İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin ve Yabancı Dil Öğrenen Öğrencilerin Tutum ve İnançlarının Metafor Yoluyla Ortaya Çıkarılması

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ÖZET

Yabancı dil öğrenen öğrencilerin dil öğrenme sürecine bakışları ile İngilizce öğretmenlerinin bu süreçte üstlendikleri roller hakkında metafor yardımıyla bilgi sahibi olmak mümkündür. Lakoff ve Johnson'a (1980) göre, "metaforun özü bir tür şeyi başka bir tür şeye göre anlamak ve tecrübe etmektir". Bu alanda yapılan çalışmalar son yıllarda hız kazanmıştır. Çalışmanın amacı İngilizce öğretmenlerinin yabancı dil eğitimindeki rolleri konusundaki inançlarını ve İngilizce öğrenen öğrencilerin yaşadıkları süreci, ürettikleri metaforları analiz ederek ortaya çıkarmaktır. Çalışmaya Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulunda görev alan 30 okutman ve eğitim alan 156 öğrenci katılmıştır. Katılımcıların her birinin "İngilizce öğrenmek... gibidir, çünkü ..." ifadesini tamamlamasıyla elde edilen veriler, metafor çözümleme tekniği kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Öğrencilerin ürettiği 121, öğretmenlerin kullandığı 25 metafor dikkate alınmıştır. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, yabancı dil öğretmenleri ve öğrencilerinin konuya ilişkin tutum ve inançlarını metafor yoluyla da ifade edebileceklerini ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Metafor, Öğretmen tutum ve inançları, Yabancı dil öğretmenlerinin rolü, Yabancı dil öğrencilerinin inançları.

Revealing ESL Teachers' and Students' Attitudes and Beliefs through Metaphors

ABSTRACT

With the help of the metaphoric language English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students and teachers use, it is possible to gain some insight into students' views of the language learning process and teachers' roles, considering the fact that the essence of metaphor is to understand and experience one kind of thing in terms of another (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). The purpose of this study was to explore EFL teachers' beliefs about language teaching and their roles in the classroom, and learners' beliefs towards language learning process through an analysis of metaphors they produced. 30 instructors and 156 students from the Foreign Languages School of a Turkish university participated in the study. In order to collect data, respondents were asked to complete in writing the stem 'Learning/Teaching English is like ... because…' using a metaphor. Metaphor elicitation method was preferred. The conclusion is drawn that there is value in analysing metaphors teachers and students produce concerning second language teaching and learning.

Key Words: Metaphors, Teacher beliefs and attitudes, English teachers' role, English language learners' beliefs.

INTRODUCTION

It has been widely claimed that our attitudes and beliefs are reflected in the language we use. If it is so, there is value in verbalizing them in order to be able to reveal the subconscious attitudes and beliefs that underlie consciously held opinions. Metaphor is a device for illuminating the lesser-known through the better-known: the 'source domain' yielding insights into the 'target domain' (Hoyle and Wallace, 2007). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) claim that metaphor is not just a matter of language, of mere words; on the contrary human thought processes are largely metaphorical. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature' (1980, p.3). Metaphors reflect how people perceive the world and how they think. Teachers and students are no exception in the widespread use of metaphor as a cognitive tool. The use of metaphors in research to examine teachers' beliefs about teaching and student learning, schooling, and students' conceptions of language teachers, course books, learning a foreign language have gained currency in recent years. (De Guerrero and Villamil, 2002; Kramsch, 2003; McGrath 2006; Perry and Cooper, 2001; Ryan, 2005; Saban et.al., 2006; Seferoğlu, et. al., 2009). Some of the aims of these studies have been helping the teachers to articulate and "construct representations of themselves and their experience"

(Kramsch, 2003, p.125), "to understand teachers' ways of thinking about teaching, learning and other school-related issues which is believed to influence their classroom practices and their own professional growth" (Seferoğlu, et. al. 2009, p. 323), and "to promote awareness of professional practice" (Cortazzi and Jin, 1999, p.155).

