

Teachers' Metaphors on a School Organization

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Abstract: As part of the late interest in the symbolic-interpretive approach to organizations, metaphors have attracted the attention of organization scientists in terms of their potential value in organizational analysis. Consistent with this, the purpose of this study was to identify the perceptions and descriptions of teachers on present and desired organizational structure and processes in a school in Turkey by using metaphors. In examining the organizational structure and processes, metaphors were used as an analysis technique. The results indicate that there seems to be a widely shared dissatisfaction among the teachers about the school which is, from the teachers' point of view, largely structured on mechanistic assumptions ignoring the needs of the teachers. Metaphors are very powerful analysis tools in capturing the various domains of a single organization (structural, human resources, symbolic/cultural) in a single study.

Keywords: Metaphor, Symbolic Interpretive Approach, Educational Administration, Organizational Theory, School Leadership

Öğretmenlerin Gözünden Bir Okul Örgütü: Metaforlarla Analiz

Öz: Kurumlara sembolik-yorumlamacı yaklaşımların bir parçası olan metaforlar örgüt bilimcilerin bir hayli ilgisini çekmektedir. Metaforlar bir kurumun yapısını, insan kaynaklarını ve kültürünü incelemek için oldukça etkili analiz araçlarıdır. Bu çalışmada metaforlar (mecaz yöntemi) kullanılarak bir okuldaki öğretmenlerin gözünden kurumun mevcut örgütsel yapısı ve olması istenilen ideal yapısı analiz edilmiştir. Kullanılan mecazlar arasındaki ortak noktalar okulda oluşan kültürü sergilemektedir. Sonuçlar öğretmenlerin algısından okul örgütünün mevcut yapısı ve olması istenilen ideal yapısı arasındaki farklar olduğu ortaya koymuştur.

Keywords: Metafor, okul kültürü, eğitim, okul liderliği, kurumsal teori, eğitim yönetimi, sembolik/yorumlamacı yaklaşım.

For centuries organizations have been considered as machines expected to operate "in logical, routinized, efficient, reliable, and predictable ways" (May, 1993). The individuals working in organizations were expected to behave as if they were parts of a machine. Later, these machine oriented concepts gave way to the growth of human relations theory (May, 1993). This new human resource frame was built around the idea that organizations are made up of individuals with needs, feelings and prejudices. Besides having a capacity to learn, they sometimes have a capacity to cling to old attitudes and beliefs. In order to be effective, managers realized that organizations need to find a balance between the organizational needs and human needs. Only when this balance is achieved people feel

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attached to the organization and feel attached to it. This results in an increased devotion to the workplace.

With the progress of the twentieth century, people have started to show interest in how language, images, and ideas help in shaping one's understanding of the world and the social reality (Morgan, 1993). The move from a mechanistic view to a more human-centered view brought with it the search for different ways of looking at organizations. Organizational scientists began to realize that fixed formulas do not work in settings where humans are involved. This meant the introduction of a new approach (symbolic-interpretive) which opened new horizons in organizations in diagnosing organizational problems. The interpretation of organizations through symbolic and interpretive approaches are very different from the traditional positivistic approach. Brown reported that the organizing processes are social in that, actors develop meaningful relationships with other actors. The staff gives meaning to certain symbols to make their environment meaningful and express the characteristics of their organization (Brown, 1994).

With the emergence of the symbolic-interpretive approach, the concepts of myths, sagas, symbols, ceremonies, beliefs and values as well as metaphors have received much attention (Simsek, 1997). Merriam Webster defines metaphor as "a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them". Using metaphors helps us illustrate the unfamiliar with the more familiar things. As can be seen from the definition of the term, it makes it very effective in getting the perceptions and honest views of the participants, making it a valuable tool to go deep inside their inner thoughts. Many organizational analysis studies use metaphor as tools for understanding the complex human behavior. Other areas where metaphors are used are management, organizations, schools, learning, teaching, and teacher researches. (Cerit, 2006)

As stated by Morgan, metaphors have an influence on science, our language and how we think, besides how we express ourselves on a day-to-day basis (Morgan, 1986, p. 13). Through metaphors we assert that A is (or is like) B. For example, when we say "the man is a lion" we want to point out the lion-like aspects (courage, strength) of the man. We draw attention to that particular aspect of the man in that when we use a certain metaphor, we bring out particular aspects of a thing and disregard the others. This is related to how we interpret the situation. Morgan (1986) is a strong advocate of organizational analysis from a different perspective through using metaphors, since he defines organizations as complex, ambiguous and paradoxical.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) state that most people regard metaphors as part of the "poetic imagination" and "extraordinary" language. They also add that metaphors are seen as a matter of words and not thought or action. However, they claim that this is not true. The authors have found that metaphors are indeed "pervasive in everyday life, thought and action. Our concepts structure what we perceive, how we get around in the world, how we relate to other people". "...the way we think, what we experience and what we do everyday is a matter of metaphor" (p. 3).

One of the studies utilized metaphors in organizational analysis was done by Simsek (1997). He analyzed a large, American public university through the use of metaphors produced by the faculty members. He found a high degree of congruence between the images held by the faculty about their institution and the strategic choices the university administration set forth to restructure the institution.

