

RAFTING PARTICIPANTS' METAPHORIC PERCEPTIONS CONCERNING THE CONCEPT OF RAFTING

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to reveal the participants engaged in rafting recreational purpose about the concept of metaphor having their perceptions. In study had been participated 98 women ($X_{age}=28.12\pm 8.70$) and 105 men ($X_{age}=28.44\pm 9.37$) totally 203 ($X_{age}=28.29\pm 9.03$) person rafting performer in Fırtına valley, Fırtına brook in 2011 year as voluntarily. Data of the study had been obtained participants "Rafting is like....., because" completed the sentence. In this way, each participant's had been expected to produce a metaphor for the concept of rafting. Phenomenon Scientific Pattern was used with Qualitative Research Method's Content Analysis Technique to analyse and interpret the collected datum. Within this framework, the metaphors developed by rafting performer participants were analysed and commented in five steps: (1) Determining metaphors (2) Classification of metaphors (3) Developing categories (4) Conducting validity and reliability and (5) Transferring quantitative data into SPSS package program. According to the outcome of the research participants rafting performer participants have created 46 different and acceptable mental images related to "Rafting" concept. These metaphors were classified under 6 different conceptual categories after studied carefully with regard to common qualities. At the end of the research, it was understood that 38% of the participants have a perception that Rafting is the expression of life, 25% of the those perceived that it is a way of expressing commitment, 13% as an expressing of love, 9% as an expression of fear, 9% as a way of expressing struggle, and 7% as a way of expressing differences.

Key Words: Metaphor, rafting, qualitative research.

RAFTING KATILIMCILARININ RAFTING KAVRAMINA İLİŞKİN METAFOR KAVRAMLARI

ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın amacı "rafting" kavramına yönelik rekreatif amaçlı rafting yapan katılımcıların sahip oldukları algıları metaforlar aracılığıyla ortaya çıkartmaktır. Çalışmaya 2011 yılında Fırtına vadisi, Fırtına deresinde rafting yapan 98 kadın ($X_{ya}=28.12\pm 8.70$) ve 105 erkek ($X_{ya}=28.44\pm 9.37$) olmak üzere toplam 203 ($X_{ya}=28.29\pm 9.03$) kişi gönüllü olarak katılmıştır. Araştırmanın verileri katılımcıların "Raftinggibidir, çünkü....." cümlesini tamamlattırılarak elde edilmiştir. Bu şekilde her katılımcının rafting kavramına ilişkin bir metafor üretmesi beklenmiştir. Bu çalışmada olgubilim araştırma deseni kullanılmış ve verilerinin analizi içerik analiz tekniğiyle yapılmıştır. Katılımcıların rafting kavramına ilişkin algıları metafor analizi yöntemiyle incelenmiştir. Bu kapsamda, katılımcıların geliştirdikleri metaforların analiz edilmesi ve yorumlanması süreci; (1) metaforların belirlenmesi (2) metaforların sınıflandırılması (3) kategori geliştirme (4) geçerlik ve güvenilirlik sağlama ve (5) nicel veri analizi için verileri SPSS paket programına aktarma olmak üzere beş aşamada gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmanın bulgularına göre, katılımcılar "Rafting" kavramına ilişkin toplam 46 adet geçerli metafor üretmişlerdir. Bu metaforlar ortak özellikleri bakımından irdelenerek 6 farklı kavramsal kategori altında toplanmıştır. Araştırmanın sonucunda, "Rafting" kavramını, katılımcıların %38'i yaşamın ifadesi, %25'i bağlılığın ifadesi, %13'ü sevgi ifadesi, %9'u korkunun ifadesi, %9'u mücadelenin ifadesi ve %7'si farklılığın ifadesi olarak algıladıkları görülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Metafor, rafting, nitel araştırma

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INTRODUCTION

Metaphor is one's expressing a concept or a fact as he perceives it. Having many definitions, the word "metaphor" was derived from the Greece word "metapherein". Here, "meta" means to shift, "pherein" means to carry (Levine, 2005) and it was used in the meaning of transplanting. Metaphor is not only a supply of thought, a model of human realization or a figure of speech but also it is a figure of thought (Lakoff and Johnson, 2005).