DEFINING ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS

Richardson (1996:103) describes beliefs as "psychologically held understandings, premises, or propositions about the world that are felt to be true". As for Rokeach (1971) a belief is "any simple proposition, conscious or unconscious, inferred from what a person says or does, capable of being preceded by the phrase 'I believe that …'" (as cited in Bailey, 2006, p.40). For example, in Horwitz's (1987) Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), it is possible to see the statements such as "I believe that someday I will learn to speak English very well", or "Language learning involves a lot of memorization", or "If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning, it will be difficult to get rid of them later on". This inventory and many others were designed to elicit students' and/or teachers' beliefs about language learning with the help of phrases constructed. Bailey (2006) exemplifies one supervisor saying "Pupils' oral errors should be corrected immediately so they won't learn bad habits". Such beliefs profoundly influence how we define effective teaching, whether implicitly or explicitly (Bailey, 2006). Ajzen (1988, as cited in Bernat and Gvozdenko, 2005) states that beliefs are a central construct in every discipline that deals with human behavior and learning. They have a complex nature that is shaped by social, cultural, contextual, cognitive, affective and personal factors. That's why beliefs have been called a "messy" construct by Pajares (1992, p. 307), and according to him, this difficulty may be partly due to the paradoxical nature of beliefs and different agendas of scholars.

Attitudes have generally been regarded as either mental readiness or implicit predispositions that exert some general and consistent influence on a fairly large class of evaluative responses (Maslach, 1977). According to Maslach, attitudes are internal, private events whose existence we infer from our own introspection or from some form of behavioral evidence when they are expressed overtly in word or deed (p.20). In other words, as Bailey (2006, p. 41) cites from Daresh (2001) "attitudes are clusters of individual beliefs that survive the immediate moment". For example, language teachers might hold certain attitudes, based on beliefs, about, say, the efficacy of treating oral errors (Bailey, 2006). Similarly, language students may have certain attitudes based on beliefs, either true or false, but with a real potency.

The use of metaphoric language, then, may help the students, as well as the teachers to uncover their conscious or unconscious beliefs about language learning/ teaching, and once their beliefs are revealed, their attitudes might be observed. If a student believes that learning a language is struggling desperately in a marsh, or drowning in a well, he might display little or no effort to learn the language. Or, on the contrary, if he believes that learning a language is like finding an oasis in a desert, or being trained in first aid, he may benefit from the positive attitude he displays, based on positive beliefs towards language learning. Therefore, in this study it is primarily aimed to reveal beliefs through metaphors, and reconsider attitudes in light of these beliefs.

ROLE OF METAPHORS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF BELIEFS

As for the language learning beliefs, they are intangible property of human mind about what is right/true or wrong/false in the process of foreign language learning. Both language learners and teachers bring to the classroom certain expectations, beliefs concerning learning-teaching practices they believe to work well. Bernat and Gvozdenko (2005) notes: "Despite what we know about beliefs, we have very little knowledge about the psychological mechanisms involved in creating, shaping and guiding these beliefs, which are by products of a number of internal as well as external factors" (p. 2).

As Kalaja and Barcelos (2003) state, beliefs are considered one area of individual learner differences that may influence the processes and outcomes of second/foreign language learning/acquisition. According to them, the recent interest in belief studies is the result of a shift in focus to learners and their contributions to learning second/foreign languages that originates from a discussion of what characterizes good language learners, including such traits as motivation, aptitude, personality, cognitive styles, learning strategies (p.1). However, some researchers have made the point that although learners have their own views about language learning, their theories are still considered less valuable than scientific theories (Allwright, 1984; Barkhuizen, 1998; Peacock, 1999). Teachers seem to ignore that students have positive contributions to make, and they are almost never asked overtly and systematically about their learning experiences. In the classroom context, the perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and metacognitive knowledge that students bring with them to the learning situation have been recognized as a significant contributory factor in the learning process and ultimate success (Breen, 2001). For example, second or foreign language

students may hold strong beliefs about the nature of the language under study, its difficulty, the process of its acquisition, the success of certain learning strategies, the existence of aptitude, their own expectations about achievement and teaching methodologies (Bernat and Gvozdenko, 2005). These beliefs influence how students approach their learning and may contribute to their success if they match with their teachers'. Ellis (1998, cited in Kramsch, 2003, p.116) analyzes metaphors to investigate students' perceptions of language learning; he is defining beliefs as the lenses through which students frame their learning experiences. He also suggests that metaphor analysis might be usefully used as a consciousness-raising device. The students' metaphors are examples of how students define their contexts and talk about their experiences of learning (Kalaja and Barcelos, 2003). In Kramsch's research carried out in 1999, 953 undergraduate learners of 14 different languages at UC Berkeley were asked to describe their experience learning the language. The findings of the study may contribute a different perspective to student learning.

