

Understanding Metaphor as an Embodiment Simulation of Agitation in Selected Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Camps in Zamfara State

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Abstract

Conceptualising struggles for equitable treatment through metaphors is not usually processed from a single mental experience. Individuals agitating for the treatment are usually motivated by their communicative capacities and perceptions of their locations, experiences and needs. Against that backdrop, this study has investigated the role of metaphor as an embodiment simulation of agitation among internally displaced persons (IDPs) in selected camps in Zamfara State, Nigeria. Amidst a humanitarian crisis driven by violence and natural disasters, over 678,000 individuals are displaced in the state. These individuals are facing living conditions challenges that have increased their stress and anxiety. Using semi-structured interviews to gather metaphorical expressions that underlie experiences of agitation from the responses of the IDPs in the state, the research, employing Bergen's (2015) Embodiment Simulation Approach, analyses the metaphorical expressions to reveal the embedded cognitive and emotional processes in them. The study finds that the analysed metaphorical expressions embody the IDPs' feelings of fear, loss and hope, thereby illustrating the complex interplay between their lives' realities and neural perceptions of the realities. Thus, this study has contributed to embodied cognition and metaphor studies and proffered practical procedures for humanitarian responses in IDP contexts. Conclusively, the procedures foregrounded by the research can promote better future interventions and more sustainable and empathetic humanitarian efforts if they are upheld by government agencies, NGOs and health professionals in their effort to bring succour to the displaced persons in Zamfara State, Nigeria and around the world.

Keywords: *Metaphor, Embodiment Simulation Approach, Agitative Communication, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Humanitarian Crisis*

Introduction

The ongoing humanitarian crisis, mostly caused by natural occurrences and the invasion of towns and villages by criminal elements, in Nigeria has resulted in the displacement of millions of individuals. That has led to the establishment of numerous Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps across the country. Among the states that have been greatly challenged in this regard is Zamfara State. According to the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Displaced Persons (2021), there are 4,244,332 displaced persons in different IDP camps across the states in Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. 678,000 of these persons are found in Bukkuyum, Anka, Kaura Namoda, Maradun, Tsafe, Kwatarkwashi and Birnin Magaji IDP camps in Zamfara State. These camps provide temporary shelter and support to those who have been forced to leave their homes due to conflict, violence or natural disasters.

Living conditions in IDP camps are often challenging and usually characterised by overcrowding, limited resources and a lack of basic amenities. These conditions contribute to a state of agitation among the camp residents, who experience heightened levels of stress, anxiety and frustration. Understanding and addressing this agitation is crucial for promoting the well-being and mental health of the IDP population. Metaphor, as a powerful linguistic and cognitive tool, plays a significant role in how individuals perceive and make sense of their experiences. Metaphorical expressions often emerge as a way to communicate complex emotions, thoughts and experiences that may be difficult to articulate directly. Metaphors can provide insights into the embodied experiences of individuals, reflecting their cognitive and emotional states.

This research, therefore, aims to investigate the role of metaphor as an embodiment simulation of agitation in selected IDP camps in Zamfara State. By examining the metaphors used by the displaced individuals to describe their experiences, the study seeks to uncover the underlying cognitive and emotional processes that form the basis of the displaced persons' agitation. Understanding how metaphorical expressions reflect and shape the experiences of agitation in IDP camps can have several implications. It can contribute to a deeper understanding of the psychological and emotional well-being of IDP populations, informing the development of targeted interventions and support services. It can also offer insights into the communication strategies employed by camp residents, through the facilitation of effective communication and interaction among the residents, aid workers and camp administrators. By exploring the relationship between metaphor, embodiment and agitation in IDP camps, this research seeks to bridge the knowledge gap and contribute to the growing field of embodied cognition and metaphor studies. The findings of this study can inform both theoretical frameworks and practical applications, ultimately improving the well-being and resilience of individuals living in IDP camps in Zamfara State and Nigeria at large.

Statement of Problem

Government agencies, NGOs and health professionals often lack awareness and understanding of the metaphorical expressions used by IDPs to articulate their agitations. These expressions, deeply rooted in the IDPs' experiences and cultural backgrounds, provide valuable insights into the persons' emotional and cognitive states. The lack of recognition and interpretation of these metaphors hampers the development of interventions that effectively address the underlying causes and concerns of the IDPs. There is therefore a disconnect between the metaphors used by IDPs and the understanding of government agencies, NGOs and health professionals,

thereby leading to miscommunication and misinterpretation of the agitations expressed. The misinterpretation may result in inadequate or inappropriate interventions, as the true nature and depth of the IDPs' agitations are not fully comprehended. The communication gap may further exacerbate the challenges faced in providing targeted and effective support services for the displaced individuals. Hence, addressing the gap is crucial for understanding the cognitive and emotional processes underlying agitation within IDP camps in Zamfara State and in developing effective interventions and support services for the displaced. By investigating how metaphorical expressions embody and simulate agitation, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the unique experiences of agitation in the various IDP camps in the state and contribute to the development of targeted interventions and support services for the IDP population. It will contribute to more effective and sustainable humanitarian responses in Zamfara State's IDP camps and other similar contexts locally and globally.

