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## **Metaphorical Perceptions Of Teacher Candidates Regarding Distance Education During The Pandemic Period And Post-Pandemic Period**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Since the beginning of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic, which started to be frequently observed and forced us to stay at home, has somewhat hindered the complete disruption of our work and educational lives through the use of distance education technologies. Metaphors have been used as a lens to analyze various phenomena such as teachers and education in educational research. This study aims to identify the metaphors used by teacher candidates regarding distance education during and after the pandemic period and to gather information about their perceptions and factors influencing their thinking. The study utilized a basic qualitative research design. The study group consisted of 66 teacher candidates who were taking the "Open and Distance Learning" course in the fall semester of 2022-2023 and who received all of their courses during the pandemic period and some elective courses through distance education in the post-pandemic period. The metaphors were analyzed using content analysis. During the pandemic period, the teacher candidates produced 66 valid metaphors regarding the concept of distance education, which were categorized into two categories: positive and negative. The positive metaphors were grouped under three main themes: education, access, and flexibility. The negative metaphors were grouped under two main themes: access and uncertainty. Similarly, the teacher candidates produced 66 valid metaphors regarding distance education after the pandemic period, which were categorized into two categories: positive and negative. The positive metaphors were grouped under three main themes: education, access, and flexibility. The negative metaphors were grouped under the theme of time loss. It was determined through the analysis of the metaphors developed by the teacher candidates that their perceptions of distance education differed during the pandemic and post-pandemic periods.

**Keywords:** Distance Education, Metaphor Analyse, Teacher Candidate

### **ÖĞRETMEN ADAYLARININ PANDEMİ DÖNEMİNDE VE PANDEMİ SONRASI DÖNEMDE UZAKTAN EĞİTİME İLİŞKİN METAFORİK ALGILARI ÖZET**

2020 yılının başından itibaren sıklıkla görülmeye başlanan ve bizleri evlerimizde kalmaya zorlayan COVID 19 pandemisi sırasında uzaktan eğitim teknolojileri iş ve eğitim yaşantılarımızın tamamen kesintiye uğramasına bir nebze de olsa engel olmuştur. Eğitim araştırmalarında metaforlar, öğretmen, eğitim gibi birçok olguyu analiz etmek için bir merceğe olarak kullanılmıştır. Bu çalışmada öğretmen adaylarının pandemi döneminde ve pandemi sonrası dönemde uzaktan eğitime ilişkin metaforlarının belirlenmesinin amaçlanmıştır. Öğretmen adaylarının bu kavrama yönelik algıları ve böyle düşünmelerine neden olan etmenler hakkında bilgi edinilmeye çalışılmıştır. Bu araştırmada temel nitel araştırma deseni kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu 2022-2023 güz döneminde "Açık ve Uzaktan Öğrenme" dersini almakta olan; pandemi döneminde tüm derslerini, pandemi sonrası dönemde de bazı seçmeli derslerini uzaktan eğitim yoluyla alan 66 öğretmen adayı oluşturmaktadır. Öğretmen adaylarının uzaktan eğitime ilişkin yazılı olarak oluşturdukları metaforlar içerik analizi yöntemi ile analiz edilmiştir. Öğretmen adayları pandemi döneminde uzaktan eğitim kavramına ilişkin geçerli 66 metafor üretmişler ve bu metaforlar olumlu-olumsuz olmak üzere 2 kategori altında toplanmıştır. Pandemi döneminde uzaktan eğitim kavramına yönelik olarak geliştirdikleri olumlu metaforlar eğitim, erişim ve esneklik olmak üzere 3 ana tema altında toplanmaktadır. Pandemi döneminde uzaktan eğitim kavramına yönelik olarak geliştirdikleri olumsuz metaforlar erişim ve belirsizlik olmak üzere 2 ana tema altında toplanmaktadır. Öğretmen adayları pandemiden sonraki dönemde uzaktan eğitim kavramına ilişkin geçerli 66 metafor üretmişler ve bu metaforlar olumlu-olumsuz olmak üzere 2 kategori altında toplanmıştır. Öğretmen adaylarının pandemi sonrası dönemde uzaktan eğitim kavramına yönelik olarak geliştirdikleri olumlu metaforlar eğitim, erişim ve esneklik olmak üzere 3 ana tema altında toplanmaktadır. Öğretmen adaylarının pandemi sonrası dönemde uzaktan eğitim kavramına yönelik olarak geliştirdikleri olumsuz metaforlar zaman kaybı teması altında

