Teachers' Mental Associations about the Covid-19:
An Example of Metaphor Study

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erol Koçoğlu
Inonu University, Turkey
ORCID: 0000-0003-4595-2892
erol.kocoglu@inonu.edu.tr

Prof. Dr. Mesut Aydın
Inonu University, Turkey
ORCID: 0000-0002-4256-9436
mesut.eydin@inonu.edu.tr

Ayşegül Dumlupınar Arslan (MA Stud.)
Inonu University, Turkey
ORCID: 0000-0003-3854-0427
dumlupinaraysegul@gmail.com

Nursenem Çetinkaya (MA Stud.)
Inonu University, Turkey
ORCID: 0000-0002-2849-5063
nrsenem@gmail.com

Revanur Kubat (MA Stud.)
Inonu University, Turkey
ORCID: 0000-0002-6717-8677
revanurkubat.44@gmail.com

Nimet Karabulut (MA Stud.)
Inonu University, Turkey
ORCID: 0000-0002-0550-1360
nimetkarabulut44.nk@gmail.com

Abstract:

The Covid-19, which emerged in Wuhan, China in the last days of December 2019 and affected the whole world, has adversely affected the lives of many people and continues to affect them. Undoubtedly, one of the areas most affected by the pandemic, which negatively affects the functioning of many areas, especially health, is education. In this study, the teacher side of this negative effect was examined. For this purpose, a questionnaire was applied to determine the mental effects of the pandemic on teachers, in Turkey. The relevant questionnaire included demographic questions (age, gender, branch, and province of employment) and 2 open-ended questions regarding the participants. The open-ended questions were "What Covid-19 like?" and "Why did you use this metaphor or representation?" The various pre-processing steps were employed on the data set. After the pre-processing steps, the data set consisted of 236 participating teachers (83 male, 153 female). In the research, a total of 102 metaphor sub-categories were produced by the participants. These metaphors were then grouped into 10 different main metaphor categories. According to the results, "fear" was the most used metaphor by the participants. After grouping the metaphors, it was observed that the category with the highest frequency was "metaphorical perceptions about emotions".

Keywords: Covid-19, Education, Metaphorical Perception, Teacher.

INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has adversely affected people in the world and our country and continues to affect them. This pandemic, which many people in the world do not even know its name, occurred in Wuhan Province in China in December and brought life to a halt in many areas, especially health (World Health Organization, 2020). Covid-19 first cases in Turkey have been seen 10 March 2020 (Telli Danışmaz, 2020). It can be said that many activities have been suspended in order not to endanger human life since the first appearance of the disease in our country. Since the first appearance of the disease in our country, many activities have been suspended in order not to endanger human life.

During the pandemic, one of the areas most affected after health is education. Within the scope of Covid-19 measures, the most important decision taken across the country regarding the education area was to temporarily suspend face-to-face education. To protect the health of teachers and students, it was decided to start the distance education process in all schools affiliated with the Ministry of National Education as of March 15. Recent studies show that 770 million students, not only in our country but worldwide, are affected by the closure of schools and university educational institutions (Genç and Gümrükçüoğlu, 2020).

Distance education in Turkey has started after a short time after the interruption of face-to-face education. The fact that teachers and students were not familiar with the distance education method and stayed away from the school environment negatively affected the educational activities in many ways (Demirbilek, 2021; Ercan, Rodopman Arman, İnal Emiroğlu, Behice Öztop, and Yalçın, 2020; Kavuk & Demirtaş, 2021; Toprakçı, Hepsöğütlü and Toprakçı, 2021; Yavuz and Toprakçı, 2021). Considering the point of view of teachers, it is a possible situation that teachers may feel mentally and mentally uneasy for the following reasons: not being able to reach enough students as in face-to-face education, not being able to interest in students one-on-one, especially practice-based lessons not being done effectively and efficiently, limited technological infrastructure and facilities, and so on. It was reported in relevant studies that the habits and teaching styles of teachers are limited due to social isolation, which may cause them to feel uneasy (Arı and Arslan, 2020; Sarı and Nayır, 2020).

People may have different associations in their minds regarding Covid-19 due to reasons such as the pandemic period taking longer than expected, disease and mortality rates constantly increasing, and restrictions on social life. It can be thought that the nature of the mental associations that teachers will produce about Covid-19, one of the professions most affected by the process, maybe interesting. In this context, using metaphors, it was revealed the mental associations for teachers' Covid-19 pandemic in Turkey. At the same time, when the relevant studies were examined, it was seen that the number of studies dealing with the metaphors that teachers produced for the Covid-19 pandemic is low. The word metaphor comes from the Greek word "metaphere", which is the combination of the words "meta" (to change) and "pherein" (to transfer) (Koçoğlu and Kaya, 2016; Levine, 2005). According to (Semerci, 2007), metaphor is the transfer of meaning from one object with perceptual similarity to another. They are also the structures used to use different concepts to describe a concept, to strengthen the expression, to enrich the language, and to transform ideas into linguistic actions in the most effective way. Also, it is a mentally strong model (Ertürk, 2017; Saban, 2008). Because through metaphor, a certain mental scheme is projected onto another mental scheme by establishing a relationship between two dissimilar phenomena. In this way, metaphors enable an individual's mind to move from one particular way of understanding to another (Ertürk, 2017; Saban, 2008).

In a study, metaphors were defined as a powerful mind mapping and modeling mechanism for individuals to make sense of and structure their world (Arslan, 2006). In this context, metaphors can be seen as concepts that enable individuals to reveal their perceptions more strikingly and effectively. With the help of metaphors, a situation or problem can be explained using other

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concepts. On the other hand, it can be said that the metaphors that are embedded in our daily conversations affect our emotions, behaviors, and actions. However, even if we do not realize where and when we use them, metaphors can serve within cultural and personal frameworks of how we direct our lives (Demirtaş and Çoban, 2014; James, 2002). In daily life, people can make use of metaphors in understanding, interpreting, and expressing phenomena that are difficult to understand. Because metaphors can greatly benefit one's communication and ability to express facts in this context (Aykaç and Çelik, 2014).

It can be thought that teachers' perceptions of the Covid-19 can be reached with metaphors, who have to interrupt face-to-face education and continue their educational activities remotely. By asking teachers to express their perceptions about the Covid-19 outbreak with another concept that they think is stronger, their metaphorical perceptions about the pandemic can be revealed. Thus, the perceptions of teachers, who have an important role in the execution of educational activities, about Covid-19 can be reached.

