



# Metaphorical Perceptions About Being A Teacher in Turkey During The Pandemic Period

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## ABSTRACT

In this study which aims to uncover and examine the metaphorical meanings that teachers have attributed to the concept of teaching during the pandemic period, phenomenological method that is a qualitative research design was used. The study group of the research consists of the teachers working in public primary, secondary and high schools in a city in the Western Black Sea Region during the spring semester of the 2020-2021 academic year. The teachers participating in this study were selected on a voluntary basis. In order to collect the data, a semi-structured interview form used in qualitative research method was used as a data collection tool. Content analysis that consisted of such procedures as coding, finding themes, organizing the data according to code and themes was used in the analysis of the data. Based on these perceptions, 278 metaphors were obtained related to the concept of "being a teacher in Turkey during the pandemic period". The related metaphors were grouped under 12 categories by the researchers. When they were examined, it emerged that the preferred metaphors usually reflected a negative structure.

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## 1. Introduction

The entire world remains in the grip of a health crisis caused by the coronavirus, with a mega-crisis composed of a combination of political, economic, social, ecological, national, planetary crises with multiple components, interactions, and uncertainties (Morin, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have negative effects on business, education, health, and tourism worldwide. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a devastating bifurcation of the world, affecting all areas of human life including all levels of the education system. Teaching is among the most affected areas (Pragholapati 2020; Nicola, Alsafi, Sohrabi, Kerwan, Al-Jabir & Iosifidis, 2020; Aarab, 2021).

Some of the measures taken by many countries to prevent or reduce the spread of infectious disease are physical distancing, quarantine, home isolation, and school closures. Students, parents, and teachers around the world have felt the unexpected ripple effect of the COVID-19 pandemic as schools have been closed to deal with the global pandemic. As of July 2020, 98.6% of students worldwide were affected by the outbreak, representing 1,725 billion children and youth from pre-school to tertiary education in 200 countries (Murphy, 2020; Sintema, 2020; Weeden & Cornwell 2020; Petrie, 2020; Sobaih, Hasanein & Elnasr, 2020; United Nations, 2020). As of 2020, the Covid-19 health crisis has affected 91.3% of students on the planet, or about 1.6 billion students whose schools have been closed in 188 countries (UNESCO, 2020).

A year after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, nearly half of the world's students are still affected by the partial or total closure of schools, and more than 100 million children are unable to reach the minimum literacy level due to the crisis. Indeed, it is essential to make continuing education a priority to prevent a catastrophe

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that will last for generations. UNESCO supports countries in their efforts to reduce the immediate impact of school closures, particularly on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities, and to facilitate the continuity of education for all through distance education. To mobilize and promote pedagogical continuity, UNESCO has established the World Education Coalition, which now has 160 members, around three main themes: gender, connection, and teachers. (<https://fr.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>).

COVID-19 has brought about changes in the education system that affect teachers in various ways. The fragile and unstable contexts of the pandemic will certainly be more challenging for educators and learners. While most countries in the world are experiencing an unprecedented total or partial lockdown that has led to the immediate closure of universities and schools, the COVID-19 pandemic has also allowed paving the way for digital learning and teaching (Dhawan, 2020). As such, teachers and students had to instantly learn how to adapt to distance education. This also applies to teacher education. The need to adapt rapidly to new contexts of online teaching and learning has revealed how teacher education and training institutions, teacher educators, and practicing teachers face and experience challenges and opportunities. Also, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to unprecedented action in the field of education (Dhawan, 2020; Flores & Gago 2020; Nasri et al. 2020; Quezada, Talbot & Quezada-Parker 2020; Wrase, 2020; Samta, Marie & Anviti, 2021).

Other effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on education include problems in accessing technology-based learning, postponement of school and exam schedules, inability to conduct teacher training, deprivation of regular nutrition opportunities at school for children and youth in disadvantaged communities, and the burden on parents and caregivers of distance education or home education decreased social interaction and social isolation (Chang & Satako, 2020). During the pandemic, neither parents nor teachers were ready to cope with the various challenges imposed on them by the changes (Wildemann & Hosenfeld, 2020). Whether face-to-face or through distance education, supporting teachers as one of the most important stakeholders of education and strengthening their motivation gained more importance in this process. UNESCO (2020) frequently recommends that teachers be recognized and supported in the critical role they play in overcoming the Covid-19 pandemic. Because, although teachers are at the forefront of ensuring the continuity of learning in this process, it is stated that they face pressure to use some distance education methods and tools without consulting the teachers and providing them with the necessary training opportunities. In such cases, teachers should be informed, supported, and protected first (As cited in Can, 2020).