Metaphors (similes, figures of speech, borrowings) are one of the most powerful mental tools, which shapes, guides and controls our thoughts about how things happen and work. As metaphors make sense out of people's personal experiences, it is defined as "the language of experiences" as well (Saban, 2004). From this aspect, metaphors direct, enlighten, and guide our applications.

"We have no chance to make a choice between thinking metaphorically or not. Metaphoric matchups are a part of our brains and we think and speak metaphorically whether we want or not. As metaphor mechanism is largely subliminal, we think and speak whether we are aware of that or not. Besides, since our brains materialize, our metaphors reflect our usual experiences in the world" (Lakoff and Johnson, 2005: 289).

Metaphors pave the way for our building highly abstract and detailed concepts. It is one of the most important means of trying to understand our emotions, aesthetic experiences, moral practices, psychological conscience and the things which we cannot comprehend in depth. It enables inferences which will be used to make inferences in motor sensory and other areas. As we reason with regard to the metaphor, the metaphors we use considerably determine how we will live (Lakoff and Johnson, 2005).

Metaphors are very useful tools to promote learning. If we want to explore

something new, we should be able to dream this firstly. Metaphors can enable creative and exploratory learning because they are the tools which let us create explicit ideas instead of indefinite concepts in our imagination. Metaphors have the power to change our conceptual systems and students' views of the world (Arslan and Bayrakçı, 2006).

Metaphors can be used in various fields of education. Researches have generally revealed by which metaphors the concepts and facts in the field of education and educational administration are expressed by the participants. These were used as a means of promoting learning, improving and planning creative thinking, conducting teaching practices and deciding the role of the educators in modern education thought (Guerrero and Villamil, 2002; Forceville, 2002; Saban, 2004; Saban, Koçbeker and Saban, 2006; Arslan and Bayrakçı, 2006; Öztürk, 2007; Cerit, 2008; Shaw, Barry and Mahlios; 2008; Saban, 2008; Botha, 2009; Alger, 2009; Saban, 2009; Töremen and Dö , 2009; Aydın and Ünal, 2010; Çapan, 2010; Ço kun, 2010; Dö , 2010; Yıldırım, Ünal, and Çelik, 2011; Kaya, 2011).

From this point of view, although there are many studies dealing with various mental imageries in educational sciences in both national and international literature, studies dealing with sports sciences in general, expressing recreative activities in particular and concerning the concept of "rafting" after all are few and far between. On that sense, this study tries to contribute to the lack in this field. From this aspect, this current study is thought to be the first of its kind and the metaphor researches which are just new are thought to be a model in researches of sports sciences (physical education, sports training and recreation training).

Additionally, using metaphors in increasing purposeful recreative attendance is thought to present crucial information and perspectives to the academic staff, to those

who prepare recreative programs in youth centers of universities, and to the educators and leaders dealing with nature sports.

Purpose of the Study

The study aims to reveal the perceptions of the participants' (who do rafting for recreative purposes) perceptions about the concept of rafting by means of metaphors. Within this frame, the study was shaped by the questions below:

1- By which metaphors do the participants doing rafting for recreative purposes explain their perceptions about the concept of rafting?

2- Under which categories are the metaphors related to the concept of rafting and brought forward by the participants raked together in terms of their common characteristics?

METHODOLOGY

Nature of the Study

In this study, phenomenology which is one of the designs of qualitative research was used. Phenomenology focuses on the facts we are aware of but we do not know in depth. Phenomenology creates a research background suitable for studies which target searching for the facts which are not unfamiliar with us, but of which meaning we cannot comprehend completely (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2006).

Participants

The number of the volunteer participants of the study was 203 ($X_{age}=28.29\pm 9.03$) in total who did rafting in Fırtına River in 2011. 98 of these participants were females ($X_{age}=28.12\pm 8.70$) and the other 105 were males ($X_{age}=28.44\pm 9.37$).

