The Perceptions of Prospective Primary Education Teachers on "Teaching to Read and Write" and "A Literate Child"

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Abstract

In this study, it is aimed to reveal the perceptions of prospective primary education teachers on teaching to read and write, and a literate child through metaphors. The study group consists of 178 prospective primary education teachers, who study at the Department of Primary Education of a state university in the 2018-19 academic year in Turkey. The research was carried out by the phenomenological method, a qualitative research design. The data of the research were collected using a form including expressions such as "Teaching to read and write is like .... Because ………." and "A literate child is like ……. Because ……….". The data analyzed by the content analysis were collected under nine conceptual categories of 127 metaphors generated on "teaching to read and write", and also 127 metaphors generated under nine conceptual categories on "a literate child". As a result, the study reveals the metaphors produced by prospective primary education teachers, show that they are aware of the importance of the process of teaching to read and write, and the experiences that the child gains during this process will be significant gains both for himself/herself and his/her environment

Keywords: Metaphor, Teaching to Read and Write, Literate Child

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INTRODUCTION

Being able to read and write is the most basic need for the individual to realize himself/herself, to prepare for life, communicahte effectively with society as a social being, understand the existing written and visual materials, and express himself/herself effectively in written and verbal form (Bay, 2008). The teaching of this skill, which develops the language and mental skills of the individual (Güneş, 2007), is an important process that requires expertise, needs to be carried out in a planned, programmed and meticulous manner, where there is no room for error (Cemiloğlu, 2001). Göçer (2000) emphasizes that first literacy teaching is an educational activity that is necessary for the student both in primary school and in his/her later education life, guiding the success of the student not only in the Turkish course but also in other courses.

The child acquires mental skills such as comprehension, thinking, and decision-making, which he/she can use throughout his/her life during the process of teaching to read and write (Demirel, 1999). A student, who can quickly, accurately, and fully understand what he/she reads, expresses his/her feelings, thoughts, impressions, and designs clearly and understandably for a specific purpose, is likely to be successful in almost every course (Ünalan, 2001). Reading and writing is an extremely important skill that enables the individual to develop his/her potential in addition to his/her success in school and social life (Yıldırım & Demirtaş, 2008). Therefore, students who cannot acquire literacy skills also suffer in other areas. For this reason, gaining reading and writing skills effectively is considered quite important (Akar, 2008). The role of the teacher is very important in providing these skills properly (Cerit, 2008; Kızılaslan Tunçer, 2013). Akyol (2020a) states that educated teachers should be knowledgeable and skilled in how to bring in and develop this skill for their students. Teachers should prepare an effective teaching and learning environment in line with the objectives set for first literacy teaching. Teachers are required to know the first literacy teaching methods well and to apply these methods effectively (Güneş, Uysal & Taç, 2016) to monitor students' learning by preparing appropriate learning environments, transferring information appropriately, and motivating their students (Güneş, 2019). Perkins (2013) states that theoretical and practical knowledge must complement each other in literacy teaching, and students who receive theoretical knowledge for a certain period of time need to put their knowledge into practice. In this context, it is possible to say that the primary education teachers' educational experiences, perceptions, attitudes, etc. towards first literacy teaching in their pre-service period play an important role in realizing an effective and qualified first literacy teaching process.

In the literature, there are studies on the attitudes of prospective primary education teachers regarding first literacy teaching (Aytan, 2017; Gömleksiz, 2013), their self-efficacy (Özdemir & Erdoğan, 2017), attitudes, and the relationship between their self-efficacy and various variables (Kızılaslan Tunçer, 2013; Üst, 2015). Besides, some studies conducted in different contexts investigated prospective teachers' metaphors for reading and writing (Bayram, 2018; Erdağı Toksun, 2019; Ulu, 2019; Ulusoy, 2013). Also, it was determined that some studies examined the primary education teachers' metaphors for literacy (Shaw & Mahlios, 2008), and their literacy beliefs (Shaw, Barry & Mahlios, 2008). In addition to these studies, it is thought that researching the perceptions of prospective primary education teachers, who will assume a dominant role in teaching reading and writing, about teaching reading and writing process and the product obtained at the end of this process, through metaphors, will give an idea about their motivation, efforts and mission awareness of teaching these skills. Bektaş (2007) states that a student who started learning reading and writing with a positive attitude easily adapted to this process and succeeded, and also had a positive attitude towards other courses. In this context, it suggests that the meanings that prospective primary education teachers attribute to the concepts of "teaching reading and writing" and "literate child" play an important role in their students' starting learning to read and write with positive attitudes when they become primary education teachers. The difference of this research from the metaphor studies mentioned above is to reveal the perceptions of prospective primary education teachers towards the literacy teaching process and the product that emerged at the end of this process. In our age, in the light of technological developments, besides traditional literacy, literacy types such as visual literacy, media literacy, information literacy, e-literacy and computer literacy have emerged. All these developments suggest

that research on literacy in various dimensions will always be needed both nationally and internationally. Therefore, together with the above-mentioned research, this research is considered important in terms of adding a different dimension to the research in the literature. In line with this importance, this study aims to reveal the perceptions of prospective primary education teachers about "teaching to read and write" and "literate child" through metaphors. In line with this main objective, answers were sought to the following questions:

1) What are the prospective primary education teachers' metaphors for "teaching to read and write"?

2) Under which conceptual categories are the prospective primary education teachers' metaphors for "teaching to read and write" grouped in terms of their common characteristics?

3) What are the prospective primary education teachers' metaphors for "a literate child"?

4) Under which conceptual categories are the prospective primary education teachers' metaphors for "a literate child" grouped in terms of their common characteristics?

Strenski (1989) states that metaphors reflect and shape thoughts, and as a result, they guide the behaviors of individuals by determining their behavior. In this context, metaphor studies are considered very important in terms of determining the beliefs, tendencies, and professional practices of teachers and prospective teachers, contributing to their professional development (Noyes, 2004). Thus, it is thought that this research can be evaluated together with other studies that guide pre-service education activities.

