

# PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY: THE ROLE OF GENDER AND DEPARTMENT

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*The aim of this study was to explore prospective social studies and English language student teachers' perception of their professional identity through analysis of metaphors through the lens of their department and gender. Data were gathered from 50 social studies prospective teachers and 50 English language prospective teachers. Participants were asked to complete these two sentences in writing such as "The social studies teacher like... Because..." "The English Language teacher like... because..." with metaphors they choose. Data were analyzed using qualitative (content and descriptive analysis) techniques. In the light of the findings, it can be argued that the majority of both English language student teachers and social studies student teachers view teacher as a "transmitter" regardless of their gender which shows the traditional perception of teacher.*

**Keywords:** Professional identity; Gender; Student teachers.

## 1. Introduction

In the 1990s, teachers' professional identity emerged as a separate research area (e.g., Bullough 1997, Connelly & Clandinin 1999, Kompf, Bond, Dworet & Boak 1996). This attention is associated with two key ideas that link it to teaching and learning. First, as Lave and Wenger (1991) indicate, learning may be seen as involving the construction of identities: "The development of identity is central to the careers of newcomers in communities of practice... learning and a sense of identity are inseparable: They are the same phenomenon" (p. 115). Second, as Palmer (1997) suggests, good teaching cannot be reduced to technique, since it comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher. He claims that the complexities of teaching have three important sources: the first two, we teach who we are, is rarely given its due. As we teach, we project the condition of who we are onto our students, the subject, and our way of being together. Therefore, knowing oneself is as necessary to good teaching as knowing the students and the subject. Indeed, knowing the students and the subject depends mostly on self-knowledge.

There are multiple interpretations of the meanings of a Professional identity within the literature. When teaching is the matter the answers to the question "Who am I as a teacher?" will easily lead us to how professional identity of teachers are defined. Nevertheless, it is impossible to give a unique and unchangeable answer to this question. (Çulha Özbaş 2012: 822) the society in which individuals live (Flores and Day 2006), their background knowledge (Lipka and Brinsthaupt 1999), their professional experiences, the level in which they work (Sachs 1999: 39) and as whom they define themselves will certainly effect the answers they give to the question above. Teaching, like all professions requires skill and complex practice. In order to understand why teachers do something in the classrooms, it is necessary to understand their professional identity. Teacher's identities are central to their beliefs, values and practices that guide their actions within and outside of the classroom (Walkington 2005). Similar to other aspects of people's identity, a person's professional identity comes from his/her interpretations of his/her experiences (Gee 2000, Geijsel & Meijers 2005).

Metaphors are one of the methods which are used in studies analyzing both teachers' and teacher candidates' professional identity. (Saban 2004, Saban, Koçbeker ve Saban 2006, Cerit 2008, Çulha-

Özbaş 2012). Besides metaphors reveal previous experiences (Zhao, Coombs ve Zhou 2010) and they are affected by the culture in which individuals live (Alger 2009). According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980) metaphors can be utilized in understanding how we define other people and ourselves.

In addition to these, there are studies in the literature on professional identity and in general these studies focus on how teacher groups define themselves. Nonetheless, one of the most important things, which constitute our identity, is the way others define our profession and that should also be analyzed. (Sachs 1999: 39). Therefore, in this study not only how English language student teachers and social studies student teachers define their professional identities but also how they define each other's professional identities are dealt with. In this way, it will be found that how social studies and English language student teachers define each other's profession from different perspectives.

## **2. Methodology**

Metaphors were used for data collection tool of this study. Qualitative educational researchers suggest that metaphor analysis is a unique heuristic tool for bringing implicit beliefs and tacit knowledge to awareness (Patchen, Crawford 2011). Because metaphors are not mere poetic embellishments in language, they have the potential to affect their users' perceptions and actions and to be affected by them (Patchen & Crawford 2011) Lakoff and Johnson (1980) explore the way individuals make meaning of their lives through regular use of metaphors that make sense of our lives" (p. 233).

### **2.1 Research Questions**

Metaphors were used for data collection tool of this study. Qualitative educational researchers suggest that metaphor analysis is a unique heuristic tool for bringing implicit beliefs and tacit knowledge to awareness (Patchen, Crawford 2011). Because metaphors are not mere poetic embellishments in language, they have the potential to affect their users' perceptions and actions and to be affected by them (Patchen & Crawford 2011) Lakoff and Johnson (1980) explore the way individuals make meaning of their lives through regular use of metaphors that make sense of our lives" (p. 233). What conceptual themes (or categories) can be derived from social studies student teachers "English language teacher" and "social studies teacher" metaphorical images?

