

## Class Teacher Candidates' Skill of Saying No in Relation to Components of Moral Anatomy<sup>1</sup>

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### Suggested Citation:

Yilmaz, F., & Ersoy, A. (2016). Class teacher candidates' skill of saying no in relation to components of moral anatomy. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 62, 161-180, <http://dx.doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2016.62.10>

### Abstract

*Problem Statement:* The ability to say no when faced with demands with possible moral consequences becomes a problem that must be addressed in terms of morality in all of its dimensions, including in terms of the concept of character. *Character* can be defined from different perspectives, and within the framework of moral anatomy. For class teacher candidates, an additional consideration is that they will be professionally required to be models of character to students in critical periods of character development, as well as to promote the skill of saying no among students. In that regard, class teacher candidates' skills of saying no when faced with moral dilemmas that they experience in their professional lives are essential to investigate, particularly in relation to the components of moral anatomy.

*Purpose of the Study:* The purpose of the study was to investigate class teacher candidates' skill of saying no in relation to components of moral anatomy.

*Method:* Following a phenomenological design, this study's sample included 25 volunteer class teacher candidates who have experienced the phenomenon of saying no in an education faculty in Turkey. Research data were collected via semi structured interviews conducted with case study texts containing moral dilemmas related to the ability of saying no. Data obtained in line with the case studies were analyzed according to thematic analysis.

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<sup>1</sup> This summary of the paper was presented at the Second Eurasian Educational Research Congress at Hacettepe University in Ankara, June 8-10, 2015.

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*Findings:* Class teacher candidates can generally say no when it comes to personal interests. The demand that they accept most concerns changing roles, and the only dilemmas that they fail to resolve are moral ones related to close relationships. A basic result of this study is that class teacher candidates think that they might have more difficulty with saying no in terms of having to change roles. Participants said that they would not have any difficulty with saying no due to their ideology, even when concerning their personal interests. It might be suggested that the most basic factor affecting class teacher candidates' reactions to saying no when faced with moral dilemmas, at least within the scope of this study, is moral anatomy – that is, the person's character structure.

*Conclusion and Recommendations:* Results suggest that class teacher candidates need to distinguish evaluations of their morality according to moral anatomy characteristics that they possess and the codes of ethics of the teaching profession.

*Keywords:* Character, character education, moral anatomy, moral identity, skill of saying no.

## Introduction

We can cause or contribute to various moral problems in our daily lives due to our inability to say no in the face of certain demands. By not saying no, we might hurt the feelings of family members, serve as agents of situations of harassment and embezzlement at work, or even cause increases in social crime (Kemp, 2006). Considering all of the above, the ability to say no when faced with demands possibly posing moral consequences becomes a problem that needs to be addressed in terms of morality in all of its dimensions. One concept in which we can address this problem in terms of morality in all of its dimensions is character.

*Character* can be defined from different perspectives. As a sociological concept, it refers to an individual's conscious attitudes and behaviors developed to contribute to and maintain social life (Karatay, 2011). From a philosophical perspective, character is a structure comprised of moral virtues such as courage, moderation, benevolence, generosity, magnanimity, and friendship, all of which enable intellectual virtues acquired through education to be used according to reason (Cevizci, 2014). Psychologically, and as addressed by the present study, character is a combination of characteristics that affect an individual's ability and inclination to behave in ways deemed morally right, such as assuming social and individual responsibility, demonstrating ethicality, and ensuring self-management (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). According to Berkowitz (2002), those characteristics are moral behaviors, moral reasoning, moral values, moral identity, moral personality, moral emotions, and meta-moral characteristics, all of which can be examined within the framework of moral anatomy.

All characteristics of moral anatomy are important for their potential to affect moral behavior. According to Aquino, Freeman, Redd, Lim, and Felps (2009), *moral behaviors* are actions showing social reactions to others' interests and needs. Decisions about which behaviors are moral and which are not are shaped by situationist, subjective, absolute, or exceptional ethical perspectives (Forsyth, 1992; Forsyth & Berger, 1982). By contrast, *moral reasoning* refers to an individual's process of dealing with moral dilemmas (Derry, 1989). During that process, individuals strive to define, classify, and evaluate moral dilemmas that they experience and ultimately resolve their dilemmas by making decisions at pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional levels (Elm & Nichols, 1993; Selcuk, 2012). From a similar perspective, *moral values* can be defined as principles, ideas, and living standards that affect decision making about moral dilemmas and shape behavior subsequent to those dilemmas (Halstead & Taylor, 1996). As part of an individual's identity, *moral identity* refers to the importance of moral values, moral goals, and moral virtues to an individual (Hardy, 2006). Formed in the mind as part of the internalization of moral identity, characteristics of moral identity are reflected as personal actions toward others symbolically (Shao, Aquino, & Freeman, 2008). Somewhat differently, *moral personality* refers to the chronic accessibility of moral schemas toward ensuring the activation of moral knowledge (Lapsley, & Narvaez, 2004). It is a complex, three-dimensional pattern formed by in-born traits such as reliability, agreeableness, and openness to experiences that support and maintain one's moral life, as well as characteristic adaptations such as moral motive, purpose, project, value, defense mechanisms, and self-defining life narratives (e.g., who was I yesterday? Who am I today? Who am I going to be tomorrow?) (McAdams, 2009). Reflecting individual differences in inclinations of moral behavior (Malti, & Krettenauer, 2013), *moral emotions* are felt for the benefit or well-being of society or at least one individual in that society (Haidt, 2003). By contrast, *meta-moral characteristics*, though not inherently moral, are required for moral functioning; examples include self-control, tenacity, social orientation, conformance to external standards, and self-respect (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Berkowitz, & Grych, 1998). All of these characteristics of moral anatomy also act as components of an individual's character structure.