When the literature was searched on metaphor studies in the field of education for Covid-19, it was seen that there were studies for students at primary, secondary, and high school levels. However, a study conducted in Turkey for a metaphorical perception of teachers was not found. Literature searches were made in the related article databases using multiple combinations of the keywords "metaphor", "metaphorical perception", "education", "teacher", "mental association", "Covid-19". In this context, it is thought that the current study will fill the relevant gap in the literature.

In a recent study, it was aimed to reveal the perceptions of students and teachers about distance education activities in the Covid-19 period with metaphor analysis. In the study, which consisted of 263 teachers and students in total, it was concluded that the participants mostly had positive perceptions about distance education (Çokyaman and Menderes, 2021).

In another study, it was aimed to state the perceptions of education faculty students regarding the definitions of "teacher" and "student" during the Covid-19 pandemic by metaphors. Considering the metaphors produced by the participants, it was reported that teachers and students had problems in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities regarding distance education (Sarıer and Uysal, 2021).

In another related study, it was aimed to determine the perceptions of teachers from different branches about Covid-19. In the study, in which 35 teachers participated, it was determined that teachers generally had negative perceptions about Covid-19, they wanted to increase the measures taken regarding Covid-19, and they were hopeful about the future of the disease (Cömert and Şahin Çakır, 2021).

In a similar research, it was aimed to determine the distance education experiences they carried out during the Covid-19 process through metaphors. According to the results of this research, in which 53 English teachers working in different educational institutions participated, the problem of interaction was the most stated metaphors by participiants about the distance education applications (Cantürk and Cantürk, 2021).

This study aims to analyze the metaphorical perceptions of teachers regarding the Covid-19 pandemic and reveal their perception of the pandemic. In the study, the answer was sought for the problem sentence "What are the mental associations teachers use about the Covid-19 pandemic?" Within the framework of this problem, the following questions were also been considered:

- What are the metaphorical perceptions of teachers regarding the Covid-19 pandemic?
- Under which main categories are teachers' metaphorical perceptions of the Covid-19 pandemic?
- What is the relationship between the metaphorical perceptions of male and female teachers regarding the Covid-19 outbreak in terms of categories and their frequencies?

METHODOLOGY

This study, which aims to determine the mental associations produced by teachers for the Covid-19 with the help of metaphors, was designed as a descriptive study. One of the qualitative research designs, phenomenology design was used in the study. The purpose of the phenomenology pattern is to generate knowledge and reveal the reality of the phenomenon (Creswell and Poth, 2016; Patton, 1980). A flow chart showing the main stages of the method followed in the study is presented in Figure 1.
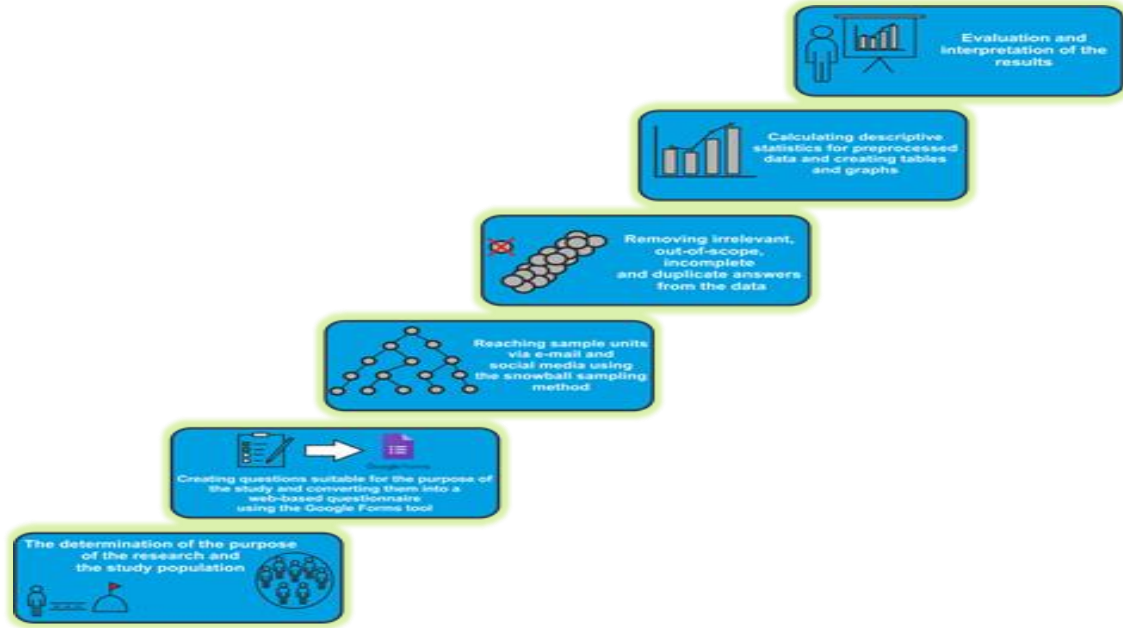

Figure 1. *The main methodological steps followed in the study*

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The research study group consisted of teachers from different branches and working in various regions of Turkey. A total of 236 teachers, 83 males, and 153 females, participated in the study. All participants participated in the study voluntarily. Snowball sampling, one of the non-probability sampling methods, was used in this study.

The research population was identified as teachers who worked in Turkey and were not retired. The Snowball sampling method which one of the non-probability sampling methods was used due to the difficulty of reaching sampling units in the Covid-19 pandemic. The questions formed according to the purpose of the study were converted into a web-based questionnaire using the Google Forms tool and then sent to the participants using e-mail and social media. In the initial phase, after giving information about metaphorical perceptions to the participants, two open-ended questions were asked. These open-ended questions were: "What do you associate the Covid-19 disease to?" and "Why did you use this association or metaphor?" In the latter question, teachers were asked to present the metaphor they use in a logical framework. The metaphors produced by the participants were grouped under 10 main metaphor categories.

The age variable, which is the only numerical variable in the data set, was summarized as arithmetic mean ± standard deviation. The other categorical variables were summarized as frequency (percentages) in the relevant tables. R (version 3.6.3) software was used for the calculation of descriptive statistics and pre-processing steps on the data set (Team, 2020).

In order to test the reliability of the research, the matching of the main metaphor categories with the metaphors produced by the participants was first made independently by the authors, and then two experts were asked. The intercoder agreement was calculated as 91.2% (93/(93+9))

using the formula of Miles and Huberman (100x(Agreement/(Agreement + Disagreement))) (Miles and Huberman, 1994). According to this result, the study can be considered as reliable (Saban, 2009).

The limited sample size and the inability to generalize the results well due to the fact that the participants were teachers from different branches were the main limitations of this study.