Considering Turkey in this period, it is seen that teachers, who are the key stakeholders of education processes, are also directly affected by these developments. While thinking about the well-being of themselves, their relatives, and students during the pandemic, they also sought ways to maintain their teaching processes as efficiently as possible (Tohum Foundation Report, 2021). In a study conducted by Çelik and Ayyüce-Şahin (2020), public school teachers stated that they had difficulties in accessing digital platforms for distance education in this process, and they did not have enough knowledge and skills to use the EBA system. Besides, in the researches conducted by Eğitim-Bir-Sen (2020) and Saygı (2021), some teachers do not teach online, and because of this, students cannot access educational activities. It has been observed that some teachers have problems such as not having personal computers, not being able to use appropriate methods and techniques for their purposes. As a matter of fact, teachers leave the teaching profession because they cannot cope with the difficulties they encounter in the profession (Price, Mansfield, & McConney, 2012).

When the studies related to education in Turkey during the pandemic period were examined in the literature, studies such as the difficulties experienced by teachers in distance education, teachers' online course-distance education experiences during the covid-19 pandemic, and the views of teachers on distance education were encountered (Tumen, 2020; Uyar, 2020; Kavuk and Demirtaş, 2021; Altıntaş- Yüksel, 2021). Yet, no study has been found on how teachers, as the main actors of education, perceive being a teacher in this process. However, we have been faced with a phenomenon that concerns the whole world, and this situation does not have a reality that is the same for everyone. As Edmund Husserl stated, according to phenomenology, which tries to understand how the reality that we accept as given in daily life without questioning is constructed by our consciousness (Srubar, 2005: 557), it is very important to reveal how teachers perceive this period in terms of solving the problems that may be experienced. Indeed, teachers have the most important influence on learning and play a primary role on their students (Giroux, 1981; Bernard, 2007). In this sense, it is known that individuals, and therefore teachers, having more positive emotions than negative emotions may mean that their subjective well-being is at a high level. Teachers' high level of subjective well-being contributes to them

in both individual and social life whereas the low level may make their lives unhappy and prevent their functionality (Diener, 2000; Diener, 2006; Diener & Ryan, 2009).

In this regard, it is thought that this study will be a pioneering study in the field and examining the perceptions of being a teacher during the pandemic period in Turkey will make the study unique by filling an important gap in the literature. This study, which aims to reveal the perceptions of teachers about teaching during the pandemic period through metaphors, will provide information to teachers, teacher educators, curriculum and education policy development experts about how the profession is perceived in times of crisis. Additionally, by identifying the difficulties that may arise with the determination of the ways teachers interpret the world they live in during the crisis period, it is thought that this research will contribute to the field in terms of offering solutions to these problems so that education can continue in crisis periods properly. In order to reveal the metaphors of teachers about being a teacher in Turkey during the pandemic period, answers were sought to the following questions;

- What are the metaphors that teachers have regarding the concept of "teaching in Turkey during the pandemic period"?
- Under which conceptual categories can these metaphors be grouped in terms of their common features?

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Research Model

In this study which aims to uncover and examine the metaphorical meanings that teachers have attributed to the concept of teaching during the pandemic period, phenomenological method that is a qualitative research design was used. Phenomenology focuses on the cases that we are aware of but do not have an in-depth and detailed understanding. It forms an appropriate research basis for studies aimed at investigating the cases that are not entirely unknown to us, but also of which we do not understand the whole meaning. In phenomenological studies, it is usually aimed to reveal and interpret individual perceptions of a case (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008). In such studies, the researchers try to obtain new information about the facts that we are aware of or are not by conducting close and long-lasting interviews with the individuals and groups that they will examine (Gürbüz & Şahin, 2015).

### 2.2. Research Group

The study group of the research consists of the teachers working in public primary, secondary and high schools in a city in the Western Black Sea Region during the spring semester of the 2020-2021 academic year. The teachers participating in this study were selected on a voluntary basis. The online link of the semi-structured interview form was sent to the teachers' e-mail addresses. The teachers who wanted to participate in the research voluntarily were recruited into the study group. The participants consisted of a total of 415 teachers working in primary school ( $N=156$ ) middle school ( $N=139$ ) and high school ( $N=120$ ). While female teachers made up 61.3% of the study group, male teachers corresponded to 39.7%. At the time of the study, 37.6% of the teachers were working in primary school, 33.5% in middle school and 28.8% in high school, respectively.

### 2.3. Data Collection Procedure

In order to collect the data, a semi-structured interview form used in qualitative research method was used as a data collection tool. The interview form was developed as a draft by the study group, and then this draft form was finalized with the expert opinion. In the semi-structured interview form, questions (gender, school level) were asked to reveal the demographic status of the teachers, and they were asked to fill in the blanks in the sentence, "*Being a teacher in Turkey during the pandemic period is like ..... because ....*". Even if the metaphor produced by the participants could be the same, the explanations after "*because*" were carefully examined since the reason might be different. The responses obtained from this form ultimately constituted the data of the research.

In the current study, data were collected online from the teachers working in public pre-schools, primary schools, middle schools and high schools in a city in the Western Black Sea Region during the spring semester

of the 2020-2021 academic year. The semi-structured metaphor form was delivered to the participants online, and they submitted the form back in the same way after having filled in it. The total of 415 forms were analyzed after those which were not fully filled or filled out were eliminated. Within the scope of the study, 415 teachers expressed their opinions on the subject.

