COVID-19 is Disaster: A Corpus-Assisted Study of 'Disaster' Metaphorical Expressions in Daily Dawn (Jan-Dec 2020)

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Abstract
Conceptual Metaphor Theory" (CMT) is a good tool for conceptualizing various phenomena. To understand how the COVID-19 pandemic (2019-2021) was understood, reported, and represented in Pakistan, COVID-19-related news stories were extracted from the daily, Dawn (January-December 2020) by using the Pragglejazz group of Identification Method for Metaphors (2007). The main purpose of the present research was to understand how fear was mongered and instilled in the people's hearts to keep them indoors. One way to achieve this aim is to represent something as dangerous, deathly, and imminent. One widely reported conceptual metaphor used to realize this objective was to represent COVID-19 as a disaster that is COVID-19 is disaster. News stories extracted from Dawn were compiled into a Corpus for concordance using AntConc. The analysis revealed that the conceptual metaphors COVID-19 is disaster and COVID-19 is natural disaster occurred with frequencies of 53 and 102 respectively. The findings prove the effectiveness of metaphors and their significance in understanding difficult situations, efficiently communicating ideas, and influencing the audience. Future research in this area would benefit from including more metaphor areas and search words or using larger corpora. A comparison with Urdu newspapers (which are more sensational and target the less-educated common man) may reveal further nuances of such metaphors.
Keywords: Conceptual metaphors, COVID-19 is disaster, Dawn Newspaper, Corpus-assisted, AntConc, CMT, Pakistan

1. Introduction

In December 2019, a novel coronavirus known as Covid-19 infected the lives of many people working in Wuhan, China with unfamiliar pneumonia (She, et al., 2020). Subsequently, the disease quickly took over the country, and in February, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic due to its rapid spread globally. According to the data collected by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, about 22705647 cases of Covid-19 were reported between 31 December 2019 and 21 August 2020 of which 794104 people succumbed to this contagious disease (COVID-19 situation update worldwide as of 21 August 2020).

Unlike former contagious diseases like Ebola and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), the nature of the Covid-19 outbreak as the infection has endangered many lives. The pandemic began in December 2019 and grew into the largest and most severe outbreak in the history of the disease (Liu, et al., 2020 and Gul et al.,2022(b)). Due to this, it has received international consideration and a public health emergency has been declared by W.H.O. The spread of coronavirus has not only affected the economies, trade and industries of the world but also affected the social and domestic lives of people (Katermina & Yachenko, 2020). It also caused a great deal of fear, anxiety and panic in the public. It has not only instilled fear in individuals at a social and psychological level but has also severely changed the conventional designs and behaviors of people.

According to Colak (2023), with the continuation of the past global diseases, recently the humanity is struggling with the arrival of Corona virus disease 2019 known as Covid-19 pandemic. As the disease started or emerged from China at the end of 2019 but then rapidly it was spread throughout the globe. Although scientific knowledge about the COVID-19 virus has increased from the early days of the outbreak but there was still no proven therapeutic medicine. While the epidemic affects the world in multiple waves, there have been no other precautions in addition to social distancing, wearing masks, and strict cleaning measures are adopted to protect individuals.

Along with other changes caused by COVID-19 globally, the communication approach is also affected at the linguistic level. In this regard, print media played a major role on all media platforms. COVID-19 receives demanding global coverage in print as well as in electronic media. The image of COVID-19 is depicted differently in various languages from different perspectives utilizing multiple communication styles. Usually, coronavirus or disease discourse is part of the medical and scientific discourse, which is accurately employed.

The study of metaphor has a long history, and can be traced back to 1932 when Aristotle stated that metaphor is "the application of a word belonging to something else" (p.51). Also, Aristotle's views on metaphor provide insights into modelling the conceptualization of metaphors. Kövecses (2010) has identified five common characteristics of the traditional concept of metaphor: First is Metaphor is the property of words. Secondly, Metaphor is used for some creative and rhetorical purpose. Thirdly, Metaphor is based on the similarity between two entities that are compared and identified. Fourthly, Metaphor is a conscious and thoughtful use of words, and you must have a distinct talent to be able to do it well. Lastly, Metaphor is a figure of speech that we cannot do communication without it, we are using it for special effects, and it is not an unavoidable part of everyday human communication. (Kövecses, 2010).