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FINDINGS

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In the present study, mental associations of teachers who worked in different branches throughout Turkey related to the pandemic of Covid-19 were considered. From the collected data set, 102 valid metaphors about Covid-19 were determined and these metaphors were grouped under 10 main headings.

In the data analysis stage, two filtering processes were performed on the raw data at first. In the first stage, the actual number of participants was reached by removing the duplicate answers. As a result of this, the number of participants reduced from 316 to 277. When the distribution of the participants by gender was examined, it was seen that the number of female participants was 153 (64.8%) and the number of male participants was 83 (35.2%). The mean age and standard deviation of the participants were calculated as 33.32 ± 6.82. The metaphorical perceptions that the teachers produced about the Covid-19 disease was presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *The metaphors generated by teachers about the Covid-19*

Metaphor	Ma (n)	Fe (n)	Total (n)	Metaphor	Ma (n)	Fe (n)	Total (n)	Metaphor	Ma (n)	Fe (n)	Total (n)
Inability	1	0	1	Whirlpool	0	2	2	Anger	0	1	1
Pain	0	1	1	Flu	2	8	10	Cough	0	1	1
Octopus	1	2	3	Weakness	0	1	1	Death	4	5	9
Agent	0	1	1	Imprisonme	2	1	3	Longing	0	1	1
Antisocial	1	0	1	Damage	1	0	1	Pandemic	0	3	3
Asociality	1	2	3	Sadness	1	0	1	Parasite	0	1	1
Asthma	0	1	1	Dead nettle	0	1	1	Dirt	0	1	1
Love	1	1	2	Malady	1	0	1	Patience	0	1	1
Separation	0	1	1	Invader	0	1	1	Epidemic	4	6	10
Problem	3	1	4	Isolation	0	1	1	Weapon	1	0	1
Uncertainty	2	1	3	Nightmare	2	5	7	Insidious	1	0	1
Boredom	0	1	1	Cage	1	0	1	Political war	1	0	1
Biological attack	0	1	1	Cactus	1	1	2	Responsibili	1	0	1
Drowning	1	1	2	Chaos	1	0	1	Social	3	0	3
Defeat	0	1	1	Staying	0	4	4	Abstraction	1	0	1
Infectiousness	2	4	6	Snowflake	0	1	1	Stress	1	2	3
Monster	0	1	1	Snowball	0	1	1	Lightning	1	0	1
Punishment	0	1	1	Blind love	1	0	1	Ungratefuln	1	0	1
Mud	0	1	1	Darkness	0	3	3	Doubt	1	1	2
Despair	3	1	4	Quarantine	0	3	3	Uneasiness	1	2	3
Avalanche	0	1	1	Anxiety	0	2	2	Danger	3	1	4
Non-removing stain	0	1	1	Tick	1	0	1	Tremor	0	1	1
Trouble	0	1	1	Restriction	3	2	5	Wild animal	1	0	1
Barbed wire	1	1	2	Hedgehog	0	1	1	Plague	2	0	2
Spiky ball	0	1	1	Break off	1	0	1	Loneliness	2	2	4
Hail	0	1	1	Fear	5	22	27	Sticky	1	0	1
Domino	0	1	1	Evil	1	1	2	Bat	0	1	1
Enemy	0	2	2	Bullet	0	1	1	Prohibition	0	2	2
Worry	4	8	12	Mask	2	6	8	Snake	0	1	1
Obstacle	1	1	2	Matryoshka	0	1	1	Weariness	1	0	1
Captivity	0	2	2	Enigma	0	1	1	Intensive	0	1	1
Ex-lover	0	1	1	Struggle	0	1	1	Pneumonia	1	0	1
Mousetrap	1	0	1	Ink	0	1	1	Poison	1	1	2
Disaster	1	0	1	Playdough	0	1	1	Difficulty	0	1	1
Total (n)					236						

Ma: Male   **Fe**: Female

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102 metaphors for Covid-19 disease were developed by 236 teachers who participated in the study. The distribution of the relevant metaphor answers by gender and their numbers and percentages in the total were given in Table 1. Among these metaphors, the followings were frequently used by participants: "Fear" (n=27), "Worry" (n=12), "Flu" (n=10), "Death" (n=9), "Mask" (n=8), "Infectiousness" (n=6), "Loneliness" (n=4) and "Problem" (n=4).

1. The categories of metaphoric perceptions generated by teachers about the Covid-19 pandemic

The metaphors produced by the teachers participating in the study for the Covid-19 pandemic, the main categories of these metaphors, and the frequency and percentage statistics are given in Table 2.

Table 2. *The metaphors produced by teachers and their categories about the Covid-19*

Main metaphor Categories	Metaphors	Number of metaphors (n (%))
Livings	Octopus, monster, dead nettle, cactus, tick, hedgehog, parasite, wild animal, bat, snake	10 (%9.8)
Emotions	Love, separation, despair, worry, ex-lover, sadness, blind love, anxiety, fear, anger, longing, stress, ungratefulness, doubt, loneliness	15 (%14.7)
Mental perception	Inability, weariness, weakness, enigma, patience, responsibility, uneasiness, frustration, difficulty	9 (%8.8)
Diseases	Pain, asthma, infectiousness, flu, cough, pandemic, epidemic, tremor, plague, intensive care, pneumonia	11 (%10.8)
Weather events and natural disasters	Avalanche, hail, disaster, whirlpool, snowflake, snowball, lightning	7 (%6.9)
Uncleanliness	Mud, non-removing stain, dirt, sticky	4 (%3.9)
Objects	Barbed wire, spiky ball, domino, mousetrap, cage, mask, matryoshka, ink, playdough	9 (%8.8)
Negativeness	Problem, uncertainty, drowning, punishment, trouble, obstacle, damage, malady, nightmare, chaos, darkness, evil, death, insidious, danger, poison	16 (%15.7)
War	Agent, biological attack, defeat, enemy, captivity, invader, bullet, struggle, weapon, political war	10 (%9.8)
Social isolation	Antisocial, asociality, staying closed, imprisonment, isolation, quarantine, restriction, break off, social distance, abstraction, prohibitions	11 (%10.8)

In Table 2, 102 different metaphors produced by teachers were evaluated and metaphors with similar connotations were grouped under 10 main metaphor categories. The names of these main metaphor categories were determined as "The livings", "Emotions", "Mental perception", "Disease", "Weather events and natural disasters", "Uncleanliness", "Object", "Negativeness", "War", "Social isolation". When the categorized metaphors were examined, it was seen that the "negativity" category had the highest frequency. The least frequent metaphor category was the "pollution" category.

