# METAPHORICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF A LOCALLY-PRODUCED ENGLISH COURSEBOOK: UNCOVERING LEARNER BELIEFS

**Meliha R. ŞİMŞEK**\*
**Esin DÜNDAR**\*\*

**Abstract**

Although metaphors are generally regarded as a literary device, they can be used in educational research as a data collection tool for exploring their writers' innermost opinions about a given construct. In this study, 119 seventh-graders wrote a metaphor describing their local English coursebook and 100 metaphors were subjected to content analysis within McGrath's (2006a) framework. While the resource (39%), boredom (16%) and guidance (14%) themes comprised major categories, the themes of entertainment with source of anxiety and fear emerged as equally-weighted categories (10%) from the metaphor analysis. The themes of worthlessness (4%), constraint (3%), support (3%), and authority (1%) became the least-cited groups. As 52% of the metaphors reflected the material's deficiencies as to content, design and learner expectations, it can be concluded that the majority had a negative attitude towards the textbook, and 48% seemed satisfied with the amount of information and fun it supplied.

**Keywords:** Content Analysis, Local English Coursebooks, Metaphor Analysis.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Metaphors are conventionally used as a literary device for creating an artistic form of expression mostly in a poem or a song, and establish a similarity relationship between two different objects in a certain respect by removing the 'like' word, as in the Elvisian definition of 'love' as 'a banana peel' (both causing one to stumble and fall). Although such interpretation involves simply the mapping of one concept onto a different or defining one thing through referring to another, Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 4) deepened this traditional interpretation by placing the concept of metaphor at the very center of human existence, as it determines "[how] we think, what we experience, and what we do every day". Thanks to influential research in cognitive sciences, metaphor is now being viewed something more than a figure of speech: it is "a common mode of thought" so pervasive that it "is found in all languages" and even described as the substance of all dreams (Aragno, 2009: 30).

Because metaphor use involves the interplay of the cognitive, cultural, social and individual realms, metaphor analysis, though having taken its roots in cognitive linguistics, is an interdisciplinary approach that links both qualitative and quantitative methods, and can be categorized as "an emergent method" that is gradually becoming interesting to the social scientists (Moser, 2000; Todd & Harrison, 2008: 480). Now that it can be applied to "any kind of text", visual and otherwise, metaphor analysis is a powerful method, enabling us to explain the underlying reasons for our actions and to evaluate our experiences with a fresh look (Huang, 2013; Pishghadam & Pourali, 2011; Saban, 2010; Todd & Harrison, 2008: 492). In the educational field, a wide range of concepts have been subjected to metaphor analysis, including mainly school-related constructs like teacher, principal, student, lesson, learning, teaching, as well as others like technology, social network, mobile education, teacher identity, counseling service etc. (Ada, 2013; Alger, 2009; Asaman, 2013; Aydoğdu, 2008; Balcı, 1999; Cerit, 2008a; Cerit, 2008b; Gök & Erdoğan, 2010; Guerrero & Villamil, 2002; Gurol & Donmus, 2010; Işık, 2014; Kayhan, 2014; Özcan, 2010; Saban, 2010; Saban, 2011; Sayar, 2014).

Moreover, Oxford et al. (1998: 4) regards metaphor as "a problem-solving device applicable to all fields, including language learning and teaching". Numerous studies have thus concentrated on exploring teachers' and learners' beliefs about language, language learning, language teaching and roles of language teachers, and even more studies can be found on comparing the metaphors produced either by different cultures and teachers of varying experience, or before-during-and-after the practicum period of student teachers in order to document professional growth/change over time and across space, and to evaluate knowledge acquisition as a result of professional training (Ahkemoğlu, 2011; Can et al., 2011; Cortazzi & Jin,

---
\*Assist. Prof. Dr., Mersin University, Faculty of Education, Department of Foreign Laşguage Education, Mersin malliday@gmail.com
\*\*RA, Mersin University, Faculty of Education, Department of Foreign Language Education, Mersin esin.dundar@hotmail.com

1999; Farrell, 2006; Nikitina & Furuoka, 2008; Pan & Block, 2011; Pishghadam & Pourali, 2011; Seferoğlu, Korkmazgil & Ölçü, 2009; Şimşek, 2014a; Şimşek, 2014b; Wan, Low & Li, 2011).

One construct that has come to be regarded as "for both students and teachers the visible heart of any ELT programme", that is, the "coursebook" is, however, an underexplored component of language instruction through metaphor analysis (Sheldon, 1988: 237). Although checklists, questionnaires and interviews have formed the mainstream data collection tools in materials evaluation, Huang (2013) emphasizes that different aspects of the classroom practices are now being investigated via metaphor analysis, and the functioning of coursebooks is no exception, as the underlying ideas of the users on their given coursebook can easily be elicited with the metaphor technique. For this reason, the purpose of this study was to investigate how middle school students conceptualised their own coursebook, and also to gain insight into student-driven evaluation of their new local coursebook. The research questions were formulated as in the following: (1) What kind of metaphors did the students have in relation to their local coursebook?, (2) What kind of evaluations were entailed in their coursebook metaphors?