To study language from this approach is to research conceptualization. Language is a window to cognitive function

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and provides knowledge about the nature, structure, and organization of thoughts and ideas. This approach deviates from other traditional views as it assumes that language can give insightful explanations about certain basic properties and features of human mental faculty i.e., the mind (Evan 2011). However, when the disease is used by ordinary people in their discourses, it is sometimes used both personally and metaphorically to conceptualize the phenomenon. To study this feature of language, a corpus study can indicate different usages of the words created by the speakers. One of the major developments in the field of linguistics is the study of language about the mind and how language is organized by ideas, thoughts, and embodiment. Understanding language and the meanings of linguistic items are related to conceptualization and embodiment. This approach to study language is provided by Cognitive Linguistics, which is a newly emerged field that investigates the relationship between language, mind, and embodied experience (Evans, 2011).

A metaphor is a good tool for conceptualizing a novel disease (Rasool, et al. 2021). The current paper examined the COVID-19 IS DISASTER metaphor in Pakistani newspaper news stories. For this purpose, the data was analyzed using the theoretical framework of "Conceptual Metaphor Theory" (CMT), proposed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in the field of Cognitive Linguistics. Previously, in linguistics, metaphors were just considered ornamental parts and stylistic tools of language. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) on the other hand negate this approach and propose that metaphors are not just ornamental tools but important reflections of human thoughts and embodiment.

The main purpose of the present research was to understand how fear was mongered and instilled in the people's hearts to keep them indoors. One way to achieve this aim is to represent something as dangerous, deathly, and imminent. The present research is based on the findings of a corpus made of disaster metaphors from the Dawn newspaper. Similarly, Nor and Zulcafli (2020) have used the "La Repubblica" corpus as a reference corpus and analyzed it through Sketch Engine. The findings of the above study based on concordance analysis revealed an emergency in the health and economy of Italy. The present study is based on the analysis of corpus made of disaster metaphors from dawn newspaper. Similarly, the spread of misinformation through public WhatsApp groups was found by Javed, Shuja, Usama et al. (2020) in addition to propagating religious ideologies to combat the COVID-19 crisis.

Nauman and Islam (2020) explored a large corpus of more than 70 news websites from Pakistan and reported an exponential change in the English language used in Pakistan. However, none of the abovementioned studies conducted in the Pakistani context explored newspaper editorials. Hence, the present study opting for the conventions of corpus-driven approaches explores various themes, through concordance analysis, in Pakistani newspapers editorials related to the spread of the pandemic.

Figen Unal Colak (2022) also carried out his research on social media users who derived metaphors conceptualized COVID-19, as a disaster along with other categories as well. This category includes metaphors that are about sudden and unexpected situations that may also cause fear and anxiety. The study showed that Covid-19 affects every area of life suddenly and unexpectedly—with a "disaster."

2. Methods & Materials

This study employs Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as the primary framework for analyzing metaphors. To address the limitations of CMT, the researchers also used Grady's Primary Metaphor Theory and Fauconnier's Blending Theory to provide a comprehensive understanding of metaphorical expressions. The corpus was created by gathering conceptual metaphors related to the 'Disaster' source domain in the context of COVID-19 using the Pragglejazz Group's Identification Method for Metaphors (2007), spanning from January 2020 to December 2020. AntConc software (Anthony, 2022) has been used for the quantitative analysis, specifically to count the frequencies of lexical items related to the 'Disaster' source domain. The software was utilized to generate frequency counts and concordance lines, providing insights into the prevalence and contextual usage of these terms. Qualitative analysis was performed to assess the metaphor's influence on public perception and communication about the pandemic.

3. Results & Discussion

According to the Oxford Dictionary disaster means "a sudden accident or a natural catastrophe that causes great damage or loss of life". Disasters are grouped into two categories natural and man-made. A natural disaster is defined as an event of nature, which overwhelms local resources and threatens the function and safety of the community (March 2002: 1). As the COVID-19 pandemic caused deaths, destroyed jobs, and compromised the safety of the public, it was called a disaster in the lives of the citizens. The print media described the disaster in the form of metaphors. Hence, this study focused on metaphors that fall in the disaster category.