Hence, this research aims to investigate the role of metaphor as an embodiment simulation of agitation in selected IDP camps in Zamfara State. It will examine the metaphors used by the displaced individuals to describe their experiences and uncover the underlying cognitive and emotional processes related to agitation. The goal is to facilitate the understanding of the cognitive and emotional processes underlying agitation within IDP camps in Zamfara State to develop effective interventions and support services that will help government agencies, NGOs and health professionals in their interactions with the displaced. The specific objectives of the study are, therefore, to:

- i. identify and analyse the metaphors that the displaced persons in IDP camps in Zamfara State use to describe their experiences in their agitation;
- ii. explore the cognitive and emotional processes underlying the metaphorical expressions related to agitation in the IDPs camp context; and
- iii. explain how metaphorical expressions contribute to the embodiment and simulation of the agitation of displaced persons across IDP camps in the state.

Unarguably, researching agitative campaign discourse, metaphorical embodiment and neural-related processes is not a novel enterprise. For example, from an agitative campaign perspective, Osaghae (1995), and Malachy and Nwobi (2014), focusing on Nigerian context, reviewed *the Ogoni Uprising: Oil Politics, Minority Agitation and Failure of the Nigerian State* and *Integration Policies as Structures of Disintegration: The Political Economic of Nationhood and Resource Control in Nigeria* respectively. Their works are basically on the effects of agitations on the socio-economic and political systems of the Nigerian state. In the same vein, Bergen (2015) evaluates the functional roles of embodied and neural processes to

the meaningful encoding of thoughts through metaphors, while van Dijk (1993) examines the relationships that exist among discourse, power, dominance, social inequality and the processes involved in maintaining the relationships from a critical discourse analysis standpoint. Meanwhile, this current study is a slight departure from the cited works as it investigates the role of metaphor as an embodiment simulation of agitation in selected IDP camps in Zamfara State by examining the metaphors used by the displaced individuals to describe their experiences and uncover the underlying cognitive and emotional processes related to agitation. Understanding the cognitive and emotional processes underlying agitation within IDPs in the state will help to develop effective interventions and support services for the displaced persons.

An Overview of Agitative Communication

Eesuola (2017:4) describes an agitator as someone who communicates “his excitement to those about him. He idealises the magnitude of the desirable social changes which are capable of being produced by a specific line of social action . . . the agitator is one who exaggerates the difference between one rather desirable policy and another.” As Osaghae (1995) has earlier opined, demands for more equitable and privileged treatment by those that form minority communities of the larger populace, such as occupants of IDPs camps, as well as struggles by them and other minorities to redress power imbalances, which make them subordinate to the majority group, essentially rise. No doubt, the situation the IDPs find themselves in categorises them among marginalised citizens, as they experience Alemazung’s (2010:66) view that “groups who feel marginalised often develop feelings for revenge and hatred against those who enjoy socio-economic well-being.” Unarguably, many a tool abounds to achieve this struggle. However, a continual agitative discourse seems to be the most accessible means this set of people resort to in this regard, since it affords them the power to conceptualise their thoughts and feelings of revenge and hatred, which are usually motivated by imbalances, in language through metaphors.

To reach that end, a great deal of metaphors is woven into the agitative discourses based on individual Zamfara State’s IDPs’ social realities. However, the conceptualised struggles for equitable treatment or against dominance in metaphors are somewhat not processed from the same mental experiences, since the agitators, in their communicative capacities, have their perceptions often mediated variously by their spatial locations, experiences and needs. In essence, this study considers it a worthwhile exercise to systematically study the embodied metaphors in selected agitative discourses of IDPs in Zamfara State to facilitate the understanding of the cognitive and emotional processes underlying agitation within IDP camps

in the state to develop effective interventions and support services that will help government agencies, NGOs and health professionals in their interactions with the displaced persons.

