findings of teacher conceptual metaphors, and then mention the student conceptual metaphors produced by visually and hearing-impaired special education teachers.

Teacher Conceptual Metaphors of Visually and Hearing Impaired Special Education Teachers

The distribution of the teacher conceptual metaphors of visually and hearing impaired special education teachers are presented in Table 2 and the most frequent elicited metaphors are discussed.

Table 2. Distribution of the teacher conceptual metaphors of hearing and visually impaired special education teachers

Teacher Conceptual Metaphors	Samples of Metaphorical Images	(VIST) N=15	(HIST) N=24
TEACHER IS A PARENT/CAREGIVER The teacher of visually impaired students is like a parent because s/he takes care of her/his student individually.	mother, parent	13.33%	4.16%

TEACHER IS A PROTECTOR/HELP GIVER The teacher of visually impaired students is, for them, like the five senses because s/he is the translator of all their feelings. S/he is their eyes, feet, and hands.	student's eyes, ear	20.00%	4.16%
TEACHER IS A SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE The teacher of visually impaired students is like CCTV camera because s/he has a very sophisticated vision. S/he is stimulated by many moving objects around him/her and s/he records them into his/her mind and activates them proficiently when required.	google, world	—	4.16%
TEACHER IS A PATIENT BEING The teacher of hearing-impaired students is like a marble craftsman because the job is very difficult and great patience is needed to work the material. Each student has different characteristics, so each should be handled in a different way, which requires patience.	stone of patience, marble craftsman	6.66%	37.50%
TEACHER IS A PERSEVERANT BEING The teacher of hearing-impaired students is like a weight-lifter because s/he has to handle increasinglyheavier weights in order to winmore medals.	weight-lifter	—	8.33%
TEACHER IS A SELF-SACRIFICER The teacher of visually impaired students is like a full glass because s/he always gives. S/he never needs to take. S/he is satisfied with what s/he has. When the glass is emptied,s/he breaks him/herself and vanishes.	a full glass	6.66%	—
TEACHER IS A DISCOVERER The teacher of hearing-impaired students is like a good diver because there are so many things to discover in his students.	miner, explorer	13.33%	4.16%
TEACHER IS A SHAPE-GIVER The teacher of hearing-impaired students is like a pencil sharpener because by keeping them sharp, s/he prevents students from becoming dull due to their hearing impairment.	pencil sharpener	—	4.16%
TEACHER IS A GUIDE The teacher of visually impaired students is like the sun because, just as the sun radiates both light and warmth, the teacher does the same thing.	walking stick, map	33.33%	4.16%
TEACHER IS A PROBLEM-SOLVER The teacher of hearing-impaired students is like a magic wand because s/he tries to manage the impossible with impossible resources, and s/he is successful.	magic wand	—	16.66%
TEACHER IS A PERSON CONSIDERING INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES The teacher of visually impaired students is like a gardener because s/he tries to grow various flowers and plants in his/her garden according to their own characteristics. […] Each student is an individual with different characteristics. That student needs to be educated with those differences in mind. Every method and everyrule of behavior does not match every student.	gardener	6.69%	4.16%
TEACHER IS A HARD WORKER The teacher of hearing-impaired students is like a machine because s/he works perpetually.	machine	—	8.42%
Total		100%	100%

Table 2 indicates that, while TEACHER IS A GUIDE (33.33%), TEACHER IS A PROTECTOR/HELP-GIVER (20.00%), TEACHER IS A PARENT/CARE-GIVER (13.33%),and TEACHER IS A DISCOVERER (13.33%)are the most frequently emerging metaphors from the perspective of the teachers of the visually impaired students, TEACHER IS A PATIENT BEING (37.50%), TEACHER IS A PROBLEM SOLVER (16.66%), TEACHER IS A PERSEVERANT BEING (8.33%),and TEACHER IS A HARD WORKER (8.42%)are thecommon metaphors from the perspective of the teachers of the hearing-impaired students.

Our findings indicated that the teacher's being a *guide* is the most frequently used image for the teachers of the visually impaired students. This function of the teacher is exemplified in the following:

(1)*The teacher of a visually impaired student is like his/her stick. Because s/he warns him/her against dangers, makes his/her take precautions. S/he is his/her saviour and someone who trusts*.

The role of the teacher as a *guide*for the participant teachers includes the teacher's support, continuous encouragement and feedback to create "self-direction and self-expression in the students" (Oxford et al., 1998), for a future oriented goal.

On the other hand, the TEACHER IS A PROTECTOR/HELP-GIVER metaphor preferred by the teachers of the visually impaired students directly points to the students' disability:

(2) *The teacher of visually impaired students is, for them, like the five senses because s/he is the translator of all their feelings. S/he is their eyes, feet, and hands*.