toplanmaktadır. Öğretmen adaylarının pandemi döneminde ve pandemi sonrası dönemde uzaktan eğitime ilişkin algılarının farklılık gösterdiği geliştirdikleri metaforların analizi sonucunda belirlenmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Uzaktan Eğitim, Metafor Analizi, Öğretmen Adayı

## 1. INTRODUCTION

COVID-19, which was identified as an unknown disease in the city of Wuhan, China at the end of 2019, spread rapidly worldwide and turned into a pandemic over time, extending beyond its point of origin. The effects of COVID-19 quickly became clear worldwide, and it was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020 (WHO, 2020). As a measure to ensure social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, activities that were conducted on a mass scale were suspended or canceled. In this context, education was suspended in almost all countries. In Turkey, the first case was detected on March 11, 2020, and it was decided to suspend pre-school, primary, secondary, and higher education starting from March 16, 2020 (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Turkey, 2020). With the onset of this global pandemic, approximately one and a half billion students from all age groups attending schools, universities, and educational institutions around the world transitioned from face-to-face education to distance learning activities (UNESCO, 2020a; UNICEF, 2020b). Although distance education has a history dating back to the 1700s, its significance increased dramatically in 2020, and especially the COVID-19 pandemic that started toward the end of December 2019 led to the widespread recognition of distance education worldwide (Eken, Tosun & Tuzcu-Eken, 2020).

Especially during the pandemic, the use of distance education technologies helped prevent a complete interruption of our work and educational lives; as we were forced to stay at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic that started to be seen in our country in March 2020. Distance education, as the most commonly known definition, refers to all arrangements in which instruction is provided to individuals who participate in planned learning through print or electronic communication environments, different from the space and time of instructional staff (Moore, 1990). Distance education provides individuals with the opportunity for self-directed learning, is more flexible and adaptable to individual conditions compared to traditional education, and enables educational opportunities to reach broader masses (İşman, 2022). However, distance education practices during the pandemic have differed from traditional distance education practices in some aspects and have been conceptualized as emergency distance education aiming to provide quick solutions to disrupted educational activities worldwide. These temporary solutions can be described as a reflex to bring educators and learners together quickly through various online technologies. In other words, when considered within the context of planned distance education processes, this period can be evaluated as a remedial process that provides imperfect educational experiences (Hodges et al., 2020; cited in Sezgin, 2021). Emergency distance education conducted during the pandemic aims to provide temporary instructional support to learners during crisis times using technological tools for remote access to learning activities. It is a process that resembles face-to-face education through remote access with the help of technological tools during crisis times (Sezgin, 2021). In this respect, it is expected that the perspectives of all learners, educators, and parents will differ from their perspectives on distance education, which involves planned teaching-learning activities and has different components, in normal times.

Metaphors have been used as a lens in educational research to analyze many concepts such as teacher, education, etc. In the literature, there are studies aiming to determine individuals' metaphors regarding distance education (Kaleli-Yılmaz & Güven, 2015; Çivril, Aruğaslan & Özaydın-Özkara, 2017; Şahin-İzmirli & Mısırlı, 2018).

The purpose of the studies conducted by Atik (2020), Bozkurt (2020), Akpolat (2021), Çokyaman & Ünal (2021), Karakuş & Karacaoğlu (2021), Kaya & Dilekçi (2021), Kazu, Bahçeci & Kurtoğlu-Yalçın (2021), and Yaşdal & Tulunay-Ateş (2022) is to determine the metaphors related to distance education of parents, K-12 students, university students, teacher candidates, and teachers, particularly during the pandemic period.

