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Exploring ELT Students' Perception of Mobile Phone through Figurative Language

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate, analyze and evaluate the mobile phone perceptions of ELT students by the help of figurative language. The participants of this study are Grade 3 and Grade 4 students of ELT Department at Samsun 19 Mayıs University, Faculty of Education, involving 139 students in total. In this research students were asked to use "simile" as a figurative language and complete the sentence *"Mobile phone is as ……as……."* in the target language. According to content analysis, the results showed that only 119 of 139 students produced valid sentences, completing sentences considering their social environments and their daily lives. According to the classification of the sentences depending upon the responses of the students, five conceptual categories were identified. At the end of the study, students were found to have both positive and negative concepts about mobile phones; for instance25.2% developed figurative language for 'part of life', 18.5% for 'addiction', 17.6% for 'entertainment', 31.1% for 'useful device' and 7.6% for 'dangerous factor' categories. Implications are given and suggestions made for language teachers at the end. Most of these results indicate that students' preferences change depending upon whether they benefit from the use of mobile phones.

Keywords: ELT, simile, figurative language, mobile phone perception.

İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Öğrencilerinin Cep Telefonu Algılarının Betimsel Dil Yoluyla İncelenmesi

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı İngiliz Dili Eğitimi lisans öğrencilerinin cep telefonlarına ilişkin algılarını incelemektir. Çalışmanın katılımcı grubunu Samsun Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı'nda eğitim gören 3. ve 4. sınıflardan toplam 139 öğrenci oluşturmaktadır. Çalışma kapsamında katılımcılardan "benzetme" söz sanatını kullanarak *"Cep telefonu …….. gibidir"* cümlesini hedef dilde tamamlamaları istenmiştir. Yapılan içerik analizinin sonuçlarına göre 139 öğrenciden 119'u çalışma için geçerli veri üretmiştir. Elde edilen bulgular öğrencilerin cep telefonu algılarına ilişkin hem olumlu hem de olumsuz görüşler ortaya koyduğunu göstermektedir; örneğin, %25.2'si cep telefonunu 'hayatın parçası', %18.5'i 'bağımlılık', %17.6'sı 'eğlence', %31.1'i 'faydalı bir gereç' ve %7.6'sı 'tehlikeli bir etken' olarak değerlendirmiştir. Çalışmanın son kısmında elde edilen bulguların pratik yansımaları ve İngilizce öğretmenleri için bazı öneriler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler İngiliz dili eğitimi, benzetme, söz sanatları, cep telefonu algısı.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Mobile assisted language learning (MALL) has indeed made an appearance within the field of ELT, first around 2009 with the appearance of mobile applications for language learning developed by the British Council (Hockly, 2013:81). Mobile learning is a new type of learning model which allows learners to obtain learning materials anywhere and anytime.

This type of learning is mostly defined as the use of mobile or wireless devices for the purpose of learning while on the move (Kukulska-Hulme & Traxler, 2005). Thanks to mobile technologies (Lan & Sie, 2010) learners become more involved in learning process. Learners get a huge benefit from mobile devices in language learning (Dudeney & Hockly, 2012). Additionally, for some learners, such learning can be regarded as the facilitator of learning, and students can get easily access to educational materials using mobile devices (Litchfield, Dyson, Lawrence & Zmijewska, 2007). That is, it is an education model that emerged with the development of mobile technologies (Odabaşı, 2009).

It is apparent that today those who have mobile devices are increasing quickly. Almost every student has at least a mobile phone or other mobile devices such as MP3 player, laptop or tablet (Ally, 2009). That is why, mobile learning, being an indispensable part of daily life, makes language learning exciting and challenging for those who want to exploit multiple purposes for learning. Thus, it is widely admitted that the new generation spends a great amount of the time on mobile technology. Besides, using real world resources for teaching and learning in the classroom can make education more meaningful and relevant to students (McNeal & van't Hooft, 2006). Depending upon the ideas mentioned above, the main purpose of this study was to investigate the mobile phone perception of ELT students at Samsun19 Mayıs University, Faculty of Education via figurative language.

