



The Cognitive Linguistic Analysis of Conceptual Metaphor in Yomiuri Shinbun and Asahi Shinbun on COVID-19 Discourses

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Abstract

In communicating ideas in a complex discourse, non-literal expressions are often used to convey a message. This qualitative descriptive study used conceptual metaphor theory and metaphorical pattern analysis to analyze and investigate linguistic discourses and find the conceptual metaphor in the two most prominent Japanese media, Yomiuri Shinbun and Asahi Shinbun. Then, analyze how metaphorical expression emerges and what conceptual domain of the source domain is underlying the expression of the source target. This research shows that WAR is the most frequent conceptual metaphor in COVID-19 discourse and the HUMAN and NATURE conceptual domain. While the WAR conceptual domain helps to convey the urgency of how to treat the virus and illness, the HUMAN and NATURE conceptual domain helps to convey the situation and condition of the pandemic. This study found that both newspapers' data emphasize the community, citizens, and national interests, indicating that to understand how Japanese people communicate is to understand that Japanese people are a collective society, and that society and cultural background are embodied in the conceptual domain of human thinking and then appear as a linguistic expression.

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INTRODUCTION

Over three years since the COVID-19 virus first broke out in Wuhan - China, the WHO declared a world health emergency on 30 January 2020 (World Health Organization, 2021). On the same day, Japan declared and formed a team called the Novel Coronavirus Response Headquarters, a country close to China and with a high level of human interaction and immigration with China (Prime Minister's Office of Japan, 2020).

The emergency outbreak of the COVID-19 virus has caused media coverage to be filled with news about cases of infection and the spread of the virus. Amid the ignorance and limited information about COVID-19, it was causing a stir worldwide. Discourse about the coronavirus began to be widely discussed, starting from the local community, social media, and mass media worldwide. Japan is no exception; the mass media broadcasts and publishes news and discourse regarding COVID-19. Moreover, Japan's most prominent mass media outlets, such as *Yomiuri Shinbun* and *Asahi Shinbun*, have high circulation and carry a particular column on COVID-19 offline and online. Even when WHO has declared the end of the COVID-19 pandemic emergency (Wise, 2023), the decline in pandemic status to endemic has not dampened the discussion of news articles about COVID-19, and discourse on COVID-19 is still being discussed and published in the Japanese mass media, especially the *Yomiuri Shinbun* and *Asahi Shinbun*.

Japan is a country that has the mass media of newspaper coverage with the highest circulation in the world (Milosevic, 2016). *Yomiuri Shinbun* takes first place with a circulation coverage of 20.7%, followed by *Asahi Shinbun* with 16.9% coverage of national newspapers (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 2022). Both are mass media that have the highest circulation and readership in Japan. With the advancement of the digital world today, *Yomiuri Shinbun* and *Asahi Shinbun* are also expanding their marketing strategy by entering the digital world. The two have also been doing journalism since the Meiji

era, so their presence in journalism is deeply rooted in Japanese society, culture and business.

In communicating ideas in a discourse, one can use literal expressions. However, non-literal expressions in communication are often used at the complex dialectic and discourse level. Someone will use a concept that is easier to understand to express something more complex and challenging to understand, and this is called a linguistic metaphor (Kövecses, 2022).

Metaphoric linguistic expressions appear not only from a series of words but also because a conceptual sequence underlies them. The conceptual is called a conceptual metaphor. These conceptual series come from all dimensions of experience that a person experiences, for example, with their five senses: colour, shape, smell, and sound (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003).

To understand how the Japanese people conceptualise COVID-19 and how Japanese people and media communicate through unliteral metaphorical expression regarding COVID-19 discourse, an in-depth study is needed to conduct. Using news media as a source of corpus data is also appropriate because newspaper reporting media in Japan have good relations and engagement rates with the public (K. Nakano et al., 2014).

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed and affected various aspects of life in people around the world. Whether it concerns health services, the economy, social society, culture, education, communication, or public policy is affected. Researchers are interested in researching aspects of life affected by COVID-19 and linguistics related to COVID-19 discourse in the mass media. Few researchers have examined the conceptual metaphors in Japanese in the COVID-19 discourse in Japanese news media, especially in Japan's most prominent news media.