In a study aiming to determine the perceptions of science teacher candidates regarding distance education, metaphors were grouped into four themes: "Communication," "Affective," "Educational," and "Accessibility" (Atik, 2020). Bozkurt (2020) identified the metaphors of primary and secondary school students regarding distance education during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and categorized these metaphors into two groups: positive and negative. In the study, the positive metaphor group revealed themes such as facilitation, lifelong learning, instructional affordance, structured learning, sense of community, autonomy, independence in time and space, intrinsic motivation, and accessibility. On the other hand, the negative metaphor group included themes such as feelings of loneliness, artificiality, socialization, extrinsic motivation, isolation, lack of communication, psychological distance, quality, inequality, immediacy, and affective proximity.

Karakuş & Karacaoğlu (2021) evaluated the perspectives of students, teachers, and parents toward distance education through metaphors. According to the results of the research, the metaphorical perception of distance education was expressed as temporary, inefficient, replacing face-to-face education, and a soulless, emotionless, and socially distant process. In a study that aimed to reveal the perceptions of students and teachers regarding distance education activities carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic, metaphors related to

distance education were grouped into the categories of access, flexibility, education, interaction, and affective (Çokyaman & Ünal, 2021).

In a study that aimed to determine the mental images of parents regarding emergency distance education during the COVID-19 outbreak through metaphors, metaphors were categorized into two groups: positive and negative. The positive category included three themes (Usefulness, Efficiency, and Flexibility), while the negative category included five themes (Related to the Form of Education, Related to Interaction, Related to Technical Reasons, Related to Students, and Related to Families) (Kaya & Dilekçi, 2021). In a study aiming to identify the perceptions of middle school students regarding distance education through metaphors, the metaphors of "incomprehensibility, anxiety-inducing, obligation, inefficiency, dependency, diversity, educational element, complexity, loneliness, facilitation, accessibility, and insufficiency" emerged, and when the metaphors were examined, it was observed that the perceptions regarding distance education were predominantly negative (Yaşdal & Tulunay-Ateş, 2022).

Metaphor is not only an unreal element used in language for aesthetic reasons but also a natural part of how we make sense of the world. The use of metaphor allows individuals to compare abstract or complex phenomena with more concrete or experienced ones, thereby developing an understanding of unknown phenomena (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). The aim of metaphor analysis is to uncover the underlying meanings beneath the direct and conscious meanings by examining the metaphors individuals use to describe their experiences and beliefs (Zheng & Song, 2010). Considering the unique conditions of the 21st century, which are characterized by its own, constantly changing nature and compel individuals to think more comprehensively in response to these changes, the perception of knowledge and knowing as power in today's world has necessitated the implementation of different techniques and approaches to access information. This requirement has also emerged in the context of conducting research, highlighting the need for diversity. Metaphors have served as a data collection method that encourages individuals to think freely and enables them to express themselves most effectively (Güneş & Fırat, 2015).

In line with this fundamental aim, the following questions have been addressed in the study:

1. What metaphors do teacher candidates develop regarding distance education during the pandemic period?
2. What metaphors do teacher candidates develop regarding distance education in the post-pandemic period?

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

### 2.1. Research Design

This study aims to uncover the metaphorical perceptions of pre-service teachers regarding distance education during the pandemic period and post-pandemic period. The basic qualitative research design was employed in this study. The focus of the basic qualitative research design is on how individuals interpret their lives, construct them, and give meaning to their experiences (Merriam, 2009). The use of metaphors as a qualitative data collection method primarily serves a descriptive role. It allows for the presentation of rich content and a visual representation of the subject, event, phenomenon, or situation (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). Accordingly, the basic qualitative research design was utilized to describe and examine pre-service teachers' perceptions of distance education during the pandemic period and post-pandemic period. The use of written metaphors produced by pre-service teachers as a data collection tool is another reason for choosing this design.

### 2.2. Study Group

The study group consists of 66 pre-service teachers who took the "Open and Distance Learning" course in the fall semester of 2022-2023 academic year and received their entire courses during the pandemic period, and some elective courses through distance education in the post-pandemic period. The participants of the study were selected using convenience sampling method, which is one of the purposeful sampling methods. Information about the pre-service teachers included in the study group based on their gender and the departments they studied in is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Study Group by Gender and Departments (n=66)**

Department	f			%
	Female	Male	Total	
Educational Sciences	3	1	4	6
Physical Education and Sports	7	3	10	15,2
Mathematics and Science Education	8	5	13	19,7
Special Education	4	8	12	18,2
Elementary Education	10	2	12	18,2
Turkish Language and Social Studies Education	2	3	5	7,5
Foreign Language Education	6	4	10	15,2

Total	40	26	66	100
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According to Table 1, pre-service teachers are studying in 7 different departments. The highest number of students in the study group is in the Mathematics and Science Education department (19.7%), while the lowest number of students is in the Educational Sciences department (6%). By including students from different departments in the study group, an attempt was made to ensure a heterogeneous structure of the group.

