Metaphoric Perceptions of Secondary School Students Related to Central Examination

Mehmet Ali Akın [1]
Mardin Artuklu University

Muhammet Baki Minaz [2]
Siirt University

Abstract

This study aims to represent metaphoric perceptions of students related to central examination applied in transition to secondary school institutions. Within the study, the phenomenology approach from qualitative research techniques was used. To collect data, a semi-structured interview form developed by researchers was used. Data were collected from four secondary schools, two of which are in Artuklu and the other two of which are in Kızıltepe, Mardin, and from 200 students who will take central examination during 2017-18 school year. In analysing data, the content analysis technique was used. İn the analyses made according to the content analysis, close metaphors were classified separately and thematized with suitable names to contain all metaphors included in the groups. At the end of the study, eight themes were found. These themes are "Stressful and challenging process", "Milestone in life", "Uncertainty", "Victim", "Hope" "The nature of life", "Teog Exam (Transition from primary to secondary education)" and "Astonishment". Among these "Stressful and challenging process", "Milestone in life", "Uncertainty", "Victim", "Teog Exam (Transition from primary to secondary education)" and "Astonishment" reflect a negative perception. In these themes there are 158 negative metaphors. Only "Hope" and "The nature of life" represent a positive perception with 29 positive metaphors. As a result, it is observed that metaphoric perceptions of students related to the central examination is in general negative, yet perception of few students is positive. This perception can be seen in metaphors developed related to examinations such as LGS, SBS, Teog, etc. conducted previously for that purpose.

Keywords: Central Examination, Metaphoric Perception and Secondary School

---

[1] **Mehmet Ali Akın**, Ph.D., Mardin Artuklu University, Department of Education Sciences, Mardin, Turkey

[2] **Muhammet Baki Minaz**, Ph.D., Siirt University, Faculty of Education, Siirt , Turkey

Correspondence: mbakiminaz@gmail.com

Introduction

Defined as desired and intentional behavioural change through experiences in individuals (Ertürk, 1979), education is a field regarded by states, families and societies on which critical investments are made with great expectations. Satisfying expectations from education depends on training students from the very beginning of the preschool in accordance with their interests and abilities and on providing them with appropriate skills for the expectations of today's world.

Secondary school period is perhaps the most challenging period of life in which students prepare for the life and higher education with puberty-based tides.

High schools are institutions that give priority to the task of guiding students to jobs compatible with their interest and abilities and prepare them for business life and higher education as well as produce mainly training service for secondary schools in Turkey (Gedikoğlu, 2005). Just like universities, due diligence should be exercised in selection and placement of students into secondary schools. Thus, assessment and evaluation processes made related to the recognition and placement of students are expected to identify students accurately in terms of cognitive, affective and psychomotor preparedness levels and to place them into programs suitable for their existing traits (Demirel, 2004). This process is shaped according to scores obtained from examinations made for that purpose. Examinations that may result in huge gains or losses for students are considered as high risk examinations (Kutlu, 2014. Akt. Atar and Büyüköztürk, 2017). Examinations applied during transition into secondary schools are among high risk examinations (Atar and Büyüköztürk, 2017). Schools that do not meet the real demand due to limited number of quotas resort to selection of students through various ways to meet the active demand (Sağır and Mart, 2017).

The numerousness of students and the scarcity of qualified schools as well as tough conditions of competitions and the magnitude of the meaning ascribed to the examinations set a premium on examinations made for the selection and placement of students into secondary school institutions.

Since 2000s the system of student selection and placement into secondary schools has undergone significant changes at certain intervals. At the beginning of 2000s "High School Entrance Exam" (LGS) was conducted for the selection and placement of students into various high schools, particularly official/private science and Anatolian high schools and it was renamed as "Secondary School Selection and Placement Test" (OKS) in 2006 (Gür, Çelik and Coşkun, 2013). Shortly after the implementation of OKS, there was a debate on the necessity of changing the student selection and placement system based on various reasons (school, student, preparation for exam, family, the exam itself, etc.) (Gür, Çelik and Coşkun, 2013; Öztürk and Aksoy, 2014). Under the influence of these debates, a radical change was made under the name of "Transition System into Secondary School" (OGES) to be effective as of 2007-2008 education year and "Placement Test" (SBS) was applied (Erdoğan, Meşeci Giorgetti and Çifçili, 2011; Yiğittir and Çalışkan, 2013). It was decided that during the academic year of 2007 and 2008, SBS (Placement Test) would be taken by 6th and 7th grades and by 6th, 7th and 8th grades for three consecutive years. Besides, scores taken from examinations on grade basis were included into the student averages at various rates (Bal, 2011). It was decided that grade-based distribution of these rates would be 25% for 6th grade, 35% for 7th grade and 40% for the 8th grade, and that weighted year-end average of students from 6th to 8th grades would be 25%, and guidance and behaviour score would be 5%. A court decision cancelled the guidance and behaviour score, and the rate of weighted year-end average was raised to 30% from 25% (Gür et al., 2013). On grounds of debates and today's education needs, the system of student's selection and placement into secondary school was changed with a transition from SBS to TEOG (Transition from primary to secondary education) as of 2013-14 education year (Şad and Şahiner, 2016). In relation to available and unavailable reasons above, the system of student's selection and placement into secondary school was changed again to be effective as of 2017-18 education year under the name of central examination in spite of all objections observed by students, parents and educators (MEB, 2018).

In brief, the history of central examinations conducted for the purpose of selection and placement of students into secondary school is as follows:

- High Schools Entrance Exam (LGS) between 1998 and 2004

- Secondary School Selection and Placement Test (OKS) between 2004 and 2007,

- Placement Test (SBS) between 2007 and 2009,

- SBS between 2009 and 2013,

-TEOG (Transition from primary to secondary education) between 2013 and 2017 (Bağcı, 2016; Şad and Şahiner, 2016).