Inbar (1996) has also conducted a study based on metaphorical images gathered from students and educators in order to enlighten certain problems and difficulties in schooling. He believes in the power of metaphors and images as the outcome of creative and theoretical thinking enriching the "insight into educational phenomena". The purpose of his study was to enlighten basic perceptions "that may enhance our understanding of some of the inherent features of education (Inbar, 1996, p. 77). His results were interesting in the sense that a large number of students defined themselves as "prisoners" and teachers as "jailers."

Kesen (2003) used metaphors besides interviews and diaries to get the views of a teacher at two different time periods to reveal the teacher's beliefs and the changes that occur during that time period.

Steinhoff and Owens (1989) studied organizational culture through stories by which respondents were asked to generate stories about their school and the principal, and then summarize their stories by using metaphors. Their results showed many interesting description of the school and the principal: the school as family, home, womb, team, rusty machine, well-oiled machine, political machine, cabaret, circus; the principal as parent, nurturer, sibling, coach, workaholic, general, master of ceremonies, master of everyone's destiny. There were also some very negative images by teachers that some of them defined the school culture as conformist, cold, hostile and paranoid. Çelik (2004) focuses on the correlation between the age of a school organization and its culture. He considers the strong, positive culture of a school as one of its vital keys to success. Therefore, finding out the cultural metaphors and turning them into positive aspects will strengthen the culture of an organization in the long run. Uzun and Paliç (2013) used metaphor analysis to show the primary school teachers' views about the "concept of classroom". They also emphasized the importance of asking the question "why?" in order to get the interpretation of the metaphor as seen by them.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to identify the perceptions and descriptions of teachers of the present and desired organizational structure and processes in a school in Turkey by using metaphors. In examining the organizational structure and processes, metaphors were used as an analysis technique. The following subproblems were designed to collect the data in a more systematic fashion:

1. What metaphors would best explain the present condition of the school organization from perspectives of teachers?
2. What metaphors would be used when thinking of the school in the future from the perspectives of teachers?

3. How can the school be transformed from the current state to a desired future state from the perspectives of teachers?
4. What metaphors would best explain the teacher-administrator relations in the school from the perspectives of teachers?

The Case

The name of the analyzed school will be kept confidential. Giving it a name is not important since similar situations can be seen in many different schools around Turkey. The school is a mid-size private elementary school with around 500 students in grades 1-4. There are 65 full-time teachers working at school.

Method

Seven (7) questions were prepared to interview thirty (30) teachers in this private school. The questions were designed in such a way so that it would be possible to get detailed information for the subproblems of the study. Two different strategies were followed to elicit metaphors about the school. In the first, teachers generated their own metaphors through open-ended questions. In the second, they selected certain images from a printed page presented to them in which there were some drawn images. The page was taken from Gareth Morgan's book, *Imaginization* (1993) (see appendix). Each interview took about 40 minutes. Note-taking was used instead of tape-recording which made the participants feel safe about the privacy of their talk.

Because of a relatively large number of teachers (170) employed in the school, a sampling strategy was sought necessary. Thirty teachers who had been at the school for at least three years were selected out of 170 teachers working at three levels: elementary, middle and high school. The reason for this was that three years time period was considered to be necessary for the teachers to get to know the school in many ways: culture, working environment, working relations, workflow, rules and regulations, human relations, social milieu in general, etc.

The statement of he/she rather than the name was used in reporting the results. In all instances, "he/she" were used in order not to reveal the gender of the interviewees, as well. Before starting the questions, the respondents were informed about the purpose of the study. The researcher stated that the results would be given to the administration and hopefully be used for the improvement of the conditions in the school. The perceptions of the teachers obtained from the interview were important because they could reveal important aspects about the school and the administration. All seven questions were subjected to a content analysis. That is, the information collected needed to be classified and categorized according to certain "codes".

The raw data were read several times in order to find common themes among them. These common themes were determined as 'codes'. Then, the metaphors as well as the

adverbs and adjectives used to describe those metaphors were listed. Following that, each of the metaphors was grouped under those determined codes (that is, the common themes).

As for the reliability and validity of the study, a pilot study was conducted. It helped to see if the questions served the purpose of the study (to assure validity). It also helped to formulate the questions in terms of clarity (to assure reliability). Special attention was given in order not to use paraphrasing, correction, leading probes or cues during note-taking.

Stratified random sampling (to assure generalizability) was utilized in order to increase the validity of the study. Also, standardized open-ended interviewing technique was used to increase reliability by reducing the possibility of bias which becomes a problem if there are no predetermined questions.

Results

Subproblem 1. Teachers' Perception of Present Condition of the School

Two questions were directed to teachers in order to elicit their views on the current status of the school: The first one was an open-ended question about eliciting metaphors that describe the school, the second one was a printed page from G. Morgan's book, *Imaginization* (1993, p. 27), depicting some visual images (see appendix 1) that are supposed to be picked by teachers in relation to the question.

Question 1a. What metaphor, image or analogy would you use to explain the present situation of this school? Why?