### 2.3. Data Collection

The "Metaphorical Perception Form of Pre-service Teachers Regarding Distance Education in the Pandemic Period and Post-Pandemic Period" was used to collect the data for this study. The participants were asked to complete the sentences "Distance education during the pandemic period is like... because..." and "Distance education after the pandemic period is like... because..." according to their own thoughts. Before the implementation, a brief explanation was provided to the pre-service teachers about filling out the form and metaphors. The participants were given approximately 10 minutes to generate metaphors. The metaphor sentences written by the participants in their own handwriting constitute the main source of data for the study. The term "like" is used to evoke a clearer and more explicit relationship between the subject and source of the metaphor, while the term "because" is used to provide a rationale or logical basis for the generated metaphors (Saban, 2009).

### 2.4. Data Analysis

The metaphors created in written form by teacher candidates regarding distance education were analyzed using content analysis method. In content analysis, the collected data is first conceptualized, then these concepts are organized, and the data is thematized (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). The stages to be followed in the content analysis of metaphors are as follows: (1) coding and extraction, (2) compilation of sample metaphor images, (3) development of categories, and (4) ensuring validity and reliability (Saban, 2008). The metaphors created by teacher candidates were sorted in alphabetical order, assigned a number for each participant, and coded (OA 8: 8th Teacher candidate from whom the metaphor was obtained). Eight forms were identified that did not contain any metaphor source, did not relate to the metaphor topic, did not provide information about the metaphor source, or did not have a logical rationale between the metaphor topic and the metaphor source. Valid metaphors were sorted in a computer environment and independently examined by the researcher and a subject matter expert, and examples were selected from the metaphors and their explanations. Metaphors used by multiple participants (library, tree, piggy bank, etc.) were examined in terms of the relationship between the metaphor topic and source and placed in the same or different categories. Teacher candidates produced 66 valid metaphors (43 different metaphors) related to the concept of distance education during the pandemic period, and these metaphors were categorized into 2 categories: positive and negative. Teacher candidates produced 66 valid metaphors (42 different metaphors) related to the concept of distance education after the pandemic, and these metaphors were categorized into 2 categories: positive and negative. The categories were initially determined independently by the researcher and then repeated by the subject matter expert. To calculate inter-coder reliability, the formula proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994),  $\text{Agreement} / (\text{Disagreement} + \text{Agreement}) \times 100$ , was used, and the inter-coder reliability was calculated as 92%. As the desired level of reliability was achieved among the coders, the reporting stage of the findings was initiated.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the metaphors produced by teacher candidates during the pandemic period and after the pandemic period regarding the concept of "distance education" and the conceptual categories formed from these metaphorical images are presented in tabular form. Each conceptual category is explained with the sentences written by the participants.

### 3.1 Metaphors of Teacher Candidates Regarding Distance Education During the Pandemic Period

The teacher candidates participating in the research have produced 43 different well-structured metaphors related to the concept of "distance education" during the pandemic period. Table 1 presents the metaphors generated by teacher candidates according to their frequency of use.