1.1 What is Figurative Language?

Figurative language uses similes, metaphors, hyperbole, and personification to describe something often through comparison with something different (Read, write and think, 2008). Figurative language means using words to imply another meaning or to evoke an emotion. For example, the sentences "*He painted the town red*" and "*I can even eat a horse*", can easily be understood by most of the English language native speakers. The first sentence means "to go out and enjoy oneself in the evening, often drinking a lot of alcohol and dancing" while the second one means "that person is so hungry", if taken figuratively. How can they make this connection between "eating a horse" and "being hungry"? People know what the sentence is trying to convey if they can distinguish the difference between figurative and literal language. They may not be aware of the exact terms, but they know how to use them.

The language that uses figures of speech is called 'figurative language' and "its purpose is to serve three elements of clarity, force and beauty in the language" (Tajalli, 2000: 100). EFL learners frequently encounter the examples of this figurative language throughout their learning process while they are reading a text or poem, watching a video, listening to a song, looking at cartoons and even saying a tongue twister. For example, *busy as a bee, as dry as a bone, as clean as white, as funny as* a *barrel of monkey*, etc...

1.2 What is Simile?

"Simile is fundamentally a figure of speech requiring overt reference to source and target entities, and an explicit construction connecting

them" (Gibbs, 1994:40). "Like metaphor, it is a semantic figure, a mental process playing a central role in the way we think and talk about the world, which often associates different spheres" (Bredin, 1998: 68). According to Fromilhague (1995:88-94), similes have various functions, for example: a) they serve to communicate concisely and efficiently b) they are one of a set of linguistic devices which extend the linguistic resources available c) they can function as cognitive tools for thought in that they enable us to think of the world in novel, alternative ways and d) in discourse, they can also fulfill more specific functions depending on the textual genre in which they occur. Unlike metaphors, similes require individuation of both source and target concepts, and an evaluation of what they have in common, but unlike literal comparisons, they are figurative, comparing things normally felt to be incomparable, typically using vivid or startling images to suggest unexpected connections between source and target (Hussain, 2014:2).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The essential characteristics of mobile learning are recognized as the potential for learning process to be personalized, spontaneous, informal and ubiquitous. Learning through mobile phones makes learners feel a greater sense of freedom of time and place, so that they can take the advantage of free time to learn a foreign / second language whenever and wherever they are. To this context, Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) deals with the use of mobile technology in language learning. In contrast to classroom learning, in MALL there is no need for the learners to sit in a classroom or at a computer to get learning materials. In fact, MALL can be considered an ideal solution to language learning barriers in terms of time and place.

The use of mobile phones is becoming very popular because nowadays many people can afford them. So, these devices are now used in supporting teaching and learning. The worldwide report published by UNESCO (2014) states that mobile technology has been used to facilitate teaching reading and improve literacy in developed countries. Mobile phones may be used for sharing information resources through Infrared, Bluetooth and Wi-Fi. Other applications including e-mails, Google drive, Google plus, clouds, blogs, and different social media can be used for sharing every kind of academic information resources. According to Commonwealth of Learning (2008), teachers can share with students' movies, documents, audio files and other learning materials through their mobile phones. The increasing ubiquity and accessibility of mobile devices and access to mobile networks globally also changed the type of language teaching and learning materials in education.

2.1 Mobile Phones as an Educational and Learning Tool

Mobile and especially smart phones are highly widespread among young population (Kalinicet, Arsovski, Stefanovic, Arsovski & Rankovic, 2011) and they are also frequently used by university students (Cheon, Lee, Crooks & Song. (2012); Park, Nam, W-M., Cha & Park, 2012). One of the most prominent reasons of this is that mobile phones have been preferred by the youth and university students as social communication media. For example, when you walk onto any university campus in Turkey, you can easily observe a majority of students carrying and using mobile phones. According to Erikson (1998), the most important progress duty of university youth is to achieve a close interaction with the same or the opposite sexes

because they have a tendency to achieve their social relations via technological devices as well. One of these devices is smart phone. Smart phones those provide internet access help students not only interact with each other but also serve them to have an ongoing communication (Moeller & Reitzes, 2011). It can be elucidated that the young prefer the applications that provide social interaction on the internet (Caplan, 2005; Ceyhan, Ceyhan & Gürcan, 2007; Deniz & Tutgun, 2010; Tutgun, 2009; Tutgun, Deniz & Moon, 2011).