Components of character structure can affect various behaviors in daily life. As Berkowitz and Bier have pointed out, some behaviors affected by character in daily life are related to moral issues (2004). These moral issues can contain morally unacceptable impositions that expose the moral dilemma of either accepting them or saying no. In that sense, the skill of saying no should be redefined from a moral perspective. For this, we may make use of the definition of the skills of saying "no" by Aslan and Ozcebe (2008). In this sense, the skill of saying "no" can be defined as an individual's capacity to say no of his or her own will to demands faced in daily life that pose a moral dilemma or conflict.

Redefining the skill of saying no from a moral perspective is necessary to re-emphasize the moral significance of that very skill. At the same time, that definition is insufficient for developing a more in-depth understanding of the moral aspects of the skill. In response, investigating the skill of saying no in terms of moral anatomy is

thought to contribute to competence in the matter. Among the reasons why, the skill has moral aspects (Kemp, 2006) and is a skill of refusal promoted during character education (Berkowitz, & Bier, 2004: 73). This study of class teacher candidates in particular was motivated by the consideration that class teacher candidates are required to professionally model character to students in critical periods of character development (O'Sullivan, 2004) and promote the skill of saying no among them, as dictated by life sciences curricula (Yetkin, & Dascan, 2010).

For all of the above reasons, this study aimed to investigate class teacher candidates' skill of saying no when faced with moral dilemmas experienced in their professional lives, as they relate to components of moral anatomy. To that end, answers to the following questions were sought:

- What do class teacher candidates think of their skills of saying no when faced with moral dilemmas?
- Which components of moral anatomy can explain the skill of saying no when faced with moral dilemmas?
- Other than components of moral anatomy, what factors can explain the skill of saying no when faced with moral dilemmas?

## **Method**

### *Research Design*

This research was conducted according to a phenomenological design (Creswell, 2013; van Manen, 2014). In short, phenomenology focuses on the experiences of individuals as the sources of all information (Husserl, 2012). Accordingly, this study focuses on how class teacher candidates who have experienced the phenomenon of saying no evaluate their skill of saying no when faced with demands involving moral dilemmas in their professional lives.

### *Study Group*

Participants were selected among volunteer class teacher candidates in an education faculty in Turkey who have experienced the phenomenon of saying no. A total of 25 class teacher candidates—11 women and 14 men—participated, of whom three were first-grade teacher candidates, seven were second-grade teacher candidates, and 15 were fourth-grade teacher candidates.

### *Data Collection*

Data were collected via semi-structured interviews conducted with case study texts containing moral dilemmas related to the ability of saying no. The case study texts were prepared based on data obtained from the literature and from interviews conducted with three class teachers. Moral dilemmas in two of the cases were derived from real events experienced by the teachers interviewed. Six case study texts drafted were submitted for expert opinion, and in line with changes made to accommodate expert opinion, it was decided that the cases for data collection would indeed cause the teachers to experience a moral dilemma, as intended. Before proceeding with the primary application, pilot interviews were conducted with three

class teacher candidates about the uniqueness of the cases in terms of their clarity and possibility for respondents to say no within them. After the pilot interviews, one of the cases was excluded for being too similar to another case.

### *Data Analysis*

In this study, data obtained in line with the case studies were analyzed with thematic analysis (Braun, & Clarke, 2006). Two basic themes were obtained regarding factors affecting the skill of saying no: moral anatomy and other factors. Whereas subthemes of moral anatomy were congruent with components of moral anatomy identified in the literature, subthemes of other factors were discovered in the study itself.

### *Validity and Reliability*

To ensure the validity of the research, the expert opinions of teachers serving during and after case preparation were obtained and accommodated in the final version of the texts. The expert review strategy was used in preparing the data collection tools, in which the opinions of both practicing teachers and experts working as academics were obtained. The report created as a result of the research was submitted to participating teachers for confirmation (Creswell, 2013). Purposeful sampling was applied in selecting participating class teacher candidates. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with class teacher candidate volunteers who confirmed during preliminary interviews that they had experienced difficulty with saying no in their daily lives. Inter-coder reliability was reviewed during data analysis under the scope of reliability strategies, in which the formula  $Reliability = \frac{Number\ of\ agreements}{Total\ number\ of\ agreements + disagreements}$  was used (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). Inter-coder reliability was calculated to be .85.

## Findings

### *Professional Moral Dilemmas and the Ability to Say No*

The views of class teacher candidates on their skill of saying no in the face of professional moral dilemmas appear in Table 1.

**Table 1.**

*Views of Class Teacher Candidates on the Skill of Saying No in the Face of Professional Moral Dilemmas*

<b>Ability to say no</b>	<b>ASN</b>	<b>AD</b>	<b>ASNAD</b>	<b>ADAD</b>	<b>ISD</b>
Legal issues	10	10	-	5	-
Vertical professional relationships	10	6	4	3	-
Personal interests	21	3	-	1	-
Change in role	8	12	3	2	-
Close relationships	13	3	3	3	3

ASN: Ability to say no; AD: Accepting demand; ASNAD: Ability to say no after dilemma; ADAD: Accepting demand after dilemma; ISD: Inability to resolve dilemma

As Table 1 shows, class teacher candidates were able to say no in regard to their personal interests. The demand that they accept most concerns their change in role, and the only dilemma that they fail to resolve concerns moral dilemmas related to close relationships.

*Factors Related to the Skill of Saying No in the Face of Professional Moral Dilemmas*

Factors related to class teacher candidates' skill of saying no amid moral dilemmas involving legal issues appear in Figure 1.