METHODOLOGY

This research, which aims to reveal the metaphorical perceptions of the prospective primary education teachers about "teaching to read and write" and "a literate child", was carried out with the phenomenological design, which is one of the qualitative research methods. The main purpose of the phenomenological design is to reveal the perceptions and views of the participants who have experienced the determined phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). In phenomenological studies, metaphors are one of the most effective data collection methods to understand the inner worlds of individuals about a certain subject, and to learn what they think and how they react to a particular event, person, phenomenon, and situations (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016: 212). Metaphors are mental images that connect the object or phenomenon to be understood to a network of concepts that belong to another domain, allowing re-conceptualizing, viewing from different perspectives, and shedding light on some previously overlooked situations (Taylor, 1984). Metaphors have been defined by some researchers as explaining something (event, phenomenon, object, etc.) by comparing it to something else (Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011; Cerit, 2008; Levine, 2005). Some researchers (Tsoukas, 1991; Balcı, 2003: 30; Perry & Cooper, 2001) have defined it as making something unknown understandable by explaining it with something known. This makes metaphors crucial for being stimulating and evocative to uncover connections that cannot be directly deduced from questions (Leavy McSorley & Bote, 2007), thus making it easier to understand the subjects that are not understood (Semerci, 2007).

Metaphor analysis, which is one of the methods that try to determine individuals' perceptions, perspectives, and attitudes towards objects, phenomena, or concepts, has been one of the most preferred methods in social sciences in recent years (Saban, 2009). It is possible to say the same thing for research studies on education. When the related literature is reviewed, it is seen that many concepts related to education are investigated by using metaphors in national and international literature. For example, metaphor studies on the school (Strike, 2000; Levine, 2005; Cerit, 2006; Gordon, 2010), teacher (Saban, 2004; Cerit, 2006; Saban 2009), teaching and learning (Martinez, Salueda & Huber, 2001; Kalra & Baveja, 2012) and learner (Saban, 2010; Kalra & Baveja, 2012) are some of these studies.

Participants

The participants of the research were selected according to convenience sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods. Thus, the participants of the research consisted of 178 teacher candidates (146 female, 32 male) studying in the second, third and fourth grades of a state university in Turkey in the 2018-19 academic year and took the first literacy teaching course.

Research Instruments and Procedures The data of the research were collected using a printed form that contains statements such as "Teaching to read and write is like .... Because ….", and "A literate child is like ………. Because ….". The form was prepared by researchers by taking the opinions of two academicians who are experts in the field of first literacy teaching and qualitative research. In metaphoric studies, the concept of "like (similarity)" is used for more explicitly reminding the connection between the "subject of metaphor" and the "source of metaphor"; the concept of "because" is used for participants to provide a "justification" for their metaphors (Saban, 2009).

Analysis

In this research, the content analysis technique was used to analyze and evaluate the data. The main purpose of content analysis, which is frequently used in the field of social sciences, is to obtain the concepts and relationships that can explain the collected data. Therefore, the collected data must first be conceptualized and then organized in a logical manner according to the emerging concepts, and the themes that explain the data must be determined accordingly (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016: 242). In this research, the data analysis process was carried out under the following operations: coding and category development, validity and reliability analysis, and interpretation of the data.

Coding and category development

In this study, primarily, metaphors were listed, and metaphors and justifications were carefully examined. Then, similarities between metaphors were tried to be found in order to create conceptual categories. 51 metaphors that were left blank in the answers of prospective education teachers, had no logical consistency and were not justified, were eliminated. The prospective primary education teachers were coded in the range of F1-F146 and M1-M32, where (F) stood for female and (M) stood for male, and the metaphors generated were gathered under the same group according to their common characteristics, hence creating a contextual categorical frame. As a result, 127 metaphors and nine conceptual categories were generated for "teaching to read and write", and 127 metaphors and nine conceptual categories were created for "a literate child".

Trustworthiness and credibility

In order to ensure the validity of this research, the data analysis process was explained in detail, and the generated metaphors and explanations were provided directly. In order to ensure the reliability of the research, the metaphors divided into conceptual categories were presented to two experts in the field of qualitative research and first literacy teaching. Consistency analysis was carried out and it was determined that the agreement between the evaluations of the experts and the researchers was 85 percent. According to Miles & Huberman (1995) intercoder reliability value of over .70 shows that coding is reliable (Cited by Akay, 2010: 90). The value of 85% indicated acceptable reliability.

Data interpretation

The metaphors, categories, and explanations that were generated after completing these phases stated in the research are presented in figures and tables, and then, they are explained and interpreted.

Ethical Procedures

This study was designed in accordance with ethical principles and rules. Necessary permissions were obtained for the research by the "Research and Publication Ethics Committee" of the relevant institution. The ethical committee approval number of the document is 2020-03/59. Also a consent form was given to the participants and they were informed that they could leave the research process at any time and that the data would be hidden.

FINDINGS

In this part of the study, the conceptual categories created in terms of the common features of the metaphors generated by the prospective primary education teachers, who participated in the research, regarding "teaching to read and write" and "literate child" are presented in tables. The identified conceptual categories were evaluated by including quotations from the metaphors created by prospective teachers.