Similarly, teachers are also highly influenced by their beliefs, which in turn are closely linked to their values, to their views of the world and to their conceptions of their place within it (Williams and Burden, 1997). These had a greater influence than teachers' knowledge on the way they planned their lessons, on the kinds of decisions they made and on their general classroom practice (Pajares, 1992). Studies have revealed that teachers often employ metaphorical language, in particular conventional metaphors (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980), when talking about their profession, their beliefs, and their daily practices (Munby, 1986, 1987; Tobin, 1990; Tobin and Ulerick, 1995). Metaphors can provide valuable insight into a teacher's beliefs and identity by revealing the teacher's basic pedagogical orientation, her personal identification with teaching and her social orientation (Sugrue, 1996; cited in Sakui and Gaies, 2003). In the study Sakui and Gaies (2003) conducted about beliefs and metaphors of a Japanese teacher of English, they identified two powerful metaphors that recurred in their data; the first was the dual metaphor of learning as a journey and the teacher as a guide. The second metaphor is teaching as planting seeds. Their study serves as a valuable tool to assess teachers' pedagogical beliefs and might be a resource for further studies. Classifications of metaphors about teachers have been done in Turkey as well. For example, Saban, Koçbeker and Saban (2006) examined metaphors produced by 1222 education students in a Turkish university. The ten dominant metaphors that the researchers identified were the sun, sculptor, parent, compass, lighthouse, gardener, candle, tree/fruit tree, painter, and tour guide. In their study, Seferoğlu, Korkmazgil and Ölçü (2009) evaluated the data gathered from three groups; in-service teachers, senior pre-service teachers and junior pre-service teachers. The overall

distribution of metaphors used by the three groups were teacher as leader, teacher as producer, teacher as resource person, teacher as care-taker, teacher as guide, teacher as facilitator. Nikitina and Furuoka (2008) claimed that these studies attest, among a wide range of metaphors some images were recurring despite the differences in educational and sociocultural settings. This phenomenon highlights the universality of the concept of "teacher" (p.166).

The interest among second language acquisition researchers, in the beliefs that learners, teachers, and the general public hold regarding language learning, seems to be prompted by the assumption that beliefs are stable mental attitudes, opinions, or ideas about language learning that remain usually implicit but can be made explicit through surveys, questionnaires and the like (Kramsch, 2003). Metaphors are believed to be a powerful tool of expression and figure of speech; therefore, they can be used to make beliefs and attitudes explicit. Metaphors possess such invaluable qualities as expressibility, compactness, and vividness and are "better conceptualized as single ideas than as individual words" (Ortony, 1975).

This study focuses on metaphors learners produced about EFL learning and teachers about language teaching and their roles in the classroom in a university setting. Beliefs and attitudes are two related constructs, which need to be understood. In this study, beliefs and attitudes were tried to be revealed via metaphors. The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' beliefs about language teaching and their roles in the classroom, and learners' beliefs towards language learning process through an analysis of metaphors they had produced.

To this end, the study tried to answer the following research questions:

1. What are English language teachers' metaphorical images concerning language teaching and their roles in the classroom?
2. What are EFL learners views about language learning process entailed in the metaphors?

METHOD

Participants

A statement completion questionnaire was given to 156 students and 30 English instructors of Mersin University School of Foreign Languages. The students were studying English for 15 hours a week, and average teaching hours for teachers was 15 hours. The students were mainly from engineering, biology, phycology and tourism departments. 57% of the participant students were males, 43% of them were females. 25 out of 30

teachers were females. The average experience of teachers was eleven. They were asked to complete the statement "Learning/Teaching a language is like… because…" with a metaphor; students in their native tongue, i.e. Turkish, and teachers in English. 121 students and 25 instructors generated metaphors in response to the statement.