Metaphors: a polished furniture which is not very practical; an apple looking good from outside, but not so much from inside

One teacher said that, "the school is like a polished furniture that looks good from outside, but not so much of good quality". The outsiders do not know that the quality of the wood is not that good since the outside of the furniture is so well polished.

One of the interviewees came up with the image of an 'apple.' He/she used this image to state that the school reminds him/her of an apple which looks wonderful from outside "...shining bright and looking delicious, but when you take a bite, you realize there are parts that need to be cut out before you can eat it. It is not that perfect after all". (*Thematic meaning: Things are not like what it seems from outside*)

Metaphors: a mixed pizza; training camp; children's club; virus; nomad tents

The school was described as a 'mixed pizza with too many ingredients' which makes it lose its original taste. The teacher used this image to explain that the school is trying to do many things at once, but because there is no clear vision or goal, they are not getting what they want. The 'training camp' and the 'children's club' were also used to state that there is a certain chaotic situation at the school and no one really knows where they are going. The image of the 'virus' was used to state that the school has an unorganized system, and will not be able to change unless it finds ways to get rid of the virus causing the problems. The 'nomad tents' image was also brought up to describe the same fact. (*Thematic meaning: Unorganized system/lack of clear vision or goals*)

Metaphors: virus; gears with broken parts; a living organism; a frame with scratches; painting of an amateur artist; human body with ailments.

3 out of 30 teachers used the images of a 'virus, human body or a living organism' which are biological terms used to explain the organization. These images seem to show that the school is seen like a human body with ailments, "...not functioning properly". Another term was the image of a virus, to state that "...there is a virus, slowly ruining the body". The other 'living organism' image was used in explaining that this organism is one that lives on only the basic things, is not complex at all. It is stated that it is a very simple living organism that does not have much impact on the environment.

The teachers (3 out of 30) used other images like the gears with broken parts. They stated that they felt like parts of those gears hinting at the machine like quality of the institution. The frame with scratches was also used to describe that some things were not in place as they should. The term 'ordinary' was also used in relation to the above theme. The interviewees expressed that all these deficiencies make the school an "ordinary school which is supposed to set an example for other schools in all respects". (*Thematic meaning: the school is not functioning as it should / It is ordinary*)

Metaphors: ant-eater; factory; rabbit; half-open prison; white furniture store; firm; lion

The perceptions of teachers are negative about the organization with respect to the human aspects. The metaphors they provided were used to express the uneasiness among them. They feel they are not given enough importance. The 'ant-eater' image was used to represent the school as an organization treating the humans as 'ants.'

Another animal image was that of a 'rabbit.' One of the teachers stated that the school treats the teachers as rabbits, "...scares them with the roar of a lion." Other metaphors used were: 'a white furniture store, factory, half-open prison and firm.' These images draw the picture of a money-oriented organization according to the teachers. "When it comes to teachers, they are not generous at all" stated one interviewee. "When you give so much importance to money, the organization becomes like a firm" complained another teacher. The school is also regarded like a store where the only concern is to satisfy the customers (parents). (*Thematic meaning: the human factor is not considered much / The school is too much profit-oriented*)

Metaphors: lion; nomad tents; big mansion; remote controlled car

The teachers believe that there is a strict hierarchy causing lack or loss of communication in the school. The top of the hierarchical chart is seen as the lion controlling the other animals in the forest. The image of the 'tents' was used to state that there is a line of hierarchy which makes the decisions and then sends out to the tents. Sometimes, the information gets lost, is changed or misunderstood by the time it gets there.

The 'big mansion' image was used by one of the teachers to express the problem of communication. He/she felt as if living in such a big mansion where no one really knows what is going on with the others in other rooms. One teacher likened the hierarchical order

in the school to a remote controlled car" where the foundation has the control in their hands. *(Thematic meaning: strict hierarchy causes lack or loss of communication)*

Metaphors: scorpion; dragon

The teachers had mostly negative attributes towards the administration. The 'scorpion' and 'dragon' images were used to describe them; scorpion in the sense that "... they do not realize that by treating us badly, they are the ones losing in the long run." The 'dragon' was also used as a creature hurting the teachers with fire from its mouth.

While some of the teachers stated that some of the administrators are friendly, and are like a family member, they still feel hesitant in approaching them. This is due to the fact that they know that the foundation controls them at the top and they too have to follow the order of the hierarchical chart.

It was interesting to see that the primary school teachers had mostly negative things to say about their administrators. However, this negative attitude was not so harsh among the upper primary and high school teachers. On the whole, the administrators at all levels were seen to have little authority due to the strict hierarchy. *(Thematic meaning: teacher-administration relationship is not good)*

Metaphors: not fully developed like Turkey; wild animal; silkworm; young tree; young horse (pony)

Five teachers were hopeful about the present condition of the school. They stated that it is normal to have certain problems because the school has not fully developed yet. This common theme was expressed by the images of the country, Turkey, still growing, a wild animal yet to be tamed, a silkworm that will turn into a butterfly and a young tree growing slowly.