Other studies (Attewell, 2005; Chen & Kinshuk, 2005) have already shown that mobile technologies and phones have considerable potential to enhance teaching and learning across all education sectors. Their impact on student mood, enthusiasm, motivation and progress is well-documented (Rau & Pei-Luen, 2006). On the other hand, Liaw, Chen, & Huang (2008) reported that in higher education mobile phones can provide course materials to students including due dates for assignments, information about time schedules, classroom changes, information exchanging and taking notes. Furthermore, a study conducted by Utulu (2012) in Nigeria revealed that mobile phones were used by students for communicating with lecturer in charge of the course, collecting data (recordings), sending e-mails to lecturers and to access Online Public Access Catalogue and share knowledge.

In terms of language skills, students have frequently used mobile phones for years. For instance, vocabulary learning and retention (Ağca & Özdemir, 2013; Başoğlu, Akdemir, 2010; Liu & Chen, 2014), mobile dictionary integration (Rahimi & Miri, 2014) and storage of flashcards on mobile phones for vocabulary practice (Başoğlu, Akdemir, 2010) have been used. For extensive reading projects (Lin, 2014), e-books (Chang, Liang, Yan, & Tseng, 2013) and in-house reading materials (Wang & Smith, 2013) are among the preferred materials for students. Speaking, on the other hand as a productive skill, is studied with its voice recording function by the students (Baleghizadeh & Oladrostam, 2010) and listening with voice response system (Demouy & Kukulska-Hulme, 2010). Studies on listening utilized audiobooks (Azar & Nasiri, 2014), multimedia formatted e-books (Chang, Liang, Yan, & Tseng, 2013), videos (Hsu, 2015) and audio players such as iPods and MP3 players (De la Fuente, 2014).

2.2 Implications of Mobile Phones

The current trend in mobile phone penetration makes it virtually certain that not too far in the future all of the world's student community will possess a mobile phone. Furthermore, the feature of being able to connect anytime and anywhere makes the mobile phone to be a viable and feasible personal technology for students. Hockly (2013) stated "as with any technology, it is not the technology itself that enhances teaching or learning, but rather the use to which it is put" (p.81). This will be a sufficient reason and motivation to explore the possibility of making the mobile phone an important tool in the educational systems.

According to Noyes (2004) the investigation of the perception, attitudes and beliefs of the prospective teachers is one of the essential means of teacher training and the results of that investigation are important to give direction to the vocational implications and to improve the professional development of the prospective teachers. As Hockly (2013) emphasized "there is no reason why mobile devices cannot be integrated into formal learning both inside and outside the classroom. For teachers to take full advantage of the potential of mobile learning, it requires a shift in thinking about not just where mobile learning can take place" (p.82). It has also been stated that the expressions used by

the students word selection and narrative styles may give an idea to the researcher about the socio-economical status, sociocultural differences, and political views of the students.

For establishing a successful and effective language atmosphere via mobile devices, teachers themselves need a set of skills that can be tabulated under three categories: pedagogical skills (knowing how to integrate mobile devices), social skills (knowing what is appropriate and inappropriate use of mobile devices) and technical skills (knowing how to use the functions of mobile devices) (Hockly, 2013:42).