Table 1: The Frequency of The Lexical Items Related to COVID-19 is Disaster

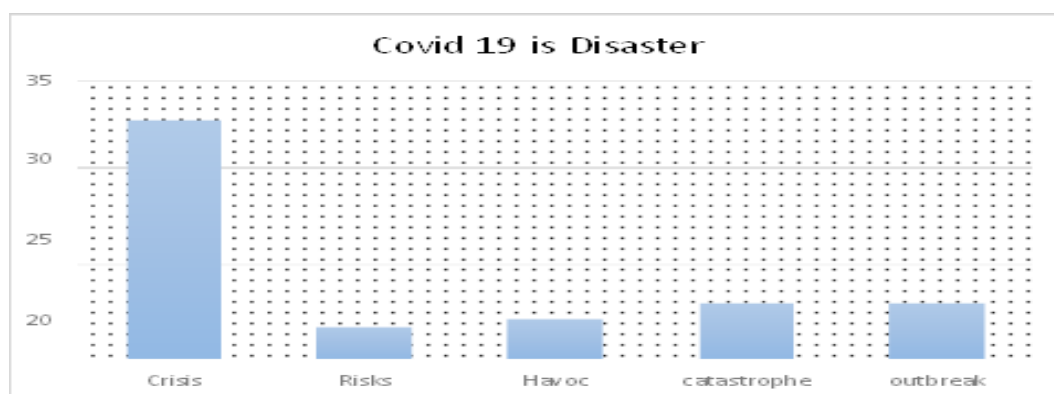| Lexical word	Frequency
Crisis	30
Risks	4
Havoc	5
Catastrophe	7
Outbreak	7

Figure 1: Covid 19 is Disaster

3.1. COVID-19 IS DISASTER

The analysis of the corpus of Dawn news stories reveals that the conceptual metaphor COVID-19 IS DISASTER is found with the frequency of 53 metaphors in the corpus. The damage caused by the virus was portrayed as a disaster. Many metaphorical expressions related to the Source Domain (SD) DISASTER were used, with lexical words like crisis, risks, havoc, disaster, and catastrophe. Searching the frequency of the source domain Crisis in the corpus, 319 tokens of the lexical item crisis were found. However, 30 lexical words were used metaphorically to refer to the metaphorical concept COVID-19 IS CRISIS. Most of them talk about economic crises For example, "Boryeong launched the festival on Daecheon Beach in 1998 to rejuvenate a local economy hit by the Asian financial crisis." (18 July 2020). Here the lexical item crisis is used in its dictionary meaning. The lexical item crisis was also used metaphorically to talk about the pandemic, for example, 'Third volume of an e-book on the economy during Covid-19 crisis launched." (10 April 2020).

It is evident from the present study that metaphor is a powerful tool to frame the government and all the public problems generated by the coronavirus. Most politicians take help from metaphors to convince the public about the situation such as: "Lockdown a temporary solution to Covid-19 crisis: PM", "Imran praises team for help in Covid-19 crisis", "Several projects launched despite Covid-19 crisis, says CM". The word crisis is used to persuade the public about the severity of the situation.

decision on repatriation of doctors should be made with Covid-19	crisis	in mind Malik Asad Published April 24, 20
well-being. The Covid-19 pandemic has aggravated the mental health	crisis	in Pakistan, highlighting an urgent need t
country where dropouts are the highest due to the Covid-19	crisis	in relative terms. This estimate is based or
that of Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan, during the Convid-19	crisis	in Sindh. "The federal government is bent
McGeehan said: "We have a nation where a child poverty	crisis	has been amplified by the impact of coro

Figure 2: COVID 19 IS CRISIS

The crisis was conceived in terms of a structured set of conceptual metaphors that depict it as a disaster, and a harmful object. The metaphors in the present study not only shape the readers' view of the crisis but also construct a negative assessment of the situation by highlighting its harmful effects. Greff et al. (2020) also investigated the uses and effects of climate change by describing the Crisis conceptual metaphors that map the crisis domain of climate change. The lexical word crisis creates intense pressure, leading to heightened stress but also the possibility of breakthrough ideas and innovation. A crisis an also represents a profound period of struggle and introspection, ultimately leading to personal or collective awakening.

The lexical item HAVOC was used five times metaphorically to refer to the pandemic. For example, "Japan, Canada, and Jordan intensified fears of more COVID-19 havoc to come." (28 Dec. 2020). The mention of intensified fears suggests growing concerns about the potential of the COVID-19 pandemic to cause further havoc. This reflects a broader global context where uncertainty and anxiety about the virus persist, despite efforts to control its spread through vaccination and other measures.