2. The Distribution of Metaphors Produced for the Covid-19 Based on the Main Categories

Table 3 includes 10 in the "metaphorical perceptions about the livings" category. The answers given to the metaphors consist of 4 males and 9 female's participants. Among the metaphor answers, "octopus" had the highest frequency.

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Table 3. *The metaphoric perceptions about the "Livings"*

Category	Metaphor	Gender		Total (n)
		Male (n)	**Female (n)**	
Livings	Octopus	1	2	3
	Monster	0	1	1
	Dead nettle	0	1	1
	Cactus	1	1	2
	Tick	1	0	1
	Hedgehog	0	1	1
	Parasite	0	1	1
	Wild animal	1	0	1
	Bat	0	1	1
	Snake	0	1	1
Total (n)		**4**	**9**	**13**

Some examples of the metaphors that the participants mentioned under this category were presented below:

- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is similar to the octopus because it has surrounded our whole lives like the arms of an octopus.*"
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is similar to a cactus because its shape and spiny appearance resemble the same cactus.*"
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is similar to the parasite because it mutates and changes itself according to the effect it receives from the outside.*"
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is like a snake because it took our country and the whole world by approaching in a sneaky way like a snake.*"

Table 4. *The metaphoric perceptions related to "Emotions"*

Category	Metaphor	Gender		Total (n)
		Male (n)	**Female (n)**	
Emotions	Love	1	1	2
	Separation	0	1	1
	Despair	3	1	4
	Worry	4	8	12
	Ex-lover	0	1	1
	Sadness	1	0	1
	Blind love	1	0	1
	Anxiety	0	2	2
	Fear	5	22	27
	Anger	0	1	1
	Longing	0	1	1
	Stress	1	2	3
	Ungratefulness	1	0	1
	Doubt	1	1	2
	Loneliness	2	2	4
Total (n)		**20**	**43**	**63**

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Table 4 contains 15 metaphors in the "metaphorical perceptions about emotions" category in line with the answers were given by a total of 63 participants. These metaphors were produced by a total of 63 (20 males, 43 females) participants. The "metaphorical perceptions about emotions" was the most frequent category. In this category, the most used metaphor to describe Covid-19 was "fear".

Some examples of the metaphors that the participants mentioned under this category were presented below:

- "*The Covid-19 pandemic evokes fear because I feel tied up, totally restricted, and scared.*"
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic evokes fear because I fear losing my relatives, getting sick and in a lot of pain, being separated from my children, and causing permanent damage to my body.*"
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic evokes suspicion, because it was released by the hand of man, gradually*

infected all people, and turned into global trouble.

Table 5. *The metaphoric perceptions related to "Mental Perception"*

Category	Metaphor	Gender		Total
		Male (n)	Female (n)	
Mental Perception	Inability	1	0	1
	Boredom	0	1	1
	Weakness	0	1	1
	Enigma	0	1	1
	Patience	0	1	1
	Responsibility	1	0	1
	Uneasiness	1	2	3
	Weariness	1	0	1
	Difficulty	0	1	1
Total (n)		**4**	**7**	**11**

In the category of "metaphors about mental perception", 9 metaphors were produced by 11 participants with 4 males and 7 females. The participants mostly used the metaphor of "uneasiness" to describe the Covid-19 disease in this category.

Some examples of the metaphors that the participants mentioned under this category were presented below:

- *"The Covid-19 creates a sense of anxiety because it affects the world and is spreading rapidly. I am very worried at the point of a disease where it is not known how it will be transmitted and I wonder how it will end. "*
- *"The Covid-19 creates a perception of helplessness because despite today's developing medical technologies, seeing what situations a tiny virus puts humanity in it brings this association to my mind."*
- *"The Covid-19 pandemic reminds me of patience because it has provided how we should behave each other in society (within limits) and also returning to our factory settings (!)."*

Table 6. *The metaphoric perceptions about the "Diseases"*

Category	Metaphor	Gender		Total (n)
		Male (n)	Female (n)	
Diseases	Pain	0	1	1
	Asthma	0	1	1
	Infectiousness	2	4	6
	Flu	2	8	10
	Cough	0	1	1
	Pandemic	0	3	3
	Epidemic	4	6	10
	Tremor	0	1	1
	Plague	2	0	2
	Intensive care	0	1	1
	Pneumonia	1	0	1
Total (n)		**11**	**26**	**37**

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In the category of metaphorical perceptions about the disease, it was observed that a total of 11 metaphors were produced by 37 (11 males, 26 females) participants. The most frequently produced metaphors in the relevant category were "flu" and "pandemic".

Some examples of the metaphors that the participants mentioned under this category were presented below:

- *I associate the Covid-19 with the pain because my relatives who had the disease had very painful days and a difficult process."*
- *"The Covid-19 pandemic reminds me of contagiousness because after I got the virus, I unwittingly infected my family and my environment very easily."*
- *"The Covid-19 reminds me pandemic because it started with one person in the world and is spreading very quickly to seven billion people."*
- *"The Covid-19 is reminiscent of asthma because I have had shortness of breath from the moment I got sick."*

Table 7. *The metaphoric perceptions about "Weather Events and Natural Disasters"*

Category	Metaphor	Gender		Total (n)
		Male (n)	Female (n)	
Weather Events and Natural Disasters	Avalanche	0	1	1
	Hail	0	1	1
	Disaster	1	0	1
	Whirlpool	0	2	2
	Snowflake	0	1	1
	Snowball	0	1	1
	Lightning	1	0	1
Total (n)		2	6	8

There were 7 metaphors in the category of "Weather Events and Natural Disasters". These metaphors were produced by 8 (2 males and 6 females) participants. The most commonly used metaphor to describe Covid-19 was "Whirlpool ".

Some examples of the metaphors that the participants mentioned under this category were presented below:
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is similar to hail because it causes great damage to the environment and humanity, just like this weather event.*"
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is like a vortex because it sucks us in, I don't think we can escape without getting caught.*"
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is like a catastrophe because it has caused a great human tragedy in the world.*"
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is like a snowball because its shape is complex and getting bigger.*"

Table 8. *The metaphoric perceptions about "Uncleanliness"*

Category	Metaphor	Gender		Total (n)
		Male (n)	Female (n)	
Uncleanliness	Mud	0	1	1
	Non-removing stain	0	1	1
	Dirt	0	1	1
	Sticky	1	0	1
Total (n)		1	3	4

In Table 8, there are 4 metaphors in the "metaphorical perceptions about pollution" category. The metaphors in this category were used by 4 participants (1 male and 3 female).