- Moreover, Central Examination (MS) related to Secondary School Institutions to Admit Students with Examination as of 2017-2018 education year (MEB, 2018). It was seen within the examination guideline related to the central examination that the examination would include 20 questions from Turkish, Maths and Life Sciences each and 10 questions from Republic of turkey Revolution History and Kemalism, Education of Religion and Ethics and Foreign Language each, and that based on acquisitions specified within the 8th grade syllabus, there would be questions to assess student skills of reading comprehension, interpretation, deduction, problem solving, analysing, critical thinking, scientific process and the like, and besides, a correction form would be used to allow that three incorrect answers lead to the nullification of a correct one (MEB, 2018).

In regard to the importance of the meaning ascribed to examinations, researchers feel the need to study related to impacts of the examination on students. One of the ways of understanding the impacts of the examination on students is to determine perceptions of students regarding the examination. Perceptions of individuals related to a certain topic can be determined through methods such as scale, questionnaire, interview and thinking loud as well as through metaphors (Koçak, Gül, Gül and Bökeoğlu, 2017).

Thoughts and perceptions of students may be set forth related to the Central Examination which was changed again as they are not only at the centre of the system of the transition to secondary school which is debated by educators, parents, students and other shareholders of education and repeatedly changed by Ministry of Education but also experience the heavy burden and stress of the system for years. Thus, there may be a research on what students as test takers think related to the examination, with what they associate it (metaphor/analogy) and the reasons why they associate the examination with the metaphors they develop.

Metaphor is to express something unknown with something known and to describe the meaning of the unknown using the tools and properties of the known. Individuals can comprehend a highly abstract, complicated or theoretical fact through metaphors as a very powerful cognitive means (Saban, Koçbeker and Saban, 2006). In other words, metaphor is an expression of an individual related to a concept or fact as s/he perceives using images (Levine, 2005). In short, metaphors are images that are developed by individuals to make an abstract or complicated concept or fact more comprehensible.

Metaphors can be used in various fields of education such as education management, creating and planning syllabi and education domain. Furthermore, they can be used to clarify topics that are incomprehensible or difficult to comprehend or some concepts, perceptions and attitudes in the education domain (Döş, 2010).

Considering metaphoric researches on education, it is possible to come across studies in which metaphors of teachers and teacher candidates in different branches are studied related to concepts such as manager, inspector, teacher, student, gifted students and so on (Saban, Koçbeker and Saban, 2006; Shaw, Massengill, and Mahlios, 2008; Döş, 2010 and Kalyoncu, 2012). In addition to studies related

to metaphoric perceptions of teachers and teacher candidates, there are also studies that touch upon metaphoric perceptions of students related to some concepts such as teacher, school, science, scientist, knowledge, examination, TEOG or different classes (Newton and Newton, 1998; Güler and Akman, 2006; Doğan-Bora, Arslan and Çakıroğlu, 2006; Aydın, 2010; Dikmenli, 2010; Akçay, 2011; Soysal and Afacan, 2012; Camcı-Erdoğan, 2013; Narayan, Park, Peker and Suh, 2013; Şad and Şahiner 2016 and Koçak, Gül, Gül and Bökeoğlu, 2017).

It is thought that the investigation of perceptions of students related to the new transition system into secondary school that closely concerns test-takers and their parents will allow the assessment of the examination in the eye of students and thus will contribute to taking some measures regarding reducing the stress and concern experienced by students. There have been some studies on TEOG, which is a Central Examination in transition from primary to secondary school, in Turkey (Özden, Akgün, Çinici, Sezer, Yıldız and Taş, 2014; Özkan and Özdemir, 2014; Yerlikaya, 2014; Birinci, 2014; Kaşıkçı, Bolat, Değirmenci and Karamustafaoğlu, 2015; Kazan, Karaman, Akçalı, Şişmanoğlu, 2015; Şad and Şahiner 2016). This study is among the studies in which metaphoric perceptions of students related the Central Examination are sought to be described. With this aspect, it is believed to contribute to the literature.

Objective

The main objective of the study is to determine metaphoric perceptions of students regarding the Central Examination related to secondary school institutions that will admit students through examination that has been effective as of 2017 in Turkey. In this respect, it is expected to contribute to reducing negative impacts of the central examination on students.

Method

During the process of collecting and interpreting data related to the study, the phenomenology design, as one of the qualitative research designs, was used. The phenomenology design is to focus on phenomena which are realized but about which we do not possess a thorough and detailed comprehension. Phenomenology is a convenient study ground on which studies are conducted on phenomena that people are not unfamiliar with but cannot fully comprehend their meaning (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008). Phenomenology focuses on not only how people perceive, describe, judge, recall, and interpret but also what they think of them and how they talk about them with others (Patton, 2014). This study that intends to determine metaphoric perceptions of students related to the phenomenon of "Central Examination" is suitable for the "phenomenology" design.

Sampling

Within the phenomenology studies data sources are comprised of individuals or groups that experience the phenomenon that is focused in the study and that can express or reflect the relevant phenomenon (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008). Within the study, the data source has been 200 students that took the central examination during 2017-18 education year. Purposeful sampling was used. In the purposeful sampling, researchers make use of their own judgements on whom to select and take those that are most relevant for the research (Balcı, 2009). Therefore, the sampling was comprised of 50 voluntary students from four schools in total, two of which are located in Mardin Merkez Artuklu High School and the other two of which are in Kızıltepe County.

Data Collection

In the interview with participants of this study, which was designed to determine metaphoric perceptions of the central examination (MS) taken by students and their supervisor teachers, what metaphor meant was explained with answers to the questions of students and teachers, and besides they were informed about the meaning and importance of the study. After the interview, voluntary

students that would take the examination soon were given semi-structured forms starting with the phrase "CENTRAL EXAMINATION is like …. Because" under the supervision of teachers and they were asked to complete the form by filling in the blanks available in the form. Forms completed were collected by teachers and delivered to the researchers. These semi-structured forms serve as the data collection tool of the study. Just as the word "like" is directed towards explaining the relation between the topic of the metaphor and its source in general within studies that describes metaphoric perceptions,   so the word "because" serves to explain the reason of creation of metaphors (Saban, 2008).