Metaphor: An Embodiment Simulation Approach

Metaphor is a fundamental cognitive process through which abstract or complex ideas are understood and communicated by mapping them onto more concrete or familiar concepts. This is corroborated by Hawkes (1979:1), stating that “Metaphor is traditionally taken to be the most fundamental form of figurative language” etymologically, Hawkes (1979:1) adds that the word metaphor originates from a Greek word “*metaphora*” – a derivation of “*meta*” and “*pherein*,” meaning “over” and “to carry” respectively. This morphological breakdown suggests that “metaphor is constructed on the principles of analogy and seems to be concerned primarily with the comparison of similarities between two or more objects” Ortony, Reynolds and Arter (1978:5). Lakoff and Johnson (1980), pioneering the conceptual metaphor theory, propose that metaphorical expressions are not merely linguistic devices but reflect fundamental cognitive processes. Thus, metaphors allow individuals to make sense of their experiences by mapping them onto tangible and embodied concepts to facilitate the communication of subjective experiences that may otherwise be difficult to express directly. The act of making sense of experiences is regarded as activating the parts of the human brain that are responsible for the perception and descriptions of emotions (Cuccio and Fontana 2017). The use of the neural capacity, in which a corresponding action, perception or emotion is absent, is called *Embodied Simulation* (Gallese and Sinigaglia 2011). In essence, Cuccio and Fontana (2017: 77) believe that language is embodied in at least two different dimensions. On the inside, language is embodied by the mechanism of Embodied Simulation. From the outside, language is embodied using co-speech gestures. Furthermore, the embodied nature of language has been particularly investigated in metaphor studies. Bodily-based metaphors seem to be particularly apt at exploiting the bodily foundation of language in these two dimensions.

This implies that, although linguistic explanations of metaphors usually project the understanding of the concept from a conceptual, abstract and disembodied perspective, looking at it from a neural perception foregrounds the view that human bodily experience contributes to the understanding of metaphors through the Embodied Simulation mechanism. Affirming this position, Deng, Yang, and Wan (2021) state that metaphor, being a fundamental method for processing thoughts and complex social issues by drawing from interlocutors’ background knowledge, which is structured in unrelated semantic domain, for the purpose communication and cognition, particularly that different metaphors can express, reflect and influence specific

ways by which humans make sense in different aspects of lives. Within the field of communication studies, metaphor and embodiment have been explored in different contexts of social interactions. Therefore, metaphorical expressions have been found to play a significant role in conveying emotional experiences, such as anger, joy and sadness, by evoking embodied simulations of those emotions (Gibbs, 2019). The use of metaphors, consequently, allows individuals to communicate and share their emotional states, thereby bridging the gap between internal experiences and external communication. From the foregoing, metaphors can influence how emotions are perceived and understood by others, shaping social interactions and interpersonal relationships (Semino & Steen, 2008). In the context of agitation, metaphor, through its embodiment features, is a reference point for the processing of cognitive and emotional experiences of heightened distress and restlessness of individuals living in IDP camps. Evaluating metaphorical expressions related to agitation can, therefore, reveal how the individuals in IDP camps conceptualise and communicate their experiences. The model of Embodiment Simulation is consequently adopted as the theoretical framework for this study.

Methodology

Data Collection Method

For data collection, the study adopts in-depth, semi-structured interviews with selected internally displaced persons representing individuals from the various IDP camps in Zamfara State. The persons were Abubakar Hamza (Mixed-farmer, Aged 51, Mareri Area, Gusau LG, 2nd September, 2024), Mohammed Sani Shediya (Farmer, Aged 47, Anguwan Dallatu, Gusau LGA, 21st September, 2024), Sani Garba (Farmer, Age 47, Mareri, Tudun Wada Gusau LGA, 21st September, 2024), Halliru Umbaru (Farmer, Aged 44, Tsafe LG, 23rd September, 2024), Salisu Nura (Farmer, Aged 50, Bungudu LG, 25th September, 2024), Muhammad Audu (Farmer, Aged 58, Damba, Gusau LG, 25th September, 2024), Salisu Badamasi (Farmer, Aged 31, Damba, Gusau LG, 26th September, 2024), Muhammad Abubakar Nura (Farmer, Aged 42, Anka LG, 29th September, 2024) and Auwalu Sani Dan-Ali (Farmer, Aged 52, Investment House, Gusau LG, 1st October, 2024). The interviews were guided by a semi-structured interview procedure that allowed flexibility for participants to elaborate on their experiences and express their agitations in their own words. The interview guide consequently consisted of open-ended questions aimed at understanding the participants' thoughts, emotions and the metaphors they employ. The responses from the interviews were transcribed. Subsequently, metaphorical expressions that reflect agitation in them are identified. The data analysed are

purposively selected to represent related views from the generally identified metaphorical expressions.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The analytical procedure for this study is based on Bergen's (2015) Embodiment Simulation Approach to the interpretation of metaphor. This approach emphasises the embodied nature of metaphorical expressions. It posits that the understanding of metaphors involves the simulation of sensorimotor experiences related to the metaphorical concept. According to Bergen, metaphors are not just linguistic expressions but also involve the activation of embodied simulation processes that simulate the experiential basis of the metaphorical concept. Hence, the study transcribes the participants' metaphorical expressions of agitation in the interviews. It also categorises the metaphorical expressions extracted into thematic clusters based on shared conceptual domains to identify common patterns and variations. The embodied simulation processes are consequently analysed based on the principles of the Embodiment Simulation Approach.