The Conceptual Categories and the Metaphors of Prospective Primary Education Teachers on the Concept of "Teaching to Read and Write"

The prospective primary education teachers who participated in the study generated 127 metaphors for the concept of "teaching to read and write". These metaphors are grouped under nine categories according to their common features and usage reasons. For example; it was determined that the participants generated metaphors such as "writing a book, knitting, teaching a bird to fly, etc." and associated these metaphors with a labor-requring process. For this reason, these metaphors are grouped under the conceptual category of "a labor requiring process". The metaphors represented by these categories are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Conceptual Categories, Metaphors, and Their Distributions Regarding the Concept of "Teaching to Read and Write"

Conceptual Categories	Metaphors	f	%
A labor-requiring process	knitting (7), growing plants (7), cooking (2), writing book (2), patiently waiting for a much-desired thing (1), lighting a fire in the rain (1), sparrow carrying water to fire (1), teaching someone to drive a car (1), a house with bricks placed one by one (1), seeing the sunrise (1), preparing for the exam by thinking about this year (1), teaching a bird to fly (1), a mother watching the first steps of her child (1), an artist performing his/her art (1), shooting a film (1)	29	22,6
A process that provides change/development	planting a tree/sapling (7), growing/watering plants (6), cooking (2), playing with play dough (1), revealing one's potential (1), starting a sport you have never done before (1), a sculptor making a new sculpture (1), transforming the coal into a diamond (1), teaching life (1), saving someone from his/her chains (1), going to Alice's wonderland (1), writing a book (1), filling the sky with stars (1), teaching football to girls who are not interested in football (1)	26	20,3
A process of opening up to a new world	teaching life (2), enlighten him/her (2), starting a game you never knew (1), opening the pencil with a sharpener (1), opening him/her for life (1), preparing him/her for life (1), opening the world to him/her (1), going to the unknown places (1), unlocking the locked key (1), giving the key to all the treasures in the world (1), a door opening to the world full of miracles (1), making him/her travel to different universes (1), the key that unlocks the new horizons (1), keeping a mirror to him/her (1), the light needed in a dark tunnel (1), freeing the butterfly (1), involving him/her to life (1), filling a blank page (1), the daylight brightening the day (1)	21	16,4

Meeting a basic need	watering flowers (7), giving sap to a plant (2), eating (1), becoming an eye of him/her (1), giving water to someone in the desert (1), offering food with vitamins (1), constructing a water well in Africa (1), teaching to breathe (1), salting the meal (1), protecting him/her with a shield (1), greening the flower (1)	18	14
A process that benefits the individual and society	Planting a sapling (3), watering a plant (2), leaving a legacy (1), enlightening the society (1), enlightening the world (1), enlightening the future (1), tying a second hand and arm to him/her (1), holding an umbrella for all humanity (1)	11	8,5
Basis of education	Teaching to walk (2), building a house (2), putting bricks in a building (1), touching the first tile of a domino set (1), laying the foundation (1), filling up the glass with little water (1), basis of educational life (1)	9	7
A guiding process	Guiding (1), putting glasses on a myopic person (1), being compass to the student (1), making him/her travel (1), being a travel guide (1)	5	3,9
Teaching a basic skill	Teaching a child to walk (1), teaching a baby to speak (1), teaching life (1), teaching to use computers (1), teaching a new language (1)	5	3,9
Other metaphors	reading a book (1), re-teaching life (1), making a puzzle (1)	3	2,34

As seen in Table 1, the metaphors produced by the prospective primary school teachers for "teaching to read and write" are respectively; a labor-requiring process (29), a process that provides change/development (26), the process of opening up to a new world (21), meeting a basic need (18), a process that benefits the individual and society (11), basis of education (9), a guiding process (5), teaching a basic skill (5) and other metaphors (3).

Category of a labor-requiring process

Under this conceptual category, knitting (f=7, 5.5%) and growing plants (f=7, %5.5) are mostly generated metaphors. Cooking (f= 2, 1.57%) and writing book (f= 2, 1.57%) follow these two metaphors. The remaining metaphors in this category were generated by one person each (0.78%). These metaphors are; patiently waiting for a much-desired thing, lighting a fire in the rain, sparrow carrying water to fire, teaching someone to drive a car, a house with bricks placed one by one, seeing the sunrise, preparing for the exam by thinking about this year, teaching a bird to fly, a mother watching the first steps of her child, an artist performing his/her art, and shooting a film. The metaphor examples are given below:

"Teaching a child to read and write is like knitting. Because it requires a lot of effort to knit, and the result is great. But when a thread runs out, the pattern becomes always deficient." (F.21)

"Teaching a child to read and write is like growing plants. Because you wait patiently for them to grow. The teacher also waits for his/her yield by giving patience, effort, and tolerance." (F.30)

"Teaching a child to read and write is like sparrow carrying water to fire. Because teaching a child to read and write is to give hope to the world burning with ignorance." (M.18)

Category of process that provides change/development

As seen in Table 1, it was determined that 26 prospective teachers generated metaphors in this category. The metaphor, which had the highest frequency among these metaphors, was planting a tree/sapling (f =7, 5.5%). This metaphor was followed by growing/watering plants (f=6, 4.72%) and cooking (f=2, 1.57%). The metaphors such as playing with play dough, revealing one's potential, starting a sport you have never done before, a sculptor making a new sculpture, transforming the coal

into a diamond, teaching life, saving someone from his/her chains, going to Alice's wonderland, writing a book, filling the sky with stars, and teaching football to girls who are not interested in football were generated by only 1 prospective teacher each (0.78). Examples of metaphors generated in this category are given below:

"Teaching a child to read and write is like planting a sapling. Because the sapling grows, sprouts, and becomes a tree. New trees grow from the new seeds growing on it." *(F.120)*

"Teaching a child to read and write is like watering a plant. Because he/she can develop his/her own imagination by reading and writing now." (F.17)

"Teaching a child to read and write is like transforming the coal into a diamond. Because coal is processed by an enormous struggle and becomes the most valuable mine in the world. Teaching a child to read and write with a good education will make that child the most valuable person of the future." (F.43)

Category of process of opening up to a new world

The third conceptual category created from the metaphors for "teaching to read and write" is the category of "a process of opening up to a new world". As seen in Table 1, 21 prospective teachers were observed to generate metaphors in this category. One of these metaphors (teaching life, enlighten him/her) was generated by two (1.57%) prospective teachers each. It was also determined that other metaphors were generated by one prospective teacher (0.78%). These metaphors are starting a game you never know, opening the pencil with a sharpener, opening him/her for life, preparing him/her for life, opening the world to him/her, going to unknown places, unlocking the locked key, giving the key to all the treasures in the world, a door opening to the world full of miracles, making him/her travel to different universes, the key that unlocks new horizons, keeping a mirror to him/her, the light needed in a dark tunnel, freeing the butterfly, involving him/her to life, filling a blank page, and the daylight brightening the day. Examples of metaphors generated in this category are given below:

"Teaching a child to read and write is like traveling to different universes. Because the individual who reads has the opportunity to meet more life than he/she can." (F. 19)

"Teaching a child to read and write is like going to unknown places. Because the child is on an endless journey. Teaching him/her to read and write which is unknown to him/her is like exploring the unknown." (F.39)

"Teaching a child to read and write is like to opening the doors of the world to him/her. Because by reading, learning, discovering, the child learns his/her own world and then the world." (F.37)

Category of meeting a basic need

The fourth conceptual category, which includes the metaphors of prospective teachers participating in the research regarding "teaching to read and write", is the category of "meeting a basic need". As seen in Table 1, it was observed that a total of 18 prospective teachers created metaphors in this category. The most common metaphor of prospective primary education teachers is the metaphor of watering flowers (f =7, 5.5%). This is followed by the metaphor of giving sap to a plant (f= 2, 1.57%). The metaphors of eating, becoming an eye of him/her, giving water to someone in the desert, offering food with vitamins, constructing a water well in Africa, teaching to breathe, salting the meal, protecting him/her with a shield, and greening the flower are generated by one person per metaphor (0.78). Examples of metaphors generated in this category are given below:

"Teaching a child to read and write is like watering flowers. Because the flower grows when watered. And we should water the flower regularly. Teaching with regular education gives good results." (F.23)

"Teaching a child to read and write is like giving water to someone in the desert. Because it is the most important thing that a child needs to grow." (F.12)

"Teaching a child to read and write is like constructing water well in Africa. Because it broadens the horizons of children who have an appetite for knowledge and learning, and it quenches the thirst of knowledge in their souls." (F.85).

Category of process that benefits the individual and society

The fifth conceptual category that includes metaphors for "teaching to read and write" is the metaphor of "a process that benefits the individual and society". In this category, a total of 11 prospective primary education teachers generated metaphors. The metaphor of planting a sapling was generated by three participants (2.3%), the metaphor of watering a plant was generated by two participants (1.5%), the metaphors of leaving a legacy, enlightening the society, enlightening the world, enlightening the future, tying a second hand and arm to him/her, and holding an umbrella for all humanity were generated by one person (0.78%) each. Examples of metaphors generated in this category are given below:

"Teaching a child to read and write is like planting a sapling. Because saplings mean hope. It is an investment in the future. So is the child." (M.22)

"Teaching a child how to read and write is like watering a plant. Because when we water and grow a sapling, it becomes a tree and bears fruit. Likewise, a child provides benefits to humanity with what he/she has learned." (F.48)

"Teaching a child to read and write is like holding an umbrella for all humanity. Because we show him/her the life by teaching to read and write, also we teach him to overcome all the challenges that he/she will face in his/her life by reading and writing." (F.111)

Category of basis of education

The sixth conceptual category, which includes metaphors for "teaching to read and write", in the research is the category of "basis of education". In this category, 9 prospective teachers were found to generate metaphors. The metaphor of teaching to walk was generated by 2 participants (1.57%); also, the metaphors of building a house, putting bricks in a building, touching the first tile of a domino set, laying the foundation, filling up the glass with little water, and the basis of educational life were generated by one prospective teacher (0.78%) each. Examples of metaphors generated in this category are given below:

"Teaching a child to read and write is like teaching to walk. Because the child reaches from one point to another by walking. Being able to read and write is the beginning of several things." (F.60)

"Teaching a child to read and write is like touching the first tile of a domino set. Because if you do not touch the first tile, you will not be able to knock over other tiles one after another. If you touch the first tile but do not touch it correctly, then the tiles will not fall over again." (F.73)

"Teaching a child to read and write is like laying the foundation. Because the first foundations of education life are layed in this stage." (M.26)

Category of guiding process

The seventh conceptual category of the prospective teachers' metaphors for "teaching to read and write" is the category of "a guiding process". In this category, it was observed that a total of five prospective teachers generated metaphors, one for each prospective teacher (0.78). The generated metaphors are the metaphors of guiding, putting glasses on a myopic person, being compass to the student, making him/her travel, and being a travel guide. Examples of metaphors generated in this category are given below:

"Teaching a child to read and write is like making him/her travel. Because when the child comes to school, he/she is unable to read any writing he/she sees around. For this reason, he/she is unaware of most things. As the teacher teaches the child to read, he/she seems to be going somewhere he/she does not know and learning new places." (F.102)

"Teaching a child to read and write is like being a travel guide. Because it is like trying to introduce a new touristic place that he/she did not know about before and make sense with its past and present. However, each group includes individuals with different characteristics and learning styles." (M.25)

"Teaching a child to read and write is like being compass to the student. Because the teacher is always a guide and a pathfinder for the student." (M.19)

Category of teaching a basic skill

The eighth conceptual category, which includes the prospective primary education teachers' metaphors for "teaching to read and write" is the category of "teaching a basic skill". In this category, it was observed that a total of five prospective teachers generated metaphors, one for each prospective teacher (0.78). The generated metaphors are teaching a child to walk, teaching a baby to speak, teaching life, teaching to use computers, and teaching a new language. Examples of metaphors generated in this category are given below:

"Teaching a child to read and write is like a mother teaching a child to walk. Because children start their educational life with reading and writing. Reading and writing which is the foundation is like the first step of a child running when it is improved." (M.3)

"Teaching a child to read and write is like teaching him life. Because the child actually learns his/her life by reading and writing, in other words, he/she writes and reads what he/she sees around." (F.19)

"Teaching a child to read and write is like teaching to use computers. Because it is like teaching something technical." (M.10)

Other metaphors

In the research, metaphors that remain outside the 8 conceptual categories are reading a book, re-teaching life, and making a puzzle.