Data Analysis

During this stage of data collection, 200 students were reached. An assessment was made on semi-structured interview forms of 185 students among these, who could develop meaningful metaphors and associate the metaphor developed with its reason.

In the analysis of qualitative data, descriptive and content analysis techniques are used. Descriptive analysis is more superficial compared to content analysis and frequently used in studies in which the conceptual structure of the study is predetermined clearly. As regards content analysis, it requires a more in-depth analysis of data and ensures that themes and dimensions that are uncertain beforehand are revealed (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008, p. 223). The process in the content analysis serves to gather similar data depending on certain concepts and themes and to interpret them by regulating to make them comprehensible for readers (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008, p. 227). Therefore, research data were analysed according to four-staged "content analysis technique. These stages are: 1. Codification of data; 2. Obtainment of themes; 3. Regularisation of codes and themes; 4. Definition and interpretation of findings (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008, p. 228). Works done within the study related to these stages are as follows:

Codification of data

During this stage, all metaphors developed by students related to the Central Examination were listed on computer environment. Each participant form was assigned a number. Listed metaphors and their reasons that were found meaningful were located and codes regarding metaphors were determined. Metaphors developed were assessed in terms of the topic of the metaphor, its reason and the relationship between its topic and reason. Researchers ruled out metaphors which did not include any metaphors or an explanation or ground for the metaphor, did not contribute to the explanation of the term "MS" and could be approached within more than one category. In this context, fifteen semi-structured forms were excluded from assessment.

Obtainment of themes

Researchers surveyed which properties of the Central examination were considered by students regarding metaphors developed and how these properties were conceptualized. While some of the themes were formed by using concepts such as a challenging and stressful process, hope and astonishment that are included in semi-structured forms directly filled by students, the rest of them were thematized by giving them new names. When forming themes, names related to feeling, thought, creature and animal were excluded. For, while some feelings and thoughts have positive meanings, some others evoke negative meanings. For example, while hope is a favourable feeling, stress is negative. As it is not suitable to develop these two metaphors under the same theme, different themes were used. This situation was considered as valid for the concepts of animal and creature. Metaphors with similar meanings were included into the same theme. Direct quotations were made by giving students each a code (e.g. Ö15, Ö48 or Ö129, etc. (Ö refers to Student) from expressions believed to represent these themes well or be interesting.

Regularisation of codes and themes

185 metaphors developed by students were grouped by researchers under eight themes considering their name and meaning closeness. Opinions and suggestions of three expert academicians in the field of education were asked related to this thematisation. In accordance with the opinions and suggestions given, the process of thematisation was finalised. Hereunder, eight themes were determined as "a stressful and challenging process (f=49)", "milestone in life (f=41)", "uncertainty (f=35)", "victim (f=18)", "hope (f=17)" "nature of life (f=12)", "TEOG examination (f=10)" and "astonishment (f=3)".

Validity and Reliability

There are some different approaches that overlap in some issues and dissociate in some others relating to the validity and reliability of qualitative researches (Lincoln and Guba (1986); Sandelowski (1986); Maxwell (1992); Eisenhart and Hove (1992) and Leininger (1994). According to the approach of Leininger (1994), as one of these approaches, in a qualitative research it is enough to have the properties of "cogency, approvability, contextuality of the meaning, repetitive patterns, saturity and transmissibility". Where these research data are evaluated considering these properties, the level of attention and concentration shown by students when researchers and teachers fill in the assessment instrument can be expressed as writing what is believed. It was found adequate in terms of approvability property to see that all students admitted in interviews which were made with five students who were selected from each school and marked to reveal whether their own metaphors and their explanations overlap with those available within the study in terms of approvability that metaphors and their explanations within the study overlapped with their own metaphors and explanations. Furthermore, in this context what students wrote were directly included in the study. As the finding and analysis section included the contextuality of the meaning, repetitive patterns, saturity and transmissibility properties, this section excluded these properties. This study satisfies the validity and reliability terms considering Leininger (1994) approach related to the validity and reliability of a qualitative study.

Definition and interpretation of findings

Findings

When presenting the findings of the study, primarily the meanings of themes were explained. Then, metaphors examples in each theme were summarized. Finally, each theme was analysed separately and in detail.

Figure 1 represents eight themes developed related to the central examination and metaphor examples under each theme. Some metaphors under the themes were included through direct quotations from participant explanations.