**Related research**

When the literature on book-related metaphors were reviewed, it was seen that the analyses concentrated on the generic "book" concept, the "coursebook" for a language course (i.e. English/Turkish coursebooks), the accompanying "teacher's book" or a specific course pack in use (e.g. Bektaş, Okur & Karadağ, 2014; Ceran, 2015; Göçer & Aktürk, 2015; Güneyli & Akıntuğ, 2012; Huang, 2013; Kesen, 2010; McGrath, 2006a; McGrath, 2006b). For instance, Güneyli and Akıntuğ (2012: 1769) worked with 211 university students from all four years of study and grouped their 82 different "book" metaphors into seven categories (book as "a source of information, a directive and guiding/relaxing and recreational/personally-developing/unique and different/vital and valuable/oppressive object"), whereas Bektaş et al. (2014: 155) classified 185 "book" metaphors (elicited from 263 fourth-graders and 252 eighth-graders) into eight conceptual categories (book as "description/nature/a source of information/a place/a person/a cartoon character/an act/an object"), and compared them against the students' grades as well. In the more recent studies, Ceran (2015) studied the metaphors of 122 Turkish teacher candidates for "Turkish coursebooks" and obtained five positive themes (importance and essentiality, abundance and variety, guidance, instructiveness, viewpoint development), six negative themes (inability to meet expectations, incompleteness, incorrectness, insufficiency, ineffectiveness, complicatedness/incomprehensibility), and three pro-and-con metaphors (necessity/non-necessity, rights/wrongs, benefits/harms), while Göçer and Aktürk (2015) derived 91 different metaphors of the teacher's book from 110 teachers of varied courses, and maintained that over half of them found it helpful and guiding.

As for the metaphor analyses on the idea of English coursebooks, only a few studies were encountered despite the relative importance of the coursebook component in language teaching. The first of these came from McGrath (2006a), who requested not only 75 (mainly secondary school) teachers of English but also "several hundred secondary school pupils in Hong Kong" to write a metaphor by completing the stem "A coursebook is …". When their metaphors, opportunistically collected over two years, were thematically classified in order to determine their attitudes towards "English-language coursebooks" in general, four themes emerged from the teacher data that varied on a dependence-independence continuum: i.e. guidance, support, resource, and constraint. In the guidance category, the teachers evidently accepted "some degree of control by the textbook", whereas in the penultimate category of resource, they expressed "a willingness to take control of the textbook" (McGrath, 2006a: 174). Among the four categories of teacher-produced metaphors, it was only the last, "constraint" category that embodied negative reactions of the teachers towards the textbook's restrictions. On the other hand, the thematic classification of the student-produced metaphors revealed eight different categories: authority, resource, support, guidance, constraint, boredom, worthlessness, source of anxiety and fear. Because the learner respondents outnumbered the teacher respondents and produced a wider range of coursebook metaphors, their data set could be divided into more subsets, indicating the differences of perception within the same category more intricately: six columns in the student data set (five in the teacher).

Yet, McGrath (2006a) did not at first calculate frequencies/percentages for the teacher/student-produced metaphors, and therefore, the two data sets were compared with regard to the total number of categories and columns rather than the relative density of metaphors or number of occurrences. In the same year, McGrath (2006b: 307-309) similarly analyzed 221 metaphors elicited opportunistically from Brazilian teachers of English in 2003, but obtained five themes after the thematic classification of these "teacher images for ELT course books": guidance, access, support, resource, and constraint. The four categories in McGrath's (2006a) previous study were preserved, and the newly-added category of "access" contained the images of the coursebook as "a medium or form of access to new horizons" (like a key) (McGrath, 2006b: 308). In addition, all the five categories were, too, organized in a descending order of dependence from the textbook:

from the most dependent category of guidance through the intermediary images of access and support to the most independent category of resource. The major difference between McGrath's consecutive studies, however, lies in the quantification of the qualitative data in his second study, whereby teachers' patterns of coursebook attitudes could be identified through the numbers of responses.

Another content analysis of generic metaphors on the coursebook concept was carried out by Kesen (2010), who collected 57 different metaphors from 150 Turkish learners of English (aged 18-23) studying at the preparatory classes of Cyprus International University. Unlike McGrath's (2006a, 2006b) clear framework, Kesen's (2010) classification consisted of 15 themes: pleasure, guidance and enlightenment, variety, travel, fear, difficulty, growth, taste, preciousness, mystery, attractiveness, big size, disaster, reflection, and power. Kesen (2010) not only arranged the themes according to their popularity (the pleasure category with the highest frequency, and power with the lowest), but she also divided these 15 themes into two groups with respect to their connotations: five themes – fear, difficulty, mystery, big size and disaster – were allotted to the negative group, whereas the remaining 10 themes constituted the positive group. As a result of this polar regrouping, the mystery metaphors was noticeably the most dominant of all the negative themes, and uncovered students' feelings of ambiguity in response to English textbooks.

The most recent study on coursebook images has been conducted by Huang (2013: 52), who examined the students' beliefs about a specific set of communicative materials (called "Communicative English for Chinese Learners") through metaphor use. The participants were made up of 103 English majors, working with the material in question for over a year at Guang Dong University of Foreign Studies in China. Unlike McGrath (2006a; 2006b) and Kesen (2010), Huang (2013) was not interested in investigating the participants' generalizations about ELT textbooks, but rather focused on surveying the learners' critical opinions on their own communicative coursebook being used in their classes. As a matter of fact, the student-produced metaphors in Huang's (2013) study served as a kind of instrument for evaluating the materials from the learners' perspective.

Three main categories were derived from a total of 103 metaphors: i. positive metaphors, expressing the students' positive attitudes towards their coursebook, ii. negative metaphors, expressing their disapproval of the coursebook, and iii. blend metaphors, expressing their mixed feelings or contradictory views about the coursebook. While the positive metaphors reflected the following strengths/advantages of the course pack: being "all-inclusive" in content, having "authentic, culture-bound, communicative tasks and content", "stimulating impact", and displaying a "clear and systematic structure", the negative metaphors showed its weaknesses/disadvantages like being the "confusing" organization and "outdated" content (Huang, 2013: 57-59). As for the blend metaphors, they represented dilemma situations for the students. For instance, the participants appreciated the "comprehensive" content; at the same time, they were discontent with its "confusing" delivery as in the "thick dictionary" metaphor, and also with its "outdated" resources as in the "old manual" (Huang, 2013: 59).