#### 2.4. Data Analysis

Content analysis that consisted of such procedures as coding, finding themes, organizing the data according to code and themes was used in the analysis of the data. As Yıldırım and Şimşek (2016) stated, the main purpose of content analysis is to reach concepts and relations that can explain the collected data. The metaphors developed by the teachers were analyzed in four stages: Coding and sorting, determining a sample metaphor, categorizing, ensuring the validity and reliability (Saban, 2008).

##### *Coding and sorting*

A temporary list of the metaphors created by the teachers was developed. Accordingly, firstly it was noted whether the teachers expressed a certain metaphor clearly; after that, the metaphors presented by each participant were coded, and then the forms that did not contain any metaphors or were left blank were separated, thus, 35 forms were eliminated and excluded from the scope of the research. The metaphors and reasons were coded with the signs indicating the type of the school where the teachers were working, the gender and the number given by the researcher. In this three-element coding, the first letter indicated the type of institution in which the teacher was working (*P*: primary school; *M*: middle school, *H*: high school), the second letter showed the gender of the teacher (*F*: female; *M*: male), and the numbers accounted for the participant number. (eg., *PF35*, *MM7*, *HM39*)

##### *Determining a sample metaphor*

After the dismissal of the invalid forms, a total of 415 forms were taken into the analysis stage. As a result of the analysis of these forms, 278 metaphors were obtained for the concept of *being a teacher in Turkey during the pandemic period*. At this stage, these metaphors were again sorted in alphabetical order, and several sample metaphor expressions were selected from the participant compositions representing each metaphor upon reviewing the raw data a second time. Thus, the sample metaphor list which was assumed to precisely represent each of the metaphors developed for the concept of *being a teacher in Turkey during the pandemic period* was formed.

##### *Categorizing*

The metaphors created by the teachers were examined in terms of their common features regarding the concept of *being a teacher in Turkey during the pandemic period*. During this stage, it was analyzed how each metaphor conceptualized this concept by taking the sample metaphor list into account. For this purpose, each metaphor produced by the teachers was analyzed in terms of the criteria such as (1) the subject of the metaphor, (2) the source of the metaphor and (3) the relationship between the subject and the source of the metaphor. Afterwards, the researcher associated these metaphors with a certain theme related to the abovementioned concept, and a total of 12 different conceptual categories emerged.

##### *Validity and reliability*

Validity and reliability are the two most important criteria for ensuring (or increasing) the credibility of research results. "Reporting the collected data in detail and explaining how the researcher has come to the conclusions are among the important criteria of validity in a qualitative study" (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008). Specific to this study, two important procedures were carried out by the researcher in order to ensure the validity of the study findings:

(1) The data analysis was explained in detail. (2) For each of the 278 metaphors related to the concept of *being a teacher in Turkey during the pandemic period*, the sample metaphor image that was assumed to represent it best was developed, and all of these metaphor images were included in the findings section. In order to ensure the reliability of the research, the metaphors given under 12 conceptual categories regarding the abovementioned concept, the expert opinion was applied on such conceptual categories. For this purpose, 2 faculty members with knowledge and experience in qualitative research were given two category lists:

- (a) A list in which the metaphors related to the concept of *being a teacher in Turkey during the pandemic period* was sorted in alphabetical order and
- (b) A list including the names and features of 12 conceptual categories related to the concept above.

The experts were asked to use both lists and match the sample metaphor images from the first list with the conceptual categories in the second list. Then the matchings done by the experts were compared with the researcher's own categories. The reliability of the research was calculated using Miles and Huberman's (1994:64) formula ( $\text{Reliability} = \frac{\text{Consensus}}{\text{Consensus} + \text{Dissensus}} \times 100$ ) by determining the numbers of consensus and dissensus in the comparisons. The percentage of the consensus between the two groups was calculated as 89%. Since it is deemed sufficient to have a consensus of 70% or higher, it was decided that the reliability was achieved in terms of data analysis, and the codes that were compatible in the coding made by researcher and the expert faculty members emerged the themes.

## 2.5. Ethical

This research was examined in the Ethics Committee of Human Studies in Social Sciences at Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University and was found ethically appropriate.

## 3. Findings

Based on the perceptions of the teachers, 278 metaphors related to the concept of *being a teacher in Turkey during the pandemic period* were finalized. These metaphors were grouped under 12 categories by the researcher, which are shown below, respectively.

