



## EXAMINATION OF GIRESUN UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF SPORTS SCIENCES STUDENTS' METAPHORICAL PERCEPTIONS OF THE "TRAINING" CONCEPT

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### **Abstract:**

This research aimed to identify students' perceptions of the training concept via their handwriting by using the open-ended question method. This is a qualitative research utilizing the phenomenological design. 54 students from Giresun University, Faculty of Sports Sciences participated in the research, and 4 metaphors were not subjected to evaluation. The data were collected with open-ended questions which are appropriate for the metaphorical question-asking pattern. The collected data were subjected to content analysis. The analysis resulted in 3 main themes which are life, breath, and health. 29 metaphors were collected. Regarding the justifications for the metaphors, the participants stated that the concept of training is an inseparable part of life and requires effort.

**Keywords:** sports science, metaphore, training

### **1. Introduction**

Awareness of "quality of life" which has emerged with the increasing population in this developing world attracts the attention of both researchers and other individuals. The advancing technology, easy satisfaction of the need for transport and basic needs, and viable levels of social life and standards can enhance the quality of life[1]. Provinces with broader physical, social and environmental domain and higher population density have better average quality of life than other provinces; living in a city has a positive impact on the quality of life.

When providing the environmental conditions which enhance the quality of life, one should remember the general working environments in cities with high population density. As sitting all the time and working in front of the monitors, therefore losing sleep causes nutritional disorders, they also lead to several physical and mental

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problems. Among them, obesity is a prominent problem that restricts individuals' movements and causes them to lose their self-esteem. Humans cannot spend their pastime efficiently in front of television and computer due to their busy schedules. Hence, many health problems are observed among them. Since they take more energy than they spend and move less, their body fat masses increase, which leads to obesity. The rate of obesity has increased in Turkey and around the world, and obesity has become the problem of our era. Obesity has a negative impact on health, job efficiency, happiness and lifetime and decreases the quality of life [2].

Today, dieting and exercise are important steps in the treatment methods for the obese. Exercise has a key role in ensuring weight loss, and later, the weight control. Aerobic exercise is a type of exercise most suitable for obese individuals. With an effective exercise schedule to be prepared specifically to the individual, it is possible for the individual to lose body weight and body fat ratio. For keeping the level; in other words, ensuring the weight control after body weight and body fat ratio have been taken to the desired level, duration and frequency of exercise need to be changed later [3].

Regular sportive activities are of importance to increase individuals' physical developments and efficacies. Individuals can enhance their muscle strength and tendon strength and take precautions against various disorders by practicing any type of training. These trainings not only improve physical characteristics but also help individuals feel mentally well, blow off steam and get away from stress and have fun while making use of their time efficiently. Furthermore, it is observed that individuals increase their external motivation along with their changing body features and maintain their social lives as individuals with higher confidence who respect themselves and their bodies, define their life standards with health and aesthetic beauty in the forefront. Metaphors are powerful mental mapping and modelling tools for perceiving and making meaning of the world. Saban and Kitheriyan (2006) describe it as follows: *"According to the theory of mental metaphor, metaphors are one of the basic mental models that shape individuals' thoughts of the reality and the world. In this sense, metaphors help individuals compare abstract or more complex phenomena to more concrete or experienced ones, therefore allowing them to develop an understanding of unknown phenomena [4]. This is what makes the metaphor strong as a mental model; it allows 'the establishment of a relationship between two dissimilar ideas (or phenomena)' or 'the reflection of a mental scheme (the source of the metaphor) on another mental scheme (the subject of the metaphor)'. In this context, metaphors enable an individual to move from a form of understanding (apprehension) of the mind to another form of understanding (apprehension) and see a given phenomenon as another phenomenon."* In other words, metaphor is the process of connecting a complex phenomenon with preliminary knowledge for perceiving and understanding a given subject from the perspective of another subject.

This study aimed to examine Giresun University Faculty of Sports Sciences students' perceptions of "training".

## 2. Method

This is a qualitative research. According to Glaser (1978), it is an approach primarily suggesting investigating and understanding social phenomena within their environment with an understanding based on theoritization [5]. In this definition, "theoritization" means a study of modelling which explains certain previously unknown outcomes within their interrelationship in the light of the collected data [6]. Metaphors can be used as both description and comparison tools in understanding social phenomena (Silman and Şimşek [7], Örucü [8]). Accordingly, this research was carried out using the phenomenological design of qualitative research methods. This approach is underlined by individual experiences. Here, the researcher is interested in participants' personal (subjective) experiences and examine individuals' perceptions and meanings they attribute to events (Adha [9], Alva [10]). Giresun University Faculty of Sports Science students' metaphorical perceptions of the training concept were examined with the metaphor technique and using the collected data. Of Giresun University Faculty of Sports Sciences students, total of 54 students were subjected to the open-ended metaphorical perception technique, and 4 of them were not evaluated.