Our participant teachers think that they have to protect their students from the dangers of life that they may face to due to their disability, since they conceive of themselves as the students' healthy eyes. They assume that their students require continuous support at present, contrary to the role of teacher as a *guide*, who directs students towards a goal (Mahlios&Maxon, 1998).

The final two most-frequent metaphors generated for the teachers of the visually impaired students are TEACHER IS A PARENT/CARE-GIVER and TEACHER IS A DISCOVERER. The following example depicts the conceptualized teachingas *parenting*.

(3)*The teacher of visually impaired students is like a mother because s/he approaches the students with a mother's affection*.

The *parenting/caring* role which the teachers attribute to themselves is a primary one in most of the studies (Block, 1992; Bullough& Stokes, 1994; Nikitina&Furuoka, 2008; Oxford et al., 1998; Saban, 2003), and it pertains to the classroom atmosphere in which the students' needs and interests are at the very heart of the teaching-learning process. The teachers who adopt this perspective centre their relationship with the students on the affective dimension of teaching, including counselling the students who are experiencing emotional difficulties (Oxford et al., 1998; Saban, Koçbeker, &Saban, 2007). In the visually impaired teaching context, the *parenting/caring* role of the teacher proved to be an important dimension of the teaching job for the teachers. The counselling activities of the teacher and his/her efforts in meeting the special needs of the students are nicely encapsulated in the following teacher remark from the teacher interviews which also parallels with the findings of the Laletas and Reupert (2016) that the caring teacher's role goes beyond the classroom "so that students have skills that enable them to function in society…"(p. 497).

(4)*We do not only teach here; we are also acting as parents or older siblings. Because the kids board at our school, we don't just have the responsibility of educating them. We also try to help them acquire life skills*.

The DISCOVERERmetaphor also lays emphasis on the learner-centred aspect of the teaching context:

(5) *The teacher of visually impaired students is like a miner because s/he works continuously under difficult conditions, whether the thing to be brought to light is coal or a gemstone like a diamond*.

For the teachers of the hearing-impaired, the TEACHER IS A PATIENT BEING conceptualmetaphor is a salient one when the Turkish cultural context is considered. *Sabır* "patience" is one of the culture-specific source domains used to map onto a range of abstract concepts such as life, emotions, and morality (Aksan&Aksan, 2012). The teacher views related to this metaphorization emphasize the lack of a common code used for communication between teachers and students, and thus the difficulty experienced by both parties. Teachers of hearing-impaired students endure this laborious intellectual task, and they patiently search and try various ways to interact with their students. Some of the examples from the data are given below:

(6) *The teacher of hearing-impaired students is like a jar of patience because you cannot express yourself to the students, and they cannot express themselves to you. Obviously there are quarrels due to communication breakdowns and misunderstandings. At these times we have to be very patient*.

Some studies in the related literature (Bullough& Stokes, 1994; Mahlios&Maxson, 1998; Oxford et al., 1998) also emphasize this characteristic of the teacher. What is significant for the present study is the emergence this feature among the prevalent metaphors for this special group of teachers.

The second metaphor for the teachers of the hearing-impaired group is TEACHER IS A PROBLEM-SOLVER. Shuell (2001, p. 102-103) explains *problem solving* as "a goal directed activity that requires an active search for and generation of possible alternative actions and decision making as to which course of action follow next. As part of this process, the problem solver must mentally evaluate the viability of various alternatives and then verify the effectiveness of the alternative selected by trying it out to see if it will work. Problem solving is clearly an active work." He then adds that in the practical situations "…logical choices among alternatives may not be possible, and there may not be a 'correct' or 'best' solution."The following examples of the TEACHER IS A PROBLEM-SOLVER metaphor overlaps with Shuell's depiction of the *problem solving* process in the teaching-learning context:

(7)*The teacher of hearing-impaired students is like a magic wand because s/he tries to manage the impossible with impossible resources, and s/he is successful*.

(8) *The teacher of the hearing-impaired students is likea designer because s/he continuously makes different designs in order to teach the students. This does not only include the students' individual differences, but also includes the decisions to be made about when, why, and which methods of teaching are appropriate for the specific teaching-learning context.*

Both examples indicate the teachers' goal-directed actions to solve problematic situations. The entailment of the "magic wand" metaphorical expression supports the idea that for some practical educational situations there may not be clear choices among the alternatives during the problem-solving process. The "designer" metaphor, on the other hand, puts emphasis on the teacher's search for and generation of possible alternative actions and decision-making as to which course of action follows next in the specific context of teaching.

Student Conceptual Metaphors of Visually and Hearing Impaired Special Education Teachers

The distribution of the student conceptual metaphors of visually and hearing impaired special education teachers are presented in Table 3 and the most frequent elicited metaphors are discussed.