The study examined conceptual metaphors in the COVID-19 discourse in Japanese mass media or newspapers conducted on NHK (Ilham & Tajudin, 2022). NHK is a state-owned news media funded by Japanese citizens' taxes, and therefore, it is organized by a government body. Thus, the content should represent the

government, as shown with the conceptual metaphor that also addresses the government. There needs to be more than one mass media source data to get a broader concept of the conceptual metaphor regarding the COVID-19 pandemic that appears in Japanese mass media. Therefore, further research using data sources in private mass media such as the *Yomiuri Shinbun* and *Asahi Shinbun* will add more diverse and complex data, mainly because these two news media have the highest circulation numbers and have more readers and editor contributions than NHK.

Research on the framing of metaphorical expressions was carried out (Komatsubara, 2021) and focused on statistically examining metaphors in the early years of the pandemic. The research shows that the conceptual metaphor that most commonly appears in media discourse in Japan is the concept of WAR. This research explains alternative public discourse that can be used to counter the conceptual framing of the WAR metaphor in a pandemic situation, which can bring more feelings of depression to society. The pandemic lasted approximately 3.5 years, and the problem was also dynamic. Therefore, analysing the metaphors in articles published in 2022 and 2023 is needed to discover the concept that emerged during the pandemic in Japanese newspaper media.

The study of conceptual metaphor in COVID-19 discourse was also conducted in newspapers of another language (Lahlou & Rahim, 2022). The study results show that the most frequent conceptual metaphors regarding COVID-19 are 'War', 'Disaster', and 'Killer'. The results show that metaphor is needed to convey what situation occurred, and the abstract concept of the COVID-19 Pandemic depicts COVID-19 with fearsome concepts like 'War', 'Disaster', and 'Killer'. Although COVID-19 is described as horrifying, other concepts are likely used to understand and communicate the discourse of COVID-19. For example, since COVID-19 has a strong connection with the human body, the human body also plays a role in communicating and understanding the abstract concept of COVID-19. Furthermore, the

government and society as a whole also play a role in treating and preventing the disease; the idea of society is the human body or human body related (Lakoff et al., 1991), which likely appears in Japanese media.

News media and newspapers cannot be separated from the daily life of Japanese society. Therefore, the discourse that appears and is published in newspapers is essential for Japanese society. Conceptual metaphors appear in everyday life, language, and action (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). Therefore, studies and research on discourse and conceptual metaphors in Japanese news media are essential for a broad and deep understanding of linguistics and Japanese society and culture. Then, it also adds knowledge about how disease and crisis are conceptualized in the Japanese language through discourse. Studying conceptual metaphors is also significant for the learner speaker of Japanese, as it enriches the Japanese language learner in terms of how unliteral metaphorical expression works and communicates in the discourse of pandemics and disease.

Accordingly, this research will first examine and focus on conceptual metaphors appearing in Japan's two most prominent newspaper media, *Yomiuri Shinbun* and *Asahi Shinbun*, regarding the COVID-19 discourse. This study will. Using articles from two prominent Japanese private newspaper media outlets, we should acquire data that metaphorical expression represents not only the government's effort to treat the disease.

Second, this research then analyses how metaphorical expression emerges and what conceptual domain of the source domain is underlying the expression of the source target. This study examines the news articles published in early 2020 when the COVID-19 outbreak started, mid-2021 when the Delta strain wave COVID-19 broke out, mid-2022 and mid-2023 when WHO declared the COVID-19 emergency over. Since the pandemic from 2020 to the middle of 2023 is so dynamic, using articles from 2020 to 2023 as a data source will acquire a broader metaphorical expression than the War or Battle conceptual domain.

RESEARCH METHOD

This qualitative descriptive study uses Conceptual Metaphor Theory to analyze and investigate discourses in linguistics (Kövecses, 2010) and the Metaphorical Pattern Analysis (Stefanowitsch & Gries, 2006) to identify and analyze the metaphorical expression in articles. The research data source used in this study is the linguistic data corpus from the Japanese newspaper media, namely:

1. *Yomiuri Shinbun* (www.yomiuri.co.jp)
2. *Asahi Shinbun* (www.asahi.com)

Newspaper media was chosen because it has a large circulation and is credible, as well as because it has free articles that users can access. The article used in this study appeared in both media, in the COVID-19 and Corona Virus News columns. After the source and limit of the articles are determined, researchers will access articles with a timeframe of early 2020 at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic Health emergency crisis, mid-2021, mid-2022 and mid-2023 when WHO declared the end of the COVID-19 pandemic emergency.