In the metaphor of "re-teaching life", it was seen that the prospective teacher considers the process from her own perspective, not the student's perspective. With the statement of *"Teaching a child to read and write is like re-teaching life. Because the teacher learns to be*

patient and to approach with love, along with the child learning to read and write", it was determined that the prospective teacher *(F.90)* perceives the process of teaching to read and write as learning to approach with love and respect.

Another prospective primary education teacher (F.98) says that *"Teaching a child to read and write is like making a puzzle. Because you go from the piece to the whole to teach the students to read and write".* It was determined that the prospective primary education teacher reflects her knowledge about the method of teaching to read and write with the metaphor of "making a puzzle".

Among all the metaphors generated on teaching to read and write, only a prospective primary education teacher (F.80) reflected a negative perception with the statement *that "Teaching a child to read and write is like reading a book. Because when a person starts reading a new book, about which he/she has little information, he/she gets bored in the process, likewise, the child learning to read and write gets bored."*

Table 2 Conceptual Categories and Metaphors of Prospective Primary Education Teachers Regarding a "Literate Child"

Conceptual Categories	Metaphors	f	%
An individual open to change/improvement	flower (3), explorer (3), newly planted plant (2), watered flower (2), a new sprout (1), sunflower (1), imagination (1), a drop by drop accumulated puddle (1), sponge (1), a baby who learned to walk (1), fish in the ocean (1), burning fire (1), water gushing around (1), a little light in the dark (1), someone exploring the world (1), a flower seed (1), space shuttle (1), treasure hunter (1), a talented chef in the kitchen (1), a tree ready to bloom (1), a bird that has just learned to fly (1), a person who learned a new language (1), a lightened lamp (1), a person who discovered a new world (1), a night that turned to day (1), a flying balloon (1), a germinated plant (1), scientist (1), bud stage of fruit (1), a person who is hungry for success (1), sun (1)	38	29,9
An individual, who is beneficial to his/her environment	tree (6), flower (2), fruit-bearing tree (1), sea (1), sun that brightens up the morning (1), cloud (1), a lock that is opened (1), ladder (1), healthy food with vitamins (1), torch (1), seed thrown on the soil (1), clock with a battery installed (1), constellation (1)	19	14,9
An individual who can direct his/her life	bird (2), a shaped tree (1), free birds (1), flowers that never fade (1), a lush garden (1), key (1), an empty plate (1), a compass (1), a bird with a parachute (1), a person who declared his/her independence (1), a person whose eyes opened to life later (1), a lost traveler who found his way by seeing the polar star (1), a sailor (1), a canvas (1), a bird flying around the world by opening the door of the cage (1), a master scout (1)	17	13,3
A product	blossomed tree (3), bloom (2), sprouted seed (2), book (2), vacuum cleaner (1), lighting bulb (1), budding flower (1), rainbow (1), keyboard (1), newly bloomed flower (1), scientist (1)	17	13,3
An individual spreading knowledge	sun (3), light (1), enlightened world (1), star (1), burning candle (1), newly blossomed flower (1), book (1), lamp (1), star in the sky (1), rainbow (1), moon (1), sage (1)	14	11
An individual with a new beginning	toddler (3), newly blossomed flower (1), a lock that is opened (1), a spark (1), a first-time employee (1), a newborn gazelle (1), a person who learned to swim (1)	9	7
An individual in need of support	flower (2), moon (1), a newborn baby (1), unformed clay (1), a novice driver (1), pool (1), a bird that just learned to fly (1), a person who is crazy happy (1)	9	7
An individual whose basic need is met	a building whose foundation was laid (1), giving sap to the newly planted sapling (1)	2	1,57
An individual who overcame a challenging process	scientist (1), person climbing a challenging hill (1)	2	1,57

As seen in Table 2, the metaphors produced by the prospective primary school teachers for "literate child" are respectively; "an individual open to change/improvement (38), an individual, who

is beneficial to his/her environment (19), an individual who can direct his/her life (17), a product (17), an individual spreading knowledge (14), an individual with a new beginning (9), an individual in need of support (9), an individual whose basic need is met (2) and an individual who overcame a challenging process (2).

Category of an individual open to change/improvement

As can be seen in Table 2, the highest number of metaphors (f = 38, 29.92%) on the concept of "a literate child" is in the category of "an individual who is open to change/improvement". The metaphors with the highest frequency in this conceptual category are the metaphors of the flower (f= 3, 2.36%) and explorer (f= 3, 2.36%). These metaphors were followed by the metaphors of the "newly planted plant" and "watered flower" represented by two prospective primary education teachers (1.57%), and all other metaphors were generated by one (0.78%) prospective primary education teacher each. These metaphors are a new sprout, sunflower, imagination, a drop by drop accumulated puddle, sponge, a baby who learned to walk, fish in the ocean, burning fire, water gushing around, a little light in the dark, someone exploring the world, a flower seed, space shuttle, treasure hunter, a talented chef in the kitchen, a tree ready to bloom, a bird that has just learned to fly, a person who learned a new language, a lightened lamp, a person who discovered a new world, a night that turned to day, a flying balloon, a germinated plant, scientist, bud stage of fruit, a person who is hungry for success, and finally the metaphor of sun. Examples of metaphors generated in this category are given below:

"A literate child is like a flower. Because when he/she learns to read and write, he/she blooms like a flower. Each time he/she learns something new, he/she gives a leaf." (F.26)

"A literate child is like a burning fire. Because the knowledge in their mind increases and becomes bigger and bigger as he/she gains knowledge. So is the fire. It grows as you add wood." (F.23)

"A literate child is like a newly planted sapling. Because as the activities of reading and writing increase, it will grow and grow and become an imposing tree." (F.67)