2.3 Aim of the Study

This study aimed to investigate the mobile phone perception of ELT students at Samsun19 Mayıs University, Faculty of Education and also to examine how they can relate their perceptions about mobile phones to similes. This research is important as it unearths the conceptual, imaginative, conscious and subconscious feelings of the students. Students were students at Grade 3 and Grade 4 of the same department. The answers of the students were examined in order to understand their figurative language preferences about mobile phones. The reason why students were asked to use a figurative language, simile, was to unearth the conceptual and cognitive images of the students and to understand their mobile phone using standards and reasons. At the same time, this study would give an idea about whether the students are aware of using figurative language. Depending upon this general perspective, the following questions were addressed:

1. What kind of similes do ELT students at Grade 3 and 4 prefer to state their mobile phone perceptions?
2. How are these similes tabulated under conceptual categories?

3. METHOD

3.1 Design of the Research

In this research, phenomenology design was used. Phenomenology design has been used to focus on the facts that we do not have detailed and specific understanding. We can encounter the facts that we are aware of as concepts, tendencies, experiments, events, situations and perceptions (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005). But this does not mean that we thoroughly understand these facts. Phenomenology constitutes a suitable base for researchers that aims to investigate the facts that are not totally unfamiliar to us and at the same time that we could not perceive their meanings (Yıldırım ve Şimşek, 2005: 72). In phenomenological studies, data are the individuals or groups who live and reflect the fact that the research aims to find out.

3.2 Participants

139 students were recruited from the Grade 3 and Grade 4, who were all at ELT Department of 19 Mayıs University, Faculty of Education. Of these, 71 are at Grade 3 and 68 are at Grade 4 students. They were all asked to meet at a meeting hall at 1:00 p.m. Most of the students did not have classes in the afternoon that day and also they did not need in a hurry to complete a single sentence within thirty minutes (15 minutes for giving explanations about the use of figurative language and 15 minutes for completing the sentence). They were all volunteered students, not forced to take part in this study. They were clearly informed by the researcher orally that their participation and interactions will be monitored and analyzed only for this research and their answers will not be shared by anyone else.

Throughout the data analysis, papers of the 20 students were eliminated since they did not complete the sentence or they haven't given a valid answer. The valid total number of the

students is 119. Table 1 shows their demographic distribution and frequencies. Table 2 indicates the distribution frequencies of the students according to their grades.

Table 1. Demographic distribution of the participants

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Female	88	73,9
	Male	31	26,1
	Total	119	100,0

When Table 1 is examined, it can be expressed that the number of female students is highly more than that of male students.

Table 2. Distribution frequencies of the participants according to their grades

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Grade 3	51	42,9	42,9	42,9
Grade 4	68	57,1	57,1	100,0
Total	119	100,0	100,0	

Table 2 indicates the distribution frequencies of the students to their grades, showing no significant numerical difference between the grades.

3.3 Data Collection

Before the study, students were given the necessary and required explanations about the figurative language and simile. Some carefully selected sentence examples were stated in order to help them clarify the issue and increase their awareness. Then they were asked to describe the mobile phone by taking anything else as a sample. They were given twenty minutes to complete the sentence on a sheet of paper with the sentence, *" Mobile phone is as ……as ……"* prepared by the researcher beforehand. This allocated time was thought as sufficient enough to complete a single sentence since the aim was to benefit from their first thoughts and impressions related to the topic. Figurative language expressions produced by sentence completion, therefore, formed the main resource of this research.

3.4 Data Analysis

Figurative analysis and content analysis techniques were used in this study. Figurative analysis is a kind of approach that depends on the summary and the comments of data which were taken to the previously determined themes. Direct quotations have been frequently used in this approach to reflect the views of the individuals in an impressive way that have been observed or interviewed (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005). On the other hand, the main purpose of the content analysis is to reach the concepts and relations that will explain the collected data. Summarized and interpreted data in figurative analysis have been more dealt with content analysis. Themes and concepts that have not been noticed and observed by figurative analysis can be discovered by this analysis (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005). Data analysis and interpretation were done taking into consideration the similar studies (Saban, 2009; Coşkun, 2010; Eraslan, 2011; Lakoff & Johnson, 2005; Hacıfazlıoğlu, Karadeniz & Dalgıç, 2011). Results taken from the students were analyzed under four stages such as (i) coding and eliminating (ii) compiling sample similes (iii) categorizing and (iv) reliability and validity.

