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The Concept of Homeland in Elementary School Students

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Abstract
The aim of this study is to assess the impact that the current status of the country and of the education system has on the identity and place attachment of the students attending the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grades of the elementary school, in the context of the meanings these students attribute to the concept of homeland via the metaphors they have created and the pictures they have drawn. The study was conducted on 27 male and 33 female students that attend the Yedidalga Elementary School in the Lefke District of Northern Cyprus. Metaphors and pictures were chosen as the tools to assess the students' perceptions of the concept of homeland, and for this reason, the students were asked to reflect their perceptions of the concept of homeland on the metaphors they create and on the pictures they draw. The data obtained were analyzed using the methods of descriptive analysis and document analysis. Students produced a total of 20 metaphors that were categorized into 4 themes about the concept of homeland, and produced pictures, in which they used blue color the most followed by green color. In conclusion, the results of the study suggest that the students' perceptions about the concept of homeland focus mostly on national values and loyalty, and that the elementary school students associated the concept of homeland predominantly with a sense of protection of national values.

Keywords: Homeland, Child, Picture, Elementary School

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

According to Ziya Gökalp (1973), homeland is "a geography where the spirituality and sacredness, memories and ideals of a nation are fused with the national culture, and where the past and the future are united." On the other hand, Namık Kemal (2015) stated that a society lacking in love of homeland and devotion to homeland will eventually lose all love and loyalty, and that the freedom of loving whomever desired would only be possible in a free and independent homeland. Homeland is a value that is of great importance for each and every society. Every country would like to instill homeland awareness into its own society. Transferring the values to the social life and passing them down to new generations have always been considered among essential issues. Today, as a result of the increase in the need felt in the society about values and about homeland in particular as

a value, the matters such the concept of value, teaching and gaining of values are frequently brought up (Arslan and Yaşar 2007: 8). In terms of educational objectives, to furnish the individuals with the values that keep the society alive emerges as an important objective (Bacanlı, 2006: 47). Many different studies were and currently are carried out on this subject.

Many different definitions of value have been made. According to some, value refers to the beliefs, ideas and actions that people find worth spending their lives for (Bobaroğlu, 2002: 66), whereas for others it refers to the criteria that determine the desired and the enjoyable without being bound by a condition (Oral, 2014). The definition of value made by Demirutku (2007) is noteworthy. According to Demirutku (2007), values refer to a system of hierarchically shaped beliefs that determines what is actually needed from among the social and individual needs and allows us to make the right choice from among the behaviors and situations that have become permanent over time. According to Yılmaz (2013), values are divided into two categories as positive values and negative values. The concept of homeland as a value is categorized under the category of positive values. A country and a nation can maintain its continuity in unity and solidarity only on the basis of values. Values are accepted as criteria and form an important part of national unity and solidarity (Yılmaz, Duman, 2018: 643). Individuals lead and end their lives within the framework of values. Because values provide the people also with criteria for how they should die, as in the case of becoming a martyr and sacrificing life for the sake of the homeland. Hence, "love of homeland" can be a sufficient motive for someone to sacrifice his/her life for the sake of his/her homeland (Özensel, 2014: 74). National values such as homeland represent the union of emotions and thoughts that arise from the society, religion, culture, history, customs and traditions one is affiliated with, and which is passed down from generation to generation (Özkartal, 2009: 64). Individuals use these as a measurement mechanism and shape their life accordingly. In this way, they have the opportunity to reach the status accepted by the society and general judgments (Öcal and Yıldırım, 2014).