To find the metaphorical expression, the text in the articles is identified by Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and Metaphorical Pattern Analysis (MPA). Concordance-based and The AntConc 4.2.0 application can help find

sentences and expressions related to the word associated with COVID-19 in the big text or corpus data. After the metaphorical expression is identified, the researcher describes and maps the conceptual metaphors of these metaphorical expressions. The data from identified metaphorical expressions were compared with the 'Master Metaphor List' (Lakoff et al., 1991). Although the Master Metaphor List (Lakoff et al., 1991) is compiled from the English conceptual metaphor, master metaphor it can used to facilitate the conceptual mapping of metaphors in other languages with different cultural backgrounds (Gaskins, 2024; Lahlou & Rahim, 2022; Nakano, 2016).

The data collection technique will apply a concordance-based rather than a whole-based. The advantages of concordance-based are that it is easier to find what you want and what you do not want to find in a data corpus by applying bottom-up data search (Sardinha, 2011).

First, the article web page is downloaded manually and converted into plain text with the AntFileConverter 2.2.0 application. Then, an application called The AntConc 4.2.0 is used to find the data (Anthony, 2022). Keywords are needed to generate data. For example, by entering the word 「コロナ」, a concordance result will appear, as shown in Picture 1.

Picture 1: Concordance results using the keyword 「コロナ」

After the concordance results from the keyword 「コロナ」 appear, there is a 'Hit' column with blue letters, which shows the results of the primary keyword we entered. Then, there are columns on the left and right named left context and proper context to understand the complete sentence and the context of the sentence better. Clicking on one of the tables will take us to the File View section, where we will see the position of the sentence in the entire text. This makes it easier to find sentences that contain metaphorical expressions in the context of the Covid-19 discourse.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After the data obtained from the two newspapers, the data then compared with the Master metaphor List (Lakoff et al., 1991), the data shows that the concept conceptualized precisely in the two newspapers is that TREATING ILLNESS IS FIGHTING A WAR. Then, the results of the analysis of the two newspapers show a more specific and unique conceptual form of the conceptual metaphor in the Master metaphor list:

1. The conceptual form of 'Acting is a Moving' to become 'Public Health Policy is Movement'.
2. The conceptual form of 'Amount is Verticality', being the 'Highest Number of Virus Infection is a Mountain Peaks'.
3. The conceptual form of 'Change is Relative Motion' to become 'Virus Pandemic Crisis is a Motion State'.

The Conceptual Metaphor similarities or differences, or cross-culturally metaphors between different cultures and languages, could result from the similarities in the shaping factor of the conceptual metaphor (Almirabi, 2015) to the extent that native speakers use similar conceptual metaphors when they communicate about the world (Kövecses, 2010b). The shaping factor could be the nature of the virus, the medical science knowledge, and how the government implementation of a policy works. Moreover, the status of the world pandemic crisis has put the world together to solve the pandemic crisis, using the same terminology and medical science knowledge. The example shown in Data 5 regarding immunology shows that immunity is

trained to defend the human body from the virus and other micro-organisms (Gu et al., 2023). The immunology science knowledge of immunology and medical science plays a significant part in shaping similar views or understanding and shaping the metaphor across the language regarding how the virus infected the human body and how immunity in the human body is being developed.

The data obtained in the *Yomiuri Shinbun* and *Asahi Shinbun* articles also shows the emergence of a unique conceptual metaphor not found in the Master Metaphor List (Lakoff et al., 1991). The conceptual metaphors are that the 'Pandemic Crisis is an Era', 'The Virus Outbreak is a Wave', 'Virus is a Thief', 'Physical and Societal Harm Caused by the Virus is Physical Injury due to Predation by Vicious Animals', 'Virus is an Artist', 'Government is a Controller', 'Virus Pandemic Crisis is an Emotional State'.

The Conceptual Metaphor of 'The Pandemic Crisis is an Era', 'The Virus Outbreak is a Wave', and 'The Virus is a Thief' are likely also appear in English or other languages but did not appear on the Master metaphor list, which could result from the new phenomenon crises such as the COVID-19 World crisis pandemic. The new phenomenon creates or introduces a new concept to appear, and to understand the new concept, another concept, e.g., a more concrete concept, is used. Metaphors appear as a useful cognitive tool that helps us understand a new concept, help us communicate, and help us grasp or construct a new concept (Arnoux & Andrade, 2019).