1. What conceptual themes (or categories) can be derived from English language student teachers' "English language teacher" and "social studies teacher" metaphorical images?
2. Is there a difference between social studies and English language student teachers metaphorical images about English language teacher and social studies teacher on the lens of gender and department?

### **2.2 Participants**

Data were gathered from two main groups. The first group was composed of 50 English language teacher students (12 male, 38 female). The second group of participants were 50 social studies student teacher (25 male, 25 female)

### **2.3 Data Collection**

In a larger-scale study of teacher as metaphor, Oxford, et al. (1998) suggests that metaphor "involves employing a familiar object or event as a conceptual tool to elucidate features of a more complex subject or situation... (p. 4). the seminal study of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) explores the way individuals make meaning of their lives through regular use of metaphors that make sense of our lives" (p. 233). Fifty english language student teachers english and fifty social studies student teachers were asked to complete in writing the stem "social studies teacher like.....because", "English language teacher like... because..." using a metaphor.

## 2.4 Data analysis

For to metaphorical study, as mentioned earlier data was collected through the use of the phrases “*social studies teacher like.....because*”, “*English language teacher like... because...*” and analyzed in the lens of gender and department through the following five stages.

*First*, all the metaphorical images supplied by the participants were simply coded.

*Second*, the coded metaphorical images were scrutinized to choose a sample expression that represented each identified metaphorical image best. And then open-coding techniques used to reveal patterns and themes related to the ways student teachers characterized teacher and social studies teacher.

*Third*, major conceptual categories were identified, each of which encompassed those metaphoric images with similar emphasis.

*Fourth*, one of the authors of this study was coden two times for to reliability of the study) (Reliability = .85).

*Lastly*, the conceptual themes were compared in the lens of gender and depeatment.

## 3. Findings

### 3.1 Findings about English language student teachers’ metaphorical images of English language teacher

There were 6 main metaphors that accounted for English language student teachers positioning as English language teachers: as lightener, as guide, as nurturer, as transmitter. Table 1 shows definitions and examples of these teacher metaphors.

Table 1. Metaphors of English Language student teachers about English Language Teacher

Metaphor	Definition	Examples
Lightener	Passing on information and knowledge	Candle
Guide	Teachers leading students to knowledge. Guides students to achieve goals, discovers students’ knowledge or hidden potential which is revealed through learning.	Supervisor, organizer
Nurturer	Providing environment to promote growth, teacher fosters potential capabilities of students.	Water, friend, mother
Transmitter	Passing knowledge that does not change	Book, internet, television
Cultural envoy (Positive)	Opening new doors for the students to teach them a different culture and expand their horizons.	Door, window, bridge
Cultural envoy (Negative)	Someone who is stuck between two different cultures.	Expat relative, bourgeois

Detailed description and some examples of the main metaphors are given in the following part. At the end of the description of each main metaphor there is the pseudonym of the person whose quotes are included in the description.

#### *Englih language teacher as Lightener*

Within this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher like a candle (3)... The metaphor lighting also describes a teacher centred approach. One student teacher described her understanding of English language teacher as a lightener is shown in the following quotation: “English language teacher is like a candle. S/he is like a candle which not only teaches but also educates students with his/her knowledge and talents. S/he sparkles and lights up better gaining strength from the participation and motivation of the students”. (Quotations from Esra’s application)

### *English language teacher as a nurturer*

Within this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher like a water (1), language (1), comrade (2), mother (2), and friend (1). They see the nurturer teacher as someone who provides a positive environment for students to grow up. One student teacher's description of his understanding of nurturer teacher is shown in the following quotation: "*English language teacher is like a comrade. S/he is affectionate. Her/his lessons are enjoyable and s/he is interested in students' problems. S/he is cheerful, emotional and warm-hearted*" (Quotation from Ali's application).

### *Teacher as a guide*

Within this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher like an organizer (1), supervisor (1). The concept is that s/he is a teacher who leads students to knowledge. One student teacher described his understanding of the teacher as a guide is shown in the following quotation English language teacher is like a guide: "*S/he helps students in their path to learn the language. S/he supervises them about how they should study.*" (quotations from Alp's application)".

