

A Study on Metaphorical Expression: Examining the Situations that Make Senior Year Students Enrolled in Classroom Teaching Programs Anxious

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ABSTRACT

The present phenomenological study aims to understand, through images and metaphors, how senior class teaching majors perceive their studies at the faculty of education. The study group was assembled via criterion sampling, a method of purposive sampling. The study group consists of 12 senior class teaching majors (10 females and 2 males) from the education faculty of a Turkish public university during the 2017–2018 academic year (10 females and 2 males). The data was gathered through focus group meetings and analyzed using content and descriptive analysis techniques. All prospective teachers are concerned about passing the KPSS recruitment exam, according to the study. They used metaphors such as "a dark figure in front of a blackboard, a dark figure pondering, a dark figure inside and out, a dark figure of a group of hopeless students, a figure with a split face, a figure with question marks in his mind, and a student figure with confusion." Half of the participants stated that recruitment tests should be made fairer, while nearly the same number stated that pedagogical training for teaching certification should be eliminated and the teaching profession should be valued. In addition to expressing concerns about social pressure and oppression, the participants requested that they be respected by society and not oppressed.

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1. Introduction

Educational organizations, the most crucial element of which is human, are responsible for producing and spreading culture. In school environments, school administrators, teachers, students, and other employees can be affected by the school culture, which can sometimes affect this culture. A strong school culture has common goals, beliefs, and values. With this aspect, schools that produce their own cultures through their values and philosophies are also educational institutions where symbolic elements exist and are used. One of these symbols is metaphors. The word metaphor originates from the Greek word "meta-metapherein" (meta: to alter, to convey - pherein: to transfer), which means to convey and transfer (Levine, 2005). Etymologically originating from the word "metaphora (meta+phora)", it is a loanword from French (Tepebaşılı, 2013). Some Turkish words i.e. "istiare, eğretileme, değişmece, ad aktarması" are used to define metaphors in Turkish (Güneş & Tezcan, 2017). An indirect linguistic means of expression, metaphorical thinking can be used "to transfer meaning from one level of reality to another or to convey the known to the unknown" (Cevizci, 2009). Metaphorical discourse can therefore be seen as expressions of linguistic wealth and variety (Wulf & Dudis, 2005). Used to conceptualize problematic situations (Goldstein, 2005) or to unearth the characteristics of a complicated case or situation (Oxford, Tomlinson, Barcelos, et al., 1998), metaphors facilitate learning of new knowledge since they are each a way of thinking and perception (Morgan, 1998). Moreover, researchers also use metaphors to collect data concerning a specific case or situation and to address or comprehend a study topic in its different aspects (Carpenter, 2008). Since metaphorical expressions convey richness and diversity

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in a language, educational researchers have tried to understand what kind of metaphors individuals use when evaluating facts, events, and situations in educational environments. For instance, Cerit (2008) examined opinions of the students, teachers, and administrators on the notion of "teacher"; Akan, Yalçın, and Yıldırım (2014), and Korkmaz and Çevik (2018) looked into teachers' opinions on the notion of "headmaster"; Cerit (2010) researched about how students, teachers, and administrators see the notion of "headmaster"; and Turan and Yaraş (2013) conducted a study on the metaphorical perceptions of teachers and students regarding the notions of "discipline, headmaster, classroom rules, reward and punishment". Örucü (2012) evaluated primary school classroom teachers' metaphorical views on classroom and classroom management while Aydoğdu (2008) researched primary school students' and teachers' perceptions of school and ideal school. Considering the studies on teaching and those evaluating the profession, Ekiz and Koçyiğit (2013) revealed that the participants associated the notion with "sun, candle, energy, and source of knowledge". Cerit (2008) concluded that teachers have positive associations such as "source and distributor of knowledge, parent, friend, mentor, and an enlightening figure". In their study where Turhan and Yaraş (2013) investigated the opinions of first-graders and their class teachers, the researchers found that the most common metaphor associated with the notion teacher is "angel". A study by Ertürk (2017) that investigated what descriptions are used by primary school students for the profession of teaching also concluded that the students used metaphors like "mother, father, computer expert, baker, walking dictionary, and sun" to describe their teachers.

Some researchers have tried to understand what kind of metaphors teacher candidates use when evaluating situations and events which directly or indirectly affect them. Among these researchers, Zapata and Lacorte (2007) investigated the figurative language used by Spanish as a Second Language (L2) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL), the philosophical perspective embedded in discourses, and differences based on experience, academic background, and culture, whereas Singh (2010) investigated how teacher candidates attending certificate programs evaluate themselves in terms of "perceptions of quality, vision, mission, and effectiveness." Alger (2009) observed the conceptual metaphors for teaching and learning employed by high school teachers. Schinck Neale, Pugalee, et al. (2008) investigated university prep-class students' beliefs about mathematics, and Reeder Utley and Cassel (2009) examined primary school teacher candidates' beliefs about teaching and learning mathematics; Ylmaz and Yanarateş (2020) investigated teacher candidates' perspectives on water pollution, which is one of the environmental problems; and Demirkay Çapan (2010) investigated teacher candidates' metaphorical perceptions of gifted students. To train ideal teachers, it is necessary to examine how teacher candidates see this profession. At this point, understanding what kind of metaphors young people use while describing the profession is important in terms of revealing their true thoughts. In their study based on this idea, Bozdemir-Yüzbaşıoğlu, Aşkın-Tekkol, and Faiz (2019) examined the metaphorical perceptions of classroom teacher candidates and found that they used the metaphor of "Sun" when describing the ideal teacher, and they see teachers as a "guide, mentor, and source of information". Saban (2004) researched the mental images of entry-level classroom teacher candidates regarding the notion of "teacher" and the notion of student. As a result of the study, it was determined that the teacher candidates evaluate "teacher" as "the source and transmitter of knowledge, who shape and form students, and heal them". Participants in a study by Ylmaz, Göçen, and Ylmaz (2013) that included first-year undergraduates from the faculty of education's department of primary education (class teaching, social sciences teaching, science teaching, pre-school teaching, primary math teaching) associated the concept of a teacher with such positive connotations as "parent, family, gardener, light, shepherd" while describing the profession as "unpretentious and sacred." Koç (2014) studied the perceptions of first-year teaching undergraduates regarding the concepts of teacher and teaching profession. He discovered that the participants associated the term "teacher" with positive descriptors such as "source of knowledge, source of self-improvement, source of motivation, leading, treating and healing, raising and improving" while developing metaphors such as "a difficult profession, one that requires devotion." These results provide an insight into the status of the teaching profession.