### 2.1 Data Collection and Analysis

A semi-structured metaphor form was applied to each of the participants to identify their perceptions of the concept of training in 2018. There are two "fill in the blank" questions in the interview form:

*"Training is like \_\_\_\_\_."*

*"Because training resembles \_\_\_\_\_."*

Open-ended questions were asked to the participants to determine their perceptions of any concept through metaphors, and they were asked to answer the questions with their own handwriting in this project. The participants were asked to explain their answers so that they can answer the question "why" to find out why they did use that specific concept. Because the actual strength of metaphor is about these "adjective" related questions. Each individual can attribute different meanings to the same metaphor. To what end these different meanings or a given metaphor were used can be only understood via the answer to the question "why" (Yıldırım and Şimşek [11], Ayyıldız [10]). The data were subjected to a content analysis, and the themes achieved in the analysis were interpreted within the conceptual framework. Next, metaphors used by the participant students were analyzed, and approaches to the concept of training were identified. The data collected in the content analysis were encoded and classified using the consequent codes. Themes that can explain the data at a general level and gather the codes under certain categories were found. First, the codes were brought together to find the themes, and it was attempted to find their shared aspects. This is the process of thematic encoding and the categorization of the collected data via

codes in a sense. If there are too many themes achieved, a classification can be performed for a meta-theme according to the interrelationships of the themes. It should be noted whether certain parts of the dataset are represented effectively in regard to the themes. At this stage, it is deemed useful that another researcher investigates whether the themes reflect the dataset sufficiently and the data are organized by these themes effectively and provides the researcher of the study with recommendations (Yıldırım and Şimşek [11]).

Reliability of the findings was calculated with the percentage of agreement formula suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) [12].

$$\text{Güvenirlilik} = \frac{\text{Görüş Birliğine Varılan Form Sayısı}}{\text{Toplam Form Sayısı}} \times 100$$

The result of the calculation is Reliability = 50/54 x 100 = 92.

### 3. Findings

Metaphors used by the Faculty of Sports Sciences students are shown in Table 1. 29 different metaphors for training were collected from the students. Grammatically, 5 of the metaphors are active metaphors; that is, they can be directly associated with the concept that resembles or is likened whereas the remaining is passive metaphors; in other words, the concept can be only associated through examples.

**Table 2:** Student Metaphors for Concept of Exercise

Metaphors	Metaphor Numbers	f
Constructing a building	1	1
Sun	2	1
Book	3	1
<b>Power-Strength</b>	4.24	<b>2</b>
Charging	5	1
<b>Breath</b>	6-25-31-41-48	<b>5</b>
<b>Life</b>	7-10-20-21-27-37-39-43	<b>8</b>
<b>School</b>	8.22	<b>2</b>
<b>Health</b>	9-11-42-47	<b>4</b>
<b>Love</b>	12.19	<b>2</b>
Soul	13	1
Driving a car	14	1
War	15	1
Hot Spicy Food	16	1
Philosophy	17	1
<b>Physical Competency</b>	18-50	<b>2</b>
<b>Volleyball-Football</b>	23-29	<b>2</b>
Stress ball	26	1
Process	28	1
Order	30	1

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A match of Beşiktaş	32	1
<b>Entertainment</b>	33-45	<b>2</b>
<b>Water</b>	34-44	<b>2</b>
Happiness	35	1
Therapy	36	1
Fashion	38	1
Close friend	40	1
Hospital	46	1
Competition	49	1

Table 1 showed the metaphors provided by the participant students, the names of metaphors, their numbers and frequencies. As it is seen, 29 metaphors in total were collected from the students about the concept of training, and the most used metaphors were **life, breath** and **health**.

**Table 2:** Distribution of Student Metaphors for the Concept of Training by Categories

Categories	Metaphor Numbers (F)
In the context of exercise	6
In the context of life	14
In the spiritual and emotional context	9

Categorical analysis of the metaphors used by the students was presented in Table 2. Accordingly, metaphors were categorized as "in the context of exercise", "in the context of life", and "in the spiritual and emotional context."

**Table 3.** Student Metaphors for the Concept of Training, Categories and Justifications

	Name of Metaphor	Category	Justification
1	Constructing a building	In the context of life	Its foundation should be laid soundly. It should be careful and disciplined.
2	Sun	In the context of life	It warms the whole world.
3	Book	In the context of life	Immersive.
4.24	Power-strength	In the context of exercise	We feel ourselves fit and well.
5	Charging	In the spiritual and emotional context	It is an energizing activity.
6-25-31-41-48	Breath	In the context of life	It is a must.
7-10-20-21-27-37-39-43	Life	In the context of life	If it is not continued, everything goes back; it colorizes our world.
8.22	School	In the context of life	It improves as you work.
9-11-42-47	Health	In the context of exercise	It makes better, heals and extends life.
12.19	Love	In the spiritual and emotional context	You reap what you sow.