The image of a young horse (pony) was used by an interviewee to state her/his sorrow in the fact that the school was a young healthy pony, but became ill because of the caregivers that kept changing all the time. He/she wished that the administration will improve certain things to heal the pony and let it grow to become a strong, healthy horse.

Those teachers who were hopeful pointed out that in order for the school to grow and reach a prominent place, there must be certain changes that need to be made. One teacher expressed that in the beginning, when the school was founded, they felt part of it, but as time went by, they were left outside the system. Now, he/she states that they are like the audience watching a film from a seat. Hopefully, if the administration wishes to change certain things, they would like to take part in the film and be part of the "action". Here again, the hopeful teachers were among the ones selected from the upper primary and high school sections. This shows that the primary level teachers have a more negative image of the school which means that they are not really satisfied in many areas. *(Thematic meaning: the school has not developed fully yet, in the process of institutionalization)*

Question 1b. Please look at this page (appendix 1) and tell me which figure or figures would best describe the present situation of this school? Why?

Question 1b which was the same in context as question 1a was asked in order to find out which method produced more metaphors whether by-asking teachers to produce their own images or by asking them to choose from a certain set of images. Both question formats worked well in different ways. In question 1a, some of the teachers wanted to have some examples as to what they should come up with. In question 1b, however, they were already familiar with what they had to do and having a set of images to choose from made them feel more comfortable. They were more productive in their answers. Even those who could not come up with any images in the first question (1a), had something to say for question 1b. They all had smiles on their faces when they looked at the pictures and expressed that they had fun while doing such a different thing. One teacher stated that, "This is so wonderful. It helped me get rid of my stress".

A total of 21 different metaphors were chosen by the respondents. These metaphors are grouped under several thematic categories as follows.

Metaphors: iceberg (7); egg (1); salt and pepper (1)

It was interesting to see the frequent use of the 'iceberg' metaphor (7 out of 30) to explain that there is the 'unseen' part of the school under water. They believe that outsiders do not see that hidden part. One teacher sadly commented that, "... when I am asked if I recommend the school for a friend's child, I don't know what to say. I work here, so I don't want to talk negatively about the organization, but inside I know what is under the 'iceberg'". The 'egg' image was also chosen for a similar reason to explain that "... the egg is ready to be eaten, but outsiders don't know how it is inside. It is not what it is supposed to be. It is not that fresh". The 'salt and pepper' image was used to point out a similar concept. One teacher stated that "... from a distance you think the shakers are full, but when you get closer you realize that they are empty." (*Thematic meaning: Things are not like what it seems from outside*)

Metaphors: clock (4); train (4); artist's palette (3); ordinary tree (2); horse (2)

The images of the 'horse, train and clock' were used to state that they are going at full speed but do not know the clear destination. This trip to an unknown destination is also required in a very strict time according to the teachers. The teachers also stated that they are seen as "machines that won't get worn out (tired)". The 'horse' was used by an interviewee to describe that the "... school is running at full speed, choosing its destination and goals while running". The 'artist's palette' reminded the teachers of an ordinary painting which they used to describe that there is nothing special about the school. It is just "another school". (*Thematic meaning: the school is not functioning properly/ has an unorganized system/ ordinary with no clear vision or goals*)

Metaphors: round table (12); \$ sign (8); clock (4); sheep (3); superman (3); bee (1)

Almost half of the interviewees (12 out of 30) chose the 'round table' image to point out that they are left outside that table where decisions are made. "The decisions are not long-

term ones and the constant meetings are useless since we don't get anywhere". One teacher was hopeful about the 'round table' stating that "... the table is newly designed and no one is present yet. People will come and discuss things. Unfortunately, teachers are outside this process for the time being".

3 out of 30 teachers felt like 'sheep' being ruled around without considering their feelings or opinions on many things. The images of the 'bee' and 'superman' were used for similar purposes. The teachers (4 out of 30) stated that most of them work like bees or superman; that is, they are expected to work hard, but do not get what they deserve in terms of appreciation and money. Another metaphor chosen by the interviewees was the '\$ sign.' It was used to symbolize the importance given to money. The teachers stated that the school does not have a satisfactory pay scale. (*Thematic meaning: The human factor is not considered much/ The school is too much money-oriented*)

Metaphors: owl (4); radar (3); Caesar (3); lighthouse (2); ears(1); eyes(1); sitting man (1)

The teachers had mostly negative attributes about the administration. The images used had the idea of being monitored, looked down upon all the time. The image of 'Caesar' was chosen to describe that some of the administrators go around with the "I know it all" attitude boasting like the statue of Caesar. The 'lighthouse' image as two teachers stated, "...should really be used to resemble guidance, but here it is like a light trying to spot our mistakes". The image of the 'sitting man' also reminded one of the teachers of the way they are controlled from a distance in a seat in the administrator's office.

