

METAPHORS AS TRAILS OF UNIVERSITY ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT EMERGENCY REMOTE TEACHING IN TURKEY

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Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic brought life to an unexpected halt, and all levels of education including higher education had abrupt changes from face-to-face teaching to emergency remote teaching to sustain the continuity of education. English preparatory schools that provide newly-enrolled university students with one-year intensive English language program are no exception with regard to emergency remote teaching. Metaphor elicitation can be one of the ways to reveal university language instructors' subtle thoughts about emergency remote teaching. In line with this idea, this paper investigates the use of metaphors elicited from 60 university instructors from different universities in Turkey in relation to emergency remote teaching. After the analysis, 58 valid metaphors were recompiled and classified under six categories. It was identified that instructors found emergency remote teaching quite challenging and dynamic in nature while only a small number of instructors considered it a positive experience. It was also evident in the instructors' metaphors that they felt inadequate and untrained when they had this abrupt change at first and perceived emergency remote teaching as an unreal experience. Given the fact that there can be emergency situations in the future, we should move on after taking the necessary lessons from this challenging period.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic, emergency remote teaching, language teaching, metaphors, university instructors

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The COVID-19 pandemic marked a dramatic change in how teaching and learning practices were carried out. Hodges et al. (2020) used the term “emergency remote teaching” in the early phases of the COVID-19 outbreak in order to differentiate online courses that are offered in response to emergency situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic from online courses which have been intentionally planned and designed for online instruction. In Zimmerman's (2020) terms, the COVID-19 pandemic has served as natural experiments in the context of education. Educators took a laborious task of figuring out what emergency remote teaching involves as many educators are new to online teaching. The significance and responsibilities of teachers have increased during this period (Aytaç, 2021). Therefore, this unexpected pedagogical shift has resulted in fluctuating feelings among almost everyone including educators. Under uncertainty, fear of inflection and stress, remote teaching practices continued. To evaluate the

remote teaching practices, one way is to learn more about teachers' thoughts about their emergency remote teaching experiences.

While sharing their daily teaching experiences, teachers often resort to metaphors. In this sense, metaphoric language reveals the subconscious beliefs and attitudes, which can be difficult to identify. In their pioneering work, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) pointed out that

metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature (p. 3).

Given the important role of metaphors, it is no surprise that metaphors have been useful in gaining insight into teachers' way of thinking (Seferoğlu et al., 2009) and have also acted as vehicles for consciousness raising among educators (de Guerrero & Villamil, 2002). Thus, understanding teachers' way of thinking may help us make sense of their teaching practices. Although we can find ample research on the perceptions of pre-service teachers (see e.g., Kavanoz, 2016; Keser-Özmantar & Yalçın-Arslan, 2019; Rakıcıoğlu-Soylemez et al., 2016; Şimşek, 2014; Villarreal Ballesteros et al., 2020), in-service teachers (see e.g., Asmalı & Çelik, 2017; Seferoğlu et al., 2009) and university instructors (see e.g., Aktekin, 2013; Oktay & Vancı-Osam, 2013; Yesilbursa, 2012) through metaphors regarding teaching, students' roles and their roles as teachers (Oxford et al., 1998), so far there has been little work in the reviewed literature (Alan, 2021; Kaban, 2021) that unearths university instructors' perceptions regarding emergency remote teaching through metaphors during the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to fill this gap, this study aims to elicit metaphors generated by English preparatory school language instructors to unveil their perceptions in relation to emergency remote teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Within a couple of weeks, all the universities in Turkey started to shift from in-person teaching to emergency remote teaching. Without necessary arrangements, sufficient teacher preparation and infrastructure, it is more accurate to call that online teaching practice "emergency remote teaching" (Marshall et al., 2020). Educators had to become digitally savvy on a very short notice.

Universities in Turkey, which concluded their Spring-2020 Term online, also resumed the following academic year 2020-2021 online, except a few applied courses in some departments. English preparatory schools that provide newly-enrolled university students with one-year intensive English language program are no exception with regard to emergency remote teaching.

In the first place, this dramatic shift brought many challenges. Depending on their digital skills, using video conferencing tools and reaching out to students via different digital tools posed a serious problem for some instructors. As Bozkurt et al. (2020) underline, one cannot create success stories unless s/he has digital competencies and uses the tools effectively. In addition to the lack of digital skills, teachers' personal circumstances also made it difficult to teach from home as they have their own children who are learning from home and/or vulnerable family members in need of care. Yet, working from home created the disillusion that educators are available 24/7 with instant notifications from student social media groups or constant school e-mails, and long teaching hours exacerbated this problem and abolished work-life balance.