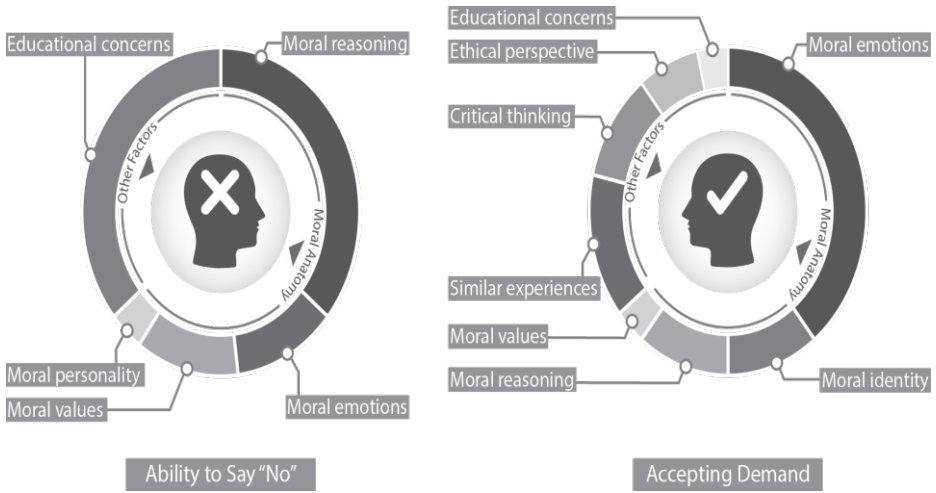


Figure 1. Factors related to the ability of saying no regarding legal issues

As Figure 1 shows, whereas class teacher candidates said no primarily due to moral reasoning and educational concerns, they accepted demands mostly due to moral emotions and having had similar experiences. One participant named Rabia, who said that she would not accept the demand given the potential harm to her, performed moral reasoning at the pre-conventional level. By contrast, another student named Soner said that he would accept the demand due to the moral emotion of pity and having had similar experiences. Another student, Ozan, said that he would not accept the demand given his professional responsibility; however, he reported having a moral dilemma due to having had similar experiences and empathy. He said that he would accept the demand by performing moral reasoning at the pre-conventional level. By contrast, Ercan approached the issue from a critical perspective—namely, at the level of description and evaluation—and said that he would accept the demand. Examples of the class teacher candidates' views appear below:

I wouldn't accept [the demand], because, for example, the child would go and work. Something may happen to him there. . . . I would lose my job in the case of an

investigation. Do I have any guarantee? No. If my job were my only source of income, then I wouldn't accept. At the end of the day, my life is also in question here. (Rabia)

This [refusing the demand] would be only slightly cruel. . . . Think about it: If I had no other source of income, and they have state scholarships—plus, I'm already hardly making ends meet . . . —I would definitely not say no because I know what the situation is about. Let me give you an example from my life. My dad passed away 10 years ago. I was 9–10 years old at the time. I mean, my family and my mom expected nothing from me. I mean, even if they had, they didn't say anything. But, it was me who should understand the situation. I was no longer a child. I mean, my childhood was over. (Soner)

In the end, you are the person in charge. . . . I can see and understand how hard his situation is. Therefore, I mean, I cannot currently answer the question. However, if I imagine myself in the situation, then I would most probably accept it, assuming that it is in the countryside and that the incident would not be exposed much. (Ozan)

Maslow has a hierarchy of needs. Now, the first need is to eat and drink, and Maslow always says that the one at the bottom cannot be sacrificed for the one at the top. However; the one at the top can be sacrificed for the one at the bottom. In other words, for example, the need of school and education is at the second and third tiers. . . . So, I would be sacrificing the second and third for the first. (Ercan)

Factors affecting the class teacher candidates' skill of saying no in the face of moral dilemmas in hierarchical professional relationships are presented in Figure 2.

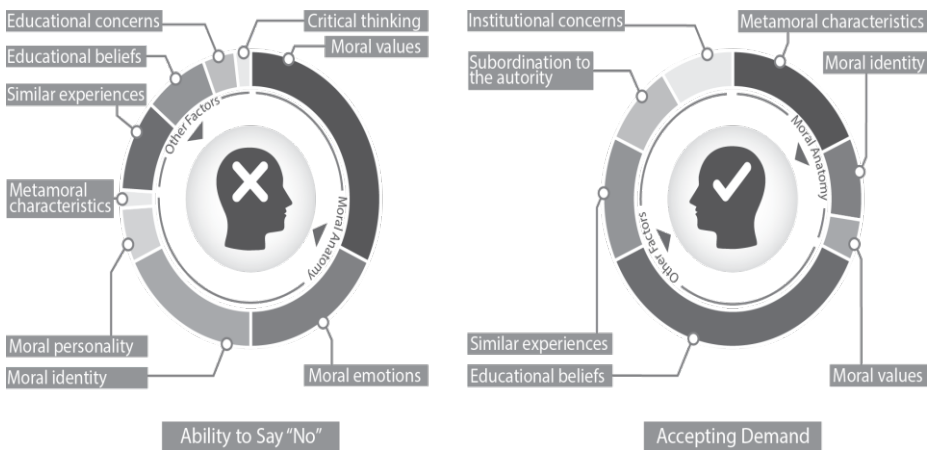


Figure 2. Factors affecting the ability to say no in vertical professional relationships

As Figure 2 reveals, compared to other factors, characteristics of moral values, moral emotions, and moral identity make it easier to say no in vertical professional relationships. Educational beliefs seem to be more influential in accepting demands than other factors. Erkan, who says that he will say no to the demand, also says “I would never accept the demand, because I tell my students that I will hold an examination, and I do it. I know the first three. All that I need is to know that. I cannot accept any impositions from the principal. If I did, then I would contradict my understanding of education, my personality, and my honesty.” As Erkan indicates, he considers his word to students to be important in terms of his moral identity in terms of internalization. At the same time, Selcuk said, “My decision would most probably be in that direction since the principal also wants it that way. The involvement of the principal is the most probable factor,” thereby stressing that his subordination to authority influenced his acceptance of the demand. Teacher candidate Isik said that though she would experience a dilemma in terms of meta-moral characteristics, she cared about being fair in terms of moral identity and expressed that view several times in terms of moral personality, as well as would say no to the demand for reasons of consistency. She stated:

Now, if you think of the success of the school, then you must choose the students who you trust. . . . However, I want to be a person who cares about honesty. . . . So, I can't decide right now. In the end, it is an examination, and it is not a big deal. Let the first three [students] go and take it. I should not be unfair . . . because I am a person who always expresses that [I should not be unfair]. If I were unfair to those little children entrusted to me, then I would very much contradict myself.