Figure 1: Themes related to metaphors developed by students regarding the central examination conducted for transition to secondary school institutions and metaphor examples under the themes.
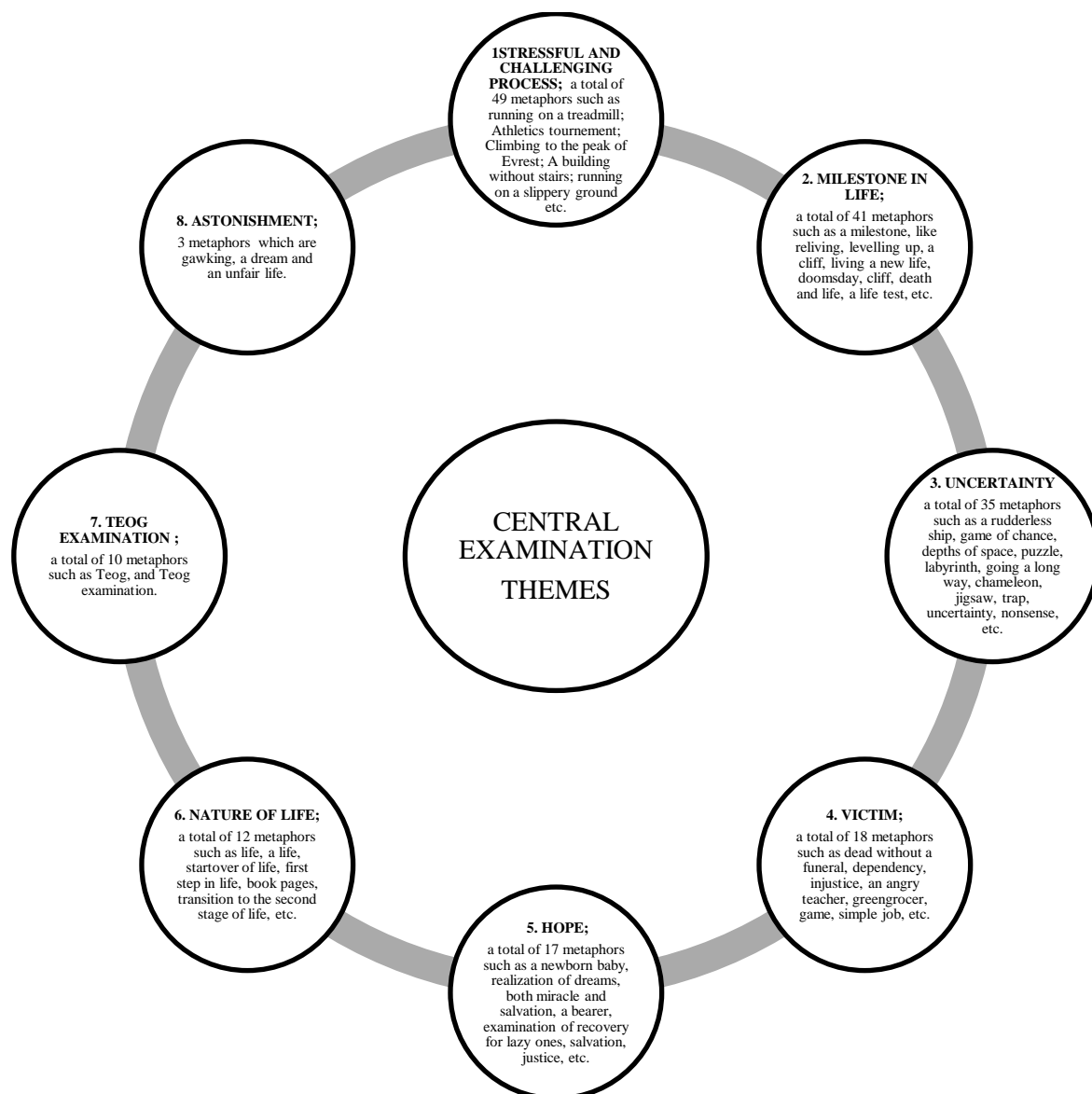
Metaphors developed by students related to the central examination were collected under eight themes. When creating themes, attention was paid to collection of metaphors with closest meanings under the same theme. All metaphors under the eight themes and their reasons of being developed were included in this section through direct quotations from participant statements.

1.The theme of a stressful and challenging process

The reason why the name of a stressful and challenging process was chosen as a theme was that students featured the examination stress, concern related to the examination and challenges of the examination process within a major part of their metaphors that they developed related to the central examination. *This theme includes: "Extraordinary examinations", "a huge challenge", "running on a treadmill", "hunting by hunter", "climbing mountain", "climbing a challenging mountain", "a fruit being grown", "a prime minister seat", "a hurdle race track", "a race", "obstacle to success", "running track", "athletics tournament", "going into the fire", "climbing Mount Everest summit", "being respectful and orderly", "a building without stairs", "drowning in ocean", "running on a*

slippery floor", "mother and father", "a long and narrow path", "suffering in hell", "the human under the water", "the birth of a baby", "fidget spinner", "elephant", "a brutal monster", "donkey", "helping my father", "dog", "a weird thing", "poison", "a tough track", "climbing over tough hills", "disgustingness", "trouble", "having a job", "halter", "horse race", "shoes that pinch", "thief" and "something bizarre".

Some of the reasons to develop these metaphors are as follows:

"Climbing Mount Everest Summit": *As it is a challenging examination to the core, it looks like climbing Mount Everest Summit (S60).*

"Drowning in Ocean": *If you swim in the ocean without an ability to swim, you will drown. Students take examinations but do not know what to do and how to solve questions. You drown and get lost in thoughts that express mistakes and regret (S71).*

"Suffering in Hell": *The central examination is not balanced as while some of the schools admit students without an examination, some others do not. As hardworking and lazy students do not take examinations, they are like to be admitted to the same school and I believe that this is so nonsense, unfair and erratic. We do not know how to study; in brief it has turned out to be something like going to hell (S75).*

"Fidget Spinner": *You feel uneasy when thinking. I am dying of stress. They should be thinking about us young people a bit (S102).*

"Thief": *I compare it to a thief as it steals my life (S136).*

2.The theme of milestone in life

The reason of naming the theme as milestone in life is that students have featured some of the metaphors developed related to the central examination and attributed meanings that can be regarded milestone in life to these metaphors. Following metaphors are included in the this theme: "*a milestone", "a tough bend", "walking on stairs", "the examination of escaping the world", "like reliving", "drawing for the future", "levelling up", "jumping off a cliff", "starting a good life", "blossoming", "a tree", "a game show", "a cliff", "dream, climbing a mountain", "success for our future", "the examination that shapes our life", "easing our life", "restarting a life", "having a job", "a pen", "overcoming obstacles", "climbing a steep mountain", "bridge", "doomsday", "jewellery", "a cliff", "life", "milestone", "the straight path (as-sirat in Arabic)", "despair in life", "something fatal", "something that makes life miserable", "examination thief", "climbing over tough hills", "death and life", "our future", "the gate to the life in future", "the examination of life" and "the examination of our life".*

Some of the metaphors were developed due to following reasons:

"A Milestone": *This examination is one that changes our life at one point. You should restart. If we want to have an up-to-date life, we should study and try to pass this examination. In fact, all examinations are crucial for us. Yet we should study hard for a good high school, good friends and a good life (S19).*

"Doomsday": *We should be admitted to a good high school for a good job. That means if you pass the examination then the doomsday ends and if you fail, it will be your doomsday (S97).*

"A Cliff": *It seems as if you set out by a car. However, you are not aware of the traffic and your destination. Someone appears and shows you the way. Yet unfortunately it is a bit late. There is a cliff at the end of that way. And you have come to an end. If you fall off that cliff, it means you have*

come to the end of your life. Yet if you make a U turn when approaching that cliff, you will escape (S48).