Another serious point is to understand which problems are faced by teacher candidates who are new to the profession or preparing for it. A study by Thomas and Beauchamp (2011) that included prospective teachers also found out that teachers are challenged to attain a professional identity in the first few years of their professional lives and the professional improvement process is complicated and problematic for teachers. Pointing to a similar finding in their study in Turkey, Sarı and Altun (2015) revealed that young classroom

teachers have difficulties fulfilling their professional responsibilities. Receptoğlu, Akgün, and Aksu (2016) stated that young teachers criticize the exams of selecting teachers while evaluating their professional qualifications, that they express that they cannot study enough for undergraduate courses because they prepare for KPSS (Public Personnel Selection Exam of Turkey), and that they want the problems related to teacher appointments to be solved for qualified students to be selected and appointed. Observing pre-appointment problems of teacher candidates, Arı and Yılmaz (2015) also examined the hopelessness levels of teacher candidates who had taken KPSS but had to prepare for the exam again because they could not be appointed and pointed out that this situation had a negative effect on the candidates' lives. Ekici and Akdeniz (2018), examined the metaphors that teacher candidates developed in relation to the notion of maintaining discipline in the classroom, In other studies about metaphors in the teaching profession. At the end of the study, it was determined that teacher candidates match the notion of maintaining discipline in the classroom, which is highly crucial in fulfilling the profession's requirements, with notions such as "getting blood out of a stone, herding, and shepherding", and that teacher candidates have negative opinions on classroom management, and they pointed out that the reasons for these should be looked into.

Metaphors can be used to enable people to describe their personal and professional images or explore their personal attitudes and beliefs (Gillis & Johnson (2002). In qualitative studies on education in which metaphors will be used as a tool, the opinions of teacher candidates about "teacher" and teaching profession can be understood (Arslan & Karataş, 2015). In this respect, metaphors can provide both a data collection tool for researchers and a starting point from which young teachers can personally evaluate their self-perceptions and professional selves (Mahlios, Massengill-Shaw & Barry, 2010). Goldstein (2005) emphasizes that teacher candidates can have difficulties developing metaphors about their individual attitudes and beliefs, and points out that metaphor studies that provide opportunities which give teacher candidates clues related to instructional activities should be conducted so as to overcome this difficulty. The present study is also intended to identify the images used by senior students of class teaching in association with teaching majors, their metaphors to explain their problems, and their expectations of the problems to be solved. A metaphorical study does not exist that uses symbolical and ideational components and interviews prospective class teachers about their feelings and opinions using the two relevant means of conveyance. Presenting an empathy-oriented perspective, the present study is therefore believed to be useful for the field so the problems experienced by prospective teachers are understood and teacher training policies are improved.

The study aims to examine the situations that worry senior students enrolled in classroom teaching programs. Within its scope, it was tried to understand what kind of metaphors teacher candidates use while describing the situations that worry them in the pictures that they made, and what kind of solution they suggested when they were asked to describe their problems in detail.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Model

This study is a qualitative research conducted with phenomenological method. Qualitative methods serve to understand the depth, intensity and subjective processes of phenomena (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The present study intends to comprehend people's perceptions and experiences concerning a specific case/phenomenon and what meanings they have assigned to the relevant case/phenomenon (Johnson & Christensen 2008; Merriam, 2014). Phenomenological studies prioritize individual experiences and investigate how they perceive and interpret the cases/phenomena they face in their world (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). Such studies do not describe the explanations of participants for a specific phenomenon as right or wrong and are only intended to understand what opinions and meanings they assign to the relevant phenomenon. As phenomenology's essential purpose is to unearth the common meanings underneath the case that is being studied, the descriptions and explanations used by individuals concerning a specific phenomenon are interpreted in categories (Punch & Oancea 2014).

2.2. Study group

The study group includes 12 senior class-teaching majors (10 females and 2 males) from the faculty of education of a public university in Turkey in the 2017-2018 Academic Year. The researcher herein identified the inclusion criteria that she thought would be useful for the study purpose. The researcher examines the

opinions of 12 volunteer high school students who are able to express their feelings and opinions through various drawing techniques (watercolour, dry-erase, pastel, pastel etching, collage techniques, etc.), who demonstrate empathy, who can easily express themselves orally and in writing, and who are willing to communicate and collaborate. After working as a classroom teacher for 8 years in the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), the researcher who has a doctorate in educational administration and classroom teaching has worked at the faculty of education since 2002. During her work at the faculty of education, the researcher has conducted courses such as “teaching Turkish, children’s literature, visual arts education, school experience, teaching practice” in the division of classroom teaching. While she was giving the courses “teaching practice, children’s literature, visual arts”, she had the opportunity to get to know the students who voluntarily joined the study group. She observed that during the courses of teaching practice and children’s literature, 12 participants had some problems making them anxious and they asked for solutions to be found, and during the activities at the course of visual arts, they were able to produce creative and original works and develop metaphors by using the techniques taught to them. The researcher aimed for teacher candidates to express their feelings and thoughts that they could not express with words through their pictures in the study; therefore, she included to the study group 12 participants who are successful in the activities during the course of visual arts, as she believes that the situations making them anxious should be understood and the solutions should be developed for teacher candidates to train well.