1. Uncertainty
2. Exclusion
3. Worthlessness
4. Despair & Pessimism
5. Having difficulty
6. Dissatisfaction
7. Desperation
8. Sacrifice, Dedication & Struggle
9. Role-Play
10. Patience
11. Discovering & Creating Opportunities
12. Hope

### Uncertainty

In this category, there are 49 metaphors produced by 95 teachers, and they are presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.** *The category of Uncertainty*

Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f	Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f
1.	Adventure film	1	26.	Magic	1
2.	Babysitter	2	27.	Maze	6
3.	Back-flowing stream	1	28.	Mehter anthem	1
4.	Bat	2	29.	Mine field	2
5.	Battle	1	30.	Mole	1
6.	Beating the air	2	31.	Nomadic life	2
7.	Bottomless well	6	32.	Outer space	5
8.	Bucket water	1	33.	Panic attack	1
9.	Cleaning	1	34.	Ping-pong ball	1
10.	Computer game	2	35.	Playing blind man's bluff	1
11.	Contacting with aliens	1	36.	Prison	1
12.	Dance with Azrael	1	37.	Radio broadcast	1
13.	Dervish	1	38.	Rain in the desert	1
14.	Deserted forest	1	39.	Raining	1

15.	Driving	3	40.	Road	2
16.	Family	1	41.	Running on the parkour	2
17.	Fishing in the desert	1	42.	Surprise egg	1
18.	Game show	1	43.	Swimming in rough sea	12
19.	Getting lost in the desert	2	44.	Tale	1
20.	Getting out of the swamp	5	45.	Tramp	1
21.	Going out without an umbrella	3	46.	Uncertain weather	1
22.	Going through the tunnel	3	47.	Walking in the dark	1
23.	Guest	1	48.	Whirligig	2
24.	Holiday	1	49.	Wind	2
25.	Journey	1	<b>Total</b>		<b>95</b>

Table 1 contains the metaphors that make up the category of *uncertainty* and information about the number of teachers who developed each metaphor. As could be seen from the Table, the most frequently used metaphor in this category is *swimming in rough sea* ( $N=12$ ). Below are the examples of the logical basis of the metaphors produced for this category described by the teachers.

*Swimming in rough sea: Because you say you're right on shore, a wave hits and you go back to where you have started (PM15).*

*Swimming in rough sea: Because swimming among giant waves can put us in unfamiliar vortexes (MF78).*

*Bottomless well: Because it is not known what happens at the end of the well, the bottom of which is not visible. Water can come out, stone can come out or sand can come out (HM51).*

*Ping-pong ball: Because you never know where the ping-pong ball is going by looking at its consecutive bouncing (HF19).*

*Surprise egg: Because you never know when and what to come across (MM127).*

*Computer game: Because you can't tell when the game have started and ended (PF144).*

*Outer space: Because you don't know what you're going to come across; shuttles, the black hole or outer space may appear (PM49).*

*Going out without an umbrella: Because when you go out without an umbrella, there could be a lot of sun. It could rain, snow, hail as well (MF97).*

*Playing blind man's bluff: Because sometimes you say everything's fine, then your eyes open, and you're a long way from where you think you really are (HF37).*

*Deserted forest: Because when walking in the deserted forest, you could be exposed to the dangers at any time anywhere and unexpectedly. There may be instantaneous developments because the situations change constantly (MM103).*

## Exclusion

In this category, there are 15 metaphors produced by 11 teachers, and these metaphors are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** The category of exclusion

Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f	Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f
1.	Dart board	1	7.	Refugee	1
2.	Immigrant	2	8.	Scapegoat	1
3.	Leaf in the water	1	9.	Shadow-show	2
4.	Loneliness	1	10.	Suspended student	1
5.	Neglected Flower	1	11.	Warrior	1
6.	Orphan kid	3	<b>Total</b>		<b>15</b>

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that the most widely used metaphors by the teachers in this category is *orphan kid* ( $N=3$ ). Below are the examples of the logical basis of the metaphors developed by the teachers.

*Orphan kid: Because you are battered, excluded and ignored like orphan kids. Only your father, your government, is with you. It is with you with all its means (PF2).*

*Refugee: Because you are literally treated as if you have brought a virus into the country (MF11).*

*Neglected flower: Because you are not consulted on anything (HM9).*

### Worthlessness

In this category, there are 20 metaphors produced by 26 teachers, and these metaphors are illustrated in Table 3 below.

**Table 3.** *The category of worthlessness*

Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f	Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f
1.	Air	1	11.	Michelangelo	1
2.	Ball	2	12.	Motherhood	3
3.	Beating the air	1	13.	Needle in haystack	1
4.	Being invisible	1	14.	Privileged group	1
5.	Falling into the swamp	2	15.	Scapegoat	1
6.	Faucet	1	16.	Spare tire	1
7.	Fruit tree	1	17.	Speaking to the space	1
8.	Getting a free salary	2	18.	Walking in the space	2
9.	Lack of options	1	19.	Whipping boy	1
10.	Little boy of the family	1	20.	Worker	1
<b>Total</b>					<b>26</b>

The metaphors in the Table above developed by the teachers fall under the category of *worthlessness*. As seen in the Table 3, the most frequently used metaphor produced by the teachers in this category is *motherhood* (N=3). The examples of the logical basis of the metaphors produced for this category described by the teachers are given below.

*Air: Because it is necessary for everyone, but its worth is unknown because it is free (HF82).*

*Fruit tree: Because you do your duty properly, and you are still criticized by everyone. They do not understand its value (PF35).*

*Motherhood: Because no matter how hard you work, people don't realize your sacrifice (MM62).*

### Despair and Pessimism

In this category consisting of metaphors produced in line with the opinions of teachers, there are 18 metaphors produced by 24 teachers. They are presented in Table 4 below.