**Table 2: Metaphors Developed for the Concept of Distance Education During the Pandemic Period**

Number	Metaphor	f	%	Number	Metaphor	F	%
1	Tree	10	15,15	23	Mountain	1	1,51
2	Book	3	4,54	24	Encyclopedia	1	1,51
3	Pajamas	3	4,54	25	Bag	1	1,51
4	Lifebuoy	3	4,54	26	Snowdrop	1	1,51
5	Fruit	3	4,54	27	Sunday	1	1,51

6	Library	3	4,54	28	Miracle	1	1,51
7	Movie	3	4,54	29	Prison	1	1,51
8	Kite	2	3,03	30	Medicine	1	1,51
9	Money	2	3,03	31	Road	1	1,51
10	School	2	1,51	32	Wardrobe	1	1,51
11	Endless road	1	1,51	33	Tampon for Wounds	1	1,51
12	Map	1	1,51	34	Ambivalence	1	1,51
13	Step hill	1	1,51	35	Matryoshka Doll	1	1,51
14	Bird in cage	1	1,51	36	Theater	1	1,51
15	Depression	1	1,51	37	Cane	1	1,51
16	Rainy weather	1	1,51	38	Lamp	1	1,51
17	Food with unknown taste	1	1,51	39	Home gym equipment	1	1,51
18	Hot air baloon	1	1,51	40	Red Crescent tent	1	1,51
19	Teapod	1	1,51	41	Comfortable Chair	1	1,51
20	Empty Pot	1	1,51	42	Super hero	1	1,51
21	Blank Canvas	1	1,51	43	Magic wand	1	1,51
22	Overcoat	1	1,51	<b>Total</b>		66	100

When Table 2 is examined, it can be seen that among the metaphors generated in the study, the following metaphors have the highest frequency: tree (f=10; %15.15), book (f=3; %4.54), pajamas (f=3; %4.54), film (f=3; %4.54), lifebuoy (f=3; %4.54), library (f=3; %4.54), kite (f=2, %3.03), money (f=2, %3.03).

The metaphors in Table 2 have been coded, categorized, and assigned to themes that can be related to the literature on distance education. Positive and negative metaphors have been separately addressed. Table 3 presents the themes, metaphors, and example expressions in the context of positive metaphors.

**Table 3: Themes, Metaphors, and Example Expressions in the Context of Positive Metaphors.**

Theme	Metaphor	f	%	Example Expression
Education	Tree, book, school, fruit, hot air balloon, empty canvas, steep slope, snowdrop, wardrobe, road, Matryoshka dolls	24	36,37	...Because it provides the opportunity to acquire information from various sources on a wide range of topics. ...Because its branches resemble the diversity of subjects in distance education. ...Because we are like ripening fruits, getting mature as we are filled with knowledge. ...Because, with the right weather conditions and a good pilot, it can provide a unique learning experience. ...Because despite the challenging obstacles it presents, it also offers beauty and learning opportunities. ...Because it is a beautiful learning process when the necessary conditions are met. ...Because the more we open it, the more knowledge we gain.
Access	Library, Magic wand, superhero, miracle, medicine, map, coat, bag, money, lamp, Red Crescent tent	11	16,67	...Because it enabled us to receive education during the pandemic and freed us from four walls. ...Because it allows us to reach inaccessible experts in the field. ...Because it provides the opportunity to learn about unseen parts of the world. ...Because we fill this bag with knowledge and skills and take it wherever we want. ...Because it illuminated the room I was confined in.

Flexibility	Pajamas, comfortable chair, sunday, lifebuoy	8	12,12	...Because it offers the opportunity to learn in the comfort and safety of home, whenever we want. ...Because it represents comfort and flexibility for me. ...Because in distance education, I don't feel pressured and I enjoy being able to organize according to my own preferences.
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As seen in Table 3, the positive metaphors developed by the participating teacher candidates regarding the concept of distance education during the pandemic are grouped under three main themes: education, access, and flexibility. It is observed that the theme most frequently expressed by the teacher candidates is "Education (f=24; %36.37)". This is followed by the themes of "Access (f=11; %16.67)" and "Flexibility (f=8; %12.12)" in terms of metaphor production and frequency. Looking at the example expressions, it can be seen that the teacher candidates emphasize the diversity and multidimensionality of the teaching and learning process with the most frequently repeated metaphor of a tree. In the education category, expressions such as "...Because, with the right weather conditions and a good pilot, it can provide a unique learning experience; ...Because despite the challenging obstacles it presents, it also offers beauty and learning opportunities; ...Because it is a beautiful learning process when the necessary conditions are met" highlight the opinions that, although distance education has its difficulties, with the right conditions and sufficient effort, the results can be positive. Table 4 presents the themes, metaphors, and example expressions in the context of negative metaphors.