Given the importance of including participants to explain a specific case in phenomenological studies, it is necessary to contact primary individuals who themselves experience the case and can develop opinions about it (Creswell & Poth 2017). To create study group by contacting individuals with experiences related to the studied case, the size of the study group created in conformity with the study purpose varies between 10 and 15 (Starks & Trinidad, 2007). To create the study group, criterion sampling, a purposive sampling method, is used (Patton, 2014). Researchers should have full knowledge of the population as purposive sampling methods are used to create the ideal sample for the study subject (Neuman & Robson, 2014). Criterion sampling method is intended to study different aspects of a phenomenon or case in depth (Neuman, 2014). The criteria that meet the level of importance can be set in advance (Patton, 2014) and researchers are free to create their own study group based on the criterion or criteria that they think would serve their study purpose (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018).

2.3. Data Collection Tools and Procedure

Data collection was conducted through focus group meetings. In qualitative studies in the field of social sciences, data collection can be conducted through methods such as discourse and text analysis, structured or semi-structured interviews, and focus group meetings. Media releases such as movies, posters, art works, newspapers and television, as well as media sources such as news, TV shows, online news and blogs can also be employed for data collection (Forrester & Sullivan, 2018). The present study uses the pictures drawn by the study group in association with the theme “majoring in teaching”, along with the metaphors produced by each participant based on his/her drawing. Focus group meetings were also held with the participants to discuss their problems.

A commonly-used method in the field of social sciences, the method of focus group meeting allows a study group of 6 to 12 individuals to share and exchange their opinions concerning a specific topic. The topic is discussed thoroughly during such meetings and the moderator should make sure that the participants express their views freely and each of them has equal opportunity in expressing their opinions (Neuman, 2014). The most critical aspect of this method is that it facilitates a setting of communication and interaction where the topic is discussed thoroughly. However, discussion may go beyond the initially-intended limit. Participants might have disagreements or address the topic superficially (Mann & Stewart, 2002). In this method, it is therefore important for interviewer to make sure that participants are willing to collaborate and the connection between them is well-established in harmony, as well as to act objectively during the meetings (Neuman, 2014). Participants were first informed of the purpose and scope of the study and that they would be asked to draw a picture using various techniques on the topic of teaching as a major and that their pictures would be interpreted. Three separate sessions of focus group meeting were held with 12 prospective teachers who volunteered to participate.

They were asked about “their evaluations of majoring in teaching” and ensured that they could express their opinions freely. After the discussion, each participant was asked to express their feelings and thoughts by drawing a picture with different techniques. The pictures drawn were saved as photos and then added to a MSWord document with an assigned sequence-number.

During the second focus group meeting, each participant was given equal opportunity to interpret their drawing based on the two questions they were asked:

- What sort of problems do you express on your drawing?
- What do your metaphors imply?

During the third focus group meeting, the problems experienced by the participants and the solutions they proposed were discussed. During this session, to maintain communication and interaction among the participants and to address the issue thoroughly, the researcher made sure that the discussion was held focusing on three main questions:

- What problems do you face as teaching majors?
- To what do you compare your problems?
- What expectations do you have for solving these problems?

2.4. Data Analysis

The phenomenological method is an approach intended to answer specific questions concerning what individuals think and know. Since this approach focuses on personal experiences, such studies deal with individuals’ worldview and how they interpret the phenomena, or in other words, their perception of the world (Marton, 1986; Punch & Oancea, 2014). Therefore, data analysis in such studies is intended to reveal experiences and assigned meanings. Findings are explained and interpreted within the scope of the themes and patterns produced, while content analysis is conducted to conceptualize the retrieved data and to identify the themes that may define the phenomenon. Descriptions and direct quotations are used to represent the results (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). The data analysis herein was conducted using “content and descriptive analysis methods”. Codes were used instead of the participants’ names since they were guaranteed anonymity. To render the data analysis easier, such codes as “Ö1-F22, Ö5-M21, Ö6-M21, Ö12-F22” were created to represent the prospective teachers symbolically. The codes contain three components that indicate the “sequence-number, gender (F=Female, M=Male), and age” of a participant. To determine the situations that make teacher candidates worry in detail, the researcher in this phenomenological study tried to understand what kind of metaphors they used in the pictures that they made and what kind of meanings they attribute to the situations that worry them. For this purpose, the researcher first presented the pictures made by the teacher candidates, and then interpreted them and quoted the candidates. To be able to capture all the details, the researcher tried to diversify the data and wanted to examine and evaluate the opinions that the teacher candidates shared during the interviews. While interpreting the data based on the interviews and showing them with the frequency values in themes and sub-categories, she quoted the teacher candidates’ explanations.

2.5. Validity and Reliability

Compared to quantitative research methods, qualitative methods have a different scientific approach. Qualitative researchers should prove that the criteria of validity and reliability are met in their studies (Creswell, 2014; Neuman, 2014). The current study intends to fulfill the validity criteria of “relevance (internal validity) and generalizability (external validity)” and the reliability criteria of “coherence (internal reliability) and credibility (external reliability)” (Creswell 2014; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam & Grenier, 2019). In qualitative research, validity is the concept that points to the researcher checking the accuracy of the findings through certain processes, and reliability is the concept that points to the consistency of the researcher's approach in terms of different projects and different studies (Gibbs & Flick, 2018). External validity in research is related to the generalizability of the study results. The fact that these results can be generalized to similar environments and situations indicates that it has external validity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). However, the fact that human behavior is not stable makes it difficult to generalize results in social sciences (Creswell, 2014). In qualitative research, it can be recommended to make rich and in-depth definitions to increase transferability (external validity), that is, the possibility of adapting the results to another situation.

Another important strategy is to be careful and attentive when selecting the samples (Meriam, 2014). To discuss external validity, it is necessary to check whether internal validity is provided or not (Guba & Lincoln, 1982). Internal validity (credibility) is related to whether the findings fit with reality in the outside world. Some of the strategies that should be considered in ensuring internal validity or credibility are as follows: triangulation, member check, appropriate and adequate participation in data collection processes, appropriate and sufficient time allocating for the data collection process, and seeking diversity of understandings about the event and phenomenon about which the study is conducted (Meriam, 2014).