As for institutional decisions leading to challenges, many universities changed their attendance and grading policy to compensate for students' lack of access to the Internet and technological devices. Some administrations did not hold attendance mandatory for students, so even students with the Internet access did not feel engaged to attend online classes and complete assignments on time. Since only few students joined video conferencing platforms, most of the lessons were not handled in conversation but in lecture style or with the participation of one or two students. Due to safety and security concerns in virtual calls or lack of suitable learning environments in their houses, many students did not opt to turn on their cameras. A turned off camera induced the feeling that students may or may not be listening to their teacher whereas teachers were expected to keep their professional outlook and turn on their cameras. Thus, teachers had to interpret online conversations without the help of students' facial expressions and body language. Due to the painful silence of online lessons, black screens and muted audios, instructors felt burnt out (Lee et al., 2021). Also, many universities allowed students to keep their cameras off during the online exams. This policy aimed to address the privacy concerns held by students, but resulted in serious problems in the secure invigilation of exams and reliable assessment of students by instructors. This has also brought the issues of cheating from others and academic dishonesty to the fore in the academia. In this sense, remote teaching has become more demanding and difficult than in-person teaching.

On the other hand, there are also some silver linings of emergency remote teaching. It is evident that educators have become more proficient in technology and enhanced their digital skills. Educators have learnt how to use new technologies such as Google apps for education, Zoom and learning management systems (Trust & Whalen, 2021b). Moreover, educators found the chance to join boundless professional development events that were held online for free with the contributions of experts from different countries. Moreover, in a global scale, it has been understood that the issues of empathy, social-emotional learning, emotional/psychological support should be prioritized and take the center stage. Educators changed their priorities to focus on relationships and well-being (Trust & Whalen, 2021b). Sharing has become the first reflex in teaching communities, and "we witnessed the importance of openness in education and its derivations (Open educational practices, open educational resources, open scholarship, open data, and open science)" (Bozkurt et al., 2020, p.11). Teachers learnt to benefit from professional learning environments on social media platforms to handle the new pedagogical challenges through collaboration (Hamilton et al., 2020).

During this challenging period, there is an array of interesting studies that have revealed the opinions of teachers and problems they faced in local and international contexts (Aytaç, 2021; Hebebcı et al., 2020; MacIntyre et al., 2020; Moser et al., 2021; Trust & Whalen, 2020; Trust & Whalen, 2021a, 2021b; van der Spoel et al., 2020). However, those studies are mainly in K-12 school contexts, while there are only a few studies concerning the case of instructors at universities (Alhawsawi & Jawhar, 2021; Erdem-Aydin, 2021; Korkmaz & Toraman, 2020; Rapanta et al., 2020; Şener et al., 2020; Tarrayo et al., 2021).

Understanding what happens in remote teaching depends on a sort of reflection, but in Patchen and Crawford's (2011) terms, "direct reflection may not yield an accurate representation of what teachers think about what they do". We also need some indirect methods to uncover teachers' beliefs. As Oxford et al. (1998, p. 5) emphasized, "metaphor has the power to enhance

the subject's understanding of educational problems and thus increase perspective-consciousness". Starting from this point of view, to add to the growing body of literature on remote teaching experiences, by benefitting from the power of metaphors and reflecting on emergency remote teaching experiences at the higher education level, this study will resort to university language instructors' metaphors.

There are a limited number of studies in the literature that address metaphors relating to remote teaching (Alan, 2021; Kaban, 2021). Therefore, it is important to identify metaphors relating to current developments such as remote teaching during the pandemic, namely, emergency remote teaching in terms of positive or negative perceptions of English language instructors. Also, there have been no studies examining the metaphors used by English language instructors for remote teaching or distance education when similar studies in the literature are examined. In this regard, this study will be an attempt to reveal their perceptions through metaphors. The following research questions have been investigated in this study:

1. What metaphors did English language instructors use to express their perceptions in relation to emergency remote teaching?
2. Which categories are these metaphors collected under in terms of their common features?