(i) Coding and eliminating: In this stage, firstly, similes produced by the students were put into an alphabetical order and a temporary list was made. During this stage, whether the students clearly stated and

used the figurative language, simile, or not was researched. In addition, the papers of the students with incomplete sentences and not including any valid simile were also eliminated. Therefore, 20 papers were excluded and the rest 119 papers were taken into evaluation.

(ii) Compiling sample similes: During this stage, similes were listed again in an alphabetical order and reviewed. Later, sample similes were selected which would represent each simile. The aim of doing this is to facilitate the categorization of similes and to provide interpretation of the data. After sample similes were defined, valid similes were grouped depending upon their similarities and a "sample simile list" were introduced. This list aims at two purposes: (a) to use as a reference resource (b) to make valid the data analysis process and the comments of the research.

(iii) Categorizing: Theme, origin and the relation between the simile and its origin of all similes produced by the students were analyzed and they were put into five categories. The whole data were analyzed by SPSS 20 statistical program.

(iv) Reliability and validity: Reporting of the collected data in details and explanation of the researcher how s/he accessed the results take place between the important criteria in a qualitative research (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005). Data collected in this study were coded by three different experts independently and the categories were established. Then, these two studies were compared and the confirmed differences were redesigned by the help of a fourth expert. At the later stage in order to check the reliability of the study the list including the 119 similes and the list including five different categories were given to an expert in the field and was asked to match the first list with the second one. The list formed by the researcher and the list formed by the experts were compared and after the numbers of agreements and disagreements were fixed, the reliability was calculated according to Miles and Huberman's (1994:65) formula. {*reliability=number of agreement (same coding) + number of disagreement x 100*}. As a result of this calculation, the interrater reliability of the study was found as 92.1 %., which was remarkably high enough.

4. RESULTS

The research findings and interpretations are tabulated below.

Table 3. Classification of simile categories according to gender differences

Gender	As a part of life	As an addiction	As an entertainment	As a useful device	As a dangerous factor	Total
Female	27	18	14	24	5	88
Male	3	4	7	13	4	31
Total	30	22	21	37	9	119

The data are as tabulated in Table 3. Five categories were established by the help of two independent different experts in the field. The accord between the categories was nearly 91%. Except the last category (a dangerous factor) results indicate relatively significant difference

between genders in terms of the number of the similes mentioned. This is of course an indispensable factor since the amount of the female students is more than the males in foreign language classes at the department. Table 4 indicates the categories mentioned by students.

Table 4. Simile categories mentioned by students

Categories	Figurative language concepts of ELT students	Number of figurative concept	Total figurative concept frequency	%
1 Mobile phone as a part of life	to breath (1), to eat (5), love (3), to drink (1), life (1), friend (5) darling (1), sun (1), bread (4) salt (1), water (3), freedom (1) air (3)	13	30	25.2
2 Mobile phone as an addiction	smoking (10), alcohol (2), chemical substance (2), drug (3), fastfood (1), internet (3),potato chips (1)	7	22	18.5
3 Mobile phone as an entertainment	chocolate (3), cracker (1) cotton candy (1), tetris (1) empty lesson (1), music (1), shopping (2), movie (1), to watch movie (1), boyfriend (1) amusement park (3), social media (2), game (3)	13	21	17.6
4 Mobile phone as a useful device	book (2), bag (1), school (1) main need (1), computer (6) electro shock (1), close friend (3) magic stick (1), compass (1) library (2), wallet (1), t-shirt (1), first aid (1), gold (1), car (2), medicine (4), navigation device (2), candle (1), coffee table (1), pencil (1), window (1), necklace (1), alarm clock (1)	23	37	31.1
5 Mobile phone as a dangerous factor	illness (1), cancer (1), virus (3) fire (1), thief (1), poisonous serpent (1), earthquake (1)	7	9	7.6
Total		63	119	100

Category 1: In this category, 30 (27 female and 3 male) students mentioned 13 figurative language concepts (Table 4). According to their priority, the concepts in this category are eating (7 times), friend (6 times), bread (4 times) and water (4 times). Students accept mobile phone as an inevitable part of their life. Some examples from this category are as follow:

Mobile phone is as necessary as eating.