The strategies that ensure consistency and reliability for a qualitative researcher are triangulation, expert review, researcher's positioning, and auditing technique. The first three are related to internal validity, which requires linking internal validity and reliability. The use of multiple methods in data collection is a consistent and reliable way and can be considered as data revealing how the participants understood the reality being researched. The auditing technique reveals how the data is collected, how the categories are created, and how the decisions are made during the examination (Meriam, 2014: 213-214). Qualitative researchers are obliged to check whether their approach is reliable (consistent or decisive) at each step of the study and prove that they minimize mistakes (Creswell, 2014). While providing internal reliability, the researcher should stick to the conceptual framework and present the results systematically without generalizing while analyzing the data (Meriam, 2014; Merriam & Grenier, 2019). Confirmability, which is used instead of objectivity in qualitative research, explains that objectivity is observed and necessary controls are made to minimize mistakes (Guba & Lincoln, 1982; Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). Encoding is an important step in defining what the data you are analyzing says (Glesne, 2012). To ensure objectivity in qualitative research, it is important to develop a control mechanism to check that there are no mistakes in the analysis and during the analysis process, and to secure that there are no deviations in the codings during the encoding process (Gibbs & Flick, 2018).

In this study, people who would represent the research subject well were reached and it was paid attention that the study group has sufficient number. The researcher gave importance to allocate appropriate and sufficient time to the data collection process. Through data diversity, she evaluated the pictures the study group made with the theme of "being a student in the faculty of education", the metaphors they produced during the focus group interviews, and the views they expressed. She explained the research method and how the data were collected and analyzed to show that transparency was provided in the study. In order for the participants to express themselves sincerely and to explain the metaphors they produced in the pictures they made, she held sessions at different times and paid attention to receive confirmation from the participants. During the interviews, she tried to prevent the participants from focusing on details that did not contribute to the solution or would waste time. During the analysis, she checked whether the views were presented under the correct codings by making continuous readings in order to verify the codings. When presenting the findings, she tried to present the views conveyed during the picture analysis and focus group interviews in an unbiased manner in themes and codings. While showing the participant views under common themes in tables, she specified the views' frequency by using frequency and presented quotations to reflect the views. To strengthen the confirmation mechanism (when necessary, checking the data once again and reviewing the codings), she kept the raw data and the documents that she used for encoding.

2.6. Researcher's Role

In qualitative studies, it is important that researcher defines the role s/he undertakes throughout the study process, understands participants' opinions and thoughts well, and presents them objectively (Punch & Oancea, 2014). Researchers should especially keep their attention during interviews, resort to verbal and non-verbal communication, and occasionally employ testing questions to ensure that participants stay focused on the problem/issue and provide them with feedback all the time (Neuman, 2014). To present the participants' opinions herein correctly, the researcher created a setting that allowed them to express their feelings and opinions freely during the focus group meetings while also ensuring that they stayed focused on the topic. Analyzing each of the drawing works and comments of the prospective teachers as part of the data analysis, the researcher employed an emphatically-driven approach and stayed objective both during the interviews and the data analysis.

2.6. Ethical

In Turkey, as of February 2020, ethical committee approval has been made obligatory. Since the data for the study entitled “A Study on Metaphorical Expression: Examining the Situations that Make Senior Year Students Enrolled in Classroom Teaching Programs Anxious” was collected before 2020, an ethical committee approval is not required herein. The researcher acted in accordance with all scientific, ethical and citing rules and did not falsify the data collected.

3. Findings

The results are assessed under two themes: “situations that concern the prospective teachers and their expectations based on the works and metaphors developed by them” (Figure 1). There are analyses and the participants’ opinions are quoted under the sub-categories of each theme.

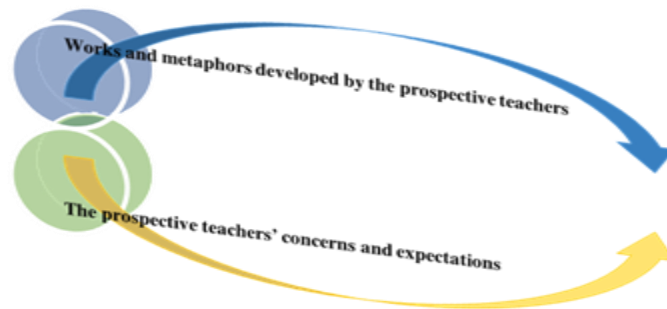


Figure 1. Analysis of the Prospective Teachers' Opinions

Works and Metaphors Developed by the Prospective Teachers

This theme deals with what metaphors the prospective teachers use and how they interpret their collage work. In this study, the participants have all concerns about passing KPSS (a test for which senior students prepare to be recruited as teachers) and being recruited as teachers. The metaphors developed by the participants in their works demonstrate that they emphasize the critical importance of KPSS and their concern, just as Ö1 compares herself to "a dark figure in front of a blackboard" and Ö5 uses a dark human figure to represent himself and colors the surrounding problems gray, expressing their desire to overcome obstacles. Ö8 divided the face of a female figure in half and covered her entire face with banners to convey that their problems are reflected on their face and to express their concern in black and shades of gray. I do not wish to be recruited while holding a walking stick! Teachers are working as anything but teachers! Contract-based teaching must be eliminated! Ö9 used a figure dark inside and outside to represent prospective teachers studying for KPSS day and night. Ö3 used "a dark figure of a group of students" waiting to be recruited just like herself. Ö4 compared herself to "a tree whose branches carrying a burden" while also using "black and shades of grey" to highlight their pessimism and despair. Using the figure of "a black tree" to express pessimism, Ö7 compared "the problems invading her mind to a tree whose branches are black/dried up" and also foregrounded blossoms on some branches to foreground the remaining hope. Ö10 drew a figure with question marks in her mind to express her fears and concerns. She also compared her hopes to the red balloons in her hands and her exam anxiety to the bombshell about to explode. To express her concerns and expectations, Ö11 drew "a figure turning black because of overthinking" to represent prospective teacher (herself). Ö12 used metaphors such as "non-recruited teachers laborers now! Their teaching hindered!" to make a critique of the teachers being forced to work in other jobs as they cannot be recruited. Ö12 also covered the colored area of problems with black to express her pessimism, which she notes indicates that concern of not being recruited darkens students' lives. 10 participants foregrounded the problem of KPSS and highlighted the "uncertainty" therein and their pessimism. Along with two participants (Ö5-Ö7) hoping to overcome this pessimism, two other participants (Ö2-Ö6) believed in the importance of being "optimistic" against all uncertainties and problems. Although Ö2 describes herself as "a confused student", she uses "blue color as the theme color" to express her remaining hope despite the existing problems and produced a colorful work to emphasize her commitment to overcome the problems. Describing himself as "an energetic teacher looking forward to teaching", Ö6 also emphasized

that he is not pessimistic but hopeful to achieve his goal of becoming a teacher against all odds. Below are the metaphors used by the 12 prospective teachers and how they interpret their collage work (Table 1).