Some examples of the metaphors that the participants mentioned under this category were presented below:
- "*The Covid-19 is like a non-removing stain because we cannot get rid of its marks in all areas of our lives.*"
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is like glue because it is a microbe that clings to and irritates people.*"

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Table 9. *The metaphoric perceptions about "Objects"*

Category	Metaphor	Gender		Total (n)
		Male (n)	Male (n)	
Objects	Barbed wire	1	1	2
	Spiky ball	0	1	1
	Domino	0	1	1
	Mousetrap	1	0	1
	Cage	1	0	1
	Mask	2	6	8
	Matryoshka	0	1	1
	Ink	0	1	1
	Playdough	0	1	1
Total (n)		5	12	17

9 of the metaphors produced by participants in this category associated Covid-19 disease with some of the tools we usually use in our daily lives. For this reason, these metaphors were grouped under the object category. A total of 12 (5 males, 12 females) participants responded to the metaphors produced under this category. In this category, the most frequently produced metaphor was "mask".

Some examples of the metaphors that the participants mentioned under this category were presented below:

- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is similar to playdough because it mutates and changes itself according to the effect it receives from the outside.*"
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic reminds me of the mask because the most effective way to protect against this disease was mask and distance.*"
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is similar to a mousetrap because as a mousetrap is a trap for a mouse, it is like a ubiquitous trap for humanity in this disease.*

Table 10. *The metaphoric perceptions about "Negativeness"*

Category	Metaphor	Gender		Total (n)
		Male (n)	**Female (n)**	
Negativeness	Problem	3	1	4
	Uncertainty	2	1	3
	Drowning	1	1	2
	Punishment	0	1	1
	Trouble	0	1	1
	Obstacle	1	1	2
	Damage	1	0	1
	Malady	1	0	1
	Nightmare	2	5	7
	Chaos	1	0	1
	Darkness	0	3	3
	Evil	1	1	2
	Death	4	5	9
	Insidious	1	0	1
	Danger	3	1	4
	Poison	1	1	2
Total (n)		**22**	**22**	**44**

In this category, 16 metaphors were produced by a total of 44 participants (22 females, 22 males). The most frequently used metaphor to describe Covid-19 was "Death".

Some examples of the metaphors that the participants mentioned under this category were presented below:

- *"The Covid-19 pandemic is like a nightmare because it has turned our lives into an endless nightmare. Unhappy people and ended lives ... "*
- *"The Covid-19 pandemic is like darkness because there is no hope that we will have healthy days.*"
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is similar to trouble because it poses major global distress.*"
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is similar to venom because it has a lethal effect.*"

Table 11. *The metaphoric Perceptions about "War"*

Category	Metaphor	Gender		Total (n)
		Male (n)	**Female (n)**	
War	Agent	0	1	1
	Biological attack	0	1	1
	Defeat	0	1	1
	Enemy	0	2	2
	Captivity	0	2	2
	Invader	0	1	1
	Bullet	0	1	1
	Struggle	0	1	1
	Weapon	1	0	1
	Political war	1	0	1

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| Total (n) | 2 | 10 | 12 |

In this category, there were 10 metaphors produced by 12 participants (2 males, 10 females). The most frequently produced metaphors by the participants are "Enemy" and "Captivity".

Some examples of the metaphors that the participants mentioned under this category were presented below:

- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is similar to the agent because it is invisible, but it causes a mess.*"
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is similar to the defeat because it negatively affected the whole world and disrupted the whole system.*"
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is similar to the enemy because it is insidious, it is not clear where it will come from, what it will do, how it will behave.*"
- "*The Covid-19 pandemic is similar to the invader because it is spreading rapidly and has invaded the whole world.*"

Table 12. *The metaphoric perceptions about social isolation*

| Category | Metaphor | Gender | | Total (n) |
		Male (n)	Female (n)	
	Antisocial	1	0	1
	Asociality	1	2	3
	Imprisonment	2	1	3
	Isolation	0	1	1
Social isolation	Staying closed	0	4	4
	Quarantine	0	3	3
	Restriction	3	2	5
	Break off	1	0	1
	Social distance	3	0	3
	Abstraction	1	0	1
	Prohibitions	0	2	2
Total (n)		**12**	**15**	**27**

According to Table 12, there are a total of 11 metaphors produced by 27 (12 males, 15 females) participants. When metaphors are examined, it is seen that the Covid-19 disease is associated with the isolating nature of people. For this reason, these metaphors have been gathered under the category of social isolation. The most pronounced metaphors in the relevant category were "Restriction".

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Some examples of the metaphors that the participants mentioned under this category were presented below:

- "*The Covid-19 is similar to prison because it seriously requires distance and limitation in social relations, in a way we live in our homes as if we were in prison.*"
- "*The Covid-19 is similar to quarantine because it has caused many restrictions around the world.*"
- "*I associate the Covid-19 with isolation because we started to stay away from our environment and our activities.*"

3. The Distribution of the Metaphors Developed by Teachers on the Covid-19 by Gender

The distribution of the metaphors developed by teachers regarding the Covid-19 by gender was given in Table 13.

Table 13. *The distribution of the metaphors developed by teachers about the Covid-19 by gender*

Metaphoric Perceptions Category	Gender		Total (n)
	Male (n)	Female (n)	
ivings	4	9	13
Emotions	20	43	63
Mental perception	4	7	11
Diseases	11	26	37
Weather events and natural disasters	2	6	8
Uncleanliness	1	3	4
Objects	5	12	17
Negativeness	22	22	44
War	2	10	12
Social isolation	12	15	27
Total (n)	83	153	236

The participants consisted of a total of 236 people, 83 males, and 153 females. According to Table 13, female participants produced more metaphors in the "Metaphoric Perceptions about Emotions" and "Metaphoric Perceptions about Diseases" category, while in the "Metaphoric Perceptions with Negativeness" category, female and male participants produced equal number metaphors.