Meanwhile, Murat believes that he should not accept the demand in consideration of the moral emotions of conscience and moral values. He explained why he would accept the demand in light of his belief in success and the continuity of success:

I also would like to choose these students, the three most successful students . . . , because they are the students with the highest overall success level. . . . I mean, I would consider it conscientiously. I gave them a written examination. In the class, I told them that only those who would succeed would be considered. We know that, too. It may be unfair, and I may experience a conflict in that respect. However, if I reconsidered, then I would choose those students again.

Factors affecting the class teacher candidates' skill of saying no to moral dilemmas involving personal interests appear in Figure 3.

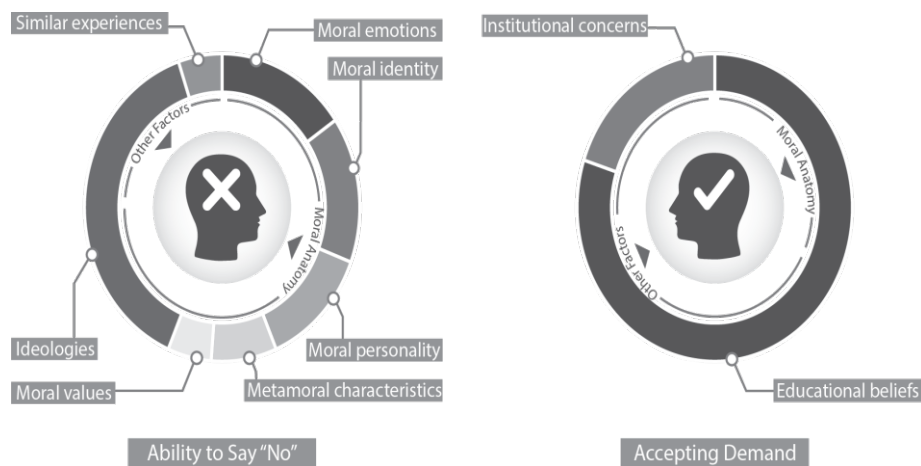


Figure 3. Factors affecting one's ability to say no in terms of personal interests

As Figure 3 illustrates, the ideology of the class teacher candidate is a more important factor in saying no to moral dilemmas involving personal interests. When it comes to personal interests, characteristics of moral emotions and moral identity make it easier to say no, whereas meta-moral characteristics can be more influential in their accepting the demand. Teacher candidate Sati said that when it came to her personal interests, her ideological ideas and moral identity would be determinants in her saying no. By contrast, Murat expressed that in terms of a meta-moral characteristic, he might accept the demand because personal success was important to him. At the same time, Ercan first considered not accepting the demand in consideration of how others would perceive how that decision symbolized his moral identity and later expressed that he would accept the demand in light of his social orientation to personal success. Responses from other candidates appear in what follows:

I wouldn't accept [the demand]. I wouldn't become an assistant principal, either. If it doesn't comply with my ideas, then I wouldn't become a member just to be an assistant principal. . . . My ideas are not for sale. I probably wouldn't sell out my ideas: not probably, but definitely. Today's Sati wouldn't sell out. Today's Sati has a conscience. (Sati)

According to Machiavellian thought, everyone more or less strives to achieve his or her personal interest, because that is how the system works. . . . Even if your institution is wrong, then you have to do what your institution wants to sustain [the existence of your institution]. I support that, too. Politics is an institution that requires self-interest. In other words, you have to do those things in order to protect your own interests. (Murat)

The response is also important here. For example, how would the people near me and the unions that I am a member of react? . . . It is not political. I probably would

do what the principal says based on my emotional aspects and instincts. I would use it as a step. (Ercan)

Factors affecting the class teacher candidates' skill of saying no in the face of moral dilemmas related to changes in role appear in Figure 4.

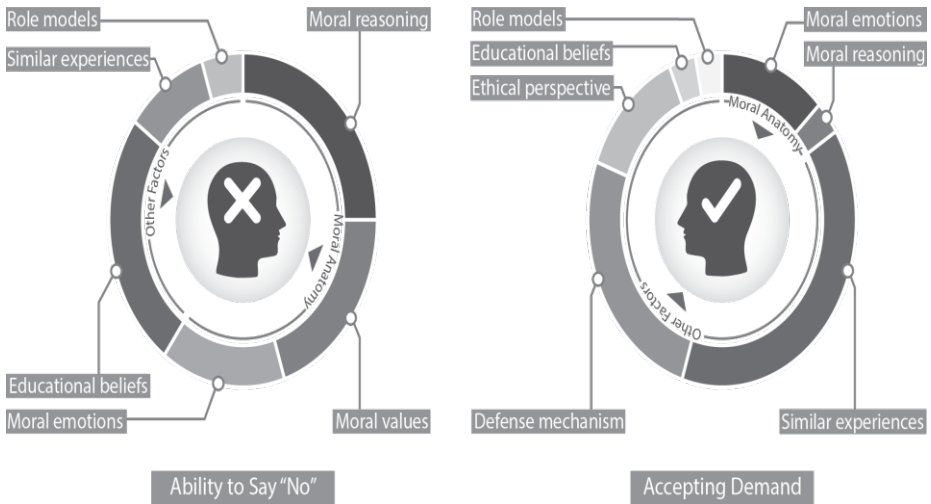


Figure 4. Factors affecting the ability to say no related to changes in role

As Figure 4 shows, participants expressed that the demand would be accepted as part of a moral dilemma involving changes in role, mostly due to their having had similar experiences. They explained their ability to say no amid a change in role mostly in light of their moral reasoning and educational beliefs. Duygu expressed that she was influenced by the thoughts of a professor who was her role model and that she could say no to the respective demand given her educational beliefs:

I once had a professor. In our first class, he said, "These are your KPSS [Public Personnel Selection Examination] questions. You should study them. But, they do not concern us. What concerns us is what you will do when you become a teacher." . . . When he [teacher candidate] becomes a teacher, he won't be a qualified one. That's what matters to me. . . . He can work for KPSS for another year. But you can't gain what you lose there.