Also, a comparison of the abovementioned studies on the student-produced metaphors of coursebook can tell if there exists a cross-cultural similarity between them. Table 1 displays the general outline of McGrath's (2006a), Kesen's (2010), and Huang's (2013) frameworks, and accompanying exemplars representative of each category within the relevant body of work.

Table 1: The comparison of the three frameworks for student-produced coursebook metaphors

| Framework | Categories (Exemplars) |
|---|---|
| McGrath (2006a) | 1. authority (bible)<br>2. resource (encyclopedia, library, treasure, dictionary)<br>3. support (bridge)<br>4. guidance (guide, compass, map)<br>5. constraint (a glass of water)<br>6. boredom (bed)<br>7. worthlessness (toilet paper)<br>8. source of anxiety and fear (toothache) |
| Kesen (2010) | 1. pleasure (film)<br>2. guidance and enlightenment (guide, compass, map)<br>3. variety (department store)<br>4. travel (ticket)<br>5. fear (dentist)<br>6. difficulty (puzzle)<br>7. growth (seed)<br>8. taste (chocolate)<br>9. preciousness (treasure box)<br>10. mystery (space)<br>11. attractiveness (lake)<br>12. big size (mountain)<br>13. disaster (flood)<br>14. reflection (TV) |

| Huang (2013) | 15. power (money) |
| --- | --- |
| | 1. all-inclusive content (encyclopedia, treasure box) |
| | 2. authentic, culture-bound, communicative tasks and content |
| | (bible for communication in English, movie in English, guide for life in English-speaking countries, TV program in daily life) |
| | 3. stimulating impact (water, assorted chocolates) |
| | 4. clear and systematic structure (library) |
| | 5. comprehensive but confusing and practical but outdated |
| | (thick dictionary, complex map for a metropolitan, shopping mall) |

It is observable from Table 1 that even though the studies varied with respect to the profile of the study group (number, age, level, grade, origin of the participants), as well as the research context (Chinese or Turkish) and purpose (evaluating students' conceptions of English coursebooks in general or of their specific coursebook), different students' completion of one similar stem produced parallel results. According to Table 1, the participants of these studies had the tendency to associate coursebooks with comprehensive sources of knowledge, and that's why, similar categories like "resource" and "all-inclusive content" emerged with synonymous or even the same metaphors like "encyclopedia, library, treasure". The flavours of guidance and illumination were present in all the three frameworks, displaying the well-known metaphors like the "guide, compass, and map". When it comes to the main disadvantages of coursebooks, restrictedness, complicatedness, and enormity of content were reflected under related labels with recurrent examples: McGrath's (2006a) "constraint", Kesen's (2010) "difficulty, big size, disaster", and Huang's (2013) "comprehensive but confusing" themes, represented by "mountain, puzzle, complex map, thick dictionary" metaphors. Interestingly, even the fear the coursebook evoked in the students was expressed with the "toothache" metaphor in McGrath (2006a), and the "dentist" in Kesen (2010). In conclusion, while some coursebook images have become classic as in the case of the teacher construct, one cannot deny that students' conceptualizations of ELT coursebooks may resemble across cultures, possibly due to the globalisation of the materials.

## 2. METHOD

### Participants

The participants of this study were composed of 119 seventh-graders (aged 12-13) studying at eight different middle schools from high-, middle- and low-income regions in Mersin. There were 64 female and 55 male participants in the study group. As for their level of English, they have completed the A1 level of the course and been working with the newly-published, local coursebook, "Sunshine 7" at A2 level. The MoNE-approved coursebook has been in use since the beginning of the 2014-2015 academic year in Turkey, and consists of ten units, aiming to develop seventh-graders' communicative skills. According to the curriculum, seventh-graders are expected to have mastered listening comprehension, oral interaction and expression, reading comprehension, writing by the end of the study of these ten units (Board of Education and Training [Talim Terbiye Kurulu], 2013). Being co-written by two authors, Sunshine 7 deals with the teaching of basic language structures like the tenses, modal verbs, comparatives etc., and covers a variety of high-interest topics, ranging from sports to planets in the student's book.

The participants in this study were not required to give any personal details including their names, but they were requested to indicate the demographic features of age and sex on their response sheets only. The anonymity of the participants was provided by numbering each student as S1 instead of identifying their responses with their names. In this way, it was maintained that trust was built between the researcher and subjects, while they were sharing coursebook experiences (Berg, 2001; Creswell, 2012). In addition, ensuring the confidentiality of their information was supposed to increase the consent of the participants, and the quality of their data in return (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

### Data collection

To uncover the real attitudes of consumers towards the locally-produced coursebook, the students completed the following sentence: "Our English coursebook is like… because…" after the researcher explained the concept of metaphor and gave examples of metaphors for different constructs (other than the coursebook, as they might have been influenced otherwise): for instance, "My mother is like a flower because she is so beautiful" and "My teacher is like an angel because she helps me and cares for me". In order to make sure that they all understood what metaphor meant, the students were asked to give their own examples, and some of these initial metaphors were as follows: "My father is like a hero because he protects us" and "Our school is like İstanbul because it is crowded and there is not enough place for us". They were also reminded to write an explanation for their coursebook metaphors. Consequently, the session for metaphor elicitation took around 30 minutes.