4. The Distribution of the Metaphors Developed by Teachers on the Covid-19 by Geographical Regions in Turkey

When the distribution of metaphoric perceptions by regions is examined, it was seen that the metaphors produced by the participants were concentrated in the category of "Metaphoric perceptions about emotions" (n=63). The other categories were "Negativity" (n=44), "Diseases" (n=37), "Social isolation" (n=27), "Objects" (n=17), "Livings" (n=13), "War" (n=12), "Weather events and natural disasters" (n=8), and Uncleanliness (n=4), respectively.
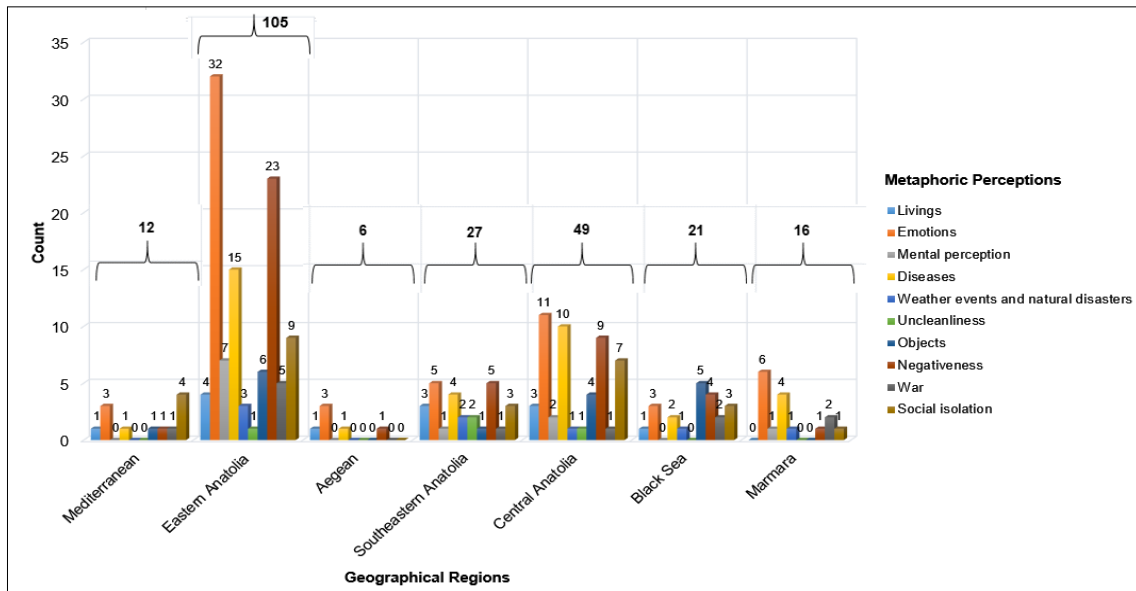

Figure 2. *The distribution of metaphoric perceptions categories by geographical regions*

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION and SUGGESTIONS

The purpose of this research is to find out perceptions of the teachers who work in Turkey about Covid-19 using metaphors. According to the findings in the research, 236 valid metaphors were determined and these metaphors were grouped under 10 main headings. While examining the

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metaphors produced by the teachers, 80 responses that do not show metaphor features and do not find a place in concept categories were excluded from the study.

Among the 10 main determined metaphor categories, the category with the highest frequency was "Metaphoric perceptions about negativity". It was observed that the metaphors produced by the participants were mostly in the "Metaphoric perceptions about emotions" category. "Fear", one of the sub-metaphors under this category, was the most used metaphor by teachers to describe Covid-19. It can be said that reasons such as the increasing prevalence and mortality of the Covid-19, and also the experiences of survivors during the treatment process were effective in the preference of the "fear" metaphor. Besides, when examined in terms of gender categories, it was observed that female participants used this metaphor more than male participants.

When the metaphors used to describe Covid-19 were examined, it was found that there were no positive metaphorical perceptions, but always negative metaphorical perceptions.

In the "livings" category, metaphors of octopus, monster, nettle, cactus, tick, hedgehog, parasite, wild animal, bat, and snake were produced. These metaphors are shown that the Covid-19 is perceived as a living entity, and it can be stated that it is often concentrated around animals and plants that people fear and dislike.

In the "emotions" category, metaphors of love, separation, despair, worry, ex-lover, sadness, blind love, anxiety, fear, anger, longing, stress, ungratefulness, doubt, and loneliness were produced. It is seen that the most frequently mentioned metaphors by the participants are generally gathered in this category. It can be said that these metaphors often cause emotional pain in people. Although many people with Covid-19 disease usually think that they will die, the findings have also revealed that they fear being alone and infecting their relatives.

In the "diseases" category, metaphors of pain, asthma, infectiousness, flu, cough, pandemic, epidemic, tremor, plague, intensive care, and pneumonia were produced. With these metaphors, it shows that the Covid-19 disease is compared to various diseases. Teachers have mostly established a relationship between influenza and Covid-19, and it can be thought that they want to emphasize that they have similar symptoms in various aspects (mode of transmission, etc.) in their two diseases. According to Karcıoğlu (2020), its spread from person to person is the most important feature of Covid-19.

In the category of "weather events and natural disasters" avalanche, hail, disaster, whirlpool, snowflake, snowball, and lightning metaphors were produced. These metaphors show that Covid-19 is viewed as a natural disaster. Natural disasters such as avalanches, hail, and lightning occur in a short time and their effect is great, it can be said that just like these natural disasters, they appear suddenly in a pandemic and continue for a long time and affect more people's lives. At the same time, the fact that the virus is likened to a snowball may indicate that it is growing rapidly in terms of infection. Like many natural disasters, Covid-19 can be considered a process that deeply affects society.

In the "object" category in the research the metaphors of barbed wire, barbed ball, domino stone, mousetrap, cage, mask, matryoshka, ink, and playdough were produced. In this category, the characteristics of the objects were influential in teachers' likening of Covid-19 to objects. It can be said that people stay in their homes for protection was caused teachers to compare their homes to cages. In another metaphor, the virus is likened to the spiny ball shape. The fact that the virus was promoted as a green spiky ball by the media might cause using this analogy. The domino metaphor can be interpreted as the virus transmitted from person to person and affects the masses in an unstoppable way.

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In the "negativeness" category, teachers may have stated that Covid-19 is spreading insidiously and is extremely dangerous. It can be said that the metaphor of drowning is used because of the difficulties the virus has caused people to breathe.

In the research, metaphors of agent, biological attack, defeat, enemy, captivity, invader, bullet, struggle, weapon, and political war were produced in the category of "war". With these metaphors, it can be thought that the uncertainty that emerged due to the rapid spread of the pandemic and the non-regional nature of the pandemic caused the participants to use the metaphors in the war category. It can be said that people have taken protective measures such as masks, distance, and cleaning to defend themselves. In this category, it has been revealed that people are in a psychological war against Covid-19.