While the findings related to the teachers of the visually impaired show that STUDENT IS A SHAPED BEING(22.22%) is the most salient metaphor for these teachers, for the teachers of the hearing-impaired students, the STUDENT IS A DISCOVERY metaphorranks first (31.81%).

The previous research on student metaphors in the Turkish context of teaching (Aydın&Pehlivan, 2010; Saban, 2010) reveal that the metaphors *student as a shaped being / student as raw material* are the frequently observed student metaphors from the perspective of teacher trainees. In these studies, these conceptual themes hold the traditional perspective of the teaching business. In the present study, however, the teachers of the visually impaired learners adopted a learner-centred perspective due to the entailments of the SHAPED BEING metaphor:

(9) *A visually impaired student is like a diamond because s/he is very valuable, but very difficult to process.*

(10)*A visually impaired student is like a jewel in the darkness… When s/he is processed correctly, tenderly, and nicely, s/he will shine and turn the darkness into light*.

The teachers' comparison of the learner to an ore to be processed and shaped, and which then becomes more valuable and functional is completely different from the traditional *shaping* concept of the learner. On the other hand, though not frequent, this metaphor emerged in its traditional sense in the metaphorical imagery of the teachers of the hearing-impaired group:

Table 3. Distribution of the student conceptual metaphors of hearing and visually impaired special education teachers

Student Conceptual Metaphors	Samples of Metaphorical Images	(VIST) N=18	(HIST) N=25
STUDENT IS A NURTURED BEING A visually impaired student is like a baby because s/he is defenseless, innocent, and unaware of danger. S/he always in need of help.	baby, kitten sapling	11.11%	18.18%
STUDENT IS A SHAPED BEING A visually impaired student is like a diamond because s/he is very valuable, but very difficult to process.	diamond, coal	22.22%	4.54%
STUDENT IS A DIRECTED BEING A visually impaired student is like an arrow because s/he follows the path you losehim/her on.	arrow	11.11%	9.09%
STUDENT IS A DISCOVERY A hearing-impaired student is like a closed box because if you cannot communicate with him/her, if you cannot discover a way to understand him/her, and it is impossible to approach him/her and open him/her up.	undiscovered continent, underground spring	11.11%	31.81%
STUDENT IS A KNOWLEDGE RECEPIENT A visually impaired student is like a closed box because when you fill up the box,s/he feels safe. S/he notices that s/he is valuable whens/he is loaded with knowledge.	closed box, box	11.11%	4.54%
STUDENT IS A TEACHER A visually impaired student is like a book because you learn something whenyou read it.	book	5.55%	4.54%
STUDENT IS A RECORDER A hearing-impaired student is like a camera because s/he records whatever s/he sees.	camera, tape recorder	5.55%	13.67%
STUDENT IS A DISCOVERER A visually impaired student is like a newborn baby because s/he has an insatiable desire to learn everything. S/he tries to see everything with her hands.	a newborn baby	5.55%	—
STUDENT IS A GROWING BEING A hearing impaired student is like a young tree because s/he grows due to the teacher's care.	flower, sapling	—	13.63%
STUDENT IS A CHANGING BEING A visually impaired student is like a chameleon because s/he may change at any moment.	apple, chameleon	11.11%	—
STUDENT IS A PERSEVERANT BEING A visually impaired student is like a competitor because s/he tries to catch any kind of opportunity and possibility to win and overcome difficulties.	competitor	5.58%	—
Total		**100%**	**100%**

(11) *A hearing-impaired student is like a blank sheet of paper because when we come back to it, we see just what we wrote on it.*

STUDENT IS A DISCOVERY is the most prevalent student image for the teachers of the hearing-impaired. What the teachers mostly refer to with the concept *discovery* is the communication difficulties of the students, and the teachers' constant challenge in exerting themselves to understand what their students convey. Decoding the hearing-impaired students' message becomes a great discovery process and challenge for the teachers, since there has not yet been a standard Turkish sign language taught in the schools (cf. İlkbaşaran, 2013; Makaroğlu&Ergenç, 2016). The examples below depict the DISCOVERY metaphor:

(12) *A hearing-impaired student is like the sea because you discover him/her when you come closer, when you swim in.*

When interviewed, a teacher of hearing-impaired students explained that:

(13) *Since the hearing-impaired students live in their own world, we try to discover exactly what they want to say from certain clues in their behaviour*.

The teachers of the visually impaired group alsoemployed the DISCOVERY metaphor, but from a different perspective. They focused on the students' interests, talents, skills, and individual differences as features waiting to be discovered:

(14) *A visually impaired student is like an underground resource because s/he is full of richness waiting to be revealed*.

The following narration from a teacher of visually impaired students is nicely encapsulated the DISCOVERY metaphor.