**Table 4.** *The category of despair & pessimism*

Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f	Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f
1	A bird without wings	2	10.	Insensitivity	1
2.	A child in the Middle East	1	11.	Looking for a forest in the desert	1
3.	A fish out of water	2	12.	Passing kidney stone	1
4.	Camping	1	13.	Sailing	1
5.	Captivity	1	14.	Seagull	1
6.	Child	1	15.	Sinking ship	2
7.	Cicada	1	16.	Swimming/rowing against the current	3
8.	Crew	1	17.	The Sahara	1
9.	House cleaning	2	18.	Vicious circle	1
<b>Total</b>					<b>24</b>

Table 4 shows the metaphors that make up the category of *despair & pessimism* and the number of the teachers who developed each metaphor. As seen in the Table, the most frequently expressed metaphor by the teachers in this category is *swimming / rowing against the current* (N=3). Below are the examples of logical basis stated by the teachers for developing the metaphors.

*Sinking ship: No matter how hard the crew on the sinking ship tries, there's nothing you can do about it, the ship still sinks (PM8).*

*Swimming/rowing against the current: Because no matter how hard you try, you will not be able to get efficiency due to the financial incapability of the student (HM5).*

*Seagull: Because the seagull that is submerged in mud tries to fly out of the mud, fights for its life not to die, but its destiny is certain (MF3).*

### Having difficulty

In this category consisting of metaphors produced in line with the opinions of teachers, there are 44 metaphors produced by 58 teachers. These metaphors are presented in Table 5 below.

**Table 5.** The category of having difficulty

Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f	Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f
1	A camel through a needle's eye	2	23.	Jabber	2
2.	A remote with low battery	1	24.	Judge	1
3.	Acrobat	1	25.	Keeping a watch	1
4.	Angry bull	1	26.	Lemonade	1
5.	Ball	1	27.	Looking for/finding a needle	3
6.	Barbell	1	28.	Mine field	3
7.	Being an audience	1	29.	Mountain top	1
8.	Being online all the time	1	30.	Non-interaction	1
9.	Being thirsty in the desert	1	31.	Not leaving a mark	1
10.	Bird with a broken wing	1	32.	Panic attack	1
11.	Breathing in water	1	33.	Pedestrian in traffic	1
12.	Bumpy road	1	34.	Porter	1
13.	Captain of the ship	2	35.	Pressure	1
14.	Compulsory service	1	36.	Puzzle board	2
15.	Computer game	1	37.	Rag doll magic	1
16.	Dancing	1	38.	Speeding up	2
17.	Dehydration	1	39.	Straw and handle	1
18.	Deserted island	1	40.	Studying science and math	1
19.	Driving in traffic	4	41.	Thorny rose	1
20.	Hapless bedouin	1	42.	Tide	1
21.	Hide-and-peek	2	43.	Unarmed warrior	1
22.	Holiday	1	44.	Use of technology	2
<b>Total</b>					<b>58</b>

When the metaphors that constitute the category of *having difficulty* and the number of teachers who developed each metaphor are examined, it is seen that the most frequently used metaphor by the teachers in this category is *driving in traffic* ( $N=4$ ). The examples of the logical basis of the preferred metaphors described by the teachers are shown below.

*Rag doll magic: Because from time to time, it is not clear where to get pinned. We continue to get hurt and having difficulty after every needle (PM57).*

*Tide: Because between the teaching I've done so far and the aftermath, you always come and go, and gasp (MF40).*

*Hide-and-peek: Because hide-and-peek is difficult to play, but it is much more difficult to play hide-and-peek with eyes closed (PF32).*

*A camel through a needle's eye: Because the needle eye is narrow and difficult to pass through for a camel (HF85).*

*Looking for/finding a needle: Because it is very difficult to look for needles in the dark; the needle can sting and hurt you (HF108).*

### Dissatisfaction

In this category consisting of metaphors produced in line with the opinions of teachers, there are 17 metaphors produced by 23 teachers. Below are the related metaphors presented in Table 6.



**Table 6.** *The category of dissatisfaction*

Metaphor Number	Metaphor	Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f
1	Candle with diminishing light	10.	Referee	3
2.	Cat playing with its tail	11.	Robot	2
3.	Chronic disease	12.	Serdengecti*	1
4.	Deserted island	13.	Silence	1
5.	Dog	14.	Thirst	1
6.	Night humidity	15.	Uncontrolled power	1
7.	Objecting judge	16.	Waterfall	1
8.	Paid worker	17.	Whistle in the wind	2
9.	Play dough	<b>Total</b>		<b>23</b>

\**Serdengecti* is a term used in the Ottoman army for the soldiers among The Raiders who are volunteers to rush forward into the opponent army as first attackers and burrow through the seized castles.

Table 6 shows the metaphors that make up the category of *dissatisfaction* and the number of the teachers having developed each metaphor. As seen in the Table, the most frequently used metaphor by the teachers in this category is *referee* (N=3). Below are the examples of logical basis stated by the teachers for developing the metaphors.