The images of the 'radar' and 'ear' were used for 'spies' present among teachers who carry out information to the administrators. Teachers are uncomfortable about the idea of being closely watched. The 'owl' and 'eye' images also reminded them (4 out of 30) of the cold looks on their shoulders by some administrators. This attitude was most common among the primary level teachers. The other level teachers felt closer to their immediate administrators. However, in general they too have the uneasiness among them because of the strict hierarchy. (*Thematic meaning: Teacher-administration relationship is not good/ strict hierarchy*)

Subproblem 2. What Metaphors would be Used When Thinking of the School in the Future from the Perspectives of Teachers?

Here, two different questions were directed to teachers in order to elicit their views on the desired status of the school in the future: The first one was an open-ended question about eliciting metaphors that describe the school in the future, the second one was asking the same printed page from G. Morgan's book, *Imagination* (1993, p. 27), depicting some visual images (appendix 1) that are supposed to be picked by teachers in relation to the question.

Question 2a. What metaphor, image or analogy would you use to describe the desired future state of this school? Why?

A total of 22 different metaphors were produced by 30 teachers. The responses were almost the opposite of those in the first question.

Metaphors: big tents connected to each other; theater; transparent glass furniture; gears working properly; an apple good inside too; family firm where everyone has a say

The teachers were very imaginative in their answers. They drew the picture of a school in a beautiful environment where everyone is equal and there is no strict hierarchy. It was clear that there was a need among the teachers to shift to a more human-centered organization. Images of a transparent furniture and an apple tasting good inside describe that in the future they wish the school to have a transparent administration where "...everyone knows what is going on". The image of a family firm was also used for a similar description. The teachers wanted to be part of the action and hoped that in the future the school will achieve this.

The close communication with the administration was also described by the images of a theater, where all actors have certain roles to play together in harmony like the parts of gears working smoothly. The image of 'big tents connected to each other' was used to state that there will be a good relationship among all parts of the school. (*Thematic meaning: more openness/ transparent administration with less hierarchy*)

Metaphors: mother's arms; happy family portrait; pandas living together; team; Disneyland; a warm sunny place; small cottage near a lake

The interviewees expressed the need for an organization where there are strong bonds that tie them together like in a family. The future school was pictured as a mother's arms where one finds peace and love anytime needed, or as cute pandas living together happily. It is the dream of many of the teachers to have such a beautiful, peaceful school. These metaphors are used to state that the teachers are against strict hierarchy and the distance among the staff and administrators. Teachers seem to be longing for an organization where the main emphasis is on the human aspects where they will feel part of the organization and contribute to it in many respects. (*Thematic meaning: Teamwork, family spirit/ a peaceful, cozy place*)

Metaphors: place to be envied from outside; beehive; tree with lovely fruits; mansion with luxuries; horse; painting of a professional artist; forest; modern place to live; high mountain where the school is at the top

The teachers described the desired future state of the school as place that will set an example to other schools in many respects. The descriptions show that there is a desire among them to see that the school develops to be a better place where everyone is working like bees in a beehive for a common goal. (*Thematic meaning: A school that will set an example to others/ a place where all the people are working in harmony*)

Question 2b. Please look at this page (appendix x) and tell me which figure or figures would best describe the future desired state of this school? Why?

17 different metaphors were selected by 30 interviewees. The desired school is very similar in the minds of the teachers. This question was the same as the one in question 2a with the only difference that the teachers this time were provided a page full of images.

Even though the images were only limited to that certain page, the teachers chose their images to explain similar things.

Metaphors: round table (4); ear (3); clock (2); sheep (1)

The 'round table' image was used again, with the wish that the teachers and the students are also included at the table. The 'ear' image was used here to state that there will be someone always there to listen to the problems. The images of the 'clock' and the 'sheep' were used to express that there will be a school where there will not be any sheep-like treatment and where time will not be against the teachers. (*Thematic meaning: More openness/ transparent administration/less hierarchy*)

Metaphors: tree and river (11); Aladdin's lamp (6); dolphin (3); dog(1)

The interviewees are hoping the genie in 'Aladdin's lamp' will change things for the better with its magic. The 'dolphin' and 'dog' images were used to express friendliness and closeness. The teachers used the 'tree and river' image frequently to express their desire to work at a place that is so warm and cozy like the side of a river. This, they hope will bring happiness, productivity, peace and unity. (*Thematic meaning: Teamwork, family spirit/ a peaceful, cozy place*)

Metaphors: lighthouse (6); horse (5); train (4); superman (3); artist's palette (3); mountain (3); cow (2); radar (2); whale (1)

The interviewees expressed their wish that the school will, "... be productive as a 'cow'; unique and important as a 'whale'; full of ambitious staff working like 'bees'; as determined and strong as a 'race horse' knowing its destination; going at full speed like a 'train'." The 'superman' was used to represent the superpower of the school which will be at the zenith of a 'mountain' acting as a 'lighthouse' for other schools, guiding them. The 'radar' was used to symbolize a technology-rich school where all will be in harmony like the colors in an 'artist's palette.' (*Thematic meaning: A school that will set an example to others/ a place where all the people are working in harmony*)

Subproblem 3: How can the School be Transformed from its Current State to the Desired Future State from the Perspectives of Teachers?