(15) *... During the activities we do with the children in the playground, anyone who observes us may think that we as the teachers are outrageous because they are visually impaired and we let them run free. One may think that we are not taking care of them. However, this is not the case. We observe them in this larger space to try to find indications of their skills and certain individual characteristics, and we try to plan and base our activities on these observations*.

STUDENT IS A RECORDER metaphor which is a frequent one (13.67%) for the teachers of the hearing impaired students'points to the hearing deficiency of the students. Below is an example from the data:

(16)*A hearing-impaired student is like a camera because s/he records whatever s/he sees*.

The metaphor points to the importance of the visual stimuli for the learning process of these students from the perspective of their teachers.

For the teachers of the hearing impaired group of students, the metaphor STUDENT IS A GROWING BEING is also a predominant one (13.63%). The collected data show that the teachers conceptualize their students as plants such as *young trees or flowers* that need special care to help with their growth.

(17) *A hearing impaired student is like a young tree because the more you care the better s/he grows*.

It is noteworthy that all participant groups in the study foreground the STUDENT IS A NURTURED BEING metaphor in the special education context of teaching (VIST,18.18%; HIST, 11.11%). As discussed in Oxford et al. (1998), when the teachers care and nurture, the students are cared for and nurtured. Citing Scarella& Oxford (1992), Oxford et al. maintain that the act of caring has certain features: "Caring actions grow out of a concern for the welfare, protection, or enhancement of the cared for… It begins with an openness and receptivity. Teachers are aware of who their students are, what their strengths and weaknesses as learners are…" (p. 29). It is not surprising that this conceptual content of caring exactly corresponds to the examples below:

(18) *A hearing-impaired student is like a sapling because s/he needs care, protection, and love*.

During the interviews, one of the teachers of the visually impaired said:

(19) *I have two cats. To let the students get to know them, sometimes I bring the cats to the school, so my students sometimes ask me how my cats are. And I tell them, "I'm going to take them to the vet for their vaccinations." When one of my boarding students heard this, she said, "I wish I were your cat." When I hear something like this, I'm really happy, but at the same time I am so touched that I find myself on the verge of tears*.

Though STUDENT IS A TEACHER is not a frequentmetaphor in our data, it is worth emphasizing since it is not a prevalent metaphor in the literature.Cognizance of the student's role as a *teacher*directly reflects the distinct nature of the teaching-learning context in the sense that the metaphor highlights different aspects of education for both groups of participant teachers:

(20) *A visually impaired student is like a book because you learn something when you read it*.

When interviewed, a teacher of the hearing impaired repliedas:

(21) *The first year I started to teach at this school, I decided to give up. But in time my students taught me the sign language*.

From the perspective of the teachers, they are the "learning partners" (Oxford et al., 1998, p. 41) of their studentsand they continuously learn many things from their students.

Conclusion

We aimed to identify and investigate how visually and hearing impaired special education teachers perceive the concepts of *teacher* and *student* by means of conceptual metaphors. Based on the findings, the following conclusions can be drawn from the study.

Firstly, the elicited metaphors of our participant teachers are concrete indicators of what it is to be a teacher of the impaired students. Thus, a substantial number of teacher metaphors that emerged in this study reflect the teacher's concern for special needs, encouragement and welfare of their students. They also emphasize the teacher's devotion to make students feel secure, and her/his continuous efforts to overcome the problematic situations they encounter in the specific teaching-learning context.

Secondly, it is observed that the most frequent teacher metaphors of each participant group of teachers differ due to the deficiency of the students they teach. For example, while the role of the teacher as a *guide, parent/caregiver* or *protector/help giver* receive priority for the teachers of the students who cannot see, the teachers of the hearing impaired students emphasized the teacher's being *patient* and being a *problem solver* considering the communication problems with the hearing impaired students.

As to the student metaphors of the teachers, we can say that they again mostly reflect humanistic approach of teaching. Considering students as a discovery, as a growing being, as a nurtured being, as a discoverer, etc.reveal that the teachers conceptualizedthe learners as whole persons.Therefore most of the elicited teacher and student metaphors in the study depict the role of the teachers and the learners from the point of view of Learner Centred Growth perspectiveas is stated in Oxford et al., 1998. This is not surprising since teaching and learning are atwo-way relationship. Therefore it can be concluded that participant groups of the study conceive their roles in the realm of the educational context in which they teach and have developed a coherent image of their roles and their students on the basis of their past experiences in the school environment.

Finally, we would like to note that this study has limitations due to the small number of participants and the findings cannot be generalized to groups of teachers who work at special education schools. However, we hope that the findings of the study might shed light on further similar studies designed to be conducted on larger groups of teachers who teachimpaired students.We believe that future metaphor studies conducted both with special education teachers and studentsmay provide precious insights into the enhancement of the special education teacher education curriculum and in-service teacher development programs.

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