Treating Illness is Fighting a War

The nature of a virus is slightly different from that of a regular army; Data 3 and Data 4 show that a virus is an enemy that is invisible and terrorizing people, unknown, and hard to detect, similar to special military operations. Data 1 shows that not only medical personnel but also the youth become troops to fight the war by taking action to prevent the spread infection of COVID-19. As shown in Data 6, The effect of infection and the symptoms create an explosion of a bomb that makes people panic, and the

number of hospitalized people fatalities rises, similar to the situation in a war.

As shown in Data 2, every citizen tries their best to overcome COVID-19 to prevent infection and find a way to fight the virus, for example, by inventing a new device that will be used to prevent the spread of infection and vote in the election for the right leader to lead the fight. Leader decisions and public policy are similar to strategies implemented in fighting an enemy in a war, and wrong decisions create fatalities. Data 5 also shows that a virus is understood as an enemy that has the ability of a soldier who can evade the human-acquired immunity as a defender of the human body.

The waging war concept accommodates the effort to prevent infection, defend the citizens from getting infected, and treat the infected people as citizens become the troops. Inventing medicine or medical devices to treat illness and viruses is inventing and producing a weapon to fight a war.

Data 1

「いま、新型コロナウイルスの感染拡大につながる行動をしているのは若者だけではありません。新しい未知なるウイルスとの闘い方がわからず、誰でも間違えてしまうことはあります。」
“Nowadays, young people are not the only ones who are taking actions that lead to the spread of the new coronavirus. Anyone can make mistakes because they do not know how to fight this new and unknown virus.”

(Kamata & Goto, 2020)

Data 2

「...非接触の消毒装置など、新商品の開発に挑戦し生き残りたい」と語る。選挙では新型コロナに負けない先端のものづくりを支えてくれる候補者に1票を投じたいと考えている。
“...I want to survive by taking on the challenge of developing new products such as non-contact disinfection devices.” In the election, I would like to cast one vote for a candidate who will support cutting-edge manufacturing that will not lose to the new corona.”

(Yomiuri Shinbun, 2021)

Data 3

「通勤車で、スーパーで、公園で、新型コロナウイルスという見えない敵を恐れ、他人との距離感に戸惑う日々。」

“On the commuter train, at the supermarket, at the park, we spend our days fearing the invisible

enemy known as the new coronavirus and feeling confused about our sense of distance from others.”
(Asahi Shinbun, 2022)

Data 4

「新しいウイルスにはどういう種類があり、どのような脅威があるのか。」

“What types of new viruses are there, and what kind of threats do they pose?”

(Asahi Shinbun, 2022)

Data 5

「現在流行しているオミクロン株は、冬の「第8波」の時とは別系統で、これまでに得た免疫を逃れる能力が高いと言われる。」

“The Omicron strain currently prevalent is said to be different from the one that caused the "eighth wave" in winter and is said to have a high ability to evade the acquired immunity.”

(Yomiuri Shinbun, 2023)

Data 6

「習政権は12月にゼロコロナを大幅に緩和し、コロナと共生を目指す方向に政策を転換した。その結果、爆発的に感染が広がり、各地で死者が急増し...」

“In December, the Xi administration significantly eased the zero-corona policy and changed its policy to aim for coexistence with the coronavirus. As a result, the infection spread explosively, and the number of deaths increased rapidly in various places...”

(Yomiuri Shinbun, 2023)

Public Health Policy is a Movement

After the government decides on public health policy, it must be implemented and taken action by the government bodies or related agencies. The implementation or action of a health policy requires a real natural body movement by the people, from government agencies or citizens, to implement the public health policy. Phrase 「急速に進む」 at Data 7 and Data 8 indicates promptly taking into action of a public health policy. Phrase 「踏み込み」 at Data 8 indicates the government has not yet decided on the policy, so taking action on the public health policy is not required.

Public health policy is a complex concept and substansion. Public policy is run, administrated, and done by the people working in government agencies, and it involves citizens in making it work. The concept of a person's natural body movement accommodates the concept of public policy implementation..