### *English language teacher as transmitter*

Within this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher like a book (2), television (1), internet (1), construction foreman (1). The concept is that a teacher who passes on information and knowledge. Besides, for these student teachers, knowledge is an externally determined product. One student teacher described her understanding of teacher as a transmitter is shown in the following quotation "*English language teacher is like a book because s/he teaches English vocabulary and grammar and s/he works hard in order to make the students speak in English*" (quotations from Aylin's application).

### *English language teacher as a cultural envoy (positive)*

Within this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher like a cultural ambassador, a window (2), door (4), key (1) wind (1), pole (1), rainbow (1) new world (1) traveller (1) explorer (1) eye (1) candy (1) machinist (1) road (1) bridge (2) stairs (1) culture heir (1), anzer honey (1) moon (1) tourist guide (1) tourist (1). For these students English language teacher introduces them with a different culture and be an ambassador of that culture while s/he teaches a foreign language; English. One student teacher described her understanding of the teacher as a cultural envoy is shown in the following quotation: "*English language teacher is like the moon. S/he becomes a door which opens to the outer world as soon as students meet English. S/he broadens their horizons and opens a blank page in their lives.*" (Quotations from Peri's application)".

### *English language teacher as a cultural envoy (negative)*

Within this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher like a culture convergence, a cuckoo in the nest (a very distant relative) (1) bourgeois (1) two people in one body (1), unleavened cake (1) Swiss penknife (1) Young Turks (1) expat relative (1). These students particularly underline the fact that English language teacher is stuck between two languages and two cultures. One student teacher described his understanding of English language teacher as a culture envoy (negative) as given in the following extract: English language teacher is like a Young Turk because they can understand the voice of the West in the best way; however, since they cannot reflect this in their country they become unhappy." (Quotations from Mehmet's application).

Perceptions' of English language student teachers metaphorical images about English language teacher in the lens of their gender is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Metaphors of English Language teacher about English Language Teacher in the lens of gender

Metaphor	Female N	Female%	Male N	Male %	Total N	Total%
Lightener	2	4	3	6	5	10
Guide	2	4	1	2	3	14
Nurturer	6	12	1	2	7	14
Transmitter	23	46	3	6	26	52
Cultural Envoy (positive)	3	6	4	8	7	14
Cultural Envoy (negative)	2	4	-	-	2	4

Table 2 shows that Transmitter, Guide and Nurturer were the most continuously used metaphors for female student teachers. Transmitter was the commonly used metaphor (46 %) than Nurturer and Cultural Envoy (positive) (12 %, 6 %). For male student teachers Cultural Envoy (positive) is the most frequently used metaphor.

### 3.2 Findings about English language student teacher metaphorical images of social studies teacher

There were 5 main metaphors that accounted for English language student teachers positioning as Social studies teachers: as lightener, as guide, as nurturer, as transmitter and life adjuster. In Table 3 it is shown that definitions and examples of these teacher metaphors.

Table 3. Metaphors of English Language teachers about Social Studies Teacher

Metaphor	Definition	Examples
Lightener	Passing on information and knowledge	Lantern, light
Guide	Leading students to knowledge. Guides students to achieve goals, discovers students' knowledge or hidden potential which becomes revealed through learning.	Scriptwriter, theatre educator
Nurturer	Providing environment to promote growth, teacher fosters potential capabilities of students.	Water, mother
Transmitter	Passing knowledge that does not change	Library, encyclopedia, life
Life adjuster	Preparing for life	Living

In the following part some description and examples are given for the main metaphors.

#### *Social studies teacher as lightener*

For this metaphor, English language student teachers viewed social studies teacher like light (1), a lantern (2), a lamp (2), a mirror (1), a candle (1). According to them, a social studies teacher must devote herself/himself to the students. To illustrate, a student teacher states: “*social studies teacher is like a lantern which illuminates the past. When we start school s/he is the first person who shows where we come from and in which geography we live in. s/he enlightens us by telling our history and our past* (quotations from Helin’s application)”

#### *Social studies teacher as a nurturer*

Within this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher like a family (1), the nature (1), the root of a blossoming flower (1), geography (1), smiling person (1), water (1), and mother (1). they believe that a teacher who can nourish the character of the child by making him or her feel loved and important is creating an emotionally positive atmosphere needed for the child’s growth. One student teacher

described his understanding of a teacher as nurturer is shown in the following quotation “*social studies teacher is like the root of a newly blossoming flower. S/he mirrors to our social life and social studies lesson is the first lesson in which our world knowledge is founded* (quotations from Adem’s application)”.