METHOD

Participants

Purposive snowball sampling was used to reach the participants. The researcher began with known English language instructors and asked them to identify others that could participate in the study (Noy, 2008). Data were gathered from 60 English language instructors (50 females and 10 males) of the English preparatory schools in Turkey through the Google Form sent by e-mails between May and June 2021. All the instructors were teaching at universities in Turkey, 41 of the participants at state universities and 19 at private universities. Their teaching experience ranged from 3 to 21 years and over. All participants' informed consent was collected before they took part in the research. Twenty instructors had their bachelor's degree, while 30 instructors had their Master's and 10 participants had their PhD. Forty-seven out of the 60 instructors had not taught any online lessons before the pandemic, while only 13 instructors had taught online lessons before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data Collection and Data Analysis Procedures

Metaphor elicitation method was employed in this study in which the instructors' perceptions can be surfaced and acknowledged. They can show the subtle struggles they faced during this challenging period. Participants were asked to complete the sentence "Emergency remote teaching during the pandemic is like..... because....." using a metaphor and write their reasons for choosing that metaphor. The expression "because" was used as metaphors are not sufficient to reveal the descriptive power. In the Google Form, the meaning of the word "metaphor", explanation and some examples were given to ensure that the question was understood clearly by the participants. The following steps were followed in the metaphor analysis:

1. Naming stage

First, it was checked whether the completed forms encompassed instances such as leaving the section unfilled or offering no logical explanation. The concepts which were not considered as metaphors and metaphors without consistent relationship with the “because” part were searched and eliminated. Two replies were eliminated as there was no mention of a metaphor and no logical explanation. A total of 58 valid metaphors from the 60 participants were generated.

2. Classification and category development stage

The generated data were then classified into emerging themes and categories. The valid metaphors were examined and collected under six categories. To count it as a category, a minimum of five related metaphors was deemed necessary. Interpretations of the metaphors were based both on the metaphor itself and the explanations provided by the instructors. Some metaphors appeared to be suitable for more than one category, but based on the explanations, the category was determined. Each category is supported with direct quotations from the answers given by the participants.

3. Determining exemplary metaphors and rationale

With the goal of giving examples, the instructors' quotes in regard to the reasoning of linked metaphors were abbreviated as ‘P’ and each instructor was allocated a number. P10, for example, refers to the study's tenth instructor.

4. Ensuring the validity and reliability stage

The data were extensively recorded, original participant responses were quoted verbatim without any additions, and the researcher's process for achieving the results was revealed; these are the most important signs of validity in qualitative research (Yildirim & Simsek, 2011). In this way, the analyzed data were given in full, together with their frequencies and classifications; original statements chosen to be useful as representatives of the metaphors collected, as well as their rationales, were assembled and included in the findings section. While another expert in ELT was consulted for her opinions on whether the metaphors obtained were indicative of the conceptual categories defined, the numbers of agreement and disagreement were calculated based on the results. The study's reliability was estimated using the reliability formula proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). Following the estimation, the agreement rate was 87% in this study, which means that there was strong inter-rater reliability. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), inter-rater agreement between two experts must be 70% or greater to ensure the reliability of research. Finally, the differences that arose during the metaphor analysis process were talked and resolved until an agreement was reached.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Metaphors regarding the teachers' perceptions about emergency remote teaching (ERT) have been given with their frequencies and percentages in Table 1. Six categories emerged from the metaphor analysis.

Table 1. The Categories of the Instructors' Metaphors

Categories	Metaphors	F	%
ERT as a challenging experience	nightmare for me, out of the frying pan into fire, trying to walk up on escalator that is going in the opposite direction, walking through a maze in the dark, a big puzzle, rowing the boat without a compass, housework, rowing against the current, spinning my wheels trying to reach and teach students, finding your way with nature, long distance relationship, a swamp, having a shower with your raincoat on, trying to save my favorite t-shirt when my house is on fire, a bomb in the house, a struggle against ADHD.	16	27.5%
ERT as changing in its nature, a growing experience	roller coaster (n=2), sailing on a boat, unhappy marriage, a deep sea, surfing or swimming in the ocean, jumping into the sea after sleeping under the sun, floating in the air, discovery, discovering secret parts of a land that has been discovered before, a deep sea, tree, diving into deep sea	13	22.4%
ERT as an unprepared, sudden, untaught experience	volcano, jumping into water without knowing how to swim, there is a war going on but we are combing our hair, our last resort, compulsory personal development opportunity, a time travel where you have to adapt to very quickly, a hard nut to crack, trying to cook your best for your unexpected quest, trying to feed only with bread at the feast table and not getting full	9	15.5%
ERT as an unreal experience	being alone in crowds, online dating experience, extending your hands through one-way mirror glass, birds without sense of sight, a simulation that we try to do as if we teach, being a mental patient, having students in my room, being a YouTuber, hosting a radio or TV programme	9	15.5%
ERT as an experience inducing isolation, feelings of being lost	Catching fish in a huge ocean, playing a cyber game especially when there are no students/no student participation, playing blind man's bluff, teaching a classroom consisting of individuals who have strong walls around themselves that you cannot see through, being Dora the Explorer	5	8.6%
ERT as a positive experience	breakfast in bed, a day in heaven, on a one man's island having your favorite cocktail with the best ocean and mountain view around at the comfort of your home, shelter that makes you feel safe for the time being but you know nothing feels like home, a lifeboat behind the shipwreck, medicine	6	10.3%
Total		58	100%