The purpose here was to get teachers' own strategies of transforming their school from the current state of their description to a desired state of their description. To do this, the following question was directed to the teachers: *In question 1, you described the school as (reminding the images produced) and in question 2, you used the image(s) of to describe the future of the school. If you had the administrative power, how would you actualize this change?* The data regarding strategies were organized under the following six thematic categories

A. Redefining the mission of the school (not to make it profit-oriented). One-third of the teachers (10 out of 30) suggested that making profit should not be the primary motive while sacrificing other things like trying to keep qualified teachers by paying satisfactory salaries. At the same time, mission of the school need to be reworked so people would know where they are headed to.

B. Appreciatiton and consideration for teachers. The human aspect of the organization

seems to be ignored. Teachers wish to be appreciated more in order to be better motivated. They can put more of themselves into the organization if this is done. 15 out of 30 teachers stressed that motivating the teachers would be the way to change the school for the better. Motivation was not always suggested as financial satisfaction even though that was part of it. The following suggestions were made by the respondents as the changes they would make: Increase salaries /financial support; develop special health care plans; be more considerate of personal problems; encourage career development; send out "thank you" notes for hardworking teachers; remember special events; give more autonomy to teachers; provide a child-care center for teachers.

C. Participative administration, less hierarchy. 10 out of 30 teachers expressed that they would have a transparent administration where things are "really" discussed with teachers and there should be a shared decision-making process. One teacher suggested that he/she "...would try to be a lion that would act fairly. I would divide the responsibility and make everyone feel part of the school. Everyone should be the lion of their own skill area or department".

Some teachers (8 out of 30) stated that they would include the teachers in the decision-making process as much as possible. This will make them feel part of the organization. Less strict hierarchy means friendlier, closer administrators and more open doors for the teachers. They expressed that they would keep their doors open and be closer to the teachers if they were in the shoes of their administrators.

D. Improvement of physical conditions. Teachers stated that the physical conditions also need to be improved in order to transform the school to a desired state. They would like the buildings and the classrooms to be improved. They believe the physical state of a place affects the mood of the people working there.

E. Elimination of too much parent involvement. Teachers believe that parents have too much say in the school processes. They are disturbed by their power over them. The teachers expressed that they would protect the teachers (if they were the administrators) against the parents. Having strict principles and discipline rules will also make the parents know what is accepted and not accepted at the school.

F. Vision. Since the school has not developed fully and has many weaknesses, it is not possible to gather everyone under a common goal and vision. The lack of unity causes many problems. This is one area the teachers would try to change. They stated that they would improve certain areas and try to establish a common vision. They believe this is a long process that needs to be started as early as possible.

Subproblem 4: What are the most Salient Aspect(S) of Teachers' View of Administrators and Administrator-Teacher Relations

To do this, the teachers were asked four hypothetical questions. First two and last two were different in strategy but same in terms of their content in the way that the first ones were open-ended questions aiming at eliciting metaphors derived from free imaginization of teachers, the second ones in each pair was relied on a printed page from G. Morgan's book, *Imaginization* (1993, p. 27). Because of space limitations, we only report the metaphors

chosen by the teachers from the printed page since it is easy by this way to see areas of concentration through frequencies

Question 4a. Please look at this page (see appendix 1) and tell me how you (the teachers) would be seen by the administration? Why?

The most common images chosen for this question were the followings: sheep (14); bee (8); superman (5); sitting man (3); horse (2); glasses (1)

Almost half of the interviewees (14 out of 30) immediately picked the "sheep" metaphor when they took a look at the page. The explanations they gave for choosing that particular image were almost alike. "We are treated like sheep". That is, they are "...ruled around and have to obey without questioning". One teacher complained about sacrificing his/her own personality in certain cases just to keep away from trouble.

Another commonly used images were the 'bee' (8 out of 30). The 'bee' is a hardworking insect, but "... the administration does not appreciate the hardwork most of the time", said one interviewee. "We work hard like bees, but they see us like bees just wandering around". The 'sitting man' (3 out of 30) image was also used for the same purpose- that they are seen as just sitting around with nothing to do.

The images of a 'superman' (5 out of 30) and 'horse' (2 out of 30) were used to state that they are seen like 'superman' or 'a horse' that will never get tired and therefore, can be loaded with as much work as possible.

Beside all these negative descriptions, one teacher (from the middle school) happily chose the image of 'glasses' to express that they are protected by some of the administrators like a "glass protecting the eye from the sun".

Question 4b: Please look at this page (appendix x) and tell me which figure or figures would you choose to describe the administrators? Why?

There were two main themes that came out when the images presented were grouped according to their contextual similarities.

Metaphors: Caesar (9); owl (7); round table (4); sitting man(3); panther (2); \$ sign (2); ears (2); eyes (1); glasses (1); hammer (1); knife (1); eagle (1)

Some of the administrators were described as 'unhappy faces' boasting like "Caesar who can't get down to the level of others". The image of an 'owl' (7 out of 30) was used within a similar context as the images of the 'eye', 'eagle', 'panther', 'glasses' to state that they are disturbed by the look of the administrators-being watched all the time for doing something wrong and not seeing a smile frequently. The 'hammer' and 'knife' images were used to express the harsh criticism towards some of the teachers.