Data Collection Procedure

In the data collection procedure, upon asking for the permission of the guidance instructor, the groups having completed the raceway were informed about the scope and reason of the study. Then those who volunteered were delivered forms and these forms were collected 30 minutes later. Every participant was asked to complete the sentence "rafting is like..... because....." to have an opinion about

the participants' perceptions about the concept of rafting. The participants were asked to put their thoughts into words using this utterance and focus on just one metaphor. In metaphor studies, the concept of "like" is usually used to stress the similarity between the topic and the source of the metaphor. In this study, the researcher used the concept of "because" to let the participants produce a sensible reason for the similarities they talk about. Each being a reference and a document, these compositions written by the participants created the basic data source.

Data Analysis Procedure

The process of analyzing and expanding the metaphors the participants developed substantiated in the processes of naming, classifying, making categories, providing validity and reliability and transferring the data to an SPSS program for quantitative data analysis.

1- The Naming Process

Firstly a temporary list of metaphors produced by the participants was made alphabetically in line with this objective, that whether the participants depicted a certain metaphor in their writings was examined. In this process, metaphors the participants mentioned were coded on each paper (e.g. adrenaline, passion, way, breathe, insistence etc.). The papers having no metaphors were marked to be eliminated later.

2- Classifying Process

In this process, each metaphor was divided into small parts and the similarities between these metaphors and the others, and the characteristics they have in common were analyzed via metaphor analyzing techniques. For this purpose, the metaphors the participants wrote were reread and got through and each metaphor was analyzed in terms of 1) the subject of the metaphor, 2) the source of the metaphor 3) the relationship between the subject and the source of the metaphor. In this study, 13 papers included no metaphor, 14 papers were empty and 53 papers had irrelevant

relationships between the source and the subject of the metaphor. So, these papers were eliminated and the number of the papers eliminated was 123. 46 valid metaphors were obtained from these 123 papers written by the participants. Later, these metaphors were put into alphabetical order again and one sample metaphor expression was chosen for every paper upon being reviewed for the second time. Thereby, a list of sample metaphors was made after compiling the sample metaphor expressions. This list was compiled for two main purposes: a) to be used as a reference source while gathering the metaphors under a certain category, b) to make the data analysis process and the observations of the study valid.

3- Making-Categories Process

In this process, the metaphors produced mainly by participants doing rafting were examined in terms of the characteristics they have about the concept of "rafting". In due course of this procedure, under the light of the metaphor list made according to 46 metaphors, it was paid attention how each metaphor conceptualized rafting. For this purpose, 6 different categories were created relating each metaphor to a theme according to their point of view about rafting.

4- Providing Validity and Reliability Process

To make the study reliable, the researcher consulted to an expert to affirm whether the metaphors given under 6 categories represent a conceptual category or not. In parallel with this aim, the expert was given 2 lists: a) a list of 46 metaphors in which they were in alphabetical order, b) a list containing the names and characteristics of 6 different conceptual categories. The expert was asked to match the sample metaphor list in the first list with 6 conceptual categories in the second one using both of the lists. Later, the expert's matches were compared with the researcher's own categories. The reliability of the study was calculated according to

Mile's and Huberman's (1994:64) formula (reliability = agreement/agreement + disagreement)

In qualitative researches in cases when the concord between the expert's and the researcher's evaluations is %90, then the reliability targeted is got (Saban, Koçbeker and Saban, 2006; Saban, 2009). In the reliability process of this research, the concord provided was %90. The expert consulted linked 5 metaphors (mood, wind, tattoo, maths, and waking up) more different than the researcher did. So, it was calculated that Reliability= $46/(45:5)=0,90$.

5- Computerizing Process

After 46 metaphors were specified, and 6 conceptual categories formed by these metaphors were created, all the data was transmitted to the SPSS statistics program. After this step, firstly the number of the participants (*f*) representing 46 metaphors and 6 categories and the percentage (%) were calculated.

FINDINGS

In this chapter, being related to the participants' metaphors about the concept of rafting, the findings got are presented in tables and they are commented on in subtitles according to the research questions.