### Data analysis

The qualitative data from the metaphor analysis were analyzed by using the content analysis method, which was realized by following these few steps:

1. First of all, all the metaphors of the 119 students were taken into consideration, and the metaphors that did not have a clear explanation or could not be placed under any category were eliminated. For instance, six of the students described the local coursebook as a "story book" but did not tell the reason why they preferred this metaphor, while in another five of the story book metaphors, the explanation was nothing more than the statement of a fact: "…as there are readings in it". There were five metaphors conceptualizing the coursebook as "water", as "it is good". Despite indicating a positive attitude towards the coursebook, such metaphors were excluded because the explanation did not inform for what occasion the coursebook was found good. Lastly, three students resembled their coursebook to "a rectangle, as it has edges and sides". Since this reason literally referred to the shape of the coursebook, their metaphors were also eliminated from the data, and the resultative metaphors amounted to 100 in the end.

2. Secondly, 100 metaphors were categorized according to McGrath's (2006a) framework. The metaphors were placed into the predetermined categories after examining their thematic similarity, the kind of object associated and the participants' explanations. But when some of the metaphors related to the joy the students had during the use of the coursebook, the entertainment category was added to McGrath's (2006a) framework.

3. The metaphors were coded by two independent coders, and their initial findings were compared to enhance the reliability of the coding process. After check-coding, the intercoder reliability was calculated by using the formula of Miles and Huberman (1994): reliability = number of agreements / total number of agreements + disagreements * 100. As a result of the agreement between the two coders, the metaphors of "server with 100.000 users", "empty CD", "inkless pen" and "story book" under the resource category were placed into the categories of support, boredom, worthlessness and entertainment respectively, whereas the metaphor of "black page" was moved from "boredom" to "source of anxiety and fear" category, and so did the rainbow metaphor from the guidance to entertainment category. Since the categories of these six metaphors were changed after discussion, the interrater reliability of the metaphor analysis was found 94% (94/94+6*100), which was considered as an acceptable range by Miles and Huberman (1994).

4. Finally, frequencies and percentages were calculated and presented in tables for all the categories, while the results were supported with direct quotations from the participants' original responses. Yıldırım and Şimşek (2011) recommended that the qualitative data is quantified so that reliability can be increased, bias can be decreased, and cross-categorical comparisons can be undertaken.

## 3. FINDINGS

As a result of the content analysis within McGrath's (2006a) framework, the coursebook metaphors written by the seventh-graders were distributed as shown in Table 2, and examples for each thematic class, including a ninth category (entertainment) additional to the framework, were presented in Table 3 below.

Table 2: A thematic classification of coursebook metaphors

| Theme | f | % | Exemplars |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Resource** | 39 | 39 | English *man* (8), teacher (6), *empty box* (3), *cake without baking powder* (1), *children's book* (1), computer (1), dictionary (2), *empty room* (1), encyclopedia (1), flower garden (2), *flower without petals* (1), *garage* (1), *half-baked meal* (1), library (2), novel (1), *retired teacher* (1), *silent teacher* (1), source (1), treasure (2), tree (2) |
| **Boredom** | 16 | 16 | Arabic (1), black-and-white TV (1), black book (1), day (1), dead place (1), documentary (1), empty CD (1), extra homework (1), fake Nike shoes (1), history book (1), maths (3), poison (1), tangled rope (2) |
| **Guidance** | 14 | 14 | *bulb* (1), guide (2), light (1), moon (1), star (1), sun (8) |
| **Source of anxiety and fear** | 10 | 10 | black page (1), hell (7), mosquito (1), prison (1) |
| **Entertainment** | 10 | 10 | game (2), rainbow (5), story book (1), toy (2) |
| **Worthlessness** | 4 | 4 | inkless pen (1), trash (1), tree waste (1), water without minerals (1) |
| **Constraint** | 3 | 3 | cookbook (1), old talkative teacher (1), strict mother (1) |
| **Support** | 3 | 3 | friend (1), partner (1), *server with 100.000 users* (1) |
| **Authority** | 1 | 1 | old wise man (1) |
| **TOTAL** | 100 | 100 | |

It can be argued from Table 2 that out of 100 metaphors, 52% were negatively and 48% were positively oriented towards the local coursebook the students had been studying, and there were also instances when the same metaphor could be used to refer to either of these two ends and differentiated with the help of the students' explanatory sentences. It is clear that the most dominant category of all was the resource metaphors (39%), followed by the boredom (16%), and guidance (14%) metaphors, whereas the two-equally cited categories, "source of anxiety and fear" along with "entertainment" (10%) outweighed the remaining less populated groups like worthlessness (4%), constraint (3%), support (3%), and authority (1%).

Table 3: Examples of coursebook metaphors

| Type | Metaphors |
|------|-----------|
| **Resource** | Our coursebook is like a library because it provides a lot of information to us. Our coursebook is like a flower without petals because there is not enough information and there are some mistakes in it. |
| **Boredom** | Our coursebook is like math because I really get bored as it is so difficult. Our coursebook is like poison because there are only structures in it, there is nothing enjoyable. |
| **Guidance** | Our coursebook is like sun because it enlightens our way while learning. Our coursebook is like bulb because it does not provide enough light. |
| **Source of anxiety and fear** | Our coursebook is like a black page because I feel desperate when I look at it. There are so many things I do not like about it. Our coursebook is like mosquito because there are lots of things that I have to ask again and again. It is really annoying. |
| **Entertainment** | Our coursebook is like story book because we can have so many adventures with it. Our coursebook is like a rainbow because it is full of colors and games. |
| **Worthlessness** | Our coursebook is like trash because there is nothing I learn. |
| **Constraint** | Our coursebook is like a cookbook because we just follow its rules. |
| **Support** | Our coursebook is like my partner because it helps me to be better in English. Our coursebook is like a friend because it is always there for me. |
| **Authority** | Our coursebook is like an old wise man because every time it teaches us something we do not know. |