Searching the lexical word OUTBREAK, the quantitative analysis shows that there were 17 tokens of the above lexical word, and examining the context reveals that 7 were used metaphorically to refer to the pandemic; the remaining instances were excluded because they did not refer to the COVID-19 crisis. For example, "The fear of a coronavirus outbreak has forced US Secretary of Defence Mark Esper to postpone a key visit to Pakistan, India and other countries in the region, the Pentagon announced on Tuesday" (11 March 2020).

Another lexical word CATASTROPHE was used 7 times metaphorically to hit the target domain Covid-19 out of 11 occurrences. The example taken from the corpus was, "What now? On top of this disaster, a coronavirus catastrophe?" said 55-year-old Roxane Moukarzel." (23 August 2020). Roxane Moukarzel's statement highlights the compounded challenges faced by individuals and communities dealing with the aftermath of a disaster, such as those mentioned earlier, alongside the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The term "coronavirus catastrophe" underscores the

severity of the situation, suggesting that the pandemic has exacerbated existing difficulties and added another layer of complexity to an already challenging scenario. Searching the lexical word 'Risk' that hit the Target domain COVID-19, the total instances were 43 of the lexical word 'risk' but only four times it was used metaphorically to refer to Covid-19. As exemplified by the corpus "Trump's age, weight adds to Covid risks: experts" (3rd October 2020). It refers to the increased vulnerability of former President Donald Trump to COVID-19 due to factors such as his age and weight. . Both age and weight are known risk factors for experiencing severe illness from the virus.

 COVID-19 or coronavirus was described as an emergency, as a global or international emergency emphasizes the urgent need for international cooperation and coordinated efforts to address its impact. There are sixteen examples of the lexical word EMERGENCYas a source domain to hit the target domain COVID-19. In one example the word "Virus alarm" was used like "Indian presidential palace isolates 500 people after virus alarm

 (April 22, 2020). It conveys a sense of urgency and heightened awareness in response to a viral outbreak or pandemic like COVID-19. Just like a traditional alarm warns of a potential threat or danger, the metaphor "virus alarm" suggests the need for immediate attention, action, and preparedness in the face of a contagious disease.

In an emergency metaphor, words like 'virus rescue' and 'virus curfew' were used. "Virus rescue" is a metaphor used to describe the efforts and actions taken to combat and mitigate the impact of a viral outbreak or pandemic. Just as a rescue operation is carried out to save individuals in danger, the metaphor "virus rescue" suggests a concerted and organized response to save lives, contain the spread of the virus and minimize the damage caused by the outbreak.

 The use of disaster metaphors in public discourse shaped the public attitude and behaviours towards COVID-19.A sense of immediacy urges individuals to take the situation more seriously and follow the public health guidelines. The disaster metaphors increased anxiety and fear. The main purpose of the research was to understand how fear was mongered and instilled in the people's hearts to keep them indoors.

3.2. COVID-19 IS NATURAL DISASTER

Metaphors are commonly used to describe and understand complex phenomena like natural disasters and pandemics. There were 102 metaphors found in the natural disaster category. The concept of "waves" has been frequently used metaphorically to describe the different phases and surges of COVID-19.

Table 2: The Frequency of The Lexical Items Related to Covid-19 IS Natural Disaster