Findings of the metaphors that the participants have about the concept of rafting

The participants produced 46 valid metaphors about rafting. 25 out of these 46 metaphors were produced by only one participant. These are child, tattoo, endorphin, overcoming the obstacles, photo frame, philosophy, holding on to life, flow of life, reflect of life, insistence, will, walking in the dark, funfair, picture, mood, sympathy, cinema, fog, shock, passion, waking up, eating, travelling and way. The rest of the metaphors are between 2 and 20. These are; life (*f*=20), living (*f*=12), love(*f*=10), sex(*f*=7), freedom, smoking, adrenaline (*f*=5), alcohol, scream, revolt against nature, horror tunnel, mathematics, dying (*f*=3), enthusiasm, storm, excitement,

breathing, dream, wind, lover, and rebirth (f=2). As one can see, the participants used

many metaphors about the concept of rafting.

Table 1. The valid metaphors of the participants about rafting, the number of the participants representing them (in alphabetical order) and the percentages

Order of the	Name of the metaphor	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)	Order of the Metaphor	Name of the metaphor	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
1	Adrenaline	5	4.2	24	Funfair	1	0.8
2	Alcohol	3	2.4	25	Mathematics	3	2.4
3	Love	10	8.2	26	Breathe	2	1.6
4	Enthusiasm	2	1.6	27	Die	3	2.4
5	Scream	3	2.4	28	Freedom	5	4.2
6	Child	1	0.8	29	Drawing	1	0.8
7	Revolt against nature	3	2.4	30	Mood	1	0.8
8	Birth	1	0.8	31	Wind	2	1.6
9	Tattoo	1	0.8	32	Dream	2	1.6
10	Endorphin	1	0.8	33	Sex	7	5.7
11	Overcome the obstacles	1	0.8	34	Sympathy	1	0.8
12	Philosophy	1	0.8	35	Lover	2	1.6
13	Storm	2	1.6	36	Smoking	5	4.2
14	Photo frame	1	0.8	37	Cinema	1	0.8
15	Life	20	16.4	38	Fog	1	0.8
16	Hold on to life	1	0.8	39	Shock	1	0.8
17	Flow of life	1	0.8	40	Passion	1	0.8
18	Reflect of life	1	0.8	41	Wake up	1	0.8
19	Excitement	2	1.6	42	Living	12	9.9
20	Insistence	1	0.8	43	Eat	1	0.8
21	Will	1	0.8	44	Rebirth	2	1.6
22	Walking in the dark	1	0.8	45	Road	1	0.8
23	Horror tunnel	3	2.4	46	Trip	1	0.8
Total						123 (f)	100 (%)

The categories of the participants' metaphors about the concept of rafting

The participants' metaphors about the concept of rafting were grouped in 6 categories. These are; rafting as the expression of life, rafting as the expression of love, rafting as the expression of

difference, rafting as the expression of sympathy, rafting as the expression of fear, rafting as the expression of struggle, and rafting as the expression of addiction. Categories of the participants' metaphors about rafting are shown below in the 3rd table.

Table 2. Categories of the participants' metaphors about rafting

Categories	Metaphors	Frequency of metaphor	Number of metaphor
1. rafting as the expression of life	Life(20), living(12), breathing (2), rebirth (2), dream(2), picture frame (1), philosophy (1), holding on to life (1), flow of life (1), reflection of life (1), picture (1), mood (1), cinema (1), way (1)	47	14
2. rafting as the expression of love	Love (10), lover (2), child(1), birth (1), funfair (1), sympathy (1)	16	6
3. rafting as the expression of difference	Freedom (5), scream (3)	8	2
4. rafting as the expression of fear	dying (3), horror tunnel (3), wind (2), walking in the dark (1), fog (1), shock (1)	11	6
5. rafting as the expression of struggle	Revolt against nature (3), mathematics (3), storm (2), insistence (1), will (1), overcoming the obstacles (1)	11	6
6. rafting as the expression of addiction	sex (7), smoking (5), adrenaline (5), alcohol (3), enthusiasm (2), excitement (2), tattoo (1), endorphin (1), passion (1), waking up (1), eating (1), travelling (1)	30	12
Total		123	46

Conceptual Categories

Category 1. Rafting as the expression of life: It is seen that this category consists of 14 metaphors and 47 participants (38%) who identify rafting with life and perceive rafting as a part of their lives or the life itself. When looked at the number of the participants, it can be seen that the most frequently used ones are *life (20), living (12), breathing (2), rebirth (2), dream (2), picture frame (1), philosophy (1), holding on to life (1), flow of life (1), reflection of life (1), picture (1), mood (1), cinema (1) and way (1)*.