"Death and Life": *The examination will determine our life. Thus, if we win the examination, we will go on living, and if not, we will die (S152).*

"The Examination of Our Life": *When we become successful in this examination, we may be admitted to a good school. We may have a good job and career. But if we fail, we will have a bad high school, job and career (S184).*

3.The theme of uncertainty

The reason of selecting the name of uncertainty as a theme is that within a major part of the metaphors related to the central examination, students have addressed to uncertainties that arise from causes such as the difficulty level of the examination and questions and the examination being conducted for the first time. This theme includes metaphors such as "*rudderless ship", "a puzzle and labyrinth", "seasonal migration", "blowing leaf in the wind", "an overturned ship in the sea", "an alarm clock", "depths of space", "university exam", "Ashoura", "housework", "marrying and divorcing", "messy and fuzzy hair", "an all-mixed-up stew", "game of chance", "chameleon", "jigsaw"," "trap", "something bizarre", "horse race", "uncertainty"* and *"nonsense".*

The reasons of developing some of the metaphors are as follows:

"Seasonal Migration": *It is like seasonal migration, each season you migrate from a place to another. That is to say, it changes all the time. The central examination is also like the seasonal migration and changes once in 2-3 years (S2).*

"An overturned ship in the sea": *We had been familiar with the TEOG system for a few years and regarded that. Yet all of a sudden they introduced a system called Central Examination and we drowned in that system (S14).*

"A blowing leaf the wind": *Neither the direction nor the destination of a leaf blowing in the wind is clear. The Central examination is just alike. It is not clear where it will go, how it will settle, what results will come out and what the system will be (S12).*

"Uncertainty": *As it is not obvious how the examination will be, it makes me stressful and thrilled (S172).*

"Nonsense": *A system was introduced to relieve the stress of students. This system is more difficult and on the top it, three incorrect answers lead to the nullification of a correct one and as this increases the stress, it is nonsense (S104).*

4.Victim

The reason why the theme was named as victim is that students have regarded themselves as the victim of the new examination system in some of the metaphors related to the central examination as the system has continually changed with ambiguities that are thought to be used against them. This theme includes following metaphors: "A *dead without funeral", "hunter", "injustice", "dependency", "greengrocer", "an angry teacher", "nothing", "game", "toys"* and *"simple job".*

Students stated following reasons when developing some of the metaphors:

"A dead without funeral": We were comfortable with TEOG. We were the first victims of this examination. We were unlucky as all teachers thought that the examination would change (S107).

"An angry teacher": If we make a mistake when we are with a teacher, that teacher will get angry at us and punish us. The examination is just alike because if we make a mistake then we cannot go to a good high school (S174).

"Hunter": This new system wants to hunt me and those like me (S117).

"Simple job": They change the system without asking, concerning and with their own way. They do this as we say nothing. Thus, it looks like a simple job (S127).

"Game": National Education introduces new things again and again. We do not know what to do. We are downright baffled (S115).

5. The theme of hope

The reason to name the theme as hope is the students' hope and thought to be likely to achieve their goals through the examination. Under this theme, the metaphors are: *"a new-born baby", "realization of dreams", "overcoming obstacles", "both miracle and salvation", "a bearer", "going to the space", "a board", "examination of recovery for lazy ones", "the day for hardworking ones", "lion goes hunting", "salvation", "a good thing", "justice", "beauty"* and *"superb"*.

Some of these metaphors were developed due to following reasons:

"Realization of dreams": *Realization of my dreams is to have a goal and to win a good high school. Yet for this I have to study hard and put in effort (S17).*

"To overcome obstacles": *I will do my best to overcome the obstacle created by this examination. I will study hard; go to a good school and achieve all these (S53).*

"Both miracle and salvation": *I hope those deserving will be admitted to a good high school, particularly me. I wish everyone a continued success (S57).*

"Lion goes hunting": *Just as a lion catches its hunt successfully, so people go hunting when taking an axamination. When they become successful, they become as happy as a lion which catches its hunt (S58).*

"Beauty": *Whether we win the examination or not, we will be admitted to a high school. There are not many high schools in our neighbourhood, yet I am happy as we are enrolled based on address (S179).*

6. The theme of nature of life

The theme of nature of life is the name given because students have developed some metaphors to reveal that they have regarded the examination as a matter of nature of life. This theme includes metaphors such as *"life", "a life", "a documentary", "book pages", "start-over of life", "two sides of the same coin", "jeweller", "the examination of life", "proceeding to the second page of life", "magnificent"* and *"equation"*.

Some of these metaphors were developed due to following reasons:

"The first step in life": *It is like the first step in life. For, it is the previous step before high school, college and finding a job. If the first step is successful, then next ones will also be successful (S93).*

"Transition to the second stage of life": *I compare the examination to turning pages of a newspaper or a notebook. We open a new page in our life and this examination is like a desire for*

161

jumping to the next page of our life. When we were at primary school, we were on the first page of our notebook. Following this examination, we will go to a high school and have a new life, just like a page as fresh as a daisy (S135).

"Jewellery": *This examination will determine our life in the future. That is to say, as it will determine our lifeline, it is as precious as jewellery (S92).*

"Start of life": *Because the examination will determine the route of our life (S85).*

"Life": *Because the examination system is change just like life (S89).*

7.The theme of TEOG examination

The reason why this theme was chosen is that some of the students likened the TEOG examination to the central examination. Under this theme, there is the TEOG examination metaphor with a frequency of ten.