Orhan said that he would accept the demand due to having had similar experiences, as well as due to his educational belief in the ineffectiveness of teaching practice and his moral reasoning at the pre-conventional level. He later explained that he would say no considering the punishment that he might face as a result of his moral reasoning at that level under the scope of his professional responsibility. By some contrast, Pervin was inclined to say no given the adverse consequences caused

by accepting the demand. Later, Pervin said that it would be more morally right to accept the demand given the conditions of teacher candidates. Omer, however, sought to justify the demand and, having had similar experiences, said that he would accept it by trying to make it look logical. Other participants weighed in, as follows:

I would accept [the demand], because those things happen. I don't find the internship very efficient. . . . If I accepted, then I wouldn't be able to explain it when the inspectors came. If they filed a complaint, then I would lose my job or receive a warning. I can't afford to do that. (Orhan)

We should be a little more realistic considering that KPSS studies would be interrupted or supporting school classes would be interrupted. Our job seems to entail that, but no matter how great the teaching practice is or how much he [teacher candidate] participated in the school activities as an intern teacher, he would not be able to become a teacher if he can't succeed in KPSS. If that is what really matters, if the current circumstances involve that, then I would find doing it more acceptable. (Pervin)

All in all, we have been interns since the second term of junior year. One term there, one term here . . . . It's been a year and a half. So, I think that nothing will happen in the last term of the period. (Omer)

Factors affecting the class teacher candidates' skill of saying no in the face of moral dilemmas in close relationships appear in Figure 5.

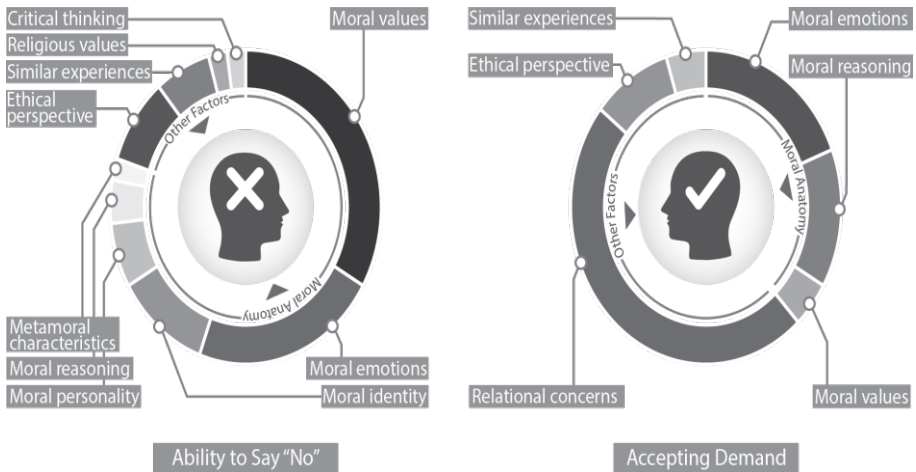


Figure 5. Factors affecting the ability to say no in close relationships

As shown in Figure 5, the class teacher candidates stated that they would say no to demands posing a moral dilemma in close relationships mostly in the context of

moral values and moral emotions, yet would accept the demand mostly due to relational concerns. Some class teacher candidates, by contrast, thought that they would fail to resolve the dilemma in the case of a close relationship. For instance, although Selcuk was first inclined to decline the demand, he later said that he would accept it in order not to lose his friend. Erkan, however, described how his moral project was influential in his saying no, largely as an indicator of his moral personality. Their views are as follows:

I most probably would accept it [the demand]. Naturally, my friend is important. I mean, he is a friend; I wouldn't wish to see him in a bad situation. If I did not accept, then I would lose my friend. That would destroy our friendship. Also, he could lose his job because of me. Plus, it would not be normal to feel remorse about it. (Selcuk)

I would say no, because I always have a project in my mind. If I am appointed to a town school in which I have always wanted to work, what I will do first is stage a play and meet the children's and the school's basic needs with the proceeds of the play, if the school is not in a bad condition, which I hope it is not. (Erkan)

Sukran first mentioned her mutual interest and was inclined to accept the demand by way of moral reasoning at the conventional level. Failing to resolve the moral dilemma that she had experienced due to her honesty and moral emotions, she expressed the following view:

This is a very hard question. . . . I mean, I think that they would do the same if I asked it of them. . . . Also, we got this money by gaining people's trust. I mean, later someone will definitely ask, "What did you do? Did you succeed? . . . He would face a wage garnishment order, but I couldn't afford to see him sad. But what about the children? . . . The children couldn't take it. . . . I really don't know. I would be torn between the two. I can't decide right now.

### **Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations**

Among the results of this study that investigated class teacher candidates' skills of saying no when faced with professional moral dilemmas, the candidates reported that they would have great difficulty saying no in the case of a change in role. As they explained, the demand imposed upon them in the case study was also imposed upon them by others in the past, which indicates that individuals may find behaviors that they find unacceptable when exhibited by others to be acceptable when they do them themselves. At the same time, moral character requires personal integrity (Davidson, Lickona, & Khmelkov, 2008). In this study, some class teacher candidates could have experienced a problem in terms of personal integrity, chiefly in respect of their moral character.

Participants also said that they would have no difficulty with saying no due to their ideology, even when in regard to their personal interests. This finding indicates the powerful influence of ideology on decision making, yet does not mean that ideology can always direct moral behavior, as shown in this study. As Spiecker and

Steutel (1996) have stated, when ideologies are not shaped by fundamentalist or ethnocentric values, but by moral ones, then they may consistently direct moral values given their strong influence. Plus, as McAdams (2009) has indicated, such is only the case when those ideologies indicate both a desire to lead a consistent life and a moral personality. As such, that some of the participants' decisions deemed morally acceptable derive from ideological considerations other than moral personality can be interpreted to mean that those ideological considerations may lead to immoral behavior.