*Social studies teacher as a guide*

Within this metaphor, the student teachers viewed social studies teacher like a guide (1), magnifying glass (1), mentor (1), theatre instructor (1), stand-up comedian (1), scenarist (1), life couch (1). A participant explained why he sees social studies teacher as a guide in the following lines: “*Social studies teacher is like a guide. A person needs social sciences since s/he is a social being. Students start to take social studies lessons starting from very early ages. In this sense, social studies teacher leads students about social skills and knowledge*” (Quotations from Murat’s application).

*Social studies teacher as transmitter*

In this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher like world knowledge (2), mirror (3) library (1), encyclopedia (4), historian (1), a gold mine of information (1), bridge (1), culture transmitter (3), documentary (1), watch (1), book (1), and conservative relative (1). For this student teacher, social studies teachers pass on information and knowledge. In the following quotation an example is given for the idea which sees social studies teacher as a transmitter is given: “*social studies teacher is like an encyclopaedia because because s/he has a command of areas such as philosophy, history, sociology, art and geography. S/he has reached to a certain level in all of these areas and s/he can answer questions related to these subjects*” (quotations from Semra’s application).

*Social studies teacher as life adjuster*

In this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher as “life” (2). For them social studies teacher is someone who prepares his/her students for life. One student teacher whose pseudonym is Selda described her understanding of a teacher like a transmitter in the following quota “*social studies lesson is just like science of life lesson prepares the students for the real life*”.

Perceptions’ of English language student teachers metaphorical images about social studies teacher in the lens of their gender is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Metaphors of English Language teacher about Social Studies Teacher in the lens of gender

Metaphor	Female N	Female %	Male N	Male %	Total N	Total %
Lightener	6	12	1	2	7	14
Guide	6	12	1	2	7	14
Nurturer	6	12	1	2	7	14
Transmitter	14	28	6	12	20	40
Life adjuster	1	2	1	2	2	4

Table 4 shows that Transmitter, Guide, Nurturer and Lightening were the most commonly used metaphors for female student teachers. Transmitting was the most often used metaphor (44 %) than Nurturer and Guide (14 %, 14 %).

**3.3 Findings about social studies student teacher metaphorical images of English language teacher**

There were 5 main metaphors that accounted for Social studies student teachers positioning as English language teachers: as lightener, as nurturer, as transmitter as positive and negative cultural envoy. Table 5 shows that definitions and examples of these teacher metaphors.

Table 5. Metaphors of Social Studies teacher about English Language Teacher

Metaphor	Definition	Examples
Transmitter	Passing knowledge that does not change	Robot, dictionary
Lightener	Passing on information and knowledge	Sun, light
Nurturer	Providing environment to promote growth, teacher fosters potential capabilities of students.	Sea, tree
Cultural envoy (positive)	Opening new doors to students and enlightening their horizon.	Rainbow, mirror, astronaut
Cultural envoy (positive)	Teacher is defined as someone who is squeezed between two cultures	Tourist, chameleon

In the following part, some description and examples are given for the main metaphors. At the end of the description of each main metaphor, there is the pseudonym of the person whose application is provided in the quotation.

*English language teacher as lightener*

Within this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher like a sun (1), light (1), and heavenly light (1). One student teacher described her understanding of English language teacher as a lightener is shown in the following quotation: *English language teacher is like the sun because with her/his knowledge s/he teaches in a language which is totally unknown for the students. S/he works for giving information to all of the students. Similar to the sun, s/he does not discriminate among the students and tries to teach in the same way.*” (Quotations from Emel’s application).

*English language teacher as a nurturer*

Within this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher like a tree (1), mother (1) and sea (1). One student teacher’s description of his understanding of teacher of English as a nurturer is shown in the following quotation: *“English language teacher is like the sea. If you have never seen the sea, at first you would get shocked and then you would become accustomed to day by day* (Quotations from Doruk’s application)”.

*English language teacher as transmitter*

Within this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher like a robot (1), insurmountable armada (1), scientist (1), dictionary (1), electronic dictionary (1), and talkative person (1). One student teacher described her understanding of a teacher as a transmitter in the following quotation *“English language teacher is like a dictionary because s/he has rich vocabulary. Her/his pronunciation is perfect.* (Quotations from Duru’s application)”.