When the issue of where to start and how to proceed in teaching the values is considered, the common view is that it is something of necessary to try to furnish the children with values. Here, the school and the families have a major role (Bolay, 2007: 19), and among the two, families may not have sufficient knowledge and skills required to furnish the children with values. Although this constitutes a problem, this problem can be solved by reaching out to the families, where necessary. Undoubtedly, the most important way to achieve this is through education. The acquisition of values starts with the family and continues with the contributions made by the school and the society. In this way, the individual learns the values related to traditions, customs, manners, mores, and morals (Ulusoy ve Dilmac, 2014: 62). It is an important issue for the schools, particularly because they are institutions that provide planned and programmed education, to provide education in accordance with the levels of children and in a manner to develop their moral understandings in the positive direction (Caglayan, 2013: 96). If we were to give an example from the past, it would be sufficient to recall the propaganda tools produced during the First World War. We see that children were used in materials such as pictures and postcards, which were used as propaganda materials in that period, in a planned and deliberate manner. The values of the period were passed on to the children and the young generations in the said manner in order to prepare them for the wars and destruction to be experienced ahead. The minds were prepared for the political crises to be encountered between the two world wars by such propaganda (Ozgisi, 2013). This example reveals the importance of planned and programmed activities, especially the activities aimed at changing human behavior.

1.2 Importance of Values Education and the Concept of Homeland

In today's world, elementary schools constitute the first stage of education in many countries and an important period in the life of individuals in terms of the curricula implemented and educational environment. In this period, the curricula implemented should be elaborated in accordance with the realities of the country and the world as well as with the needs of the child (Güney, 2019). Providing an education on the basis of an unrealistic curriculum will do more harm than good. It should be kept in mind that countries need individuals that will develop and sustain the countries themselves. For this reason, the education to be provided should be supportive of the unity and the integrity of the country, and it should not be overlooked how important the education provided at the elementary level is in this regard. Considering the characteristics of the children between the ages

of 6-12, which is the common age range of the children attending elementary schools, it is known that in this period they are in the concrete operational stage and they are gradually going onto the abstract operational stage. Children of this period, especially children between the ages of 7-9, start to come into contact with the society, become conscious of being a part of the environment and they reflect this on their drawings (Kehnemuyi, 2001). According to Malchiodi (2005), in the realism stage that is experienced between the ages of 9-12, children move away from self-centered thinking and begin to attach importance to the opinions and ideas of others. The children of this period quickly begin to notice the world around them (Malchiodi, 2013). The fact that the children begin to attach importance to the opinions and ideas of others in this period increases the importance of the environment in children's education. This environment starts at the family and continues at the school. Considering the environment of schools, teachers are seen as important role models. For this reason, whatever the teachers say and do is perceived as correct in the eyes of the children. Thus, it is a very important task for both teachers and school administrators to be very meticulous in the implementation of educational programs directed at the children of this age range in particular.

It is stated by many researchers that the behaviors acquired during the elementary school period, which is a critical period in the lives of individuals, and during the childhood in general, are considered as permanent behaviors (Çolakça, 2019). For this reason, the behaviors that are gained in elementary schools, where education is provided in a planned and scheduled manner, will affect the individual's life and subsequently the society's life positively. Anything happening to the contrary must be identified and remedied immediately. Therefore, the studies to be carried out with regards to this period of the children should be examined using many different techniques, as it would not be easy to find the truth from a single point of view. Pictures drawn by the children of this period are an important tool that can be used in this regard.

Important information about the children can be obtained based on the evaluations made on the pictures drawn by the children. Pictures can be utilized for the purpose of learning about the children in general and about their inner worlds. Picture is an important interpretable tool that facilitates communication, enriches and enables the individual to express himself. Through drawing, children in particular can better express their feelings and thoughts that they could not express verbally. Because the picture drawn is a product of the child's emotional world and thoughts. Children draw the pictures of what they care about the most. Pictures drawn can be seen as a common product of both conscious and unconscious levels (Batı, 2012; Güney, 2019). According to many researchers that study the picture tests, children's drawings are very important treasures that can be used to get information about the inner worlds of the children, the problems they experience, and their personalities (Halmatov, 2015: 9). According to Yavuzer (2017), children see drawing as a game. When they are on their own, they take in an interest in drawing, as much as they care about their belongings and toys (Yavuzer, 2017: 23). Through drawing, children express themselves comfortably and reveal distinctive characteristics of themselves. In this way, they draw with their own expressions and can show their unique aspects (Şen Beytut et al., 2009; Stuyck, 2003). In fact, through the pictures they draw children reflect on their inner selves and the relations they have with their environments. For these reasons, the pictures drawn by the children should be carefully examined and the children should be given the opportunity to express themselves also verbally from time to time (Batı, 2012).