The failure of some participants to resolve the moral dilemmas that they experience in close relationships such as friendship overlaps Smith's (1998) view that situations in which it is most difficult to say no are those that involve persons who we value. Aslan and Ozcebe (2008) have described reasons for being unable to say no to friends as expressing a desire to be accepted by them. In parallel, participants in this study also stated that they would not say no to their friends out of fear of losing them and due to their reluctance to hurt them and put them in a difficult situation.

Possibly the most basic factor affecting their reactions of saying no in the face of moral dilemmas used in this study is moral anatomy—in other words, character structure. This possibility also verifies Berkowitz and Bier's (2004) idea that responses to various moral issues are shaped by character. According to the results of this study, among factors other than character that affect one's ability to say no in the face of demands, including moral dilemmas, are similarity of experience, educational beliefs, educational concerns, critical thinking skills, role models, religious values, relational concerns, ethical perspective, and ideology. That similar experiences affected participants' views in all case studies indicates that the roles gained, evaluations made, and emotions felt in previous experiences influence decisions made. This study has additionally revealed that reactions to moral dilemmas faced in participants' professional lives may also be affected by educational beliefs; however, the teacher candidates would not say no, even if they are supposed to, due to misguided beliefs concerning success and factors affecting the success.

This study has revealed four fundamental results regarding how character (moral anatomy), at least according to the class teacher candidates, affects behavior in the face of moral dilemmas. The first is that the character induces varying reactions among individuals faced with moral dilemmas. As Berkowitz (2002) has explained, one reason could be that the profile of components comprising character varies from one individual to another. However, components comprising character do not lead only to differences among individuals, but also to the same individual's different reactions to different cases. This finding indicates a secondary characteristic regarding character: that character may fail to demonstrate consistency and prompt different reactions developed depending on the content of the moral issue at hand, since different components of character become prominent in different cases.

As this study has shown, the third possible characteristic regarding character is that two different components of character or two different characteristics of a character component may cause dilemmas in individuals. This finding does not suggest, however, that the fundamental factor causing dilemmas in individuals is only conflict between character components. Apart from that, conflicts between character components and other factors such as similarity of experience also cause

various dilemmas in participants. Nevertheless, it is possible that at least one character component is involved in all conflicts experienced.

Some participants stated that they would exhibit immoral behavior due to their meta-moral characteristics—for example, accepting the demands of membership in a professional union that they did not actually support. This finding indicates that meta-moral characteristics may control immoral as well as moral behavior (Berkowitz, & Grych, 1998). Some participants, by contrast, stated that they would respond by accepting immoral demands in light of moral reasoning at the pre-conventional level. However, considering explanations made regarding those two components, as well as other components of moral anatomy, it is inaccurate to consider accepting demands presented in the case studies as invariably immoral. For example, in the case study regarding legal issues, the explanations of class teacher candidates who stated that they would accept the demand of families to create appropriate conditions for their children's employment as child laborers indicate that the fundamental factor prompting such behavior in individuals is moral emotion. In that case study, class teacher candidates stated that they would accept the related demand due to moral emotions despite their criminal liability. Considering that moral emotion is a characteristic that distinguishes altruist and selfish individuals (Haidt, 2003), it is more accurate to say that the reaction does not conform to the codes of ethics in the teaching profession than to say that it is an immoral reaction. Therefore, the fourth characteristic regarding character is that character in a general sense does not lead to behavior contrary to morals, yet could lead to behaviors contrary to professional codes of ethics.

As Kocabiyik and Kulaksizoglu (2014) have pointed out, since the current cultural environment may affect one's moral identity, it may be important to investigate environmental factors that can affect the formation of moral identity. As a finding for that inquiry, the present study indicates that one environmental factor that may influence the formation and activation of moral identity is an environmental reaction to possible behavior. Indeed, some participants in the study stated that they would accept some demands that did not conform to moral values as long as no one saw and that no one would therefore judge them regarding their moral values. Some participants said that they would exhibit the behavior of saying no simply out of fear of environmental reactions to their accepting the demand. Contrary to those participants, whose responses suggest that the symbolization of moral identity dominates, participants in whom internalization is dominant in terms of their moral identity stated that they would not exhibit behaviors contrary to moral values, even if no one saw them enact those behaviors, only because they cared about moral values. That finding overlaps the idea that the internalization of moral identity may be more influential than symbolization in terms of controlling moral behavior (Winterich, Aquino, Mittal, & Swartz, 2013; Winterich, Mittal, & Aquino, 2013). According to a similar view, individuals are more inclined to think of themselves as others see them when their misconduct has a public aspect. By contrast, when individuals commit a crime in secret, they focus more on the characteristics of the misconduct than how it is perceived (Cohen, Panter, Turan, Morse, & Kim, 2013). It therefore seems normal that when the internalization of moral identity is dominant, individuals refrain from various behaviors that have immoral characteristics, even if no one sees it, since the internalization of moral personality is a very strong character

trait. Yet, Cohen et al. (2014) have stated that very strong character traits are not limited to the internalization of moral identity, but also extend to moral emotions such as guilt and empathy that are powerful moral character traits. That this study's participants referred to moral emotions when explaining possible behaviors that they might exhibit in the face of moral dilemmas in the case studies supports that view.

The findings of this study indicate that only the moral personality component of moral anatomy consistently enables people to say no to demands that are immoral. This trend could be caused by the holistic, consistent, and stable structure of moral personality (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004). This factor's powerful impact on possible behaviors can be explained by the ideal self; as McAdams (2009) has written, self-defining life narratives—a dimension of moral identity—are shaped by questions such as, *Who was I yesterday? Who am I today? and Who will I be tomorrow?* Answers to these questions also contain self-schemas of possible selves for the past, present, and future. By contrast, possible selves are comprised of an ideal self and a self about which the individuals feels concerned, and individuals can feel better as they approach their ideal selves (Hardy, Walker, Olsen, Woodbury, & Hickman, 2013). Given all of the above, we suggest that individuals, thanks to the consistent behaviors that they exhibit through their moral personality, can ensure not only social good, but also individual happiness.