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13	Soul	In the spiritual and emotional context	It increases stress.
14	Driving a car	In the context of life	It is enjoyable and makes you happy.
15	War	In the context of life	You can win or lose.
16	Eating hot spicy food	In the context of life	You want to keep doing it even if it hurts.
17	Philosophy	In the spiritual and emotional context	It improves only if you work and question.
18-50	Physical competency	In the context of exercise	It is heavy.
23-29	Volleyball-football	In the context of exercise	It gives happiness and pleasure; it has a purpose.
26	Stress ball	In the spiritual and emotional context	The best way to blow off steam.
28	Process	In the spiritual and emotional context	It carries away.
30	Order	In the context of life	It must be done all the time.
32	A match of Beşiktaş	In the context of exercise	It always excites me.
33-45	Entertainment	In the spiritual and emotional context	It entertains and makes pass.
34-44	Water	In the context of life	Involuntary need.
35	Happiness	In the spiritual and emotional context	I become happy while training.
36	Therapy	In the spiritual and emotional context	It heals mental health.
38	Fashion	In the context of life	It requires attention and care.
40	Close friend	In the context of life	If you cherish, you get attention.
46	Hospital	In the context of life	It treats and repairs.
49	Competition	In the context of exercise	If you do not sweat when training, you will sweat in competition.
			<b>Total = 50</b>

Table 3 presented the metaphors used by the students for the concept of training, the categories and justifications.

#### 4. Discussion

According to the data obtained in the research, majority of the metaphors provided by the students for the concept of "training" were in the category of "in the context of life" which was followed by the categories of "in the context of exercise" and "in the spiritual and emotional context" respectively. Given the justifications for the metaphors, the

participants reported that training is an inseparable part of life, they would find it hard to be happy without training and they can improve physically (probably due to being athletes) while the fact that participant X likened training to "love" suggests that training is an action which appeals to emotions. Metaphors of "school" due to being progressive in terms of physical and mental development, "driving a car" and "a match of Beşiktaş" as social activities because they entertain and excite reinforce the idea that training is a good leisure activity. There are many studies on training in the literature.

In the study carried out by Gökçe, the participants who do sports had higher mean scores of the Leisure Satisfaction Scale with 3.73 in the psychological factor, 3.86 in the educational factor, 3.82 in the sociological factor, 4.20 in the relaxation factor, 3.60 in the physiological factor, 3.84 in the aesthetic factor and 3.84 in the whole scale than the participants who do not do sports [13]. The justifications provided by the students in this study coincide with the participant statements that training gives an aesthetic look, strength, makes you blow off steam and makes you happy in Gökçe's study.

Zorba & Saygın stated that exercising for health mainly aims to prevent or slow down organic and physical disorders caused by an immobile lifestyle, increases the physiological capacity that is the basic need of body health and maintains physical fitness and health for long years [14]. Regular sports activities contribute to individual's physiological, motor, psychological and sociological well-being. Regular training enables individuals to increase their job efficiency, decreases the number of off-days due to illness, contributes to being more energetic, avoiding laziness, being a fit and lively individual willing to exercise, causes self-esteem to improve, keeps organism away from physical and mental stress, helps look at life more positively, causes aggressive and hyperactive nature to calm down, increases confidence and helps individual socialize [15]. There is parallelism between the results of the aforementioned studies and the justifications observed in this study.

Küçük and Koç state that the rapidly advancing technology has increasingly reduced the need for manpower, and consequently, pressures and stresses of work and social circle coming along with a lifestyle not suitable for human nature frustrate people psychologically [16]. Indeed, with sports functioning to relax and save individuals from monotony, it contributes to their psychosocial development. The study reinforces the considerations addressed in the introduction part of this study.

Saris et al. stated that the International Association for the Study of Obesity (IASO) recommends physical activity for at least 30 min a day for the prevention of chronic diseases and for health protection in adults [17]. But this level falls insufficient to ensure and control weight loss. Obese individuals need to exercise lightly or moderately for at least 60-90 minutes a day to control weight loss, and normal-weight individuals need to exercise moderately for at least 45-60 minutes to avoid obesity. These exercise levels should be higher among children [18]. It is in parallel with the ways of burning fat which the participants mentioned in their statements of exercise's effects on health.

## 5. Conclusion

It is the sine qua non of a healthy life to keep a balanced and sufficient diet in the first place and to exercise along regularly. Exercises may create a remarkable and measurable impact if done at a sufficient degree and frequency and for an adequate period (Cerit [19], Çavdar et al. [20]). Considering the justifications provided for the open-ended questions in this study, it is noteworthy that the participants likened the concept of training to abstract and indirectly related concepts such as love while it had been anticipated that they would have used more sports-specific or concrete metaphors. Training is a psychological and physiological endeavor which improves individuals mentally, physically, socially and spiritually and allows them to compete with themselves. Individuals can hold on to life, be happy, preserve their health or eliminate their health problems and get the chance to enter a new social environment and to know others, therefore establishing a better communication through training. Individuals who train are observed to be more confident, fit and athletic individuals who can cope with their problems rapidly and are stronger both physically and psychologically. The best example explaining this situation is a saying of our Great Leader Atatürk: *"Just so a youth deprived of sports cannot be effective in the defense of its nation, no matter how much the mind of the being that is the human improves, they cannot take and carry their minds to the next level if their bodies are ill-developed."*

There are many encouraging visual publications, articles, books and institution that emphasize the importance of training and doing sports. Training programs as social activities should be recommended by these sources and institutions to individuals for enhancing the quality of their lives.

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