When you assign a subject to an elementary school age child and ask him/her to draw something, he/she would look at you with eyes as if he/she tries to say: "I know what I want to draw and what I want to do," and then he/she would start drawing immediately. He/she would be engaged in drawing to the level that the result of his/her action would not matter anymore but only the time that passes would matter (Kehnemuyi, 2001: 17). The things that the child does during this period give important information about the child's inner world. During this period of education, pictures can be used more than the tests to learn about how the things taught to the children reflected on their inner worlds. As a reason, drawing is a natural means of expression for the child since through drawing the child can concretize his/her psychology (Ekici, 2008: 17). The child tries to show how he/she perceives the subject given in a wholeness and transparency, and describes his/her loved and unloved ones, his/her emotional bonds and the world surrounding him/herself (Artut, 2004: 215). With his/her drawings, the child reflects a little bit of him/herself, and expresses his/her feelings, thoughts and opinions (Yavuzer, 2017). The picture drawn by each child is personal for him/herself and is deemed as a private matter. Children

commonly reflect a different situation or a problem via their drawings. At the end of the day, these special pictures meet on common ground at some point. Certain features of these pictures are almost always the same. It is usually seen in these pictures that the children find similar solutions to the problems. For this reason, children's drawings can be said to demonstrate certain common characteristics (Kırışoğlu, 2005: 73).

Colors start to make sense for children after they are 4 years old. In general, children reflect their happiness with the yellow color and their unhappiness with the brown color. The color chosen in the picture is a reflection of the child's inner world and his/her positive and negative emotions (Çankırılı, 2015: 205). Colors are briefly described as warm and cool colors. Yellow, red, orange colors are classified as warm colors, whereas blue, green and purple are classified as cool colors (Dilci, 2017: 108).

1.3. Objective of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate and understand the perceptions of the Turkish elementary school students, who are subjected to self-inquiries in respect of identity and place attachment due to the fact that the country in which they live is de facto in status, as the members of a society that has gone through a period of war as a result of the ongoing conflicts between the two communities in Cyprus, about the concept of "homeland," which represents the ultimate level of these self-inquiries, through both the pictures they have drawn and the metaphors they have created. The most important aim of this study is to set forth the pictures drawn and the metaphors created about the concept of homeland by the students that are between the ages of 7-11 and who attend elementary school, and to reveal the ways that the students they express these pictures and metaphors. For this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought;
1. What are the metaphors used by the elementary school students about the perception of homeland?
2. How do the elementary school students reflect their perceptions of the homeland on their paintings?

2. Material and Method

This study was carried out within the framework of phenomenological research design, which is one of the qualitative research methods. In phenomenological research design participants of the study define the phenomenon and the individuals describe their experiences in respect of this phenomenon (Creswell, 2014, s. 14).

2.1. Ethics Committee Approval

For the study, firstly, an application was made from the National Education Ministry for the necessary permissions. Within the framework of the permission obtained as a result of the commission examinations, with the relevant school principal were discussed. School teachers and parents of students were informed with the statements of the school director and related researchers. Within this framework, the students were included in the study with the approval of the parents who accepted to participate in the study.

2.2. Study Group

The study was carried out on the students attending Yedidalga Elementary School located in the Lefke District of Northern Cyprus. Purposeful sampling method was utilized in determining the participants of the study as well as in conducting the study, as it allows time-savings and flexibility (Miles and Huberman, 2015; Patton, 2014). 27 male and 33 female students were included in the metaphor study. Of these students, 15 were in the 2nd grade, 17 were in the 3rd grade, 14 were in 4th grade, and 14 were in 5th grade (Table 1). 1st grade students were excluded from the study since they do not possess the necessary literacy skills to participate in the study. On the other hand, some of the data obtained from the students of other grade levels of the elementary school have not been taken under consideration since they were not deemed to be suitable. Metaphors generated were examined on the basis of the data obtained from 55 students in total. One of the painting course hours, which has been deemed convenient for the 40 students (Table 2) who accepted to make a drawing, was scheduled, in order for the participating students to make a drawing reflecting their perceptions of the concept of the homeland. The

work produced by 4 out of these 40 students were excluded from the study as they were not deemed suitable for interpretation.