As a result, in the literature review, no study similar to the relevant study is found. The metaphors produced by teachers about the Covid-19 virus overlap with some of the metaphors in other studies. In a metaphor study for students, the "monster" metaphor is under the "fatal" category (Arı and Arslan, 2020). In our study, it is in the "Livings" category. Although the monster metaphor is in different categories in these two studies, it is very close to each other. In our study, it is a metaphor that is in the category of monster creatures and causes fear. In the study conducted with students, the monster was metaphorized as deadly and fear was highlighted. Another concept produced in the same studies is the "agent" metaphor. In our research, the metaphor of "agent" was included in the category of "war" and it was stated that it infects people secretly. In the other study, "agent" was included in the "late noticed category". Likewise, it can be seen that the same metaphors have similar characteristics despite their being in different categories.

In a metaphor study conducted for primary school students, the "darkness" metaphor was included in the "Interaction" category (Bozkurt, 2020). In our study, the "darkness" metaphor is in the "negativeness" category. Although the dark metaphor is included under different categories in both studies, it is very close to each other. In our study, the darkness, lack of a definitive treatment method yet can be interpreted as the light of reaching healthy days is far away. In the other study, it can be stated that it is a matter of getting away from the phenomenon of socialization by identifying with the feeling of loneliness.

In a study, included the metaphors of "fear" and "anxiety" in the theme of "feelings felt during the pandemic". In our study, it was categorized in the "emotions". In both studies, "fear" and "anxiety" metaphors were among the metaphors with the highest frequency value (Demirbaş and Koçak, 2020).

When the reasons for using metaphors to describe Covid-19 are examined, it can be concluded that the whole world and our country were greatly affected by this pandemic, that people were negatively affected in terms of thoughts and feelings, and that their lifestyles were changed and a different process was entered. Also, it can be said that public health is threatened, people die due to the pandemic, death is constantly reminded, freedoms are restricted, and in such situations it creates fear. On the other hand, it was also emphasized that things that add awareness to people and are not valued, for example, cleanliness, hygiene, and patience in which the importance of is understood by people (Saatçi and Aksu, 2020).

This study, which was conducted to uncover the mental associations of teachers with the Covid-19 pandemic, shows that Covid-19 disease often creates negative perceptions on teachers. In general, teachers envisioned Covid-19 as a scary, worrying, and contagious disease. In this context, it may be suggested to organize online seminar programs under the auspices of the Ministries of National Education and Health to reduce the levels of anxiety and fear caused by the pandemic on teachers.

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Öğretmenlerin Covid-19 Salgınına İlişkin Zihinsel Çağrışumları: Bir Metafor Çalışması Örneği

Doç. Dr. Erol Koçoğlu
Inonu University, Turkey
ORCID: 0000-0003-4595-2892
erol.kocoglu@inonu.edu.tr

Prof. Dr. Mesut Aydın
Inonu University, Turkey
ORCID: 0000-0002-4256-9436
mesut.aydin@inonu.edu.tr

Ayşegül Dumlupınar Arslan (YL Öğr.)
Inonu University, Turkey
ORCID: 0000-0003-3854-0427
dumlupinaraysegul@gmail.com

Nursenem Çetinkaya (YL Öğr.)
Inonu University, Turkey
ORCID: 0000-0002-2849-5063
nrsenem@gmail.com

Revanur Kubat (YL Öğr.)
Inonu University, Turkey
ORCID: 0000-0002-6717-8677
revanurkubat.44@gmail.com

Nimet Karabulut (YL Öğr.)
Inonu University, Turkey
ORCID: 0000-0002-0550-1360
nimetkarabulut44.nk@gmail.com

Özet:

Çin'in Vuhan şehrinde, 2019 yılı Aralık ayının son günlerinde ortaya çıkan ve tüm dünyayı etkisi altına alan yeni tip korona virüs (COVID-19) salgını yaşamımızı ciddi anlamda etkilemiştir. Başta sağlık olmak üzere birçok alandaki işleyişi olumsuz yönde etkileyen salgının en çok etkilediği alanlardan biri de hiç şüphesiz eğitimdir. Salgının öğretmenler üzerinde yaptığı zihinsel etkileri belirlemek amacıyla Türkiye geneli bir anket uygulaması yapılmıştır. İlgili anket, katılımcılara ilişkin demografik sorular ile 2 adet açık uçlu sorudan oluşturulmuştur. Bu açık uçlu sorular "COVID-19 salgınını neye benzetiyorsunuz?" ve "Neden bu çağrışım veya imgeyi kullandınız?" şeklinde belirlenmiştir. Anket verileri çeşitli önişleme süreçlerinden geçirilmiştir. Önişleme sonrası anket verisi 236 katılımcı öğretmenden (83'ü erkek, 153'ü kadın) oluşmuştur. Ankette, katılımcılar tarafından toplam 102 tane metafor alt kategorisi üretilmiştir. Bu metaforlar daha sonra 10 farklı ana metafor kategorisinde gruplanmıştır. Elde edilen bulgulara göre, katılımcılar tarafından en çok "korku" metaforu kullanılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Covid-19, Eğitim, Metaforik algı, Öğretmen*

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Problem: Covid-19 salgını dünyada ve ülkemizde insanları her alanda olumsuz etkilemiş ve etkilemeye de devam etmektedir. Dünyada birçok insanın adını dahi bilmediği bu salgın Çin'in Wuhan Eyaletinde Aralık ayında ortaya çıkarak başta sağlık olmak üzere birçok alanda hayatı durma noktasına getirmiştir. Hızla yayılım gösteren bu salgın Türkiye'de ilk olarak 10 Mart 2020 tarihinde görülmüştür (Telli Danışmaz, 2020). Hastalığın ülkemizde ilk görülmeye başladığı andan itibaren insan hayatını tehlikeye atmamak adına birçok faaliyete ara verildiği söylenebilir.

Salgın sürecinde sağlıktan sonra en çok etkilenen alanlardan biride eğitim olmuştur. Covid-19 tedbiri kapsamında her hizmet sektörü için ülke genelinde kararlar alınmıştır. Eğitim sektörüyle ilgili olarak ülke genelinde alınan kararlardan biri de geçici olarak yüz yüze eğitimi askıya almak olmuştur. Öğretmen ve öğrencilerin sağlığını korumak amacıyla 15 Mart itibariyle Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'na bağlı tüm okullarda uzaktan eğitim sürecini başlatma kararı alınmıştır. En son veriler, sadece ülkemizde değil dünya çapında 770 milyon öğrencinin okulların ve üniversite eğitim kurumlarının kapanmasından etkilendiğini göstermektedir (Genç ve Gümrükçüoğlu, 2020).