Mobile phone is as important as a friend.

Mobile phone is as valuable as a friend.

Mobile phone is as necessary as bread.

Mobile phone is as enjoyable as love.

Mobile phone is as adhesive as darling.

Category 2: Total number of the figurative language concept is here 7 and they were produced by 22 (18 female and 4 male) students. It is also interesting that number of the female students is more than the males (Table 4) although there is a general perception that men have much more tendencies for *"smoking, alcohol, drugs"*, etc. The most noticeable concept is here "smoking" and it is evaluated a means for addiction. Some examples:

Mobile phone is as dangerous as smoking.

Mobile phone is as inevitable as drug.

Mobile phone is as bad as smoking.

Mobile phone is as dangerous as potato chips.

Mobile phone is as anesthetic as alcohol.

Category 3: In this category where the mobile phone is seen as an origin of *"entertainment and fun"*, 21(14 female and 7 male) students have produced 13 different figurative language concepts. Some prominent ones:

Mobile phone is as pleasing as chocolate.

Mobile phone is as enjoyable as amusement park.

Mobile phone is as fun as shopping.

Mobile phone is as sweet as cotton candy.

Mobile phone is as relaxing as music.

Category 4: This category is the one where the most figurative language concepts have been produced. The number of the students who accept mobile phone as a *"useful device*" is 37 (24 female and 13 male) and the number of the produced simile is 23. Computer takes the first place among the similes. Some examples:

Mobile phone is as practical as computer.

Mobile phone is as useful as computer.

Mobile phone is as addictive as computer.

Mobile phone is as important as first aid.

Mobile phone is as valuable as gold.

Mobile phone is as necessary as medicine.

Category 5: In this category, 9 (5 female and 4 male) students accepted mobile phone as an evil, a dangerous factor. Number of the simile is 7. Some examples are as follow:

Mobile phone is as dangerous as a poisonous serpent.

Mobile phone is as contagious as virus.

Mobile phone is as shocking as earthquake.

Mobile phone is as disturbing as a thief who steals your time.

5. DISCUSSSION

The findings of this study support the importance of students' awareness about the distinction between the literal and the figurative language depending upon the concepts that they use. According to Boers (2000) in the case of learning figurative expressions, first of all metaphoric themes should be well understood. Kövecses (2001) also proposed that a way to teach figurative expressions was to show and explain the mapping relationships between target and native language domains in terms of *ontological* and *epistemic mapping*. Since Turkish and English are coming from different origins and have different conceptual metaphors, knowledge of epistemic mapping may help learners relate their used knowledge to the unused one.

Taking into consideration the expressions of the students, it can be elucidated that some expressionistic data related to the mobile phone perception of the students were gathered. When the categories of the study are evaluated, mobile phone perceptions of the students can be interpreted as follow. In order to find an answer to the first research question of the

study (*What kind of similes do ELT students at Grade 3 and 4 prefer to state their mobile phone perceptions?),* the following categories have been listed and examined:

Category 1: In this category, 30 students (27 are females and 3 are male) have mentioned 13 different similes. Noticing similes are *"to eat (7times), friend (6 times), bread (4 times) and water (4 times)*". The reason of using these similes may be the result of mobile phones have become an indispensable part of our daily lives and play an important role in our daily lives. 84 % of people surveyed in a new *TIME Mobility Poll* (2013) stated they, especially the young population, could not go a single day without their mobile device in hand. Essentially, according to Campell (2006) young people have always positive perceptions of mobile phones and regard the technology as an important tool for social connection (p. 290). Friendships are also being initiated, developed, and broken; membership in a social clique may become significant. Therefore, the selection of these similes is the reflection of their subconscious images to outside because how people cannot live without eating and drinking water, they think that they also cannot continue their lives without mobile phones as if they ignored something as important as breathing.

