

**VIETNAM NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, HANOI
UNIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

PHẠM THỊ MAI

**CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF *BUSINESS*
IN ECONOMIC NEWS DISCOURSE**

(Ân dụ ý niệm ‘BUSINESS’ trong diễn ngôn tin tức kinh tế)

DOCTORAL THESIS

HA NOI - 2025

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degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Linguistics**

DOCTORAL THESIS

Supervisors: Professor Dr. Nguyễn Hòa

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HA NOI - 2025

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I, the undersigned, certify that the thesis titled “Conceptual Metaphors of Business in Economic News Discourse” is the result of my independent work. To the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis does not include any work previously published or written by another individual, except where due reference is made.

Signature

Phạm Thị Mai

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in economic news discourse, with a focus on the retail industry during the Covid-19 pandemic. The study explores the ideological implications embedded in metaphorical constructions and demonstrates how metaphors shape economic perceptions and influence strategic decision-making. By analyzing metaphorical shifts across two phases - the crisis phase (2020) and the recovery phase (2021-2022) - the study highlights how metaphors frame narratives of resilience, competition, and transformation in retail discourse. The research integrates Conceptual Metaphor Theory with Kövecses' multi-level view and Maalej's three-dimensional ideological model. This theoretical framework enables the analysis of metaphors at both generic and specific levels, focusing on domain- and frame-level structures to examine their ideological implications across conceptual, cognitive, and pragmatic dimensions. Methodologically, the study adopts a mixed methods research design and a corpus-based approach within the pragmatist paradigm. It follows an explanatory sequential procedure, in which quantitative analysis precedes qualitative interpretation to deepen insights into metaphorical patterns. In total, 480 metaphorical expressions were identified in the crisis phase, spanning 14 generic source domains and 39 specific domains. The recovery phase yielded 419 metaphorical expressions across 17 generic and 29 specific domains. These data reveal a clear metaphorical shift between the two phases. In the crisis phase, BUSINESS is primarily framed as WAR, reinforcing ideologies of confrontation and resilience. As the pandemic transitions into the recovery phase, metaphors shift toward EXPANSION, emphasizing growth, innovation, and leadership. Notably, metaphors of RESILIENCE persist across both phases, underscoring adaptability and sustainability in strategic business planning. This research contributes to metaphor studies by extending Conceptual Metaphor Theory through a multi-level analytical framework combined with ideological critique. It offers a replicable model for analyzing metaphors in economic discourse and provides practical insights into the role of metaphor in shaping public policy, corporate strategy, and economic recovery.

ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

Abbreviations

CMT:	Conceptual Metaphor Theory
DM:	Domain
FR:	Frame
IS:	Image Schema
MIP:	Metaphor Identification Procedure
MMR:	Mixed Methods Research
SD:	Source Domain
TD:	Target Domain

Conventions

- Metaphorical expressions identified in the text are written in bold italics to emphasize their occurrence and significance in the discourse analysis (e.g., *hit hard*)
- Generic and Specific Conceptual Metaphors are fully capitalized (e.g., BUSINESS IS WAR) to clearly distinguish them from other metaphorical mappings and theoretical constructs.
- Construed metaphors at the frame level are written in italics to indicate their contextual and interpretative nature within specific frames of analysis (e.g., *Suffering setbacks is receiving blows in a battle.*)
- In citations, (A. number) (e.g., (A.6)) or (B. number) (e.g., (B.1)) refers to examples in Appendix A or Appendix B, with the number indicating the specific example. This helps locate the referenced material.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the study's focus on the conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in economic news discourse, specifically within the retail industry during the Covid-19 pandemic. It outlines the aim of the research, formulates the key research questions, and defines the scope of the investigation. Additionally, the chapter presents the methodology employed in the analysis, highlights the significance of the research, and provides an overview of the structure of the thesis. This introduction sets the foundation for a detailed exploration of how BUSINESS metaphors shape and reflect economic discourse during the pandemic.

1.1. Economic and Social Context of Conceptual Metaphors of BUSINESS

The conceptualization of BUSINESS through metaphors holds a significant place within economic news discourse, shaping how economic events, challenges, and transformations are understood and communicated (Greco, 2009; Koller, 2004; Kovács, 2006; Liendo, 2001; Maestre, 2000). Conceptual metaphors function not only as linguistic tools but as cognitive frameworks that influence how societies interpret complex economic phenomena (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003). This study investigates the conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS within economic news discourse, focusing specifically on how the retail industry is framed through metaphorical language in response to evolving socio-economic pressures.

Economic news discourse serves as a rich site for metaphor analysis, reflecting broader societal attitudes and values concerning commerce, competition, resilience, and adaptation (McCloskey, 1983; Telibaşa, 2015). Previous research has extensively explored metaphor use in financial markets, organizational discourse, and mergers and acquisitions (Charteris-Black, 2004; Koller, 2004; Smith, 1995). However, there remains a noticeable gap in understanding how BUSINESS is metaphorically constructed within retail industry discourse, particularly during times of economic uncertainty and crisis.

This study situates itself within the context of U.S. economic news discourse, drawing on data from Forbes' Retail section - a prominent source of economic reporting in the United States. The retail sector, as one of the pillars of the U.S. economy, offers a fertile ground for metaphor analysis, given its direct engagement with shifting consumer behaviors, market dynamics, and technological innovation (Bednarek & Caple, 2012). The focus on the United States is justified by the global economic influence of the country's retail sector and the availability of high-quality data from reputable publications. The insights gained from analyzing U.S. discourse are not only relevant within the American context but also contribute to broader discussions on economic resilience and adaptation in the face of global economic disruptions.

While this research spans the years 2020 to 2022, the Covid-19 pandemic serves as a critical backdrop for understanding metaphor use within the retail industry. The pandemic created unprecedented disruptions to the global economy, placing immense pressure on businesses to adapt, survive, and thrive amid economic uncertainty. The retail sector, in particular, faced challenges ranging from mandatory closures of physical stores to rapid shifts in consumer spending and the acceleration of e-commerce. This dynamic environment offers a unique lens through which to explore how metaphors of BUSINESS evolved during periods of crisis and subsequent recovery.

The economic impact of Covid-19 on the United States was profound. According to Rushe (2021), the U.S. Gross Domestic Product experienced a 3.5% decline in 2020 - the sharpest contraction since 1946. Unemployment rates soared to 14.8% in April 2020, as widespread business closures and workforce reductions took hold (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). In response, the U.S. government introduced comprehensive relief measures, such as the CARES Act, which allocated \$2.2 trillion to support individuals, businesses, and healthcare institutions (Investopedia, March 2020). These measures aimed to stabilize the economy and sustain businesses during periods of acute uncertainty.

The retail sector encapsulated the dual nature of this economic shock. On the one hand, non-essential retail segments, such as fashion and luxury, experienced significant revenue declines, with several major brands, including J.C. Penney and Neiman Marcus, filing for bankruptcy (Thomas, 2020). On the other hand, essential retailers and e-commerce giants such as Amazon and Walmart reported record growth, as consumer priorities shifted towards online shopping, home goods, and personal health products (Goldberg, 2020). This bifurcation within the retail landscape underscores the importance of adaptation and resilience - concepts frequently reflected in the metaphorical language used in economic reporting.

The Covid-19 pandemic's impact on the retail sector can be divided into two distinct phases: The crisis phase (2020) - characterized by widespread uncertainty, economic contraction, and survival-focused strategies, and the recovery phase (2021 - 2022) - marked by gradual economic reopening, renewed focus on innovation, and long-term restructuring within the retail industry. This division forms the basis for the study's exploration of metaphors in two phases, capturing the evolving nature of retail business conceptualization during and after the pandemic.

By analyzing metaphors used in economic news discourse during these two phases, this study reveals how linguistic strategies reflect and shape societal understandings of BUSINESS. The conceptual framing of BUSINESS through metaphors of war, struggle, survival and so on not only provides insights into economic resilience but also highlights the ideological underpinnings embedded within retail industry discourse.

This background establishes the foundation for investigating how conceptual metaphors shaped the discourse around BUSINESS in the retail sector during a period of unprecedented economic and social transformation.

1.2. Rationale

One key reason for this research is to address a significant gap in the study of conceptual metaphors within retail industry discourse. While Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003) has been widely applied to various

domains of economic discourse - such as finance (Charteris-Black, 2004), marketing (Koller, 2004), and organizational studies (Oswick et al., 2002) - the retail sector remains underrepresented. Given the retail industry's critical role in economic growth, consumer behavior, and market stability, this gap presents an opportunity to explore how BUSINESS is metaphorically framed within retail news discourse. Investigating this underexamined area expands the scope of metaphor studies and enriches our understanding of how language constructs economic realities in this vital sector.

Another important reason is the unique context created by the Covid-19 pandemic, which heightened the relevance of metaphor use in economic news discourse. The pandemic introduced unprecedented challenges for the retail sector, prompting widespread disruptions and necessitating rapid adaptation by businesses. In response, economic news coverage increasingly relied on metaphorical language to articulate complex phenomena, such as survival, resilience, and recovery. Examining the metaphors used during the crisis phase (2020) and recovery phase (2021 - 2022) offers valuable insights into how economic narratives were shaped during this transformative period, capturing the evolving conceptualization of BUSINESS under extreme socio-economic pressures.

Furthermore, this research responds to the need to investigate the ideological implications embedded in conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS. Metaphors are not only linguistic expressions but also cognitive and ideological tools that frame public understanding of economic events (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003; Kövecses, 2010b, 2017, 2020; Charteris-Black, 2004; Maalej, 2011). The metaphors used to describe retail during the pandemic such as BUSINESS IS WAR, BUSINESS IS EXPANSION reflect broader ideological constructs concerning competition, resilience, and adaptation. By analyzing these metaphors, this study reveals how language reinforces specific economic ideologies, contributing to a deeper understanding of how metaphors influence public perception, business practices, and policymaking within the retail sector.

A pilot study (*See 3.4.4*) conducted as part of this research highlights the prevalence and significance of metaphors in retail discourse, further justifying this

inquiry. Preliminary findings a number of metaphorical expressions such as “... *other specialty retailers - especially those without existing e-commerce platforms - **struggled**,*” “... *retail stores **survive** the pandemic,*” and “... *a **thriving** retail sector ...*” demonstrating the pervasive use of war, survival, and expansion metaphors. These initial results reinforce the necessity of a more comprehensive investigation into how such metaphors structure the conceptualization of BUSINESS during periods of economic volatility. This study builds upon these preliminary insights, aiming to provide a systematic analysis of metaphor use within retail industry discourse.

In addition, the selection of Forbes’ Retail section as the primary data source strengthens the relevance and credibility of this study. Forbes - an American business magazine - is recognized globally for its authoritative coverage of economic and business matters, offering a rich repository of high-quality data that reflects key trends and challenges within the retail sector. By drawing from Forbes’ economic reporting, this research ensures that its findings are grounded in reputable, widely circulated discourse, contributing to the robustness of the analysis and reinforcing the broader applicability of the results.

Ultimately, this research advances theoretical discussions within conceptual metaphor studies while offering practical insights into economic discourse. By bridging the gap between linguistic theory and real-world economic narratives, the study not only enhances our understanding of how BUSINESS is framed during times of crisis but also provides valuable insights for policymakers, business leaders, and communicators navigating the evolving retail landscape. Through this dual contribution, the research highlights the power of metaphor in shaping economic thought and discourse, offering new perspectives on the intersection between language, ideology, and economic practice.

1.3. Aim and Objectives

The aim of this research is to investigate the ideological implications of business arising from the use of conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS within economic news discourse, with a particular focus on retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In pursuit of this aim, the study sets forth the following objectives:

1. Identify the source domains mapped onto the target domain of BUSINESS in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic.
2. Interpret how conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS are conceptualized and framed within retail industry discourse.
3. Examine how conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS convey ideological implications in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic.

1.4. Research Questions

To achieve the objectives of the research, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What source domains are mapped onto the target domain of BUSINESS in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic?
2. How are the conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS conceptualized and framed in retail industry discourse?
3. How do conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS convey ideological implications in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic?

1.5. Research Methodology

This study is grounded in the Pragmatism paradigm (Morgan, 2014), which integrates both qualitative and quantitative methods to offer practical insights. This paradigm supports the combination of interpretive and empirical approaches, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of metaphor usage. To address the research questions, the study adopts a Mixed Methods approach (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007), combining MIP (Pragglejaz Group, 2007) for the qualitative phase to identify and interpret metaphorical expressions, and a corpus-based approach (Deignan, 2008) for the quantitative phase. The WordSmith Tools (Scott, 2023) were employed to generate concordance lines, enabling the examination of metaphor usage and tracking shifts in their contextual meaning.

The study follows an Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design (Creswell & Creswell, 2017), which starts with quantitative data collection to identify

metaphorical expressions and is followed by qualitative data collection to deepen the understanding of the findings. This research design ensures a balanced analysis by combining interpretive depth with empirical validation, allowing for a thorough exploration of how BUSINESS metaphors are conceptualized, framed and ideologically shaped during the Covid-19 pandemic.

1.6. Scope of the Study

This study examines the conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in U.S. retail-industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. The self-compiled corpus (Biber et al., 1999) comprises 60 English-language articles collected from the Forbes Retail section (<https://www.forbes.com/retail/>), divided evenly across two periods to enable phase-by-phase comparison:

- Crisis phase (March-December 2020): the outbreak period marked by immediate disruptions and acute challenges to retail operations.
- Recovery phase (2021-2022): the period of adaptation and transformation as the industry navigated ongoing pandemic conditions and began to recover.

The analysis focuses on identifying and categorizing metaphorical expressions related to BUSINESS, and on how these expressions are conceptualized and framed across the two phases. The study is sector-specific (retail only), geographically limited to the United States, and temporally bounded to the intervals stated above; it does not extend to other sectors, countries, or periods. Consequently, the findings are not intended to generalize beyond this defined context.

These parameters support a focused and in-depth account of how metaphors shape business discourse in retail during crisis and recovery, and they provide a basis for discussing the cognitive and ideological implications of metaphor use within this domain.

Working Definitions

As part of the scope of this study, several key concepts are essential to the analysis of conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS within the retail industry discourse

during the Covid-19 pandemic. The following working definitions outline these concepts, providing clarity and ensuring consistency throughout the research.

Conceptual metaphor: Lakoff & Johnson (1980) define conceptual metaphor as a cognitive process where one concept is understood and experienced in terms of another. This study applies their framework to analyze how the abstract concept BUSINESS is structured through concrete domains, such as WAR or EXPANSION, in retail discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Metaphorical conceptualization: Metaphorical conceptualization, as proposed by Kövecses (2010a), refers to the intricate process by which individuals form and interpret metaphors, drawing upon both embodied experiences and cultural context.

Generic metaphors: Generic metaphors are broad, abstract frameworks that structure thought across various domains (Kövecses, 2010b). For example, LIFE IS A JOURNEY is a generic metaphor, which can generate specific expressions like “I’m at a crossroads in life” (p.3).

Specific metaphors: Specific metaphors, in contrast, are context-specific and detailed applications of generic metaphors. For instance, THE EARLY BIRD CATCHES THE WORM is a specific metaphor that exemplifies the generic idea of GENERIC IS SPECIFIC, where concrete elements such as “bird” and “worm” are used to express effort leading to reward (Kövecses, 2010b, p.45).

Framing: Framing in this study refers to how metaphorical mappings highlight certain aspects of a concept while suppressing others. It shapes how the target domain (in this case, BUSINESS) is understood by projecting the structure of source domains onto it. According to Lakoff & Johnson (1980), framing is an implicit result of metaphorical mapping, guiding the focus of interpretation. Kövecses (2017) further explains that generic metaphors provide broad frameworks, which are adapted into specific metaphors to fit particular contexts, thereby framing the target concept in a socio-culturally relevant way.

Domain: A domain is a structured area of knowledge that facilitates connections between abstract concepts (target domains) and more concrete,

experience-based concepts (source domains), forming the foundation for metaphorical mappings. Domains represent long-term, supra-individual knowledge structures that are stored in memory and activated during metaphorical reasoning (Kövecses, 2020).

Domain level: In Kövecses' Multi-level View of Conceptual Metaphor (2020), the domain level represents the broadest conceptual stage, where generic metaphors (BUSINESS IS WAR) provide overarching cognitive frameworks. These generic metaphors structure how individuals understand and interpret abstract concepts across different contexts. They are the foundation from which more specific metaphors (BUSINESS IS A BATTLE, BUSINESS IS MILITARY OPERATIONS) emerge.

Frame: A frame is a mental structure that organizes related concepts, providing context for interpreting meaning. It links elements in a system, where understanding one concept activates others (Fillmore, 1982). For example, in BUSINESS IS WAR, the 'War frame' includes concepts such as soldiers, strategy, and victory, which are mapped to business elements like employees, planning, and success.

Frame level: In Kövecses's (2020) Multi-level framework, the frame level refers to the stage where metaphors become context-bound and specific, elaborating on the general conceptual structures established at the domain level. It refines broader domain-level metaphors by providing detailed, concrete representations. For example, the domain-level metaphor BUSINESS IS WAR branches into the specific metaphor BUSINESS IS A BATTLE, which is further construed at the frame level as "*Suffering setbacks is receiving blows in a battle,*" offering a more context-sensitive reflection of economic struggles in particular situations.

Ideology: Van Dijk defines ideology as "a system of socially shared knowledge, beliefs, and values within a society" (1998, p.127). He explains that ideologies are collective constructs, distinct from personal opinions or individual memories, and are shaped by social interactions. This definition emphasizes the

societal nature of ideologies and their role in influencing group behaviors and collective thought, making it applicable for analyzing how shared beliefs influence economic practices and business discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Ideological dimensions: Maalej's framework (2011) divides the ideological dimensions of metaphor into three levels: conceptual, cognitive, and pragmatic. At the conceptual level, metaphors structure abstract ideas by mapping them onto more familiar, concrete concepts, creating coherence in discourse. At the cognitive level, metaphors direct attention to specific aspects of the target domain while downplaying others, influencing how people perceive reality. At the pragmatic level, metaphors serve as persuasive tools, shaping beliefs and influencing behavior by reinforcing specific ideological views and guiding interpretations of the world.

1.7. Significance of the Study

Theoretical Significance

This research advances Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003) by demonstrating how metaphors in economic discourse operate as both cognitive structures and ideological tools. By integrating CMT, Kövecses' (2020) Multi-level View of Conceptual Metaphor with Maalej's (2011) Ideological framework, the study provides a comprehensive model for understanding how metaphors operate at different levels of abstraction and ideological influence. The distinction between domain-level and frame-level metaphors highlights how metaphors evolve in response to changing socio-economic conditions. The study also emphasizes how metaphors frame public perceptions of economic challenges, shaping narratives of resilience, competition, and transformation during periods of crisis and recovery.

Methodological Significance

This study introduces a robust methodological framework for analyzing conceptual metaphors using mixed-methods approach (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007) and corpus-based approach (Deignan, 2008). The integration of qualitative and quantitative methods enhances the rigor of the analysis, allowing for both in-depth

interpretation and empirical validation. By combining WordSmith Tools (Scott, 2023) and the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) (Pragglejaz Group, 2007), the research ensures systematic and replicable metaphor identification and analysis. This approach offers a contribution to metaphor research, providing a comprehensive toolset for future studies in economic discourse analysis.

Practical Significance

The practical significance of this study lies in its ability to reveal how metaphors influence business strategies and policymaking. The identification of metaphors such as BUSINESS IS WAR, BUSINESS IS EXPANSION, and BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE provides actionable insights for business leaders and policymakers. These metaphors shape decisions related to market strategies, digital transformation, and long-term sustainability, highlighting the importance of adaptability in economic crises. The study emphasizes the role of metaphors in guiding corporate actions, fostering public trust, and aligning business practices with societal expectations, ultimately contributing to economic resilience and growth.

1.8. Structure of the Thesis

This thesis comprises six chapters, each addressing a critical aspect of the study on the conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in economic news discourse, specifically in the U.S. retail industry during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Chapter 1, Introduction, introduces the focus of the study, which explores the role of conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in shaping economic discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. The chapter outlines the research aim, formulates the key research questions, and defines the scope of the investigation. Additionally, it presents the methodology used for the analysis and highlights the significance of the research. The chapter concludes by providing an overview of the structure of the thesis, setting the stage for the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 2, Theoretical Background and Literature Review, reviews the theoretical frameworks and literature that underpin the study. It delves into CMT by Lakoff & Johnson (1980, 2003), examining key concepts such as source and target

domains, cross-domain mapping, and categorization. The chapter also incorporates Kövecses' (2020) Multi-level View of Conceptual Metaphor, focusing on domain and frame levels, and Maalej's (2011) Ideological framework, emphasizing the role of metaphors in shaping discourse and societal perceptions. The chapter concludes by reviewing existing research on economic news discourse, identifying gaps that this study aims to address.

Chapter 3, Methodology, outlines the research methodology, including the research paradigm (Pragmatism), and explains the mixed methods and corpus-based approach used to analyze the conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS. The chapter describes data collection, corpus construction from Forbes retail articles, and the metaphor identification procedure (MIP). It also explains how source domain categorization was performed and discusses the reliability and validity of the research process.

Chapter 4, Conceptualization and Framing of Conceptual Metaphors of BUSINESS, presents the findings and discussions regarding the categorization and framing of BUSINESS metaphors in U.S. retail industry discourse. The chapter is organized into two phases: the crisis phase (2020) and the recovery phase (2021-2022). It addresses Research Questions 1 and 2, analyzing the metaphorical expressions, the source domains, conceptualization and framing of BUSINESS metaphors at both the generic and specific levels.

Chapter 5, Ideological Implications of Conceptual Metaphors of BUSINESS, explores the ideological implications of BUSINESS metaphors in U.S. retail industry discourse during the pandemic (research question 3). The chapter analyzes how these metaphors reflect societal values and shape public perceptions. It also examines the contextual conceptualization of BUSINESS metaphors, focusing on how they adapted to the socio-economic changes during the crisis and recovery phases.

Chapter 6, Conclusion, provides a summary of the main findings and their theoretical, methodological, and practical implications. It reflects on the contributions of the research and offers recommendations for future studies on conceptual metaphors in economic discourse. The chapter concludes by discussing the broader implications of the study for understanding how metaphors influence economic practices and policy-making.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the theoretical frameworks and literature that form the foundation of this study on conceptual metaphors in economic news discourse. It draws on Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) by Lakoff & Johnson (1980, 2003) to explore key concepts such as source and target domains, cross-domain mapping, and categorization. The chapter also incorporates Kövecses' (2020) Multi-level View to metaphor, focusing on domain and frame levels, and Maalej's (2011) framework on the ideological dimensions of metaphor, emphasizing their role in shaping discourse and societal perceptions. The chapter concludes with a review of existing studies in economic news discourse, identifying research gaps that inform the direction of this study.

2.1. Traditional Views on Metaphor

Metaphor, a fascinating linguistic phenomenon with profound symbolic significance, has evolved through diverse interpretations across historical eras. From Aristotle's foundational perspectives to the transformative theories of the mid-20th century, this section traces the journey of metaphor from its classical origins to the emergence of the Interaction Theory, which laid the groundwork for contemporary understanding.

Classical Views

Aristotle (384-322 B.C.E.), the pioneering Greek philosopher, offered one of the earliest systematic accounts of metaphor in his works *Poetics* and *Rhetoric*. Aristotle defined metaphor as “the application of a word that belongs to another thing: either from genus to species, species to genus, species to species, or by analogy” (as cited in Levin, 1982). His definition introduced three critical aspects of metaphor:

- It operates at the level of individual words.
- A word is repurposed from its conventional literal usage to an unconventional figurative role.
- The connection between the two components of the metaphor is established through similarity.

Aristotle's focus on individual words framed metaphor as a rhetorical device,

primarily concerned with stylistic embellishment. This approach, as noted by Soskice (1985), limited metaphor to the analysis of specific words rather than broader contexts, such as sentences. Furthermore, Aristotle emphasized the “transfer” of meaning, highlighting the distinction between ordinary and unconventional language. By positioning metaphor as a deviation from literal discourse, its semantic value was often perceived as secondary.

Cicero (106-43 B.C.E.) and Quintilian (c. 35-95/6 C.E.) extended Aristotle’s ideas. Cicero regarded metaphor as a condensed form of simile, primarily valued for its aesthetic and rhetorical effects, while Quintilian viewed it as a concise comparison with no significant cognitive role, emphasizing its stylistic function. These classical views collectively relegated metaphor to the realm of rhetorical ornamentation (see Buzila, 2018; Charteris-Black, 2004; Ricoeur, 1977).

Medieval Perspectives

During the medieval period, perspectives on metaphor were divided. One view held that metaphor served only an aesthetic purpose, lacking cognitive influence. However, the frequent use of metaphor in religious texts, such as the Bible, introduced a more nuanced approach.

Aquinas (as cited in Boland, 1996) argued that metaphorical language, particularly when used to describe God, held analogical significance. He proposed that such language revealed resemblances rather than literal truths, reflecting the view that metaphors highlighted similarities through a “deviant” use of words (Johnson, 1981). This perspective preserved the idea of metaphor as a stylistic tool while acknowledging its capacity to convey abstract theological concepts.

Enlightenment Perspectives

The Enlightenment brought a shift in metaphor’s status, with philosophers such as Hobbes (1588-1679) and Locke (1632-1704) expressing skepticism. Hobbes criticized metaphor for its potential to deceive by distorting meaning, advocating for the clarity and precision of literal language in philosophical discourse. In the same vein, Locke dismissed metaphor as a construct that obscured truth and stirred emotions unnecessarily.

He argued that language should prioritize “Order and Clarity,” rejecting the figurative as a distraction from reasoned discourse. These reductionist views framed metaphor as an obstacle to rationality, reflecting the Enlightenment’s preference for empirical clarity (as cited in Buzila, 2018).

Interaction Theory

In the mid-20th century, the Interaction Theory of Metaphor marked a departure from earlier views, emphasizing the cognitive and dynamic nature of metaphor. Richards (1936, as cited in Bilsky, 1952) introduced the concepts of “tenor” (the subject of description) and “vehicle” (the figurative language used), illustrating how meaning arises from their interaction. Richards further argued that metaphor was not merely ornamental but fundamental to thought and communication. Building on Richards’ work (1936), Black (1962, as cited in Buzila, 2018) introduced the notions of “focus” (the metaphorical word) and “frame” (the literal context surrounding it). Black highlighted the interplay between focus and frame as the source of metaphorical meaning, emphasizing the importance of contextual and extralinguistic factors, such as tone and shared background knowledge, in shaping interpretation (as cited in Buzila, 2018). Together, Richards and Black reframed metaphor as a tool for generating layered meanings, challenging its historical relegation to stylistic embellishment and paving the way for contemporary metaphor research.

The traditional views on metaphor, while diverse, often regarded metaphor as a rhetorical or stylistic device. However, the Interaction Theory introduced a paradigm shift, emphasizing metaphor’s role in cognition and meaning-making. This transition laid the groundwork for the revolutionary insights of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, which reconceptualizes metaphor not as linguistic ornamentation but as a fundamental mechanism of human thought - a perspective explored in the following section.

2.2. Conceptual Metaphor Theory

2.2.1. Conceptual Metaphor

In their seminal work “Metaphors We Live By” (1980), Lakoff & Johnson introduced the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), offering a groundbreaking

perspective on metaphor that challenges the traditional view of metaphor as primarily a literary device. They assert that metaphor is not merely a tool for poetic expression or rhetorical flourish but is instead an inherent and pervasive aspect of language. Lakoff & Johnson state, “Metaphor is often seen as a tool of poetic imagination and rhetorical flourish - something extraordinary, not ordinary, in language” (1980, p. 1). By challenging the perception of metaphor as something reserved for the domain of genius, they aim to demonstrate its accessibility and ubiquity in everyday communication. This approach represents a departure from Aristotle’s conception of metaphor and seeks to democratize its usage, emphasizing its fundamental role in shaping thought and language for all individuals.

Lakoff & Johnson (1980) argue that the concepts shaping our thoughts go beyond intellectual realms, influencing our daily lives, even in the most mundane activities. According to them, our conceptual system plays a central role in “shaping our daily realities” (1980, p.1). They suggest that people use common metaphoric concepts to understand the world, indicating that metaphors in language serve a conceptual purpose beyond just rhetoric. By using the term “*conceptual*,” they emphasize that the core of metaphorical understanding occurs within the mind.

Lakoff & Johnson (1980) further propose that metaphor is a language not limited to elite figures like politicians, poets, or philosophers but is inherent in ordinary people. They emphasize that “human thought processes are largely metaphorical” (1980, p.10), highlighting the pervasive nature of metaphor in our thinking.

Their interest lies in exploring the *Systematicity of Metaphorical Concepts*. They argue that the “essence of metaphor” lies in the act of “grasping and experiencing one type of entity by means of another” (1980, p.5). According to them, metaphor isn’t just isolated linguistic expressions; it forms a complex network called a “conceptual metaphor.” This metaphor extends beyond language, providing a comprehensive framework to understand various aspects of human experience.