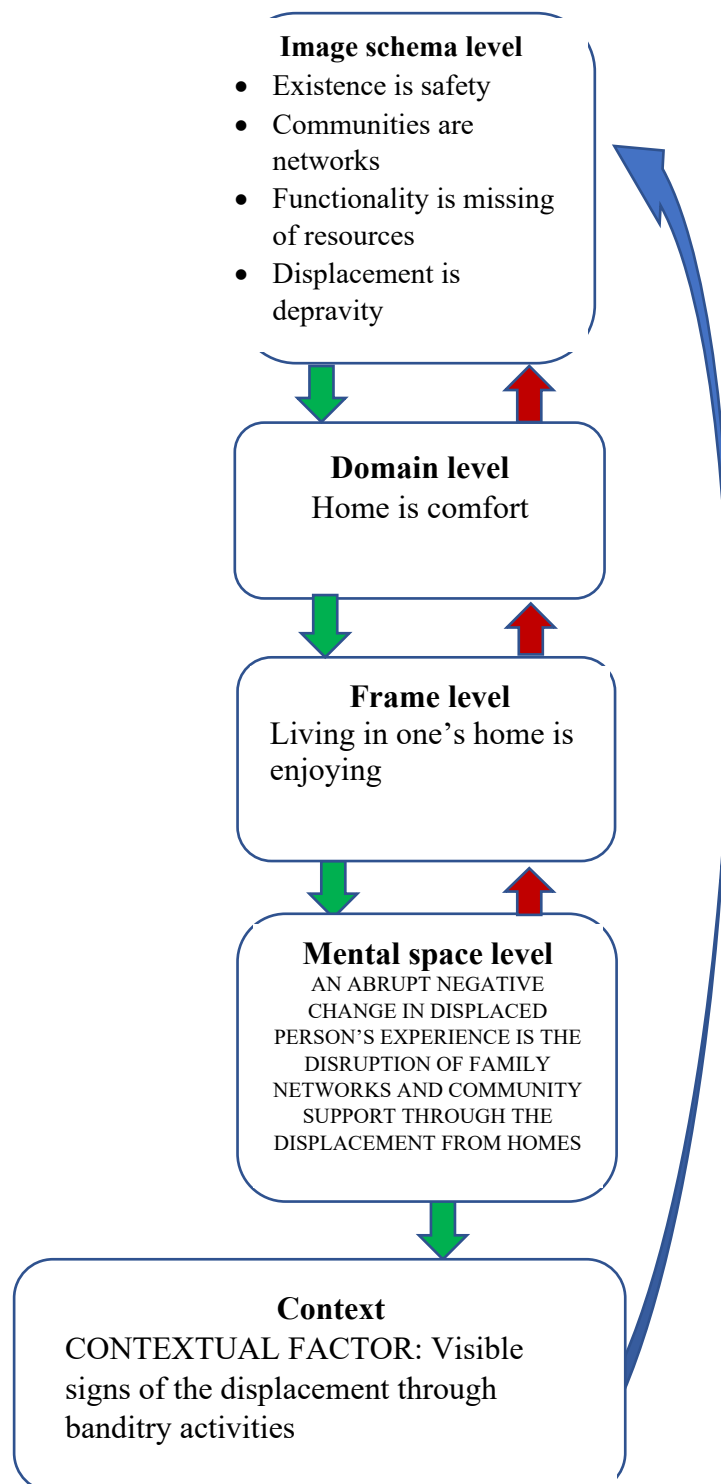
Consequently, the analysis of the data is done on four levels. First, the contextual factor that influences the use of the metaphor is identified through the presentation of the discourse in which the metaphor is embedded. Next, relevant image schema metaphors related to the context of use are activated to establish the foundation for understanding the structure of the metaphor. On the third level of the analysis, the broader domain of the metaphor, which covers the experience described in the discourse, is identified by framing the metaphor within the IDPs' cosmology. This is necessary to delimit the perspective of use on the choice of the metaphor. In the final stage, a specific mental space level that reveals the real-life impact of the metaphor on the IDPs is created. Holistically, the process foregrounds the dynamic relationship between the contextual factor and the emerging metaphorical meaning of how the IDPs' worldview and bodily experience concretise the persons' mental perception and description of emotions through the analysed metaphor.