3 out of 30 teachers chose the image of a 'sitting man' to express that the administrators do not mix with others and just sit and watch from their offices. The 'round table' image was used again in this question to state that there are meetings held at the table, but the teachers are not included. "It is the table of the 'boss' for us, since we don't know what's going on, what's being discussed there," state the teachers. (*Thematic meaning: Boss-employee relationship*)

Metaphors: lighthouse (3); bee (2); dolphin (1)

Some of the teachers (from middle and high schools) had positive feelings towards some of their administrators . They were described as a 'lighthouse' guiding and helping the teachers in many areas. The 'bee' was used for their hardwork and the 'dolphin' for their warm, friendly attitude. (*Thematic meaning: Some of them are good people*)

Discussion and Conclusions

Even though some teachers (5 out of 30) stated positive things about the present situation at the school (not fully developed yet like Turkey; a wild animal to be tamed; a silkworm; a young tree; a young horse), inside they are actually all yearning for a better organization. The images used to describe the present situation at the school were very harsh, cold and unfriendly which reminded an assembly-line factory. (Firm, owl, factory, gears with broken parts, clock, virus, etc.). The statements of the teachers were similar to those presented in a similar study by Steinhoff and Owens (1989) where some teachers stated that the culture of the school is cold, hostile and paranoid. They were afraid of the fact that "anything can get you... and it often does" (Steinhoff and Owens, 1989, p. 19-22). The negative attitudes about the present situation, changed from negative feelings to positive ones when it came to the description of the desired state of the school in the future. The images used bring into mind a warm, loving atmosphere which fits better for a school environment.

The results of this analysis show that there is a general dissatisfaction among the teachers. There is a strict line of hierarchy and people do not get to know each other well enough. Overall, the human aspect is not taken into much consideration as stated by the teachers.

Our findings are similar to that of Schleghty and Josling's (1986) in the sense that the school seems to be like a "factory" according to the perceptions of teachers. The common characteristics of such places are mass-production, assembly line technique and quality control. The metaphors the teachers used were mostly mechanical images. Similar to Schleghty and Josling's (1986, p. 148) findings, human relations at this school can be summarized as "dominance/submission", "super-ordination/subordination and passivity."

In the same way, in organizations designed as machines, humans are expected to work within mechanical structures and are valued for their instrumental abilities. Such mechanistic organizations, as can be seen from the images used by the teachers (clock, gears, machines, factory, sheep), discourage "initiative, encouraging people to obey orders and keep their pace rather than to take an interest in, challenge, and question what they are doing" (Morgan, 1986, p. 37).

The teachers expressed their discomfort in working at a school where there is a steep hierarchical structure which leads to top-down decision making and communication flow. They used images like 'lion, remote controlled car, sheep, big mansion' to express their discomfort about the strict hierarchy. One teacher stated that "the school is controlled like a

'remote controlled car' by the administrators at the top". The teachers saw themselves like 'sheeps' who are to be ruled around and that they have no function in many things. One of the teachers used the image of a 'big mansion' to state that the hierarchical line causes lack or loss of communication. The same teacher stated that they are living in a big mansion but no one knows about the others living in the same mansion. The image of the 'round table' was used many times to also express the hierarchical structure of the school. One teacher stated that "We are not included at the table where the decisions are made. We just look from outside like the sheep waiting to be told what to do." This strict form of hierarchy, as can be seen in the perceptions of the teachers, creates certain problems that are present at the school. For example, the teachers feel apathy towards the school, they do not show their best in their work. It also creates teachers who are resistant to do certain tasks because they do not feel part of the school because of the strict hierarchy.

There also seem to be a case of tight control (eye and ear images), threats (knife and hammer images) and punishments within the school resulting in low productivity and apathy. Moreover, the large number of negative feelings toward the organization as expressed in the images provided (scary bosses, spies, owl, half-open prison, factory, pawns in chess) seem to be the indicators of a "closed culture" where the teachers are disturbed by the 'spies' acting as a 'radar' to find the problem persons, or spot the wrongdoings and let the administration know about those. One teacher expressed his/her uneasiness because of those spies, "carrying gossip". In such cases, the organization becomes "stagnant" because of the "inauthentic" behavior of the members which also lead to a "paranoid" culture of fear and suspicion (Steinhoff and Owens, 1989, p. 21; Lunenberg and Ornstein, 1996, p. 76). The images of "iceberg, polished furniture-not of good quality, apple-with rotten parts inside" were all used to express the two sides to the things going on in the organization. The teachers point out the fact that things are not the way they look from outside and that most people are "afraid to look under the iceberg" as stated by one of the teachers.

Some other themes that came up as a result of the analysis of the images used remind a "bureaucratic nature of the school." The teachers used images like 'ant-eater, factory, half-open prison, firm, scorpion, dragon, Caesar, clock' to express that the relationships are not good between the teachers and the administrators because of the strict division of labor, rules and hierarchy of authority and impersonality of the managers. They also believe that their relationships with most of the administrators are that of a "boss-employee" relationship which reminds a "firm" or a "factory". One teacher expressed sadly that he/she is afraid of his/her "scary boss" because of the fact that they are mostly "called to the office for some wrongdoing". As stated earlier, in a school environment such principles of bureaucracy may not always fit properly.