Table 1. Collage Works by The 12 Prospective Teachers and Their Interpretation of Them

	<p>"I used yellow as theme color and inserted KPSS in yellow into the middle, along with the figures representing the society and the questions we are asked on the left side. I drew a blackboard on my side and added a dark teacher figure in reference to her problems." Ö1-F22</p>
	<p>"I addressed the confusion among the senior class-teaching majors. The huge question mark foregrounds our problems. We face the dilemma of whether to study MA or for the test. I also have security concerns if recruited. Paid recruitment also concerns me. We feel sad leaving our home, family, and friends after graduation. Despite those who complicate our lives and the dark chaos we have been exposed to, I preferred various colors in my work." Ö2-F22</p>
	<p>"I highlighted how we have uniformed without our individuality, gender, and varying opinions because we are all confused. The infinite number of teachers implied here indicates that many people (graduates and undergraduates) suffer from the same problems." Ö3-F21</p>
	<p>"They try to proceed through fear, anxiety and despair. I compared students to trees. A tree that is about to dry up with burdened leaves trying to stand tall. The colors I used are mostly black and shades of grey because we do not have a colorful world. Although I compared students to trees in this work, this tree does not represent a blooming tree in spring, but a tree dried up in fall." Ö4-F21</p>
	<p>"The work tells that the student is depressed as he cannot prepare for his exams. The volume of thoughts above his head is because of financial problems. Because the student is more concerned about working than studying and cannot afford the books to prepare for KPSS." Ö5-M21</p>
	<p>"The biggest desire of all prospective teachers is to finally meet their class and students to raise individuals that will serve well for their country. The pencil in orange color (KPSS) gets in the way of the prospective teacher here. I drew the school and students in blue and pink to represent hope. I believe we will achieve our ideals one day against all odds." Ö6-M21</p>

	<p>"I compared the issues invading our minds to tree branches. Tree represents peace and most people are happy when the tree blossoms and yields fruits. However, if it is dried up, it cannot yield happiness and peace. A dried-up tree is solely a piece of wood for firing. You expect trees to blossom and yield fruits. That's why the green on branches gives hope (the green branches on the right-hand side show that we are still hopeful)." Ö7-F22</p>
	<p>"For the whole face of the female teacher in black and grey, I used the letter KPSS, which foregrounds our concern about KPSS. I divided the face into two to tell that this concern breaks one's life and oneself into pieces and used black and shades of grey while doing so. To express that these concerns drain our hopes, I used banners stating "That moment!" Ö8-F22</p>
	<p>"I divided the page into two and used bright colors (orange, yellow) for daylight and pastel colors (blue and its shades) for night. The dark figure in the middle represents prospective teachers. The figure is black because prospective teachers are preparing for the exam day and night and stressed and bored because of the exam." Ö9-F22</p>
	<p>"My work addresses our concerns and fears (KPSS, exams, efforts to graduate). The prospective teacher here holds a bombshell in one hand and red/orange balloons (hopes, dreams, success) in the other. I used dark colors while drawing the figure to express our despair and pessimism. The lightning flashes in our mind represent our problems (study, prepare for KPSS, graduate, etc.), while the river flowing under our feet represent social pressure, exam stress, and our concern about recruitment." Ö10-F22</p>
	<p>"My work deals with personal and social problems and highlights that teaching majors have concerns and are pressured by society even before graduation. The thinking figure represents a prospective teacher (me). On the left-hand side are my concerns (what would my family think? Will I achieve to graduate? KPSS!, prospective teachers waiting to be recruited!), while on the right-hand side are my hopes (success, graduation, recruitment, teaching)." Ö11-F22</p>
	<p>"My work highlights recruitment problems. I criticized that teachers that could not be recruited are forced to work in other jobs. I used a dark background to insert newspaper headlines like "Non-recruited teachers laborers now! Their teaching hindered! 300 thousand unemployed teachers!" I drew this bit in red but then covered it all with black. This concern/stress darkens our life and causes us to be pessimistic, which is my highlight here." Ö12-F22</p>

Concerns of Prospective Teachers

During the final interviews in the second theme, the participants' opinions are analyzed and the findings are evaluated under two sub-categories i.e. "their concerns and their expectations".

What Concerns the Prospective Teachers

The present study concludes that the primary concerns of prospective teachers are "passing KPSS (f=12), recruitment (f=12), and financial concerns (f=12)", and that they describe KPSS as "a huge black box (f=11), a

sickening exam (f=4), confusing/chaotic (f=7), a bottomless well (f=1), a tree-killing worm (f=1), a pencil getting in the way (f=1), str Criticizing the recruitment policies of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and their disregard for those with a teaching degree when recruiting teachers, the prospective teachers emphasized the "injustice (f=12)" in recruitment, while others criticized the "uncertainty (f=6)" of the system and described the situation of the teachers waiting to be recruited as "unfortunate (f=5)". It is also understood that the prospective teachers are all concerned about not being employed (f=12). Of those noting that they have financial problems (3), one (Ö3) is understood to be pessimistic because she will start her life in debt as she had to study with student loans, while another (Ö5) expressed sadly that he did not have time for studying or preparing for KPSS since he had to earn money. Most of the participants considered social pressure/oppression (f=9) as a major means of pressure. Eight participants (8) described these oppressions as "destructions on life", while one participant (Ö1) compared them to "fruit-withering worms". Some of the participants shared that they were adversely affected by the attitudes of scholars and described such scholars as inconsiderate (f=7), while also expressing the pressure that they are under because of all the burden that is placed on their shoulders including responsibilities, exams, and assignments (f=7). When asked to point out the problems and concerns that they experience as undergraduates, the participants shared that they were negatively affected by the attitudes of scholars and described such scholars as inconsiderate. Some prospective teachers (3) expressing their concerns about their future after recruitment are understood to be concerned about safety in the Eastern Turkey if recruited for teaching there (f=3), low salary (f=4), and teachers (f=3) being underappreciated (Figure 2).