Category 2: This category in which the mobile phone has been accepted as *"an addiction"* and likened to substances that constitute habit and are not easily given up shows that students have some negative ideas and attitudes toward mobile phones. The number of figurative concepts is 7 and the number of the students mentioned these similes is 22. As it mentioned above, it is attentive that number of the female students is more than the males although there is a belief that men are more inclined to *"smoking (10 times), alcohol (2 times), drugs (3 times)"*, etc. (Table 1). According to Choliz (2010:373-375) "the uncontrolled, inappropriate or excessive use of the mobile phone could give rise to social, behavioral and affective problems and mobile phone use in adolescents could reveal the existence of significant relationships between some of the main parameters of mobile use and problems derived from its abuse, as well as the presence of indicators of mobile phone dependence". And also becoming addicted to using a mobile phone is *'an increasingly realistic possibility'* for young people.

Category 3: Today's smartphones are designed to entertain and are increasingly marketed to young adults as leisure devices. Not surprisingly, Batista & Barcelos, 2014; Osman, Talib, Salusi, Shiang-Yen & Alwi, 2012 conclude that young adults most often use their phones for entertainment purposes rather than for school or work. The high-frequency cell phone users experienced significantly more leisure distress. Leisure distress is feeling uptight, stressed and anxious during free time (Lepp, Li, Barkley & Salehi-Esfahani, 2014). So, the answers given by the students for this category seem to support the views of Lepp et al. (2014). Here, we observe an approximately equal distribution of similes for each concept except *"chocolate (3 times), amusement park (3 times) and game (3 times)"*.

Category 4: Mobile phones have changed our way of life to an unbelievable degree. These days, mobile phones allow us to be in touch with emergency staff, family, friends, and loved ones in an instant. For instance, if on a trip in an unfamiliar place while needing help, mobile phones allow us to remain in touch with loved ones, letting them know we are safe. All these show us how mobile phones are useful devices to make our lives easier. In this context, this is the category of not only the similes but also number of the students is much more than the others. The young accepted mobile phones

as a *"security blanket"* and they have become an integral part of their lives like as *"computer (6 times), medicine (4 times), car (2 times), alarm clock (1once), pencil (1once), wallet (1once), etc."* because 37 students mentioned 23 similes.

Category 5: With mobile phone use soaring, especially among young people, Dr. Davis says we may face a *'global public health catastrophe'* in as little as three years if the problem is ignored (as cited in Leonard, 2010). This is the category in which mobile phone is seen as *"a dangerous factor"* by only 9 students. This shows us that while only nine students see the mobile phone a dangerous factor, the other majority cannot rule out the possibility of danger and risk. Some possible reasons of mobile phones are not accepted as a dangerous factor by majority are those students feel stressed if their phone is not in sight or becoming addicted to using a mobile phone.

For the second research question of the study (*How are these similes tabulated under conceptual categories?*), the similes produced by the students have been tabulated under five conceptual categories. When these categories are generally evaluated, it can be observed that a great number of the students has used figurative language for the fourth category. Especially, having seen of mobile phones as "a useful device" by the young should give language teachers some ideas and feedback about the use of mobile phones in language courses. They could do an array of things, such as assigning tasks for supporting mobile phones, supporting collaborative and group learning, ensuring security and privacy for learning, etc. Another noticeable simile produced by the students for this category is "computer". This shows us that students believe that if mobile devices, especially mobile phones, are used attentively and effectively like computers, they are really useful devices not only for their fun but also for their learning and improvement.

In brief, when the similes and their reasons produced by the students have been examined, it has been observed that students have been divided into two main groups. Of these, 73.9 % of the students have positive ideas about mobile phones. Only 26.1 % of them think of using mobile phones as a dangerous and useless device. That is to say, having been accepted of mobile phones as useful, entertaining device and a part of life by a great majority of the students, it can be proposed that mobile phones and devices take an important place in their lives. They could be used in educational settings as well. For instance, to manage class, including attendance and administration, easier and more effective; to enhance coordination between teachers and students; to supplement educational materials; to organize mobile-oriented activities in the classroom; to carry out the input in the classroom to the outside of the classroom; to promote the use of informal language; to foster autonomy, etc.

