

Analysis of Pre-Service Turkish Teachers Conception of The Internet

Research Article

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to reveal Turkish language candidate teachers' perception of the internet concept through metaphors. In this regard, it is thought that the study will make an important contribution to the literature. In the study, phenomenology, one of the qualitative research methods, was used. The study is 100 students, who are in the 1st and 3rd classes of Turkish Education Department of Faculty of Education of a big university in the south of Turkey, in fall semester of 2017-2018 academic year. The reason for choosing the 1st and 3rd grade Turkish Education Department students, who take computer lesson in 2nd grade, is to determine their perceptions of the computer course before and after taking this course. Firstly, the students were informed about the metaphor concept and then the subject was made clear to them through some examples. Then, in order to determine their perception of the internet concept blank papers, on which the following sentence is written by the researcher beforehand "The internet is like.....in my life, because.....", were handed out and the students were asked to complete the sentence. They were given 60 minutes to be able to create metaphors. Descriptive analysis and content analysis techniques were used in the analysis of the data. Here, the reliability that was suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) was calculated according to same and different decision sum formula. As a result of the calculation, the reliability of the researcher was found as 86 %. The fact that the result of the calculation is over 70% is a proof of the reliability of the study as it is accepted by Miles and Huberman.

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Introduction

The 21st century we live in is called "information age" as a result of the rapid development and changes in almost every area of life in the last century. The biggest share in this denomination belongs to the technological developments. Using the developments in the field of informatics in educational practices

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provided various conveniences to the educators, so they gave more importance to these kinds of developments. When viewed from this aspect, the most important innovation is the invention of the computer. While the computers met educational practices in many countries during the 1970s, they were integrated into educational environments in our country in 1984 when the Ministry of National Education (MONE) sent 1100 computers to the secondary education institutions under the name of "New Information and Communication Technology" studies (Uşun, 2004). In addition to the computer, the internet is one of the significant discoveries which entered not only educational life but also almost every area of human life. Thanks to the Internet, people can access information and share with others whenever they want without the hassle of time and space. (Orhan & Akkoyunlu, 2004). However, there are some negative cases that the internet may cause in people's life. These are communication problems, economic losses caused by various sites on the internet, fraud and the like activities, info pollution and isolation from the social environment. (Swickert, Hittner, Harris & Herring, 2002).

When the condition of accessing to the internet are examined across Turkey, it is seen that 76,3 % of the houses has an internet connection. This percentage is an indication of widespread usage of the internet in our country (Turkish Statistical Institute, 2016).

Together with the use of the internet in educational environments, the teachers' role changed from a person who conveys the information to the one who leads and encourages the students to reach the information. The internet, which offers unlimited information and new ways of teaching in sharing information, provides various conveniences to the teachers and students in their educational lives. The teachers should be trained in this area in order to benefit from these facilities and to ensure that the internet can be used effectively and efficiently in the field of education. (Akinoğlu, 2002). Within the framework of the Fatih project, the MONE has started to distribute tablets to all the teachers and students to ensure equal opportunities in education. Thus, the lessons can be lectured more effectively and efficiently through tablets. Therefore, the teachers should have full knowledge of the computer and information technologies and use them more effectively.

The metaphor is defined as naming objects or concepts and the use of experiences of people in transmitting them, in other words, it is expressed as the language of the experience (Miller, 1987). According to Lakoff and Johnson (2005), the metaphor is to understand a phenomenon based on the other one and to experience it. They are of great importance in the process of visualization and learning of, especially, difficult and abstract concepts. In this respect, they help people to learn new information (Morgan, 1998). The metaphors, especially in the 18th century, were considered as a problem in the fields of language and thought, but the studies on them date back to Aristoteles (McGlone, 2007: 110). According to Lakoff and Johnson (2005: 28), they are not just a language problem.

The metaphors have been used as a tool for pedagogical reflection and evaluation in teacher education, program theory, professional identity development, mental model, exploration and change in teaching (Saban, 2006). In addition, they can help teachers and prospective teachers to identify themselves and can be used to combine theory and practice, particularly in teacher education (Leavy, McSorley and Bote, 2007: 1230).

This study examined the opinions and metaphors of the prospective Turkish teachers on the internet which is widely used in today's world in depth. The metaphor studies in the literature show that a single metaphor will not be sufficient to explain a concept from a holistic perspective, but it can be analysed and examined with more than one metaphor.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study to get the clear-picture picture of the opinions, mental images and attributed meanings of the prospective Turkish teachers on the internet and to better understand their purposes of using

it. With this motivation, it was tried to reveal the perceptions of the students on the internet through the metaphors created by themselves.