Data 7

「医療提供体制の逼迫が急速に進む可能性が出てきた。」

“The tightness of medical care system's may become move forward rapidly.”

(Karube et al., 2021)

Data 8

「特に深刻なのは、約 7 万 3 千人の超過滞在者だ。通報されて国外退去となることを恐れ、ワクチン接種が進まない。」

“Particularly serious are the approximately 73,000 overstayers. Vaccinations have not progressed due to fear of being reported and deported.”

(Kitago Miyu, 2022)

Data 9

「専門家による政府の分科会は同日、「第 7 波に向けた緊急提言」をまとめましたが、やはり行動制限には踏み込みませんでした。」

“A government subcommittee of experts compiled an "urgent proposal for the seventh wave" on the same day, but did not step into the movement restriction.”

(Yamaguchi, 2022)

The virus Pandemic Crisis is a Motion State

The pandemic crisis is an abstract concept because the situation in this regard is not only for the medical situation but also for the community and nation as a whole. Like Public Health is a Movement Conceptual Metaphor, a thing's motion state accommodates the situation's concept and meaning.

The motion can be slowly changing, gradually changing, or rapidly changing, representing the speed of a change in a pandemic. Moving Up and down and moving toward other directions can represent the infection record or impact of the pandemic and pandemic condition.

Data 10

「...新規感染者数について、「4 月上旬以降、緩やかな増加傾向となっており、夏の間に一定の感染拡大が生じる可能性がある」との見解を示した。」

“He expressed his opinion regarding the number of new infections, he said, "Since early April, there has been a gradual upward trend, and there is a possibility that the infection will spread to a certain extent during the summer.”

(Yomiuri Shinbun, 2023)

Data 11

「目の前の感染拡大に対応するような緊急の話ではなく、全体の大きな方向性の話なので、じっくり考える必要がありました。」

“It was not urgent to deal with the spread of infection right before us, but because it was a big overall direction, I had to think carefully.”

(Tsujigai & Omi, 2023)

Pandemic Crisis is an Era

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed many aspects of human life and society. The pandemic has changed public medical policy and public medical services, politics, economy, education, transportation, social welfare, and other aspects of human life. This transformation changed people's daily lives in Japan and the whole world.

People change their daily lives, how they interact with others, and the interaction of a nation with another nation. Because of the drastic change, pre-corona describes an era when COVID-19 did not become a pandemic crisis. The use of the word 「経て」 in data 8 indicates the passing of time. The concept of an era is accommodated to understanding the time of the crisis and turmoil.

Data 12

「アエラストイルマガジン WEB のアンケートで、コロナ禍を経る価値観の変化を問うてみました。「とても感じる」55%、「少し感じる」24%と、8 割近くの WEB 読者が価値観の変化を感じると回答しています。」

“In the Aera Style Magazine WEB questionnaire, I asked about the change in values after the corona disaster. Nearly 80% of web readers answered that they felt a change in their sense of values, with 55% saying they “feel it a lot” and 24% “feeling it a little”.”

(Yamamoto, 2023)

Data 13

「解除されたからといって、「コロナ前」に戻るわけではない。」

“Just because the restrictions have been lifted does not mean we will return to the "pre-coronavirus" situation.”

(Hanada, 2020a)

Data 14

「コロナ以前に戻ったのか、あるいはそれ以上になったのか、細かな検証が必要だが、まずは演芸の世界が元気を取り戻しつつあることを素直に喜ぶたい。」

“Whether it has returned to pre-coronavirus or has become more than that requires detailed verification, but first of all, I would like to be frankly pleased that the entertainment world is regaining its vitality.”

(Nagai, 2021)

Virus is a Thief

Something that we have, our life, time, resource, belonging, and chance to do something or acquire something are perceived as valuable things. When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, it took our beloved family and friends' lives by force and our resources because the economy was stagnant. It took our chance to socialize, our children's chance to have a proper education and other valuable matters. COVID-19 takes that value suddenly with force, making us defend ourselves and preventing virus infection from approaching us.

Something abstract is perceived with a more concrete concept of a valuable thing or belonging. The impact of COVID-19 is perceived with something that we are used to in daily life: thievery or robbery.