Instance 1: *We have been forced to flee our homes and community due to banditry activities and often experienced the following trauma and stress: loss of livelihood and income sources, separation from family and community members, as well as loved ones. We also limited access to basic necessities like food, water, shelter, healthcare and education. These are leading to economic instability and causing emotional stress. The displacement has disrupted our social networks and community support, leaving us feeling isolated.*

Metaphor from the IDPs' Experience: HOME IS COMFORT

The Deconstruction of the Embedded Metaphor Embodiment Simulation

The perceptual property of the physical situation of being in an IDP's camp plays a major role in the embodiment of the interviewee's experience: "limited access to basic necessities like food, water, shelter, healthcare and education." This prompts the choice of "we have been forced to flee our homes and community," which in turn assumes or invokes the primary metaphors of EXISTENCE IS SAFETY and PERSISTING IS STRIPING OF RESOURCES. Simultaneously, since the topic of the interview is the displaced person's experience, the HOME and COMFORT domains are evoked, resulting in the conceptual metaphor HOME IS COMFORT. An aspect of this metaphor is the correspondence between being in one's home and enjoying, that is, the metaphor LIVING IN ONE'S HOME IS ENJOYING (with enjoying being an experiential aspect of comfort, while comfort is a more inclusive category than enjoyment). The idea, at this point of discourse, concerns how the displaced person's experience has suddenly changed for the worse, a very specific metaphor is evoked – that of a FORCING TO FLEE HOME. As expressed by the verb *force*, the metaphor is demonstrated in the following contextually primed **schematicity hierarchy**.



Hence, the perceptual property of what the displaced person experienced and described (displacement from home) functions as a contextual factor that activates the image schema metaphors EXISTENCE IS SAFETY, COMMUNITIES ARE NETWORKS and FUNCTIONALITY IS MISSING OF RESOURCES. The lack of functionality (of home) is brought about by the ejection from home, an obstacle to continued enjoyment, which is the

further image schema (primary) metaphor: DISPLACEMENT IS DEPRAVITY. The analysis consequently foregrounds a position that takes the enjoying frame and expresses the contextual meaning of “an abrupt negative change in the displaced person’s experience” through the mental space level metaphor: AN ABRUPT NEGATIVE CHANGE IN DISPLACED PERSON’S EXPERIENCE IS THE DISRUPTION OF FAMILY NETWORKS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT THROUGH THE DISPLACEMENT FROM HOMES. By implication, the embodied metaphors simulated in the response demonstrate a degenerating transmission of life from conditions of safety, relaxation, tranquillity, warmth, economic stability and communal living into a life depravity, insecurity, poverty and dehumanisation. They experienced the turn of events with a sense of urgency and lack of choice, emphasising the trauma of displacement.

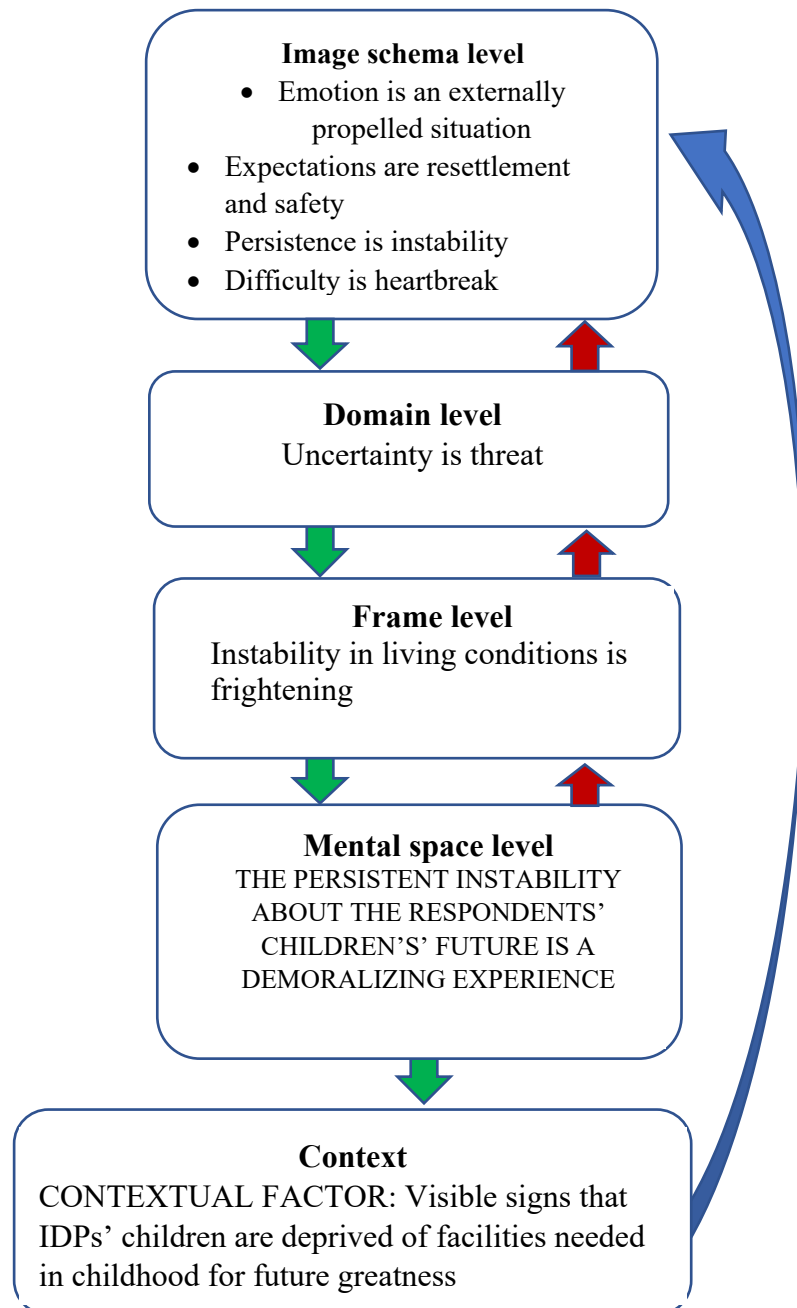
Instance 2: *Seeing our children grow up in a camp, missing out on a normal childhood, can be heartbreaking to us. Struggling to maintain dignity and privacy in overcrowded and inadequate living conditions can be demoralising our feelings. Hearing rumours or uncertainty about their future, including potential repatriation or resettlement, also caused anxiety and uncertainty in our lives/There is uncertainty about our situation and potential threats to our safety because it can cause fear and anxiety to each other in the camp.*