**Table 4: Themes, Metaphors, and Example Expressions in the Context of Negative Metaphors**

Theme	Metaphor	f	%	Example Expression
Access	Prison, horror movie, kite, ambulance, rainy weather, theater, film, caged bird, depression.	13	19,69	... Because it was a period where we couldn't even leave home for online classes. ... Because the unsuitability of the home environment for education made everything horrifying. ... Because in the sky, everyone can see, but if not managed well from the strings, it either gets stuck in a tree or flies away. ... Because watching a good play from a distance is like. ... Because we could only watch, we couldn't fly to the sky. ... Because it supported us staying at home, but it dragged us into depression.
Uncertainty	Endless road, cane, wound pad, mountain, home exercise equipment, unknown-taste food, teapot, encyclopedia, empty pot.	10	15,15	... Because when it comes to my educational life, it's impossible to predict what I will encounter. ... Because due to unfavorable conditions, it has been a temporary but ineffective solution to the bleeding wound of education. ... Because it was like a mountain that I had to overcome in my educational life. ... Because at first, everyone finds it very comfortable, uses it a lot, but not everyone can succeed because it requires great willpower. ... Because it contains a lot of information, but it doesn't make sense unless I open it.

As seen in Table 4, the negative metaphors developed by the participating teacher candidates regarding distance education during the pandemic period are grouped under two main themes: access and uncertainty. It can be observed that the theme most expressed by teacher candidates is "Access (f=13; %19.69)." This is followed by the theme of "Uncertainty (f=10; %15.15)." In the Access category, the emphasis is on the inability to participate in the education process and the concern of being left out, with expressions such as "... Because the unsuitability of the home environment for education made everything horrifying; ... Because in the sky, everyone can see, but if not managed well from the strings, it either gets stuck in a tree or flies away; ... Because watching a good play from a distance is like; ... Because we could only watch, we couldn't fly to the sky." The Uncertainty category includes metaphors such as endless road, mountain, unknown-taste food, empty pot. The expressions "... Because when it comes to my educational life, it's impossible to predict what I will encounter; ...

Because there is an unknown-taste meal in front of me and I think I won't like it" highlight the negative emotions created by the uncertainty of distance education.

### 3.2 Metaphors Developed by Teacher Candidates for Post-Pandemic Period of Distance Education

The participating teacher candidates have produced 42 different well-constructed metaphors regarding "distance education in the post-pandemic period." Table 5 presents the metaphors developed by teacher candidates for distance education in the post-pandemic period, according to their frequency of use.

**Table 5. Metaphors developed for distance education in the post-pandemic period**

Number	Metaphor	f	%	Number	Metaphor	f	%
1	Flash drive	4	6,06	22	Unnecessary Workload	1	1,51
2	Book	4	6,06	23	Lake	1	1,51
3	Friend	4	6,06	24	Glasses	1	1,51
4	Freedom	4	6,06	25	Judge	1	1,51
5	Library	3	4,54	26	Dead-end	1	1,51
6	Coffee	3	4,54	27	Door	1	1,51
7	Car	2	3,03	28	Shortcut	1	1,51
8	Sun	2	3,03	29	Small Home Appliance	1	1,51
9	Bird	2	3,03	30	Amusement Park	1	1,51
10	Ocean	2	3,03	31	Pomegranate	1	1,51
11	Gold	2	3,03	32	Rough Road	1	1,51
12	Mirror	2	3,03	33	Window	1	1,51
13	Sapling	2	3,03	34	Rubik's Cube	1	1,51
14	Film	2	3,03	35	Robot Vacuum	1	1,51
15	Father	1	1,51	36	Burden	1	1,51
16	Futile Effort	1	1,51	37	Borderless Land	1	1,51
17	Empty Notebook	1	1,51	38	Waste Time	1	1,51
18	Tea's Sugar	1	1,51	39	Water	1	1,51
19	Child	1	1,51	40	Soil	1	1,51
20	Sea	1	1,51	41	Remote Control	1	1,51
21	Binoculars	1	1,51	42	Time Machine	1	1,51
				<b>Total</b>		66	100

When Table 5 is examined, it can be seen that among the metaphors generated in the study, USB Flash Drive (f=4, %6.06), book (f=4, %6.06), friend (f=4, %6.06), freedom (f=4, %6.06), library (f=3, %4.54), and coffee (f=3, %4.54) are among the metaphors with the highest frequency. The metaphors in Table 5 have been coded, categorized, and assigned to thematic areas that can be related to the literature. Positive and negative metaphors have been addressed separately. Table 6 presents the themes, metaphors, and example expressions in the context of positive metaphors related to remote education after the pandemic.