Some of the metaphors were developed because of following reasons:

"Teog examination": *During only two sessions, three incorrect answers lead to the nullification of a correct answer. This has been done to paint students into a corner; I wish there weren't such a new system (S82). It looks lie TEOG which was conducted in previous years (94). It looks like a challenging TEOG examination for me and my friends (S96). It looks like previous TEOG examinations; both are the same (S169). I think it looks like TEOG. The only difference is that TEOG was composed of two examinations and this examination is composed of only one, which is optional (S177).*

8.The theme of astonishment

The reason of naming the theme astonishment is that the examination astonishes students. Under this theme, there are themes such as *"gawking", "an unfair life" and "a dream"*.

These metaphors were developed due to following reasons:

"Gawking": *When taking the examination of the new system and seeing the questions in it, we gawk at the questions. That is to say, the examination is one that is overrated by everyone (S11).*

"An unfair life": *There was TEOG and it was very good without any limitation of duration. However, during our time the central examination was introduced. Thus, I wanted to express it as an unfair life (S18).*

"A dream": *When you sleep, you want to forget the challenges in life, yet it is just a dream and when you wake up, such challenging things wait for you that everything comes for you and then you drown, thus you get exhausted. You should study hard and struggle; therefore you should regard everything as a dream (S9).*

Discussion and Conclusion

Metaphoric perceptions of eighth grade students, who will take the "CENTRAL EXAMINATION" conducted to be placed into secondary school institutions, were analysed through content analysis technique in the study. Metaphors that were developed by students related to the CENTRAL EXAMINATION" according to the analysis results were categorized under eight themes. *The theme of a stressful and challenging process"* is ranked as the first with 49 metaphors, *"the theme of milestone in life"* ranked as the second with 41 metaphors, *"The theme of uncertainty"*

ranked as the third with 35 metaphors, *"The theme of victim"* ranked as the fourth with 18 metaphors, *"The theme of hope"* ranked as the fifth with 17 metaphors, *"The theme of nature of life"* ranked as the sixth with 12 metaphors, **"The theme of TEOG Examination"** ranked as the seventh with 10 metaphors and finally *"The theme of astonishment"* ranked as the eight with three metaphors.

As can be understood from themes, it can be stated that secondary school students generally have negative metaphoric approaches related to the central examination that they have to take to be admitted to the secondary school institutions, that is to say to high schools, and that was changed again during the 2017-18 education year and named as central examination. For, it is observed that only twenty nine of these metaphors developed by students were positive while the rest of 185 metaphors were negative. In fact, considering these metaphors, it can be observed that students intensely regard this central examination, perceive it as a stressful and challenging process and find it scary. Particularly that students explain the central examination through metaphors such as a matter of life or death, suffering in hell, doomsday, etc. is significant in terms of demonstrating that the central examination has negative influences on students that are experienced by them intensely. Besides, a plenty of observations can support these findings.

Within literature, findings of the following studies overlap with and support metaphors in this study that were predominantly found negative and had unfavourable, scary and frightening meanings ascribed to the central examination by students: the study conducted by Koçak, Gül, Gül and Bökeoğlu (2017) titled as "Investigation of students' metaphors related to the term examination (TEOG); the study made by Karaşahinoğlu (2015) titled as "The relationship between metaphoric examination perceptions of students and opinions of parents on school", the study carried out by Karadeniz, Er and Tangülü (2014) titled as "Metaphoric perceptions of 8th grade students related to SBS", the study made by Elmacı (2015) "Determination of teacher opinions and their metaphoric perceptions related to public personnel selection examination and field information examination" and the study made by Nartgün and Gökçer (2014) with findings related to the theme of "negative factors" titled as "These dangerous situations that students compare with the examination". Moreover, in his study, Dönmez (2017) states that the TEOG examination is far from assessing proficiencies specified within the General Purposes of Turkish National Education, continues to be information-centred and mainly parrot fashion, cannot assess affective and psychomotor acquirements of students, that this approach has not abolished training centres where students get prepared for exams, on the contrary, it transformed schools to training centres, and that as long as school successes are assessed depending on the scores of TEOG, the race between students will be a challenging one that increases the stress and harm them more. These concerns expressed for the TEOG examination are unfortunately valid for the central examination as well.

Considering the findings of the study shown above as a whole, it is observed that no matter how the examination for admission of students to secondary school institutions is named (LGS, SBS, TEOG, MS), the change in the method and content of the examination has not affected the fact that examinations are the source of negative feelings such as stress, concern, fear, etc. for students. In this context, Ministry of National Education should understand that the reason of the examination is primarily a limited number of good quality schools and upgrade the quality of schools as well as adopt the principle of equalising school qualities at the end (Dönmez, 2017). It is thought that acting under this principle can alleviate the pressure of the examinations of the education system on students.

Furthermore, some of the students had positive perceptions related to the central examination and these perceptions were stated through metaphors such as *"A life", "First step in life", "Start-over of life", "Magnificent", "Jewellery", "A renascent child", "The day of hardworking ones, "Salvation", "Justice", "Beauty"*, etc. ın the study by Koçak, Gül, Gül and Bökeoğlu (2017) titled as "Investigation of students' metaphors related to the term examination (TEOG)", students have stated this situation through metaphors such as *"Enjoyment", "Trust", "Hope", "Happiness", "Joy", "Excitement", "Curiosity", "Freedom",* etc. In the study carried out by Karadeniz, Er and Tangülü (2014) titled as "Metaphoric perceptions of 8th grade students related to SBS", students have expressed

163

their positive perceptions through metaphors such as "Life", "Renaissance", "Heaven Road", "Dream", "Teacher", etc.

When considering these findings as a whole, it can be concluded that no matter how the name of the examination for the transition into secondary schools changes (SBS, TEOG, MS), some students have positive perceptions in the least, and that they express these through positive metaphors. This conclusion can reveal that students do not have completely negative perceptions related to examinations for transition into secondary schools, however positive perceptions are few.