Metaphor from the IDPs’ Experience: UNCERTAINTY IS THREAT

The Deconstruction of the Embedded Metaphor Embodiment Simulation

The perception of the childhood experience of the respondents’ children in the IDP camps contributes greatly to how the experience is embodied when they (the respondents) describe feelings that evoke emotions of “Seeing our children grow up in a camp, missing out on a normal childhood.” This prompts the choice of “Hearing... uncertainty about their future... caused anxiety/There is uncertainty about our situation and potential threats to our safety.” The choice invokes the primary metaphors of EMOTION IS EXTERNALLY PROPELLED SITUATION and PERSISTENCE IS DESPIRATION. In addition, since the thesis of the review is the respondents’ experiences that evoke strong emotion, the UNCERTAINTY and THREAT domains emerge, resulting in the conceptual metaphor UNCERTAINTY IS THREAT. The metaphor has a correspondence between instability in the respondents’ living conditions and frightening. Hence, the metaphor INSTABILITY IN LIVING CONDITIONS IS FRIGHTENING (with frightening being an experiential aspect of threat, while threat is a more inclusive category than fright) emerges. From the perspective of the immediate idea of

the discourse, the metaphor embodies the extent of the respondents' demoralising feelings of "Seeing our children grow up in a camp, missing out on a normal childhood" to evoke a very specific metaphor – HEARTBREAKING. As expressed by the verb *demoralise*, the metaphor is demonstrated in the following contextually primed **schematicity hierarchy**.



From the above, the conceptual nature of what the respondents experienced and described (in seeing their children grow up in IDP camps) demonstrates the contextual factor that activates the image schema metaphors EMOTION IS EXTERNALLY PROPELLED SITUATION, EXPECTATIONS ARE RESETTLEMENT AND SAFETY and PERSISTENCE IS INSTABILITY. The persistence of instability is a result of keeping "seeing our children grow