Procedure

The researcher preferred stem-completion technique in this study. Metaphor elicitation method was employed in this study. In response to a stem "Learning/Teaching a language is like … because..." 121 students and 25 English instructors produced metaphors and these metaphors were grouped and analysed. For classification of the data from students' statements, all metaphors were listed and metaphors that appeared to be semantically related were grouped together under 13 categories. The formulation of the categories was based on the presence of the same key words found in different metaphors, for example "journey" and "traveling", led to the formulation of the category "Traveling to new places". The conceptual aspects of the metaphors were also considered and categorization was done accordingly, for example "tasting a new meal" and "eating chicken in students' cafeteria" were differently categorized as "Ingesting food" and "Bind", the former with a positive connotation and the latter with emphasis on the negative feeling it arises. Table 1 summarizes the 13 categories identified from students' metaphors, with three examples given to illustrate each category. A minimum of five metaphors was considered necessary to count as one category. As for the teachers' metaphors, they are also listed and grouped. Their role as a teacher and how they conceptualize teaching have been categorized. Examples and number of occurrence have also been noted. In the categorization process, the researcher worked with two of her colleagues. After categorising the metaphors on their own, they negotiated any differences in their classification of metaphors to reach a consensus. In her study on 'Metaphor and the subjective construction of beliefs' dated 2003, Kramsch applied this method. Upon personal contact with her, the same method of analysis was applied in this study.

FINDINGS

Processing Students' Metaphors

As mentioned previously, Kramsch (2003) suggests two approaches to processing the metaphors elicited in this manner. The first approach is a social psychological approach which would show "how these metaphors reveal the underlying conceptualization of the words these students inhabit" (Ellis, 1998). Table 1 illustrates metaphors under 13 categories which were grouped conceptually, and analysed according to Kramsch's first approach.

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Table 1: Metaphoric Statements of Students' Beliefs

Metaphors	Examples	Number
1. Activity which requires practice and/or patience	Driving a car, the more you practice, the better driver you become Fishing, you need to wait patiently to catch one Doing fitness; whenever you stop, you get soft.	16
2. Struggling to achieve something impossible	Milking the pigeon. Trying to persuade an atheist to become Muslim. Walking on eggs without breaking them.	15
3. Returning to a childhood state	A baby growing, slow but amazing A child learning to walk. A new born baby, first syllables then words and sentences	14
4. Bind	Ongoing nightmare, I cannot wake up. Eating chicken in students' cafeteria, disgusting Carrying a stone on my back with naked feet on a road full of broken glass	9
5. Becoming another person	Being a different person, discovering different part of you Being a new person, having a new identity Learning to be different with a new language	7
6. Getting to know another culture	Meeting different people from different cultures Discovering new things about other countries Having new ideas about people from other cultures	7
7. A long journey on difficult paths	Traveling on curved roads, getting sick Traveling on dead-end streets Climbing up a rocky mountain with slippers	7
8. Learning a physical skill	Swimming; first the fear to be drowned, then the joy of being in the sea Cycling; you need a good bike to enjoy your ride Playing tennis; you need a good partner	7
9. Discover a new country, travel to new places	Traveling to new places, seeing new faces Adventuring in enchanted waters Open up your door, stepping into a new world	6
10. Learning a cognitive skill	Doing crossword puzzles Discovering how an engine works Assembling a puzzle	5
11. Platonic love	Being in love with a girl who doesn't recognize you at all A platonic love; I like it but it doesn't like me Dreaming to kiss your lover who is not your lover yet	5
12. Ingesting food, cooking	Tasting a delicious meal Cooking with too many ingredients Trying new tastes with different ingredients	5
13. Something you will need in unexpected times	A master key which opens every door Saving money in your piggybank Knowing first aid, you may need anytime, anywhere	5