*Robot: Because we have become a robot in online education; unfortunately, we do not go outside of the coding. (HF107)*

*Referee: Because the referee cannot satisfy the winning or the defeated teams. No one is satisfied; the parent, the student or the administrator. I mean, no one. (MF79).*

*Play dough: Because the parents criticize in a way, the managers criticize in other way and the ministry in another way, but no one asks if the teachers themselves are satisfied (PF23).*

## Desperation

In this category including the metaphors asserted by teachers, there are 18 metaphors produced by 19 teachers. Below are the related metaphors presented in Table 7.

**Table 7.** *The category of desperation*

Metaphor Number	Metaphor	Metaphor Number	Metaphor
1.	Bringing sea to Ankara	10.	Popping candy
2.	Desperation	11.	Swamp
3.	Diet	12.	Swimming in the desert
4.	Drowning	13.	Terminal cancer
5.	Earthquake	14.	Turbulence
6.	Electronic ankle monitor	15.	Unable to breathe
7.	Evaporation	16.	Unable to swim
8.	Fainting	17.	Unable to walk
9.	Jalapeno	18.	Uprooted tree
		<b>Total</b>	

\* *Ankara* is the capital city of Turkey located in the Central Anatolia which is terrestrial.

The metaphors above developed by the teachers belong to the category of *desperation*. As seen in the Table, the most frequently used metaphor in this category is *swamp* (N=2). The examples of the rationales of the related metaphors described by the teachers are presented below.

*Jalapeno: Because it looks good, but you can't cure its pain (HM114).*

*Swamp: Because you'll never get out of the swamp (PF59).*

*Electronic ankle monitor: Because after you are handcuffed with ankle monitor, you desperately wait at home for time to run out (MM132).*

## Sacrifice, Dedication and Struggle

There are 50 metaphors expressed by 85 teachers in this category which was developed in line with the teachers' views. Below are the related metaphors presented in Table 8.

**Table 8.** *The category of sacrifice, dedication & struggle*

Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f	Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f
1	A hair shirt	3	26.	Lace	2
2.	Acrobat	1	27.	Light	1
3.	Anatolian woman	1	28.	Magical touch	2
4.	Ant	2	29.	Master	3
5.	Bee	2	30.	Migratory bird	2
6.	Behind mountain Kaf	1	31.	Mountaineer	3
7.	Being a parent	1 1	32.	Octopus	2
8.	Being madly in love	1	33.	Orphan child	2
9.	Bird with a broken wing	1	34.	Pancu in Beşiktaş*	1
10.	Captive	1	35.	Planting trees in the desert	1
11.	Challenging journey	1	36.	Rout	1
12.	Chameleon	1	37.	Seed	1
13.	Cleaning the couch grass	1	38.	Sharing	1
14.	Closeout	1	39.	Shuttle relay race	1
15.	Expert	1	40.	Student	2
16.	Facing up	1	41.	Superhero	2
17.	Fear	1	42.	Survivor	1
18.	Ferris wheel	1	43.	Teaspoon	1
19.	Flapping	2	44.	Technology	1
20.	Friend	1	45.	The musicians in the movie of <i>Titanic</i>	1
21.	Garden	1	46.	Torch	2
22.	Getting honey from flowers	1	47.	Turtle	1
23.	Getting out of the swamp	4	48.	Umbrella	2
24.	Holiday	1	49.	Walking on a bumpy road	3
25.	Journey to the impossible	3	50.	War of Independence	1
<b>Total</b>					<b>85</b>

\*Pancu is a former football player having played in Beşiktaş in Turkey. Once he was playing for Beşiktaş, he went in goal in an important match instead of the goalkeeper who was sent off the match having a red card. He played a crucial role in the victory of the team

Table 8 shows the data about the metaphors that constitute the category of *sacrifice, dedication & struggle* and the number of teachers who develop each metaphor. When the Table is examined, it is seen that the most frequently used metaphor by the teachers in this category is *being a parent* (N=12). Below are the examples of the rationales described by the teachers for their preference of the metaphor.

*Being a parent: Because you want to spend time with your children, but you need to endure the risk and the responsibility (PM13).*

*Ant: Because the lessons, housework, cooking, meetings and parent messages...you don't stop at anything (MF82).*

*A hair shirt: Because it is the teachers who face all kinds of situations at the forefront (HM77)*

*Superhero: Because home, school, means catching up with everything within four walls (PF7).*

*Torch: Because we teachers walk with the torch and guide the way, whether it is bright or dark (MF19).*

### Role-play

In this category consisting of metaphors expressed by the teachers, there are 18 metaphors produced by 26 teachers. Below are the related metaphors presented in Table 9.

**Table 9.** *The category of role-play*

Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f	Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f
1	Acrobat	1	10.	Hernia of the loins	1
2.	Acrobatics	1	11.	Hide-and-peek	1
3.	Artist	4	12.	Monkey	1
4.	Being invisible	2	13.	Movie script	3
5.	Chameleon	2	14.	Retirement	1
6.	Clown	1	15.	Shadow-show	1
7.	Elephant	1	16.	Singing on the stage	1
8.	Eraser	1	17.	Theater	1
9.	Fairy	1	18.	Theater player	1
<b>Total</b>					<b>26</b>

The metaphors above developed by the teachers belong to the category of *role-play*. As seen in the Table, the most frequently used metaphor in this category is *artist* (N=4). The examples of the logical basis for the related metaphors described by the teachers are presented below.