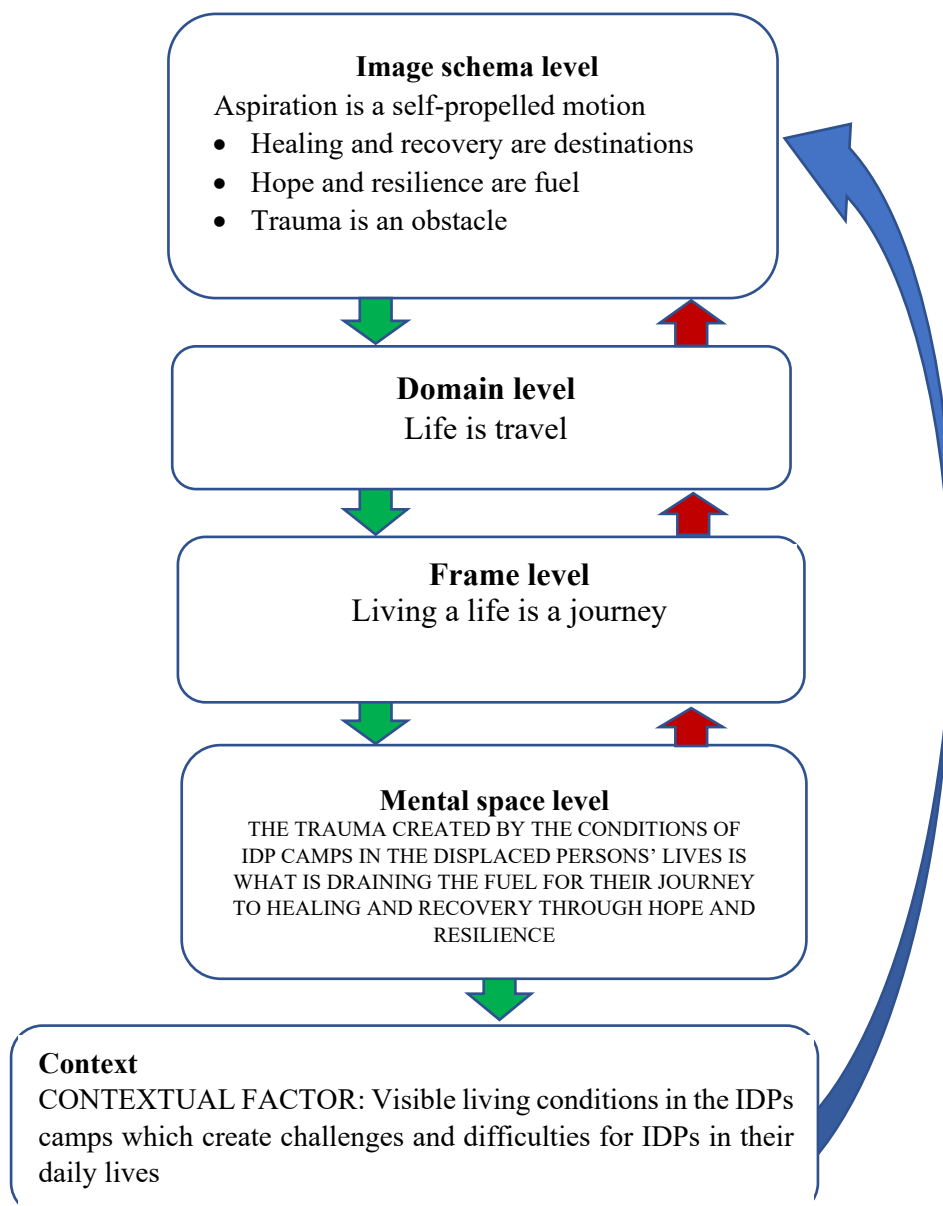
up in a camp, missing out on a normal childhood,” which is further image schema (primary) metaphor: DIFFICULTY IS HEARTBREAK. Therefore, the embodied metaphors, as simulated in the displaced persons’ response, portrays a degenerating movement from an unstable living condition, that is, abnormal juvenile status in IDPs camps, into a demoralising, heartbreaking and hopeless world, especially when the affected individuals are surrounded by visible signs that IDPs’ children are continually deprived of facilities needed in childhood to achieve future greatness.

Instance 3: *We aspire..., ensuring well-being and health. Despite trauma, we hold onto hope and resilience, fuelling our journey towards healing and recovery/Our conditions in the camp influence our hopes for the future, while the challenges and difficulties we face in our daily lives. These include good expectations from the government and both national and international organisations, by meeting our social needs in the camp and elsewhere.*

Metaphor from the IDPs’ Experience: LIFE IS A JOURNEY

The Deconstruction of the Embedded Metaphor Embodiment Simulation

The perceptual property of the physical situation has a great deal of effect on the metaphorical conceptualisation of the displaced persons’ lives: the challenging living conditions of the IDPs camp, particularly the “challenges and difficulties we face in our daily lives.” This brings about the use of the verb *aspire*, which creates the primary metaphors of ASPIRATION IS SELF-PROPELLED MOTION and HOPE AND RESILIENCE ARE FUEL. In the same vein, since the theme of the interview has to do with the displaced persons’ lives, the LIFE and TRAVEL domains are evoked, resulting in the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS TRAVEL. From one of the aspects in which domains of the metaphor can be mapped into, the correspondence between leading one’s life and journeying is established, to create the metaphor LIVING A LIFE IS JOURNEYING (where journeying is the activity aspect of travel, with travel being a more inclusive idea of the discourse on how the challenges and difficulties in IDPs camp can affect the displaced persons’ lives. Consequently, a very specific metaphor is evoked – that of ASPIRING OVER TRAUMA OF HEALING AND RECOVERY JOURNEY, as expressed by the verb *aspire* and demonstrated in the following contextually primed **schematicity hierarchy**.