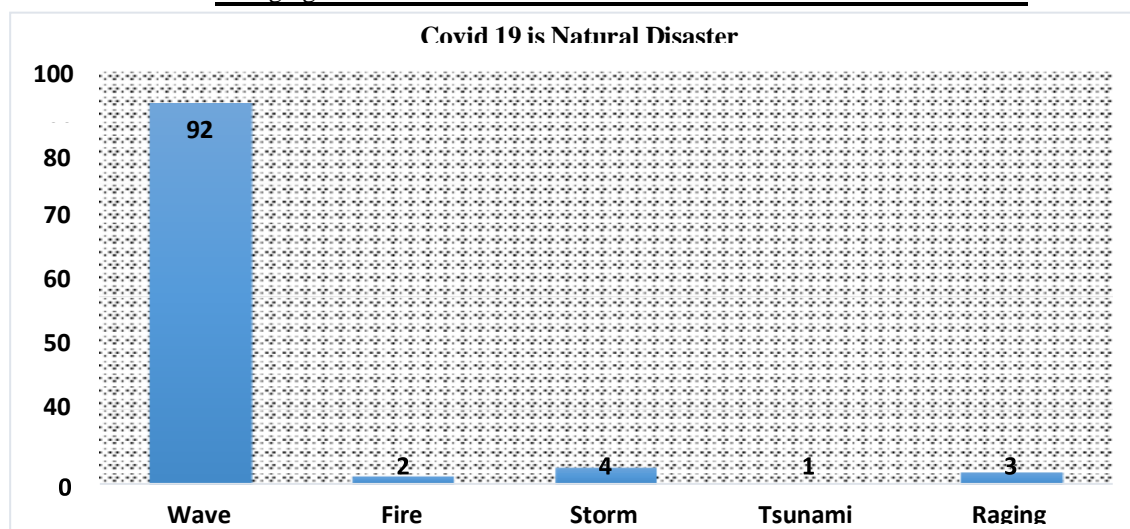| Lexical word	Frequency
Wave	92
Fire	2
Storm	4
Tsunami	1
Raging	3

Figure 3: COVID-19 is Natural Disaster

The conceptual metaphor COVID-19 IS NATURAL DISASTER was frequently described with various lexical words in the corpus with a frequency of 102 metaphors in total. Lexical items such as "wave, fire, storm, and tsunami" were used metaphorically to refer to the pandemic. There were 187 instances of the metaphorical use of WAVE to refer to COVID-19. For example, "They told Dawn that the second wave of the virus was considered to be more dangerous than the previous one" (28 Nov. 2020) The spread of the pandemic is compared to water by using the lexical items wave to convince the audience of the dangers of the disease as it quickly spreads.

One of the most powerful images from nature has also become a powerful metaphor—the WAVE. In the last few months, we have heard such metaphors used to describe the different periods of the COVID-19 pandemic. The First Wave metaphor refers to the initial surge of COVID-19 cases in a particular region or country. It's often likened to

the first wave of an ocean swell, marking the onset of the pandemic's impact. Second Wave metaphors are following the decline of cases after the first wave, subsequent rises in infections are referred to as the second wave. These metaphors propose a pattern of resurgence, much like the repeating waves of the sea. Third Wave similar to the second wave, the third wave represents another increase in cases after a period of relative calm, indicating ongoing challenges and a resurgence of the virus.

More with the former example than the latter, the wave metaphor can be seen as positive or negative, depending on your point of view. But, examining the natural phenomena will help us to determine why the wave is such a popular metaphor, and why some believe it is overused and misused to the point that they battle against it. Waves are relentless. The water crashes on the beach, and ebbs back toward the ocean followed by another wave of crashing water. Ahmad, et al. (2023) have showed distinct waves where cases ebbed and flowed. While each country had slight, nuanced differences, lessons from each wave with country specific details provides important lessons for prevention, understanding medical outcomes and the role of vaccines. This paper compares key characteristics from the five different COVID-19 waves in Pakistan. Below is the example taken from Dawn newspaper ''Punjab is gradually heading towards a second wave of the Covid-19 as an upsurge has been witnessed in the confirmed cases of the virus across the province during the last 24 hours.'' (12 Oct.2020). These metaphors help illustrate the unpredictable and dynamic nature of the pandemic, making it easier for the public to understand the ebb and flow of case numbers and the importance of ongoing preventive measures. There are many other instances as shown in figure no. 3