Covid-19'a yönelik olarak eğitim alanında yapılan metafor çalışmalarıyla ilgili literatür taraması yapıldığında ilkokul, ortaokul ve lise düzeyindeki öğrencilere yönelik çalışmaların olduğu görülmüştür (Demirbilek, 2021; Ercan, Rodopman Arman, İnal Emiroğlu, Behice Öztop, ve Yalçın, 2020; Kavuk ve Demirtaş, 2021; Toprakçı, Hepsöğütlü ve Toprakçı, 2021; Yavuz ve Toprakçı, 2021). Fakat, eğitimin diğer bir parçası olan öğretmenlerin metaforik algılarına yönelik bir Türkiye'de yapılan bir araştırma bulunamamıştır. Literatür taramaları, "metafor", "metaforik algı", "eğitim", "öğretmen", "zihinsel çağrışım", "Covid-19" anahtar kelimelerinin çoklu kombinasyonları kullanılarak ilgili makale veri tabanlarında yapılmıştır. Bu kapsamda, mevcut çalışmanın literatürdeki ilgili boşluğu dolduracağı düşünülmektedir.

Yöntem: Öğretmenlerin Covid-19 salgınına yönelik oluşturdukları zihinsel çağrışımları metaforlar yardımıyla belirlemeyi amaçlayan bu çalışma tanımlayıcı (betimsel) bir araştırma olarak kurgulanmıştır. Çalışmada nitel araştırma desenlerinden fenomenoloji (olgu bilim) deseni kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu, ülkemizin tüm bölgelerinde görev yapan ve farklı branştan öğretmenler oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmaya 83 erkek 153 kadın olmak üzere toplam 236 öğretmen katılmıştır. Covid-19 salgını kaynaklı olarak örneklem birimlerine ulaşılmasının zorluğu nedeniyle olasılıksız örnekleme yöntemlerinden biri olarak kartopu örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Çalışma amacına uygun olarak oluşturan sorular Google Forms aracı kullanılarak web tabanlı anket haline dönüştürülmüş, katılımcılara e-posta ve sosyal medya kanalları kullanılarak gönderilmiştir. Başlangıç aşamasında katılımcıların her birine metaforik algılar konusunda bilgi verildikten sonra 2 adet açık uçlu soru sorulmuştur. Bu çalışma için öğretmenlere dört gün süre verilmiş ve öğretmenlerin ürettikleri metaforlar çalışmanın veri kaynağını oluşturmuştur. Katılımcıların ürettikleri metaforlar, 10 ana metafor kategorisi altında gruplandırılmıştır.

Bulgular: Mevcut çalışmada, Türkiye genelinde farklı branşlarda görev yapan öğretmenlerin Covid-19 salgınına ilişkin zihinsel çağrışımları ele alınmış ve yapılan ankette, Covid-19 ile ilgili 102 geçerli metafor belirlenmiş ve bu metaforlar 10 ana başlık altında toplanmıştır.

Veri analizinde ilk olarak, ham anket verisi iki filtreleme aşamasından geçirilmiştir. İlk aşamada, 316 olan anket cevaplanma sayısı mükerrer cevapların çıkarılmasıyla 277'ye düşürülerek gerçek katılımcı sayısına ulaşılmıştır. İkinci aşamada ise 277 anket cevabının içerisinden ilgisiz/kapsam dışı olanlar elenerek sayı 236'ya düşürülmüş ve nihai katılımcı sayısı elde edilmiştir. Katılımcıların cinsiyete göre dağılımları incelendiğinde, kadın katılımcı sayısının 153 (%64.8) erkek katılımcı sayısının ise 83 (%35.2) olduğu görülmüştür. Katılımcıların yaş ortalamaları ve standart sapmaları ise 33.32±6.82 olarak hesaplanmıştır.

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Sonuçlar: Sonuç olarak kaynak taramasın da yapmış olduğumuz çalışmaya benzer herhangi bir çalışmaya rastlamamaktadır. Öğretmenlerin Covid-19 virüsüne ilişkin ürettikleri metaforlar ile diğer çalışmalardaki metaforlardan bazıları örtüşmektedir. Arı ve Arslan (2020), öğrencilere yönelik yapılan bir metafor çalışmasında "canavar" metaforu " Ölümcül" kategorisi altında yer almaktadır. Çalışmamızda ise "Canlılar" kategorisinde yer almaktadır. Yapılan bu iki çalışmada da canavar metaforu farklı kategorilerde yer almış olsa da birbirlerine çok yakındır. Bizim çalışmamızda canavar canlılar kategorisinde yer alan ve korkuya neden olan bir metefordur. Öğrencilere yönelik yapılan çalışmada ise, canavar ölümcül olarak metaforlaştırılmış ve korku ön plana çıkarılmıştır. Yine aynı çalışmalarda üretilen diğer bir kavramda "ajan" metaforudur. Yaptığımız araştırmada "ajan" metaforu "Savaş" kategorisi içerisinde yer almış ve insanlara gizli bir şekilde bulaştığı ifade edilmiştir. Diğer çalışmada ise "ajan" "Geç fark edilen kategorisinde" yer almıştır. Yine aynı şekilde aynı metaforların farklı kategorilerde yer almalarına rağmen benzer özelliklerinin olduğu görülebilir.

Metaforların gerekçeleri incelendiğinde, bu salgından tüm dünyanın ve ülkemizin büyük oranda etkilendiği, insanların düşünce ve duygu bakımından olumsuzluğa kapıldığı ve yaşam biçimlerinin değişerek farklı bir sürece girildiği çıkarımı elde edilebilir. Bunun yanında sağlığın tehdit edildiği, salgından dolayı insanların öldüğü, ölümün sürekli olarak hatırlatıldığı, özgürlüklerin kısıtlandığı ve bu gibi durumlarında insanlara korku saldığı söylenebilir. Öte yandan insanlara farkındalık katan ve değer verilmeyen şeylerin, örneğin; temizliğin, hijyenin ve sabrın öneminin anlaşıldığı bir süreç olduğu da vurgulanmaya çalışılmıştır (Saatçi ve Aksu, 2020).

Öneriler: Öğretmenlerin Covid-19 salgınına yönelik zihinsel çağrışımlarını ortaya çıkarmak için yapılan bu araştırma, Covid-19 hastalığının öğretmenler üzerinde genellikle olumsuz algılar oluşturduğunu göstermektedir. Genel olarak öğretmenler Covid-19'u korkutucu, endişe verici ve bulaşıcı bir hastalık olarak zihinlerinde canlandırmışlardır. Bu kapsamda, Milli Eğitim ve Sağlık Bakanlıklarının himayesinde öğretmenler üzerinde salgın sebebiyle oluşan kaygı ve korku düzeylerinin indirgenmesi adına online seminer programları düzenlemesi önerilebilir.