Method

This study adopted the phenomenological design of qualitative research methods. This design focuses on the phenomenon that is actually known but not had an in-depth understanding. The phenomenological studies generally aim at revealing individual perceptions of a phenomenon. (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008). Creswell (2013) states that in phenomenology, the researcher seeks answers to two fundamental questions below;

1. What are the perceptions or experiences related to the phenomenon?
2. What are the conditions and circumstances in which the experience of the phenomenon occurred?

Study Group

This study was conducted with 102 voluntary 1st and 3rd-grade university students studying in the Department of Turkish Language Teaching at a large university in southern Turkey during 2017-2018 academic year. Since the students in this department attends to the course "Computer" in the 2nd grade, the study group was purposefully chosen from these two grades in order to determine to what extent their perceptions on the internet have changed. There were 52 1st-grade students (28=female, 24=male) and 50 2nd-grade students (27=female, 23=male). Since two students in the first grade did not specify any metaphor, they were excluded from the evaluation. Table 1 below presents the frequency and percentage values of the participants' demographic information.

Table 1. Gender and Class Profiles of the Participants

Variable	Option	f	%
Class	1 st -grade	50	50
	3 rd -grade	50	50
Gender	Female	55	55
	Male	45	45
TOTAL		100	100

Data Collection Process

The students were firstly informed about the concept of the metaphor and some examples were given to make them easier to understand the subject. Later, the papers prepared by the researcher and written a sentence "The internet is like in my life because" were handed out the students and they were asked to complete the sentence so as to identify their perceptions on the internet. Since the main purpose of the study is to utilize from the first thoughts coming into their minds related to the metaphors, the students were given about an hour to create their metaphors.

Data Analysis

Prior to the data analysis, the relevant studies in the literature were reviewed (Aydın & Pehlivan, 2010; Saban, 2004; Çelikten, 2006; Cerit, 2008, Tiryaki & Demir, 2016). The collected data were analysed using descriptive and content analysis techniques. Therefore, a four-stage path was followed. Firstly, the metaphors created by the participants were listed in alphabetical order. In the meantime, it was examined whether they completely created the metaphors. In the second phase, the metaphors created by the participants were re-examined to determine the expressions that can represent them. At this phase, the answers which did not present a logical basis for the metaphor or were considered as non-functional to contribute to the

understanding of the internet excluded from the analysis. In the third phase, after the sample metaphors were determined, the acceptable ones were grouped and interpreted according to their similarities. 6 categories were determined in total. In the final phase, the validity and reliability of the study were checked. For this reason, the findings were firstly analysed by the researcher and sent to two external researchers for expert's opinion. In this context, the external researchers were asked to write the metaphors into the relevant categories and the categories of the researcher and external researchers were compared to set the reliability of the study.

It was calculated by using the formula (Reliability= consensus/ consensus +dissidence) developed by Miles and Huberman (1994). The reliability of the study was found at 86 %. The fact that the ratio was over 70% revealed that the study was reliable as accepted by Miles and Huberman.

The Significance of the Study

While examining the perceptions, attitudes and beliefs of the prospective teachers is one of the main objectives of the studies on teacher education, such studies positively affect the prospective teachers since these studies contribute to their personal and professional development by determining their tendency, beliefs and professional practices in the pre-service period. It is important to determine the beliefs, assumptions and perceptions of the prospective Turkish teachers on the internet which is widely used in almost all areas of life in recent years. In this context, this study aims to reveal the perceptions of the prospective Turkish teachers on the concept of the internet through the metaphors. In this respect, it is believed that it will make a significant contribution to the literature.

Findings

In this section, the findings collected through the papers written a sentence "The internet is like in my life because" were examined. The similar metaphors were grouped under the same headings and the frequency values were presented.

The metaphors created by the participants were grouped under 6 headings. They are as follows:

Table 2. Metaphors of the Students' Perceptions of the Internet

Categories	Metaphors	N	f	%
The internet as a source of life	Water (2), Godsend (1), Savior (1), Heart Pumping Blood (1), Organ (1), Life (1)	6	7	7
The internet as a means of communication	Communication (9), News Channel (2), Smart Phone (2), Free Phone (2), WhatsApp (1),	5	16	16
The internet as a means of game, entertainment and hobby	Social Media (7), Cinema (2), Pleasing (3), Tivibu (2), Cd Player (2), PlayStation (2), Friend (2)	7	20	20
The internet as a means which makes life easier	Store (3), Bank (3), Online Pay Desk (2), Tax Office (2), Hospital(1), Baby Silencer (1)	6	12	12
The internet as a harmful tool	Waste of Time (4), Asociality (3), Alcohol (3), Liar (2), Slavery (4),			

	Radiation (2), Chaos (1), Cancer (1), Obesity (1)	9	21	21
The internet as an academic tool	Book (17), Walking Library (3), Language School (2), Exam Centre (1), Dictionary (1)	5	24	24
Total		38	100	100

The gender distributions of the participants according to the categories can be shown as follows:

Table 3. Distribution of genders according to categories

GENDER	The internet as a source of life	The internet as a means of communication	The internet as a means of game, entertainment and hobby	The internet as a means which makes life easier	The internet as a harmful tool	The internet as an academic tool	Total Metaphors
Female	2	9	12	8	13	14	58
Male	5	7	8	4	8	10	42
Total	7	16	20	12	21	24	100

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that female students could create more metaphors than males. It is observed that there was a significant difference in the categories such as the internet as means for game, entertainment and hobby, the internet as a means which makes life easier, the internet as a harmful tool and the internet as an academic tool in favour of female students. In the category "the internet as a source of life", the situation was in favour of males.