Category of an individual who is beneficial to his/her environment

As can be seen in Table 2, a total of 19 prospective teachers generated metaphors in the category of "an individual who is beneficial to his/her environment", which is the second conceptual category that includes metaphors for "a literate child". The metaphor with the highest frequency among these metaphors (f =6, 4.72%) is the metaphor of the tree. The metaphor of the tree is followed by the metaphor of flower generated by two prospective primary education teachers (1.57%). Other metaphors in this category were generated by one prospective primary education teacher (0.78%). These are a fruit-bearing tree, sea, the sun that brightens up the morning, cloud, a lock that is opened, the ladder, healthy food with vitamins, torch, seed thrown on the soil, clock with a battery installed, and constellation. Examples of metaphors generated in this category are given below:

"A literate child is like a fruit-bearing tree. Because he has learned to read and write and has taken the first steps towards becoming a beneficial individual to his country and nation." (F.27)

"A literate child is like the sun that brightens up the morning. Because as he/she reads and learns, he/she will not only enlighten itself but also the environment." (F.33)

"A literate child is like a flower that produced leaves. Because when he/she is a little bud, he/she learns and produces leaves like a rose. He/she gives life to himself/herself and the universe." (F.39)

Category of an individual who can direct his/her life

The third conceptual category, which includes the prospective primary education teachers' metaphors for "a literate child" is the category of "an individual who can direct his/her life". In this category, as seen in Table 2, a total of 17 (13.38%) prospective primary education teachers generated metaphors. All metaphors, except the metaphor of bird generated by two prospective primary education teachers (1.57%), were generated by one participant each (0.78%). These metaphors are a shaped tree, free birds, flowers that never fade, a lush garden, key, an empty plate, a compass, a bird with a parachute, a person who declared his/her independence, a person whose eyes opened to life later, a lost traveler who found his way by seeing the polar star, a sailor, a canvas, a bird flying around the world by opening the door of the cage, and a master scout. Examples of metaphors generated in this category are given below:

"A literate child is like a bird. Because he/she received the most precious thing that could be given to him/her. If he/she wants, he/she may not come down from the sky and can reach the stars." (M.15)

"A literate child is like a shaped tree. Because when students learned to read and write, they took their form, and they can direct their lives." (F.2)

"A literate child is like a bird with a parachute. Because each person is, in essence, a free individual. However, the individual who learned to read and write gets much more freedom with the opportunity to access alternative options." (F.75)

Category of product

The fourth conceptual category that includes metaphors for the concept of "a literate child" is the category of "product". In this category, as seen in Table 2, a total of 17 (13.38%) prospective teachers were found to come up with metaphors. The metaphor with the highest frequency among these metaphors is the metaphor of the blossomed tree (f= 3, 2.36%). This is followed by the metaphors of bloom, a sprouted seed, and a book generated by two prospective teachers per metaphor (1.57%). The metaphors generated by one prospective teacher (0.78%) are a vacuum cleaner, a lighting bulb, a budding flower, a rainbow, a keyboard, a newly bloomed flower, and a scientist. Examples for metaphors are provided below:

"A literate child is like a blossomed tree. Because he/she met the requirements and overcame the challenging conditions, and blossomed. He will bear fruit under the next conditions." (F.3)

"A literate child is like a lightning bulb. Because the child, who has just learned to read and write, suddenly becomes illuminated like turning on a lamp." (F.42)

"A literate child is like a sprouted seed. Because he grows, develops, branches, and gives new seeds, and new sprouts." (M.29)

Category of an individual spreading knowledge

The category of "an individual spreading knowledge" is the fifth conceptual category that includes metaphors generated on "a literate child". There are a total of 14 (11%) metaphors in this category. The metaphor with the highest frequency is the metaphor of the sun (f= 3, 2.36%). Other metaphors are a light, an enlightened world, a star, a burning candle, a newly blossomed flower, a book, a lamp, a star in the sky, a rainbow, the moon, and a sage that were created by one prospective primary education teacher each (0.78%). Examples of metaphors generated in this category are given below:

"A literate child is like a burning candle. Because as he/she burns, he/she will enlighten himself/herself and his/her surroundings in line with the knowledge he/she gains." (F.47)

"A literate child is like the moon. Because the moon radiates the light it receives from the sun. The child also spreads the knowledge he/she receives from his/her teacher." (F.121)

Category of an individual with a new beginning

The sixth conceptual category, which includes the metaphors generated by the prospective primary education teachers on "a literate child", is the category of "an individual with a new beginning". As seen in Table 2, this category has 9 (7%) metaphors. Among them, the metaphor with the highest frequency is the metaphor of a toddler ($f=$ 3, 2.36%). Each of the six prospective primary education teachers (0.78%) came up with a different metaphor such as a newly blossomed flower, a lock that is opened, a spark, a first-time employee, a newborn gazelle, and a person who learned to swim. Examples of metaphors generated in this category are given below:

"A literate child is like a toddler. Because a toddler takes a few steps at the beginning. Just like a child who learned the letters to learn to read and write. As he/she learns the letters, he/she can walk longer, and a child, who learns all the letters at the end of the year, learns to walk." (M.10)

"A literate child is like a lock that is opened. Because he/she has opened the door to many things in his/her life by learning to read and write." (F.49)

"A literate child is just like a person who learned to swim. Because when we first meet at sea, we stand on the shore, we are afraid to take a step. Then, as we get into it in time, we find ourselves deep inside." (F.141)

Category of an individual in need of support

This category is the seventh conceptual category of the metaphors for "a literate child", and it includes 9 (7%) metaphors. While two of the participants (1.57%) generated the metaphor of a flower, other prospective teachers generated a different metaphor each (0.78%) in this category. These metaphors are the moon, a newborn baby, unformed clay, a novice driver, a bird that just learned to fly, a pool, and a person who is crazy happy. Examples of metaphors generated in this category are given below:

"A literate child is like a flower. Because just as the flower needs water, sun, and care, the child, who learned to read and write, needs care, concern, and a teacher." (F.79)

"A literate child is like a novice driver. Because the child will master in reading and writing, but he/she needs to practice and to get help for practice." (F.63)

"A literate child is like a bird that just learned to fly. Because a bird that has just begun to fly should be encouraged by its mother. A literate child also needs life-long assistance." (F.140)

Category of an individual whose basic need is met

In the research, the eighth conceptual category, which includes the metaphors generated by the prospective primary education teachers on "a literate child", is the category of "an individual whose basic need is met". In this category, there are 2 (1.57%) metaphors, including a building whose

foundation was laid, and giving sap to the newly planted sapling. Examples of metaphors generated in this category are given below:

"A literate child is like a building whose foundation was laid. Because learning to read and write is vital in order to be a strong person against challenges in life, just like a solid foundation needs to be laid to hold a building up (F.8).