The most frequently produced metaphors were about physical activities which require practice and patience (1). The activities are all physical like doing sports, fishing, driving a car or riding a bike, and the more one practices, the better he becomes at doing the activity. The need of patience and practice is being emphasized in the metaphors in this category, which differentiates this category from the category eight. In category eight, the metaphors reflect the idea of learning a skill solely with an emphasis on the need of a good instructor. Four out of 13 categories in Table 1 imply the students' having some kind of problem and difficulty in learning a language (2,4,7,11). The metaphors under these categories convey a sense of hardship, torture, disgust, boredom, desperation and so forth. Consciously or unconsciously, if learners believe in the complication and difficulty of learning a language and if they consider this experience as a burden, the success and the pleasure of learning will be minimal. These metaphors may reflect what the learners have experienced and how their belief systems have been shaped. They may maintain similar attitudes towards language learning, to say positive or negative. Learners have more to gain by viewing language learning as discovering new places, learning about new cultures (6,9) than as struggling to achieve something impossible. If a learner believes that "learning a language is like having a master key which opens every door" (13), he probably thinks that it is for his own sake to know the language and one day he will need it. This belief can foster his learning; whereas a student who thinks that learning a language is like going nowhere, being in a vicious circle lacks the motivation to involve in the language classroom which at the end may hinder the learning. When the first category is reconsidered, it is true to say that some learners are aware of the need of practice and patience in this process, and when category 10 is viewed learning is regarded as a cognitive skill. With these metaphors, learners show that they are not passive recipients of knowledge, but they cognitively involve in the process with their effort and patience.

The second approach used is a social discursive approach, which focuses on the metaphoric construction of a beliefs space, that is in part shared and shaped by others, and in which various possible scenarios are acted out (Kramsch, 2003). For example, one student say that "Learning a language is like eating a hot chilli pepper; you cry because of hot but you don't give up eating it". Here, learning corresponds to eating; drills, memorization, exams are the hot part; failure to learn or not being able to succeed is the crying part. Still the student believes that it is essential to learn English and it is part of his education, as the pepper is indispensable part of his meal which gives flavour, so he doesn't give up eating chilli peppers.

The metaphor conveys a sense of pain, bodily hardship, as well as the bitter taste that gives delight. The seventh category in Table 1, Platonic love, contains metaphors as the construction of paradox. The learners indicate that they love someone, in this case learning a foreign language, but they cannot reach her/him or get reaction, as it is in platonic loves. It can be interpreted that their love of English is not enough for them to accomplish learning it.

In the first approach, Kramsch (2003) points out the classification problems encountered. There might be logical contradictions among metaphors used. In her study, it was noted that students used metaphoric statements to create a fundamentally ambivalent space that attempted to articulate the paradox of learning a foreign language (p.117). In this study, 13 paradoxical metaphors were listed under three categories. Table 2 illustrates the metaphors which are paradoxical constructions.

Table 2: Metaphors as the Construction of Paradox

Paradox	Examples
1. Double binds	Playing music with a tuneless guitar Having a crash on a girl who has a boyfriend Driving a sports car in bumpy roads Saving in a bank which goes bankrupt Sailing in an ocean with a gondola
2. Contradiction between expectations and physical abilities	Rowing a boat alone without instructions in an ocean Climbing up a mountain without any equipment Studying mathematics, many calculations without handy formulas
3. Conflict and struggle	Watching a boring film but still wondering how it will end Trying to do a puzzle with missing pieces Drinking water which is essential, knowing that you will piss it all A drag on me, I leave it but it never leaves me A war to be won without weapons

The metaphors in Table 2 conceptually try to see language learning in terms of a paradox. These metaphors can be processed under three aspects; conceptual, linguistic and discursive. Conceptual aspect was preferred while analysing these metaphors. For example, following Kramsch (2003), a metaphor like "Learning a language is like drinking water knowing

that you will urinate it all regardless of the amount you take." can be analysed under conceptual aspect as:

- Learning corresponds to drinking
- English corresponds to water
- The memorization of words, grammatical rules correspond to absorbing water
- Inadequacy of knowledge stored corresponds to urinating

When we look at category 1, the metaphors tell us that learning English is fun, enjoyable, and delightful; however, there is difficulty, nuisance, and trouble in the process. Category 2 consists of metaphors with contradictions between expectations and physical abilities, like trying to row a boat himself in an ocean, or climbing up a mountain without any equipment. The last category is about conflicts and struggle. There is worthless effort in terms of students.