1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KPSS • Huge black box • Sickening exam • Confusion/chaos • Bottomless well • Tree-withering worm • Pencil getting in one's way • Strangling rope • Problem breaking individuals into pieces
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exams-assignments • A means of pressure on students
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitudes of scholars • Inconsiderate
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social pressure/oppression • Fruit-withering worms • Destructions on life
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment • Unfair • System of uncertainties • Unfortunate

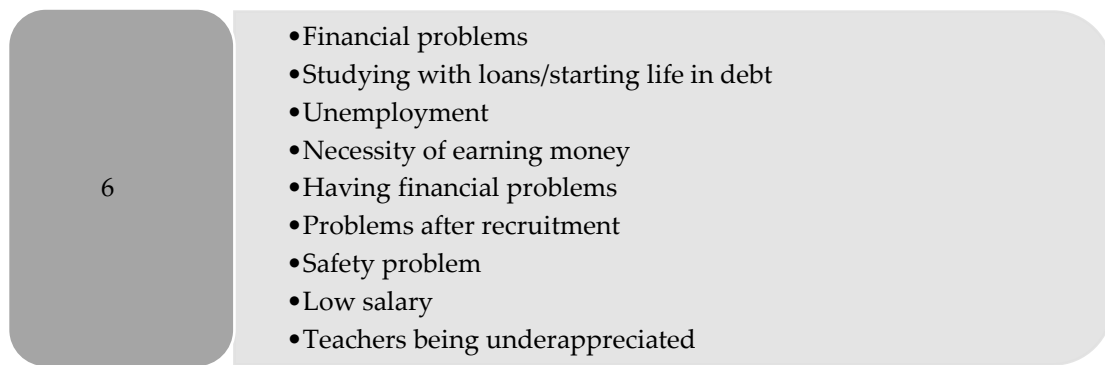


Figure 2. *What Concerns the Prospective Teachers*

Below are some quotations of the explanations made by the participants about their concerns.

“Due to the systematical uncertainties, we as prospective teachers are unfortunate. As students worried about their future, I used a slogan highlighting that we feel sad instead of laughing. I applied for a scholarship as an undergraduate with financial problems but ended up having a scholarship as an undergraduate with financial problems. However, I had to admit the student loan and started our lives in debt. The numbers of students graduating and of teachers that are still waiting to be recruited are worrying. We are concerned about failing in KPSS.” Ö3-F21

“The common problems of teaching majors include exams, concern about recruitment (because of the interviewing system in effect), social pressure, and a constantly changing system.” Ö4-F21

“We should do our best to overcome all our problems. We should quit pessimism as long as we have our green branches (of hope) against all odds. Parents think they do everything for their children’s best interests but are unaware of the burden and responsibilities that they are imposing onto their children. I hope they will realize this fact and relieve our burden.” Ö7-F22

“Our greatest fear is not to be recruited. We want to see the gains of our years-long efforts. We are occupied all the time and facing a social pressure!” Ö10-F22

“We all dream about graduating but have barriers in our way. Not being recruited and unemployment cause graduates of teaching major to do other jobs. It is quite normal that we are pessimistic considering all the handicaps!” Ö12-F22

Expectations of Prospective Teachers

The present study evaluates expectations of prospective teachers under eleven sub-categories. As seen in Table 4, all participants hope they pass KPSS and are easily recruited. Half of the participants stated that a fairer recruitment test is administered (f=6), while almost half of them disapproved recruitment of those without a degree from a faculty of education who only have obtained a certificate of teaching from schools deemed equal to faculties of education and therefore this system of teacher training is revoked (f=5), and expressed that the profession of teaching should be appreciated more (f=5). Expressing their concerns about social pressure and oppression, the participants also requested the society to respect the youth and not to oppress them (f=8). Some future educators who were dissatisfied with the attitudes of their professors and the amount of work they had to do during their undergraduate years demanded that undergraduates not be oppressed (f=8), that academicians demonstrate empathy towards students (f=8), and that the responsibilities of students be decreased (f=7). Emphasizing the financial difficulties faced by undergraduate students, one participant (Ö5) requested that scholarships are granted fairly (Figure 3).

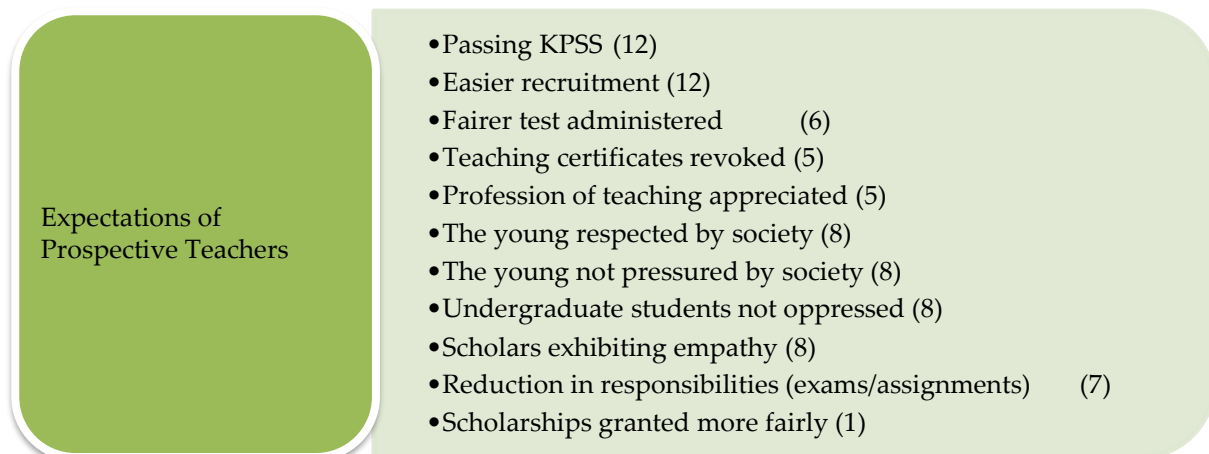


Figure 3. *Expectations of Prospective Teachers*

Below are quotes summarizing the participants' expectations of the future.