*Artist: Because, like an artist, you're always in every role (HF49).*

*Acrobatics: Because when you're on the ropes, you take on every role to stay balanced (MF9).*

*Monkey: Because you need to wear the cap and bells all the time so that the students can follow the classes (PF82).*

*Hernia of the loins: When you have the hernia, you stand up straight and pretend to be healthy. Because you are the comfortable one who is paid without working hard, according to the society (MM50).*

### Patience

There are 8 metaphors expressed by 13 teachers in this category which was developed in line with the teachers' views. These metaphors are shown in Table 10 below.

**Table 10.** *The category of patience*

Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f	Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f
1.	An employee in dargah	1	5.	Flower	1
2.	Being a mother	2	6.	Majnun	2
3.	Being patience itself	3	7.	Sunflower	1
4.	Fishing with a hook	1	8.	Tailoring	2
<b>Total</b>					<b>13</b>

\*Dargah is an islamic monastery.

The metaphors above developed by the teachers belong to the category of *patience*. As seen in the Table, the most frequently used metaphor in this category is *being patience itself* (N=3). The examples of the rationales of the related metaphors described by the teachers are presented below.

*Majnun: Just as Majnun endured challenges and remained patient for his Leyla, the teacher has been patient with many things like him during this period (HF103).*

*Tailoring: Just as the tailor manipulates the fabric with millimeters in patience, the teacher has been patient with many small things during this period (MF24).*

*Being patience itself: Because it's really a matter of patience to give the same answer to the same questions that are constantly asked (PF151).*

### Discovering and Creating Opportunities

In this category of metaphors expressed by the teachers, there are 17 metaphors produced by 21 teachers. These metaphors are shown in Table 11 below.

**Table 11.** *The category of discovering & creating opportunities*

Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f	Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f
1	A garden inside the house	1	10.	New planet	1
2.	Having a look at a book	1	11.	Robinson	1
3.	Inspector Gatgate	1	12.	Sandglass	1
4.	Journey	3	13.	Student	1
5.	Learning to ride a bike	1	14.	Swedish pocket knife	1
6.	Lifting dumbbells	1	15.	Tasting	1
7.	Mirror	2	16.	Technology	2
8.	Moving house	1	17.	World map	1
9.	Nasreddin Hodja	1			
<b>Total</b>					<b>21</b>

Table 11 shows the data about the metaphors that constitute the category of *discovering & creating opportunities* and the number of teachers who developed each metaphor. When the Table is examined, it is seen that the most frequently used metaphor by the teachers in this category is *journey* ( $N=3$ ). Below are the examples of the rationales described by the teachers for their preference of the metaphor.

*Robinson: Because you try and discover new things (HM2).*

*A garden inside the house: Because every corner of the house has been rediscovered and utilized (PM96).*

*Student: Because during this period we have learned and discovered new things on the computer, just like students have. (MF135).*

## Hope

In this category consisting of metaphors expressed by the teachers, there are 8 metaphors produced by 10 teachers. Below are the related metaphors presented in Table 12.

**Table 12.** *The category of hope*

Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f	Metaphor Number	Metaphor	f
1	A stream flowing unsteadily	1	5.	Ice-cream at the poles	1
2.	Boats out of watermelon rinds	1	6.	Lighthouse	3
3.	Cliff-hanger	1	7.	Sunflower field	1
4.	Hope	1	8.	The Sun	1
<b>Total</b>					<b>10</b>

Table 11 shows the data about the metaphors that constitute the category of *hope* and the number of teachers who developed each metaphor. When the Table is examined, it is seen that the most frequently used metaphor by the teachers in this category is *lighthouse* ( $N=3$ ). The rationales of the metaphors expressed by the teachers are presented below.

*Hope: Because one can't live without hope (PM66).*

*A stream flowing unsteadily: Because the stream flows and finds its way to one day (MF107).*

*Sunflower field: Because no matter the conditions are, the flowers always turn their faces to the Sun (PM1).*

*Lighthouse: Because the lighthouse will get you to the port safely (HF33).*

## 4. Discussion and Conclusion

This study was conducted in order to reveal the perceptions of the teachers about *being a teacher in Turkey during the pandemic period*. Based on these perceptions, 278 metaphors were obtained related to the concept of "*being a teacher in Turkey during the pandemic period*". The related metaphors were grouped under 12 categories by the researchers. When they were examined, it emerged that the preferred metaphors usually reflected a negative structure. According to this finding, it could be said that the teachers have been negatively affected by the pandemic period. When the determined categories, that is, the categories of *uncertainty, exclusion, worthlessness, despair & pessimism, having difficulty, dissatisfaction, desperation, sacrifice, dedication & struggle, role-*