In their definition, Lakoff & Johnson assert that metaphor is a cognitive process involving the “*understanding and experiencing of one kind of thing in terms of another*”

(1980, p.5). This concept highlights that metaphor is not confined to words; it encompasses broader conceptual mapping. This mapping associates one concept with another, enabling a richer understanding beyond individual words. This process transcends language, significantly influencing how we perceive and interact with the world.

For instance, let's consider the metaphor "TIME IS MONEY" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p.8). This metaphorical mapping associates the concept of "*time*" with the concept of "*money*", allowing us to understand and quantify the value and importance of "time" in terms of the monetary value we assign to it. This process of metaphorical mapping enhances our comprehension, transcending the limitations of individual words and profoundly shaping the way we perceive and interact with the world around us.

In a word, Lakoff & Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), as presented in "Metaphors We Live By" (1980), revolutionizes the notion of metaphor, asserting its fundamental presence not only in literature but also in everyday language and cognition. They argue that metaphor permeates our daily communication, profoundly influencing how we perceive and interpret the world around us. By democratizing metaphor and stressing its universal nature, they highlight its significant role in shaping our conceptualization of human experience. Their theory unveils intricate networks of conceptual metaphors within the mind, transcending mere linguistic constructs to offer profound insights into our understanding of reality.

In their 2003 afterword, Lakoff & Johnson significantly enhanced their original CMT from 1980 by emphasizing the importance of empirical evidence and the integration of cultural and contextual factors. These additions provided a more robust and comprehensive framework for understanding metaphorical thought.

Lakoff & Johnson (2003) highlighted the necessity of grounding the theory in systematic, empirical research rather than relying solely on intuitive or anecdotal data. They argued that questions about the nature of meaning, conceptualization, reasoning, and language are inherently empirical and require rigorous investigation.

The expanded theory incorporated evidence from various methodologies,

including psychological experiments, gesture studies, historical semantics, discourse analysis, and language acquisition research. This diverse evidence base strengthened the empirical foundation of CMT, making it a more scientifically rigorous theory.

Another major enhancement in 2003 was the explicit integration of cultural and contextual factors into CMT. Lakoff & Johnson recognized that while some metaphors are universally grounded in bodily experiences, their specific manifestations can be heavily influenced by cultural and situational contexts.

Building upon Lakoff & Johnson's foundational work, Kövecses (2020) further expanded CMT by refining the understanding of metaphorical structure and emphasizing the hierarchical nature of conceptual metaphors. Kövecses (2020) proposes that conceptual metaphors operate at different levels, including generic-level metaphors (such as EVENTS ARE ACTIONS, p.45) and more specific-level metaphors (such as DEATH IS A JOURNEY, p.46). This hierarchical structuring offers a more nuanced analysis of how metaphors function at varying degrees of abstraction. *(A more detailed exploration of this hierarchical structure and its relevance to the current study will be provided in Section 2.2.5.)*

Kövecses (2020) also emphasizes the importance of contextual "priming" (2020, p. 102), highlighting how metaphors are activated differently depending on immediate discourse contexts. While Lakoff & Johnson focused on broad, universal metaphorical patterns, Kövecses draws attention to the dynamic nature of metaphor, arguing that context-sensitive factors play a significant role in shaping metaphorical meaning.

By incorporating cultural and contextual factors, CMT could be applied more effectively across various fields, including politics, law, literature, psychology, and cognitive science. This broadened the scope of the theory, showing how metaphors shape not only language but also broader social and cognitive processes.

The enhancements to CMT by Lakoff & Johnson in 2003, and Kövecses (2010, 2017, 2020) significantly strengthen the theory's empirical and theoretical foundations, broaden its applicability, and link metaphorical thought to broader cognitive processes. These advancements are directly relevant to the current thesis, providing a robust

framework for analyzing the use of BUSINESS metaphors in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic and offering valuable insights into the interplay between language, cognition, and economic ideologies.

2.2.2. Metaphorical Expressions

Metaphorical expressions are linked to the present research as they help identify how BUSINESS metaphors shape communication in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. By analyzing these expressions, the researcher can uncover the specific metaphorical expressions used to represent the target domain of BUSINESS addressing the first research question.

Metaphorical expressions play a crucial role in the foundation of CMT (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), giving us insights into the close connection between thoughts and language. According to CMT, metaphors go beyond just adding flair to language; they are vehicles that help us share our ideas. This idea lines up with the view that metaphors come from how we think and show up in the words we use.

In this framework, the concept of metaphorical expressions emphasizes that our thoughts and words are tightly linked. These expressions act as a bridge between the abstract world of ideas and the concrete world of words. When we look at everyday language, we uncover many examples of linguistic metaphors that mirror the ideas shaping our thinking. For instance, think about the metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR. Expressions such as “*indefensible, every weak point in, right on target, won, demolished ...*” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p.8) reveal how we see arguments as battles.

It is important to distinguish between conceptual metaphors and metaphorical expressions, as highlighted by both Lakoff & Johnson (1980) and Kövecses (2008, 2010b). Conceptual metaphors serve as the foundational structures that guide our thoughts, while metaphorical expressions represent how these conceptual structures manifest in language. This differentiation is essential for comprehensively studying metaphors, as it allows us to examine the complexities of their influence on cognition and communication.

Kövecses (2010b) further elucidates that metaphorical expressions are linguistic

manifestations rooted in the terminology of concrete conceptual domains. For example, expressions like *head start*, *bumpy road*, *at a crossroads* ... (p.46) associated with the domain of journey, reflect the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY. This distinction underscores the intricate relationship between conceptual metaphors and their linguistic representations, providing valuable insights into the interplay between ideas and language. Ultimately, metaphorical expressions offer glimpses into how metaphors shape cognition and communication, emphasizing their profound influence on human understanding.

2.2.3. Cross-domain Mapping

CMT posits that metaphors operate by mapping elements from one conceptual domain (the source domain) onto another (the target domain). Lakoff & Turner (2009, p. 59) explain that metaphors labeled as “A IS B” involve a transfer of knowledge structures from the source domain (B) to the target domain (A). Similarly, Kövecses (2010b) conceptualizes this as “CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN A IS CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN B,” illustrating how abstract ideas are understood through more concrete frameworks.

To clarify this mapping process, consider the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR. As Lakoff & Johnson (1980, p. 4) note, expressions such as “Your claims are *indefensible*,” “He *attacked every weak point* in my argument,” and “I *demolished* his argument” illustrate how vocabulary associated with the concrete domain of WAR is employed to describe and understand the abstract domain of ARGUMENT. In this metaphor, ARGUMENT serves as the target domain, while WAR acts as the source domain. By using the expressions “*indefensible*,” “*attacked every weak point*” and “*demolished*,” individuals draw on the conceptual structure of WAR to shape their understanding of ARGUMENT. This mapping enriches the comprehension of the target domain by leveraging the more tangible and familiar characteristics of the source domain.

Building on this foundation, Kövecses (2010b) emphasizes that cross-domain mappings rely on systematic correspondences between the source and target domains. Lakoff (1987) further delineates two types of correspondences that arise from these mappings: ontological and epistemic.

Ontological correspondences

Ontological correspondences establish direct relationships between individual elements in the source and target domains. These correspondences shape metaphorical meaning by mapping physical properties from the source domain onto abstract properties in the target domain. For example, the metaphor ANGER IS HEATED FLUID IN A CONTAINER features correspondences such as:

Table 2.1

Examples of ontological correspondences

Source: HEATED FLUID IN A CONTAINER		Target: ANGER
Containers	→	Body
Heated fluid	→	Anger
Heat scale	→	Anger scale
Pressure in container	→	Experienced pressure
Agitation of bodily fluid	→	Experienced agitation
Limits of container's resistance	→	Limits of person's ability to suppress anger
Explosion	→	Loss of control

Note. Adapted from Lakoff (1987, p. 387).

The metaphor ANGER IS HEATED FLUID IN A CONTAINER uses ontological correspondences to map physical properties from the source domain (heated fluid in a container) onto the abstract concept of anger. In this metaphor, the body is conceptualized as a container that holds anger, similar to how a container holds fluid. As anger intensifies, it is compared to the heating of fluid, which increases pressure and agitation within the body. This imagery helps us understand how anger builds up and can eventually overflow, reflecting the loss of control when anger reaches its peak.

The heat scale in the container corresponds to the intensity of anger, ranging from mild irritation to intense rage. Similarly, the pressure in the container symbolizes the tension experienced when anger builds up. Once the pressure exceeds the container's limit, it 'explodes,' symbolizing the release of anger and the loss of control. These ontological correspondences map physical phenomena - heat, pressure, and containment - onto the abstract experience of anger, making it easier for people to relate to and understand the emotional state.

By framing abstract concepts in terms of physical experiences, such as heated fluid and container limits, the metaphor emphasizes the tangible nature of emotional processes. This mapping allows the metaphor to convey complex emotional states in more familiar terms, thus making the experience of anger more accessible and relatable.

Epistemic correspondences

In contrast, epistemic correspondences align the internal relationships within the source and target domains, transferring not just elements but also the logic and causal structures that connect them. This includes general knowledge and culturally ingrained assumptions associated with the source domain. Continuing with the metaphor ANGER IS HEATED FLUID IN A CONTAINER, epistemic correspondences may appear as:

Table 2.2

Examples of epistemic correspondences

Source: HEATED FLUID IN A CONTAINER		Target: ANGER
When fluid in a container is heated beyond a certain limit, pressure increases to a point at which the container explodes.	→	When anger increases beyond a certain limit, “pressure” increases to point at which a person loses control.
An explosion is damaging to container and dangerous to bystanders.	→	Loss of control is damaging to person and dangerous to others.
Explosion can be prevented by applying sufficient force and counter-pressure.	→	Anger can be suppressed by force of will.
Controlled release of pressure may occur, which reduces danger of explosion.	→	Anger can be released in a controlled way, or vented harmlessly, thus reducing level.

Note. Adapted from Lakoff (1987, p. 387).

The source domain suggests that when fluid is heated beyond a certain limit, pressure builds until the container explodes. This aligns with the conceptualization of anger: as anger increases, so does the ‘pressure’ within, eventually leading to a loss of control. The explosion in the source domain, which is damaging to both the container and potentially harmful to bystanders, mirrors the damaging effects of losing control due to anger, which can harm the person experiencing it and others around them.

Moreover, the explosion can be prevented by applying sufficient counter-pressure. This is akin to the idea that anger can be controlled or suppressed by the will. Similarly, the controlled release of pressure of the source domain reduces the risk of explosion, aligning with the concept that anger can be safely vented or expressed, lowering its intensity and avoiding harmful outbursts.

Through these epistemic correspondences, the metaphor not only maps physical properties but also transfers the underlying logic, providing a cognitive framework for understanding and managing anger. This transfer of logical structures contributes to the coherence of metaphors, making them not only understandable but also actionable in real-life contexts.

Cross-domain mapping in the present study

The interplay between source and target domains is central to understanding how metaphors operate in economic discourse. In the present study, BUSINESS functions as the target domain, representing an abstract and multifaceted concept. Source domains such as WAR, JOURNEY, and EXPANSION provide structured frameworks that shape how BUSINESS is conceptualized, particularly within retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Cross-domain mapping allows economic challenges and transformations experienced in the retail sector to be articulated through metaphorical language. For instance, the metaphor BUSINESS IS WAR reflect how competitive strategies, market survival, and economic struggles are framed through the lens of conflict and battle.

Similarly, BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY conveys the evolving nature of business growth, setbacks, and eventual recovery.

This study examines both ontological and epistemic correspondences to reveal how metaphors shape economic narratives. Ontological correspondences facilitate direct mappings between elements such as *strategy* in WAR and *planning* in BUSINESS, while epistemic correspondences highlight broader parallels, such as how *winning battles* metaphorically aligns with *achieving market dominance*.

2.2.4. Metaphorical Conceptualization

Metaphorical conceptualization informs this research by explaining how both embodied experiences and cultural context influence the formation and interpretation of BUSINESS metaphors in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. This analysis helps identify the source domains mapped onto the target domain of BUSINESS (addressing research question 1) and how these conceptual metaphors are conceptualized (addressing research question 2). Furthermore, by considering the impact of cultural and contextual factors, it also sheds light on the ideological implications embedded in these metaphors (addressing research question 3).

In his work “Metaphor and Culture”, Kövecses (2010a) digs deeply into the intriguing realm of metaphorical conceptualization, offering profound insights into how embodiment and cultural context influence the formation and interpretation of metaphors. Kövecses challenges the notion that embodiment alone can fully account for the complex process of metaphorical conceptualization, arguing instead for a more comprehensive understanding that integrates cultural factors.

A central question posed by Kövecses (2010a) is whether conceptual metaphor theory can adequately capture both the universal and culture-specific dimensions of metaphorical conceptualization. He suggests that while embodiment plays a significant role in shaping metaphors, cultural context also exerts a powerful influence, leading to the emergence of language- and culture-specific metaphors.

Kövecses (2010a) proposes that metaphorical conceptualization occurs under the simultaneous pressures of embodiment and cultural context. This dual pressure

necessitates a delicate balance between coherence with embodied experiences and alignment with the norms and values of local culture. Through this lens, Kövecses illuminates the dynamic interplay between universal cognitive processes and culturally contingent factors in the formation of metaphors.

Kövecses (2010a) provides valuable insights into the role of context in metaphorical conceptualization, highlighting how various contextual factors, including physical, social, cultural, and discourse aspects, shape our understanding and use of metaphors. He argues that context encompasses elements such as setting, topic, audience, and medium, all of which can significantly influence the formation and interpretation of metaphors.

For instance, Kövecses (2010a) cites the work of Boers (1999), who investigated how physical context impacts metaphorical thinking. Boers studied the metaphor “ECONOMY IS HEALTH” over a ten-year period and observed that its usage varied systematically based on the season. Specifically, the metaphor was more frequently employed during the winter months compared to summer. This finding suggests that physical factors, such as seasonal changes, can influence the prevalence and salience of metaphors in discourse.

Moreover, Kövecses (2010a) emphasizes that the choice of metaphor in a given situation is not solely determined by the availability of universal metaphors but also by the specific setting and topic of the discourse. This insight underscores the dynamic nature of metaphorical conceptualization, where the interplay between universal cognitive processes and situational context shapes metaphor use.

In Kövecses’ (2010a) exploration of metaphorical conceptualization, the FIFA Congress serves as a prime example of how contextual factors influence the selection of metaphorical source domains. When Sepp Blatter, the president of FIFA, metaphorically conceptualizes the behavior of Asian representatives leaving the Congress as football-related, it reflects the natural alignment between the topic of the event (football) and the chosen metaphorical source domain (the game of football). This example illustrates how the context of an event can shape the metaphorical

conceptualization process, highlighting the common practice of selecting metaphorical source domains based on local contexts.

Additionally, Kövecses (2010a) explores how personal background and interests contribute to metaphorical conceptualization. In a letter to the editor regarding Hungary's joining of the European Union, the author, an electrical engineer, employs the unconventional metaphor "EUROPEAN UNION IS AN ELECTRIC CIRCUIT" to express their perspective. This metaphor, while not conventional, is deeply rooted in the author's profession and personal history, demonstrating how individual factors influence the selection of metaphorical source domains.

In conclusion, metaphorical conceptualization, as examined by Kövecses (2010a), refers to the intricate process through which individuals form and interpret metaphors, drawing upon both embodied experiences and cultural context. Challenging the notion that embodiment alone suffices to explain this process, Kövecses introduces a framework emphasizing the dual influence of embodiment and cultural context on metaphor formation. This enriched perspective advances traditional conceptual metaphor theory by highlighting the dynamic interplay between universal cognitive processes and cultural factors, contributing to the field of cognitive linguistics.

2.2.5. Generic and Specific-level Metaphors

The foundational work of Lakoff & Johnson (1980, 2003) establishes the core principles of CMT. This theory posits that metaphors are fundamental to human cognition, structuring abstract thought through systematic cross-domain mappings. While Lakoff & Johnson does not explicitly introduce the terms generic-level metaphors and specific-level metaphors, their framework provides the basis for understanding these distinctions.

Lakoff & Johnson (1980) focus on the systematicity of metaphors and how they structure thought. For example, they discuss ARGUMENT IS WAR, a conceptual metaphor that structures how we talk and think about arguments. Expressions such

as “He *attacked every weak point in* my argument” and “His criticisms were *right on target*” (p. 4) exemplify how a generic metaphor (ARGUMENT IS WAR) underpins specific linguistic realizations.

Moreover, in their discussion of ontological metaphors, Lakoff & Johnson describe the metaphor THE MIND IS A MACHINE (1980, p.28), where the generic framework highlights the mind’s function as mechanical. Specific-level expressions include “My mind isn’t *operating* today” or “... we’re *running out of steam*”, which instantiate this generic metaphor.

Their explanation of systematicity reveals how generic metaphors guide specific entailments. For instance, TIME IS MONEY generates expressions “You’re *wasting* my time” or “How do you *spend* your time these days?”, demonstrating the connection between abstract schemas and specific realizations.

Kövecses (2010b) explicitly distinguishes between generic-level metaphors and specific-level metaphors, emphasizing that generic metaphors are highly schematic, skeletal frameworks that structure thought across various domains. In contrast, specific metaphors are context-dependent realizations of these frameworks, enriched with detailed and concrete elements.

Generic metaphors provide abstract cognitive structures that organize thought across a wide range of domains. Kövecses (2010b, p. 37) illustrates this through the motion schema, a generic metaphor comprising of a traveler, a path, a destination and so on. From this framework, generic metaphors such as LIFE IS A JOURNEY emerge, providing the foundation for specific instantiations. Examples cited by Kövecses include “I’m *at a crossroads* in his life”, “She’ll *go places* in life” (p. 3). These examples demonstrate how generic-level metaphors function as abstract scaffolding that can be adapted and filled with context-specific details.

Specific metaphors are detailed realizations of generic-level metaphors. Kövecses (2010b) explains how the proverb “The early bird catches the worm” (p. 45) is grounded in the generic metaphor GENERIC IS SPECIFIC. The specific elements, such as bird, worm, and catching, are mapped onto the generic idea of effort

leading to reward. This demonstrates how generic metaphors support the interpretation of specific expressions.

Kövecses (2010b) describes the relationship between generic and specific metaphors as hierarchical:

- Generic metaphors provide the abstract framework, organizing thought across domains.

- Specific metaphors enrich this framework by embedding detailed, context-sensitive elements.

For instance, the generic metaphor *EVENTS ARE ACTIONS* serves as a cognitive schema for specific metaphors *DEATH IS A JOURNEY*, which involves elements of movement from life to death, *ILLNESS IS AN ADVERSARY*, involving elements of battling illness.

These examples illustrate how generic metaphors guide the creation of specific metaphors, reflecting their dynamic interaction and their role in structuring human cognition. This hierarchical relationship aligns with Lakoff & Johnson's framework (1980, 2003), where generic metaphors like *TIME IS MONEY* guide specific entailments across different contexts.

By distinguishing between generic and specific metaphors, the researcher can better analyze metaphorical language in discourse. For example, in this study, the generic metaphor *BUSINESS IS WAR* underpins specific instances such as *BUSINESS IS A BATTLE* or *BUSINESS IS COMPETITION*, revealing how abstract schemas shape detailed communicative practices.

2.2.6. Conceptual Structure and Conceptual Categorization

Conceptual structure and conceptual categorization support this research by providing the theoretical foundation for analyzing how source domains are mapped onto the target domain of *BUSINESS* in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. These concepts help identify the metaphorical expressions used to represent *BUSINESS* and categorize them within the discourse, addressing the research question 1 of the study.

Conceptual Structure

Lakoff & Johnson (1980, 2003) imply that conceptual structure refers to the way our cognitive system organizes and relates different concepts. It is the underlying framework that shapes our thoughts, language, and understanding of the world.

Lakoff & Johnson (1980, 2003) argue that an adequate theory of the human conceptual system must explain how concepts are grounded, structured, related to one another, and defined. They emphasize that a significant portion of our conceptual system is metaphorically structured, meaning that we often understand abstract concepts in terms of more concrete experiences. This metaphorical structuring is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but a fundamental cognitive process.

For example, consider the concept of an argument. Lakoff & Johnson illustrate how we commonly use the metaphor AN ARGUMENT IS A BUILDING (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p.47) to understand and describe arguments. Phrases like *buttressing an argument* draw on our understanding of physically supporting a structure, thereby using concrete experiences to make sense of abstract ideas. Moreover, when we say *A building has a deepest part*, it implies that an argument, like a building, has a fundamental core or central point that is crucial to its stability and integrity. This metaphorical mapping allows us to transfer knowledge from the domain of physical buildings to the domain of abstract reasoning.

The relationship between conceptual structure and metaphors is vital because metaphors provide a systematic way to link different conceptual domains. They enable us to comprehend complex and abstract concepts by relating them to more familiar and tangible experiences. This process enhances our cognitive abilities, allowing us to navigate and make sense of the world more effectively.

In brief, according to Lakoff & Johnson (1980, 2003), conceptual structure is fundamentally shaped by metaphors, which serve as cognitive tools that link abstract and concrete domains. This metaphorical structuring is essential for understanding and organizing our conceptual system, highlighting the profound role of metaphors in human cognition.

Conceptual Categorization

Based on the theoretical perspectives of Croft & Cruse (2004), conceptual categorization is an essential cognitive process that enables humans to systematically organize and interpret the vast array of experiences and entities they encounter. This process involves recognizing individual instances as exemplars of broader, more abstract categories, which simplifies and structures our understanding of the world.

Croft & Cruse (2004) suggest that categorization is the apprehension of particular experiences as instances of something more abstract, a process that is fundamental to human cognition. By doing so, we group these experiences into meaningful constructs, known as conceptual categories. These categories serve as cognitive tools that facilitate various mental functions.

Conceptual categorization, as outlined by Croft & Cruse (2004), supports several cognitive functions. It aids learning by linking new experiences to past ones, helping us apply prior knowledge to new situations. In planning, it organizes knowledge into broad categories, aiding in goal formulation and problem-solving. Communication relies on categories to convey meaning efficiently, such as using the term *fruit* to represent many individual items. Finally, categorization promotes economy by simplifying information storage and retrieval, reducing cognitive load. In metaphorical expressions, conceptual categorization groups expressions into relevant semantic fields, helping us understand how metaphors shape and reflect human cognition.

2.2.7. Framing and Conceptual Metaphor in Discourse

Within the framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003), framing can be understood as an implicit outcome of the metaphorical mapping process. Kövecses (2017) emphasizes that conceptual metaphors project the structure of source domains onto target domains, shaping not only how the target is understood but also how certain aspects are highlighted while others are backgrounded. This selective emphasis inherent in metaphorical mappings contributes to framing by directing attention to particular features of the target domain while suppressing others (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003).

Although Kövecses (2017) does not explicitly use the term “framing,” his differentiation between generic and specific-level metaphors (*as mentioned in Section 2.2.5*) provides a foundation for understanding how framing operates within CMT. Generic metaphors, such as LIFE IS A JOURNEY, function as high-level, abstract schemas that offer interpretive coherence across multiple contexts (Kövecses, 2017). These generic metaphors are not context-bound but instead provide overarching conceptual frameworks that can be adapted to various situational needs. Specific-level metaphors, by contrast, emerge as contextualized realizations of these abstract schemas, tailoring the metaphorical structure to address particular scenarios or issues (Cameron & Deignan, 2006).

For instance, Musolff (2006) demonstrates how the broad conceptual domain of MARRIAGE is adapted into specific scenarios END-OF-HONEYMOON and ADULTERY in political discourse. These specific scenarios do not merely extend the generic metaphor but also frame the target domain in ways that resonate with cultural understandings and evaluative judgments. Similarly, Cameron & Low (2010) describes systematic metaphors, such as A RESPONSE TO TERRORISM IS NEGATIVE LABELLING OF MUSLIMS, which frame societal reactions by uniting semantically related expressions under a cohesive structure. These examples illustrate how framing emerges through the selective adaptation and elaboration of broader conceptual metaphors.

Thibodeau & Boroditsky (2011) further support this view by showing how metaphor framing can influence reasoning and decision-making. In their experiments, describing crime as a beast led participants to favor punitive solutions, while framing it as a virus prompted preventative measures. Such findings demonstrate that framing operates not only at a linguistic level but also at a cognitive and social level, shaping how audiences perceive and respond to complex phenomena.

In sum, framing within CMT arises from the interaction between generic and specific-level metaphors. Generic metaphors provide interpretive stability and coherence, while specific metaphors adapt these frameworks to meet the demands of

particular contexts. This dual-level operation underscores the dynamic nature of framing, enabling metaphors to organize abstract concepts while remaining responsive to immediate socio-cultural needs. By embedding framing within metaphor theory, scholars such as Musolff (2006) and Cameron & Low (2010) have highlighted its critical role in shaping discourse, offering valuable insights into how metaphors structured narratives of BUSINESS during the Covid-19 pandemic in the present study.

2.3. Multi-level View of Conceptual Metaphor

2.3.1. Hierarchical Levels and Schematicity in Conceptual Metaphor

In cognitive linguistics, the conceptualization of metaphor has undergone significant refinement with the introduction of hierarchical frameworks that analyze metaphorical thought across multiple levels of abstraction. Kövecses (2020) proposed a multi-level view of conceptual metaphor, which distinguishes four levels: *image schemas, domains, frames, and mental spaces*. Each level represents a distinct degree of specificity and schematicity, providing a comprehensive structure for understanding how metaphors operate in both abstract and context-specific contexts.

Figure 2.1

Schematicity hierarchy for four conceptual structures

Note. Adapted from Kövecses, 2020.

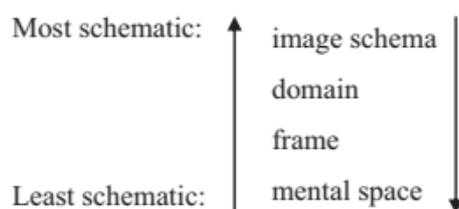
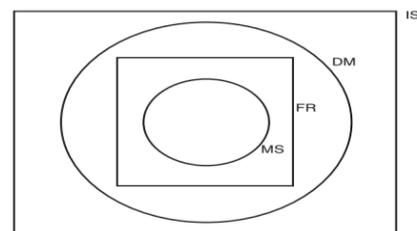


Figure 2.2

Schematicity as inclusion

Note. Adapted from Kövecses, 2020.



The figures presented above visually represent the hierarchical nature of metaphorical conceptualization as outlined by Kövecses (2020). Figure 2.1 illustrates the schematicity hierarchy, where metaphors are structured across four levels of abstraction, ranging from the most schematic (image schema) to the least schematic (mental space). This gradation highlights how metaphors transition from general, abstract representations to highly specific and context-bound forms.

The upward arrow signifies increasing schematicity, indicating that image schemas provide broad, foundational structures that apply across a wide range of experiences. Conversely, the downward arrow reflects increasing specificity, illustrating that as metaphors move toward the mental space level, they become more detailed and contextually grounded. This dual directionality emphasizes the dynamic relationship between abstract metaphorical thought and its concrete manifestations in discourse, reinforcing the layered nature of metaphorical meaning construction.

Figure 2.2 further elaborates this hierarchy through a nested model, depicting how each level of metaphorical structure builds upon the other. Image schemas (IS) form the outermost layer, encapsulating domains (DM), which in turn contain frames (FR) and ultimately mental spaces (MS). This nested representation underscores the interdependence between levels, suggesting that while image schemas provide broad, foundational structures, frames and mental spaces enable more fine-grained and context-specific metaphorical construals.

The hierarchical structure presented by Kövecses (2020) highlights the interconnected nature of metaphorical thought, demonstrating how metaphors evolve from abstract, generalized forms to highly context-specific realizations. This layered approach provides a nuanced framework for analyzing metaphorical meaning, reinforcing the importance of examining multiple levels to fully capture the complexity of metaphorical conceptualization.

Building on this foundation, the following sections will focus on the domain and frame levels, as these two levels are central to this study's investigation of BUSINESS metaphors in economic discourse. By narrowing the analysis to these levels, the research can effectively trace how broad metaphorical mappings at the domain level are elaborated and manifested at the frame level, offering deeper insights into the ideological dimensions embedded within metaphorical expressions.

2.3.2. Domain level

In Kövecses' (2020) Multi-level View of Conceptual Metaphor, the domain level represents a critical stage in the metaphorical mapping process, where broad

conceptual structures serve as the foundation for metaphorical thought. Domains act as structured areas of knowledge that facilitate connections between abstract concepts (target domains) and more concrete, experience-based concepts (source domains). Kövecses (2020) highlights domains as supraindividual, long-term knowledge structures that are stored in memory and activated during metaphorical reasoning.

At the domain level, metaphors are conceptualized through generic mappings that apply across a wide range of experiences and contexts. For instance, the metaphor BUSINESS IS WAR reflects a domain-level mapping that structures how people think about economic competition, challenges, and resilience. This broad metaphor encompasses various specific mappings, such as BUSINESS IS A BATTLE or BUSINESS IS MILITARY OPERATIONS, which provide more granular realizations of the overarching metaphor.