Data 15

「食堂は子どもの居場所でもあった。地域の大人と食卓を囲み、思いの丈を話す。長引くコロナ禍で失われた家庭と学校以外の大切な場所を一日も早く再開してあげたいと願う。」

“The dining room was also a place for children. Gather around the dining table with local adults and talk about our thoughts. I hope essential places other than home and school lost due to the prolonged coronavirus disaster will be reopened as soon as possible.”

(Tamaki, 2021)

Data 16

「受験生のご両親は、在宅勤務をしながら家事や育児に追われ、ときには塾のZoom授業の視聴環境を整えたり、小学校の大量の宿題に四苦八苦したり……。おまけに会社帰りの同僚と一杯も、ママ友とのランチの時間も奪われ、ウイルスよりもストレスとの闘いのほうが大変だったのではないのでしょうか。」

“Parents of students taking entrance exams are busy with housework and childcare while working from home, sometimes setting up a viewing environment for Zoom classes at cram schools, and struggling with much homework at elementary school. In addition, The time for a drink with colleagues on the way home from work and lunch

with my mom's friends was also stolen; moreover, it must have been harder to fight stress than the virus.”

(Goto, 2020)

Highest Number of Virus Infection is Mountain Peaks

Fluctuation and dynamic numbers of statistical data are often shown with a graphic chart ascending and descending. The graphic chart creates a mountain shape, and the highest number of people infected by the virus is shown with the highest graphic chart. The mountain shape of a chart accommodates the concept of the worst or highest number of people getting infected by the virus.

Data 17

「第5波のピーク時には、医療のから自宅療養者が全国で13万人を超え…」

“At the peak of the fifth wave, more than 130,000 people were receiving medical treatment at home nationwide...”

(Yomiuri Shinbun, 2021)

Data 18

「東京の新規感染者数は、直近1週間の平均で1日約1800人で、ピークだった8月後半の4割以下まで減少したが、70歳代以上の重症者は増加傾向にあり…」

“The number of new infections in Tokyo, the average number of cases last week was about 1,800 per day, dropping to less than 40% of the peak in the second half of August. However, the number of people in their 70s and older with severe symptoms is rising...”

(Yomiuri Shinbun, 2021)

Data 19

「新型コロナウイルスが岩手県内で猛威をふるい続けている。全国状況とは違い、「第6波」のピークが見通せない。」

“The new coronavirus continues to rage in Iwate Prefecture. Unlike the situation nationwide, the peak of the "sixth wave" cannot be predicted.”

(Nishi, 2022)

Virus Outbreak is a wave

The massive outbreak of COVID-19 is perceived as a wave approaching and striking the people at the sea. A sea wave or water motion creates a force impact that strikes the seashore, pulling and swiping the people or anything near the shore. A wave that caused massive fatalities is considered a giant tidal wave. A wave is a relative

motion that repeats to approach the seashore again.

The wave concept is accommodated and considered a virus outbreak that infected many people. The impact of the tidal wave is infected people. It would always approach the seashore if it did not build a dam or something to prevent the wave. Graphic charts and fluctuation statistics of infected people also play the role of a concrete concept because the graphic chart forms a wave-like data presentation.

Data 20

「感染の波が繰り返される」と懸念を抱く感染症など医療の専門家もいました。」

“There were also those concerned about ‘repeat waves of infection’, such as infectious diseases medical experts.”

(Tsujigai & Omi, 2023)

Data 21

「感染者と死者は増減の波を繰り返し、今年 1 月前後に第 8 波が到来した。読売新聞の集計では、1 日当たりの感染者のピークは第 1 波が 718 人だったが、第 2 波、第 3 波と数が増え、第 7 波時の 22 年 8 月 19 日に最多の 26 万 1943 人に達した。」

“The eighth wave arrived around January this year, and the number of infected people and deaths has increased and decreased. According to the tally of the Yomiuri Shimbun, the peak number of infected people per day was 718 in the first wave, but the number increased with the second wave and the third wave, and the number was the highest on August 19, 2022, during the seventh wave. It reached 261,943 people.”

(3-Nen 4-Kagetsu Gaman to Mosaku, 2023)

Physical and Societal Harm Caused by Virus is Physical Injury due to Predation by Vicious Animals

Corona's infectious nature is considered an attack and predation of a vicious animal or a beast. Word 「襲う」 shown in Data 22 indicates indiscriminately attack on people. The word meaning of 「爪痕」 shown in Data 23 is a scar, but the kanji 「爪」 is a claw, which indicates a scar from animals with a claw.