Following recommendations can be given depending on the findings of the study:

It is observed that metaphoric perceptions of students related to the Central Examination are in general negative and this is shown through metaphors developed by them. Reasons of this situation originating from the system, students and parents may be investigated and negativities based on these may be minimized.

Changes in examinations conducted for transition into secondary schools can be discussed thoroughly by all shareholders and shared with them much earlier to avoid abrupt changes.

References

Akçay, B. (2011). Turkish elementary and secondary students' views about science and scientist. *Asia-Pacific Forum on Science Learning and Teaching*, 12, 1-11.

Atar, H. Y. ve Büyüköztürk, Ş. (2017). Temel Eğitimden Ortaöğretime Geçiş: Uygulamalar ve Sonuçları. *Eğitime Bakış, Eğitim-Öğretim ve Bilim Araştırma Dergisi.* Eğitim-Bir-Sen. Yıl 13.Sayı 40. Mayıs-Haziran-Temmuz-Ağustos 2017.

Aydın, F. (2010). Ortaöğretim öğrencilerinin coğrafya kavramına ilişkin sahip oldukları metaforlar. *Kuram ve Uygulamada Eğitim Bilimleri*, 10(3), 1293-1322.

Bağcı, E. (2016). TEOG Sınavı Matematik Sorularının Matematik Öğretim Programına Uygunluğunun ve TEOG Sistemi'nin Hedeflerine Ulaşma Düzeyinin Belirlenmesi. Yüksek Lisans Tezi. Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim bilimleri Enstitüsü.

Bal, Ö. (2011). Seviye Belirleme Sınavı (Sbs) Başarısında Etkili Olduğu Düşünülen Faktörlerin Sıralama Yargıları Kanunuyla Ölçeklenmesi. *Eğitimde ve Psikolojide Ölçme ve Değerlendirme Dergisi, 2*(2), 200- 209.

Balcı, Ali. (2009). *Sosyal Bilimlerde Araştırma Yöntem, Teknik ve İlkeler* (7. Baskı). Ankara: Pegem A Yayınları.

Birinci, D.K. (2014). Merkezi Sistem Ortak Sınavlarında İlk Deneyim: Matematik Dersi. *Eğitim ve Öğretim Araştırmaları Dergisi, 3*(2), 8-15.

Camcı-Erdoğan, S. (2013). Üstün zekâlı ve yetenekli öğrencilerin bilim insanlarına yönelik algıları. *Türk Üstün Zekâ ve Eğitim Dergisi*, 3(1), 13-37.

Demirel, Ö. (2004). *Öğretimde Planlama ve Değerlendirme: Öğretme sanatı*. Ankara: PegemA Yayıncılık.

Dikmenli, M. (2010). Undergraduate biology students' representations of science and the scientist. *College Student Journal*, 44(2), 579–588.

Doğan-Bora, N., Arslan, O. ve Çakıroğlu, J. (2006). Lise öğrencilerinin bilim ve bilim insanı hakkındaki görüşleri. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 31, 32-44.

Dönmez, Burhanettin, (2017). Türkiye'de Temel Eğitimden Ortaöğretime Geçiş Sistemine İlişkin Bir Değerlendirme, Eğitime Bakış, Eğitim-Öğretim ve Bilim Araştırma Dergisi. Eğitim-Bir-Sen. Yıl 13.Sayı 40. Mayıs-Haziran-Temmuz-Ağustos 2017.

Döş, İ. (2010). "Aday Öğretmenlerin Müfettişlik Kavramına İlişkin Metafor Algıları." Gaziantep Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, 9(3):607-629.

Eisenhart, M. A., & Howe, K. R. (1992). Validity in educational research. In M. LeCompte, W. Millroy, & J. Preissle (Eds.), *The Handbook of Qualitative Research in Education.* (pp. 642-680). San Diego: Academic Press.

Elmacı S. (2015). *Kamu personeli seçme sınavı ve alan bilgisi sınavına ilişkin öğretmen görüşlerinin ve metaforik algılarının belirlenmesi,* Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Yayımlanmamış yüksek lisasn tezi.

Erdoğan, İ., Meşeci Giorgetti, F. ve Çifçili, V. (2011). Seviye Belirleme Sınavı Yordayıcıları ve Eğitim İmkânlarında Eşitlik Sorunu. *Kuram ve Uygulamada Eğitim Bilimleri*, *11*(1), 215-228.

Ertürk, S. (1979). Eğitimde program geliştirme. (3.Baskı), Ankara: Yelkentepe Yayınları.

Gedikoğlu, T. (2005). Avrupa Birliği Sürecinde Türk Eğitim Sistemi: Sorunlar ve Çözüm Önerileri. *Mersin Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, *1*(1), 66-80.

Güler, T. ve Akman, B. (2006). 6 Yaş çocuklarının bilim ve bilim insanı hakkındaki görüşleri. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 31, 55-66.

Gür, B., Çelik Z. ve Coşkun, İ. (2013). Türkiye'de Ortaöğretimin Geleceği: Hiyerarşi mi Eşitlik mi? *Seta Analiz*, *69*, 1-26.

Kalyoncu, R. (2012). Görsel sanatlar öğretmeni adaylarının "öğretmenlik" kavramına ilişkin metaforları. *Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi,* 9(20), 471-484.

Kaşıkçı, Y., Bolat, A., Değirmenci, S. ve Karamustafaoğlu, S. (2015). İkinci Dönem Teog Sınavı Fen ve Teknoloji Sorularının Bazı Kriterlere Göre Değerlendirilmesi. *Eğitim ve Öğretim Araştırmaları Dergisi, 1*(21), 225-232.

Karadeniz, O., Er, H. ve Tangülü, Z. (2014). 8. sınıf öğrencilerinin sbs'ye yönelik metaforik algıları. *Uluslararası Avrasya Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, Cilt: 5, Sayı: 15, ss: (64-81).