Table 1: Distribution of students participated in the metaphor study

Gender	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	Total
Female	8	9	8	8	33
Male	7	8	6	6	27
Total	15	17	14	14	60

Table 2: Distribution of students participated in the painting study

Gender	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	Total
Female	6	6	4	4	20
Male	5	6	5	4	20
Total	11	12	9	8	40

2.3. Data Collection Method

Metaphors used by the students are utilized in the collection of the data to reveal how the concepts are perceived by the students and to obtain rich data on the subject (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011: 211). Additionally, pictures drawn by the students, as they express themselves more comfortably when drawing pictures, and the individual interviews held with the students so that they can verbally describe the pictures they have drawn were also utilized as data collection tools (Malchiodi, 2013:45). In this way, data were collected from many sources instead of a single source (Creswell, 2014:189). Necessary permissions were obtained from the Ministry of National Education for the collection of data, and the data have been then collected during the meetings with the students at a certain time frame designated in cooperation with the school administration. Only the students that voluntarily participated in the study were included in the study upon obtaining the permissions from their families.

First the students were given a form of incomplete sentences in the following format of "Homeland is like .... Because ...." as a data collection tool, and then they were asked to write their opinions by filling the blanks. Another day, students were given white paper and crayons, and asked to draw pictures on the concept of homeland. Names of the students were not used in any of the works completed by the students for the purpose of the study, and the works have been coded instead to keep students' identities confidential. Codes were in the format of Y(first letter of the name of the school)(grade level)-(student's sequence). For example, "Y4-11" denoted that the student is a 4th grade student from Yedidalga elementary school that is in the 11th place among the students participating from that grade level.

2.4. Analysis and Interpretation of Research Data

Descriptive analysis and document analysis methods were used to analyze the data. Descriptive analysis allows the categorization of the data in a logical and orderly fashion and their interpretation as such, and the inference of a conclusion through the establishment of a cause-effect relationship (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011: 246). Metaphors have been resolved within this framework. The reliability formula of Miles and Huberman (2015) was used to ensure reliability. [Reliability = Consensus / (Consensus + Disagreement)]: [18 / (18 + 2) = 0.90]. Thus, the reliability of this study was calculated as .90. Consensus were reached in disagreements and metaphors with similar characteristics were given under the same title.

Document analysis allows the collection of the information from first-hand and facilitates the analysis (Creswell, 2014: 191). The pictures drawn by the students have been analyzed via this method. Two researchers made a joint decision based on the extent that the concept of homeland was reflected in the pictures. Reliability of this method was found as .88.

3. Results

In this section, the metaphors developed by the students about the concept of "homeland" and the themes composed by these metaphors are provided.

Table 3: Metaphors Developed by the Elementary School Students About the Concept of Homeland

METAPHORS	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	Total
House	1	5	3		9
Mother	4	2	1		7
Native country	3	1	3		7
Family	2	2	1	1	6
Country		1	2		3
Home			1	2	3
Peace	1		1		2
Republic	1		1		2
Society			1	1	2
Friend	1			1	2
Life	1			1	2
Beautiful	2				2
Nation			1		1
War			1		1
Place of birth				1	1
Tolerance				1	1
Solidarity				1	1
Flower				1	1
Chastity				1	1
Spirit		1			1
A total of **20 metaphors** were generated				frequency	**55**

Students have developed a total of 20 metaphors in respect of the concept of the homeland. Metaphors such as nation, war, place of birth, tolerance, solidarity, flower, chastity, life and spirit were each developed by one participant. Other metaphors developed by the students and the number of the students who have mentioned of the respective metaphor are as follows; house (f=9), mother (f=7), native country (f=7), family (f=6), country (f=3), home (f=3), peace (f=2), republic (f=2), society (f=2), friend (f=2), and beautiful (f=2).