Based on the results of this study, class teacher candidates might need to distinguish their moral evaluations based on the characteristics of moral anatomy that they possess and the codes of ethics of the teaching profession. These codes therefore need to be taught in the education faculties of universities so that teacher candidates can act according to codes standardized for professional ethics instead of according to individual evaluations, particularly when they face various moral issues in their professional lives. Otherwise, views on life shaped by moral values should be promoted among teacher candidates, who should be taught to say no when necessary and within the frame of such views on life. At the same time, misguided educational beliefs gained by teacher candidates before they entered education faculties should be identified and corrected in constructivist settings. Considering that moral personality consistently directs individuals to enact moral behaviors, it is possible to suggest that teacher candidates should be encouraged to participate in activities such as community service in which they may strengthen their characteristics of moral personality.

The results of this study reveal that the relationship between components of moral anatomy and the skill of saying no should moreover be quantitatively identified in additional processes. Moral dilemmas that teachers directly experience and their reactions to those dilemmas should also be investigated in terms of moral anatomy.

#### *Acknowledgments*

We are grateful to Ozgur Orun for drawing the figures presented in this article.

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## Sınıf Öęretmeni Adaylarının “Hayır” Diyebilme Becerilerinin Ahlaki Anatominin Bileşenleri Açısından İncelenmesi

### Atıf:

- Yılmaz, F., & Ersoy, A. (2016). Class teacher candidates' skill of saying no in relation to components of moral anatomy. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research, 62*, 161-180, <http://dx.doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2016.62.10>

### Özet

*Problem Durumu:* Karakter yapımızın bileşenleri, günlük yaşam içerisinde çeşitli davranışlarımızı etkileyebilmektedir. Günlük yaşam içerisinde karakter yapımızdan etkilenen davranışlarımızdan bazıları, ahlaki meselelerle ilgilidir. Bu ahlaki meseleler bazen ahlaki anlamda doğru kabul edilemeyecek dayatmalar içerebilir ve bizi dayatmayı kabul etme ya da ilgili dayatmalar karşısında “hayır” diyebilme becerisini sergileme şeklinde ahlaki bir ikileme sevk edebilir. “Hayır” diyebilme becerisinin ahlaki meseleler karşısında önem kazanması, ahlaki boyutta yeniden tanımlanmasını gerektirmektedir. Bu anlamda “hayır” diyebilme becerisi, kişilerin günlük yaşamlarında karşılaştıkları ve ahlaki açıdan ikilem ya da çatışma içeren taleplere, kendi irade ve seçimleriyle “hayır” diyebilme kapasiteleri şeklinde tanımlanabilir. “Hayır” diyebilme becerisinin ahlaki boyutta yeniden tanımlanması, bu becerinin ahlaki öneminin vurgulanması açısından önemlidir. Ancak, bu tanımlama söz konusu becerinin ahlaki yönlerine ilişkin daha derin bir anlayış geliştirebilmek için tek başına yeterli değildir. “Hayır” diyebilme becerisinin ahlaki anatomisi kavramı çerçevesinde incelenmesinin, bu konudaki bir yeterliğe katkı sağlayabileceği düşünülmektedir. “Hayır” diyebilme becerisinin ahlaki yönlerinin bulunması ve karakter eğitimi kapsamında bireylere kazandırılması hedeflenen reddetme becerilerinden biri olması, bu düşünceye kaynaklık eden nedenler arasında yer almaktadır. Özellikle sınıf öęretmeni adaylarının meslek yaşamlarında karakter gelişimi açısından kritik bir dönemde olan öğrencilerine hem karakter açısından model olması hem de Hayat Bilgisi Öęretim Programı'nda yer alan “hayır”

diyebilme becerisini kazandırması gerektiği düşünülünce de bu araştırmanın sınıf öğretmeni adaylarıyla yürütülmesi gerekliliği ortaya çıkmıştır.

*Araştırmanın Amacı:* Bu çalışmada, sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının meslek yaşamlarında karşılaşılabilecekleri ahlaki ikilemler karşısındaki “hayır” diyebilme becerilerinin, ahlaki anatominin bileşenleri açısından incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu amaç çerçevesinde aşağıdaki sorulara yanıt aranmıştır: Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının,

- meslek yaşamlarında karşılaşılabilecekleri ahlaki ikilemler karşısındaki “hayır” diyebilme becerilerine ilişkin görüşleri nasıldır?
- ahlaki ikilemler karşısındaki “hayır” diyebilme becerileri, ahlaki anatominin hangi bileşenleriyle nasıl açıklanabilir?
- ahlaki ikilemler karşısındaki “hayır” diyebilme becerileri, ahlaki anatominin bileşenleri dışında hangi etmenlerle nasıl açıklanabilir?

*Araştırmanın Yöntemi:* Bu araştırma fenomenoloji deseniyle gerçekleştirilmiştir. Katılımcılar, ölçüt örnekleme yapılarak, “hayır” diyebilme olgusunu deneyimlemiş gönüllü öğretmen adaylarından seçilmiştir. Araştırmaya, Türkiye’deki bir eğitim fakültesinden 25 sınıf öğretmeni adayı katılmıştır. Araştırma verileri, yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmelerle toplanmıştır. Yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmeler, “hayır” diyebilmeyle ilişkin ahlaki ikilemler içeren örnek olay metinleri kapsamında gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu çalışmada, örnek olaylar doğrultusunda elde edilen veriler, tematik analiz yoluyla analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmada “hayır” diyebilme becerisini etkileyen etmenler açısından iki temel tema elde edilmiştir. Bunlar ahlaki anatomi ve diğer etmenler temalarıdır.