*play, patience, discovering & creating opportunities and hope* and the metaphors collected under these categories are examined, it could be considered that the teachers have been in constant uncertainty and obscurity, that they feel worthless, that their hopes for the future have ran out, that they are in great pessimism and Also, they have found it very difficult to perform the profession and they have felt dissatisfied with the situation and conditions they are in, that they feel helpless. However, it is also seen that they have struggled a lot by sacrificing despite the difficulty of the conditions, and this difficult process have taught a number of teachers to be patient, and actually, there have been great opportunities to learn new things. Although the research carried out in the field of education during the Covid-19 pandemic in Turkey are very low in numbers, the findings of this study are in the same line with some studies in the literature. In this pandemic period, teachers, schools, families and children's burdens have increased due to technology-assisted education (Iivari et al., 2020). For example, one study has showed that many teachers, unable to adapt to the process, tend to quit their jobs due to increased workloads and inefficiency of the distance education model, and almost half of the public-school teachers in the U.S who have quit their jobs early and voluntarily since March, 2020 have showed Covid-19 and the concomitant stress as the main reasons for their leave (Alkan & Onur-Andaç, 2021). During the Covid-19 pandemic, many teachers have faced distance learning tools that they have perhaps never used before to carry out the teaching or support their students. Other than the face-to-face communication they are accustomed to professionally, teachers have had to support the learning and success of their students with different methods and tools; on the other hand, they have had to cope with the social and psychological difficulties that the pandemic has created in their own lives (Çetinkaya-Aydın, 2020). As a matter of fact, it could be said that although many efforts have been made in the field of health to cope with Covid-19 and lead people to the new normal, the studies in education are not such effective (Hossain, 2020). In this context, teachers have already stated that distance education practices applied during this period cannot replace face-to-face education, and there are many problems concerning the teachers and students (Atreya & Acharya, 2020). Everyone was caught unprepared by the changes in education during the pandemic period (Papagiannidis et al., 2020). As in the *role-play* theme of this study, the teachers in Turkey have played various key roles during the pandemic. For example, constant communication with the students and parents, monitoring and supporting the students' academic development as well as their social and emotional state, giving them house duties and offering feedback according to their readiness levels, and preventing the students' learning deficits through the synchronous online lessons are the most important of these roles.

In addition to this, such responsibilities of the teachers as taking charge in video shooting of asynchronous classes, production of the materials such as medical masks, visors and overalls that have been needed more in the process, volunteering within the scope of local social responsibility studies in the supply and delivery of basic needs of the individuals aged 65 and over who have had curfew restrictions are the most remarkable roles among them (Gençoğlu, & Çiftçi, 2020). The teachers with limited skills and competence to provide online education have faced difficulties in conducting this process effectively on their own and had to cope with a much more workload, demands and expectations. The pandemic period has created extra stress for the teachers (Çetinkaya-Aydın, 2020). Even under normal circumstances, along with the fact that the educators who have no previous experience of distance education have gone through this process can cause some problems (Kayaduman & Demirel, 2019), it is understandable that the teachers have problems in this unusual period. As found in many studies (Dilekçi & Limon, 2020; Hatun, Dicle & Demirci, 2020; Pitcher, 2021; Ho et al., 2020; Illuminated, 2020; World Economic Forum, 2020) the teachers have been negatively affected by this period psychologically like other people; that's why, the changes in education cannot be achieved without including teachers' views in the process in the time of crisis like this. (Mulenga & Marban, 2020). The pandemic brings social attitudes such as anxiety, fear and panic into the forefront in individuals (Lee & Burke, 2020). However, regarding sacrificing that is one of the findings of this study, the teachers in Turkey have played a major role in the successful management of the process by making great efforts (MEB, 2020). Despite these negative sides, a study conducted by the OECD with a total of 330 education employees and stakeholders from 98 countries whose schools have been closed has found that the important option is to provide the teachers with professional support (77.9%) and ensure the well-being of the teachers (77.6%) (OECD, 2020).

## 5. Recommendations

This study is limited to the question of the teachers working in official primary, secondary and high schools in a city in the Western Black Sea Region in the spring semester of the 2020-2021 academic year and the

metaphorical perception of related concept. Therefore, for the future studies, this topic could be reinvestigated by having a wider sampling, including the teachers working in different regions in the study and using different instruments for the data collection. Focus group discussions and interviews could be conducted in order to investigate the causes of the teachers' metaphorical perceptions in detail. Teachers could be trained at pre-service or in-service in such issues as tolerance to uncertainties, crisis management, problem solving skills, psychological capital and endurance etc. Projects could be implemented to support the teachers psychologically during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. Psychological support that will increase the well-being of the teachers could be provided by the Ministry. As Çetinkaya-Aydın (2020) has stated, what the process of crisis and its aftermath will mean to the teachers, and how the issues in this process will affect them professionally and personally will depend largely on the policies and measures to be followed at the central management level and institutional level. Therefore, policy makers and employees of central organization could carry out the necessary studies on what kind of programs to implement in case of pandemics or different disasters.

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