According to Table 2, the majority of the student-produced metaphors for the local coursebook belonged to the resource category (39%), and 13 of these resource metaphors were actually classic images describing it as a thing or place used for storing something valuable, namely, information, as in the "library, dictionary, encyclopedia" metaphors. This view of the coursebook as a source of information often had the body of "a teacher", and once even digitized with the help of the "computer" metaphor in the resource category. A few of the resource metaphors (italicized in Table 2) did, however, indicated that the students were aware of the typical role of coursebooks – provider of knowledge – and the incapacity of their own coursebook to serve this most immediate function. For instance, S100 found his local coursebook "inefficient" and resembled it to a "cake without baking powder", for "there is information in it but… it does not show everything we need".

The lack of informativeness was also highlighted by six of the eight students that adopted the "English man" metaphor. Unlike the remaining two that found the coursebook as knowledgeable as a native-speaker of English, these six pointed out the inappropriateness of the coursebook for their proficiency level by stating that despite covering all the essential content, they could not comprehend it without the teacher's explanations. Table 3 displayed another striking representative of the resource category, suggesting incompleteness. In this example, the local coursebook was likened to a flower, whose petals had withered away, implying the students' displeasure with the quality of information they were exposed to in the local coursebook. In other words, from the consumers' perspective, the content was limited in both scope and trustworthiness.

The resource category was followed by the boredom metaphors, corresponding to 16% of all the coursebook metaphors in Table 2. Obviously, these 13 different metaphors illuminated the reasons why the users felt tired of their most consulted book. The local coursebook was found: i. as complex as mathematics or a tangled rope, ii. as serious as a history book, iii. as ugly as a black-and-white TV. They expressed that Sunshine 7 was lacking in fun elements, causing frustration and losing the reader's attention through similar boredom metaphors: "Our coursebook is like a documentary because there are always serious structures, there is not any game in it" (S3); "Our coursebook is like Arabic because I understand nothing and I get bored" (S9); "Our coursebook is like fake Nike shoes because it is poor-looking" (S42).

As can be seen from Table 2, 14 students produced six different metaphors, which focused on the facilitating function of the textbook rather than its being an authoritative source. All except one believed that their local coursebook was capable of showing them the way in the unexplored territory of foreign language, and as a result, they tended to associate it with the natural sources of light like the sun, moon and stars, illuminating the paths of learning as in Table 3. S73, on the other hand, drew a parallel between the dimness of the light radiating from a bulb and the poor performance of the local coursebook in managing the guiding process.

From Table 2, two categories emerged equal: "entertainment" along with "source of anxiety and fear", each amounting to only 10% of the coursebook metaphors. Those that adopted the entertainment metaphors like a toy or rainbow admired the fun elements and the colourful design of the local coursebook, while the ones that saw it as a source of anxiety and fear conveyed their feelings of apprehension and anger at the overwhelmingness of the content as in S83's "mosquito" and S80's "black page" metaphors in Table 3.

The deadening experience of learning English through this coursebook was explained by the prison and hell metaphors: "… I cannot breathe during the lesson" (S75) or "… it suffocates me when I look at it" (S110).

As for the metaphors in the worthlessness category, they amounted to 4% of the whole, and as its name implies, alluded to the state of being useless or malfunctioning as in the case of the pen that cannot write because it has run out of ink, as well as the distilled water, deprived of vital minerals. In both situations, using this coursebook was pointless for the participants like S119, reasoning that "it has the cover but the content is empty".

Although they accounted for only 3% of the coursebook metaphors, the "support" and "constraint" metaphors formed contrasting categories in Table 2. In the support group, the friend and partner metaphors carried the attributes of a helpful human being, and expressed the students' satisfaction with the amount of assistance provided by the local coursebook. Yet, one student voiced his disappointment by resembling it to an overloaded server that fell short of expectations when he was in need of support: "Our coursebook is like a server with 100.000 users because it is not enough for us" (S62). In the constraint group, apart from the cookbook metaphor, all the metaphors in this category were, too, anthropomorphized, and the lack of flexibility or delimitation was emphasized by the choice of authoritarian and annoying figures like the "old talkative teacher" and "strict mother", as can be understood from S111's reproach: "…we always do what it wants". Ultimately, the authority category was formed out of a single, anthropomorphized metaphor, the "old wise man". It is clear that the participant conceptualized his textbook as a more experienced and insightful person possessing extensive knowledge, as he wrote: "… every time it teaches us something we don't know" (S10).

### 4. DISCUSSION

In the light of the findings from the metaphor analysis, the majority of middle school students (52%) in this study can be claimed to have developed negative attitudes towards the local coursebook they had been using for about two terms. The negative metaphors packaged Sunshine 7 as an uninteresting, rigid, futile, and intimidating kind of material. As for the positive metaphors (48%), they mirrored the consumers' admiration of the new textbook predominantly for its wide coverage of essential knowledge, and also for the guidance and assistance it provided when they were in need. When compared with the findings of the previous research, this study documented a higher concentration of the negative images (52%) than that in McGrath's (2006a) (44.5%), Kesen's (2010) (38%), and Huang's (2013) (36% negative and blend metaphors altogether) studies (McGrath, 2013). This may be related to the fact that while McGrath (2006a) and Kesen (2010) elicited students' ideas on the general concept of English coursebooks, Huang (2013) and the available study extracted their evaluative responses about the specific set of coursebook being trialled in their classrooms. Since McGrath (2013: 155) dealt with students' generalizations about English coursebooks, he could not classify metaphors expressing mixed feelings as in "A coursebook is like white bread which can allay my hunger… but is tasteless".