*Araştırmanın Bulguları:* Bu çalışmadan elde edilen bulgulara göre, öğretmen adayları, en çok kişisel çıkarları söz konusu olduğunda “hayır” diyebildiklerini, en çok kabul ettikleri talebin rol değişimiyle ilgili olduğunu ve çözemedikleri tek ikilemin yakın ilişkilerle ilgili ahlaki ikilemler olduğunu belirtmiştir. Öğretmen adayları, hukuki meselelerde daha çok ahlaki muhakeme ve eğitimsel kaygılardan dolayı “hayır” derken; en çok ahlaki duygular ve benzer yaşantı etmenleri nedeniyle talebi kabul etmektedir. Dikey mesleki ilişkilerde “hayır” diyebilmeyi ahlaki değerler, ahlaki duygular ve ahlaki kimlik özellikleri, diğer etmenlere göre daha çok kolaylaştırmaktadır. Talebin kabul edilmesinde eğitimsel inançlar, diğer etmenlere göre daha baskındır. Kişisel çıkarlar içeren ahlaki ikilemlere “hayır” diyebilmede sahip olunan ideolojinin daha belirleyici olduğu görülmektedir. Kişisel çıkarlar söz konusu olduğunda, ahlaki duygular ve ahlaki kimlik özellikleri, “hayır” diyebilmeyi kolaylaştırırken; talebi kabul etmede daha çok meta-ahlaki özellikler belirleyici olmaktadır. Rol değişimi içeren ahlaki ikilemlerde, en çok benzer yaşantılardan dolayı talebin kabul edileceği belirtilmiştir. Katılımcılar, rol değişiminde “hayır” diyebilmelerini daha çok ahlaki muhakeme ve eğitimsel inançları ile açıklamıştır. Sınıf öğretmeni adayları, yakın ilişkilerindeki ahlaki ikilemler içeren taleplere daha çok ahlaki değerler ve ahlaki duygular bağlamında “hayır” diyebileceklerini ve daha çok ilişkisel kaygılar nedeniyle talebi kabul edeceklerini belirtmişlerdir.

*Araştırmanın Sonuçları ve Önerileri:* Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının mesleki ahlaki ikilemler karşısında “hayır” diyebilme becerilerini incelemeyi amaçlayan bu araştırmanın sonuçlarından biri, öğretmen adaylarının rol değişimi olduğunda “hayır” demekte daha çok zorlanacaklarını düşünmeleridir. Katılımcıların bu konuda zorlanmalarının nedeni, ilgili örnek olayda kendilerine yöneltilen talebin, daha önceden kendileri tarafından da başkalarına yöneltilmiş olmasıdır. Bu durum, bireylerin, başkaları gerçekleştirdiği zaman yanlış kabul ettikleri davranışları, kendileri gerçekleştirdiği zaman doğru olarak kabul edebileceklerinin göstergesidir. Katılımcılar, kişisel çıkarları söz konusu olsa bile, ideolojilerinden dolayı, “hayır” deme konusunda zorlanmayacaklarını belirtmiştir. Bu durum ideolojilerin, kararlar üzerindeki güçlü etkisini göstermekte ancak; bu örnek olayda olduğu gibi, her zaman ahlaki davranışları yönlendirebileceği anlamına gelmemektedir. Araştırma kapsamında kullanılmış tüm ahlaki ikilemler karşısında “hayır” diyebilmeyle ilişkin tepkileri etkileyen en temel etmenin ahlaki anatomi, yani karakter yapımız olduğu söylenebilir. Bu çalışmaya göre, öğretmenlik mesleğiyle ilgili ahlaki ikilem içeren talepler karşısında “hayır” diyebilmemizi etkileyen karakter dışındaki etmenler ise benzer yaşantılar, eğitimsel inançlar, eğitimsel kaygılar, eleştirel düşünme becerileri, rol modeller, dini değerler, ilişkisel kaygılar, etik bakış açıları ve ideolojilerdir. Benzer yaşantıların, tüm örnek olaylarda katılımcı görüşlerini etkilemiş olması; önceki deneyimlerimizde edindiğimiz rollerin, yaptığımız değerlendirmelerin ve yaşadığımız duyguların, aldığımız kararlar üzerindeki etkisini göstermektedir. Bu çalışma, meslek yaşamında karşılaşılabilecek ahlaki ikilemler karşısındaki tepkileri, eğitimsel inançların da etkileyebileceğini; ancak öğretmen adaylarının başarı ve başarıyı etkileyen etmenlere yönelik bazı yanlış inançlarından dolayı, “hayır” demeleri gereken durumlarda da “hayır” diyemeyeceklerini ortaya koymuştur. Bu çalışmada, karakterin (ahlaki anatominin) ahlaki ikilemler karşısındaki davranışlarımızı nasıl etkilediğine ilişkin dört temel sonuç elde edilmiştir. Birincisi, karakterin, ahlaki ikilemler karşısında, bireyler arası tepkisel farklılıklara neden olmasıdır. İkinci özellik, karakterin bir tutarlılık gösteremeyebilmesi ve ahlaki meselelerin içeriğine bağlı olarak farklı tepkilerin üretilmesine yol açabilmesidir. Üçüncü özellik, karaktere ait iki ayrı bileşenin ya da tek bir karakter bileşenine ait iki ayrı özelliğin, bireylerde ikilemlere neden olabileceğidir. Dördüncü özellik ise karakterin, mesleki etik kodlara uymayan davranışlara yol açabilecek olmasına rağmen; genel anlamda ahlaka aykırı olan davranışlara neden olmamasıdır. Bu çalışmadan elde edilen bulgular, sadece, ahlaki anatomiye ait “ahlaki kişilik” bileşeninin, tüm örnek olaylarda tutarlı bir biçimde ahlaki olmayan talepler karşısında “hayır” diyebilmeyle sağladığını göstermiştir. Bu çalışmanın bulgularına dayalı olarak, öğretmen adaylarının sahip olduğu ahlaki anatomi özellikleri açısından yaptıkları ahlaki değerlendirmelerle öğretmenlik mesleğinin etik kodları arasında bir ayırım yapmaları gerektiği söylenebilir. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları dikkate alınınca, ilerleyen süreçlerde; ahlaki anatomiye ait bileşenlerle “hayır” diyebilme becerisi arasındaki ilişkinin nicel olarak da belirlenmesi gerekliliği ortaya çıkmaktadır.

*Anahtar Kavramlar:* Karakter, karakter eğitimi, ahlaki anatomi, ahlaki kimlik, hayır diyebilme becerisi