When looked at the number of the participants of the metaphors of this category, those used most frequently are seen. Below are some of the participants' expressions.

"Rafting is like life because it requires courage. The nature of rafting has the struggle, complexity, rises and falls which are present in life and in the naturalness of social life."

"Rafting is like life because it is not only fascinating, exciting and amusing but also dangerous and you never want it to end."

"Rafting is like breathing because as long as you breathe you get the taste of life."

Rafting lessens your troubles and brings forth amusement and joy. Shortly, it lets you enjoy life."

"Rafting is like a way because there are always different twists and obstacles. Just like life itself..."

Category 2. Rafting as an expression of love. In this category composed of those who regard rafting as a symbol of love and sympathy, there are 6 metaphors and 16 participants (%13). Considering the number of the participants of the metaphors of this category, the most commonly used ones are *love (10), lover (2), child (1), birth (1), funfair (1) and sympathy*. Below are some of the participants' expressions.

"Rafting is like love because it is exciting, nice, complex and amusing. To be able to do rafting is like protecting love and requires effort. Rafting in fact is the meaning of life just like love is. Namely rafting is love itself..."

"Rafting is like a lover because in everything I feel there is rafting. Rafting is a view through which I watch the happiest moment of my life as well as the most unhappy one."

"Rafting is like a child because it is like a part of me which expect care all the time and

which is sometimes sassy and sometimes testy. It is like a lover which does not leave you as long as you do not leave it."

Category 3. Rafting as an expression of difference.

Composed of those regarding rafting as an expression of difference, this category has 2 metaphors and 8 participants (%7). Considering the number of the participants of the metaphors of this category, the most commonly used ones are freedom (5) and scream (3). Below are some of the participants' expressions.

"Rafting is like a scream because a scream is a revolt and difference. Scream is also a reaction given to different conditions."

"Rafting is like freedom because only those feeling free do rafting and it is different when compared with other sports."

"Rafting is like freedom because it has a different meaning and role depending on every circumstance. Rafting changes and becomes different in accordance with every season and running water."

Category 4. Rafting as an expression of fear. Composed of those regarding rafting as an expression of fear, this category has 6 metaphors and 11 participants (%9). Considering the number of the participants of the metaphors of this category, the most commonly used ones are dying (3), horror tunnel (3), wind (2), walking in the dark (1), fog (1), and shock (1) scream (3). Below are some of the participants' expressions.

"Rafting is like a horror tunnel because it is difficult and full of obstacles, and to me, it is not an easy but risky activity."

"Rafting is like walking in the dark because it is a very different branch of sport and nothing is certain but the unforeseen."

"Rafting is like dying because you feel death. A way which you do not know and cannot see the end of... Maybe it is a resistance that you cannot escape from as you struggle."

Category 5. Rafting as an expression of struggle. When table 3 is scanned, it can be seen that this category consists of 6 metaphors and 11 participants. Considering the number of the participants of the metaphors of this category, the most commonly used ones are revolt against nature (3), mathematics (3), storm (2), insistence (1), will (1), and overcoming the obstacles. Below are some of the participants' expressions.

"Rafting is like a revolt against nature because it is to react incredibly suddenly and severely. Doing rafting requires rebellious and insurgent energy."

"Rafting is like mathematics because as you try to solve, it ties a knot more."

"Rafting is like a storm because you can never guess what it will bring and how much you will push the limits."

"Rafting is like insistence because in nature's rules unless one insists, it results in a disaster."

"Rafting is like will because it tells struggle and how to stand out against difficulties."