Kövecses (2020) distinguishes domains from frames by emphasizing their higher level of schematicity. While frames represent more context-bound realizations of metaphors, domains provide the overarching conceptual scaffolding that guides how individuals structure and interpret experiences. This distinction aligns with the broader aim of this research, which seeks to analyze BUSINESS metaphors at the domain level to uncover large-scale ideological narratives present in retail industry discourse.

Domain and Conceptual Metaphor

Lakoff & Johnson's (1980) foundational work on CMT introduced the idea of metaphor as a mapping between source and target domains. They argue that metaphors allow individuals to understand abstract, complex experiences by projecting elements from a more concrete, familiar domain. This process highlights how domains function as essential components in the conceptual system, shaping not only language but also perception and thought.

Expanding on this, Langacker (1987) introduces the concept of cognitive domains, which he defines as the mental spaces that structure linguistic meaning. Langacker posits that all predications occur within domains, suggesting that any area

of conceptualization can serve as a domain for metaphorical mapping. For example, the domain of BUILDING incorporates notions of structure, stability, and growth, facilitating metaphors such as THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS. This perspective underscores the flexibility and expansiveness of domains, reinforcing their role in metaphorical thought.

Sullivan (2013) refines this understanding by introducing the concept of metaphor input domains. Sullivan defines metaphor input domains as cognitive structures that contain schematic information used during metaphorical mapping. In this view, input domains are mental constructs that integrate multiple frames and provide the necessary conceptual material for metaphor creation. For example, in the metaphor BUSINESS IS WAR, the input domain of WAR includes elements such as conflict, strategy, and victory, which are systematically projected onto the domain of BUSINESS.

Sullivan's framework (2013) complements Kövecses' model by emphasizing the schematic richness of domains and their role in facilitating coherent mappings. This notion of metaphor input domains aligns with the present study's focus on identifying and analyzing source domains to understand how BUSINESS metaphors are constructed and reinforced in retail discourse.

Rationale for focusing on domain level in the current study

This research prioritizes the domain level because it provides a broad conceptual foundation that captures thematic and ideological patterns in economic discourse. By examining metaphors at this level, the study can trace overarching narratives that frame economic activities during the Covid-19 pandemic. The domain level allows for the identification of generic metaphors (e.g., BUSINESS IS WAR), which encapsulate recurring patterns of thought across different phases of economic disruption and recovery.

Focusing on the domain level also aligns with the study's aim of exploring the ideological implications of BUSINESS metaphors. Kövecses (2020)' model highlights how domain-level metaphors influence the conceptual landscape of discourse, shaping

public perceptions of economic resilience, competition, and survival. This level of analysis provides a macro-level perspective that is essential for understanding the broader ideological frameworks embedded in retail industry discourse.

Moreover, domain-level analysis enables the integration of Maalej's (2011) *Ideological Dimensions of Metaphor* (*which will be elaborated in detail in Section 2.5*) to dissect the ideological functions of metaphors at different conceptual stages. By grounding the analysis at the domain level, the research establishes a strong foundation for subsequent investigations into frame-level metaphors and their pragmatic implications.

2.3.3. Frame Level

Frames elaborate on domains by providing detailed roles and relationships within a given conceptual structure. In his development of frame semantics, Fillmore (1982) conceptualized frames as mental structures that organize experiences and provide context for interpreting linguistic meanings. Building on Fillmore's foundational work, Kövecses (2020) integrated frames into his multi-level view of conceptual metaphor, emphasizing their role in structuring specific aspects of domains. This section explores the nature of frames as cognitive structures and their relevance to frame-level metaphor analysis.

Frames as cognitive structures

Fillmore (1982) defines frames as:

“Any system of concepts related in such a way that to understand any one of them you have to understand the whole structure in which it fits; when one of the things in such a structure is introduced into a text, or into a conversation, all of the others are automatically made available” (p. 111).

This definition highlights the interconnected and holistic nature of frames. Frames are systems of related concepts that derive meaning from their relationships with other elements within the structure. For example, in the Commercial Transaction Frame, elements such as buyer, seller, goods, and money form an interdependent system, where each component's meaning is shaped by its interaction with the others.

In metaphor analysis, frames serve as mental blueprints that guide the mapping of source domain elements onto target domains. In the metaphor BUSINESS IS WAR, for instance, the War frame includes elements such as soldiers, strategy, battles, and victory, which correspond to employees, planning, competition, and market success in the target domain of BUSINESS.

Interdependence within frames

A critical feature of frames is the interdependence among their elements. Fillmore (1982) emphasizes that understanding a concept like *buying* necessitates grasping its connection to *selling*, *goods*, and *money*. This relational nature mirrors the frame level in Kövecses's (2020) metaphor theory, where interdependent relationships in the source domain are systematically transferred to the target domain.

For example, in the metaphor BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY in the current study, the elements travelers, waypoints, and destinations in the source domain correspond to stakeholders, project milestones, and goals in the target domain. The interdependence within the Journey Frame ensures that invoking one element (e.g., *reaching a waypoint*) activates the broader journey metaphor, reinforcing the coherence of the conceptual mapping.

Holistic understanding of frames

Fillmore's theory posits that comprehending any element within a frame requires an understanding of the entire frame. This holistic view is crucial for frame-level analysis in metaphor theory, where the metaphor's richness and depth emerge from the interplay of various frame elements.

For example, to fully grasp the metaphor BUSINESS IS WAR, one must engage with the entire War frame, including concepts such as tactics, resources, defense, and attack. Without this holistic perspective, metaphors may lose their ideological and cognitive significance, reducing the nuance of their application in discourse.

Automatic activation of frames

Another essential aspect of frames is their automatic activation during discourse. Fillmore (1982) suggests that introducing one component of a frame

triggers the activation of all related concepts. In the Commercial Transaction Frame, mentioning *selling* activates associated concepts like *buyer*, *money*, and *goods*.

This automatic activation aligns with the frame level in metaphor theory, where invoking a metaphorical frame activates interconnected source domain elements, facilitating complex mappings. For instance, in the metaphor BUSINESS IS A GAME, invoking *competition* triggers related concepts such as *rules*, *players*, and *strategies*, enriching the conceptualization of business operations.

Frames in Kövecses's Multi-level View

In Kövecses's (2020) multi-level framework, frames operate at the level where metaphors become context-bound and specific, elaborating on the broader mappings established at the domain level. Domains provide general conceptual structures, exemplified by the generic metaphor BUSINESS IS WAR, which branches into more specific metaphors such as BUSINESS IS A BATTLE and BUSINESS IS A STRUGGLE.

At the frame level, these specific metaphors are further construed into detailed, context-sensitive forms, reflecting how abstract conceptual mappings are realized in concrete discourse. For instance, in this study, the specific metaphor BUSINESS IS A BATTLE may manifest as the construed metaphor "*Suffering setbacks is receiving blows in a battle*", while BUSINESS IS A STRUGGLE can appear as "*Facing uncertainties is navigating through obstacles*".

In real-world discourse, these construed metaphors surface through metaphorical expressions that shape public narratives around economic events. For example, the expression *hit hard* in the example "*Retailers ... were hit hard by the pandemic*" (A.1) reflects the construed metaphor "*Suffering setbacks is receiving blows in a battle*", mapping setbacks in business onto physical confrontations. This expression stems from the specific metaphor BUSINESS IS A BATTLE, nested within the domain-level metaphor BUSINESS IS WAR.

Relevance to the present study

Frame-level analysis is critical to this study as it traces how broad conceptual

metaphors at the domain level are grounded in specific metaphorical expressions that permeate retail discourse. This granular focus allows for the examination of how metaphors shape public perceptions of BUSINESS during economic crises by reinforcing themes of resilience, competition, and survival.

For example: “Retailers ... were **hit hard** by the Covid-19 pandemic.” (A.1)

Metaphorical expression: *hit hard*

Domain level (Generic metaphor): BUSINESS IS WAR

(Specific metaphor): BUSINESS IS A BATTLE

Frame-level metaphor (construed metaphor): “*Suffering setbacks is receiving blows in a battle*”

Through Maalej’s (2011) ideological dimensions of metaphor (conceptual, cognitive, and pragmatic), this study investigates how frame-level metaphors reinforce ideological positions in economic discourse during the pandemic (*further elaborated in Section 2.5*).

In brief, frames serve as indispensable cognitive structures that enrich metaphor analysis by providing detailed, relational mappings within conceptual domains. This study leverages frames to explore the nuanced, context-bound realizations of BUSINESS metaphors in retail industry discourse. By focusing on frame-level analysis, the research uncovers the ideological underpinnings of metaphorical language, offering critical insights into how metaphors shape economic narratives during periods of crisis and recovery.

2.3.4. Interplay Between Domain and Frame Levels in Metaphor Construal

Kövecses (2020) presents a hierarchical framework that differentiates between domain and frame levels in metaphor construal, highlighting their distinct yet interconnected roles. This framework provides a nuanced approach to understanding how metaphors function across varying levels of schematicity, from broad conceptual patterns to context-specific elaborations. The interplay between domain and frame levels illustrates how metaphors are dynamic tools that adapt to different discourse contexts while maintaining underlying conceptual coherence.

At the domain level, metaphors function on a broad and abstract plane, establishing generalized mappings between source and target domains. Domains serve as propositional structures that organize meaning across multiple metaphorical expressions. For example, the domain metaphor AN ABSTRACT COMPLEX SYSTEM IS A PHYSICAL OBJECT reflects the conceptualization of abstract systems (e.g., *organizations* or *theories*) as physical entities, such as *buildings* (Kövecses, 2020). This domain-level metaphor can be elaborated through propositions such as:

THE CREATION OF THE SYSTEM IS THE PHYSICAL CREATION OF THE BUILDING;

THE STRUCTURE OF THE SYSTEM IS THE PHYSICAL STRUCTURE OF THE BUILDING;

THE PARTS OF THE SYSTEM ARE PARTS OF THE PHYSICAL OBJECT (BUILDING).

(P.67)

These broad mappings provide stable conceptual foundations that ensure metaphorical consistency across discourse. For instance, the metaphor BUSINESS IS A BUILDING conveys attributes such as structure, growth, and stability, which can be applied flexibly across various economic contexts.

In contrast, the frame level introduces a more detailed and context-specific layer of metaphorical construal. Frames operate within the broader structure of domains, elaborating on specific relationships, actions, and roles. At this level, metaphors emphasize dynamic processes and situational nuances rather than static conceptual mappings. For example, the frame-level metaphor THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SYSTEM IS BUILDING (as process) highlights the active and ongoing nature of creating or maintaining a system (Kövecses, 2020). Submetaphors such as LOGICAL SUPPORT IS PHYSICAL SUPPORT and THE STABILITY OF THE BUILDING IS THE STRENGTH OF PHYSICAL SUPPORT further refine the domain metaphor by focusing on particular aspects of the BUILDING schema.

A key feature of frame-level metaphors is their adaptability to specific contexts, allowing metaphors to evolve alongside discourse. This adaptability makes

frame-level analysis essential for capturing the fluidity of metaphors in real-world scenarios, particularly during periods of change or crisis.

The interplay between domain and frame levels highlights the hierarchical yet fluid nature of metaphorical construal. Domains provide the overarching conceptual framework, while frames introduce context-bound specificity, enabling metaphors to adapt to different communicative needs. This interaction ensures that metaphors retain coherence at the conceptual level while allowing for flexibility at the discourse level.

Illustrative example:

Extract: “I examine how retailers can **build** resilient, responsible businesses.”
(B.49)

Metaphorical expression: *build*

Domain level (Generic metaphor): BUSINESS IS EXPANSION

(Specific metaphor): BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION

Construal at Frame level: “*Building resilience is laying foundations*”

In this example, the domain-level metaphor BUSINESS IS EXPANSION reflects the overarching narrative of economic growth and renewal, while the specific metaphor BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION conceptualizes this growth as a structured, step-by-step process, drawing from the source domain of physical construction. The metaphorical expression *build* serves as a linguistic realization of this conceptual mapping, capturing the notion of resilience and responsibility in post-crisis business development.

At the frame level, the construed metaphor “*Building resilience is laying foundations*” elaborates this mapping by invoking the imagery of laying physical foundations, emphasizing the incremental and structural nature of fostering resilience. This construal reflects not only the conceptualization of economic recovery as physical construction but also highlights the tangible, foundational work necessary for sustained growth.

The interaction between the domain and frame levels in this example demonstrates how metaphors operate dynamically to convey both abstract economic

principles and the grounded, experiential aspects of business recovery. While the domain-level metaphor provides coherence and stability across discourse, frame-level construals introduce adaptability, enabling metaphors to address specific facets of economic challenges.

By analyzing metaphors through this dual-level approach, the study captures the nuanced ways in which metaphors shape economic discourse, highlighting the intricate relationship between broad conceptual mappings and detailed, context-sensitive realizations. This interplay underscores the significance of metaphors as both cognitive tools and linguistic strategies that reflect and construct economic realities during periods of crisis and recovery.

2.4. Framework for Analyzing Ideological Dimensions of Conceptual Metaphor

2.4.1. Definition of Ideology

This study adopts Van Dijk's (1998, p. 127) definition of ideology, which views it as "a system of socially shared knowledge, beliefs, and values within a society". According to Van Dijk, ideologies are collective constructs, distinct from individual memories or personal opinions, and are shaped by societal interactions. This definition is particularly relevant for analyzing metaphors in the context of business during the Covid-19 pandemic, as it aligns with the study's focus on how collective beliefs, influenced by socio-economic conditions, shape business practices and economic discourse.

Fowler (1991, p. 92) offers a broader, neutral perspective, defining ideology as "the ways in which people order and justify their lives," indicating that ideologies help organize individuals' understanding of the world. Fairclough (1995, p. 44), however, emphasizes the political aspect of ideology, describing it as "the representation of 'the world' from the perspective of a particular interest," highlighting power dynamics. Thompson (2013) echoes this by suggesting that ideology serves power relations, with Simpson (1993) adding that language reinforces dominant ideologies.

Semino (2008, p. 90), in contrast, takes a cognitive and socially constructed

approach, defining ideology as “the combination of different parts of long-term mental representations of ‘reality,’ which will be socially shared by the members of particular groups.” This view emphasizes the evolving nature of ideologies shaped by group-specific cognitive representations.

While these perspectives provide valuable insights, Van Dijk (1998)’s definition allows for a broader and more inclusive understanding of how ideologies shape economic and business discourse. This approach aligns with the study’s objective to explore how metaphors reflect and reinforce societal norms and collective beliefs in the retail industry during the pandemic, influencing business practices and public perceptions.

2.4.2. Ideological Dimensions of Metaphor: Conceptual, Cognitive, and Pragmatic Levels

In this study, Maalej’s framework (2011) of the ideological dimensions of metaphor is applied, dividing the analysis into three key levels: conceptual, cognitive, and pragmatic. These levels offer a structured approach for understanding the role of metaphors in shaping ideologies, particularly within retail industry discourse.

At the conceptual level, Maalej (2011) emphasizes that metaphors provide coherence to discourse by structuring abstract target domains (TD) around the properties of source domains (SD). Metaphors create stability by selecting specific features of the SD to structure the TD. This view aligns with Turner’s (1991) assertion that metaphors imbue elements of the TD with the structure of the SD, thereby making abstract ideas more understandable and relatable. Metaphors in this regard help in making the intangible tangible, by simplifying complex concepts into more familiar frameworks.

For example, Maalej highlights the metaphor AN ABSTRACT CONCEPT IS A JOURNEY (Maalej, 2011, p. 119), which structures abstract ideas like freedom or democracy in terms of a journey. The journey metaphor represents the progress towards abstract goals, such as *future*, *democracy*, *free markets*, positioning these abstract concepts as achievable milestones. The destination in this metaphor signifies

the realization of these goals, making them more relatable to the audience. The metaphor is not merely an artistic or rhetorical device, but a structure that influences how the target concept is perceived and acted upon.

At the cognitive level, Maalej (2011) argues that metaphors focus attention on certain aspects of the TD while downplaying others, shaping how individuals perceive and interpret reality. This “distribution of attention” process (p. 108) is crucial in understanding the ideological power of metaphors. Talmy (2000) and Lakoff & Johnson (1980) argue that metaphors select and highlight features, often obscuring alternative interpretations. In the case of AN ABSTRACT CONCEPT IS A JOURNEY, this metaphor emphasizes the idea of progress and ease of achievement, thus framing societal development as straightforward and inevitable. This selective attention steers individuals toward interpreting societal progress as linear and achievable, while overshadowing the complexities or challenges involved.

Finally, at the pragmatic level, Maalej (2011) discusses how metaphors serve as persuasive tools that influence behavior and beliefs. This level focuses on how metaphors are used strategically to affect the beliefs, knowledge, and attitudes of the audience. According to Lakoff & Turner (2009), metaphors possess several persuasive assets, including their capacity to structure understanding, evaluate ideas, and provide options for interpreting the world. At this level, the AN ABSTRACT CONCEPT IS A JOURNEY metaphor functions as a tool for persuasion, reinforcing the belief that achieving abstract ideals such as freedom or democracy is not only possible but inevitable. The familiarity of the journey metaphor, combined with its automatic and unconscious nature, makes it a particularly potent ideological tool.

In Maalej’s framework (2011), the metaphorical cluster AN ABSTRACT CONCEPT IS A JOURNEY has powerful ideological implications. By repeating the journey metaphor in political discourse, the metaphor stabilizes meaning and promotes a specific worldview: societal progress is an inevitable, linear path toward desirable ends. This strategic use of metaphor serves not only to structure the understanding of abstract concepts but also to embed particular ideological beliefs about societal change and progress.

The pragmatic dimension of Maalej's framework (2011) underscores the role of metaphors in shaping public discourse and influencing political behavior. The metaphor of AN ABSTRACT CONCEPT IS A JOURNEY, when repeated across political rhetoric, serves as an ideological tool that emphasizes the ease of societal transformation, reducing the resistance to political agendas that align with this vision of progress.

2.5. Integration of CMT, Multi-level View of Conceptual Metaphor and Ideological Dimensions of Metaphor

This section presents the integrated framework used in this study, combining Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003), Kövecses' (2020) Multi-level View of Conceptual Metaphor, and Maalej's (2011) Ideological Dimensions of Metaphor to analyze the ideological implications embedded in metaphors of BUSINESS within retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. This combined framework provides a comprehensive analytical tool that allows for the examination of metaphors at different levels of abstraction and their role in shaping ideological constructs in retail industry discourse.

Rationale for Integration

The integration of CMT (*See 2.2*), Kövecses' Multi-level View of Conceptual Metaphor (*See 2.3*), and Maalej's Ideological Dimensions of Metaphor (*See 2.4.2*) is crucial for addressing the research aim of investigating the ideological implications embedded in metaphors of BUSINESS in the retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. CMT, developed by Lakoff & Johnson (1980, 2003), is foundational in this study because it allows for the identification and categorization of metaphors, illustrating how abstract concepts such as BUSINESS are understood through more concrete experiences. It enables the understanding of how metaphors influence human thought, structuring reasoning not only in language but also in action and decision-making. However, while CMT offers valuable insights into the cognitive and linguistic dimensions of metaphor, it lacks a focus on the ideological implications embedded in these metaphors.

To address this gap, Kövecses' (2020) Multi-level View and Maalej's (2011) Ideological Dimensions of Metaphor are incorporated. Kövecses' framework provides a deeper examination of metaphors at both the domain and frame levels, which are necessary for understanding how abstract concepts are conceptualized and framed in economic discourse. Meanwhile, Maalej's ideological dimensions offer the tools to analyze the ideological functions of metaphors at three levels: conceptual, cognitive, and pragmatic. This multi-dimensional approach enriches the analysis by adding an ideological layer that goes beyond cognition and examines how metaphors reinforce dominant socio-economic ideologies, particularly in the context of the pandemic.

Together, these frameworks enable the study to comprehensively examine metaphors from identification to their ideological functions, providing a nuanced analysis of how BUSINESS metaphors influence public perceptions of economic realities during the pandemic.

Integration of Frameworks in Relation to the Research Questions of the Study

The integration of CMT (1980, 2003), Kövecses' Multi-level View (2020), and Maalej's Ideological Dimensions (2011) directly addresses the study's research questions.

For the first research question, "*What source domains are mapped onto the target domain of BUSINESS in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic?*", CMT is central in identifying metaphorical expressions and categorizing them into source domains. Expressions such as *hit hard* ("*Retailers ... hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic ...*", A.1) and *fighting* ("*... all fighting for the consumer's attention*", A.324) are categorized under the specific source domains BATTLE and STRUGGLE, respectively. These are then grouped under the broader generic source domain of WAR, providing the conceptual foundation for how BUSINESS is understood as conflict in both the crisis and recovery phases of the pandemic.

The second research question, "*How are the conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS conceptualized and framed in retail industry discourse?*", is addressed by CMT through the distinction between generic metaphors (e.g., BUSINESS IS WAR),

and specific metaphors (e.g., BUSINESS IS A BATTLE). These generic metaphors offer a broad conceptual framework for understanding business struggles, while specific metaphors further elaborate on those struggles by framing economic challenges in more concrete and detailed terms. This distinction allows for the study to explore how business struggles are conceptualized across different levels of abstraction.

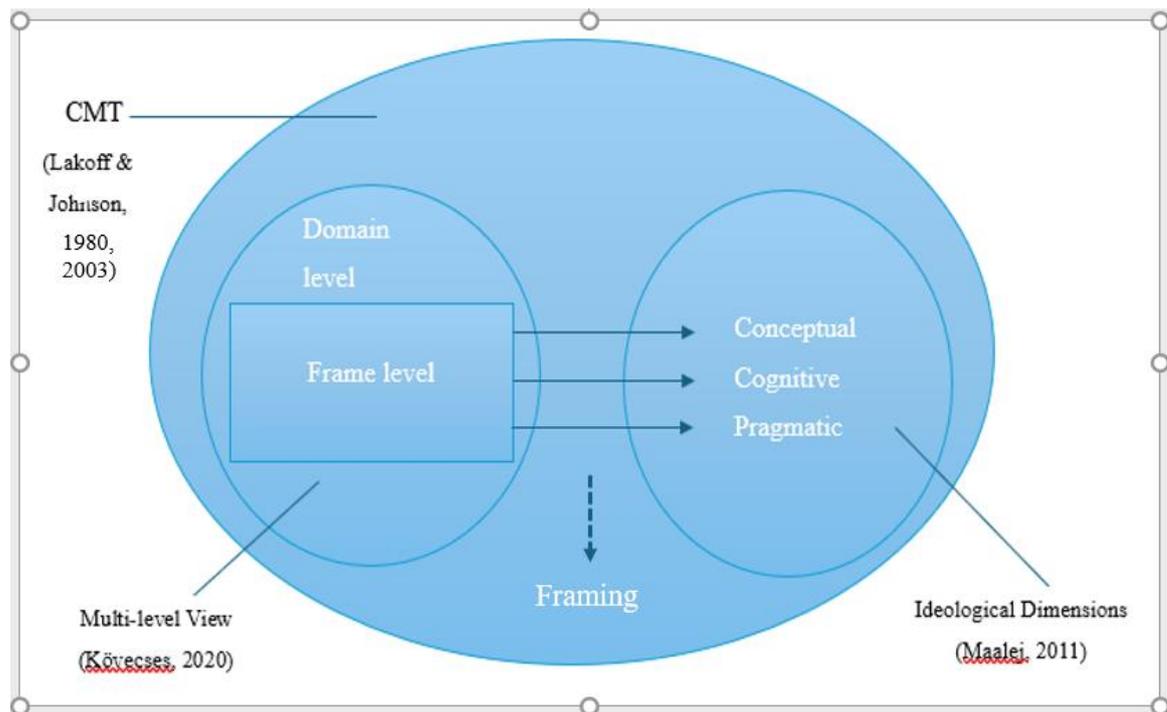
The third research question, “*How do conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS convey ideological implications in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic?*”, is answered by combining Kövecses’ Multi-level View and Maalej’s Ideological Dimensions. At the domain level, both generic and specific metaphors contribute to shaping the broader ideological landscape of retail industry discourse. At the frame level, metaphors are further construed into detailed, context-sensitive forms. For example, the metaphor BUSINESS IS A BATTLE is construed as “*Suffering setbacks is receiving blows in a battle,*” providing a vivid representation of business adversity as part of a larger economic conflict.

This is where Maalej’s (2011) ideological dimensions come into play. Maalej’s framework adds a crucial layer to the analysis by evaluating the ideological functions of metaphors. The conceptual dimension examines how metaphors structure abstract economic ideas, the cognitive dimension focuses on which aspects of those ideas are foregrounded or backgrounded, and the pragmatic dimension assesses how metaphors justify certain practices and reinforce ideologies.

The diagram below illustrates the integration of these frameworks:

Diagram 2.1

The integrated framework of CMT, Multi-level View of conceptual metaphor (Domain and Frame levels) and Ideological Dimensions of Metaphor



This diagram illustrates the integration of three frameworks in analyzing conceptual metaphors. CMT provides the foundation for identifying and categorizing metaphors. Kövecses’ Multi-level View refines this by analyzing metaphors at the domain and frame levels, focusing on how metaphors are framed in specific contexts. Maalej’s Ideological Dimensions extend the analysis by examining the ideological functions of metaphors, addressing conceptual coherence, cognitive salience, and pragmatic justification. The arrows show how frame-level metaphors interact with ideological implications, demonstrating how metaphors reflect socio-economic realities.

Illustrative example:

Extract: “Retailers plays a pivotal role in the U.S. economy - and while they’ve have been **hit hard** by the Covid-19 pandemic, the sector has adapted through innovation”. (A.1)

Metaphorical expression: *hit hard*

Mappings at two conceptual levels:

- DM: BUSINESS IS WAR (Generic metaphor)

BUSINESS IS A BATTLE (Specific metaphor)

- FM: *Suffering setbacks is receiving blows in a battle*

Ideological Dimensions

Conceptual level: The metaphor structures economic setbacks as physical blows in a battle, reinforcing the view of business as a site of conflict and survival. This creates coherence by aligning economic struggles with the narrative of external attack. It promotes the ideology that setbacks are external forces (e.g., the pandemic), positioning businesses as victims of unavoidable adversity.

Cognitive level: The metaphor directs attention to losses and hardships, framing economic downturns as severe and damaging. The imagery of being *hit hard* intensifies the perception of vulnerability and crisis. This focuses public and policy attention on immediate survival, reinforcing competitive ideologies where only the strongest endure.

Pragmatic level: By framing setbacks as battle wounds, the metaphor justifies aggressive responses such as layoffs or cost-cutting, portraying them as necessary to stay in the fight. It sustains the ideologies that emphasize resilience, competition, and aggressive strategies for economic survival.

2.6. Previous Studies on Conceptual Metaphors in Economic News Discourse

This section reviews existing literature on conceptual metaphors in economic news discourse, highlighting various perspectives and methods. By examining these studies, the researcher identifies gaps that shape the direction of this thesis. The review provides a foundation for understanding current research and justifies the need for further investigation.

Although there is no clear classification system for these studies due to overlapping research objectives, the literature can be organized into key themes.

One theme explores the prevalence of metaphors in economic news discourse, with contributions from scholars such as Boers (2000), White & Herrea (2007), Koller (2004), De los Ríos (2010), Urbonaitė & Šeškauskienė (2007), Bratoz (2004), and Cai & Deignan (2019).

Another focus is on the functions of metaphors, examined by Boers & Demecheeler (1997), White (1997, 2003), Eubanks (1999), Koller (2004), Smith (1995), Skorczynska (2012), Skorczynska & Deignan (2006), Charteris-Black & Ennis (2001), and Charteris-Black & Musolff (2003).

Research approaches applied to the study of metaphors form another important area of investigation. This includes studies by Charteris-Black (2004), Charteris-Black & Ennis (2001), Cesiri & Colaci (2011), Muelas Gil (2016, 2019), Partington (1995), Lan & MacGregor (2009), Cai & Deignan (2019), Herteg (2015), Silaški (2012), Cardini (2014), Arrese & Vara-Miguel (2016), and Wang & Chen (2013).

By organizing the literature around these themes, this section provides a structured understanding of conceptual metaphor studies in economic news discourse and highlights areas that require further exploration.

2.6.1. Pervasiveness of Metaphor in Economic News Discourse

It is widely believed that economic news discourse is heavily metaphorical (McCloskey, 1983; Telibaşa, 2015). Evidence for this can be seen in the frequent use of metaphorical expressions to describe the economy (*e.g., growth, depression*) and economic organizations (*e.g., parent company, sister company*). Inanimate metaphors are often used to describe market movements as animals (*e.g., bear market, bull market*) or inflation as a horse (*e.g., galloping inflation, trotting inflation*). Other common metaphorical mappings include business as war (*e.g., advertising campaign, corporate raiders, market competition*) and business as sports (*e.g., an outsider, a stalemate, key players*).