3.1. Categorical Distribution of Metaphors Developed by the Students About the Concept of Homeland

Metaphors developed by the students about the concept of "homeland" were categorized under 4 categories, which are as follows; category of national values comprising metaphors of native country, country, society, republic, peace, war, nation, and chastity; category of loyalty comprising metaphors of family, mother, friend, place of birth, house, home, war, peace, spirit; category of values comprising metaphors of solidarity, beautiful, and tolerance; and category of vitality comprising metaphors of life and flower.

Table 4: Categories emerged from the metaphors developed by the elementary school students in relation to the concept of homeland

National Values	Loyalty	Values	Vitality
•Native country •Country •Society •Republic •Peace •War •Nation •Chastity	•House •Mother •Family •Home •Friend •Place of Birth •Spirit	•Solidarity •Beautiful •Tolerance	•Life •Flower

Category of National Values

Elementary school students developed 8 metaphors that can be classified under the "national values" category of the concept of "homeland." These metaphors and number of the students who have used these metaphors are as follows; native country (f = 7), country (f = 3), society (f = 2), republic (f = 2), peace (f = 2), war (f = 1), nation (f = 1), and chastity (f = 1). It can be speculated that the students who used the metaphors of native country and country meant to say that these are synonyms of homeland and that the homeland must be protected and looked after. It is inferred that the students describe homeland as a place they can fight for and live in peace thereafter. In this way, the homeland becomes a place where they can live safely. It can be speculated that they are sensitive about the protection of the homeland.

The metaphors developed by the students and classified under this category are listed below.

Homeland is like a native country. Because the synonym of homeland is native country. (Y2-46)
Homeland is like a country. Because homeland and country have almost the same meaning. (Y3-54)
Homeland is like society. Because if there was no homeland, everyone would live in turmoil. (Y4-1).
I liken the homeland to the republic. Because Atatürk won our homeland for us. I love Atatürk and our homeland. (Y4-18)
I compare the homeland to peace. Because, people can live in peace in their homelands. (Y4-9)
Homeland is like war. Because homeland is about fighting for it. (Y4-11).
Homeland is like a nation. Because our nation would not be protected if we did not have a homeland right now. (Y4-9)
Homeland is like chastity. Because one must love his/her own homeland or someone else will come and deprive him/herself of this/her homeland. (Y5-27)

Category of Loyalty

Elementary school students developed 7 metaphors that can be classified under the "loyalty" category of the concept of "homeland." These metaphors and number of the students who have used these metaphors are as follows; house (f = 9), mother (f = 7), family (f = 6), home (f = 3), friend (f = 2), place of birth (f = 1), and spirit (f = 1)

The metaphors developed by the students and classified under this category are listed below.

Homeland is like our home. Homeland is like our home. Because as life cannot exist without a house, it also cannot exist without a homeland. (Y3-59)
Homeland is like house. Because if we don't take good care of our house, it will be destroyed. If we do not take care of our homeland, the homeland will also be lost. (Y4-14)
Homeland is like a mother. Because it is indispensable, and it cannot be discarded or sold, and no one can do without it. (Y3-55)
Homeland is like family. Because everyone gets along well within a family and helps each other. (Y3-58)
Homeland is like a home. Because the homeland is a place where all of us live brotherly and must live brotherly. (Y5-30)
I compare the homeland to a friend. Because if I do not have a friend, I will be left alone when everyone else is playing (Y5-28).
Homeland is like the place where we live and where we were born. Because I compare the homeland to where we live, because it is the place where we live in. (Y5-22).
Homeland is like our spirit. Because our houses, families, schools, works and loved ones are here. (Y3-51)

Category of Values

Elementary school students developed 3 metaphors that can be classified under the "values" category of the concept of "homeland." These metaphors and number of the students who have used these metaphors are as follows; solidarity (f = 1), beautiful (f = 2), and tolerance (f = 1). It can be speculated that the reasons for the students to have used these metaphors are because they describe the homeland as a beautiful place, where people show solidarity and thus unite and also as a place where even some of the mistakes committed can be resolved with tolerance. In a way, they have expressed what is needed for peace.