Table 1 shows that the categories with most metaphors are “ERT as a challenging experience” (n=16) and “ERT as changing in its nature and a growing experience” (n=13). All the themes are listed below respectively, and the explanations of the instructors were also given to support the elicited metaphors.

ERT as a Challenging Experience

During the pandemic, the instructors held great responsibilities for the effective delivery of lessons under uncertainty. Inferring from their explanations, they sometimes believed that they were not making a difference although they were showing tremendous efforts. This can be one of the possible reasons why the instructors found the emergency remote teaching practice challenging. The following metaphors elicited from the participants such as “swamp” and “bomb” revealed a more complex understanding of emergency remote teaching in terms of its tremendous effects.

Emergency remote teaching is like swamp. It is suffocating, the more you're trying to connect with the students, get things done, the deeper you go. By 'deeper' I mean, things get harder and harder. There is no human contact, no feelings shared, nothing humane actually. You make a joke, but you have no idea of the students are laughing or smiling. You share a memory, you tell them sth. About yourself, but you do not know if you can reach them. They are far away from you, and you are in the middle of the swamp, getting deeper. (P41).

Emergency remote teaching is like a bomb in the house because you have to deal with it no matter how devastating and shocking it is:) (P55).

The instructors had challenges on multiple fronts. For instance, they confirmed that students' lack of enthusiasm and motivation caused the ineffectiveness of remote teaching. Similarly, in previous research, Serhan (2020) found that students' interaction decreased and remote teaching had a negative effect on their engagement as there were too many distractions around them at home, so it required a lot of patience and efforts to engage students from the perspective of instructors. Students with their cameras off and microphones muted made teachers think as if they were staring at a screen and talking to the void. We can see the reflection of such thoughts in the following examples:

Emergency remote teaching is like spinning my wheels trying to teach and teach every student because of the attitudes of the students. As they are indifferent and unenthusiastic about the classes, it makes me feel that I'm wasting my time (P34).

Emergency remote teaching is like out of the frying pan into fire because it has already been difficult to motivate students in face-to-face education conditions but now it is next to impossible (P9).

In the metaphors, it was also noted that instructors did not believe in the positive outcomes of their struggles in online teaching, which is consistent with the previous research (Korkmaz & Toraman, 2020; Moser et al., 2021).

Emergency remote/online teaching is like rowing against the current because it is a challenging process in which we, as teachers, often feel like we are doing something in vain though knowing that it won't produce a meaningful outcome. Despite knowing this fact, we have struggled with online digital tools, which we are not familiar with, and try to do our best in order to reach our target group who are away from knowing what we are doing behind the scenes and how much effort has been put into this process. It is like trying to survive despite knowing the tragic end (P31).

It is for sure that metaphors of emergency remote teaching in this category cannot portray us the realities of educational practice, but show us the struggles, thoughts and feelings the instructors had during this period.

ERT as Changing in Its Nature, a Growing Experience

This study also brought to the forefront the changing nature of emergency remote teaching. In this ever-changing context, the instructors' feelings fluctuated, too. The ones who considered it as a growing experience had difficulty at first, but after some adaptation time, they got used to this sudden change. This finding is in line with Kim and Asbury's (2020, p.1075) study as they noted that "after the initial shock many participants began to reflect on their new circumstances and to find some silver linings". Likewise, Aladsani (2021) stated that the early stages of the rapid transition were the hardest ones. Similar perception is evident in the following metaphors and their explanations:

Emergency remote teaching is like surfing or swimming in the ocean. You feel nervous and bit frightened in the very beginning and then you get used to it very quickly and feel as if you have been doing it for a long time and start to enjoy with what you can do with the students. Also, there is no destination point in the ocean and online teaching. No boundaries and lots of things to discover ... (P10).