	File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
65	dawn data ...	is the economic development affected." "Despite all difficulties, the first	wave	of Covid-19 was tackled by Pakistan in a very
66	dawn data ...	attended the meeting wherein the latest situation about the second	wave	of coronavirus across the province was reviewed. The meeting
67	dawn data ...	attended the meeting wherein the latest situation about the second	wave	of coronavirus across the province was reviewed. The meeting
68	dawn data ...	of a decision to close educational institutions amid the second	wave	of coronavirus and said the lives of their children
69	dawn data ...	the SOPs is the key to fend off the second	wave	of coronavirus but the situation on ground presents an
70	dawn data ...	during training session on Monday.—Reuters NYON: As a second	wave	of coronavirus cases hits Europe, the Champions League is
71	dawn data ...	a press conference on Wednesday. — DawnNewsTV ISLAMABAD: While the second	wave	of coronavirus claimed as many as 105 lives — the second-
72	dawn data ...	federal and provincial governments. — Online/File ISLAMABAD: As the second	wave	of coronavirus continues to gain momentum in the country,
73	dawn data ...	spread of the virus. — AFP/Flile LAHORE: Fearing a second	wave	of coronavirus following a sudden surge in the number
74	dawn data ...	facing increased resistance as they try to contain a second	wave	of coronavirus infections at the start of autumn. Europe
75	dawn data ...	acknowledged that the Punjab was in the middle of second	wave	of coronavirus pandemic that demanded that the masses should
76	dawn data ...	Buzdar expressed his concern at people not taking the second	wave	of coronavirus seriously, stressing the need for taking precautionary
77	dawn data ...	districts other than Peshawar and Abbottabad. They said the second	wave	of coronavirus was more virulent than the first one
78	dawn data ...	coronavirus in May, Israel has been grappling with a second	wave	of infections and has reported a total of 98,550 Covid-19
79	dawn data ...	cases in months on Sunday, triggering fears of a second	wave	of infections as more European countries prepare to reopen

Figure 4: COVID-19 is different waves of sea

Suligowski, & Ciupa, (2023) also found the continuous death rates recorded in several waves of COVID-19 worldwide. They investigated five waves of COVID-19 in Poland during 800 days of the pandemic. The wave metaphor seems to imply that the number of Covid-19 cases increases not because of human behavior, but because of the virus itself. Therefore, the wave metaphor also has the potential of hiding the fact that the measures taken by the government to slow the spread of the virus have failed to stop an increase in cases. Moodley and Lesage (2020) expressed that the natural forces invasion metaphor feeds into fears. Pasaribu, T. A., Dewi, N., & Bram, B. (2021) described natural force is the second prominent category of metaphors. By drawing on the literal uncontrollability of waves, possible preventive measures are backgrounded and Covid-19 is conceptualized as beyond human control, as if nothing can be done to prevent an increase in cases (De La Rosa, 2007, p.25). Despite being "warned from the very beginning" and "regardless of all the measures that were taken", the wave still came crashing.

Another lexical item related to the conceptual metaphor COVID-19 IS NATURAL DISASTER is FIRE. Searching the corpus, 10 occurrences of the lexical item fire were found. By careful examination, 8 tokens were excluded because they did not refer to the COVID-19 crisis. For example, "Johnson 'on top of things', but under fire over initial virus response." (20 April 2020). Here, "under fire" conveys the idea of facing harsh criticism or being attacked, much like a target being bombarded with projectiles during a military assault or, more metaphorically, like being engulfed in flames during a fire. This metaphor vividly captures the level of scrutiny and pressure faced by Johnson due to perceived failures orshortcomings in his handling of the COVID-19 pandemic in its early stages. The next lexical item related to the conceptual metaphor COVID-19 IS NATURAL DISASTER is FLARE UP. The lexical word is used metaphorically in the three instances. The example is taken from the corpus, "Epidemiologists say contact tracing will become a vital weapon in containing future flare-ups in Covid-19, the flu-like disease caused by coronavirus, once national lockdowns slow the rapid spread of the virus." (02 April 2020).

The above two examples come under the category of fire, made by Semino as fire metaphors (Semino, E. 2021). The next lexical word under the fire metaphor category is 'RAGING' used as a noun or verb as exemplified from the corpus, "This epidemic is like a raging fire."(21 April 2020). Comparing an epidemic to a raging fire is a common metaphor used to convey the rapid spread and destructive nature of infectious diseases. Just like a fire can quickly

engulf everything in its path, an epidemic can rapidly spread through populations, overwhelming healthcare systems and causing significant harm. This comparison highlights the urgency of taking swift and decisive action to contain the spread of the disease and mitigate its impact on communities.