"I believe that those who earn a paid certificate of teaching instead of studying the same major as we did do not deserve to hold the same title. The system of teaching certificates should be lifted." Ö3-F21

"I want our professors to communicate with us efficiently (emphatically). Assignments improve us but they should not be that intensive for senior students. We have financial problems. I cannot allocate time for other responsibilities as I have to work. Students with financial problems should be granted additional scholarship." Ö5-M21

"It is not the solution to constantly change the education system. The young should be respected more. A society cannot develop with passive acting. Act for real and see what the young are going through to understand us. Then we can hope. We need people hopeful for the future. No success will come out of solely talking. We expect them to come up with solutions." Ö7-F22

"We want a fairer recruitment system. Interviews should be held in accordance with some specific standards and the results should be made available so justice is established. Students should be interviewed before their admission to faculty of education. There should be specific qualifications that prospective teachers are required to meet. Teaching certificates should be abolished. Because I do not think a training of 3-4 months would be useful. There is a need for a fairer and balanced system." Ö10-F22

"I do not approve the graduates of faculty of science and letters who become teachers after getting a certificate of teaching. We do not want to be recruited when we are old or to start our lives as the potentially unemployed." Ö12-F22

4. Conclusion and Discussion

The results are assessed under two themes: "situations that concern the prospective teachers and their expectations based on the images and metaphors developed by them". The study concludes that all of the prospective teachers have concerns about passing the test KPSS and being appointed as teachers. The study concludes that "passing KPSS, being appointed and financial concerns" were the problems that affected the participants most. The participants described KPSS as "a huge black box, a sickening test, confusion/chaos, bottomless well, a tree-withering wolf, a pencil getting in the way of prospective teachers, a problem strangling and breaking individuals". Criticizing the approaches of MEB in appointing teachers and the disregard in attaching due importance to setting a criterion of having a degree from faculties of education, the participants stated that it is "unfair" and described this situation that they are in as a "misfortune", criticized "the system for being ambiguous", and expressed their concerns of unemployment.

In Turkey MoNE remained in charge of training teachers until 1982, which was subsequently assigned to Faculties of Education that also collaborated with the MoNE following the inception of the Council of Higher Education (Deliveli, 2020). Faculties of Education train teachers for various fields and teach them "field-specific, pedagogical and world knowledge". Prospective teachers graduating from these departments are recruited based on the base points in KPSS. After completing the candidate training of the MoNE, teachers sit

for the “Written Exam for Permanent Recruitment of Teachers” and the “Interviewing” Exam to be recruited permanently. The MoNE was unable to meet the number of teacher vacancies across Turkey between 1985-1991 and abolished exam requirement for recruitment in 1992, which resulted in recruitment of the unemployed university graduates who did not qualify for teaching. In 1996, recruitment of unemployed university graduates as teachers -mostly as class teachers- disrupted the supply-demand balance. The increasing number of admissions to faculties of education that started in 1982 resulted in higher numbers of graduates, which brought up “Teaching Proficiency Exam” in the 2000s. Finally, the MoNE started recruiting candidate teachers with Public Profession Exam in 2001 and KPSS in 2002-2003. Moreover, unemployed graduates of different faculties with teaching certificate were recruited through KPPS, which also increased unfair competition. The recently increasing number of graduates of teaching majors and the small number of recruitment quotas set by the MoNE resulted in a pile-up in unemployed graduates (Atav & Sönmez, 2013; Baştürk, 2017; Deliveli, 2020). Passing KPSS has become an issue of concern for senior teaching majors and their families, just as their graduation has always been. It is challenging for prospective teachers to pass KPSS (those with necessary financial means enroll in courses to prepare for the exam while others prepare with their own means) and to pass their courses at university successfully.

One’s perception and expectations of life and the extend to which these expectations come true might have positive or negative effects on that individual’s psychological welfare and the working environment that s/he joins (Crossman & Haris, 2006). Associated with an individual’s cognitive evaluation of his/her own life, fulfillment in life is a notion that encompasses an individual’s perception of his/her life and the criteria that s/he associates with her/himself (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin 1985). To increase efficiency in teaching, it is not enough to improve the training programs within teacher-training institutions. Because professional efficiency is also connected with personal motivation. Efficiency in teaching can only be enhanced through boosting their professional fulfillment among teachers. Their expectations should therefore be understood and met when they start and progress in their professional life (Uras & Kunt, 2006). Raising and selecting quality teachers is an issue of significance to raise individuals who meet the necessities of the time. It can therefore be motivating to understand personal welfare and expectations of prospective teachers as undergraduates and tackle their problems.