**Table 6: Themes, Metaphors, and Example Expressions in the Context of Positive Metaphors Related to Remote Education after the Pandemic**

Theme	Metaphor	f	%	Example Expression
Education	Book, coffee, friend, gold, sugar of tea, sea, mirror, artificial intelligence, ocean, lake, glasses, sun, football match, water, pomegranate, small home appliances, car, father, baby, coffee, boundless territory, friend, sapling, empty notebook, soil	36	54,54	... Because it provides me with invaluable learning opportunities. ... Because it allows us to continue our educational processes in the best possible way with unlimited sources of knowledge. ... Because, even if it is distant, our connection remains unbroken, and I constantly learn from it. ... Because it provides endless accumulation of knowledge. ... Because it enlightens me through its sources of information. ... Because it takes me to my desired destination.
Access	USB flash drive, library, rubik's cube, film, door, binoculars, shortcut, window,	16	24,24	... Because it allows me to learn anytime, anywhere. ... Because it is a system where I progress at my



	judge, remote control			own pace, rewind as much as I want, and repeat as much as I want. ... Because I can access information sources whenever I want. ... Because it ensures equal access to education for everyone.
Flexibility	Freedom, bird, robot vacuum cleaner, amusement park, time machine	8	12,12	... Because it allows me to both work and study. ... Because it enables me to be independent of time while receiving education. ... Because it provides me with the opportunity to learn comfortably in the comfort of my home.

As seen in Table 6, the positive metaphors developed by the participating teacher candidates regarding remote education in the post-pandemic period are grouped under 3 main themes: education, access, and flexibility. It is observed that the theme most expressed by the teacher candidates is "Education (f=31; %47)". This is followed by the themes of "Access (f=15; %22.72)" and "Flexibility (f=8; %12.12)" in terms of metaphor production and frequency. Looking at the example expressions, it can be seen that the teacher candidates most frequently repeated the metaphor of a book, emphasizing that remote education is seen as a source of knowledge and provides support to them. In the education category, expressions such as "... Because it provides me with invaluable learning opportunities; "... Because it enables us to continue our educational processes in the best possible way with unlimited sources of knowledge; ... Because, even if it is distant, our connection remains unbroken, and I constantly learn from it" highlight the view that remote education creates an opportunity for their educational lives. Table 7 presents the themes, metaphors, and example expressions related to negative metaphors developed for remote education in the post-pandemic period.

**Table 7: Themes, metaphors, and example expressions related to negative metaphors for remote education in the post-pandemic period.**

Theme	Metaphor	f	%	Example Expression
Time Loss	Futile effort, time waste, unnecessary workload, rugged road, burden, dead-end street	6	9,09	... Because it cannot replace real education, we are wasting time. ... Because while we have face-to-face lessons, these lessons feel like an unnecessary workload to me. ... Because it is a dead-end street that wastes time without reaching any goal.

As seen in Table 7, the negative metaphors developed by the participating teacher candidates regarding distance education in the post-pandemic period are grouped under the theme of time loss (f=6; %9.09). When looking at the example expressions, it is observed that teacher candidates emphasize the difficulties of distance education and perceive it as a waste of time and unnecessary workload. They support their views with expressions such as "... Because while we have face-to-face lessons, these lessons feel like an unnecessary workload to me; ... Because it is a dead-end street that wastes time without reaching any goal."