Category of an individual who overcame a challenging process

The ninth conceptual category, which includes metaphors for the concept of a literate child, is the category of "an individual overcame a challenging process". This category has 2 (1.57%) metaphors: a scientist and a person climbing a challenging hill. Below is one of these metaphors:

"A literate child is like a scientist. Because he/she has achieved something very difficult for him/her. He/she feels very confident." (F.41)

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study, which was conducted to reveal the perceptions of prospective primary education teachers about "teaching to read and write" and "a literate child", it was found that 127 valid metaphors were generated on each concept. The metaphors generated by the prospective primary education teachers about the concept of "teaching to read and write" were grouped in nine conceptual categories and 127 metaphors for "a literate child" were grouped in nine conceptual categories.

It has been determined that prospective primary education teachers perceive teaching to read and write as a process that requires effort, labor, and patience. The fact that the prospective primary education teachers define the process in this way can be interpreted as they are aware of the need to prepare meticulously in teaching to read and write and to follow their students' progress patiently while teaching reading and writing. In their research, Shaw and Mahlios (2008) found that two prospective teachers generated the metaphors regarding "that teaching to read and write and learning to read and write are not always easy, and the teachers carefully plan teaching activities for teaching to read and write". Although the number of prospective teachers, who generated this metaphor, showed a significant difference in these two studies, it is thought that this situation was due to the difference in the expressions given to the prospective teachers to generate metaphors, albeit the two studies supported each other. Perkins (2013) also states that prospective school teachers understand during their education that teaching reading is a complex process beyond teaching children sounds.

The category of "a process that provides change/development" was created from metaphors generated by many prospective primary education teachers. In the study of Erdağı Toksun (2019), it was determined that the metaphors of many prospective Turkish Language teachers on reading were grouped in the category of "development/expansion". In Ulusoy's (2013) study, it was observed that prospective primary education teachers generated similar metaphors for reading and writing, and in Bayram's (2018) study, the prospective Turkish Language and Literature teachers generated similar metaphors for the concept of reading. The holistic evaluation of all these studies revealed that, even though the branches of the prospective teachers who participated in these studies were different, reading/reading and writing are important skills that enable the individual to develop. As Akyol (2020b) said; today's children, who is living in a world where human intelligence develops rapidly, must have fundamentally sufficient and qualified literacy skills to keep up with these developments. It is possible to say that the prospective primary education teachers participating in the study have this sensitivity.

Some of the prospective primary education teachers considered the process of teaching to read and write as "a process of opening up to a new world". In the study of Shaw and Mahlios (2008) on the prospective teachers' metaphors for reading and writing, it was determined that some prospective teachers generated metaphors for reading such as "traveling to unknown places", "exploring a world

that is an open sea", "unlocking a new and bright world full of interesting facts". Again, in the study conducted by Ulusoy (2013), it was determined that prospective primary education teachers produced metaphors such as "exploring new worlds" for reading. It was found that similar metaphors were generated in the studies conducted by Bayram (2018) and Erdağı Toksun (2019). Bamberger (1990) states that in order to motivate students to read, books should be removed from the image of a school assignment and made them look as friends who will carry them to different worlds. This metaphor produced by the prospective primary education teachers participating in this study raises a hopeful expectation that they will organize activities that will provide reading motivation to their students.

Metaphors in the conceptual category of "meeting a basic need" suggest that prospective primary education teachers attribute a vital meaning to teaching to read and write. Similar metaphors (requirement, need) have been found in the studies investigating metaphors for reading and writing by Bayram (2018), Erdağı Toksun (2019), and Shaw and Mahlios (2008). The acquisition of reading and writing skills has become a basic tool to meet most of the needs of individuals in daily life. It is obvious that reading and writing skills are needed in many situations that can be encountered in daily life, from shopping to going to the hospital by bus, from applying a recipe to learning the rules of a game, from reading a user manual to reading a prospectus. Moreover, this need becomes more evident with the technology that enters our lives more and more every day. The category of "meeting a basic need" is considered important in terms of the awareness of the prospective primary education teachers participating in the study that literacy is a lifelong skill.

There are also prospective primary education teachers who evaluate the process of teaching to read and write as "a process that benefits the individual and society". In the studies of Bayram (2018) and Erdağı Toksun (2019), prospective teachers mostly mentioned the contribution to the individual in their metaphors generated on the concept of "reading". Çelenk (2005) states that only by being literate can an individual become a functional member of society, develop an independent and participatory personality, and gain a modern view. This research suggests that prospective primary education teachers are aware of the importance of teaching to read and write for the benefit of the individual and society and those they will show the necessary sensitivity in this process in their professional life.

In the research, the sixth category created from metaphors for teaching to read and write is the category of "basis of education". Metaphors in this category seem that the prospective primary education teachers, who think that teaching to read and write is the basis of educational life and other skills and habits to be gained and that the conditions in this process affect the educational life of the child. It was determined that the prospective teachers in the study of Shaw and Mahlios (2008) also generated metaphors defining reading and writing as the basis of education. Although it is known that a successful first literacy education affects the child's attitude towards school and life positively (Binbaşıoğlu, 2004: 2), it is possible to say that the opposite experience of the child can have a negative attitude towards reading and writing, lessons, even school, and moreover, this attitude can be reflected in the whole education life.