One significant task carried out by linguists would be the identification of the most frequently used conceptual metaphors in economic news discourse. This is shown in the table below:

Table 2.3

Most frequently used conceptual metaphors in economic news discourse

Metaphors	Authors
The WAR metaphor	Boers & Demecheleer (1997)
	Koller (2004)
	Cai & Deignan (2019)
	Kovács (2006)
	Charteris-Black & Musolff (2003)
	Cesiri & Colaci (2011)
	Muelas Gil (2019); Hu & Xu (2017)
	Eubanks & Eubanks (2000)

Metaphors	Authors
The ORGANISM metaphor	Wang & Chen (2013)
	Charteris-Black (2004)
	Maestre (2000)
	Charteris-Black & Ennis (2001)
	Andryukhina (2021)
	Muelas Gil (2019)
The PEOPLE/HUMAN BEING metaphor	Charteris-Black (2004)
	Cardini (2014)
	Velasco Sacristán (2005)
	Telibasa (2015)
	Muelas Gil (2019)
The HEALTH metaphor	Boers & Demecheleer (1997)
	Urbonaitė & Šeškauskienė (2007)
	Boers (2000)
	Silaški (2012)
	Charteris-Black & Musolff (2003)
The MACHINE / MECHANISM metaphor	Skorczyńska & Deignan (2006)
	White (1997)
	Telibasa (2015)
	Andryukhina (2021)
The ANIMAL metaphor	Charteris-Black (2004)
	Cardini (2014)
	Cesiri & Colaci (2011)
	Muelas Gil (2019)
The HUMAN BODY metaphor	Kovács (2006)
	Telibasa (2015)
	Cesiri & Colaci (2011)
	Muelas Gil (2019)
	Cardini (2014)

The table highlights the extensive use of metaphors in economic discourse, reflecting how language shapes perceptions of economic concepts.

The dominance of the WAR metaphor underscores its central role in framing economic competition as conflict, with frequent references to strategies, battles, and victories. The ORGANISM metaphor conceptualizes economic entities as living systems, suggesting growth, interdependence, and vulnerability. Similarly, the HUMAN BEING metaphor bridges abstract economic ideas with human experiences, making economic discourse more accessible and relatable.

The HEALTH metaphor reinforces the idea of economic stability or crisis, portraying economies as entities that can thrive or ail. The MACHINE metaphor presents economic systems as structured and efficient, emphasizing mechanical precision and predictability, while the ANIMAL metaphor highlights instinct and volatility in market behaviors. The HUMAN BODY metaphor draws attention to the interconnected nature of economic systems, likening them to physiological processes.

While metaphors are undeniably pervasive in economic news discourse, providing valuable insights into how economic concepts are understood and represented (McCloskey, 1983; Telibaşa, 2015), there are significant limitations in the existing research. One major limitation lies in the fact that while the BUSINESS metaphor has been explored in economic discourse (e.g., Maestre, 2000; Kovács, 2006; Liendo, 2001), it has not been a primary focus of metaphor research. These studies have touched upon the metaphorical representations of business but have not fully examined the depth and breadth of its conceptualization across different economic contexts. This gap in the literature emphasizes the need for a more comprehensive exploration of how BUSINESS metaphors function in economic news discourse.

Another limitation is that despite the extensive use of metaphor in various sectors of economic discourse, there is a notable lack of targeted research focusing specifically on the retail industry. Retail industry discourse, with its distinct characteristics, has not received the same level of attention as broader economic sectors. While general economic discourse has been extensively studied, there has yet to be a study that explicitly targets and analyzes metaphor use within the retail sector. This lack of research provides an opportunity for this study to contribute unique insights into the metaphorical representations within the retail industry, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic, a period that significantly affected retail businesses worldwide.

2.6.2. Functions of Metaphor in Economic News Discourse

Communicative Function

The communicative function of metaphor in economic news discourse plays a crucial role in shaping opinions and influencing judgments, particularly during times of crisis. Charteris-Black (2004) emphasizes metaphor's persuasive power, describing it as an incongruous linguistic representation used to reflect speakers' intentions and sway audiences. Cai & Deignan (2019) further highlight that metaphors reveal their full communicative potential when analyzed in specific contexts, illustrating how they shape discourse beyond simple conceptualization.

Boers & Demecheleer (1997) demonstrate this in their analysis of PATH, HEALTH, and WAR metaphors across English, Dutch, and French financial publications. Their findings reveal that metaphorical expressions such as *slimming down* or describing organizations as *too heavy* frame economic actions, such as layoffs, in relatable health terms, reinforcing the desirability of efficiency. Similarly, expressions like "*mass-firings left a leaner and more efficient corporate America*" leverage health-related imagery to justify corporate restructuring.

Skorczynska & Deignan (2006) extend this by examining British and Lithuanian political and economic discourse, affirming the widespread use of the HEALTH metaphor to depict economic issues as diseases or ailments. Wang & Chen (2013) show how metaphors like ECONOMIC CRISIS IS A LIVING ORGANISM shape readers' perceptions of the 2008 financial crisis, influencing public understanding through vivid imagery of *hitting* and *injuring*. Their comparative analysis between British and Russian news reveals that Russian economic metaphors often reflect more pragmatic, evaluative stances.

Cesiri & Colaci (2011) and Cardini (2014) explore metaphors in publications like *The Economist* and *Der Spiegel*, identifying metaphors such as CRISIS IS AGGRESSION and FAILURE IN THE ECONOMY IS AN AILMENT. Metaphorical expressions such as "*The crisis will ... disruptive, however,*" and "*... the financial crisis hit*" depict economic downturns through violent imagery, reinforcing urgency and severity. Additionally, the spread of economic issues is framed as a contagion,

with expressions like “... *mutated into a global crisis*” drawing parallels between economic collapse and disease.

Cardini’s (2014) analysis further emphasizes metaphors like ECONOMY IS A HUMAN BEING, portraying economies with human-like attributes such as vulnerability or strength. His study of *The Economist* and *The International Economy* reveals how metaphorical frames simplify complex economic concepts, aligning with earlier work by Charteris-Black (2004).

The consistent use of metaphors such as WAR, HEALTH, and ORGANISM across crises suggests their vital role in economic discourse. However, while metaphors of crisis have been extensively studied, the metaphorization of BUSINESS in economic news, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic, remains underexplored. Limited works by Maestre (2000), Kovács (2006), and Liendo (2001) touch upon BUSINESS metaphors, indicating a gap in understanding how metaphors shape perceptions of industries during global crises.

This research aims to address this gap by examining how the retail industry is framed metaphorically in economic news discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic, drawing on the communicative function of metaphor to reveal deeper insights into how businesses navigate and conceptualize crisis.

Ideological Function

The ideological function of metaphor in economic news discourse highlights how metaphors shape perceptions by emphasizing or concealing certain aspects of economic phenomena, reflecting the judgments and ideological views of their creators (Charteris-Black, 2004; López & Llopis, 2010; Silaški, 2012; Cai & Deignan, 2019; Kheovichai, 2015; Muelas Gil, 2019). This function plays a key role in constructing social and political realities (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Charteris-Black (2004) demonstrates how financial reporting in *The Economist* uses metaphors to establish authority. Animate metaphors, such as THE ECONOMY IS AN ORGANISM, project expertise and certainty through expressions such as *growth*, *decay*, and *healthy*, positioning the writer as an analytical expert. In contrast, inanimate

metaphors, such as THE MARKET IS A FUNFAIR (*swing, slide, and rollercoaster*), reflect uncertainty and position the writer as a neutral observer.

Muelas Gil (2019) extends this by analyzing metaphors in politically diverse newspapers in England and Spain. He shows that Left, Center, and Right-leaning publications use metaphors to shape readers' perceptions of economic events, with Left-leaning papers emphasizing negative metaphors (e.g., CRISIS IS A CONTAINER) and Right-leaning papers favoring positive metaphors (e.g., MORE IS UP). This reflects how metaphors align with political ideologies.

Silaški (2012) explores corporate discourse, revealing how metaphors like SLENDERNESS draw on gendered ideals to justify downsizing. The expression "... corporate America's *downsizing diet*" equate organizational efficiency with physical fitness, framing layoffs as necessary for corporate health. This metaphor reflects societal values of discipline and sacrifice, reinforcing corporate ideologies.

Hayes (2004) analyzes The Times and The Financial Times, showing how metaphors *turbulence* and *turmoil* frame financial crises as meteorological or social upheavals, evoking emotional responses and guiding public interpretation. These metaphors shape the narrative of economic instability by linking financial events to natural disasters or social unrest.

While existing studies reveal how metaphors reflect ideologies in economic news, there is limited focus on conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS during global crises. Much of the research centers on financial markets or economic policy, with few attentions given to retail industries. The Covid-19 pandemic offers a unique context to explore how BUSINESS metaphors frame resilience, survival, and adaptation, filling a significant gap in the intersection of metaphor, ideology, and crisis communication.

2.6.3. BUSINESS Metaphors in the Existing Studies

Despite the extensive use of metaphors in economic news discourse (*see section 2.6.1*), research specifically on BUSINESS metaphors within this discourse remains limited. However, existing studies, particularly those by Maestre (2000) and Kovács (2006), provide valuable insights into how metaphors shape public perception

of business dynamics. These metaphors make abstract economic concepts - such as *market movements*, *financial stability*, and *corporate strategies* - more accessible by mapping them onto familiar domains like *war*, *health*, and *journey*. This section synthesizes findings from key studies, presenting a detailed overview of the metaphor categories, common expressions, and implications in economic news discourse.

Table 2.4*Summary of BUSINESS metaphors in economic news discourse*

BUSINESS metaphors	Common metaphorical expressions	Implications	Sources
BUSINESS IS WAR / A FIGHT BUSINESS IS RIVALRY BUSINESS IS COMPETITION	battlefield, firing line, crossfire, attack, fighting, tactic, recruit, enemies, defense, hit	Frames business as combative, emphasizing competition and market dominance	Kovács (2006) Maestre (2000) Liendo (2001) Koller (2004) Greco (2009) Vasiloaia et al (2011) Sun & Jiang (2014) Jendrych (2017) Skorczynska (2012) Lăzărescu (2011)
BUSINESS IS A GAME/SPORT BUSINESS IS GAMBLING	playing the game, win-win, stake, bet, win, roll the dice	Portrays business success as based on strategic moves and competitive skill	Kovács (2006) Greco (2009) Jendrych (2017) Skorczynska (2012) Lăzărescu (2011)
BUSINESS AS A HUMAN / HUMAN BODY	healthy economy, ailing market, economic symptoms, remedy	Makes economic conditions relatable by linking to physical health concepts	Kovács (2006) Jendrych (2017) Skorczynska (2012)

BUSINESS metaphors	Common metaphorical expressions	Implications	Sources
BUSINESS IS AN ORGANISM	business ecosystem, market evolution, adaptation	Emphasizes the adaptive nature of businesses, likening them to living organisms	Maestre (2000) Greco (2009)
BUSINESS IS AN ANIMAL	predators, jungle, pack	Suggests business as a survival game, highlighting competitive instincts	Jendrych (2017) Greco (2009) Lăzărescu (2011)
BUSINESS IS HEALTH	healthy economy, economic symptoms, cure	Emphasizes the notion of business health, focusing on treatment and recovery as integral to business resilience	Jendrych (2017) Lăzărescu (2011)
BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY BUSINESS IS TRAVEL BUSINESS IS EXPLORATION	pathway, advance, go for, set for, move, drive, pave ways	Emphasizes resilience, framing business as a journey through challenges	Maestre (2000)
BUSINESS IS A MARRIAGE	merger as marriage, alliance, partnership	Frames business mergers as intimate partnerships, emphasizing mutual commitment	Kovács (2006)
BUSINESS IS THEATRE/CINEMA /CONCERT	star player, leading role, perform	Suggests business as performative, focusing on reputation and public perception	Kovács (2006)
BUSINESS IS DANCING	dance with the market, rhythmic changes	Frames business as adaptable and coordinated, responsive to market movements	Kovács (2006)

BUSINESS metaphors	Common metaphorical expressions	Implications	Sources
BUSINESS IS A PHYSICAL PHENOMENON	liquidity, fresh, overheated, pressure	Highlights tangible impacts of economic activities, treating business as subject to forces	Maestre (2000)
BUSINESS IS MEDICINE	cure, remedy, therapy	Suggests business issues as ailments that can be 'treated' or 'healed'	Jendrych (2017)
BUSINESS IS COLOUR	green products, blue-chip stocks	Uses color imagery to describe business attributes and market stability	Jendrych (2017)
BUSINESS IS MECHANISM / MACHINERY	tick over, daily grind, hammer the market, fuel to the fire	Depicts business as a machine that requires maintenance and smooth operation	Lăzărescu (2011)
BUSINESS IS A PLANT	seed funding, root of success	Emphasizes organic growth and foundational aspects of business	Lăzărescu (2011)
BUSINESS IS A SHIP	steering the company, navigating rough waters	Frames business as something that needs guidance and steady leadership	Lăzărescu (2011)

The WAR metaphor, widely used by Kovács (2006), Maestre (2000), and others, frames business as a battleground, with expressions such as *battlefield*, *firing line*, and *attack*. These expressions strongly convey competition and market dominance, underscoring the combative nature of business. This metaphor, often linked to competition, survival, and aggression, dominates business discourse, especially in times of crisis. It's crucial to note, though, that while this framing emphasizes competitiveness, it may obscure the collaborative and strategic partnerships that drive many businesses, especially in times of recovery. The WAR metaphor does not fully acknowledge the complex relationships that go beyond rivalry, which are also vital to understanding business dynamics in contemporary markets.

The GAME/SPORT metaphor, identified by Kovács (2006) and Greco (2009), conceptualizes business as a competitive game, with expressions like *stake*, *bet*, and *win*. These expressions emphasize that business success depends on skillful strategy and calculated risks. While this metaphor adds a sense of fairness and calculated skill to business operations, it can fail to address the unequal playing fields created by economic disparities. GAME/SPORT metaphors focus on strategic moves within structured boundaries, yet they tend to overlook the external forces, such as regulation or economic policies, that shape the business environment.

The HUMAN BODY and HEALTH metaphors, explored by Kovács (2006) and Jendrych (2017), make economic conditions more relatable by linking them to physical health concepts like *healthy economy* and *economic symptoms*. These metaphors simplify complex economic phenomena, framing the economy as something that can recover from a crisis, much like a person recovering from illness. However, this metaphor risks oversimplifying the recovery process by presenting it as a straightforward healing process, when in reality, economic recovery is often much more multifaceted, involving systemic changes and structural reform.

The ORGANISM metaphor, used by Maestre (2000) and Greco (2009), emphasizes adaptation and resilience (e.g., *business ecosystem*, *market evolution*), suggesting that businesses, like living organisms, evolve and adapt to changing

conditions. This metaphor provides a nuanced view of business survival but may overlook the competitive realities that hinder many businesses' ability to evolve. While it effectively conveys the need for businesses to adapt, it underplays the role of external pressures, such as economic inequality and market monopolies, which can restrict certain businesses from effectively adapting.

The JOURNEY metaphor, as mentioned by Maestre (2000), frames business as a progression through obstacles and challenges. Expressions such as *pathway* and *advance* suggest that businesses overcome setbacks on a path toward growth. Yet, the JOURNEY metaphor can be overly optimistic, framing business development as a linear and inevitable process. In reality, businesses often face setbacks that aren't easily surmountable, and this metaphor doesn't adequately address the complexities of economic systems that hinder such straightforward progress.

Furthermore, metaphors like MARRIAGE, THEATRE/CINEMA and DANCING offer additional perspectives. For example, the MARRIAGE metaphor (*merger as marriage*) emphasizes the emotional and relational aspects of corporate partnerships. This metaphor, while highlighting commitment, may inadvertently oversimplify the often-transactional nature of mergers and acquisitions. THEATRE/CINEMA metaphors (*leading role, star player*) focus on public image and reputation, portraying business as a performative act. While this is a valid perspective, it can obscure the internal workings of businesses, reducing complex organizational dynamics to outward performances. DANCING, with expressions like *dance with the market*, emphasizes the need for adaptability, but it also risks oversimplifying the constant flux and unpredictability of the market.

Other metaphors PHYSICAL PHENOMENON, MEDICINE, and COLOUR shift the focus towards tangible aspects of business. For example, PHYSICAL PHENOMENON (*pressure*) and MEDICINE (*cure*) frame business challenges in terms of forces that can be treated or balanced, thus simplifying the response to economic difficulties. This perspective can downplay the complexities of the issues, such as the political, social, and economic factors that often influence business outcomes.

Similarly, COLOUR metaphors, such as *green products*, bring attention to ethical considerations in business, but they may inadvertently focus too much on trends, such as environmental sustainability, without addressing deeper systemic changes that might be required.

The MECHANISM, PLANT, and SHIP metaphors bring in structural perspectives, emphasizing stability, growth, and guidance. MECHANISM (*daily grind*) underscores the operational side of business, but can obscure the dynamic, human elements that contribute to business success. PLANT metaphors (*root of success*) imply organic growth, while SHIP metaphors (*navigating rough waters*) highlight the need for steady leadership. These metaphors are insightful, yet they don't account for the role of external conditions that shape business operations, such as economic policy or global crises like the Covid-19 pandemic.

In conclusion, while these metaphors offer valuable insights into business dynamics, their application often reduces the complexity of economic activities to a limited set of ideas. Metaphors WAR and GAME can overly emphasize competition, while metaphors HEALTH and JOURNEY might oversimplify economic recovery. Future research should explore a broader set of metaphors, especially those that highlight cooperation, collaboration, and systemic economic challenges. This critical analysis encourages a deeper understanding of the limitations and implications of the metaphors that dominate business discourse.

2.6.4. Methodology of Conceptual Metaphor Research in Economic News Discourse

Research on conceptual metaphors in economic news discourse employs two primary methodologies: the lexical approach and the corpus-based method. These methods are instrumental in identifying, classifying, and analyzing metaphors, offering insights into the conceptual and ideological frameworks underpinning economic texts.

2.6.4.1. Lexical Approach

The lexical approach relies on researchers' intuition to identify metaphorical

expressions through dictionaries, thesauri, and existing language knowledge (Kövecses, 2008; Kövecses et al., 2019; Semino, 2017). Linguistic expressions are grouped into source domains (concrete concepts) and target domains (abstract concepts), forming hypothetical conceptual pairings (A is B). The Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) developed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007) remains the most widely used method for metaphor identification, involving a step-by-step comparison of basic and contextual meanings of words.

However, this approach faces criticism for its subjectivity and reliance on researchers' intuitions (Sinclair, 1991; Stefanowitsch, 2007). Llopis & Lopez (2010) argue that the method lacks empirical rigor, as it is often shaped by analysts' personal language experience rather than objective data. This top-down approach risks inconsistencies and limits replicability.

2.6.4.2. Corpus-based Method

The corpus-based method offers a more empirical, bottom-up approach to metaphor identification by analyzing large collections of economic texts. This method enables researchers to detect metaphorical patterns systematically and avoid over-reliance on intuition. It has been widely applied by scholars in economic metaphor research (Boers & Demecheleer, 1997; Charteris-Black, 2000; Skorczynska & Deignan, 2006; Muelas Gil, 2019).

(a) Corpus compilation

Researchers often compile their own corpora, drawing from economic journals and newspapers to study metaphor use in specific contexts (Deignan, 2008). This allows for a more focused analysis of crisis-related metaphors. For example, De los Ríos (2010), Cardini (2014), and Wang & Chen (2013) built corpora from financial publications like *The Economist* and *Financial Times* to examine metaphors framing the 2008 financial crisis.

Charteris-Black & Musolff (2003) analyzed 25,017 words on European trade, while Cardini (2014) compiled corpora of 49,740 and 50,317 words, highlighting the trend of using smaller corpora for in-depth metaphor analysis.

This approach provides rich contextual data, allowing researchers to uncover how journalists shape crisis narratives through metaphor.

(b) Quantitative analysis

Quantitative corpus analysis relies on software to automate metaphor identification and frequency analysis. One common method is the use of wordlists, which extract frequent words and phrases indicative of metaphorical patterns. For example, Cesiri & Colaci (2011) employed WordSmith to identify recurrent terms such as *crisis*, *inflation*, and *recession* in economic texts. A second tool is the concordance function, which displays words in context and allows researchers to assess their metaphorical use. Lan & MacGregor (2009) examined color metaphors such as *in the red* using WordSmith, while Cai & Deignan (2019) applied Wmatrix to investigate metaphors of damage and destruction in economic discourse. A further technique is lemmatization, whereby tools such as #Lancsbox retrieve variations of key terms by analyzing root forms (*e.g.*, *invest* for *investment* and *investing*) (Muelas Gil, 2019). Collectively, these automated methods significantly reduce labor while ensuring comprehensive data coverage, thereby providing a quantitative foundation for metaphor analysis.

(c) Manual metaphor identification

Despite the advantages of automation, manual metaphor identification remains essential for nuanced interpretation. Researchers apply MIP or Metaphoric Pattern Analysis to concordance lines, verifying metaphors by manually reading and classifying texts (Philip, 2012; Muelas Gil, 2019). For example, Muelas Gil (2019) manually reviewed texts multiple times to ensure no metaphor was overlooked; Cardini (2014) and Andryukhina (2021) argue that manual reading allows for detecting extended metaphors that span larger portions of text.

Additionally, researchers consult experts and native speakers to verify metaphor classifications (Skorczyńska & Deignan, 2006; Arrese & Vara-Miguel, 2016), simulating general audience perspectives and reducing researcher bias.

(d) Qualitative analysis of metaphors

After quantitative identification, qualitative analysis interprets metaphorical patterns to reveal how they function in discourse. This phase uncovers the ideological, evaluative, and persuasive roles of metaphors, showing how they shape economic narratives (Charteris-Black, 2004; López & Llopis, 2010).

López & Llopis (2010) compared metaphorical patterns in U.S. and Spanish financial texts, analyzing the positive or negative connotations of metaphors during the financial crisis. Muelas Gil (2019) applied Critical Metaphor Analysis (CMA) to uncover ideological influences in economic reporting, highlighting how metaphors reinforce specific worldviews. Wang & Chen (2013) used metaphor models (Chudinov, 2001) to frame economic crises as living organisms, demonstrating the persuasive role of metaphors.

Limitations of Existing Methodologies and Addressing Shortcomings in the Current Study

Existing methodologies for metaphor analysis in economic discourse, including the lexical and corpus-based approaches, present notable limitations. The lexical approach, though foundational, depends on the researcher's intuition to identify metaphors, resulting in potential subjectivity and inconsistent classifications (Kövecses, 2008; Sinclair, 1991). This method lacks the empirical rigor required for reproducibility and can lead to biases or overlooked metaphors. While MIP offers some standardization, it still heavily relies on manual identification, making the process time-consuming and prone to error (Philip, 2012; Muelas Gil, 2019).

The corpus-based approach, while more systematic and empirical, also has its drawbacks. Automated tools such as WordSmith and Wmatrix help with metaphor identification and frequency analysis but are limited in their ability to capture extended metaphors that span larger portions of a text (Cai & Deignan, 2019). These tools are primarily designed for isolated expressions and often miss the nuanced meanings and complexities of metaphors in context. Additionally, corpus-based studies have traditionally focused on large-scale economic events, such as financial crises, leaving significant areas, particularly the retail sector, underexplored. This gap

presents an opportunity to investigate the metaphors unique to dynamic industries like retail, which may differ from those found in broader economic discourses (Boers & Demecheleer , 1997; Muelas Gil, 2019).

To address these methodological gaps, this study integrates a mixed-methods approach with corpus-based approach. The use of corpus-based methods allows for the systematic identification of metaphorical expressions across large data from a variety of contexts, ensuring a broad scope of analysis. Manual verification complements the automated process, capturing extended metaphors that automated tools may miss. By expanding the corpus to include retail articles, a sector often underrepresented in metaphor research, this study broadens the scope of economic discourse analysis. This combination of quantitative rigor with qualitative depth ensures a comprehensive, accurate understanding of metaphorical language and its role in shaping ideological and economic narratives, particularly in the context of the retail sector during the Covid-19 pandemic.

2.7. Research Gaps

The review of previous studies on conceptual metaphors in economic news discourse (*Section 2.6*) highlights several major directions in the field, including the pervasiveness of metaphor, the communicative and ideological functions of metaphor, and the metaphorical representation of BUSINESS across various economic contexts. However, the review also exposes several important limitations that call for further scholarly attention and directly inform the focus of this dissertation.

Lack of Focus on BUSINESS as a Conceptual Domain

Although numerous studies have confirmed the pervasiveness of metaphor in economic news discourse - particularly in framing abstract concepts like growth, inflation, or competition through source domains such as WAR, HEALTH, or MACHINE - few of these studies have treated BUSINESS as a standalone conceptual focus. In most cases, BUSINESS appears only tangentially, embedded within larger discussions of economic processes or institutions, without being examined systematically in its own right. As a result, the conceptual metaphor of BUSINESS

has not been fully explored as a target domain with its own structural patterns and variations, especially in relation to different sectors or crisis contexts.

Underexplored Ideological Implications in Retail Discourse

The literature on metaphor functions - especially communicative and persuasive - has emphasized the role of metaphor in shaping public perception and influencing discourse during financial crises. Yet, while there is growing interest in how metaphors reflect ideological positions, there remains a shortage of studies that specifically examine the ideological implications of BUSINESS metaphors in particular economic sectors. The retail industry, in particular, has received minimal attention, despite its economic significance and exposure to metaphor-driven narratives during the Covid-19 pandemic. Existing research rarely explores how metaphors frame values such as resilience, efficiency, leadership, or innovation in ways that reflect or reinforce dominant ideologies.

Fragmented Treatment of BUSINESS Metaphors

Among the studies that do reference BUSINESS metaphors - such as BUSINESS IS WAR, GAME, or JOURNEY - most tend to present these examples in isolation, without integrating them into a coherent typology or theoretical framework. There is a lack of systematic categorization or comparison of metaphorical source domains applied to BUSINESS, leading to a fragmented understanding of how this domain is constructed conceptually. Moreover, few studies have investigated the internal structure, variation, and communicative roles of BUSINESS metaphors across different discourse contexts. In particular, the metaphorical framing of BUSINESS in the retail industry remains underexplored, despite its socio-economic relevance during periods of disruption like the Covid-19 pandemic.

Methodological Limitations in Previous Research

A further gap lies in the methodological practices of metaphor research. As reviewed in Section 2.6.4, existing studies often rely on either a lexical or corpus-based approach. While each of these methods offers valuable tools, they are typically applied in isolation, leading to either subjectivity (in intuition-based studies) or

superficiality (in purely automated analyses). There remains a need for more integrated, mixed-methods approaches that combine the empirical breadth of corpus analysis with the interpretive depth of qualitative techniques. Such integration is particularly necessary for identifying extended metaphors and for interpreting metaphorical patterns within broader ideological and contextual frameworks.

Neglect of Temporal Shifts in Metaphorical Framing

Much of the existing literature treats metaphors as static features of economic discourse, even when analyzing them in the context of crises. However, crisis periods such as the Covid-19 pandemic are not uniform; they unfold in stages, bringing shifts in communication strategies and public expectations. This raises the need to consider the temporal dimension of metaphor use - how metaphorical framing of BUSINESS may shift between crisis and recovery phases, and how these shifts correspond with changes in ideology, strategy, and public sentiment. Yet, this dynamic aspect of metaphor has been largely overlooked in previous research.

In response to these limitations, this study investigates conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in economic news discourse, with a specific focus on the retail industry during the Covid-19 pandemic. By addressing underexplored aspects such as sector-specific framing, ideological implications, metaphor shifts over time, and methodological integration, the research aims to contribute a more comprehensive and context-sensitive understanding of metaphor use in contemporary economic communication.

Summary of Chapter 2

Chapter 2 provides the theoretical foundation for analyzing conceptual metaphors in economic news discourse, focusing on BUSINESS metaphors during the Covid-19 pandemic. It begins by outlining key developments in metaphor theory, especially Conceptual Metaphor Theory, and elaborates on core concepts such as metaphorical expressions, cross-domain mapping, and framing in economic narratives. The chapter emphasizes the multi-level structure of metaphors at the domain and frame levels, and discusses their ideological functions in shaping economic and political perspectives.

A review of previous studies highlights the pervasive use of metaphors in economic discourse but reveals limited attention to BUSINESS metaphors as a distinct conceptual domain. Studies often address BUSINESS tangentially and lack systematic categorization of its metaphorical structures. Moreover, the ideological dimensions of BUSINESS metaphors, particularly in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic, remain underexplored. The literature also shows a reliance on either lexical or corpus-based methods in isolation, and little focus on how metaphors shift over time across crisis and recovery phases. These limitations inform the research direction of this study and provide the rationale for the research design in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodological framework for analyzing conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in retail discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. It covers the research paradigm (Pragmatism), the mixed methods and corpus-based approach, and the embedded design integrating qualitative and quantitative analysis. The chapter details data collection from Forbes retail articles, corpus compilation, and text processing, followed by a pilot study to validate BUSINESS concepts. The metaphor identification procedure (MIP) and source domain categorization are explained, ensuring rigorous analysis supported by considerations of validity and reliability.