Processing Teachers' Metaphors

In the analysis of teachers' metaphors, 30 English instructors produced 25 metaphors that fall into nine categories. Table 3 illustrates these metaphors under four headings; role of the teacher, definition of teaching, examples and number of occurrence.

Table 3: Metaphoric Statements of Teachers' Beliefs

Role of the teacher	Definition of teaching	Examples	Number
1. Actor/Actress	play	acting in a play, on a stage	7
		being an actress, wearing different hats	
2. Cooperative leader	training, directing	training a sport team like a coach	4
		being a symphony director	
3. Provider of knowledge	instruction	teaching how to drive, how to paint	2
	enlightenment	like the sun, illuminating learners	
4. Artist	art, handcraft	tailor, dressmaking that requires creativity	2
		being a potter, moulding	
5. Innovator	cooking	different ingredients, different tastes	2
		making sarma	
6. Guide	journey	being a guide in their journey	2
		introducing a new world to students	
7. Nurturer	breeding	being a gardener	2
		raising a child which is amazing	
8. Construction engineer	construction	building a house, systematic and cumulative	2
		construction something stone by stone	
9. Guru	spiritual ceremony	feeling hundreds of miles away	2
		finding who you are, seeing inner you	

The collection of teachers' metaphors reveals that the teacher as actress/actor category ranks higher with seven examples in this study. Teachers state that teaching a language is like acting on a stage, using your posture, voice effectively; having different roles, wearing different hats. Teaching is a play, show and the teacher is the actress. In the second category Teaching is like training a team or conducting an orchestra, the teacher can be defined as cooperative leader because the need of cooperation and soul of a team. Teacher is a leader, but learners are the part of the team. The following categories are represented with two examples each. In the role of knowledge provider, the learner is posed not as a passive recipient of knowledge but as a constructor of language, a notion more in line with social-constructivist theories of language learning and teaching (Williams and Burden, 1997). Considering teaching as an art and teachers as artists is another category. Teaching is like dressmaking or doing pottery are the metaphors which house the concepts of creativity, skill and talent. Teaching can be like cooking or a journey where teachers are innovators and guides. Nunan (1998) points out the benefits of an organic view to grammar instruction and he uses the organic metaphor which sees second language acquisition more like growing a garden than building a wall. Similarly, two of the teachers in this study take the role of a nurturer with their metaphors "Teaching is like gardening, different flowers, trees and they all need special care" and Teaching is like bringing up a child, which is amazing. In the eighth category, teaching is like construction, building which is regarded as systematic and cumulative. In the last category, the teacher is the guru and teaching is something spiritual that allows a person to find himself, the other self. In this category, learners seem to be the part of the spiritual process and they might join the same ceremony with the teacher.

When we look at students' metaphors in Table 1, 31% of the metaphors produced show that students believe learning language needs patience, practice, time and effort, like a baby growing or learning to drive. When teachers' metaphors are analysed, we see that 24% of the teachers see themselves as cooperative leaders, knowledge providers. They are trainers, directors, and people giving instructions. Teachers also conceptualize themselves as tailors, painters, sculptures. In their study, Seferoğlu et. al. (2009) stated that when teachers depict themselves as producer like tailor, sculptor, carpenter, etc., they emphasise students' dependency and high teacher control. Meanwhile, when they describe teacher as guide, high teacher control is decreased (p.329). In this study, the metaphors students' produced and the metaphorical images teachers' depict can tell us that teachers' assumed roles and the students' conceptions about language

learning process are part of a similar domain. Similarly, 11% of the students think that learning a language is like learning a new culture, travelling to different places, while 8% of the teachers consider themselves as guides. The students say that language learning is like becoming another person (6%), while there are teachers who find teaching language as spiritual ceremony (8%). Students think that language learning is like cooking (4%), while some teachers regard themselves as cooks (8%).