Category 6. Rafting as an expression of addiction. Composed of those regarding rafting as an expression of addiction, this category has 30 metaphors and 12 participants (%24). Considering the number of the participants of the metaphors of this category, the most commonly used ones are sex (7), smoking (5), adrenaline (5), alcohol (3), enthusiasm (2), excitement (2), tattoo (1), endorphin (1), passion (1), waking up (1), eating (1) and travel (1). Below are some of the participants' expressions.

"Rafting is like sex because it gives both pleasure and pain, but the desire to do rafting is always inside you."

"Rafting is like sex because both the good one and the bad one drowns you."

"Rafting is like enthusiasm because it people doing rafting get such energy that they are full of life. Engaging in rafting depends on feeling this sense."

“Rafting is like endorphin because it is like the enthusiasm which you breathe early in the morning and which you are mad about doing. And when you gulp, you feel rafting not in your stomach but in your brain.”

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study was prepared to reveal the participants' metaphors about the concept of rafting and to gather these metaphors under certain categories. The findings of the study draw attention to some important points.

Firstly, many metaphors are needed for the concept of rafting to be able to be explained. The participants of this study produced 46 different metaphors about the concept of rafting. The participants used metaphors such as life, love, scream, freedom, horror tunnel, adrenaline and sex which are different from each other. This shows that the concept of rafting cannot be explained by just one metaphor. The main reason of this is as Weade and Ernst (1990, pp. 133) declared “metaphors are eclectic and they represent not the whole but only a part of the phenomenon they try to define.”

Under the circumstances, it is clear that alternative metaphors are needed for complex phenomena to be able to be explained. As Yob (2003, pp. 134) stresses “Basically, a metaphor is not the phenomenon it mentions. It is a symbol of it. If it were the phenomenon itself, there would be no need for metaphors. So, a metaphor is different from the phenomenon it mentions and even though it presents a very powerful perspective of the phenomenon, it is mostly less than the phenomenon. To compensate this situation, many metaphors should be used.”

Secondly, it is seen that when we divide the participants' perceptions about the concept of rafting, we can see the category which has the most metaphors is “rafting as an expression of life”. %38 of the participants relates rafting to life and living. The category which has the least metaphors is “rafting as an expression of difference.”

Thirdly, rafting is an important activity as it both contains adventure and makes the participants' be discharged letting their energy off. What is more important is that it increases the talents of sharing, cooperation, interdependence and saturation. Thus, rafting can be defined as the activities of being up against the potential difficulties and risks of nature and leading a life with the knowledge, abilities and condition and without getting the support of machines and animals. Being special to this study, when the participants' metaphors about the concept of rafting are examined, it is seen that the most preferred metaphors are life ($f=20$), living ($f=12$), and love ($f=10$). This situation makes it clear that the participants regard rafting as a part of life and as an activity relating this with life itself.

As a result, the findings of the study reserve clues to present how the participants perceive rafting. From this point of view, metaphors may be used as research tools in understanding, revealing and explaining the mental imageries the participants have about rafting. Besides, another research may be done about the changes in the participants' perceptions of rafting taking the aims into consideration in the discipline of rafting which is among adventure sports. As Gillis and Johnson states, metaphors “help us understand the perception of self which we want to be or we are not able to be, we have been or we avoid being”. According to Saban, Koçbeke, Saban (2006: 504) and Yob (2003: 134-135) to use metaphors for subjects difficult to be understood is to the point. Metaphors may be positive or negative as well as sensible-insensible, abstract-concrete. They may be tools of information gathering and questioning. They also make it possible for the subjects which are not well understood to be understood more easily. Additionally, they have an important role in exposing problems and they make it easy for thoughts to be summarized easily. While metaphors and similar researches are like

guides in nature sports in general and rafting in specific, they will provide us with new point of views. Joining in rafting requires mental imageries when that joining in adventure sports and other branches of sports are different is thought. It is important to use metaphors to explain this complex situation in nature sports. Taking this idea into consideration, it is suggested to do similar researches about the

participants of different kinds of nature sports (air, water and land sports). In a similar research, captains and guides of nature sports may be incorporated. Metaphors revealed in such kinds of studies may be used as references for metaphor lists or for researchers making likert scales. Such studies may be repeated periodically while programs are being made in nature sports camps.

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