3.1. Research Paradigm: Pragmatism

The research paradigm for this study is Pragmatism, which was chosen because it allows for the integration of both qualitative and quantitative methods, providing flexibility to address the complex nature of the research questions. Pragmatism, as described by Morgan (2014), emphasizes the practical application of knowledge, asserting that knowledge is provisional and validated through its real-world consequences. It rejects rigid distinctions between objectivism and subjectivism, advocating for methodological pluralism. This flexibility made it particularly suitable for this study, which aims to analyze conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS within retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Pragmatism aligned with the research objectives, which focus on identifying source domains, conceptualizing and framing metaphors, and analyzing their ideological implications in retail industry discourse. The study involves both qualitative methods - such as metaphor identification and interpretation - and quantitative techniques - such as measuring the frequency of metaphorical expressions. By adopting a pragmatic approach, this study was able to explore the subjective meanings behind metaphors while also ensuring that findings are empirically validated.

Pragmatism's focus on practical outcomes is also essential for understanding how metaphors shape business strategies and public policy. As Tashakkori & Teddlie (2010) note, pragmatism supports a mixed-methods approach that emphasizes the practical

implications of research. This approach was especially useful in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, where the socio-economic challenges required both interpretive and empirical analysis to provide actionable insights for businesses and policymakers.

Ultimately, Pragmatism enabled this study to bridge the gap between qualitative and quantitative inquiry, offering a comprehensive and flexible framework for analyzing metaphors in retail industry discourse. It ensured that the research not only contributes to theoretical understanding but also provides real-world relevance, capturing the impact of metaphors on economic thought and decision-making within the retail sector during the pandemic.

3.2. Research Approach: Mixed Methods and Corpus-based Approach

Mixed Methods Approach

This study employs a mixed methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research techniques to provide a comprehensive analysis of conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in retail discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. Mixed methods, as defined by Tashakkori & Creswell (2007), combine interpretive and empirical approaches, allowing for a rich understanding of metaphor usage and its implications in economic discourse.

The mixed methods approach was particularly valuable in this study because it aligned with the research questions. Specifically, the combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis enabled the study to address the research questions: (1) identifying the source domains mapped onto the target domain of BUSINESS, (2) understanding how these conceptual metaphors were conceptualized and framed in retail discourse, and (3) analyzing the ideological implications of these metaphors in the context of the pandemic. By using both quantitative techniques to identify metaphorical expressions and qualitative analysis to interpret them, the study provided a fuller, more nuanced exploration of metaphor use in business discourse.

Corpus-based Approach

Integral to the quantitative phase was the corpus-based approach (Deignan, 2008), which facilitated the systematic collection and analysis of metaphorical

expressions from a large data. This approach began with the construction of a corpus of 60 articles from the Retail section of Forbes, with equal representation from the crisis phase (2020) and the recovery phase (2021-2022). The use of WordSmith Tools (Scott, 2023) enabled the extraction of concordance lines to identify metaphorical expressions and track shifts in their frequency and contextual meaning over time. These quantitative insights set the stage for the subsequent qualitative phase, where the identified metaphors were analyzed in more detail to understand their framing and ideological implications.

The research approach is realized in the explanatory sequential mixed methods design as presented in the following section.

3.3. Research Design: Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design

This study employs an Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design (Creswell & Creswell, 2017), combining both quantitative and qualitative research phases. This design allows for the sequential integration of both data types, with the quantitative phase serving as the foundation for the qualitative phase. The process begins with the collection of quantitative data, followed by qualitative data collection and analysis, and concludes with the integration and interpretation of the findings.

Quantitative Phase: Data Collection and Analysis

The initial phase focused on the quantitative data collection of metaphorical expressions in a corpus of 60 articles from the Retail section of Forbes published between 2020 and 2022. This corpus was split into two time periods: the crisis phase (2020) and the recovery phase (2021-2022). For this phase, the study used WordSmith Tools (Scott, 2023) to generate concordance lines that displayed occurrences of the target words within their textual context. The frequency of metaphorical expressions was calculated, providing insights into the patterns of metaphor use across both phases of the pandemic. This quantitative analysis captured the frequency of metaphorical expressions and established the generic source domains that shaped how business was conceptualized during the pandemic.

In the quantitative data analysis step, MIP (Pragglejaz Group, 2007) was applied to identify metaphorical expressions within the concordance lines. These expressions

were manually categorized into source domains based on their semantic relations, using *WordNet* (n.d.) as an online lexical reference tool. The identified metaphorical expressions and their respective source domains were validated with feedback from educated native speakers. This ensured that the metaphorical expressions reflected the linguistic and cultural context of the corpus accurately.

Qualitative Phase: Data Collection and Analysis

Following the quantitative phase, the qualitative phase was designed to provide an in-depth interpretation of the metaphorical expressions identified. This phase involved qualitative data collection, where the systematic correspondences between source domains and target domains were analyzed to map out the conceptual elements. Metaphors were categorized into generic and specific metaphors, and their framing and conceptualization was examined.

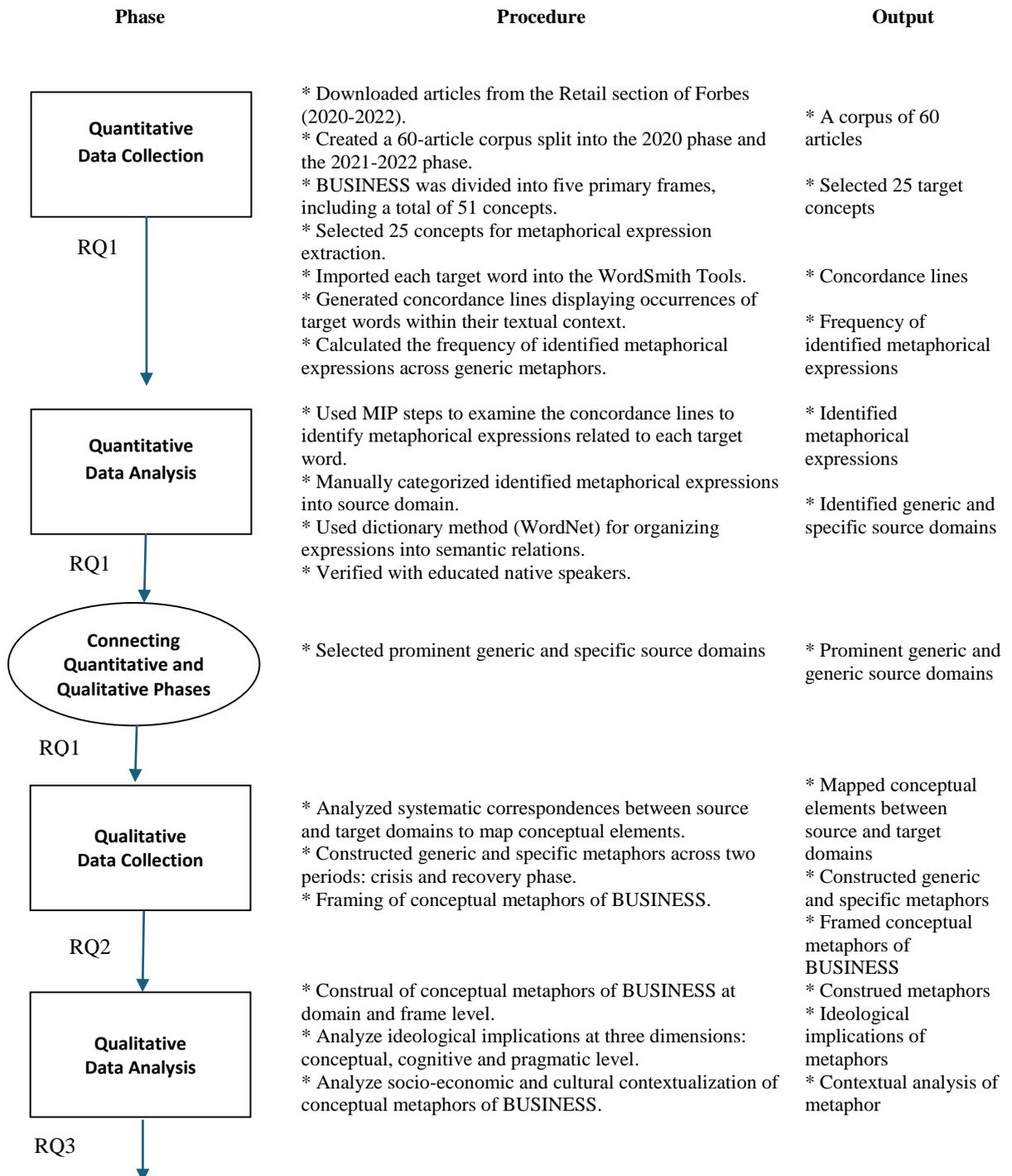
The qualitative data analysis proceeded by construing the conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS at both the domain and frame levels, based on the framework developed by Kövecses (2020). This phase also addressed the ideological implications of the metaphors by analyzing them at three levels: conceptual, cognitive, and pragmatic. Finally, the socio-economic and cultural contextualization of these conceptual metaphors was explored to provide insights into how metaphors were shaped by and reflected societal values and challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Results

The final step integrated both the quantitative and qualitative results, which were interpreted to provide a comprehensive understanding of how metaphors functioned in retail discourse. This process not only examined the patterns and frequency of metaphor use but also uncovered the underlying ideological dimensions and their framing of business realities in times of crisis and recovery. The integrated findings led to a deeper discussion of the implications of metaphors in shaping public discourse, corporate strategies, and socio-economic narratives in the retail industry during the pandemic.

Figure 3.1

Visual Model for Sequential Explanatory Design Procedures in this Study



3.4. Data

3.4.1. Economic News Discourse

Economic News Discourse refers to a specialized form of communication that reports, analyzes, and interprets economic phenomena, market activities, and financial events. It focuses on delivering news and analysis about economic activities, trade, financial markets, and business developments (Van Dijk, 1998).

Wu & Zhao (2018) emphasize its role in simplifying complex economic data into accessible language, helping a broader audience understand intricate economic concepts. While its primary goal is to inform, economic news often uses metaphorical language to enhance comprehension and engage readers, connecting abstract economic ideas to everyday experiences.

Economic news discourse is characterized by timeliness, accuracy, and objectivity, as it provides up-to-date, factually accurate information while maintaining credibility. Additionally, it connects economic factors to societal and political contexts, presenting a holistic view of how economic forces influence and are influenced by broader societal frameworks (Wu & Zhao, 2018).

In the context of this thesis, economic news discourse is defined as a written form of communication that not only documents economic events but also frames them in ways that influence public understanding and decision-making. This working definition provides the foundation for analyzing how metaphorical language is embedded in economic news and how it shapes the ideological framing of economic narratives.

3.4.2. Retail Industry Discourse as a Realm of Economic News Discourse

Retail Industry Discourse is a key subdomain of economic news discourse, reflecting retailing's crucial role in economic systems. Kotler & Armstrong (2010) define retailing as selling goods and services directly to consumers, marking the final stage in the economic supply chain. Retail performance often mirrors broader economic trends, consumer confidence, and market demand (Bednarek & Caple, 2012).

Retail discourse not only reports on sales and market dynamics but also interprets economic shifts, especially during crises like the Covid-19 pandemic. It highlights market resilience, supply chain challenges, and recovery efforts, providing insights into both microeconomic conditions and macroeconomic trends (Wu & Zhao, 2018).

Like economic news discourse, retail discourse emphasizes timeliness, accuracy, and objectivity, ensuring stakeholders are informed of market changes and economic conditions. It also helps shape public narratives and informs decision-making, safeguarding against misinformation.

Retail industry discourse, like broader economic discourse, can perpetuate dominant ideologies, framing narratives around growth, competition, and innovation, while also introducing alternative perspectives on labor rights, sustainability, and corporate responsibility (Wu & Zhao, 2018).

In this study, retail industry discourse is analyzed as a component of economic news discourse, focusing on how metaphorical language shapes perceptions of economic resilience and transformation during crises and recovery.

3.4.3. Data Collection

3.4.3.1. Data Source

The primary data source for this research is the Retail section of Forbes magazine, a leading and reputable business publication in American known for its authoritative reporting on financial markets, economic trends, and business operations. According to Van Dijk (1998), economic discourse includes news, reports, and analyses related to economic activities, financial markets, trade, and business developments. Forbes aligns with this definition, offering in-depth coverage of the retail sector's performance and strategies, particularly during periods of economic volatility such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

Wu & Zhao (2018) highlight that economic news discourse serves not only to report economic data but also to translate complex financial and business information into accessible narratives for broader audiences. The Retail section of Forbes

provides comprehensive analyses, reflecting diverse perspectives from industry experts and journalists who possess a nuanced understanding of the retail landscape.

The selection of Forbes as a data source ensures that:

- (a) The data originates from a reputable and credible publication.
- (b) The articles reflect current and accurate insights into the retail industry.
- (c) The content is authored by experienced journalists with deep knowledge of economic and business issues.

(The list of the authors is presented in Appendix F for further reference.)

By utilizing Forbes as a primary source, this research benefits from high-quality content that captures the evolving dynamics of the retail industry, ensuring relevance and reliability in the findings.

3.4.3.2. Corpus Compilation

The compilation of the corpus forms the foundation of the data collection process, providing a structured dataset for analyzing conceptual metaphors in retail industry discourse. Deignan (2008) emphasizes that manually compiled corpora allow researchers to focus on specific linguistic features relevant to their investigation. In this study, the corpus was compiled based on clearly defined criteria to ensure representativeness, balance and sampling (Biber *et al.*, 1999).

(a) Selection Criteria for Articles

Firstly, the articles selected for this study were required to be directly relevant to the retail industry and focus on aspects of BUSINESS, ensuring alignment with the research objective of examining metaphorical expressions within retail discourse. This relevance was crucial in providing a clear focus on the retail sector and its response to the challenges and transformations during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Secondly, the articles were chosen based on a specific time frame, spanning from January 2020 to December 2022. This period includes two key phases: the crisis phase (2020) and the recovery phase (2021-2022). The inclusion of these two phases allows for a comprehensive analysis of how the retail industry's challenges and adaptations were reflected through metaphorical expressions across different stages of the pandemic.

Additionally, the credibility of the authors was a critical factor in the selection process. The articles chosen were authored by experienced business journalists and industry analysts, ensuring that the content was of high quality and accurately reflected the retail sector's dynamics. A list of the authors can be found in Appendix F, providing further reference to their expertise in the field.

Moreover, the diversity of perspectives and thematic coverage within the retail sector was another important criterion. The final corpus consists of 60 articles, with 30 articles from 2020 (the crisis phase) and 30 from 2021-2022 (the recovery phase), ensuring a varied representation of the retail industry's experiences and responses to the pandemic.

Finally, the language and accessibility of the articles were also taken into account. All articles were written in English and made available digitally, which facilitated the data collection process and ensured that the text could be efficiently processed and analyzed.

b) Corpus Size and Characteristics

The corpus for this study consists of a total of 60 articles, carefully selected to provide a comprehensive dataset for analysis. The total word count of the corpus is approximately 120,000 words, a size that is both substantial enough to yield meaningful results and manageable for conducting in-depth qualitative and quantitative analyses, as suggested by Deignan (2008).

The corpus is a compiled corpus, specifically constructed for this research. It was not pre-existing but was assembled by the researcher to directly address the study's objectives related to metaphor analysis in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. This approach ensured that the corpus was tailored to the specific needs of the research, providing the most relevant data for analysis.

In addition, the corpus is classified as a specialized corpus, as it focuses exclusively on the retail industry's discourse during the pandemic. This aligns with Hunston's (2008) definition of specialized corpora, which target specific domains and subject matter. The specialized nature of the corpus allows for a deep exploration

of metaphors within the retail sector, offering insights into how metaphors reflect and shape the sector's economic discourse during a period of crisis and recovery.

(c) Representativeness, Balance, and Sampling

The corpus is designed to reflect the full range of variability within retail industry discourse during the pandemic. Articles were selected from the 2020 to 2022 period, covering critical phases of crisis and recovery. Forbes, as a reputable source of economic analysis, ensures the corpus represents the language of economic news discourse in the retail sector (Biber *et al.*, 1999).

To ensure balance, the corpus includes articles addressing diverse aspects of the retail industry, such as market trends, business strategies, consumer behavior, and supply chain disruptions. This variety captures multiple perspectives and enriches the data, allowing for a holistic analysis of metaphorical expressions in different contexts (Biber *et al.*, 1999).

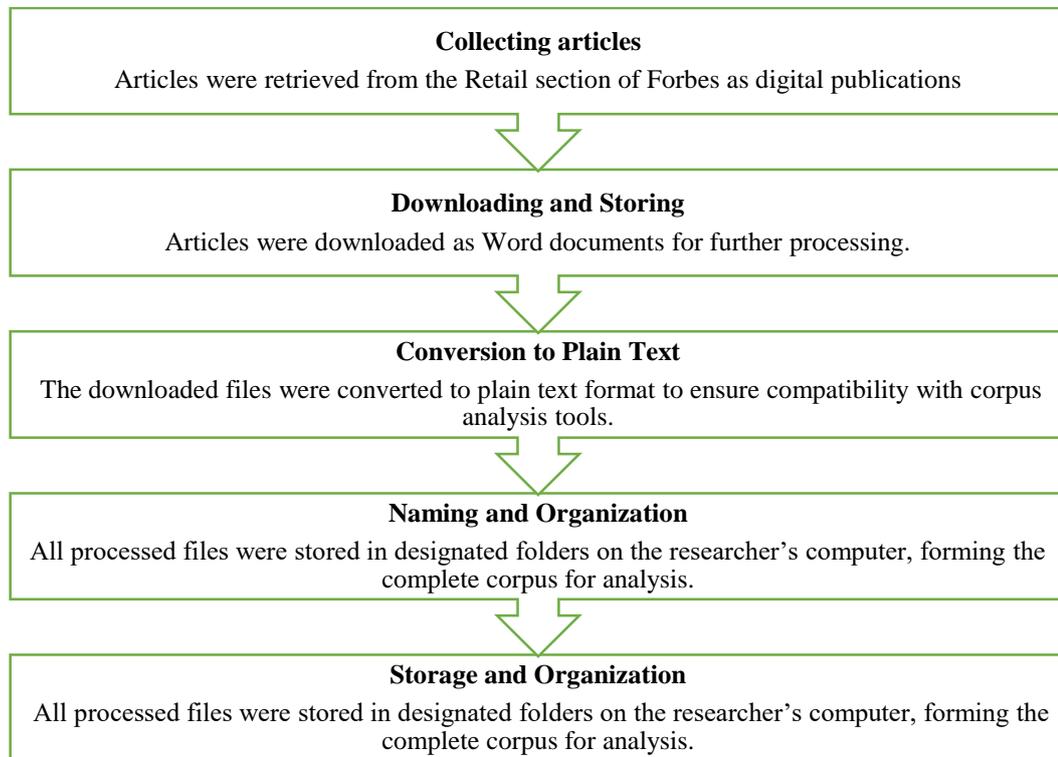
Articles were manually selected based on their relevance to the study's focus on BUSINESS metaphors within retail discourse during the pandemic. The sampling process prioritized articles authored by experienced journalists and industry experts, ensuring alignment with the research objectives (Biber *et al.*, 1999). This strategic sampling enhances the coherence and validity of the corpus.

3.4.3.3. Text Processing

The text processing phase ensures that the collected articles are systematically prepared for analysis using corpus linguistics tools. This section details the step-by-step procedures followed to organize and format the data for compatibility with analytical software.

Figure 3.2

Text Collection and Processing Workflow



After collecting the articles from the Retail section of Forbes, the text processing phase prepares the data for further analysis. This involves organizing and formatting the collected digital articles to ensure they are compatible with corpus linguistics tools. The text is processed systematically to extract relevant metaphorical expressions and structure the data for quantitative and qualitative analysis. This workflow streamlines the data for use in analytical software, ensuring that the corpus is ready for metaphor identification and subsequent analysis.

3.4.3.4. Elaboration of the overarching target domain 'BUSINESS'

The elaboration of the overarching target domain BUSINESS was undertaken to establish a structured framework for identifying metaphorical expressions in retail discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. This process relied on Fillmore's Frame Semantics (1982), which provides a systematic approach to organizing abstract domains into structured frames and interrelated concepts. These frames serve as the

foundation for identifying metaphorical expressions by highlighting key dimensions and their linguistic manifestations.

(a) Steps in Elaborating BUSINESS

The elaboration of BUSINESS followed a systematic process using Frame Semantics, which views domains as structured systems of interrelated concepts. BUSINESS was divided into five primary frames, each representing key dimensions of its conceptual structure:

Commercial transaction frame: This frame captures the transactional nature of BUSINESS and includes concepts such as *buyer, seller, consumer, consumption, goods, services, transaction, shopping, ordering, store, retail, commerce, payment, exchange*.

Work and employment frame: This frame addresses the professional activities related to BUSINESS, including concepts such as *job, work, employee, employer, employment, task, wage, career*.

Organizational frame: This frame focuses on the structural and operational aspects of BUSINESS, including concepts such as *company, business, mall, owner, manager, hierarchy, industry, departments, performance, strategy*.

Market Frame: This frame situates BUSINESS within broader economic systems, including concepts such as *economy, market, sales, competition, supply, demand, price/pricing, trend, consumer behavior*.

Financial Frame: This frame emphasizes the monetary aspects of BUSINESS, including concepts such as *revenue, profit, loss, investment, budgeting, capital*.

These frames encompass the multifaceted nature of BUSINESS and provide a conceptual basis for identifying metaphorical expressions. However, not all concepts within these frames were equally productive in yielding metaphorical expressions, necessitating further refinement through a pilot study.

(b) Pilot Study and Selection of Core Concepts

To refine the focus of the analysis, a pilot study was conducted to validate the relevance of the initial list of concepts derived from the frames. The pilot tested the

productivity of these concepts in yielding metaphorical expressions in a subset of articles (10 articles) from the data.

As a result, 25 core concepts were identified for the main analysis: *retail, commerce, brand, economy, price, revenue, profit, trend, employment, job, business, shopping, store, industry, supply, owner, company, mall, market, sales, performance, consumer, ordering, transaction, and consumption.*

These core concepts consistently yielded metaphorical expressions, making them central to the analysis. Less productive concepts were excluded to ensure the study remained focused on linguistically significant elements. The details of this pilot study are presented in Section 3.4.4: Pilot Study - Validation of Specific Concepts of BUSINESS.

(c) Integration with Semantic Tension and MIP

The identification of metaphorical expressions from these core concepts was guided by the criterion of semantic tension and MIP. Semantic tension, as defined by the Pragglejaz Group (2007), occurs when a lexical unit's contextual meaning deviates from its basic, literal meaning but remains interpretable through conceptual comparison. The MIP framework provided a systematic method for identifying metaphorical expressions by comparing the contextual and basic meanings of lexical units.

Illustrative Example: Retailer (a lexeme of 'retail')

The following excerpt from the dataset illustrates this process:

*"2020 can certainly be interpreted as a retailer's **nightmare**, yet those who were more adequately prepared to **pivot** witnessed explosive growth - or at least were able to **survive**." (A.6)*

Here, three metaphorical expressions *nightmare*, *pivot*, and *survive* were identified:

"Nightmare"

The basic meaning of *nightmare* refers to a distressing dream. Contextually, it metaphorically frames 2020 as a profoundly challenging experience for retailers. This

expression reflects the difficulties faced by participants in the retail domain, such as store closures and disrupted supply chains.

“Pivot”

The basic meaning of *pivot* pertains to a physical turning movement. Here, it metaphorically signifies the strategic adaptations of retailers to meet challenges, such as shifting to online platforms. This reflects the adaptability embedded in the retail concept.

“Survive”

The basic meaning of survive involves continuing to live despite hardship. In this context, it metaphorically represents the resilience of retailers during economic turbulence.

These expressions demonstrate how BUSINESS is metaphorically framed through its elaborated concepts, particularly *retail* (its lexeme - *retailers* in the above excerpt).

(d) Purpose of Elaboration

The elaboration of BUSINESS serves two key purposes. First, it ensures conceptual clarity by dividing BUSINESS into cognitive frames and validated core concepts, providing a structured foundation for identifying metaphorical expressions. Second, it ensures empirical relevance, as the pilot study validated the productivity of these core concepts, making sure that the analysis focuses on metaphorically significant and linguistically relevant elements of BUSINESS. By elaborating BUSINESS into frames and core concepts and integrating semantic tension with MIP, this study creates a robust and conceptually grounded framework for analyzing metaphorical expressions. The pilot study, described in Section 3.4.4, further ensures that the analysis remains focused on empirically significant elements of BUSINESS.

3.4.3.5. Unit of Analysis

The sentence is chosen as the unit of analysis in this thesis to explore metaphors of BUSINESS in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. This choice aligns with the research focus on examining metaphorical expressions and their implications within complete linguistic units.

Halliday (1985) defines a sentence as a linguistic unit beginning with a capital letter and ending with a full stop, which makes it suitable for analyzing metaphors. Lakoff & Johnson (1980) emphasize that metaphors extend beyond individual words, integrating into full communicative units. Therefore, analyzing metaphors within complete sentences allows for a deeper understanding of their roles and implications.

The approach also aligns with Cameron (2003), who advocates for analyzing metaphors within complete texts, and Charteris-Black (2004), who highlights the importance of examining metaphors at the micro-level in sentences. This method helps uncover the subtle nuances and deeper meanings of BUSINESS metaphors in retail industry discourse.

3.4.3.6. Concordance Tool

For the purposes of this study, the concordance tool within WordSmith Tools (Version 8.0, developed by Scott, 2023) was the primary analytical feature used to extract and analyze target words representing conceptual frames of BUSINESS. This tool systematically identifies word-forms in context, allowing for the examination of how key terms are used within broader discourse structures (Sinclair, 1991). This process is integral to metaphor analysis, as it highlights co-textual patterns that reveal metaphorical expressions in retail industry discourse.

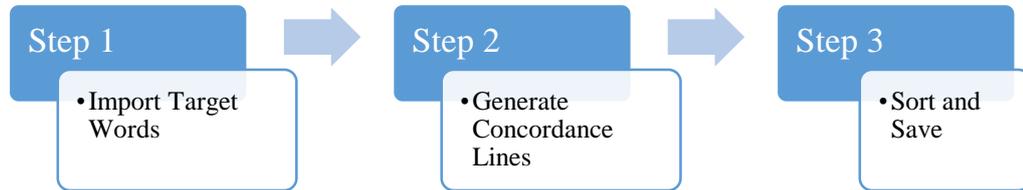
The objective of employing the concordance tool was to detect metaphorical expressions associated with BUSINESS by analyzing target words derived from 25 concepts identified during the pilot study (see Section 3.4.4). Key target words included *retail, commerce, brand, economy, price, revenue, profit, trend, employment, job, business, shopping, store, industry, supply, owner, company, mall, market, sales, performance, consumer, ordering, transaction, and consumption.*

Through this systematic exploration, the study aimed to uncover metaphorical patterns in retail industry discourse from the Forbes Retail section.

The concordance tool of WordSmith 8.0 was applied in the following stages:

Figure 3.3

Application of Concordance tool



Step 1: Target words representing BUSINESS concepts were imported into WordSmith.

Step 2: The concordance tool generated lines containing the target words, displaying each occurrence in its immediate textual surroundings. This allowed for contextual analysis of the target terms.

Step 3: Concordance lines were sorted by neighboring words (left or right) to identify patterns suggesting metaphorical usage. Extracted concordance lines were saved in Excel for further analysis.

The concordance lines, showing target words in context, were prepared for the next stage - applying MIP to identify metaphorical expressions.

Example:

Figure 3.4

Concordance lines of 'store'

compared to their department store brethren. A major contributor to	
most of its workforce. The department store chain will operate with a skeleton	
tools or computer vision to digitize store shelves, brands can learn more	
tracking, shopper insights and even store format updates, choosing the	
if really defines the character of every store and can be what differentiates	
before the pandemic, with exclusive store brands gaining marketshare, but	
post-pandemic world. Gucci's flagship store in Italy is a great example of	
post-pandemic world. Gucci's flagship store in Italy is a great example of	
are fulfilling e-commerce orders from store stock or performing home	
customers want based on insights from store employees who directly interact	
share. On the other hand, grocery store chains that embrace ways to	
Season If you've been to a grocery store recently, you've likely noticed the	
has announced that current hourly store, distribution center, and	
a store—blurring the lines between in-store and online sales. Counting	
other trends like "buy online, pick-up in store" (BOPIS) and curbside pickup	

The image shows concordance lines from WordSmith Tools 8.0, with the target word *store* in blue and the nearest surrounding words in red. In the next step, each lexical unit in the full sentence containing *store* is manually examined using MIP to identify metaphorical expressions.

3.4.3.7. Frequency of Metaphorical Expressions

To enhance the analysis of metaphorical expressions, this study employed a quantitative approach to calculate their frequency across generic source domains for both the crisis phase (2020) and the recovery phase (2021-2022). By incorporating frequency analysis, the research highlighted the distribution of dominant conceptual patterns over time, offering insights into shifts in metaphor usage across the two phases of the pandemic.