The metaphors developed by the students and classified under this category are listed below.

Homeland is like solidarity. Because the homeland is nothing but like solidarity. (Y5-25)
Homeland is like beautiful. Because it is the homeland that saved us. (Y2-48)
Loving the homeland is like tolerance. Because we must love our homeland and protect it. (Y5-22)

Category of Vitality

Elementary school students developed 2 metaphors that can be classified under the "vitality" category of the concept of "homeland." These metaphors and number of the students who have used these metaphors are as follows; life (f = 1), and flower (f = 1). Students associated homeland with life itself and the flower, which is one of the elements that represent vitality.

The metaphors developed by the students and classified under this category are listed below.

Homeland is like life. Because we would fall, if not for homeland. (Y2-37)
Homeland is like a flower. Because homeland is the most beautiful place that we humans love. (Y5-26)

3.2. Analysis of the Pictures Drawn & Paintings Made by the Students on the Concept of Homeland

In the analyses made about these paintings, priority was given to the extent how much the colors were used in the paintings made by the students. The results of these analyses are given in Table 5.

Table 5: The extent of the use of colors in the paintings made by the elementary school students

COLOR	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	Total
Blue	5	10	3	4	22
Green	5	3	2	3	13
Orange	1	4	3	1	9
Red		2	1	1	4
Purple			2	1	3
Black	1	1			2
Total	12	20	11	10	53*

* In some pictures there were two colors that were used in the same amounts.

Blue is one of the primary colors and is a cool color. It represents peace, freedom and eternity. It was seen that blue has been used in the paintings of the students irrespective of their grade level. Blue has been the mostly used color as it was the predominantly used color in 22 of the paintings made by the students.

The green color, which is formed by mixing the blue and yellow colors, has a relaxing feature. Green, which is the second most used color in students' paintings, creates a sense of trust and instills hope. People, who love green, are innovative, dynamic and lively (Avara, 2019: 34).

The third most used color in the pictures has been orange. As one of the warm colors, orange represents vitality, dynamism and commitment to life (Avara, 2019: 34). Apart from these colors, purple and black were also used intensely in the pictures. Black color may have different meanings depending on the context it is used. It is used to describe strength and passion, but may also also describe pain and sorrow. Black color culturally describes mourning in the west, whereas in Japan it represents happiness. People who love mystery and perfection choose this color and by choosing this color in their clothes, etc. they imply that they expect to get respected (Avara, 2019: 34). In the context of this study, we can say that the use of black color connotates mourning, more than happiness.

It was determined that there were 17 different figures drawn by the students in the pictures they made. It was seen that these figures, which have been drawn by the students in relation to the concept of homeland, have been drawn in different the grade levels and in different frequencies. A total of 36 students have drawn 153 figures in total. The distribution of these figures by the grade levels is given in the table below.

Table 6: Distribution of the figures drawn by the elementary school students in their paintings by their grade levels

FIGURE	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	Total
Flag	6	11	6	4	27
Soldier	6	5	6	7	23
Tank	4	7	2	4	17
People	3	7	3	3	16
Sun	4	3	3	5	15
Helicopter	3	2	1	3	9
Enemy	2	2	2	3	9
Military vehicle	1	2	1	1	5
Flower	1	1	2	1	5
Atatürk's mausoleum	2	1	2		5
Balloon	1	3	1		5
Fighter jet		1	2	2	5

Continuation of Table 6: Distribution of the figures drawn by the elementary school students in their paintings by their grade levels

FIGURE	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	Total
Cloud		1	2	2	5
Tree	1	1	1		3
House		2			2
Atatürk			1		1
School		1			1
				Total number of figures	**153**

Seven of these figures, which are flag, soldier, tank, helicopter, enemy, military vehicle, and fighter jet, were classified under the category of security. It can be speculated that by drawing these figures students wanted to associate the concept of homeland with the feeling of security. Additionally, four of these figures, which are sun, flower, cloud and tree, were classified under the category of nature. It can be speculated that by drawing these figures students wanted to associate the concept of homeland with a physical place, where people live in peace. Furthermore, three of these figures, which are people, house and school, were classified under the category of immediate surroundings, whereas the figures of Atatürk and Atatürk's mausoleum were classified under the category of leader. Thus, 4 main categories have emerged from the figures drawn in the students' paintings (Table 7).