The schematicity hierarchy represents the conceptual nature of what the respondents described while demonstrating their determination to achieve healing and recovery, despite the traumatising circumstances against their hopes for the future. The contextual factor demonstrated in the discourse, therefore, activates the image schema metaphors ASPIRATION IS SELF-PROPELLED MOTION, HEALING AND RECOVERY and HOPE AND RESILIENCE are FUEL. The need to hold onto hope and resilience is motivated by the prevalent trauma against the journey towards healing and discovery. This further creates an image schema (primary) metaphor: TRAUMA IS OBSTACLE. Hence, the analysis underlines the contextual meaning of the IDPS' daily-life challenges and difficulties that culminated to

trauma through the highly specific mental space level metaphor: THE TRAUMA CREATED BY THE CONDITIONS OF IDPS CAMPS IN THE IDPS' LIVES IS THE PERSONS' FUEL FOR THEIR JOURNEY TO HEALING AND RECOVERY THROUGH HOPE AND RESILIENCE.

Findings

This study has investigated the role of metaphor as an embodiment simulation of agitation in selected IDP camps in Zamfara State. It has examined the metaphors used by the displaced individuals in the camps across the state by describing the displaced persons' experiences and uncovering the underlying cognitive and emotional processes related to agitation in the metaphorical expressions that the persons employed to embody the experiences. The analysis of the selected metaphors in the expressions has, therefore, facilitated the understanding of the cognitive and emotional processes underlying agitation within IDP camps in Zamfara State in a way that promotes effective interventions and support services that will help government agencies, NGOs and health professionals in providing succour for the displaced persons. Consequently, the study has made the following findings.

- i. The displaced persons in IDPs camps in Zamfara State described their experiences in their agitation through metaphors such as **home is comfort**, that is, **living in one's home is enjoying**, (to demonstrate that it is not their wish to leave their homes, where safety, economic stability and communality are guaranteed, for the camps but they have to surrender to fate, depravity and dehumanisation, since the circumstances that led to their eviction from "home" is beyond their control); **uncertainty is threat**, that is, **instability in living conditions is frightening**, (to express the fear that IDPs' life might cost the children in the camps a fulfilling future due to the pervading unstable living condition, abnormal juvenile life style and lack of facilities necessary for promising adulthood in the camp); and **life is a journey**, that is, **living a life is a journey**, (to establish that displacement to IDPs camps is an obstruction to the IDPs' journey of life in the forms of drawbacks to personal/life ambitions, hopes and aspirations).
- ii. The cognitive and emotional processes underlying the metaphorical expressions related to the IDPs camp context in the analysis are **visible signs of the displacement through spates of banditry activities, visible signs that IDPs' children are deprived of facilities needed for future greatness and visible living conditions in the IDPs camps which create challenges and difficulties for the IDPs in their daily lives.**

- iii. Metaphorical expressions contribute to the embodiment and simulation of the agitation of displaced persons across IDP camps in Zamfara State in the following ways:
 - a. An abrupt negative change in displaced persons' experiences is a disruption of family networks and communal support through the displacement from homes.
 - b. The persistent instability about IDPs' children's future is a demoralising experience for the IDPs.
 - c. The trauma created by the conditions of the IDPs camps in the displaced persons' lives is what is draining the fuel of hope and resilience for the persons' journey to healing and recovery from the aftermath of displacement.

Conclusion

This paper explores the role of metaphor in expressing the agitation experienced by internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Zamfara State. The study presents metaphors as crucial linguistic tools that help individuals articulate complex emotions related to their experiences. The study, therefore, investigates how metaphors reflect and shape the cognitive and emotional states of the displaced individuals to promote targeted interventions and support services for the individuals. After analysing the metaphors extracted from the responses of selected IDPs in semi-structured interviews which were conducted for them, using Bergen's Embodiment Simulation Approach, the study finds that the analysed metaphorical expressions embody the IDPs' feelings of fear, loss and hope, thereby illustrating the complex interplay between their lives' realities and neural perceptions of the realities. Understanding this complex interplay is, consequently, necessary for developing effective interventions that address the actual needs of the IDPs. In essence, government agencies, NGOs and health professionals should recognise those realities in their preparation for the persons' aid and interventions. By bridging the communication gap in humanitarian programmes, the study has enlightened stakeholders on how efforts to process thoughts and complex social issues related to IDPs' experience and cognition can help them tailor their support services for the well-being and resilience of displaced individuals. Thus, this study has contributed to embodied cognition and metaphor studies and proffered practical procedures for humanitarian responses in IDP contexts. Conclusively, the procedures foregrounded can promote better future interventions and more sustainable and empathetic humanitarian efforts if they are upheld by government agencies, NGOs and health professionals in their effort to bring succour to the displaced persons in Zamfara State, Nigeria and around the world.

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