Quantitative Process

Metaphorical expressions identified in both phases were compiled into a Microsoft Excel sheet. Each expression was categorized under its corresponding generic and specific source domains and tagged for its occurrence within either the crisis phase or the recovery phase.

Example:

Metaphorical Expressions	Specific Domains	Generic Source Domains	Phase	(Generic Metaphors)
<i>blow</i>	BATTLE	WAR	2020	(BUSINESS IS WAR)

For each generic source domain, the total number of metaphorical expressions across both phases was calculated. The percentage frequency was then computed to reflect the relative prevalence of each generic source domain within the corpus.

The results were summarized in tables to illustrate the distribution and prevalence of metaphorical expressions. The following is an example drawn from the crisis phase (2020) for clarity.

Table 3.1*An example of frequency of metaphorical expressions*

CRISIS PHASE - 2020				
Target Domain	Generic Source Domains	Specific Source Domains	Number of Metaphorical Expressions	Frequency
BUSINESS	WAR	BATTLE	96	20.0%
		STRUGGLE		
		MILITARY OPERATIONS		
		STAND FOR SURVIVAL		
	MOVEMENT	MOTION	65	13.5%
		PHYSICAL MOVEMENT		
		NAVIGATION		
		SHIFT		

The WAR domain emerged as the most dominant, accounting for 20.0% of all metaphorical expressions in the crisis phase (2020), reflecting a narrative of conflict and resilience as businesses faced unprecedented challenges. In contrast, the MOVEMENT domain, representing 13.5% of the data, underscored themes of transition and adaptation, as businesses responded dynamically to market disruptions.

By extending this analysis to the recovery phase (2021-2022), the study captured shifts in metaphor usage, showing a gradual move from framing challenges as battles to highlighting themes of recovery and innovation. This quantitative foundation complemented the qualitative analysis, ensuring that the study's findings were robust and comprehensive.

3.4.3.8. Native Speaker Consultancy

As part of the data collection methods, the current study adopted native speaker consultancy (Skorczyńska & Deignan, 2006; Arrese & Vara-Miguel, 2016) to ensure the accuracy and reliability of both the metaphor identification process and the categorization of source domains. This approach helped mitigate potential bias and provided an external validation of the research process, ensuring that the identification and classification of metaphorical expressions were contextually appropriate and linguistically precise.

Rationale for Adoption

The use of a native speaker with expertise in both business discourse and metaphor was essential for maintaining objectivity and consistency in the analysis. Their

advanced linguistic proficiency allowed them to accurately interpret metaphorical expressions, ensuring alignment with MIP framework.

Selection Criteria

The native speaker was selected based on three key criteria. Their linguistic proficiency as a native English speaker ensured accurate interpretation of metaphors. With a business background, they understood the terminology and concepts relevant to the retail industry. Additionally, their academic qualifications in language analysis ensured expertise in applying MIP and categorizing source domains. This combination of skills and knowledge made them well-suited to support the research process.

Consultancy Process

The native speaker contributed in two key stages of the research process. First, during metaphor identification, they acted as an independent coder, applying MIP to ensure that all metaphorical expressions in the dataset were accurately identified according to established criteria. Second, in the source domain categorization stage, the native speaker validated the categorization of these metaphorical expressions, confirming that each metaphor was assigned to the appropriate source domain based on its contextual meaning. This dual role helped enhance the accuracy and reliability of the metaphor identification and categorization processes. (*The native speaker's bibliography is provided in Appendix G for reference*).

3.4.4. Pilot Study - Validation of Specific Concepts of BUSINESS

This pilot study was conducted to validate the selection of target concepts within the overarching domain of BUSINESS, ensuring that the chosen concepts consistently generate metaphorical expressions in retail industry discourse. This preliminary step strengthens the reliability of the research design by refining the focus on empirically significant data, thereby enhancing the accuracy and relevance of subsequent analyses.

Objectives and Rationale

The primary objective of the pilot study was to assess the presence and frequency of metaphorical expressions associated with BUSINESS-related concepts. This process aimed to filter and prioritize concepts that yield meaningful metaphorical data, ensuring alignment with the overall aim of exploring conceptual metaphors in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. The study also sought to eliminate concepts that do not contribute to metaphor generation, thereby streamlining the corpus analysis.

Methodology

A subset of ten articles was systematically selected from the research corpus, with

equal distribution across the two analytical phases:

Phase 1: The crisis period (2020)

Phase 2: The recovery phase (2021-2022)

The pilot study employed WordSmith Tools (Scott, 2023) to conduct concordance analysis. Key concepts drawn from the frames of BUSINESS were analyzed to identify metaphorical expressions. The concepts included:

“Buyer, seller, consumer, consumption, goods, services, transaction, shopping, ordering, store, retail, commerce, payment, exchange, job, employee, employer, employment, task, wage, career, company, business, mall, owner, manager, hierarchy, industry, departments, performance, strategy, economy, market, sales, competition, supply, demand, price/pricing, trend, brand, customer behavior, profit, revenue, loss, investment, budgeting, and capital.”

The Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP), as proposed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007), was applied to systematically evaluate whether these concepts produced metaphorical expressions within their textual context. The number of metaphorical instances was recorded for each concept.

Each concept selected as a key concept (target concept) must be associated with at least two metaphorical expressions found in the pilot study data. This ensures that the concept consistently generates metaphorical expressions relevant to the research.

For instance, the concept *retailer* is associated with the metaphorical expression *survive* in two examples. In the first, “... *some retailers may survive* ...,” (A.84) and in the second, “... *some retailers might survive if they adapt to the new normal*” (A.85). Both instances highlight the resilience of retailers, justifying *retailer* as a key concept for further analysis. This criterion ensures that only concepts with consistent metaphorical associations are selected for deeper examination.

Results of the Pilot Study

The pilot study revealed that while several concepts consistently produced metaphorical expressions, others did not. Key concepts such as *retail, commerce, brand, economy, price, revenue, profit, trend, job, employment, and market* ... demonstrated strong metaphorical potential and were retained for the main analysis. Conversely, concepts like *logo, hierarchy, career, and customer perception* ... did not yield significant metaphorical data and were excluded to maintain focus on empirically productive elements.

Summary of Results

The table below summarizes the findings, indicating the number of metaphorical expressions detected for each concept and the subsequent decision regarding their inclusion or exclusion from the main study.

Table 3.2

The results of the pilot study

Concept	Number of Metaphorical Expressions	Decision	Concept	Number of Metaphorical Expressions	Decision
Retail	12	Included	Buyer	1	Excluded
Commerce	10	Included	Seller	1	Excluded
Brand	8	Included	Goods	0	Excluded
Economy	9	Included	Services	1	Excluded
Price	7	Included	Payment	1	Excluded
Revenue	6	Included	Exchange	0	Excluded
Profit	8	Included	Employee	1	Excluded
Trend	5	Included	Employer	0	Excluded
Employment	6	Included	Task	0	Excluded
Job	10	Included	Wage	1	Excluded
Business	11	Included	Career	0	Excluded
Shopping	7	Included	Manager	0	Excluded
Store	6	Included	Hierarchy	0	Excluded
Industry	8	Included	Departments	1	Excluded
Supply	6	Included	Strategy	0	Excluded
Owner	4	Included	Competition	1	Excluded
Company	6	Included	Demand	0	Excluded
Mall	4	Included	Consumer Behavior	0	Excluded
Market	8	Included	Logo	0	Excluded
Sales	5	Included	Advertising	1	Excluded
Performance	6	Included	Messaging	1	Excluded
Consumer	7	Included	Customer Perception	0	Excluded
Ordering	6	Included	Loss	1	Excluded
Transaction	5	Included	Investment	0	Excluded
Consumption	4	Included	Budgeting	1	Excluded
			Capital	0	Excluded

- Total metaphorical expressions identified: 158

- Concepts included in main study: 25 (*retail, commerce, brand, economy, price, revenue, profit, trend, employment, job, business, shopping, store, industry, supply, owner, company, mall, market, sales, performance, consumer, ordering, transaction, and consumption.*)

- Concepts excluded from main study: 26

Conclusion

The pilot study served as a critical step in refining the analytical focus by selecting only those BUSINESS concepts that demonstrated metaphorical productivity. This empirical validation ensures that the main analysis is firmly grounded in observable linguistic data, contributing to the methodological rigor of the research. By focusing on metaphor-generating concepts, the study enhances the reliability of findings and provides a more accurate representation of metaphorical patterns in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic.

3.4.5. Data Analysis

3.4.5.1. Identification of Metaphorical Expressions and Coding Criteria

The identification of metaphorical expressions in this study is conducted using MIP developed by the Pragglejazz Group (2007). MIP offers a structured, empirical framework to detect metaphorically used words in written discourse, ensuring consistency and reducing subjectivity.

(a) MIP

MIP involves the systematic detection of metaphorical expressions by analyzing lexical units through their basic and contextual meanings. This approach ensures objectivity and enhances the replicability of metaphor identification.

The MIP follows these steps:

Table 3.3

Metaphor identification procedure

Note. Adapted from Pragglejaz Group (2007).

Steps	Description
1. Reading the entire text	The entire text is read to develop an overall understanding of the discourse.
2. Lexical unit determination	The text is broken down into individual lexical units (words or phrases).
3. Contextual and basic meaning analysis	For each lexical unit: a) Determine the contextual meaning based on how the word functions in the surrounding text. b) Establish the basic meaning (more concrete, sensory, or historically older meaning). c) If the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood by comparison, the lexical unit is marked as metaphorical.
4. Marking metaphorical units	Metaphorical units are coded for further analysis.

(b) Coding criteria for metaphorical expressions

To ensure the objectivity and consistency of metaphor identification, the following coding criteria were applied in this study, based on the guidelines of Pragglejaz Group (2007):

Focus on lexical units: The analysis primarily focuses on nouns, verbs, and adjectives related to BUSINESS. Functional words (e.g., articles, prepositions) are excluded unless they form part of a larger metaphorical phrase.

Contextual analysis: Each lexical unit is analyzed within the full sentence (*See section 3.4.3.5: Unit of Analysis*) to ensure metaphorical meaning is interpreted holistically. This approach minimizes misinterpretations based on isolated phrases.

Consistency and standardization: A *coding manual* (for the researcher) was developed to provide detailed guidelines for metaphor identification. This ensures uniformity across the corpus and reduces variability in coding decisions.

Domain-specific analysis: Only metaphorical expressions that map onto the

target domain of BUSINESS are coded. This aligns with the study's objective to investigate conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in retail industry discourse.

(Please refer to Appendix F for a sample of the researcher's coding manual).

(c) Coding procedure

The coding of metaphorical expressions was conducted through the following stages:

Corpus-wide metaphor identification: MIP was applied to all 60 articles in the corpus. Each article was analyzed sentence by sentence, and metaphorical expressions were identified and coded following the established criteria.

Double coding for reliability: To ensure inter-coder reliability, two independent coders performed the metaphor identification process (Krippendorff, 2018):

Coder 1: The primary researcher (researcher of this study).

Coder 2: A native English speaker with expertise in linguistics and economic discourse, who also contributed to source domain verification in Section 3.5.4.2.

Resolving discrepancies: In cases where coding discrepancies emerged, the coders engaged in discussion to reach consensus. If needed, the text was re-examined to ensure accuracy.

(Please refer to Appendix G for a sample of the Comparison of coding results from two coders).

Illustrative example of metaphor identification and coding:

Example Sentence: "Consumers are having trouble wrapping their minds around the extent of the economic losses." (A.142)

Lexical Units (segmented for analysis):

"Consumers / are having trouble / wrapping their minds / around the extent / of / the economic losses."

The following table is the comparison of coding results from two coders:

Table 3.4*Comparison of coding results from two independent coders*

Phase	Example	Target Word (under the target domain 'BUSINESS')	Lexical Unit	Coder 1 (Researcher)	Coder 2 (Native Speaker)	Agreement
2020	Consumers are having trouble wrapping their minds around the extent of the economic losses. (A.412)	Consumer				
			<i>having trouble</i>	Literal	Literal	Yes
			<i>wrapping their minds</i>	Metaphorical	Metaphorical	Yes
			<i>around the extent</i>	Metaphorical	Metaphorical	Yes
			<i>economic losses</i>	Literal	Literal	Yes

- *Wrapping their minds* - This is a metaphorical expression. The basic meaning of *wrapping* involves physically enclosing something, but in this context, it metaphorically represents the process of trying to understand or grasp a concept.

- *Around the extent* - The word *around* literally means encircling, but in this sentence, *around the extent* metaphorically conveys the idea of approaching or assessing the degree of economic losses.

The following section will outline the process of categorizing the identified metaphorical expressions into hierarchical source domains to uncover underlying conceptual patterns.

3.4.5.2. Categorization of Source Domains

The conceptual categorization of metaphorical expressions in this study adheres to well-established principles in metaphor research, which involve grouping metaphors

based on shared semantic fields or conceptual domains (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2010b; Steen et al., 2010). The categorization process integrates both theoretical insights and empirical methods to uncover the hierarchical structure of metaphors, systematically organizing them into generic and specific source domains.

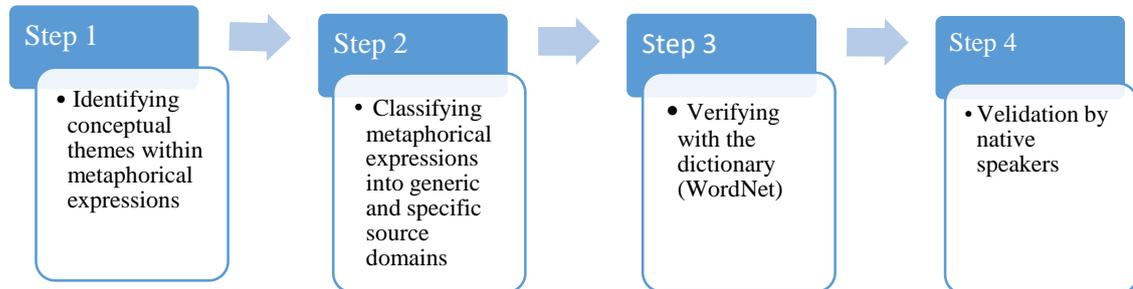
The study employs Croft & Cruse's (2004) conceptual categorization framework, which provides a hierarchical structure for organizing metaphorical expressions. Metaphorical expressions were first grouped into generic source domains, representing overarching semantic categories, and subsequently refined into specific source domains, capturing finer distinctions within each generic category. This process enabled the identification of the central patterns that characterize metaphorical thought in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Categorization Procedure

The categorization process involved four key steps as follows:

Figure: 3.5

Categorization procedure



Step 1: Identifying linguistic patterns and conceptual themes

The categorization process began by identifying recurring linguistic patterns or conceptual themes within the metaphorical expressions. These themes served as intermediary groupings, bridging individual expressions with the broader conceptual structure. While not formal source domains, they provided a preliminary framework for organizing the data.

For example:

The theme Expansion and Growth was identified based on metaphorical expressions such as *proliferates* and *move further*. The theme Resilience and Stability

emerged from expressions like *anchor* and *tougher*.

These themes highlighted recurring conceptual trends in the data and informed subsequent categorization into generic and specific source domains.

Step 2: Categorizing into generic and specific source domains

Building on the themes, metaphorical expressions were manually categorized into generic source domains and specific source domains: generic source domains represent overarching conceptual fields, such as WAR, EXPANSION and RESILIENCE.

Specific source domains refine the semantic distinctions within each generic domain, such as BATTLE and STRUGGLE under WAR.

This hierarchical structure aligns with Croft & Cruse's (2004) framework and ensures that the categorization captures both general patterns and detailed semantic nuances.

Step 3: Verification with existing dictionaries

To validate the manual categorization, the study employed *WordNet* (n.d.) - an online lexical database specializing in semantic relations. *WordNet* (n.d.) provided a systematic framework for verifying the alignment between metaphorical expressions and their assigned source domains.

For example:

The expression *anchor* ("*Grocers view their stores as the anchor of their business,*" B.256) was confirmed by *WordNet* (n.d.) to have the literal meaning of a device providing stability, validating its categorization into the specific source domain STABILITY under the generic domain RESILIENCE.

This step ensured consistency and reliability in the categorization process, aligning with best practices in metaphor research (Gibbs, 2008; Charteris-Black, 2004).

Step 4: Native speaker validation

To address cultural nuances and ambiguous cases, the study incorporated insights from educated native speakers. Native speakers provided critical validation for the semantic relevance of the categorizations and clarified subtle contextual meanings.

For instance:

Native speakers confirmed that the metaphorical use of *anchor* resonates culturally as a symbol of stability and support in business discourse. This input enriched the categorization process by incorporating cultural perspectives, consistent with Skorczynska & Deignan (2006).

Illustration of the categorization process

To illustrate, consider the metaphorical expression *anchor* in the example “*Grocers view their stores as the anchor of their business*” (B.256):

- Identifying linguistic patterns and themes: The expression *anchor* aligned with the theme ‘Resilience and Stability’ due to its association with providing support and steadiness.

- Categorization: The expression was categorized into the specific source domain STABILITY under the generic source domain RESILIENCE.

- Dictionary-based verification: *WordNet* (n.d.) confirmed that the literal meaning of *anchor* as a device providing stability matched its semantic categorization.

- Native speaker validation: Native speakers affirmed the cultural relevance of *anchor* as a metaphor for stability and security, confirming its appropriateness in this context.

In sum, this multi-step process ensured a rigorous and nuanced analysis of metaphorical expressions, balancing theoretical insights with empirical verification. The combination of linguistic patterns, hierarchical categorization, and cultural validation enabled the study to capture the richness of metaphorical thought in retail discourse during the pandemic. By systematically integrating these steps, the categorization framework provided a solid foundation for identifying the conceptual mappings underlying metaphorical expressions in the target domain BUSINESS.

3.4.5.3. Ideological Analysis of Metaphors

This section explores how the ideological implications embedded in BUSINESS metaphors in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic are revealed through the integration of Kövecses’ (2020) Multi-level View of Conceptual

Metaphor and Maalej's (2011) Ideological Dimensions of Metaphor. The analysis focuses on how metaphors operate across both domain and frame levels, offering a nuanced exploration of their ideological roles in shaping economic discourse.

Domain Level Analysis

At the domain level, both generic and specific metaphors contribute to the broader ideological landscape of retail industry discourse. Generic metaphors, like BUSINESS IS WAR, offer a broad conceptual framework that maps business struggles onto a larger conflict. Specific metaphors, such as BUSINESS IS A BATTLE, provide a more focused, contextualized view of business challenges. These metaphors set the stage for understanding the overarching ideological themes of competition, survival, and resilience that dominate business discourse during the pandemic.

Frame Level Analysis

At the frame level, specific metaphors are further construed into detailed, context-sensitive forms that reflect particular economic experiences. For instance, the metaphor BUSINESS IS A BATTLE can be construed as "*Suffering setbacks is receiving blows in a battle*". This construed metaphor vividly conceptualizes business adversity as part of a larger conflict, providing a concrete representation of the challenges businesses face. By focusing on these construed metaphors, we move from broad conceptual frameworks to more nuanced, contextualized representations of economic struggles.

Ideological Analysis Through Maalej's Dimensions

To explore the ideological implications of these construed metaphors, Maalej's (2011) ideological dimensions of metaphor offer a crucial extension to the analysis. Maalej identifies three levels of analysis: conceptual, cognitive, and pragmatic dimensions, each of which reveals a different aspect of the ideological role metaphors play in discourse.

Conceptual Dimension: This dimension examines how metaphors structure abstract economic ideas. The metaphor "*Suffering setbacks is receiving blows in a battle*" structures the experience of business adversity as physical conflict, framing

economic challenges as part of an ongoing battle. This metaphor links economic struggles to a broader narrative of conflict and survival, which can shape public understanding of business activities as driven by competitive forces.

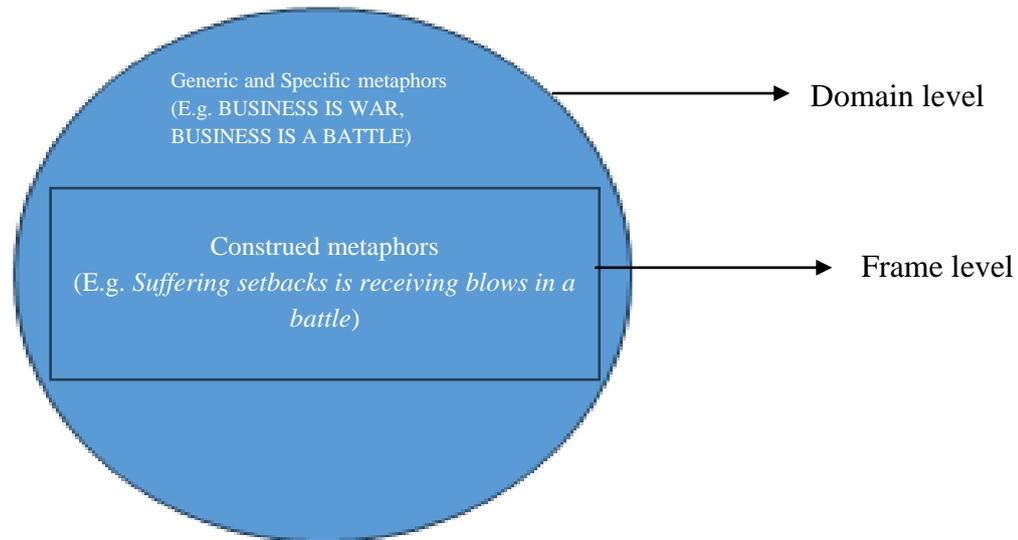
Cognitive Dimension: The cognitive dimension focuses on which aspects of the metaphor are foregrounded or backgrounded. In this case, “*Suffering setbacks is receiving blows in a battle*” highlights the resilience and endurance required by businesses, foregrounding the notion of individual struggle and survival. By framing setbacks as *blows*, the metaphor emphasizes the intensity and hardship of business challenges, while downplaying systemic factors such as external economic conditions or government support. This reflects an ideology of self-reliance, where business success is seen as a matter of personal endurance rather than external intervention.

Pragmatic Dimension: At the pragmatic level, the metaphor “*Suffering setbacks is receiving blows in a battle*” justifies certain business practices and behaviors, such as aggressive cost-cutting, layoffs, or restructuring. By conceptualizing business struggles as a battle, the metaphor supports the idea that such measures are necessary for survival and competitiveness. This aligns with an ideological framework that values resilience and market-driven strategies, promoting the view that businesses must adapt and fight through adversity to thrive.

Figure: 3.6

Integrated Framework of Metaphor Levels and Ideological Analysis

Multi-level view of conceptual metaphor
(Domain and frame levels)
(Kövecses, 2020)



Integrated Framework
of Metaphor Levels and
Ideological Analysis

Ideological dimensions of metaphor
(Maalej, 2011)

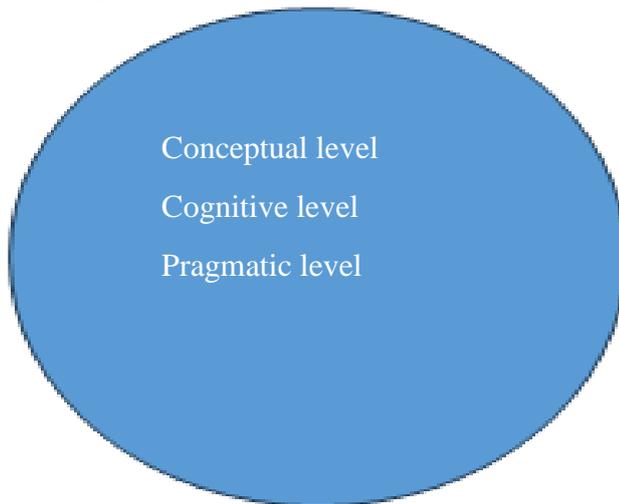


Figure 3.6 illustrates the integrated framework, showing how metaphors operate across the domain and frame levels. At the domain level, generic and specific

metaphors such as BUSINESS IS WAR and BUSINESS IS A BATTLE establish broad thematic structures. At the frame level, these metaphors are construed into context-sensitive forms, such as “*Suffering setbacks is receiving blows in a battle,*” providing a more vivid representation of business struggles. Maalej’s ideological dimensions are layered on top of this, offering a multi-dimensional analysis of how metaphors structure abstract economic ideas, highlight specific cognitive aspects, and justify practices at the pragmatic level.

3.4.5.4. Contextual Analysis

Utilizing the theory of Metaphorical Conceptualization (Kövecses, 2010a), the contextual analysis investigated the interaction between embodiment, culture, and specific contextual factors in the conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS.

Influence of embodiment and cultural context: Clearly articulated how the formation and interpretation of BUSINESS metaphors in real-world contexts resulted from both embodied perception and the influence of local culture.

Interaction between embodiment and culture: Analyzed how the interaction between embodiment and culture influenced the formation and understanding of metaphors related to BUSINESS.

Diversity of influencing contexts: examined specific contexts, including physical, social, cultural, and discourse contexts, to better understand how these contexts impacted the use and understanding of BUSINESS metaphors.

Selection and use of metaphorical language: Analyzed how metaphorical language related to BUSINESS was chosen and used in specific situations, based on the presence of embodied and cultural factors in each context.

Contribution of personal history and perspectives: Explored how individuals’ personal histories and perspectives influenced how they form and use BUSINESS metaphors.

Importance of local culture: Emphasized the significance of local culture in shaping the formation and understanding of BUSINESS metaphors, and how specific cultural contexts influenced the selection and use of metaphorical language.

Example:

In the following excerpt, *heroes* serves as a metaphorical expression for the conceptual metaphor BUSINESS IS WAR:

“But many retail workers, heralded as heroes during the first wave of the pandemic, are not being provided with the same level of bonuses and raises this time, even as the health risks for them increase.” (A.112)

Drawing from the theory of Metaphorical Conceptualization (Kövecses, 2010a), the interaction between embodiment, culture, and specific contextual factors in the conceptual metaphor of BUSINESS IS WAR can be analyzed as follows:

Influence of embodiment and cultural context: The portrayal of retail workers as *heroes* during the pandemic’s first wave reflected a perception influenced by both embodied experiences and cultural narratives. The embodiment of struggle and sacrifice, coupled with cultural ideals of heroism and valor, shaped the understanding of retail work as comparable to warfare.

Interaction between embodiment and culture: The interaction between embodied experiences of hardship and societal perceptions of heroism influenced the formation and interpretation of the BUSINESS IS WAR metaphor. Retail workers might embody the role of soldiers on the front lines, facing adversity in the battlefield of commerce.

Diversity of influencing contexts: Various contextual factors, including the physical demands of retail work, societal expectations of heroism and sacrifice, and discourse surrounding economic challenges, contributed to the use and understanding of the BUSINESS IS WAR metaphor within the retail industry.

Selection and use of metaphorical language: The choice to depict retail workers as *heroes* reflected a selection of metaphorical language that resonated with both embodied experiences and cultural narratives. This language was used to convey the challenges and adversities faced by retail workers in the context of the pandemic.

Contribution of personal history and perspectives: Individuals’ personal histories, such as experiences of hardship or resilience, might influence how the

writer interpreted and used the BUSINESS IS WAR metaphor. Those with direct experience in challenging work environments might perceive retail work through the lens of warfare more strongly.

Importance of local culture: The significance of local cultural norms, including perceptions of work ethic, heroism, and sacrifice, shaped the formation and understanding of the BUSINESS IS WAR metaphor within the retail industry. Cultural ideals of heroism and valor contributed to framing retail work as a battle against adversity.

3.5. Validity

Validity in mixed-methods research ensures that the findings accurately represent the phenomena being studied, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to create a comprehensive understanding (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007). This study employed strategies aligned with the explanatory sequential mixed methods (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of its findings from multiple perspectives.

Triangulation

Triangulation was achieved by integrating qualitative and quantitative data sources. The study analyzed 60 articles from the Retail section of Forbes magazine, quantitatively examining metaphor frequency and qualitatively interpreting conceptual patterns. Insights were corroborated through consultations with educated native speakers and metaphor studies experts. Cross-referencing findings across these sources ensured that emerging themes were coherent and supported by diverse evidence. This multi-dimensional approach enhanced the validity of both qualitative and quantitative components, providing a robust understanding of BUSINESS metaphors within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Clarifying researcher bias

Reflexivity was employed to address potential biases in interpreting data. The researcher's academic background in business studies and experiences were acknowledged and systematically documented in reflective journals. Incorporating

feedback from native speakers and professional experts helped mitigate subjective biases, ensuring balanced interpretations. These efforts align with the explanatory sequential mixed methods design's emphasis on transparency, enabling readers to understand how personal perspectives may have influenced the findings.

Rich, thick description

The study provided rich, thick descriptions to contextualize both qualitative interpretations and quantitative data. By detailing the socio-economic and cultural settings of the pandemic, the analysis illuminated the relevance and nuances of BUSINESS metaphors. This depth allowed for an integrated understanding of the metaphors' functions and ensured that the quantitative findings were meaningfully embedded within their qualitative context.