However, when such metaphors (e.g. "cake without baking powder") were encountered in the resource, guidance and support categories, they were not disregarded in this study, as they demonstrated the double consciousness of the participants during coursebook evaluation. To be more precise, they were simultaneously aware of the vital roles English coursebooks undertake in the language class, and of their own coursebook's underachievement in this regard. Finally, the differing density of negative metaphors might be influenced by the extent of learner contact with the global and local coursebooks, the satisfactoriness of past coursebook experiences as consumers, as well as their age groups. Despite the co-occurrence of some metaphors in both fourth and eighth graders' responses in Bektaş et al.'s (2014) study on the "book" metaphors, negative metaphors were reported, as their participants got older.

A closer analysis of the students' images revealed that they preferred to ascribe human characteristics to their textbook in four different categories: resource (**English man**, teacher, **silent teacher**, **retired teacher**), constraint (**old talkative teacher, strict mother**), support (friend, partner), and authority (old wise man), whereas the majority of these anthropomorphized images (**in bold**) evidenced the students' low opinion of the new material in some respects. There were both similarities and differences between this study and McGrath's (2006a) in the use of anthropomorphization. Positive metaphors like "an elder, teacher, my friend, my mother, a helper" in McGrath's (2006a) study were shared by the existing participants, whereas his students reflected a more vivid or even stronger expression of their dislike by personifying English coursebooks as an "ugly and terrible girlfriend, devil, professional killer". Attaching human attributes to coursebooks was not uncommon in Kesen's (2010) study, either: "artist, **dentist**, **baby**" were the few anthropomorphized metaphors, mostly accumulating in the negative group again.

Whether it was coursebooks in general, a specific course pack, the teacher's book or even the book concept in and of itself undergoing investigation, some metaphors like the "guide, rainbow, tree, friend, teacher, library, encyclopedia, game, sun, light, treasure, and partner" formed classic images in this study,

and effortlessly recurred in a considerable number of studies, either with the same or a similar wording (Bektaş, Okur & Karadağ, 2014; Ceran, 2015; Göçer & Aktürk, 2015; Güneyli & Akıntuğ, 2012; Huang, 2013; Kesen, 2010; McGrath, 2006a). The use of classic images was worthy of notice, as they showed the idea of a coursebook conventionalised by the specific group/culture of learners. In other words, the classic images can be argued to manifest their stereotyped conception of the coursebook.

Furthermore, the metaphor writing activity exhibited the disagreement between the students, when they evaluated how stimulating and helpful their coursebook could be during the learning process. The first of the contrasting categories, boredom versus entertainment, demonstrated that while some students were displeased with the grim look of the coursebook (No colours, no games!), others rejoiced at the lively mood it created in the classroom (Full-colour, full fun!). The second of the contrasting categories, support versus constraint, showed that opinions were divided over whether the coursebook was an aid (permissive like a "friend") or obstacle (preventive like a "strict mother") to their advancement in language learning. The conflict of opinions also hinted that the inappropriateness of the coursebook may not be the only culprit, but the teacher's style of coursebook use might as well be responsible for the students' disappointment.

Finally, the student evaluation of the new local textbook through metaphor use proved instrumental in identifying the major weaknesses of Sunshine 7. It can be concluded from the entailments of the negative metaphors that the MoNE-approved material failed learners in: i. choosing relevant topics (trash), ii. presenting a variety of activities and games (poison), iii. providing comprehensible input (English man), iv. displaying the content in an organized and appealing way (black-and-white TV), and v. allowing room for alternative lesson scenarios (cookbook). Similarly, the confusing organization, the complexity of the content along with the information overload were frequently cited among the disadvantages of coursebooks in different metaphor analyses (Ceran, 2015; Huang, 2013; Kesen, 2010; Menkabu & Harwood, 2014).

## 5. CONCLUSION

The content analysis of the student-produced metaphors demonstrated the variation in their symbolic representations of the new local textbook, and conveyed useful information about the wanted and unwanted qualities of Sunshine 7, being implemented in their classrooms for a year. The negative attitudinal tendency of the majority towards the material was explained in their mental images by the poor presentation of the language content way beyond their level of proficiency, and the organizational indifference to learner needs and interests, with which the topics, activities and physical appearance were selected. As a result, the teacher's role was reported to be downgraded to a curriculum translator (one that interprets the content as the students cannot access it without the teacher's explanations), let alone approximating the "curriculum transmitter" in Shawer et al.'s (2008) study.

However, its faulty design may not be the only one to blame for the students' overall dissatisfaction with the local textbook. According to McGrath (2006a; 2006b), the way in which the teacher chooses and uses the textbook might be held equally responsible for the negative responses. Especially in the textbook-based teaching contexts like Turkey, pre-service teachers should be prepared, and in-service teachers need to be guided for how to exploit, adapt and supplement such a governmentally-approved, compulsory textbook by organizing workshop activities about materials evaluation (McGrath, 2006b). When coupled with metaphor elicitation from students as consumers, teachers can better respond to learner needs and wants, and will learn to make amends for coursebook deficiencies and contextual constraints.

Since the "course book *is* the course", or put differently, "a central element in teaching-learning encounters", "airing and sharing" the *users'* (both teachers' and learners') images can offer twofold benefits (McGrath, 2006b: 307, 314). First of all, the compatibility of their coursebook views can be tested, and if a mismatch is detected, measures can be taken for surviving the lesson, and rehabilitating the coursebook, and then, all parties, including the coursebook writers and educational authorities, can learn from this reflective practice of course- and self-evaluation, as the use or abuse of even the best tool depends on the operator factor. Therefore, future research may focus on evaluating the teachers' images of the (same) local coursebook(s), and comparing the views of different user groups in terms of varied factors like experience, age, grade, type of institution, amount of control over coursebook selection etc.