Table 7: Categories emerged from the figures drawn by the elementary school students in relation to the concept of homeland

Security	Nature	Immediate Surroundings	Leader
•Flag •Soldier •Tank •Helicopter •Enemy •Military vehicle •Fighter jet	•Sun •Flower •Cloud •Tree	•Human •House •School	•Atatürk •Atatürk's mausoleum

Examples of the paintings made by the 2nd grade students in relation to the concept of homeland

Examples of the paintings made by the 3rd grade students in relation to the concept of homeland

Examples of the paintings made by the 4th grade students in relation to the concept of homeland

Examples of the paintings made by the 5th grade students in relation to the concept of homeland

4. Discussion And Conclusion

As a response to the research question of *"What are the metaphors used by the elementary school students about the perception of homeland?"*, it was observed that students have developed a total of 20 metaphors about the concept of homeland, which were classified under 4 themes. It can be speculated that the metaphors developed by the students mostly focused on national values and loyalty. It was concluded as a result of the analysis conducted on the metaphors generated under the category of national values that the students consider the words that are homeland, country and native country, which have similar meanings, within the same framework. Use of other metaphors such as society and nation, which can also be considered among the metaphors directly related to the concept of homeland, indicates that the students are raised in line with this concept. On the other hand, it can be speculated that with metaphors such as house, home, or people who live in the close vicinity, students indirectly referred to the loyalty, which needs to be shown towards the homeland. Family and mother metaphors were found to be among the most used metaphors In the study conducted by Türküresin (2018), as well. One of

the metaphors that catches attention among the metaphors evaluated within the scope of this study is chastity. There are other studies, where the concept of homeland was found to have been associated with chastity by the participants. In the study conducted by Sağdıç and İlhan (2018) on the preservice teachers, chastity was used as a metaphor in place of the homeland, and a similar definition was made in respect of the homeland by the participants of the study, who perceived homeland as a holy place. We can infer from the said finding of the study conducted on preservice teachers that the meaning that teachers attribute to a concept affects the students they teach in the future. Furthermore, use of life and flower metaphors, which are among the metaphors developed by the students within the scope of this study, indicates that the homeland is described as vital and happy. In a study conducted by Maagero and Sunde (2016), children were asked to depict 'happiness' and 'fear' through drawing a picture. The results of the study revealed that Palestinian and Norwegian children used the same symbols in their pictures for happiness, such as flowers, tresses, a bright sun, family and friends.

Having had to leave homeland to survive is something that would be perceived negatively by anyone. Continuing to live in homeland despite the experienced difficulties and having to leave homeland as a refugee are two very different situations. We can clearly see the said difference when we compare the results of this study with the results of the study conducted by Oztabak (2020). As a result of examining the pictures drawn by Syrian and Palestinian refugee children about their perceptions of war and immigration; it has been determined that the drawings were mostly about negative elements such as death (37), war (28), and despair (18), whereas the drawings about positive elements such as nature (11) and hope (1) were substantially less (Oztabak, 2020). In addition, in the study by conducted by Maagero and Sunde (2016), it was observed that 17 of the 29 Palestinian children drew a house in an attempt to depict 'happiness,' and that 6 of these children drew dark houses and dark windows, which were interpreted as an indication of fear.

It was found that the elementary school students associated the concept of homeland predominantly with a sense of protection of national values. Developing a good sense of homeland in children is not an easy task. Developing a good sense of homeland in children will also create an infrastructure for patriotism. It is known that the children's perceptions of patriotism are shaped around phenomena such as protecting the country and other related concepts, such as loving soldiers and protecting the flag (Tatlı, Güngöraytar, 2017). Patriotism includes the sense of loyalty and love felt for the country (Huddy and Khatib, 2007: 63). In addition, Yıldırım (2006) stated that patriotism is not only a measure of love felt for the country, and that it also includes any behavior that will benefit the country and help its development. In the light of these findings, we can infer that the students, who were studied within the scope of this study, will become good patriots as they know what homeland means. A good patriot would know very well what he/she has to do for his/her country. However, it should not be forgotten that education also plays a very important role in gaining this value.