3.6. Reliability

Reliability in mixed-methods research emphasizes the consistency and dependability of both qualitative and quantitative procedures, ensuring replicability and alignment between the mixed methods components (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007). This study adopted strategies to maintain methodological rigor across its explanatory sequential mixed methods design.

Consistent data collection procedures

Standardized protocols were established for collecting and analyzing data across qualitative and quantitative components. Articles were selected based on defined criteria, and quantitative frequency analysis of metaphorical expressions was conducted uniformly. The qualitative metaphor identification process was also guided by established methods, such as the Metaphor Identification Procedure (Pragglejaz Group, 2007), ensuring consistency throughout the study.

Verification with educated native speakers

Educated native speakers were engaged to verify the appropriateness and contextual relevance of identified metaphors. Their feedback informed both the qualitative interpretations and the quantitative categorization of metaphors. Discrepancies were resolved through collaborative discussions, enhancing

consistency across methods.

Professional consultancy

Experts in metaphor studies were consulted to ensure the conceptual soundness of BUSINESS metaphors identified through qualitative analysis. Their insights reinforced the accuracy and reliability of metaphorical conceptualization and strengthened the integration of qualitative and quantitative findings.

Documentation of procedures

Comprehensive documentation of all procedures, including data collection, quantitative analysis, metaphor identification, and validation processes, was maintained. This detailed record enables replication of the study and ensures transparency in methodological decisions. The Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design (Creswell & Creswell, 2017), was explicitly followed, ensuring clear alignment between the quantitative and qualitative components.

By integrating these strategies, the study achieved reliability and validity, reflecting the rigor expected in mixed-methods research. This comprehensive approach ensured that the findings were both credible and applicable to the broader discourse on BUSINESS metaphors during the pandemic.

Summary of Chapter 3

This chapter presents the methodological framework for analyzing conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in retail discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. The study is guided by Pragmatism as the core research paradigms. Pragmatism supports methodological flexibility, integrating qualitative and quantitative methods to address complex research questions.

A mixed methods and corpus-based approach underpins the research, enabling the comprehensive analysis of BUSINESS metaphors by combining qualitative metaphor identification with quantitative frequency analysis. The study adopts explanatory sequential mixed methods framework, prioritizing quantitative analysis with qualitative elements to enhance empirical rigor.

The chapter details the process of data collection, corpus compilation, and text processing from Forbes Retail articles, spanning the Covid-19 crisis and recovery phases. A pilot study validates specific BUSINESS concepts, refining the selection of target words for metaphor analysis. The Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) is applied to detect metaphorical expressions, followed by source domain categorization to systematically classify and analyze conceptual mappings.

This methodological framework, driven by research questions and grounded in established paradigms and mixed methods, ensures a robust and nuanced investigation into the conceptualization, framing, and ideological dimensions of BUSINESS metaphors in retail discourse during the pandemic.

CHAPTER 4: CONCEPTUALIZATION AND FRAMING OF CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF BUSINESS

This chapter presents the findings and discussion on the categorization of source domains, conceptualization and framing of conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in U.S. retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. Organized into two research phases - 2020 (crisis phase) and 2021-2022 (recovery phase) - it addresses Research Questions 1 and 2 by analyzing metaphorical expressions, their source domains, and the structures of conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS at both generic and specific levels.

4.1. Conceptual Categorization

This section addresses Research Question 1:

“What source domains are mapped onto the target domain of BUSINESS in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic?”

The objective of this section is to identify the source domains mapped onto the target domain of BUSINESS in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic across two phases - the crisis phase (2020) and the recovery phase (2021-2022).

4.1.1. Findings of Source Domains Mapping onto the Target Domain BUSINESS

This section presents the findings from two key analytical steps. First, it outlines the identification of metaphorical expressions that represent the target domain BUSINESS. Second, it illustrates the categorization of these metaphorical expressions into generic and specific source domains.

The findings are organized according to two phases of retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic: the crisis phase (2020) and the recovery phase (2021-2022). These results provide a comprehensive account of the linguistic and conceptual representation of BUSINESS, serving as the foundation for the analysis and discussion in Section 4.1.2.

4.1.1.1 Metaphorical Expressions and Source Domains in the Crisis Phase (2020)

During the crisis phase of 2020, a total of 480 metaphorical expressions were

identified, offering a comprehensive view of how BUSINESS was linguistically framed during the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic. These metaphorical expressions were categorized into 14 generic source domains, further subdivided into 39 specific source domains, providing nuanced insights into the conceptualization of BUSINESS. This section presents and describes the findings, focusing first on metaphorical expressions and subsequently on their categorization into source domains.

These findings are summarized in the table below, which presents the identified metaphorical expressions, their distribution across generic and specific source domains, and their corresponding frequencies. The table also includes examples of metaphorical expressions that highlight how these linguistic elements were used to frame BUSINESS in the discourse during the crisis phase of 2020.

Table 4.1

Metaphorical Expressions and Source Domains in the Crisis Phase - 2020

CRISIS PHASE - 2020						
Target Domain	Generic Source Domains	Specific Source Domains	Number of Metaphorical Expressions	Frequency	Examples	Generic Conceptual Metaphors
BUSINESS	WAR	BATTLE	96	20.0%	Retailers ... <i>hit hard</i> by the Covid-19 pandemic ...	BUSINESS IS WAR
		STRUGGLE			... all <i>fighting</i> for the consumer's attention.	
		MILITARY OPERATIONS			Nike's "Play Inside, Play for the World" <i>campaign</i> is a fitting example ...	
		STAND FOR SURVIVAL			... e-commerce orders ... become a <i>survival tool</i> ...	
	MOVEMENT	MOTION	65	13.5%	... we (retailers) can ... <i>shift</i> to survival mode.	BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT
		PHYSICAL MOVEMENT			The <i>bump</i> retailers typically get from ...	
		NAVIGATION			... the biggest names to have <i>run aground</i> this year ...	
		SHIFT			... retailer has tried to <i>shake off</i> its image as ...	
	RESILIENCE	ENDURANCE	63	13.1%	... retailers are generally a <i>durable group</i> ...	BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE
		ADAPTATION			... example of an <i>agile</i> marketing campaign ...	
		FLEXIBILITY			... when the economy <i>rebounds</i> ...	
	FLUCTUATION	INSTABILITY	44	9.2%	... chains <i>teetering</i> on the edge of bankruptcy.	BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION
VOTALITY		... sales <i>tumble</i> during the pandemic.				

CRISIS PHASE - 2020						
Target Domain	Generic Source Domains	Specific Source Domains	Number of Metaphorical Expressions	Frequency	Examples	Generic Conceptual Metaphors
	DETERIORATION	DISRUPTION	32	6.7%	... sales never <i>ground to a halt</i> the way ...	BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION
		DECLINE			... estate will notice their jobs <i>going under</i> .	
	PRESSURE	DEPLETION	30	6.3%	... revenues have <i>dried up</i> .	BUSINESS IS PRESSURE
		STRESS			... pandemic <i>forced</i> many retailers ...	
		VULNERABILITY			... leaving retailers that sit in the middle highly <i>exposed</i> .	
	PROTECTION	MANIPULATION	26	5.4%	... loyal consumers <i>dominate</i> over ...	BUSINESS IS PROTECTION
		SAFEGUARD			... the “ <i>crib</i> economy” becomes more prevalent ...	
		ATTACHMENT			... discount retailers to <i>embrace</i> online selling ...	
	HUMAN	FOUNDATION	26	5.4%	... retail will always remain <i>core</i> to the vibrancy ...	BUSINESS IS A HUMAN
		LIFE			AI-driven big data retailing has been <i>maturing</i> for ...	
		GAMBLING			... biggest <i>winner</i> to emerge is e-commerce ...	
	TRANSFORMATION	TRAVEL	25	5.2%	... ability to <i>shift gears</i> quickly ...	BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION
		PROGRESSION			... retailers ... evolve to include new models of sales ...	
	PROGRESS	TRANSITION	23	4.8%	... offline retailers <i>moving</i> into online by ...	BUSINESS IS PROGRESS
CONSTRUCTION		... especially as online ordering <i>ramps up</i> .				
	PERFORMANCE			... how they ... <i>play out on the big stage</i> in the years ...		

CRISIS PHASE - 2020						
Target Domain	Generic Source Domains	Specific Source Domains	Number of Metaphorical Expressions	Frequency	Examples	Generic Conceptual Metaphors
		DYNAMICS			... online retail, already <i>booming</i> , will grow ...	
	EXPANSION	AMPLIFICATION	20	4.2%	As online shopping continues to <i>balloon</i> ...	BUSINESS IS EXPANSION
		MOMENTUM			... trend too is now in <i>full gear</i> .	
	OPERATION	MECHANISM	20	4.2%	... plans to keep stores <i>running</i> ...	BUSINESS IS OPERATION
		TOOLS			... businesses can <i>leverage</i> advanced technology ...	
	FORCE	PHYSICAL FORCE	6	1.3%	... strong <i>grasp</i> of customer expectations on pricing ...	BUSINESS IS FORCE
		TRAJECTORY			... U.S. economy <i>revolves</i> around consumer spending ...	
		GRAVITY			... employment hiring has significantly <i>dipped</i> ...	
	PHYSICAL PROCESSES	EVOLUTION	4	0.8%	... pivot witnessed explosive <i>growth</i> ...	BUSINESS IS PHYSICAL PROCESSES
		RESPONSE			... retail industry has been <i>sounding alarms</i> ...	
	(14 generic source domains)	(39 specific source domains)	480	100.0%		

(a) *Metaphorical Expressions*

The identified metaphorical expressions illustrate the linguistic strategies used to depict BUSINESS during the crisis phase of 2020, a period marked by unprecedented challenges. These expressions captured themes of conflict, movement, resilience, and instability, reflecting the discourse's emphasis on survival, adaptation, and transformation.

The most prominent metaphorical expressions emerged in contexts describing BUSINESS as:

'A battleground', emphasizing struggle and survival during the crisis. For example, the metaphorical expressions such as *struggle (... small businesses ... struggle to adapt)* and *survival tool (... e-commerce orders ... become a survival tool ...)* portray BUSINESS as engaged in intense conflict against external forces.

'Dynamic and adaptive', highlighting the agility required to navigate uncertainties. For instance, expressions such as *shift (we (retailers) can ... shift to survival mode)* and *shake off (... retailer has tried to shake off its image as ...)* emphasize strategic movement and repositioning.

'Resilient and durable', focusing on the capacity to withstand external pressures. Examples include *durable group (... retailers are generally a durable group ...)* and *agile (... example of an agile marketing campaign ...)*, which frame BUSINESS as capable of enduring hardships while adapting to the crisis.

'Precarious and unstable', reflecting the fragility and unpredictability faced by businesses. The expressions *teetering ("... chains teetering on the edge of bankruptcy ...")* and *dried up ("... revenues have dried up ...")* convey the volatility of the business environment during the pandemic.

These metaphorical expressions provide the foundation for identifying and categorizing the source domains, representing the semantic fields from which these expressions derive, as presented in the following section.

(b) *Source Domains*

The metaphorical expressions were systematically categorized into 14 generic source domains, reflecting key conceptual dimensions of BUSINESS during the crisis. These domains represent overarching semantic fields, with each subdivided into specific source domains to capture finer distinctions:

WAR: As the most prominent source domain, WAR accounted for 96 metaphorical expressions (20.0%), framing BUSINESS as a conflict-driven endeavor. Specific source domains within WAR include BATTLE (“Retailers... **hit hard** by the Covid-19 pandemic ...”), STRUGGLE (... all **fighting** for the consumer’s attention”), MILITARY OPERATIONS (“Nike’s “Play Inside, Play for the World” **campaign** is a fitting example ...”), and STAND FOR SURVIVAL (... e-commerce orders ... become a **survival tool** ...”). This domain reflects the discourse’s focus on the fight for survival and competitive pressures faced by businesses.

MOVEMENT: Accounting for 65 expressions (13.5%), MOVEMENT emphasizes the dynamic adjustments businesses made during the pandemic. Specific source domains include MOTION (*we (retailers) can ... **shift** to survival mode*), PHYSICAL MOVEMENT (“The **bump** retailers typically get from...”), NAVIGATION (“... the biggest names to have **run aground** this year...”), and SHIFT (... retailer has tried to **shake off** its image as ...). This domain highlights the agility and strategic redirection required to navigate uncertainties.

RESILIENCE: With 63 expressions (13.1%), RESILIENCE reflects the focus on endurance and adaptability in the face of challenges. Specific source domains include ENDURANCE (... retailers are generally a **durable group** ...), ADAPTATION (“... example of an **agile** marketing campaign ...”), and FLEXIBILITY (“When the economy **rebounds**...”). This domain captures the linguistic framing of BUSINESS as capable of withstanding and adjusting to external pressures.

FLUCTUATION: Representing 44 expressions (9.2%), this domain focuses on instability and unpredictability, with specific source domains including INSTABILITY (“...chains **teetering** on the edge of bankruptcy”), VOLATILITY (... sales **tumble** during the pandemic) and DISRUPTION (“Sales never **ground to a halt** the way...”).

DETERIORATION: Comprising 32 expressions (6.7%), this domain highlights decline and depletion, with examples such as “... estate will notice their jobs **going under**” (DECLINE) and “... revenues have **dried up**” (DEPLETION)

PRESSURE: Accounting for 30 expressions (6.3%), this domain captures external stresses, including specific domains STRESS (“... pandemic **forced** many retailers to...”), VULNERABILITY (“... leaving retailers that sit in the middle highly **exposed**”)

and MANIPULATION (... *loyal consumers **dominate** over ...*).

PROTECTION: Accounting for 26 metaphorical expressions (5.4%), emphasizing safeguarding and maintaining stability during the crisis. Specific source domains include SAFEGUARD (“... *the **crib** economy becomes more prevalent ...*”), ATTACHMENT (“... *discount retailers to **embrace** online selling ...*”) and FOUNDATION (“... *retail will always remain **core** to the vibrancy ...*”). These expressions depict BUSINESS as requiring protection and foundational stability during external disruptions.

HUMAN: Also, with 26 metaphorical expressions (5.4%), this generic source domain personifies BUSINESS, attributing human-like qualities or actions. Specific source domains include LIFE (“*AI-driven big data retailing has been **maturing** for ...*”), GAMBLING (“... *biggest **winner** to emerge is e-commerce ...*”) and TRAVEL (“... *ability to **shift gears** quickly ...*”). These expressions frame BUSINESS as a human-like entity capable of growth, risk, and navigation.

TRANSFORMATION: Comprising 25 metaphorical expressions (5.2%), it reflects change and evolution in BUSINESS models and operations. Specific source domains are PROGRESSION (“... *retailers ... **evolve** to include new models of sales ...*”) and TRANSITION (“... *offline retailers **moving** into online by ...*”). These expressions portray BUSINESS as undergoing significant transformations to align with new market demands.

PROGRESS: This generic source domain accounts for 23 metaphorical expressions (4.8%), reflecting development and forward momentum in BUSINESS. Specific source domains include CONSTRUCTION (“... *many retailers and brands are considering **redrawing** supply chains ...*”) and PERFORMANCE (“... *how they ... **play out on the big stage** in the years ...*”) and DYNAMICS (“*Online retail, already **booming**, will grow ...*”). These expressions emphasize the ongoing efforts to achieve growth despite the challenges.

EXPANSION: With 20 metaphorical expressions (4.2%), EXPANSION highlights BUSINESS growth and scaling. Specific source domains include AMPLIFICATION (“*As online shopping continues to **balloon** ...*”) and MOMENTUM (“... *trend too is now in **full gear***”). This generic source domain frames BUSINESS as expanding its capabilities, especially in e-commerce.

OPERATION: The domain OPERATION, with 20 metaphorical expressions (4.2%), focuses on BUSINESS functionality and systems. Specific source domains include MECHANISM (“... *plans to keep stores **running** ...*”) and TOOLS (“*Businesses can **leverage** advanced technology ...*”). These expressions depict BUSINESS as a system driven by efficiency and adaptation.

The less frequent domains include FORCE (1.3%, 6 expressions) with examples like “...*strong **grasp** of customer expectations on pricing*”, and PHYSICAL PROCESSES (0.8%, 4 expressions) with examples such as “... *pivot witnessed explosive **growth** ...*”. These domains, though minimal, highlight external pressures and transformative changes affecting BUSINESS.

4.1.1.2 Metaphorical Expressions and Source Domains in the Recovery Phase (2021-2022)

During the recovery phase of 2021-2022, a total of 419 metaphorical expressions were identified, revealing shifts in the conceptual framing of BUSINESS compared to the crisis phase. These metaphorical expressions were categorized into 17 generic source domains and further subdivided into 29 specific source domains, reflecting the diverse strategies businesses employed to navigate recovery. This section presents and describes these findings, beginning with metaphorical expressions and then examining their categorization into source domains.

The following table provides a detailed overview of the identified metaphorical expressions, their corresponding generic and specific source domains, frequency, and illustrative examples, offering a comprehensive snapshot of how BUSINESS was conceptualized during this phase.

Table 4.2

Metaphorical Expressions and Source Domains in the Recovery Phase - 2021-2022

RECOVERY PHASE - 2021-2022						
Target Domain	Generic Source Domains	Specific Source Domains	Number of Metaphorical Expressions	Frequency	Examples	Generic Conceptual Metaphors
BUSINESS	EXPANSION	AMPLIFICATION	83	19.8%	As e-commerce <i>proliferates</i> , the barriers ...	BUSINESS IS EXPANSION
		CONSTRUCTION			... retailers can <i>build</i> resilient ...	
		DEVELOPMENT			... <i>move further</i> along their digital transformation journey.	
	WAR	BATTLE	51	12.2%	Being the first <i>line of defense</i> ... retail ...	BUSINESS IS WAR
		CONFLICT			... retail pie will be shared among fewer <i>competitors</i> .	
		COMPETITION			... retailers ... <i>win</i> new customers ...	
		DEFENSE			... company is <i>hunkering down</i> on the cost side ...	
	RESILIENCE	ENDURANCE	51	12.2%	... e-commerce is <i>tougher</i> than it looks.	BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE
		ADAPTATION			Stores <i>morphed</i> into Amazon-style fulfillment centers ...	
		STABILITY			... stores as the <i>anchor</i> of their business.	
	MOVEMENT	MOTION	41	9.8%	... retailers to <i>make the shift</i> to digital payments ...	BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT
		TRANSITION			... industry <i>parts ways</i> with the past.	
		MOBILITY			... <i>ahead of the curve</i> in adopting Web 3.0 capabilities ...	
	FLUCTUATION	VOLTAGE	34	8.1%	... since the pandemic ... online sales have <i>surged</i> ...	BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION
		DISRUPTION			... facing a market <i>turned upside down</i> .	
PRESSURE	STRESS	32	7.6%	... were <i>forced</i> rather swiftly ... online selling.	BUSINESS IS PRESSURE	
	TENSION			... small businesses are <i>feeling the brunt</i> .		
TRANSFORMATION	PROGRESSION	24	5.7%	... how retail <i>evolves</i> in 2021 ...		

RECOVERY PHASE - 2021-2022						
Target Domain	Generic Source Domains	Specific Source Domains	Number of Metaphorical Expressions	Frequency	Examples	Generic Conceptual Metaphors
		RENEWAL			Retailers ... have <i>emerged</i> stronger.	BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION
	DETERIORATION	DECLINE	23	5.5%	... consumer demand <i>wanes</i> ...	BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION
		COLLAPSE			Consumer confidence <i>tumbled</i> ...	
	JOURNEY	EXPLORATION	19	4.5%	... retailers ... <i>charting</i> a sustainable <i>path forward</i> .	BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY
		ASPIRATION			... (consumers) is <i>craving</i> a return to normal ...	
	LEADERSHIP	AUTHORITY	18	4.3%	U.S. q-commerce <i>pioneer</i> ...	BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP
		GUIDANCE			As the <i>eyes and ears</i> for companies ...	
	NATURE	SURVIVAL	17	4.1%	To <i>weather</i> supply chain disruptions ...	BUSINESS IS NATURE
		ENERGY			... more normal situation, retailers will get <i>exuberant</i> ...	
	AWARENESS	CONTROL	16	3.8%	... <i>galvanising</i> our customers to get creative ...	BUSINESS IS AWARENESS
		PERCEPTION			... promote <i>conscious</i> consumption.	
	BALANCE		3	0.7%	... retailers are <i>staying quiet</i> on whether ...	BUSINESS IS BALANCE
	ENGAGEMENT		3	0.7%	... brands have already <i>voiced</i> optimism ...	BUSINESS IS ENGAGEMENT
	IMPACT		2	0.5%	... shoppers <i>pinched</i> by inflation ...	BUSINESS IS IMPACT
	DELIBERATION		1	0.2%	... <i>conscious</i> consumption ...	BUSINESS IS DELIBERATION
	FRAGILITY		1	0.2%	... <i>razor-thin</i> profit margins ...	BUSINESS IS FRAGILITY
	(17 generic source domains)	(29 specific source domains)	419	100.0%		

(a) *Metaphorical Expressions*

The metaphorical expressions identified during this phase emphasize growth, resilience, and transformation, capturing how businesses adapted to new challenges and opportunities. These expressions are reflected in the following prominent linguistic patterns or conceptual themes:

‘Expansion and growth’: Metaphorical expressions such as *proliferates* (“*As e-commerce proliferates, the barriers ...*”) and *move further* (“*... move further along their digital transformation journey*”) frame BUSINESS as undergoing rapid expansion and development. These expressions reflect a discourse centered on scaling operations and broadening capacities, particularly in digital platforms.

‘Conflict and competition’: The expressions *line of defense* (“*Being the first line of defense ... retail ...*”) and *win* (“*... retailers ... win new customers ...*”) highlight BUSINESS as an arena of strategic competition. This framing captures the persistent challenges businesses faced in maintaining market presence.

‘Resilience and stability’: Expressions such as *anchor* (“*... stores as the anchor of their business*”) and *tougher* (“*... e-commerce is tougher than it looks*”) underscore the resilience businesses demonstrated during this period. These linguistic choices emphasize stability and adaptability in the face of lingering uncertainties.

‘Dynamic adjustments’: The expressions *make the shift* (“*... retailers to make the shift to digital payments ...*”) and *parts ways* (“*... industry parts ways with the past*”) depict BUSINESS as actively adapting to new realities, particularly through digital innovation.

These metaphorical expressions lay the foundation for the categorization into semantic fields and source domains.

(b) *Source Domains*

The metaphorical expressions were systematically categorized into generic source domains, reflecting key conceptual dimensions of BUSINESS during recovery. Each domain provides insights into the strategies businesses used to navigate recovery.

EXPANSION: The most frequent generic source domain, EXPANSION, accounted for 83 metaphorical expressions (19.8%). Specific source domains include AMPLIFICATION (“*As e-commerce **proliferates**, the barriers ...*”), CONSTRUCTION

(“... retailers can **build** resilient ...”), and DEVELOPMENT (“... **move further** along their digital transformation journey”). This generic source domain reflects a focus on growth and scaling, with particular attention to digital transformation.

WAR: WAR accounted for 51 expressions (12.2%), framing BUSINESS as a competitive battlefield. Specific source domains include BATTLE (“Being the first **line of defense** ...”), CONFLICT (“... retail pie will be shared among fewer **competitors**”), COMPETITION (“... retailers ... **win** new customers”), and DEFENSE (“... company is **hunkering down** on the cost side ...”). This domain emphasizes strategic maneuvers to maintain or regain market share.

RESILIENCE: With 51 expressions (12.2%), RESILIENCE captures the discourse’s focus on endurance and stability. Specific domains include ENDURANCE (“... e-commerce is **tougher** than it looks”), ADAPTATION (“Stores **morphed** into Amazon-style fulfillment centers”), and STABILITY (“... stores as the **anchor** of their business”). These expressions depict businesses as enduring and adaptable in the recovery phase.

MOVEMENT: Accounting for 41 expressions (9.8%), MOVEMENT highlights dynamic adjustments businesses made. Specific source domains include MOTION (“... retailers to **make the shift** to digital payments ...”), TRANSITION (“... industry **parts ways** with the past”), and MOBILITY (“... **ahead of the curve** in adopting Web 3.0 capabilities ...”). This domain emphasizes flexibility and strategic repositioning.

FLUCTUATION: Representing 34 expressions (8.1%), this domain reflects instability. Specific domains include VOLTAGE (“... online sales have **surged** ...”) and DISRUPTION (“... facing a market **turned upside down**”). These expressions reveal the volatility businesses faced in recovering demand and stabilizing operations.

PRESSURE: With 32 expressions (7.6%), PRESSURE captures the external stresses businesses endured. Specific domains include STRESS (“... were **forced** rather swiftly ...”), and FORCE (“... small businesses are **feeling the brunt** ...”). This domain underscores the intense demands businesses had to manage.

TRANSFORMATION: Comprising 24 expressions (5.7%), TRANSFORMATION highlights change and innovation. Specific domains include PROGRESSION (“... how retail **evolves** in 2021 ...”) and RENEWAL (“Retailers ... have **emerged** stronger”). This

domain portrays BUSINESS as adapting and evolving to align with new realities.

DETERIORATION: Accounting for 23 expressions (5.5%), DETERIORATION reflects decline and instability. Specific domains include DECLINE (“... *consumer demand wanes* ...”) and COLLAPSE (“*Consumer confidence tumbled* ...”). These expressions capture challenges businesses faced despite recovery efforts.

JOURNEY: JOURNEY, representing 19 expressions (4.5%), reflects BUSINESS as progressing toward goals. Specific domains include EXPLORATION (“... *retailers ... charting a sustainable path forward*”) and ASPIRATION (“... *consumers ... craving a return to normal* ...”). This domain underscores the forward-looking strategies businesses adopted.

LEADERSHIP: Accounting for 18 metaphorical expressions (4.3%), this generic source domain reflects BUSINESS as a guiding and authoritative entity. Specific source domains such as AUTHORITY and GUIDANCE are highlighted in expressions like “*U.S. q-commerce pioneer* ...” and “*As the eyes and ears for companies ...*,” portraying businesses as strategic leaders navigating recovery.

NATURE: comprising 17 metaphorical expressions (4.1%), NATURE emphasizes BUSINESS as intertwined with natural processes. Examples such as “*To weather supply chain disruptions* ...” (SURVIVAL) and “... *more normal situation, retailers will get exuberant* ...” (ENERGY) frame businesses as resilient forces adapting to external pressures.

AWARENESS: with 16 expressions (3.8%), this generic source domain positions BUSINESS as a conscious and perceptive entity. Examples such as “... *galvanizing our customers to get creative* ...” (CONTROL) and “... *promote conscious consumption*” (PERCEPTION) underline the focus on strategic awareness and influence over consumer behavior.

The source domains BALANCE, ENGAGEMENT, IMPACT, DELIBERATION, and FRAGILITY collectively account for a small portion of the total metaphorical expressions, with frequencies ranging from 0.2% to 0.7%. Due to their limited occurrences and broad conceptual scope, they are not further categorized into specific source domains.

4.1.2. Discussion of the Findings

The findings from the analysis of metaphorical expressions and source domains in the crisis phase (2020) and recovery phase (2021-2022) reveal the evolving linguistic strategies employed in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. These findings align closely with the socio-economic disruptions and recovery dynamics outlined in Section 1.1, providing insights into how businesses navigated unprecedented challenges and shifting market conditions.

(a) Crisis phase (2020): Linguistic framing of survival and instability

The crisis phase of 2020 was characterized by widespread economic uncertainty and rapid adaptations in the retail sector. The identification of 480 metaphorical expressions during this period reflects the intense focus on survival and the dynamic responses to external pressures. These expressions were categorized into 14 generic source domains and 39 specific source domains, illustrating the complex ways in which businesses framed their challenges.

The prominence of WAR as the largest generic source domain (20.0% of expressions) reflects the perception of the crisis as an existential struggle. Specific source domains such as BATTLE and STRUGGLE captured the immediate challenges businesses faced, with expressions - *struggle (to adapt)*, *fighting (for the consumer's attention)* highlighting the intense competition and efforts to stay afloat. This aligns with the socio-economic context of mandatory closures and shrinking consumer spending (Rushe, 2021), where businesses had to fight for survival amid limited resources and heightened uncertainty.

The second-largest generic source domain, MOVEMENT (13.5%), underscores the agility and adaptability required during this phase. Expressions such as *shift (to survival mode)* and *navigate (new challenges)* reflect the dynamic adjustments businesses made to maintain operations. These linguistic choices mirror the widespread adoption of e-commerce and contactless delivery as retailers pivoted to new operational models (Goldberg, 2020).

Source domains such as RESILIENCE (13.1%) and FLUCTUATION (9.2%) further emphasize the fragility and adaptability of the retail sector during this period. Expressions related to ENDURANCE ("*retailers are generally a **durable** group*", "*bear*

the brunt” of the economic impact”) and INSTABILITY (“*teetering on the edge of bankruptcy*”) reveal the dual pressures of maintaining operational stability while contending with unpredictable market conditions. These findings resonate with the societal emphasis on resilience as a key narrative during the pandemic, as businesses and individuals alike sought to weather the storm (Roy, 2020).