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to identify the metaphors used by teacher candidates regarding distance education during the pandemic period and the post-pandemic period. An attempt was made to gain insights into the participants' perceptions of this concept and the factors that led them to think in this way. While participants used positive metaphors for distance education, there were also those who held negative views towards distance education. Learners' perceptions of distance education and their reasons for them were discussed under categories and themes. When examining the literature, studies similar to the research findings can be seen, where teachers, teacher candidates, parents, and students express metaphors that indicate both the positive and negative aspects of distance education (Akkaş et al., 2020; Arslan et al., 2021; Atik, 2020; Bozkurt, 2020; Bulut & Kırbaş, 2022; Çokyaman & Ünal, 2021; Karakuş & Karacaoğlan, 2021; Kaya & Dilekçi, 2021).

The metaphors used by teacher candidates regarding distance education were categorized under positive and negative categories, both during the pandemic period and the post-pandemic period. However, it is observed that during the pandemic period, there were more positive metaphors (f=43, %65.15) compared to negative metaphors (f=23, %34.65), whereas in the post-pandemic period, there were more positive metaphors (f=60, %90.1) compared to negative metaphors (f=6, %9.09). It is evident that the majority of the metaphors created in the post-pandemic period were positive.

When examining the positive metaphors during the pandemic period, it is observed that metaphors were generated in the categories of education, accessibility, and flexibility. According to the Excellence project conducted by the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU), which involves 13 institutions running online education programs in Europe, accessibility, flexibility, interaction, and personalization have been determined as key characteristics for distance education in higher education, and the development of these characteristics has been targeted (EADTU, 2013). It can be said that the themes of the research align with these principles.

In the education category, teacher candidates emphasize the continuity of education and the support of teaching-learning processes with various resources. This finding of the study aligns with the findings in the education category in the study conducted by Çokyaman (2021). Similarly, in the study by Bozkurt (2020), the lifelong learning theme in the beneficial category also supports the current study. In the accessibility category, teacher candidates mentioned through metaphors such as superhero, miracle, and medicine that their connection with the world during the pandemic period was through distance education, and that distance education was the only way for teacher candidates to access education. Similarly, in a study by Akpolat (2020), middle school students saw distance education, which ensured the continuity of their education during the pandemic, as a healing soup, medicine, or first aid kit, as it didn't fully cure the situation but saved them momentarily. Online education creates flexibility for learning and teaching anytime and anywhere (Hodges et al., 2020). In this study, the theme of flexibility is emphasized through metaphors such as comfortable chair and pajamas mentioned by teacher candidates. Urgent distance education during the pandemic period is independent of time and place (Özdoğan & Berkant, 2020) and provides all learners with the opportunity to review their lessons in a flexible manner (Günbaşı & Gözükcük, 2020). In a study conducted with science teacher candidates, metaphors were generated in the flexibility category highlighting the time and place independence of distance education, the absence of attendance obligation, and the learner's ability to continue learning without changing their lifestyle, emphasizing its flexible structure (Atik, 2020). In a study examining the metaphors of primary school students regarding distance education, autonomy, and themes of time and place independence were identified in the flexibility category (Bozkurt, 2020).

When looking at the negative metaphors expressed during the distance education period, it is observed that metaphors were generated in the categories of accessibility and uncertainty. The accessibility category became a category where both positive and negative metaphors were produced. While some teacher candidates see distance education as the only way to access their educational processes, others perceive distance education as a barrier between them and their education. Teacher candidates used metaphors such as prison, horror movie, rainy weather, caged bird, and depression to express that distance education prevented them from leaving their homes.

When examining the metaphors used by teacher candidates regarding distance education in the post-pandemic period, it is observed that the majority of metaphors are positive and are categorized under education, access, and flexibility. On the other hand, the negative metaphors expressed in the post-pandemic period are gathered under the theme of time loss. It is evident that teacher candidates perceive the distance education they received during their formal education as a waste of time and an unnecessary burden.

Upon analyzing the research results, it can be concluded that teacher candidates' perceptions of distance education vary during the pandemic and post-pandemic periods, as determined through the analysis of developed metaphors. In light of this finding, it can be stated that teacher candidates have a positive view regarding the integration of distance education to support face-to-face learning. They emphasize that their social interactions and engagement significantly decrease in distance education. To address this issue, online seminars, collaborative activities, group projects, counseling hours, and student interviews can be implemented to enhance the interactivity of distance education processes and increase student-student and student-teacher interactions.

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