*English language teacher as cultural envoy (positive)*

Within this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher like international relations (1) new world, bud, volunteer envoy (2), rainbow (1), astronaut (1), and mirror (1) two persons (5). One student teacher stated that *“English language teacher is like the new world. One language is one person. S/he induces students to have new horizons and provokes them to meet new cultures and understand differences”* (Quotations from Nilsu’s application)”.

*English language teacher culture envoy (negative)*

Within this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher like a culture convergence, dream (1), drum (1), chameleon (1) rich (1), English fabric (1), stranger (5), tourist (12), and red (1). These students emphasize the fact that English language teacher is squeezed between two cultures and two languages. A student teacher understands of English language teacher as a culture envoy (negative) is shown in the following lines *“English language teacher is like a tourist. S/he understands foreigners better since her/his English is better but s/he does not understand his/her culture very well* (Quotations from Ayaz’s application)”.

Perceptions of social studies student teachers' metaphorical images about English language teacher in the lens of their gender are displayed in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Metaphors of Social studies teacher about English Language Teacher in the lens of gender

Metaphor	Female N	Female %	Male N	Male %	Total N	Total %
Lightener	3	6	4	8	7	14
Nurturer	2	4	2	4	4	8
Transmitter	3	6	-	-	3	6
Cultural Envoy (Positive)	3	6	9	18	12	24
Cultural Envoy (Negative)	14	28	9	18	23	46

Table 6 shows that cultural envoy (positive-negative) were the most common frequently used metaphors (46 %, 24 %). Both male and female students focus on English language teacher's being a cultural envoy in a negative way. In the detailed analysis of their statements it is understood that their English learning experience had a great effect on this perception. Unfortunately, Social studies student teachers came across with unfavourable examples and they stated that they could not learn English and the reason of this was that they were not able to connect English with their lives. A student teacher explained his thoughts about why English language teachers are like cultural envoys in a negative way in the following quotation: "*English language teacher is just like a chameleon. S/he is alienated from his/her own culture and s/he is regarded as a foreigner in Turkey*" (quotations from Ercan's application).

### 3.4 Findings about social studies student teachers' metaphorical images of social studies teacher

There were 5 main metaphors that accounted for Social studies student teachers positioning of Social studies teachers: as guide, as nurturer, as transmitter, as life adjuster, as social sciences. In Table 7 definitions and examples of these teacher metaphors are illustrated.

Table 7. Metaphors of social studies student teachers about Social Studies Teacher

Metaphor	Definition	Examples
Guide	Teachers leading students to knowledge. Guides students to achieve goals, discovers students' knowledge or hidden potential which becomes revealed through learning.	Community leader, orchestra conductor
Nurturer	Providing environment to promote growth, teacher fosters potential capabilities of students.	Sun, tree, mother
Transmitter	Passing knowledge that does not change	Commander, Mirror, Google (web-search engine)
Life adjuster	Prepare for life	Life
Social scientist	Teaching educational branch of social sciences.	Rainbow, colorful ice-cream

In the following part description and some examples are given for the main metaphors. At the end of the description of each main metaphor there is the pseudonym of the person whose thoughts are mentioned in the quotation.

#### *Social studies teacher as a guide*

Within this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher like a orchestra conductor (2), compass (1), engineer (1), society leader (1), democracy guide (1), life couch (2). One student teacher described his understanding of the teacher as a guide is shown in the following quota "*social studies teacher is like*

a compass. S/he should indicate the correct direction all the time and s/he should be knowledgeable (quotations from Mehmet’s application)”.  
*Social studies teacher as a nurturer*

Within this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher like the sun (3), tree (1), mother (5), parents (2). One student teacher described his understanding of teacher as a nurturer is shown in the following quotation: “social studies teacher is like mother and father. S/he hugs the students like mother and father and s/he does her/his best for their development” (quotations from Can’s application).

*Social studies teacher as a transmitter*

In this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher like a transmitter; namely, television (1), map (1), state watchman (1), encyclopaedia (4), commander (1), mirror (1), information cube (1), Google (1), flag (1), walking library (1). One student teacher described her understanding of a teacher as transmitter in the following sentences: “social studies teacher is like a walking encyclopaedia and transmits knowledge to the students” (quotations from Şeyda’s application).