If one carefully investigates and contrasts what the teachers said about the school as they perceive today, the school as they would like to see in the future and the strategies they offered to achieve this desired state all indicate a clear human-centered approach. The images about the present situation (e.g., clock, train, horse, factory, firm) change to more humanistic terms, warmer and friendlier (dolphin, cow, tree and river, Aladdin's lamp,

mother's arms, a happy family portrait). All these may show the desire of the respondents to change the school from a mechanistic organization to a more human-centered one.

The satisfaction of teacher needs, as expressed in the images used, was not only monetary compensation (mother's arms-implying an environment as warm as a mother's arms, happy family portrait and etc.). This proves one of the assumptions of the human relations approach that employees are also motivated by the satisfaction of social and psychological needs such as recognition and belongingness.

Jenkins (1998, p. 145) suggests that school leaders should see themselves as "coaches" rather than "cops." It is also equally important that leaders should sometimes need to be "regulators like cops", but should not work with the intention to "catch people doing something wrong". They need to see teachers as a "professional community" rather than a "labor force". This will change the definition of teachers from "workers" to "decision-makers". If a leader manages to do these, he/she will have the others to share those values. In such an environment, the values, power, accomplishments and problems are shared (Jenkins, 1988, p. 148). When managers achieve to acquire such qualities, they will be successful in creating an "open culture" that the teachers desire. The desire of the teachers for such an open culture can be seen in the images like happy family portrait, dolphins, team, mother's arms, etc.

To conclude, from the analysis of metaphors used by teachers regarding the certain aspects of this school, it will not be an unjustified conclusion to call this school a factory-like bureaucracy largely defined by a closed, somewhat a paranoid culture and autocratic administrative practices. The school seems to lack basic structural components such as organizational goals and operational rules and procedures. Description of teachers of the current state of the school today and the future state show a sharp contrast while the current state is characterized by solid mechanistic/bureaucratic features, the future is described with rather human-centered terms. In the same way, teachers' views of strategies to transform the school are rather in the form of human resource strategies.

The Value of Metaphors in Organizational Analysis

In this research, we took a rather nontraditional way of analyzing a school organization by primarily relying on teachers' conception of reality through metaphors. Besides their practical use compared to other traditional nonobstrusive techniques used in organizational analysis, they also seem very powerful in eliciting an enormous degree of depth and richness in portraying an organization from the participants' point of view. As our findings indicate, the school under study experiences serious challenges in at least three organizational domains from the teachers' perspectives: structural, human resource, and cultural (Bolman and Deal, 1991). From the teachers' point of view, these three domain of the school need to be reworked. It is important to emphasize the point here that we were able to arrive a multiframe picture of the school through a single research design because of extreme utility of metaphors as data collection instruments. This shows a sharp contrast to

the research tradition in organizational analysis that seeks to scrutinize only one dimension of organization at a time in a single study.

On the other hand, working with metaphors seem to be more participant (subject)-friendly in collecting valuable information about a topic. Metaphors seem more enjoyable to people compared to other qualitative and quantitative data collection methods such as surveys or interviews. Inceçay (2015) also believes that using metaphors in his research helped the the study become trustworthy. He also took advantage of the background knowledge of the participants, being graduates of language and literature, had no problem interpreting the "why" part of the metaphors. In our case, teachers were enthusiastic and willing in playing around with metaphors especially with the visual form. If we were to compare the effectiveness of the two techniques we used, namely attempting to elicit metaphors through open-ended questions and having the participant choose among a number of printed figures on a page, we would recommend the second without any hesitation. Because it is easy to understand and easy to elaborate more by using various adjectives and adverbs on the part of the participants. In addition to this, working with a set of ready images is able to make the researcher to summarize some descriptive information quite easily such as calculating the percentages among a set of chosen images. Kesen (2010) also believes that metaphors play an important role in discovering the perceptions of teachers in language teaching and creating an awareness. Therefore, we can state that this study helped the teachers become aware of concepts from a different angle and thus brought up many common views by using images and their interpretations. With the help of metaphors we could get a vivid description of the participants' mental pictures of the institution. Nikitina and Furuoka (2008) also mention a similar benefit of using metaphors in their research where they could get the mentioned students' feeling towards a "complex process such as learning".

The results of the study (even though in the mentioned school has changed for the positive) can still be seen in many schools around Turkey. The school administrators used the results in order to improve the culture of the school. Therefore, instead of using different questionnaires to find out the "so called" opinions of teachers in various schools, a similar study can be carried out in different schools around Turkey and the results can be used as a guide to increase the number of "happy teachers, happy students" concept. Each school is as good as its "teachers" and more of these studies similar to this one will give a genuine background to the culture of the teachers in an institution. Schools are living organisms and teachers do their best when they are devoted to their schools. Therefore "images of schools" will be formed by "devoted teachers of those schools" with the help of the organization. Investing in the happiness of the teachers will yield positive results in the school culture.

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