The effect and impact of getting infected in our physical body makes our body sick, leaving a scar and affecting our body and the inner parts. More than the physical body, as mentioned before in the “Pandemic Crisis is an Era

Conceptual Metaphor”, the pandemic effect impacts society as a whole. The effect and impact of the pandemic on society and the effect of getting infected by the virus on the human body are perceived as vicious animals that are making and leaving harm on the human body.

Data 22

「コロナは、誰かれの見境なく人を襲うという。しかしそれは事実でない。貧困層を狙い撃ちにする。イタリアでも、米国でも、シンガポール（外国人労働者）ですらも、貧困にあえぐ人々がその餌食になった。」

“Corona is said to attack people indiscriminately. However, that is not the case. Target people in poverty. The impoverished people fell prey in Italy, the United States, and even Singapore (the foreign workers).”

(Hanada, 2020b)

Data 23

「コロナ禍は社会・経済に大きな爪痕を残した。ウイルスに未知の部分が多かった初期は、なるべく外出しない「ステイホーム」が呼びかけられ、「孤独」が社会問題となった。」

“The coronavirus crisis has severely scarred society and the economy. In the early days of the virus, when there were many unknowns, people called for people to “stay home” by not going out as much as possible, and “loneliness” became a social problem.”

(3-Nen 4-Kagetsu Gaman to Mosaku, 2023)

Virus is an Artist

The effect and impact of the corona pandemic-caused by coronavirus infection outbreak is causing many problems. As mentioned in other described conceptual metaphors before, the effect of the coronavirus infection and pandemic creates problems in the human body, people's daily lives, and societal problems as a whole.

Coronavirus embossed an art, decorated an object, and made an art appear on surfaces of a wood or stone. The concept of the artist accommodates the cause or culprit of the problem, and the concept of the art accommodates the concept of the problem. Corona Virus is perceived as an artist who creates and embosses a problem or essential matter that has not appeared or occurred before.

Data 24

「政府のコロナ対策分科会のメンバーで、東北大学教授の押谷仁さんは「今後もパンデミックは起きる」と指摘します。コロナで浮き彫りになった課題とどう向き合うべきなのでしょう。」
“Hitoshi Oshitani, a professor at Tohoku University and a member of the government's coronavirus countermeasures subcommittee, points out that “pandemics will continue to occur.” How should we face the challenges that have been embossed by corona?”

(Yoneda & Edamatsu, 2023)

Data 25

「プーチン氏の支持率は60%と、過去20年で最低の水準だ。新型コロナウイルスで多数の感染者と死者を出し、官僚組織や保健システムの不備が浮き彫りになった。」

“Putin's approval rating is 60%, the lowest level in 20 years. The new coronavirus has caused many infections and deaths and embossed the bureaucracy's and health system's inadequacies.”
(Yomiuri Shinbun, 2020)

The government is a Controller

Some of the government's roles are to govern, administrate, provide guidance, and regulate and execute public policy. Coronavirus infection outbreaks create a problem for the citizens and are dangerous to national security. As some conceptual metaphors mentioned before, the coronavirus is perceived as a vicious animal, an enemy in a war, or a natural phenomenon that creates a disaster. The role of the government is to regulate a public policy and execute the policy to tame the animals and to take control of the enemy and natural phenomena.

The use of the word 「抑える」, 「手」, 「対策」, 「逼迫」 and 「許す」 indicate the role of the government. The concept of controller accommodates the concept of the government's role in controlling the situation. The concept of the one who controlled accommodates the concept of coronavirus infection outbreak or the effect caused by it.

Data 26

「また、オミクロン株の重症化リスクが低い、という理由もあります。では、この感染拡大をどうやって抑え、医療や介護の逼迫を避ければいいのか。」

“Another reason is that the Omicron strain has a low risk of severe disease. So, how can we suppress the spread of this infection and avoid the tightness of medical and nursing care?”

(Yamaguchi, 2022)

Data 27

「やろうと思ったができなかったことは、「感染対策と経済活性の両立の中で、どこまで感染を許容するか」です。」

“What I wanted to do but could not do was “to what extent can infections be tolerated while balancing infection control and economic revitalization?””