Students' metaphors with negative connotation (30%) such as "struggling for impossible", "travelling in a long difficult, journey" or "platonic love" deserve attention. 11% of the metaphors are found to be constructed paradoxically. With these metaphors which hold negative connotation, students make their problems, the difficulty they encounter while learning a language explicit. They believe that learning a language is a burden, they are in a bind and the process is full of conflicts and struggle.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In his article called 'Metaphor', Searle (1993) asks the question that some of the scholars might have in mind, "Why do we use expressions metaphorically instead of saying exactly and literally what we mean?" Some researchers argue that when people use metaphors, they are saying exactly what they mean (Glucksberg and Keysar, 1993). Some of the scholars make further points that metaphors may express the meaning more concisely than a prolix non-metaphorical equivalent (original emphasis) (Cortazzi and Jin, as cited in Mc Grath, 2006). As Lakoff (1993) states metaphor allows us to understand a relatively abstract or inherently unstructured subject matter in terms of a more concrete, or at least more highly structured subject matter. The aim of this paper, therefore, was to draw attention to the beliefs of students' and teachers' about language learning/teaching processes and the potential value of metaphors for this purpose. The use of metaphors in this study is like taking the road less travelled, the metaphoric expression Bailey (2005) uses in her article about the recent history of language classroom research. She means that there are many possible goals in our journey of inquiry as well as many different ways to reach those goals, such as "charter'd streets", "blue highways" and the "road less travelled".

It is argued that the use of metaphoric language may help the students, as well as the teachers to uncover their conscious or unconscious beliefs about language learning/ teaching, and once their beliefs are revealed, their attitudes might be observed. Narrative method of inquiry has been

employed to explore these beliefs. In sum, an analysis of students' metaphors sheds light on the conceptualization of the process as generally being difficult, impossible, and tiresome; a process which requires patience and practice. The metaphors imply that learning a language is a long and hard process, and one needs a good guide or an instructor and good equipment to be successful. Negative attitudes towards language learning may root from these beliefs and they should be taken into account. However, Saban (2008) stated that with only one metaphor, it is not possible to explain the whole student phenomenon. Yet, the perceptions, beliefs and attitudes that students bring with them to the learning situation are significant contributory factor in the learning process.

Teacher beliefs are also important in understanding teachers' way of thinking and their professional growth, and it is believed that one's beliefs and attitudes, and his/her performance are associated (Richardson 1996). Teachers frequently use metaphorical language to depict their profession, so these metaphorical images should also be considered. While students' metaphors mostly imply the hardship they experience, the teachers' metaphors reveal that they identify themselves as actors or actresses, knowledge providers, coaches, guides or leaders. Still, as Berliner (1990) states, "each metaphor we use to think about schooling, teaching and learning influences how we think about our field and in subtle ways also influences the training programs we develop" (p.92). The teachers could build up on students' positive beliefs and consequently the attitudes towards the process, and could foster students' learning as well as their own teaching. Moreover, by using metaphors, teachers can arrive at a deeper understanding of their role and responsibility as educators, the nature of education, and the relationships between the teacher and student.

Metaphor is believed to be at the centre of mind and language. Hence, with the studies of metaphor scholars in metaphor theory and cognitive linguistics, metaphor can become a bridge between contextually contingent, changing and subjective experiences and their expression through language. Metaphor analysis can also help to gain insight into learners' beliefs in different educational settings. For example, Seferoglu et al. (2009) analysed pre-service and in-service teachers metaphorical images, while Aktekin and Aktekin (2011) analysed the metaphors medical students studying anatomy constructed. Güler et al. (2011) tried to reveal the prospective primary teachers' metaphoric perceptions towards mathematics, while Kalyoncu (2013) aimed to reveal the perceptions of elementary classroom teacher candidates about "art education lessons" by analyzing their metaphors.

SUGGESTIONS

As De Guerrero and Villamil (2002) pointed out, this is a study of what teachers 'say' rather than what they 'do', no claims are made about the teachers' behaviour in the classroom and whether or not the metaphors they came up with correlate in any way with their practice. Besides, students may produce metaphors so as to attract attention, or to exaggerate what they believe. Stem completion technique may not be sufficient as well. For future studies, it is recommended that teachers and students are interviewed upon the metaphors they have produced. Asking students' to elaborate on what they write may shed more light on the metaphors produced.

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