The seventh conceptual category, where the metaphors generated on "teaching to read and write" are grouped, is the category of "a guiding process". It was determined that similar categories were created in Bayram's (2018) and Erdağı Toksun's (2019) metaphor studies on reading skills, and these three studies overlap with each other. Body (2003: 99) stated that reading skill was an important tool for a student to achieve literacy in different fields and therefore to take responsibility for his/her own development process.

Another conceptual category created from the metaphors of prospective primary education teachers on teaching to read and write is the category of "teaching a basic skill". The skill of reading and writing is an important skill that must be acquired in our age. In daily life, individuals can constantly face an activity based on reading and writing: reading the electricity bill, reading news, writing an address, reading the message on the phone, or writing a message, etc. It is inevitable for an individual who has not acquired these skills to be dependent on others in their life. Demirel (1999) argues that first literacy teaching provides the child with the basic skills of reading that he/she will use

throughout his/her life. While these skills help to meet emotional and spiritual needs, reading also provides personal development (Akyol, 2005: 4).

Since three metaphors could not fall into one of the other 8 categories created, each one created a separate category. The metaphors created are "re-teaching life", "making a puzzle", and "reading a book". The prospective teacher who generated the metaphor of "reading a book" was the only one who negatively evaluated the process of teaching to read and write. The metaphor generated by this prospective teacher suggests that she has a negative attitude towards reading as well. Similar results were also found in some studies (Bayram, 2018, Erdağı Toksun, 2019) on prospective teachers' metaphors for reading.

Although no similar study has been found in the literature, it was observed that similar metaphors were generated in studies investigating metaphors for reading and writing skills (Bayram, 2018; Erdağı Toksun, 2019; Shaw & Mahlios, 2008; Shaw, Barry & Mahlios, 2008; Ulu, 2019; Ulusoy, 2013). This suggests that the metaphor generated for a skill is generated in a way that defines the process that will bring that skill. Therefore, it is possible to say that the results of this research coincide with the results of the mentioned research.

In the category of "an individual open to change/improvement", which contains the most metaphors regarding the concept of "literate child", it is clearly seen that the prospective primary education teachers perceive the literate child as an individual who is open to learning new knowledge and improvement. In the study conducted by Saban (2009) on metaphors for the concept of students, it was found that 29.2% of the primary education teachers generated the metaphors that represented the student as "an improving being". Although the said research focuses on the concept of the student in general, it is possible to say that the research findings support each other considering that a literate child is also a student with a more limited definition.

Another category created in the research is the category of "an individual who is beneficial to his/her environment". When the descriptions of the metaphors in this category are examined, it is understood that a literate individual is beneficial to the environment as well as to himself/herself. Yıldırım and Demirtaş (2008) state that being literate enables the individual to reveal his/her potential and to improve his/her academic and social success. Also, it was determined that the prospective teachers who participated in the study of Saban (2009) perceived the student as a beneficial person to society in their metaphors for the concept of student. Although metaphors only on "student" are generated in the said research as opposed to this research, it was observed that the perceptions of prospective teachers towards students were similar in general.

The fourth category, which includes metaphors for the concept of "a literate child", is the category of "a product". In Saban's (2009) study, it was found that a few prospective primary education teachers generated the metaphor of a "product" for the student. According to Alexander, Schallert and Reynolds (2009), learning refers to both a process and a product. The process indicates how learning takes place, and the product indicates the gain earned at the end of this process. Accordingly, the metaphors for the first literacy teaching process were examined in the first question asked to the prospective primary education teachers, and the metaphors for the child, who is almost at the end of the first literacy teaching process, were examined in the second question. The literate child becomes the product because he/she achieves this gain at the end of the process.

Another category created by the prospective primary education teachers on "a literate child" is the category of "an individual spreading knowledge". Also, in the study of Saban (2009), 59 (4.2%) prospective primary education teachers perceived students as knowledge reflectors in their mental images towards the student; it is compatible with the explanations of the metaphors generated in the category of "an individual spreading knowledge" in this research.

Another category of metaphors generated on "a literate child" is the category of "an individual in need of support". In this category, there are expressions emphasizing that the teacher should support

his/her students and enlighten them. The students need teacher support, not only during the first literacy teaching process but throughout their education. Teachers supporting their students do not only facilitate their learning (Yetim & Göktaş, 2004) but also, being raised in a supportive school environment enables the students to gain social behaviors more easily (Dreikurs & Cassel, 1991).

The categories that consist of two metaphors generated by the prospective primary education teachers on "a literate child" are the categories of "an individual whose basic need is met" and "an individual who overcame a challenging process". First literacy teaching, which is the basic education, is the instruction for providing people with basic skills and teaching to read and write that will be necessary throughout their lives (Tekışık, 1994; Güleryüz, 2000). For this reason, the first literacy teaching process is an important and basic process of education life. A category similar to the category of "an individual who overcame a challenging process" was also found in the study of Shaw and Mahlios (2008) under the name of "challenge". In the said study, it was seen that prospective teachers explained literacy as a continuous struggle to understand.

This study focused on the perceptions of prospective primary education teachers, who will have a primary role in teaching to read and write, on "teaching to read and write" and "a literate child". As a result, the study reveals that prospective primary education teachers, who participated in the research, are aware of the importance of the process of teaching to read and write, which is a basic and important process of life, and the experiences that the child gains during this process will be significant gains both for himself/herself and his/her environment. On the other hand, it is recommended to conduct studies using the interviewing from qualitative data collection methods to examine the opinions of prospective primary education teachers on these two concepts in depth. Besides researching whether there is a difference in the perceptions of the prospective primary education teachers who took the first reading and writing teaching course or not, will contribute to the literature. It is thought that the studies to be carried out using quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research designs, in which the attitudes and opinions of primary education teachers and prospective primary education teachers will be investigating about "teaching to read and write" and "a literate child", will also bring a broad perspective on the subject.

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No potential conflict of interest was declared by the authors

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