*Social studies teacher as a life adjuster*

In this metaphor, the student teachers viewed teacher life (3) living (2). For them social studies teacher is someone who prepares his/her students for life. One student teacher described her conception of social studies teacher as a life adjuster is shown in the following quotation “social studies teacher is like life. S/he prepares the students for life outside of the classroom by teaching them several things related to life.” (quotations from Zuhul’s application)

*Social studies teacher as a social scientist*

Within this metaphor, the student teachers viewed social studies teacher like hodgepodge (1), Russian nesting doll (1), sociologist (1), rainbow (3), colourful ice-cream (1), iceberg (1), psychologist (1), flower (1), seed (1), and philosopher (1). The concept is that a teacher who teaches any branch of social sciences such as history, geography, civics, sociology, anthropology and the like. One student teacher described her perception of a social studies teacher as life adjuster can be seen in the following quotation “social studies teacher is like an iceberg. Her/his knowledge seems to be consisted of only history and geography. S/he has comprehensive knowledge of psychology, philosophy, politics, economics, sociology, archaeology, anthropology, social psychology however on the surface this knowledge is not understood. (quotations from Zuhul’s application)”.  
 Perceptions’ of social studies student teachers metaphorical images about social studies teacher in the lens of their gender is shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Metaphors of Social Studies student teacher about Social Studies Teacher in the lens of gender

Metaphor	Female N	Female %	Male N	Male %	Total N	Total %
Guide	5	10	3	6	8	16
Nurturer	5	10	7	14	12	24
Transmitter	5	10	8	16	13	26
Life adjuster	3	6	2	4	5	10
Social Scientist	7	14	5	10	12	24

Table 8 shows that Transmitter, Nurturer and Social Scientist were the most commonly used metaphors for female student teachers. Among female participants “Social scientist” was the more frequently used metaphor (14 %) than “Nurturer” (10 %) and “Guide” (10 %). According to male student teachers “Transmitter” was the commonly used metaphor (16 %) than Nurturer and Social Scientist (14 %, 10 %).

#### 4. Conclusion

Both male and female English language student teachers define English language teacher as a “transmitter”. Male students commonly used “cultural envoy (positive)” in the second place after “transmitter”. In this perspective, English language student teachers regard their profession; namely, teacher of English, as someone who opens new windows by meeting them with different cultures. On the other hand, social studies student teachers define English language teacher as “transmitter” who passes knowledge to the students. The second most frequent term for the female participant is cultural envoy (negative); whereas, it is “nurturer” for the male students. It is observed that in social studies student teachers’ perception related to English language teachers their experiences in the school years have a great impact.

English language teachers name social studies teachers as “transmitter” and this is valid for both male and female students. As for social studies teachers, they view social studies teacher mostly as “transmitter”. The other two commonly used terms for social studies teacher are “social scientist” and “nurturer”. Both social studies and English language student teachers view not only their own profession but also the other group’s profession as “transmitter”, which is also a commonly used metaphor in several different studies (Saban, 2004; Saban, Koçbeker and Saban; 2006, Cerit, 2008, Çulha-Özbaşı, 2012). It is thought that our traditional learning and teaching process is the reason of this “transmitter” perception.

One of the most important results of this study is that both English language student teachers and social studies student teachers can use different metaphors in defining their profession but they do not use these metaphors for the other group’s profession. To exemplify, while social studies student teachers use social scientist, which is a result of a more reformist and constructivist approach, English language student teachers have never used this term. In the continuing education reform process it is expected that the teacher define himself/herself in the constructivist perspective rather than with traditional metaphors. What is expected from teacher is no more transmitting unchangeable knowledge as it was fifty years ago, but making the learners think and to help them in constructing learning process. All in all, it can be argued that the metaphors of the participants are pointing to the traditional learning environment and conventional teacher roles.

In the light of these results, the following suggestions can be given. Firstly, research can be carried out with other teacher groups related to how they regard their own branch, other teaching branches and teacher in general with the help of metaphors. Secondly, research can be conducted in order to understand the underlying reasons behind student teachers’ views using both metaphor and interview techniques. Last of all, to overcome the handicaps of the education reform and to ensure teachers from different branches, seminars can be organized and a selective course about the innovative teacher education can be put in the curriculum of the education faculties.

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