Emergency remote teaching is like jumping into the cold sea after sleeping under the sun because once your body gets adapted, you relax and enjoy (P22).

On the other side of the same coin, there were some instructors who started to understand how difficult it was as time passed. First, they felt without limits, but later they realized there were many difficulties that they needed to deal with.

Emergency remote teaching is like floating in the air because at first you feel yourself free from all the limits of the traditional classroom environment. There are no "walls". Time and place are much more flexible. In time, you realize that there are other limits. You see/hear, but you cannot touch the ground (the students, in this case). You don't feel comfortable because you are somewhere between the air and the ground (P32).

ERT as an Unprepared, Sudden, Untaught Experience

It was evident in the instructors' metaphors that the instructors felt inadequate and untrained when they had this abrupt change at first. Their prior experience or lack of experience seems to matter in shaping their perceptions, as indicated in the metaphor below:

Emergency remote teaching is like jumping into water without knowing how to swim. I had no prior experience of online teaching before the pandemic and everything seemed to be so complicated to me and I was not feeling confident about my technological competence as a teacher (P39).

This finding is also consistent with the previous research. In Trust and Whalen's study (2021a), it was seen that teachers were ill-prepared to shift from in-person teaching to emergency remote teaching. Similarly, in Karademir et al.'s (2020) study, some academics reported that they felt inadequate to conduct their online lessons properly. Apparently, being a good teacher in face-to-face teaching may not necessarily mean that s/he is a good video actor in remote

teaching as a result of different factors including distractions, lack of focus, etc. (Rapanta et al., 2020).

The instructors also underlined that the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic caused a very sudden shift from in-person teaching to emergency remote teaching as it can be seen in the following metaphor 'volcano':

Emergency remote teaching is like a volcano because it came up all of a sudden and with great pressure (P28).

ERT as an Unreal Experience

This theme also emerged from the participants' metaphors. The instructors perceived emergency remote teaching as an unreal experience. Based on the instructors' explanations, it can be seen that remote teaching has blurred the line between reality and virtuality.

Emergency remote teaching is like online dating experience because you try your best, but in real life your effort doesn't pay off. Nothing is real and in the end, no big real benefit for us (P24).

Emergency remote teaching is like a simulation that we try to do as if we teach because we all know that education is mainly a kind of communication, and nothing is as real and genuine as face-to-face communication (P50).

This finding is in line with Kaban's (2021) study in which the categories "uselessness" and "virtuality" of the metaphors are dominant. The participants in his study posited that remote teaching is not as useful as face-to-face teaching and cannot substitute for it. Similarly, in Alan's (2021) study, the participants addressed the artificial aspect of distance education.

ERT as an Experience Inducing Isolation, Feelings of Being Lost

Restrictions being imposed on the public such as "stay at home" orders and social distancing practices caused a penetrating feeling of loneliness, boredom and helplessness among students and teachers alike. Staying at home and conducting online lessons with students' microphones muted and cameras turned off exacerbated feelings such as isolation, confusion and feelings of being lost. As a result of lockdowns and continued uncertainty, it has become a monumental task to care for students as a teacher while teachers cannot show enough care for themselves. In addition to this, the teachers started to feel guilt for being unable to teach in the way they did before the pandemic. They felt that they lost the control of what was going on in their classrooms. Moreover, lecture-based lessons without students' participation made the instructors feel what they were doing was futile and not meaningful. They wanted to see a "real" person behind the screen, but what they experienced was a black screen or their own reflection like a mirror. These perceptions are also visible in the elicited metaphors below:

Emergency remote teaching is like playing blind man's puff because you don't know if you are really touching them. You try to reach them through different media in and outside the classroom, yet you don't really sense / know / observe that they are meaningful to them. You feel kind of lost as you do in the game (P10).

Emergency remote teaching is like playing a cyber game, especially when there are no students/student participation because you play it by yourself and sometimes feel that you've done nothing at all (P8).

ERT as a Positive Experience

It was noted that six participants held positive attitudes towards emergency remote teaching. Although the metaphors in this category are few in number, they are worthy as they highlight another dimension of emergency remote teaching. In order to explore the metaphors further, we can take a look at the explanations provided by the instructors.