6. LIMITATIONS

This study has examined concerns that Grade 3 and Grade 4 ELT students at Samsun 19 May University had regarded their mobile phone perceptions via a figure of speech, simile. The students of this study are from a state university in Turkey. In order to give an idea for further studies, students may have taken from some private universities and the results may have been compared. In addition, students' socioeconomic, sociopolitical, sociocultural backgrounds may have been taken into consideration. In addition, students from the Grade 1 and Grade 2 may have also been included to a further study. The answers and the similes mentioned by the students in this study may

give an idea for the instructors, scholars and the other studies about how mobile phone use may be possible for positive and educational goals. Learning activities can be designed for mobile devices rather than traditional tools or they can be designed which would be impossible to carry out without a mobile device (Hockly, 2013). The responds of the students in other studies identify that their conceptual and cognitive images play an important role in describing mobile phones.

7. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In order to eliminate the problems that may cause the learners confuse the difference between literal and figurative language, foreign language teachers should give clear explanations beforehand because explicit instructions can facilitate learners' awareness in figurative language (Ellis, 2006; Littlemore, 2009; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). This study generally did not attempt to measure the impact or efficacy of using mobile technologies for attaining specific pedagogical outcomes or goals. Rather it intended to map out the evaluation and investigation of Grade 3 and Grade 4 ELT students' mobile phone perception at Samsun 19 Mayıs University by using simile, a figure of speech. However, in line with the responds of the students, some pedagogical implications may be discussed here about using mobile phones in education. For instance, considering the similes used by students, language teachers ensure that mobile devices are usable and acceptable tools for education and language learning. Their easiness and deliverability make classroom most classroom activities and tasks challenging and create an innovative learning environment. In addition, new language procedures and strategies may be developed; cooperative and group learning may be promoted; current and new instructional activities may be enabled, learner-centered approach may be embraced; new strategies for assigning materials to students, reviewing and collecting students' tasks may be developed.

Some studies suggest positive student views regarding mobile systems or tools in general accepting mobile devices as crucial enhancements (Corbeil & Valdes-Corbeil, 2007; Motiwalla, 2007; Uzunboylu & Özdamlı, 2011), and m-phones in particular (Gromik, 2012; Saran et al, 2009). If the responses of the students were taken into consideration, the answers of the students in this study would mainly reflect positive attitudes towards mobile phones and the way how they categorize their mobile phones with a figurative language by reflecting their conceptual and cognitive images.

Depending upon the responds of the students, it can be stated that their preferences about the use of similes reflect their interaction with their mobile phones. This interaction may depend on how, when, and why they use them. The similes, for example, *chocolate, game, music, empty lesson, amusement park*, etc. may exemplify that they prefer or expect an easy and at ease life. *Breath, sun, water, air..*, on the other hand, may show that their preferences are in indispensable elements of life. But it may be also urged that selection of *cancer, virus, earthquake, illness…* as similes may be the reasons of they have some problems with the life or how they are affected by events around them.

When the data of this study were examined, similes produced by the students were listed under five categories. These are *"part of life, an addiction, an entertainment, a useful device, and a dangerous factor"*. Depending upon the results of this study, it can be stated that students' preferences towards mobile phones seem to be reflected their selection of the figurative language. As it is observed, some responses are positive (e.g. part of life, entertainment, useful

device) while some are negative (e.g. addiction, dangerous factor). Positive responses of the students may be accepted as "having been adopted and becoming an essential part of their life" and negative responses may be the result of "not being preferred and causing some problems". Therefore, this present paper attempts to understand whether ELT students at 19 Mayıs University have favorable perceptions and preferences towards mobile phones. And also it can be said that responses of the students may imply that mobile phones may gradually become a trend among university students. As we have seen, figurative language occurs not only in communicative strategies, but also in the management of social relations among speakers in different hierarchical positions like university students. It can be stated that figurative language when used with humorous undertones helps keep the motivation and reinforce social relation and interaction within the class.

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