### REFERENCES

ADA, Sibel (2013). *Öğrencilerin Matematik Dersine ve Matematik Öğretmenine Yönelik Algılarının Metaforlar Yardımıyla Belirlenmesi*, Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara: Gazi Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü.

AHKEMOĞLU, Hasan (2011). *A Study on Metaphorical Perceptions of EFL Learners Regarding Foreign Language Teacher*, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Adana: Çukurova University Institute of Social Sciences.

ALGER, L. Christiana (2009). "Secondary Teachers' Conceptual Metaphors of Teaching and Learning: Changes over the Career Span", *Teaching and Teacher Education*, V. 25 (5), pp. 743-751.

ARAGNO, Anna (2009). "Meaning's Vessel: A Metapsychological Understanding of Metaphor", *Psychoanalytic Inquiry: A Topical Journal for Mental Health Professionals*, V. 29 (1), pp. 30-47.

ASAMAN, Erkin (2013). *Özel Eğitim Kurumlarındaki Öğretmen ve Öğrencilerin Birbirlerine Yönelik Metaforik Algıları*, Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Mersin: Mersin Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü.

AYDOĞDU, Elif (2008). *İlköğretim Okullarındaki Öğrenci ve Öğretmenlerin Sahip Oldukları Okul Algıları ile İdeal Okul Algılarının Metaforlar (Mecazlar) Yardımıyla Analizi*, Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Eskişehir: Eskişehir Osman Gazi Üniversitesi Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü.

BALCI, Ayşe (1990). *Okul ile İlgili Mecazlar (Metafor): Seçilmiş Dört Okulda Öğrencilerin, Öğretmenlerin ve Velilerin Okul Algıları (Ankara)*, Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi, Ankara: Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.

BEKTAŞ, Mustafa, OKUR, Alpaslan & KARADAĞ, Buket (2014). "İlkokul ve Ortaokul Son Sınıf Öğrencilerinde Metaforik Algı Olarak Kitap", *Türk Kütüphaneciliği,* S. 28 (2), s. 154- 168.

BERG, L. Bruce (2001). *Qualitative Research Methods for Social Sciences*, Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

CAN, Cem, BEDİR, Hasan & KILIANSKA-PRZYBYLO, Grazyna (2011). Is Teaching Culture-Bound? A Cross-Cultural Study on the Beliefs of ELT Teachers. In J. Arabski, & A. Wojtaszek (Eds.), *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning,* (pp. 107-120). Berlin: Springer-Verlag.

CERAN, Dilek (2015). "Türkçe Öğretmeni Adaylarının Türkçe Ders Kitaplarına İlişkin Metaforları", *Uşak Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi,* S. 8 (3), s. 121-140.

CERİT, Yusuf (2008a). "Öğrenci, Öğretmen ve Yöneticilerin Müdür Kavramı ile İlgili Metaforlara İlişkin Görüşleri", *Eğitim ve Bilim,* S. 33 (147), s. 3-13.

CERİT, Yusuf (2008b). "Öğretmen Kavramı ile İlgili Metaforlara İlişkin Öğrenci, Öğretmen ve Yöneticilerin Görüşleri", *Türk Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi,* S. 6 (4), s. 693-712.

CORTAZZI, Martin & JIN, Lixian (1999). Bridges to Learning: Metaphors of Teaching, Learning and Language. In L. Cameron, & G. Low (Eds.), *Researching and Applying Metaphor,* (pp.149-176). New York: Cambridge University Press.

CRESWELL, W. John (2012). *Educational Research Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*, Boston: Pearson.

FARRELL, S. C. Thomas (2006). "The Teacher is an Octopus': Uncovering Preservice English Language Teachers' Prior Beliefs through Metaphor Analysis", *RELC Journal*, V. 37 (2), pp. 236-248.

GÖÇER, Ali & AKTÜRK, Yunus (2015). "İlk ve Ortaokul Öğretmenlerinin Öğretmen Kılavuz Kitabına Yönelik Algıları: Metafor Analizi", *Uluslararası Türk Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi,* S. 3 (4), s. 186-199.

GÖK, Bilge & ERDOĞAN, Tolga (2010). "Investigation of Pre-Service Teachers' Perceptions about Concept of Technology through Metaphor Analysis", *TOJET*, V. 9 (2), pp. 145-160.

GUERRERO, M. C. Maria & VILLAMIL, S. Olga (2002). "Metaphorical Conceptualizations of ESL Teaching and Learning", *Language Teaching Research,* V. 6 (2), pp. 95-120.

GUROL, Mehmet & DONMUŞ, Vildan (2010). "Metaphors Created by Prospective Teachers Related to the Concept of Social Network", *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences,* V. 9, pp. 1489-1496.

GÜNEYLİ, Ahmet & AKINTUĞ, Yeliz (2012). "Kitap Kavramına İlişkin Zihinsel İmgeler (Yakın Doğu Üniversitesi Örneği)", *Kuram ve Uygulamada Eğitim Bilimleri,* S. 12 (3), s. 1769- 1790.

HUANG, Qiang (2013). "Exploring Learners' Perceptions on Communicative Coursebooks by Metaphor Analysis: The Case of CECL", *Higher Education of Social Sciences*, V. 5 (2), pp. 52-60.