(Tsujigai & Omi, 2023)

Data 28

「私は長く国内外の感染症に携わってきました。なるべく感染を抑えることで、医療逼迫を防ぎたいと思っています。」

“I have long been involved in infectious diseases in Japan and overseas. I want to prevent medical shortages by suppressing infections as much as possible.”

(Tsujigai & Omi, 2023)

Virus Pandemic Crisis is an Emotional State

The human emotional state is a psychological condition of the human mind. In times of pandemic crisis emergencies, when the situation gets better, people will feel happy or optimistic about the future. When the situation gets worse, we will be feeling sad or depressed. The pandemic situation and the human emotional situation are also connected. People experience an emotional state regarding the pandemic conditions that surround them.

The human emotional state accommodates the abstract situation of a pandemic crisis. Human emotions perceived as a pandemic crisis cause similarity and connectivity. It is easier to understand the abstract pandemic situation with something we are used to experiencing.

Data 29

「ただ、過去には4～5月にいったん落ち着いた世界の感染者数がその後再び急増した経緯もあり、引き続き楽観はできない状況だ。」

“However, in the past, the number of infected people worldwide calmed down in April and May, after that, there was also a rapid increase again, we cannot continue to be optimistic.”

(Shimizu, 2020)

Data 30

「新型コロナウイルス流行の事態が落ち着いたら、少しでも多くの学校を訪問し、その時の様子を皆さんに紹介したいと思っています。」

“Once the new coronavirus pandemic has calmed down, I would like to visit as many schools as possible and introduce everyone to the situation at that time.”

(Goto, 2020)

Data 31

「感染者は欧州で落ち着いてきた一方、北南米を中心に急増。」

“While the number of infected people has stabilized in Europe, it is rapidly increasing, especially in North and South America.”

(Goda et al., 2020)

CONCLUSION

The most common source domain from all data obtained from the newspapers is the source domain of WAR. The concepts derived from it are fighting the virus, defending from thievery or vicious animals, and controlling the war, depicting the effort to treat the illness and the pandemic. It conveys that the virus is the enemy and a dangerous entity that threatens humanity and national interest.

The Second common source domain is the source domain of ‘Human’ and ‘Nature’. Concepts derived from the ‘Human’ source domain, like the human emotional condition and movement, are used to depict the condition and situation of the pandemic. The ‘Nature’ source domain concept also depicts the condition and situation of the pandemic. It conveys that we can more easily understand abstract concepts with our bodies and things we are used to in our daily lives, e.g., nature and natural phenomena.

The source domain of an ‘Artist’ and the ‘Art’ are uniquely found in the discourse of both newspapers. The neutral concept of ‘Artist’ and ‘Art’ depicts the lousy impact and effect of the virus and the pandemic. Both newspapers also view the pandemic as an ‘Era’ for conveying the time and significant societal change.

The unique finding is that besides the source domain concept of ‘War’, ‘Human’ and ‘Nature’ are essential for Japanese people to understand what happened during the pandemic and convey the message through a metaphor. The ‘War’ conceptual domain helps to convey the urgency and technicality of how to treat the virus and illness. In contrast, the ‘Human’ and ‘Nature’

conceptual domain helps convey the pandemic's situation and condition.

The results of an analysis of the discourse on COVID-19 in two Japanese news media, *Yomiuri Shinbun* and *Asahi Shinbun*, show that both the media and the public use metaphorical expressions in conveying news ideas and communicating COVID-19 discourse. These metaphorical expressions also indicate the underlying conceptualization behind the linguistic expression.

The COVID-19 discourse is complex, and it is evident that the COVID-19 discourse does not only appear in health articles but also in economics, politics, public policy, social, etc. Both the newspaper data emphasize the community, citizen, and national interests. This indicates that Japanese people are a collective society and that society and cultural background are embodied in the conceptual domain and linguistics. This study aims to understand how the ideas are embodied and conceptualized in Japanese people's community awareness and provides us with knowledge of how we must communicate and behave in Japanese society, prioritizing communal or societal interests.

This study's finding regarding the data of Japanese people using metaphors emphasizes that the community interest shown in the two media opens future research regarding critical discourse analysis on the ideology of the two newspapers regarding COVID-19 through a metaphor. Furthermore, future studies of how conceptual metaphor is conceptualized in the Japanese language and discourse can focus on how Japanese ruling party politicians and opposition party politicians rhetorically address the COVID-19 pandemic crisis discourse.

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