The study concludes that senior class-teaching majors have concerns and are pessimistic. They used metaphors of “black tree and dark prospective teacher” to describe themselves. To reflect the participants’ mood, the results table presents “their concerns (recruitment, social pressure, financial concerns) in black and their metaphors in grey”. The table presenting their expectations of life (social pressure ending, empathy-based attitudes exhibited by academicians towards undergraduates, tackling financial problems, easier recruitment and ensuring employment, tackling security problems after recruitment, etc.) uses “green and its shades” to highlight these issues. The participants created collage works using metaphors and interpreting them shows that all of them are concerned about passing KPSS and being recruited. To express their concern about KPSS, participants used metaphors such as “a dark figure in front of a blackboard, a dark figure pondering, a human figure dark inside and out, a dark figure of a group of students whose hopes have been dashed, a human figure with a face split in two, a human figure with question marks in its head, and a figure of a confused student.” One of the two participants who used the image of a dark tree compared his/her face to “a tree with burdened branches,” while the other compared “the problems in his/her head to dark/ withered tree branches,” also foregrounding some branches that are about to blossom “to express that there is hope.” The participants used mostly shades of black and grey to express their concerns and pessimism. Based on the participants’ interpretation of their metaphors and works, it is understood that prospective teachers feel under pressure because of KPSS and that their concern of “not being recruited as teachers” adversely affects their fulfillment in life. A study conducted by Güven and Dak (2017), with senior students preparing for KPSS reports that KPSS, an exam creating an unnecessary competition, is the source of future uncertainties and causes anxiety and stress among prospective teachers, thereby reducing their life-quality. In the category of impediment, prospective teachers have been reported to use metaphors such as “handcuffs, barrier, black wall, death sign, an elephant skating, sledgehammer, and shackle.” In the category of the process, prospective teachers have been reported using metaphors such as “long path, tunnel, dark ambiguous path.” In the category of compulsion, prospective teachers have been reported using metaphors such as “anxious person, a person compulsorily working, Elmacı (2015) and Karaca (2011) revealed that prospective teachers have a negative perception of KPSS, while Sadioğlu and Sezer (2016) and Özsarı (2008) reported that senior students have

high-level concerns about KPSS. The researchers also emphasized that the concern of not being recruited after graduation causes anxiety among prospective teachers. According to the findings of a study conducted by Gündodu, İmen, and Turan (2008), which inquired into the viewpoints of third-grade and senior undergraduates from eleven distinct teaching majors, one of which was Class Teaching, the exam had a negative impact on the participants' levels of anxiety, and both the exam itself and the preparation process were draining for the participants in terms of "economical, psychological, and social" considerations.

This study concludes that the biggest concern is "KPSS, recruitment and financial problems," and reports that participants described KPSS as "a huge black box, a sickening test, confusion/chaos, a bottomless well, a tree-devouring worm, a pencil standing in the way of prospective teachers, a problem that strangles and breaks individuals." Participants criticize the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture for its teacher recruitment procedures and the fact that it does not give due importance to those who have graduated from teacher training programs, calling this situation "unfair" and "unfortunate." In addition, it is noted that most participants consider social pressure/oppression as a major pressure on themselves and describe these oppressions as "destructions in life", while one participant compares them to "fruit-eating worms". Nartgün and Gökçer (2014) found that prospective teachers used negative metaphors such as "torture, torment, chaos, nightmare, death, barrier" to express their opinions about KPSS. A study where Sezgin and Duran (2011) conducted with prospective teachers with a degree in Class and Social Sciences Turkish Teaching reports that the participants expressed their concerns and anxiety about KPSS mostly with descriptions like "exhausting, boring". This study revealed that prospective teachers are exhausted and unable to attend art, cultural and sportive events because of their concern of unemployment, which also adversely affects their social relationships and communication. Another study where Arı and Yılmaz (2015) included prospective teachers enrolled in KPSS preparation courses revealed that the severity of their concern about future and its adverse effect on their lives are elevated more as their level of negativity towards KPSS increases, as well as that KPSS causes more harm on them as the level of social pressure and concern about their future increases and the perceived social pressure is diminished as family support grows. Dursun and Aytaç (2009) found out that the primary factor causing desperation among senior students is their unemployment concern. Noting that unemployment elevates concerns and desperation among the young as a common problem for the qualified labor in Turkey, researchers report that unemployment is considered a fault, failure and incompetence or an embarrassment.

Some of the participants shared that they felt negatively impacted by the attitudes of academics, calling them inconsiderate and pointing out the pressure of having all the weight on their shoulders, including responsibilities, exams, and assignments. Some prospective teachers who complained about the attitude of university teachers and the intensity of assignments (exams and homework) during their study period demanded that students not be oppressed, that university teachers show empathy in communication, and that students' responsibilities be reduced. The present study concludes that future concerns expressed by some participants include insecurity in Eastern Turkey after being hired, low salary, and lack of appreciation for teachers, and that all participants expect to pass the KPSS and be hired more easily. Half of the participants stated that a fairer test should be administered for recruitments, while almost half of them disapproved recruitments of the non-teaching majors who only have graduated from schools deemed equal to faculties of education and hold only a teaching certificate, and expressed that the profession of teaching should be appreciated more. Expressing their concerns about social pressure and oppression, the participants also requested the society to respect the youth and not to oppress them. A study by Eraslan (2006) reports that prospective teachers think that KPSS does not assess professional proficiency in teaching properly as it only tests examinees' cognitive knowledge and that different assessment criteria (faculty admission score, GPA, etc.) should apply to recruitments. Uyulgan and Akkuzu (2014) concluded that prospective teachers perceived field-specific assessment negatively, worried about the exam, and felt inadequately qualified because of the exam, and reported that their undergraduate studies were also affected by concerns about unemployment. Studies by Sezgin and Duran (2011) and Guendoğdu, Çimen, and Turan (2008) report that prospective teachers do not view the KPSS as an effective assessment tool in the hiring process. These studies indicate that academics are not helpful in KPSS preparation and emphasize that classroom activities should be designed to support the KPSS preparation process.

Recommendations

To train hopeful, happy, optimistic teachers, it is recommended that the problems that concern class-teaching undergraduates are tackled (academicians with positive attitudes, introducing practices to sooth senior students' concern about KPSS and the pile of responsibilities). In addition, it would be useful to revise teacher recruitment policies (introduce solutions to address prospective classroom teachers' concerns about recruitment, roll back pedagogical training for teaching certification) and introduce practices that improve the status of the teaching profession (improve salaries, resolve safety issues in unsafe regions, or refrain from recruiting newly qualified teachers in such regions).It is also useful that academics show empathy to understand prospective teachers' concerns.

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