The results of the analysis of the colors used in the pictures drawn by children revealed that the most preferred color by the students was blue. In addition to representing peace and freedom, blue is thought to slow down the blood flow, as well. It is known that the bridge piers are painted blue in order to prevent suicides in the Western world. It was observed that children were more stagnant in schools with walls painted blue (Avara, 2019: 34). The fact that the students have used blue color the most was interpreted as to that the students perceive homeland as a place, where people live in peace. On the other hand, their predominant use of blue color may also reflect their wishes in respect of a calm, happy and free life, which is supported with their use of green color as the second most color.

It was observed in the study conducted by Jabbar and Betawi (2019) that the drawings about peace featured cheerful colors, such as blue and green, which depict happiness and calmness. People, who love green, are innovative, dynamic and lively (Avara, 2019: 34). As one of the warm colors red color connotates fire. Love may refer to affection and passion, as well as aggression and anger. Accordingly, it was observed in the study conducted by Jabbar and Betawi (2019) that one of the children used predominantly the red color in his/her drawing about peace, which was interpreted as an indication of his/her feeling of intense anger. Red color is used in the flags of many countries since it has the effect to stimulate people (Avara, 2019: 33). Although red color was used less than other colors in the pictures, the flag was the most drawn figure and most of the flags had red, as in the case of the flag of the country the students live in. The fact that the flag of the country in which they live is a red color is also a finding that explains this situation. The color that catches the attention in the students'

paintings is black. This color is commonly associated with pessimism and grief in the current society. It can be speculated that some students have used the black color in that direction. Though it was not much, use of black color may be something that is necessary to be taken into consideration. It is seen from the pictures drawn by the students that they have acted with the instinct of protection for their environment when drawing. They have verbally stated that protecting the environment they live in is important for the homeland. It is a remarkable finding that fighting for homeland was a phenomenon that is depicted in the paintings made by the students and that is expressed in the metaphors developed by children. They have drawn pictures of soldiers fighting. It was found that they perceive flag as the most important figure in relation to the concept of homeland. It was observed that the students used expressions such as protecting the homeland and helping soldiers, when they were asked to describe their paintings. Considering the status of the country they live in, the depiction of the phenomenon of fighting with enemy soldiers in the paintings was something expected. It can be speculated that it is because of the country in which they live is de facto in status that they have drawn enemy flags in their paintings. It can also be interpreted as that they have a certain perception of enemy. Drawings of soldiers, fighter jets, helicopters, military vehicles, enemies and flag indicate that the students have a certain knowledge on what war means in general. On the other hand, besides the concept of war, nature was another theme depicted in the pictures. It is seen that students imagine a sunny, happy and peaceful place where balloons fly and flowers bloom when thinking about homeland.

5. Recommendations

Students walk on the path drawn for them by their teachers, who guide them. It is important for the next generations and the future of the countries that a correct definition of homeland is made today. In this context, the education programs of many countries is always shaped to raise a good citizen. Attention should be paid to teacher education as they are the implementers of the education programs. For this reason, teacher training programs and in-service training programs can be arranged to include methods of teaching values such as patriotism and citizenship. National values possessed by the society should be explained to the students explicitly. It would be beneficial to utilize trips and other methods of observation. As a result, students should be able to develop an understanding that they must be well-equipped to have a happy and peaceful homeland, and that their homeland would be lost otherwise.

It is important that the Ministry of National Education acts by taking students' perceptions into account while carrying out curricular studies. Otherwise, it is likely that the students will have heterodox perceptions. Training should be provided on what needs to be done to protect the country from engaging in a war, other than military measures. Common values agreed upon about the homeland should be clearly determined and activities should be carried out to provide children with these values.

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