IŞIK, Özlem (2014). *Sınıf Öğretmeni Adaylarının Öğretmen, Öğretme, Öğrenme Kavramları ile İlgili Metaforik Algılarının Yapılandırmacı Yaklaşım Açısından İncelenmesi*, Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Denizli: Pamukkale Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü.

KAYHAN, Murat (2014). *Öğretmen ve Öğrencilerin Taşımalı Eğitim Uygulamasına İlişkin Metaforlarının İncelenmesi*, Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Sivas: Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü.

KESEN, Aynur (2010). "Turkish EFL Learners' Metaphors with respect to English Language Coursebooks", *Novitas ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language)*, V. 4 (1), pp. 108-118.

LAKOFF, George & JOHNSON, Mark (2003). *Metaphors We Live by*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

MCGRATH, Ian (2006a). "Teachers' and Learners' Images for Coursebooks", *ELT Journal*, V. 60 (2), pp. 171-180.

MCGRATH, Ian (2006b). "Using Insights from Teachers' Metaphors", *Journal of Education for Teaching: International Research and Pedagogy,* V. 32 (3), pp. 303-317.

MCGRATH, Ian (2013). *Teaching Materials and the Roles of EFL/ESL Teachers*, London: Bloomsbury Academic.

MENKABU, Ahlam & HARWOOD, Nigel (2014). Teachers' Conceptualization and Use of the Textbook on a Medical English Course. In N. Harwood (Ed.), *English Language Teaching Textbooks*, (pp. 145-177). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

MILES, B. Matthew & HUBERMAN, A. Michael (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis*, California: SAGE Publications.

MOSER, S. Karin (2000). "Metaphor Analysis in Psychology: Method, Theory, and Fields of Application", *Forum: Qualitative Social Research [Online],* 1(2). Retrieved from http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1090/2387

NIKITINA, Larisa & FURUOKA, Fumitaka (2008). "A Language Teacher is Like…": Examining Malaysian Students' Perceptions of Language Teachers through Metaphor Analysis", *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 5 (2), pp. 192-205.

OXFORD, L. Rebecca, TOMLINSON, Stephan, BARCELOS, Ana, HARRINGTHON, Cassandra, LAVINE, Z. Roberts, SALEH, Amany & LONGHINI, Ana (1998). "Clashing Metaphors about Classroom Teachers: Toward a Systemathical Typology for Language Teaching Field", *System*, V. 26 (1), pp. 3-50.

ÖZCAN, Ahmet (2010). *İlköğretim Öğrencilerinin İngilizce Öğrenmeye Yükledikleri Anlamlar: Metaforik Bir Analiz*, Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Tokat: Gazi Osman Paşa Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.

PAN, Lin & BLOCK, David (2011). "English as a Global Language in China: An Investigation into Learners' and Teachers' Language Beliefs", *System,* V. 39 (3), pp. 391-402.

PISHGHADAM, Reza & POURALI, Shahrzad (2011). "Metaphorical Analysis of Iranian MA University Students' Beliefs: A Qualitative Study", *Higher Education Studies,* V. 1 (1), pp. 27-37.

SABAN, Ahmet (2010). "Prospective Teachers' Metaphorical Conceptualizations of Learner", *Teaching and Teacher Education*, V. 26 (2), pp. 290-305.

SABAN, Ahmet (2011). "Prospective Computer Teachers' Mental Images about the Concepts of School and Computer Teacher", *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, V. 11 (1), pp. 435-446.

SAYAR, Elif (2014). *Investigating EFL Teachers' and their Students' Conceptions of Professional Teacher Identity through Metaphor Analysis,* Unpublished Master's Thesis, Bolu: Abant İzzet Baysal University Institute of Educational Sciences.

SEFEROĞLU, Gölge, KORKMAZGİL, Sibel, & ÖLÇÜ, Zeynep (2009). "Gaining Insights into Teachers' Ways of Thinking via Metaphors", *Educational Studies*, V. 35 (3), pp. 323-335.

SHAWER, F. Saad, GILMORE, Deanna & BANKS-JOSEPH, R. Susan (2008). "Student Cognitive and Affective Development in the Context of Classroom-level Curriculum Development", *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, V. 8 (1), pp. 1-28.

SHELDON, E. Leslie (1988). "Evaluating ELT Textbooks and Materials", *ELT Journal*, V. 42 (4), pp. 237-246.

ŞİMŞEK, R. Meliha (2014a). "A Metaphor Analysis of English Teacher Candidates' Pre- and Post-course Beliefs about Language and Teaching", *Dicle Üniversitesi Ziya Gökalp Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, V. 22, pp. 230-247.

ŞİMŞEK, R. Meliha (2014b). "Examining Preservice Teachers' Conceptions of Language and the Development of their Teaching Beliefs over the Practicum", *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, V. 152, pp. 937-942.

Talim Terbiye Kurulu (2013). *İlköğretim Kurumları (İlk ve Orta Okullar) İngilizce Dersi (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 ve 8. Sınıflar) Öğretim Programı*. Retrieved from http://ttkb.meb.gov.tr/www/guncellenen-ogretim-programlari/icerik/151

TODD, Zazie, & HARRISON, J. Simon (2008). Metaphor Analysis. In S. N. Hesse-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds.), *Handbook of Emergent Methods*, (pp. 479-493). New York: The Guildford Press.

WAN, Wan, LOW, D. Graham, & LI, Miao (2011). "From Students' and Teachers' Perspective: Metaphor Analysis of Beliefs about EFL Teachers' Roles", *System*, V. 39 (3), pp. 403-415.

YILDIRIM, Ali & ŞİMŞEK, Hasan (2011). *Sosyal Bilimlerde Nitel Araştırma Yöntemleri*, Ankara: Seçkin Yayıncılık.