In addition to this, the lexical word STORM was used 4 times metaphorically out of 11 occurrences. An example of the above lexical word was taken from the corpus, "Face masks will become compulsory in England's shops and supermarkets from next week, while South Africa re-imposed a nationwide curfew to prevent a "coronavirus storm" (16 July 2020). In this metaphor, "coronavirus" represents the viral outbreak, and "storm" evokes imagery of a powerful and uncontrollable force. Just like a storm, the spread of the virus can be rapid, widespread, and unpredictable. By describing it as a "coronavirus storm," the metaphoremphasizes the urgency and severity of the situation, highlighting the need for preventive measures such as re-imposing a curfew to curb the spread of the virus and mitigate its impact on public health and safety. The words storm taken from the Dawn Newspaper data as shown in the figure;

..	the family of Yahya was more worried due to a	storm	of false and fake news over different mediums though
..	in Islamabad like a thunderbolt from Mount Olympus. A perfect	storm	of quasi-existential crises darkened the skies over the
..	term and ensure we are better prepared to weather the	storm	ahead." Harrison said on Tuesday there were no plans
..	depend on how long national economies manage to withstand the	storm,	and the performance of governments in tackling the threat.
..	South Africa reimposed a nationwide curfew to prevent a "coronavirus	storm".	BBC job cuts add to UK media gloom as
..	the coronavirus lockdown but cricket was expected to weather the	storm	better than most given the season was all but
..	positive lab test result. China retreats online to weather coronavirus	storm	February 17, 2020 Virus-phobia has sent hundreds of millions of
..	the ladder. Coronavirus pandemic that has taken the world by	storm	including the super powers has brought all sporting activities
..	of Pakistan for SMEs to help them weather the Covid-19	storm.	It should assume that some of these loans may
..	has been quick to point the finger in the latest	storm. "	The abuse and mistreatment of Africans living and working
..	cancel an election rally in New Hampshire, citing an approaching	storm.	Trump has pushed to hold large gatherings against health

Figure 2: COVID 19 IS STORM

Pasaribu, et al. (2021) described natural force as the second prominent category of metaphors. By drawing on the literal uncontrollability of waves, possible preventive measures are backgrounded and COVID-19 is conceptualized as beyond human control as if nothing can be done to prevent an increase in cases (De La Rosa, 2007). Despite being "warned from the very beginning" and "regardless of all the measures that were taken", the wave still came crashing. Whereas, Repetskaya & Ivanova, (2022) described that natural disaster metaphors are productive metaphors. The most frequent sources for presenting the economic and social consequences of a destructive pandemic are natural disasters, against which peopleand the economy are weak (corona storm, Covid tornado, corona earthquake, Covid disaster, Covid chaos). In the same line, Covid-19 has immensely affected all fields of life in numerous ways, viz. trade marketing, economy section, education etc. likewise, teaching and learning processes of language have also been affected for instance, there came the concepts of online classroom, offline classroom, online and offline exams and so on (Gul et al., 2022). Furthermore, many new lexemes/words entered into the lexicons/dictionaries of English language during Covid-19. It implies that language and humans have bidirectional causal relations as they contribute to one another in various forms.

The last lexical word related to the conceptual metaphor "COVID-19 IS NATURAL DISASTER" was 'TSUNNAMI' found in the corpus of Dawn newspaper. There was one example of tsunami used metaphorically out of three instances. An example is "Todayeveryone witnessed that Pakistan was facing a tsunami of price hike and coronavirus" (06 August2020), and Sajjad et al., 2023. In this connection, many experts have studied Covid-19 from various perspectives such as studying health issues, anxiety, fear, through the lens of medical sciences. Correspondingly, discursive power in discourse have put in order to have explicit contributions to the arena of medical sciences.

Wicke & Bolognesi, (2020), also found that words in the natural disaster category seem to relate to events and actions associated with the arrival and spreading of the pandemic(e.g., "wave", "storm", "tide", "tsunami", "disaster", "tornado". With the use of such terms, a wave of fear is inflicted in the minds of people and they take the COVID-19 situation as a devastating wave of storm or sea and a real threat to the health of people. Moodley & Lesage (2020) expressed that the natural forces attack metaphor feeds into fears. In their work, Moodley and Lesage (2020) explore how metaphors that frame natural events (like pandemics, natural disasters, or environmental crises) as attacks or assaults by natural forces contribute to emotional responses, particularly fear. These metaphors can shape how individuals perceive and react to such events by casting them in terms that evoke a sense of vulnerability and threat. Natural disaster metaphors had a significant impact on public attitudes toward COVID-19. Waves symbolize the ebb and flow of crises, suggesting that challenges can return even after periods of calm, reflecting the ongoing nature of public health issues. Waves reflect the idea that stability is often temporary; just when things seem to be improving, a new wave can disrupt that sense of security. Similarly, fire metaphors shaped the public perceptions of COVID-19

as a significant, urgent threat, influencing behaviour, compliance with health measures, and emotional responses during the pandemic.

4. Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic has left deep marks in the consciousness of people all over the world. Because of its unexpectedness, rapid pace, and global scale, the pandemic has forced significant changes into our lives. The enormous challenge issued by the dreaded pandemic isbeing discussed, explained, rationalized, and interpreted in numerous publications of health and media reports, newspaper articles, write-ups as well as news headlines. The present study analyzed the COVID-19 disaster-related metaphors with the help of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). The source domain disaster is the highest frequency of metaphorical expressions after the war metaphors in the Dawn news stories corpus which seems toconfirm that COVID-19 is a sudden accident or a natural catastrophe that caused great damage or loss of life" as confirmed from previous studies such as Colak (2023) and Piromalli (2021).

The use of disaster metaphors in public discourse shaped the public attitude and behaviors towards COVID-19.A sense of immediacy urges individuals to take the situation more seriously and follow the public health guidelines. The use of lexical words "Crisis, Risks, Havoc, catastrophe, outbreak" as source domain to depict the COVID-19 as a disaster increased anxiety and fear. The main purpose of the research was to understand how fear was mongered and instilled in the people's hearts to keep them indoors.

Natural disaster metaphors had a significant impact on public attitudes toward COVID-19. Waves symbolize the ebb and flow of crises, suggesting that challenges can return even after periods of calm, reflecting the ongoing nature of public health issues. The fire metaphors within the natural disaster category capture the infectiousness of the COVID-19 pandemic, where even a small spark can trigger a large-scale fire. Pakistani newspaper shares the use of the concepts of "fire, raging, Wave, Storm, Tsunami, crisis, risks, etc. in terms of disaster metaphors. Moreover, using "forest fires" as a metaphor for the COVID-19 pandemic also has a certain basis of recognition, just as people feel the heat and high temperature in a forest fire; COVID-19 patients also experience the torture of high body temperature (Semino, 2021). At the same time, other types of disaster metaphors appear in the given text, such as "tsunami metaphors" and "storm metaphors," which aim to awaken people's awareness of the severity of the COVID-19 epidemic. In the "tsunami metaphor", "storm metaphor," and wave metaphors the patients or viruses are compared to the "tsunami" or "storm". On the other hand, the human body or medical and health institutions are compared to the suffering side.

Any future research in this area would benefit from including more metaphor areas and searchwords using a larger corpus. This would allow a broader and more detailed view into the purposes and effects of metaphor usage in text discourse regarding Covid-19. Further research that can compare metaphor usage in Urdu newspapers with English-language newspapers might uncover differences in how metaphors are employed to engage with different audiences. Urdu newspapers, known for their sensationalism, might use more emotionally charged and dramatic metaphors, potentially targeting a less-educated or more general audience. Similarly, a CDA perspective may reveal the ideology and hidden agendas of the newspapers vis-à-vis the pandemic.

Further researchers can compare more metaphorical representations of COVID-19 across different types of media, such as news articles, social media posts, government communications, and public speeches. Investigate how metaphors vary across these platforms and their impact on public understanding and response to the pandemic.

5. Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the major findings of the current research study, the research recommends the following points for research conducted in the arena of linguistics:

    i. To study language in diverse contexts.
    ii. To theorize that language is a living entity.
    iii. To study changes, taking place due to change of context.
    iv. To investigate that how language moves with moving entities i.e. Human beings.
    v. To explore that language is ubiquitous.
    vi. To study language from the perspective of culture, society and community.
    vii. Unfold that how language is discursively produced through discourses spoken in a specific environment/language ecology.

6. Research Implications

The current research has theoretical and practical implications as mentioned below:

    i. Theoretically, this study has explicit contributions to the field of linguistics such as language learning and teaching theories.
    ii. The study in hand has practically enriched our understandings regarding language usage in diverse language environment.
    iii. The study has also uncovered that language situations provide platforms to language learning and teaching.
    iv. In both written and spoken alike, language functions to create metaphors, expressions, thoughts in order to shape and reshape the public opinions.

v.   The study also affirmed that what we think in our ecology the takes place in our expressions in daily life.

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