Table 4. Class distributions of participants according to the metaphor categories

Categories	1 st -grade	3 rd -grade	Total
The internet as a source of life	3	4	7
The internet as a means of communication	7	9	16
The internet as a means of game, entertainment and hobby	8	12	20
The internet as a means which makes life easier	3	9	12
The internet as a harmful tool	4	17	21
The internet as an academic tool	10	14	24
Total	35	65	100

As can be seen in Table 4, 3rd-grade students were almost two times more successful than the first grades. This finding shows that 3rd-grade students used the internet more than the 1st-grades and they attributed more meaning to it.

Categories

1. The internet as a source of life: the students created 9 metaphors in this category. The water (f: 2) metaphor was the most commonly used one. The most important reason for the frequent use of this metaphor was that there was internet in almost all areas of life and it provided great facilities for people. Other metaphors were *water, life, godsend, saviour, a heart pumping blood and organ*. The metaphors created by the students and the reasons for developing them can be cited as follows:

- . *The internet is like water for me because it is the source of life.*
- . *The internet is almost like a heart pumping blood.*
- . *The internet is like a godsend, it lends a hand every moment.*
- . *The internet is like an organ, so it's essential.*
- . *The internet is simply like a life because it is a must.*
- . *The internet is like my saviour in every situation, it helps me at any time and in any case.*

2. The internet as a means of communication: the students created 5 metaphors in this category. The most commonly used one was *communication* (f: 9). other metaphors were a *news channel, smartphone, free phone* and *WhatsApp* which is an instant messaging app over the internet. When it comes to communication, the first concept that comes to students' minds is internet and communication. The students stated that they used the internet for communication especially with social media and instant messaging apps, e-mail and similar programs. The metaphors created by the students in this category can be cited as follows:

- . *The internet is like a communication. I can communicate thanks to it in every situation.*
- . *The internet is like news channels, I can immediately learn all kinds of news on the internet.*
- . *The internet is like a smartphone, I can make video calls when I have internet.*
- . *The internet is like a free phone because we can call the person we want on the internet for free as long as we have an internet connection.*
- . *The internet is like WhatsApp, I can send messages anytime.*

3. The internet as a means of game, entertainment and hobby: the students created 7 metaphors in this category. The *social media* (f: 7) metaphor was the most commonly used one among these. Others were *cinema, pleasing, tivibu, CD player, PlayStation* and *friend*. The metaphors created by the students are as follows:

- . *The internet is like social media, I can find everything such as news, entertainment and game on the internet.*
- . *The internet is like a friend... I get bored when I do not have internet just as when I do not have a friend.*
- . *The internet is like socializing, I socialize by being friends with it.*
- . *The internet is like a cinema, I can watch all kinds of movies on the internet.*
- . *The internet is like a PlayStation, I can play all kinds of games on the internet.*
- . *The internet is like something that gives happiness, I'm usually happy and pleased when I use the internet.*
- . *The internet is like tivibu, I can watch the TV series whenever I want.*

. *The internet is like a cd player, I can listen to music.*

4. The internet as a means which makes life easier: the students created 6 metaphors in this category. The *store* (f: 3) metaphor was the most commonly used one among these. Others were *a bank, online pay cash, tax office, hospital, and baby silencer*. The metaphors can be exemplified as follows:

. *The internet is like a store, I can buy everything I'm looking for on the internet.*

. *The internet is like a bank, I can do all the bank-related stuffs...*

. *The internet is like an online pay cash, I make all kinds of payments online.*

. *The internet is like a tax office, for example, I can directly pay motorcycle tax on the internet.*

. *The internet is like a hospital, I can get information about my minor diseases on the internet without going to the hospital.*

. *The internet is like a baby silencer, the babies immediately keep quite thanks to the games and cartoons on the internet.*

5. The internet as a harmful tool: the students created 9 metaphors in this category. The waste of time (f: 4) was the most commonly used metaphor among these. *Asociality, alcohol, lazy person, liar, slavery, radiation, chaos, cancer and obesity* were other metaphors. The metaphors created by the students can be exemplified as follows:

. *The internet is like a waste of time because the time spent on the internet is a waste.*

. *The internet is like asociality. Because of the internet, people become asocial by getting lonely.*

. *The internet is like alcohol because it causes addiction.*

. *The internet is like a liar because we cannot trust the information they both give.*

. *The internet is like slavery because it exercises power over you after a while.*

. *The internet is like radiation because both harm the body.*

. *The internet is like a chaos because both, in my opinion, can easily create trouble in society.*

. *The internet is like cancer because both harm the humans.*

. *The internet is like obesity because, in both, immobility is common.*

6. The internet as an academic tool: the students created 5 metaphors in this category. The most preferred metaphor was the *book* (f: 17). *Walking library, language school and exam centre* were other metaphors. The metaphors created in this category can be cited as follows:

. *The internet is like a book because I can find everything I'm looking for on the internet just like in books.*

. *The internet is like a walking-library because I can get the book I want whenever I want.*

. *The internet is like a language school, thanks to it I can get online language training.*

. *The internet is like an exam centre, especially for distance education the exams can be held on the internet.*

. *The internet is like a dictionary because I can learn the words that I do not know on the internet.*

Discussion and Conclusion

The results obtained from this study conducted with 100 voluntary university students studying in the Department of Turkish Language Teaching and aiming to determine the internet perceptions of the students through metaphors are as follows:

The metaphors created by the participants were grouped under 6 headings. These were as follows: the internet as a source of life, the internet as a means of communication, the internet as a means of game, entertainment and hobby, the internet as a means which makes life easier, the internet as a harmful tool and the internet as an academic tool. It was observed that the students created the highest number of metaphors in the category of “*the internet as an academic tool*” (24%).

The majority of the students (f: 17) likened the internet to the book, even 3 students called it like the walking library. Nowadays, language schools are becoming widespread. Concordantly, the students likened the internet to language schools and pointed out that they could apply for exams and search for the words they do not know on the internet. It is quite normal for students to create the highest number of metaphors in this category when considered that some of the books, e-books and many academic studies are available on the internet. In their study, Varışoğlu et al. (2012) revealed that the prospective Turkish language teachers found sufficient themselves in finding, downloading, using e-books, accessing the library and international resources. This result is consistent with the results of this study. Atav, Akkoyunlu and Sağlam (2006) also found out that the prospective teachers used it to access information for lessons and home works. This study which examined the metaphors of the students on the internet revealed that they considered themselves sufficient in the subjects such as book, dictionary and library with reference to the metaphors they created.

The category which had the second highest number of metaphors was *the internet as a harmful tool* (21%). The students stated that the internet caused addiction like alcohol and they wasted their time in front of it, so it accustomed people to laziness and people became asocial. They highlighted that every information on the internet may not be accurate, so it should not be trusted to the internet, otherwise, it may drag the society into chaos. In addition, the students, who empathized that the internet had a negative effect on human health, stated that it was one of the main reasons for cancer and obesity.

The third category the students created the most metaphors was the internet as a means of game, entertainment and hobby (20%). Nowadays, the internet draws our attention as a recreational tool. It makes the students happy and enables them to make use of their spare time by providing them to play games, listen to music, watch movies and TV series and use social media tools (Facebook, Twitter etc.) Okay (2010) emphasized that the students used the internet for activities such as watching movies or TV series and listening to music. This result is consistent with the result of this study. Based on the results, it can be said that the students can do many things that they take pleasure in doing in daily life via the internet.

The fourth category which the students created the most metaphors was *the internet as a means of communication* (16%). They created five metaphors in this category. They stated that they used it for communication and pointed out that they could fastly learn all kinds of news about the world from the internet. In addition, it offers free video calls and correspondence. Therefore, the students are informed about the developments in the fastest way both in Turkey and the world thanks to the internet as well as using it as a means of communication for video, written call and free usage. In their study, Atav et al. (2006) and Dursun (2004) revealed that the prospective teachers used the internet especially for accessing information and communication. This result shows a similarity with our finding.

One of the categories which the students created the least metaphor was *the internet as a means which makes life easier* (12%). The students who used it for shopping such as stores, also indicated that they could easily carry out banking, tax, and hospital (test results etc.) transactions and all kinds of payment via the

internet. One of the students stated that the internet was used to silence babies and that babies can easily be kept silence with various cartoons and music on the internet.

The internet as a source of life was the category which had the lowest frequency value (7%) but almost the highest variety (f: 7). the students considered the internet as necessary for life and even it was as necessary as water for 2 students. The fact that one of the students likened it to a heart pumping blood and the other likened it to an organ shows how important the internet was important for them.

Based on the results of the study, it can be suggested that the students should be informed about the positive and negative aspects of the internet and the ways of effective and efficient use of the internet, especially, in the computer 1-2 courses.

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