Karaşahinoğlu A. (2015). *Öğrencilerin metaforik sınav algıları ile velilerin okula yönelik görüşleri arasındaki ilişki,* Ankara Üniversitesi / Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Yayımlanmamış yüksek lisasn tezi

Kazan, K., Karaman, K., Akçalı, B.Y. ve Şişmanoğlu, E. (2015). Assessment of teog examination success: topsis multi-criteria decision-making method practice. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 195*, 915 – 924.

Koçak, D., Gül, Ç.D., Gül, E. ve Bökeoğlu, B. Ç. (2017). Öğrencilerin Sınav Kavramına Yönelik Metaforlarının İncelenmesi. *Ahi Evran Üniversitesi Kırşehir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, Cilt 18, Sayı 3, Aralık, 2017.

Leininger, M. (1994). Evaluation criteria and critique of qualitative research studies. In J. M. Morse (Ed.). *Critical Issues in Qualitative Research Methods.* (s. 95-115). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Levine, P.M. (2005). Metaphors and ımages of classrooms, *Kapa Delta Pi Record*, 41(4), 172-175.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1986). But is it rigorous? Trustworthiness and authenticity in naturalistic evaluation. *New directions for evaluation,* (30), 73-84.

Maxwell, J. (1992). Understanding and validity in qualitative research. *Harvard educational review, 62*(3), 279-301.

Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı (MEB). Sınavla Öğrenci Alacak Ortaöğretim Kurumlarına İlişkin Merkezi Sınav Başvuru ve Uygulama Kılavuzu. https://www.meb.gov.tr/sinavlar/dokumanlar/2018/MERKEZI_SINAV_BASVURU_VE_U YGULAMA_KILAVUZU.pdf. İndirilme tarihi: 15.05.2018

Narayan, R., Park, S., Peker, D. and Suh, J. (2013). Students' images of scientists and doing science: An international comparison study. *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science ve Technology Education,* 9(2), 115-129.

Nartgün, Ş. S. ve Gökçer, İ. (2014). Pedagojik formasyon eğitimi alan öğretmen adaylarının mesleklerine, geleceklerine, istihdamlarına ve eğitim politikalarına ilişkin metaforik algıları. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 5: 4, 57-69.

Newton, L. D. and Newton, D. P. (1998). Primary children's conceptions of science and the scientist: Is the impact of a national curriculum breaking down the stereotype? *International Journal of Science Education*, 20(9), 1137-1149.

Özden, M., Akgün, A., Çinici, A., Sezer, B., Yıldız, S., & Taş, M. M. (2014). Merkezi Sistem Ortak Sınav Fen Bilimleri Sorularının Webb'in Bilgi Derinliği Seviyelerine Göre Analizi. *Adıyaman Üniversitesi Fen Bilimleri Dergisi*, *4*(2), 91-108.

Özkan, M. ve Özdemir, E.B. (2014). Ortaokul 8. Sınıf Öğrencilerinin Ve Öğretmenlerinin Ortaöğretime Geçişte Uygulanan Merkezi Ortak Sınavlara İlişkin Görüşleri. *Tarih Okulu Dergisi (TOD), 7*(10), 441-453.

Öztürk, F. Z., & Aksoy, H. (2014). Temel Eğitimden Ortaöğretime Geçiş Modelinin 8. Sınıf Öğrenci Görüşlerine Göre Değerlendirilmesi (Ordu İli Örneği). *Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, 33*(2), 439-454.

Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Nitel araştırma ve değerlendirme yöntemleri* (3. Baskıdan Çeviri). M. Bütün ve S. B. Demir (Çev Ed.). Ankara: Pegem Akademi Yayıncılık.

Saban, A., Koçbeker, B. N. ve Saban, A. (2006). Öğretmen adaylarının öğretmen kavramına ilişkin algılarının metafor analizi yoluyla incelenmesi. *Kuram ve Uygulamada Eğitim Bilimleri.* 6, 461-522.

Saban, A. (2008). Okula ilişkin metaforlar. *Kuram ve Uygulamada Eğitim Yönetimi*, 55, 459-496.

Sağır, M. ve Mart, M.T. (2017). Temel Eğitimden Ortaöğretime Geçiş (TEOG) Sistemine İlişkin Öğretmen Görüşleri. *Eğitime Bakış, Eğitim-Öğretim ve Bilim Araştırma Dergisi.* Eğitim-Bir-Sen. Yıl 13.Sayı 40. Mayıs-Haziran-Temmuz-Ağustos 2017.

Sandelowski, M. (1986). The problem of rigor in qualitative research. *Advances in nursing science, 8*(3), 27-37.

Shaw, D., Massengill, B. and Mahlios, M. (2008). Preservice teachers' metaphors of teaching in relation to literacy beliefs. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 14(1), 35-50.

Soysal, D. ve Afacan, Ö. (2012). İlköğretim öğrencilerinin "fen ve teknoloji dersi" ve "fen ve teknoloji öğretmeni" kavramlarına yönelik metafor durumları. *Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi,* 9(19), 287-306.

Şad, S. N ve Şahiner, Y. K. (2016). Temel Eğitimden Ortaöğretime Geçiş (TEOG) Sistemine İlişkin Öğrenci, Öğretmen ve Veli Görüşleri, Elementary Education Online, 2016; 15(1): 53-76.

Yerlikaya, İ. (2014). Devlet ve Özel Ortaokul Öğrencilerinin Umutsuzluk Düzeyinin Belirlenmesi Ve Çeşitli Değişkenlerle İlişkisinin İncelenmesi. *Electronic Turkish Studies*, *9*(8), 865-877.

Yıldırım ve Şimşek, (2008). Sosyal Bilimlerde Nitel Araştırma Yöntemleri (6. Baskı). Ankara: Seçkin Yayıncılık.

Yiğittir, S., ve Çalışkan, H. (2013). Seviye Belirleme Sınavında (SBS) Sosyal Bilgiler Alanında Sorulan Soruların Kapsam Geçerliği Açısından İncelenmesi. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi, 42*(197), 145-157.