Emergency remote teaching is like breakfast in bed because one might have breakfast in bed and doesn't have to go to the living room to have it and now we are at home and don't have to go to the campus to teach. It feels much more comfortable too just like having breakfast in bed:) (P23).

Not having to go to the campus in traffic at the risk of being infected may be one of the reasons the six instructors liked and had positive perceptions towards emergency remote teaching. Some of them started to use the extra time, which they used to spend on commuting to the campus, in beneficial ways (Kim & Asbury, 2020). Another metaphor with positive meaning is as follows:

Emergency remote teaching is like a day in heaven because you are totally safe from coronavirus and Istanbul's traffic (P25).

Working from home may be beneficial for those who enjoy spending time in their personal space and/or suffer from the heavy traffic in the rush hours.

The following example also shows that besides their own personal reasons, the instructors also believed in the necessity of emergency remote teaching to sustain education and therefore perceived it as a positive endeavor:

Emergency remote teaching is like a life boat behind the shipwreck because it helped to continue our lives in terms of both education and occupation somehow (P12).

CONCLUSIONS

Hopefully, this COVID-19 pandemic will soon be a memory. We should not forget our experiences about remote teaching as the adopted coping skills during this challenging period should become "part of a teacher's skill set", the term proposed by Barbour et al. (2020, p. ii). Although emergency remote teaching has been considered a health and safety precaution, it will definitely leave its marks on education systems. There can be similar or totally different emergency situations in the future; therefore, we should move on after taking the necessary lessons, and institutions should oversee the necessity of planning for future emergency situations.

We can say that instructors' perceptions are highly important for learning outcomes and students' success. In this regard, this study contributes to the research on remote teaching and metaphor studies by bringing language instructors' perspectives to the forefront. Fifty-eight metaphors emerged in this study. The instructors' experiences of emergency remote teaching

were visible in their metaphors. From this study, six themes emerged that may resonate with other teachers' experiences in different contexts. When the study is examined in general, it can be seen that instructors have negative concepts about emergency remote teaching. More than half of the metaphors show that the instructors found emergency remote teaching challenging and dynamic in its nature over time. The emerging issues are in compliance with the dominant problems of remote teaching such as lack of interaction (Hebebcı et al. 2020; Serhan, 2020; Tarrayo et al., 2021; van der Spoel et al., 2020), insufficient training of teachers (Trust & Whalen, 2021a) in the reviewed literature. In this study, some of the instructors highlighted that remote teaching could not bring sufficient satisfaction, but they admitted that it was a necessity due to circumstances. Positive perceptions were also echoed in the explanations by the participants.

The emergency remote teaching practice has been a strength test for all institutions including higher education. In its limited scope, this research looked at how English language instructors thought about the emergency remote teaching practice. The metaphors employed provide eloquent insights into these language instructors' feelings about emergency remote teaching practice. Conducting other studies on the metaphors about remote teaching is recommended for future research directions. The results of similar studies on remote teaching experiences will project valuable findings while remote teaching practices have gained momentum all around the world. Given the fact that teachers can find themselves again in emergency situations in the future, learning how to cope with unexpected situations and fostering such coping competence can be integrated to pre-service and in-service teacher training programs. It has become apparent that university teachers need full-fledged technical and pedagogical support mechanisms as they have felt unprepared, which was reflected in their metaphors. Supporting the suggestions made by previous studies (van der Spoel et al., 2020), the teachers appeared to have the intention to use more technology in the lessons after the pandemic. In this regard, university teachers should be supported not only technically but also pedagogically when universities reopen. As reflected in the metaphors, the instructors felt themselves alone in online lessons as if they were in a radio programme. In pre-service teacher training programs, they can be offered courses on using digital tools to enhance interaction in online platforms or benefit from them in face-to-face lessons to increase engagement among students.

There are some limitations of this study. One of the limitations is that the instructors' metaphors are collected at one point of time, and their perceptions may differ over time. Another limitation is that we cannot be sure that the chosen metaphors by the instructors correlate with their actual classroom practice. In de Guerrero and Villamil's (2002, p. 113) terms, "this is a study of what teachers 'say' rather than what they 'do', no claims are made about the teachers' behavior in the classroom". In further research, this study can be replicated in other levels of education and/or other countries.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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