Smaller source domains such as DETERIORATION (6.7%) (*... revenues have dried up*) and PRESSURE (6.3%) (“*pandemic forced many retailers to...*”) captured the external stresses and financial challenges many businesses faced, while domains like PROTECTION (5.4%) (“*...embrace online selling*”) reflected efforts to safeguard core operations. Collectively, these linguistic patterns highlight the sector’s focus on short-term survival and tactical responses during one of the most disruptive economic periods in modern history.

(Detailed information on the generic source domains, specific source domains, and corresponding metaphorical expressions is provided in Appendix C of the thesis).

(b) Recovery Phase (2021-2022): Linguistic framing of growth and adaptation

During the recovery phase (2021-2022), the linguistic framing in retail industry discourse shifted toward growth, rebuilding, and strategic adaptation. A total of 419 metaphorical expressions were identified, categorized into 17 generic source domains and 29 specific source domains, illustrating the evolving priorities of the retail sector. This shift reflects the broader stabilization of the economy during this period, as GDP growth resumed and consumer confidence gradually improved (Kozlova, 2021).

EXPANSION emerged as the most prominent generic source domain (19.8%), reflecting the discourse’s emphasis on growth and scaling operations. Specific source domains such as AMPLIFICATION and DEVELOPMENT captured the strategic focus on leveraging opportunities in a recovering market. Expressions such as “*e-commerce proliferates; ... move further along their digital transformation journey*” highlight the rapid adoption of digital platforms, underscoring the transformative role of technology in shaping the retail landscape (Goldberg, 2020).

WAR remained a significant source domain, comprising 12.2% of expressions. The recovery discourse continued to frame BUSINESS as a competitive and strategic endeavor. Specific source domains, including BATTLE, CONFLICT, COMPETITION,

and DEFENSE, emphasize the challenges of navigating a crowded market and maintaining cost efficiency. For example, expressions such as “*Being the first **line of defense**...*” and “... *retailers **win** new customers*” reflect how businesses adopted strategic measures to secure market share and outmaneuver competitors during the recovery phase.

Similarly, RESILIENCE (12.2%) continued to feature prominently, reflecting the ongoing importance of adaptability and stability in the retail sector. Specific source domains such as ENDURANCE, ADAPTATION and STABILITY were evident in expressions like “... *e-commerce is **tougher** than it looks*” and “... *stores as the **anchor** of their business.*” These linguistic patterns align with the sector’s efforts to establish robust operational foundations amid lingering uncertainties.

MOVEMENT (9.8%) remained significant in the recovery phase, reflecting how businesses continued their transition toward digital innovation. Expressions such as “... ***make the shift** to digital payments*” and “... ***parts ways** with the past*” illustrate strategic repositioning efforts. Drawing from Kövecses’s (2010a) insights, such metaphors rely on embodied experiences of movement to conceptualize abstract changes. Unlike the crisis phase, these expressions signal long-term transitions, highlighting the retail sector’s alignment with societal shifts toward convenience and digital accessibility (Parker et al., 2020).

FLUCTUATION (8.1%) underscores ongoing market instability during recovery, with expressions like “... *online sales have surged*” and “... *facing a market **turned upside down.***” These align with Lakoff & Johnson’s (1980) emphasis on metaphors as tools for structuring abstract concepts like volatility through physical experiences. However, in the recovery phase, fluctuation metaphors also hinted at opportunities for growth, reflecting the sector’s cautious optimism amid lingering uncertainties (Goldberg, 2020).

(Detailed information on the generic source domains, specific source domains, and corresponding metaphorical expressions is provided in Appendix C of the thesis).

(c) Shifts between crisis and recovery phases

The linguistic strategies in retail industry discourse shifted significantly between the crisis phase (2020) and the recovery phase (2021-2022), reflecting broader socio-

economic transitions. The crisis phase emphasized survival, uncertainty, and short-term adaptations, while the recovery phase focused on rebuilding, growth, and long-term transformation.

One of the most notable shifts is the prominence of the WAR generic source domain. During the crisis phase, WAR accounted for 20.0% of metaphorical expressions, reflecting the immediate perception of the pandemic as an existential struggle. Specific source domains such as BATTLE and STRUGGLE conveyed businesses' efforts to survive intense competition and external pressures, aligning with the economic turbulence of 2020, marked by plummeting GDP and mass unemployment (Rushe, 2021). However, in the recovery phase, WAR declined to 12.2% of expressions, signaling a shift from outright survival to strategic competition and market positioning. Domains like DEFENSE and COMPETITION gained prominence, highlighting businesses' efforts to secure market share and implement cost efficiencies in a stabilizing economy.

Another key difference is the increased emphasis on EXPANSION during the recovery phase, which emerged as the most dominant generic source domain (19.8%). This marks a departure from the survival-focused metaphors of 2020, as businesses turned their attention to growth and scaling operations. Expressions like "*e-commerce proliferates*" and "*move further along their digital transformation journey*" reflect the sector's strategic pivot toward leveraging digital platforms to rebuild and innovate (Goldberg, 2020). In contrast, the crisis phase lacked a comparable focus on expansion, underscoring the different priorities between the two periods.

The role of MOVEMENT also evolved between the two phases. While it remained a significant domain, its framing shifted from immediate tactical responses in 2020, such as "*shift to survival mode*," to long-term transitions in 2021-2022, as reflected in expressions like "*make the shift to digital payments*" and "*parts ways with the past*." These changes align with societal trends toward digital adoption and convenience, as highlighted in Section 1.1 (Parker et al., 2020).

The recovery phase also saw the continued prominence of TRANSFORMATION (5.7%), slightly increasing from 5.2% in the crisis phase. This domain reflects the sector's growing focus on innovation, long-term planning, and sustainable growth as

businesses transitioned from survival to recovery.

Despite these differences, RESILIENCE remained a constant theme across both phases, with 13.1% of expressions in the crisis phase and 12.2% in the recovery phase. This consistency underscores the ongoing importance of stability and adaptability in the face of uncertainty. However, the framing of resilience evolved, with a greater emphasis on stability and operational foundations during recovery, as seen in expressions like “*stores as the anchor of their business*” (2021-2022 phase).

Overall, the shifts between the crisis and recovery phases illustrate how retail discourse adapted to changing economic and societal conditions. While the crisis phase focused on survival and short-term solutions, the recovery phase marked a transition toward rebuilding, growth, and innovation. These shifts not only reflect the retail sector’s resilience but also highlight the dynamic nature of linguistic strategies used to conceptualize BUSINESS during an unprecedented period of change.

4.2. Conceptualization and Framing of Conceptual Metaphors of BUSINESS

This section addresses the second research question: “*How are the conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS conceptualized and framed?*” The analysis explores the cognitive mappings underlying metaphorical conceptualization and the contextual roles these metaphors played in framing BUSINESS in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The findings build on the identification of 480 metaphorical expressions during the crisis phase (2020) and 419 during the recovery phase (2021-2022), as presented in Sections 4.1.1.1 and 4.1.1.2. These expressions were categorized into 14 generic source domains and 39 specific source domains for the crisis phase and 17 generic source domains and 29 specific source domains for the recovery phase.

This section narrows its focus to 12 generic metaphors in each phase, which encapsulate overarching conceptualizations of BUSINESS. These 12 generic metaphors account for the majority of metaphorical expressions and represent recurring patterns observed in the findings. Prioritizing these metaphors allows for a focused and comprehensive analysis of how BUSINESS was conceptualized and framed, providing insights into the cognitive and contextual dynamics that shaped the discourse. These generic metaphors are further elaborated into 34 specific metaphors for 2020 and 29

specific metaphors for 2021-2022, capturing the nuanced variations in metaphorical expression across phases.

By integrating conceptualization and framing, this section presents a unified analysis of how metaphors structured and contextualized BUSINESS during the pandemic. Conceptualization involves mapping source domains to the target domain BUSINESS, uncovering the underlying cognitive structures (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003; Kövecses, 2010a, 2017, 2020; Lakoff, 1987). Framing examines how these metaphors shaped the interpretation of BUSINESS within the socio-economic realities of the crisis and recovery phases (Kövecses, 2017). Addressing these aspects together provides a holistic view of the dual roles metaphors played in the discourse.

The subsequent sections analyze these 12 generic metaphors and their corresponding specific metaphors, revealing recurring patterns and shifts that defined the metaphorical conceptualization and framing of BUSINESS during the Covid-19 pandemic.

4.2.1. Findings of Conceptual Metaphors of BUSINESS

This section presents the findings of conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS during the crisis phase (2020) and the recovery phase (2021-2022). The results are organized into two tables, highlighting the 12 generic metaphors identified in each phase along with their corresponding specific metaphors.

In the crisis phase, the analysis identified 12 generic metaphors and 34 specific metaphors, while the recovery phase revealed 12 generic metaphors and 29 specific metaphors.

The following tables provide a structured overview of these findings, offering a detailed account of the conceptual metaphors across both phases.

Table 4.3*Conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in the crisis phase - 2020*

CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF BUSSINESS		
CRISIS PHASE - 2020		
Generic Metaphors	Specific Metaphors	Representative Metaphorical Expressions
BUSINESS IS WAR	BUSINESS IS A BATTLE	face ... final battle, hit hard, suffer ... final blow, suffer ... injury, fight (2), battered (2), heroes (2), endure, make a retreat
	BUSINESS IS A STRUGGLE	struggle (11), struggling, face ... challenge(s) (3), dead (3), crumble (3), crater ... collapse, suffer, exhaust, loss, lose (2), loser, winner
	BUSINESS IS MILITARY OPERATIONS	campaign (7), ramp up, score wins, following suit, score, play to the strengths, overcome, loss (2), weather ... blow
	BUSINESS IS A STAND FOR SURVIVAL	survive (16), survival (2), ride out, struggle (6), find their feet, navigate, face, shake off
BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT	BUSINESS IS MOTION	head, navigate, move at a rapid clip, shift, pick up, speed up, plummet, flock, take on a movement, reach new heights
	BUSINESS IS PHYSICAL MOVEMENT	bump, step up, elevate, move, carry, soar, retract, retreat, shift gears, shift
	BUSINESS IS NAVIGATION	run aground, on the horizon, set the course, shift, pivot, driver
	BUSINESS IS SHIFT	shift gears, shift, make a shift, pivot
BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE	BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE	durable, bear the brunt, straining, take the brunt, bounce back, breathing ... relief
	BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION	pivot, agile, shift gears, re-emerge, hunker down, navigate, move forward
	BUSINESS IS FLEXIBILITY	shift, jump, agile, elasticity, resilient, rebound, sustain
BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION	BUSINESS IS INSTABILITY	teeter, upend (2), dip (2), collapse (2), afloat (3), waver
	BUSINESS IS VOLATILITY	surge, shrivel, drop, grow, climb, spike, fall, slump, tumble, amplify
	BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION	sound alarms, crush, grind to a halt, shutdown, topple, upend
BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION	BUSINESS IS DECLINE	ghost town, lead astray, let slip, crater, disappear, lose, go under, fall
	BUSINESS IS DEPLETION	hit, take a hit, fall, plummet, drop, lose, dry up, erode, cut back

CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF BUSSINESS

CRISIS PHASE - 2020

Generic Metaphors	Specific Metaphors	Representative Metaphorical Expressions
BUSINESS IS PRESSURE	BUSINESS IS STRESS	forced, suffer, strain, push, weight on the mind, struggle, tipping point, exhaust
	BUSINESS IS VULNERABILITY	weak, expose, exposure, suffer (2), injury, waver
	BUSINESS IS MANIPULATION	act with ... wallets, dominate (2), wrap minds, make up, come into play, shape (2), gouge
BUSINESS IS PROTECTION	BUSINESS IS SAFEGUARD	crib (2), rebind (2), battered (2), shelter, wrapping ... mind
	BUSINESS IS ATTACHMENT	embrace (4), cling, stick (2), stuck
	BUSINESS IS FOUNDATION	ingrain, core, embed, strong, robust, pure, strengthen
BUSINESS IS A HUMAN	BUSINESS IS LIFE	mature, grow, healthy (2), crumbling, death, breathe ... relief, learn ... tricks, resilient
	BUSINESS IS GAMBLING	win, winner, loser, keep pace, grapple, leaving money on the table, watch pennies
	BUSINESS IS TRAVEL	drive, shift gears, journey, horse and buggy, explore, navigate
BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION	BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION	evolve, thrive, flourish, grow, turn around, come out, work through, emerge, recover
	BUSINESS IS TRANSITION	shift, move, garner, recoup, dead
BUSINESS IS PROGRESS	BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION	redrawing, ramp up (2), block, build, durable
	BUSINESS IS PERFORMANCE	see (2), play out on ... stage, stage, unfold, act
	BUSINESS IS DYNAMICS	leverage, run, shift, explode, run, loom, force, boom, reach, surge, vibrant
BUSINESS IS EXPANSION	BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION	come into ... own, stay, balloon, move, grow, boom, grow, climb, jump, accelerate, soar, bolster, panacea
	BUSINESS IS MOMENTUM	amplify, push, full gear, drive, surge, gain, build
BUSINESS IS OPERATION	BUSINESS IS MECHANISM	drive, run, grind to a halt, curate, feed, dented
	BUSINESS IS TOOLS	leverage, gauge, cut, grind, durable
<i>(Total: 12 generic metaphors)</i>	<i>(Total: 34 specific metaphors)</i>	

Table 4.4*Conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in the recovery phase - 2021-2022*

CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF BUSSINESS		
RECOVERY PHASE - 2021-2022		
Generic Metaphors	Specific Metaphors	Representative Metaphorical Expressions
BUSINESS IS EXPANSION	BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION	thrive, scale, grow, proliferate, spike, soar, rise, elevate, growth, emerge, build, ignite, boom
	BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION	build (2), have room, make room, beef up
	BUSINESS IS DEVELOPMENT	move further, take on a movement, lead the way, part ways, growth, evolve
BUSINESS IS WAR	BUSINESS IS A BATTLE	surrender, face, hit, line of defense, suffer, survival, grapple, decimate, challenge, force, win, lose
	BUSINESS IS CONFLICT	struggle (3), force, suffer (2), friction, compete, competitor, stick, face, challenge (2)
	BUSINESS IS COMPETITION	batter, win, lose, challenge, hit, raise ...game, face, woo ... away, compete, weak player
	BUSINESS IS DEFENSE	hunker down, barrier, line of defense, shelter, poised, protect
BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE	BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE	tough, struggle, resilient, batter, feel the brunt, face, bounce back, endure, strong, durable
	BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION	morph, renaissance, shift (3), eyes and ears x 2, pivot, face, make a shift, resilient, agile
	BUSINESS IS STABILITY	anchor, firm, hallowed, poised, anchor x 2, embrace, build, harmonized, calm
BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT	BUSINESS IS MOTION	shift, head, move forward, ride, streamline, take on a movement, jump, flow in
	BUSINESS IS TRANSITION	head into, head out, emerging, part way, shift, move, migrate, gravitate, evolve

CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF BUSSINESS

RECOVERY PHASE - 2021-2022

Generic Metaphors	Specific Metaphors	Representative Metaphorical Expressions
	BUSINESS IS MOBILITY	drive, driver, go forward, ahead of the curve, move forward
BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION	BUSINESS IS VOLTAGE	surge, skyrocket, squeeze, turn off, explode, boom, swing, jump, bounce back, fall, drop, bounce
	BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION	struggle, sour, turn upside down, disaster, upheaval
BUSINESS IS PRESSURE	BUSINESS IS STRESS	get stressed, weight on the mind, force, struggle, feel the squeeze
	BUSINESS IS TENSION	felt the brunt, embrace, seize, muster, get a handle
BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION	BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION	evolve, re-emerge, thrive
	BUSINESS IS RENEWAL	refine, emerge, wake up, revive
BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION	BUSINESS IS DECLINE	wane, go under, drag down, dying (4)
	BUSINESS IS COLLAPSE	fall (2), tumble
BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY	BUSINESS IS EXPLORATION	explore (2), navigate, chart a path forward, head into, head out, take a leap of faith, journey
	BUSINESS IS ASPIRATION	chase, crave, embrace (2)
BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP	BUSINESS IS AUTHORITY	pioneer (2), king, dictate, stay ahead of the curve (2), head
	BUSINESS IS GUIDANCE	navigate, skirt, eyes and ears, leading, lead the way
BUSINESS IS NATURE	BUSINESS IS SURVIVAL	weather, thrive, go into hibernation, reach the hands
	BUSINESS IS ENERGY	galvanize, exuberant, shrug off, play
BUSINESS IS AWARENESS	BUSINESS IS CONTROL	playbook, center stage, power, galvanize
	BUSINESS IS PERCEPTION	ease, conscious
<i>(Total: 12 generic metaphors)</i>	<i>(Total: 29 specific metaphors)</i>	

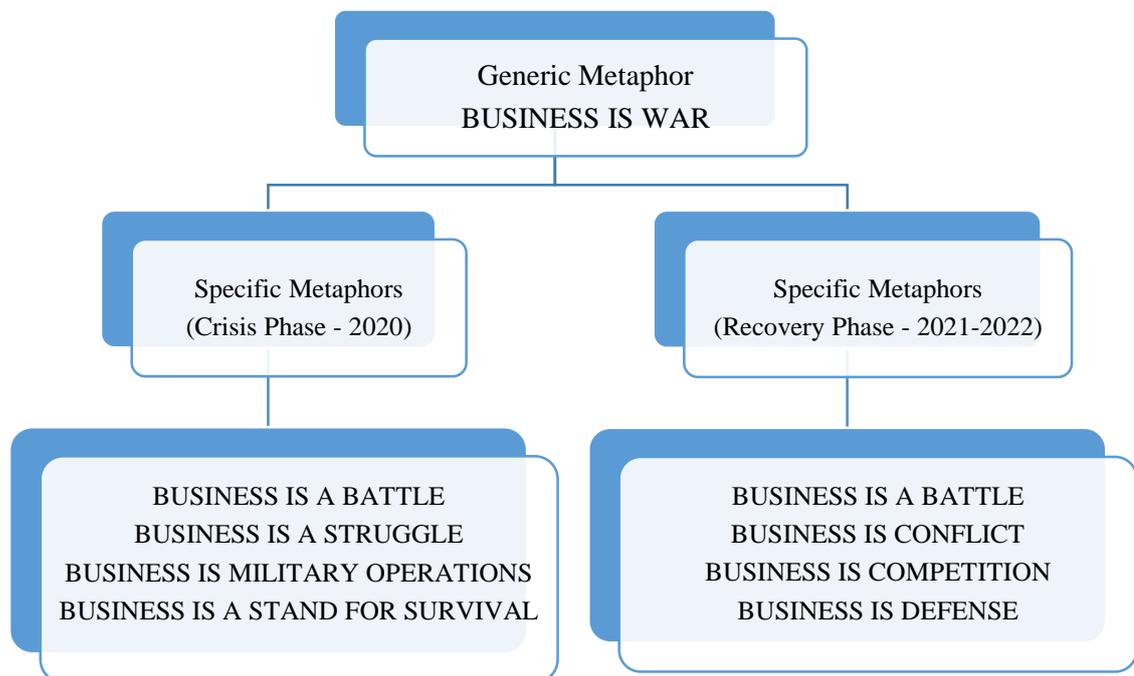
The findings reveal recurring patterns across the identified metaphors, indicating that the conceptualization of BUSINESS during the crisis phase and recovery phase shares overlapping themes while also demonstrating notable shifts. These patterns highlight the evolving nature of BUSINESS metaphors in response to the distinct socio-economic contexts of each phase.

To provide a clearer understanding of these thematic consistencies and changes, the findings are presented through theme analysis. This approach organizes the metaphors by their generic themes (e.g., BUSINESS IS WAR, BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE) and compares their corresponding specific metaphors across the two phases. By examining how the same generic metaphor manifests differently in each phase, this analysis uncovers shifts in focus, emphasis, and framing strategies employed during the Covid-19 pandemic.

4.2.1.1. BUSINESS IS WAR

Figure 4.1

BUSINESS IS WAR



The metaphor BUSINESS IS WAR captures the portrayal of business as an arena of intense conflict, strategic maneuvering, and resilience during the Covid-19 pandemic. This metaphor remained consistent across both the crisis phase of 2020 and the recovery phase of 2021-2022 but evolved in its framing to reflect the shifting

realities businesses faced during these periods.

In the crisis phase of 2020, the generic metaphor BUSINESS IS WAR highlighted the urgency of survival and the immediate responses required to combat external challenges. The specific-level metaphor - BUSINESS IS A BATTLE depicted businesses as entities facing relentless adversaries, grappling with widespread closures, financial instability, and supply chain disruptions. Metaphorical expressions such as *hit hard* (“*Retailers plays a pivotal role in the U.S. economy - and while they’ve have been hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic...*”, A.1) and *suffer their final blow* (“*These struggling retailers may suffer their final blow from the coronavirus lockdown*”, A.87) framed businesses as enduring relentless attacks, akin to strikes in a battle. The expression *survive* (“*Efforts have been made ... help retail stores survive the pandemic*”, A.283) emphasized the struggle to withstand existential threats and maintain operations amidst chaos. Workers were celebrated as *heroes* (“*... many retail workers, heralded as heroes during the first wave of the pandemic ...*”, A.112), emphasizing their critical roles in sustaining business operations during the pandemic’s first wave. Additionally, businesses were depicted as “*...fighting to remain open ...*” (A.242), illustrating their strategic efforts to overcome existential threats and ensure survival in the face of overwhelming challenges.

Similarly, BUSINESS IS A STRUGGLE highlighted ongoing challenges as adversarial forces, requiring persistent effort to overcome. Expressions such as “*struggled to navigate uncertainties*” (A.123) and “*facing a daunting multitude of challenges*” (A.147) conceptualized businesses as engaging in continuous battles to adapt and remain operational. The specific metaphor BUSINESS IS MILITARY OPERATIONS framed businesses as engaging in strategic campaigns to navigate challenges and secure success during the crisis. The expression *campaign* (“*Nike's "Play Inside, Play for the World" campaign is a fitting example of an agile marketing campaign ...*”, A.311) highlighted planned marketing efforts, while *scored major wins* (“*The U.S. pot industry scored major wins - and setbacks - in pandemic-ruled year*”, A.286) reflected the achievement of key business objectives through tactical maneuvers, emphasizing calculated actions and resource mobilization.

Lastly, the metaphor BUSINESS IS A STAND FOR SURVIVAL emphasized

businesses enduring immense challenges while adapting to the ‘new normal.’ The expression *survival tool* (“... *e-commerce orders for groceries and other essentials have become a survival tool for the American family*”, A.136) depicted strategies essential for maintaining operations during the pandemic, while “... *some retailers might survive if they adapt ...*” (A.85) highlighted the necessity of resilience and operational adjustments to sustain and thrive amidst crisis conditions.

By the recovery phase of 2021-2022, the generic metaphor BUSINESS IS WAR evolved to reflect a more competitive and strategic environment. While the specific BUSINESS IS A BATTLE persisted, expressions such as *line of defense* (“*Being the first line of defense, both online and brick-and-mortar retail will suffer ...*”, B.25) highlighted businesses’ readiness to confront ongoing challenges. BUSINESS IS CONFLICT framed competition and opposition within the market. Expressions such as “*compete for customer loyalty*” (B.11) and *friction* (“*Any friction takes away from the experience ...*”, B.242) depicted clashes over market dominance and consumer preferences, illustrating a shift from immediate survival to strategic positioning.

The specific metaphor BUSINESS IS COMPETITION portrayed businesses as striving to outperform rivals and gain market share, as seen in expressions like “*win new customers*” (B.48) and “*raise their game*” (B.107). This framing reflected a more dynamic, forward-looking perspective, emphasizing innovation and adaptability. Lastly, BUSINESS IS DEFENSE introduced the idea of businesses protecting their stability and resources against ongoing threats. Expressions such as “*hunkering down on the cost side*” (B.279) and “*protect themselves*” (B.98) highlighted measures taken to safeguard operations and ensure resilience in the face of external pressures.

The framing of BUSINESS IS WAR reveals how the metaphor structured perceptions of the business environment during the pandemic. According to Kövecses (2017), framing involves selecting specific aspects of a metaphor to emphasize, shaping stakeholder understanding and responses.

In the crisis phase, BUSINESS IS WAR framed challenges as external threats demanding reactive and urgent measures. Businesses were depicted as entities under siege, with expressions like *suffer their final blow* (A.87) and *fighting to remain open*

(A.242) emphasizing the precariousness of their situations. This framing directed attention to the need for external support, such as government aid and policy interventions, positioning businesses as victims of the pandemic's economic impact. By highlighting the struggle for survival, this framing elicited empathy and solidarity from stakeholders, while emphasizing resilience and adaptation as critical responses.

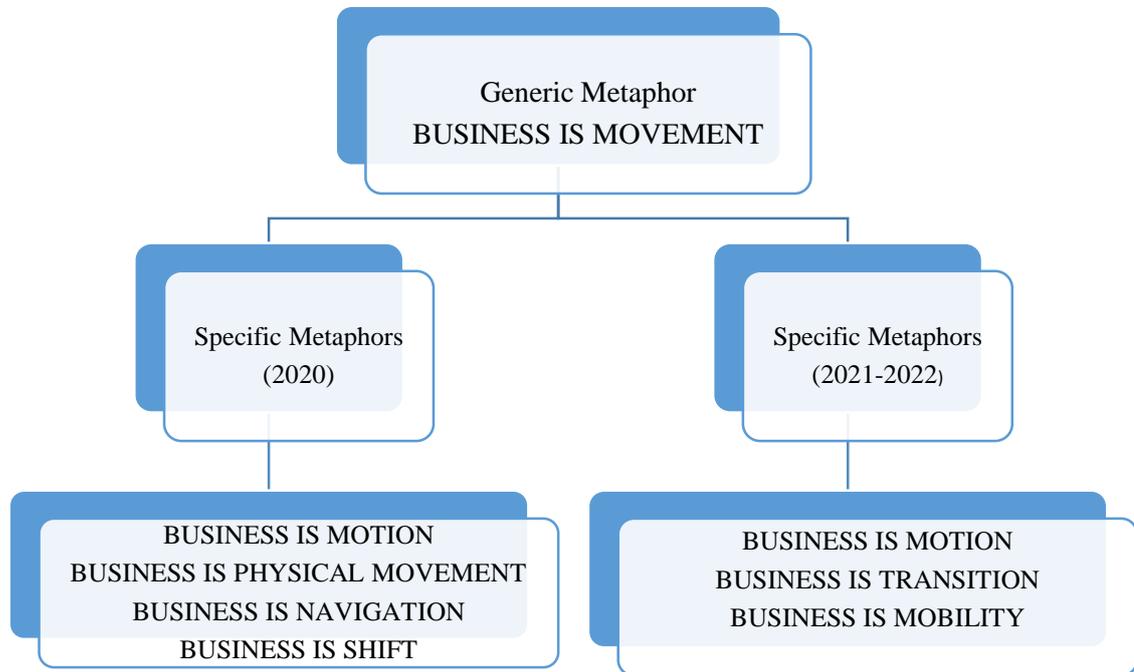
In the recovery phase, the framing shifted to highlight strategic competition and proactive adaptation. Businesses were portrayed as active participants in a dynamic and competitive market, focusing on innovation, resource optimization, and positioning for growth. Expressions such as “*compete for customer loyalty*” (B.11) and “*raise their game*” (B.107) emphasized businesses' agency and strategic efforts, directing discourse towards long-term recovery strategies. By framing businesses as competitors and defenders, the metaphor fostered a forward-looking perspective, prioritizing recovery and growth over immediate survival.

The dual framing of BUSINESS IS WAR across the two phases had significant cognitive and discursive impacts. During the crisis phase, the framing shaped stakeholder understanding of challenges as adversarial and high-stakes, aligning with cultural schemas of war that emphasize resilience, sacrifice, and external support. In the recovery phase, the framing encouraged a shift in focus to strategic planning and competitive positioning, highlighting businesses' capacity for innovation and adaptation.

4.2.1.2. BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT

Figure 4.2

BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT



The metaphor BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT conceptualizes the retail industry’s responses to the Covid-19 pandemic as various forms of motion, capturing the dynamic and transformative nature of business operations. Across the crisis and recovery phases, this generic metaphor was instantiated through specific metaphors such as BUSINESS IS MOTION, BUSINESS IS PHYSICAL MOVEMENT, BUSINESS IS NAVIGATION, BUSINESS IS SHIFT, BUSINESS IS TRANSITION, and BUSINESS IS MOBILITY. These metaphors reflect distinct ways in which businesses adjusted to challenges, highlighting the shifting priorities and strategies employed during this period.

In 2020, BUSINESS IS MOTION emerged prominently, reflecting fluctuations in business performance and adaptability. For instance, the expression “*e-commerce reached new heights*” (A.138) portrays growth as ascending or climbing, emphasizing the significant expansion of online retail. Similarly, “*the retail recovery was running out of steam*” (A.130) conceptualizes losing momentum in recovery as slowing down or losing energy. These metaphors framed the pandemic’s initial impact as a period of instability requiring continuous adaptation. BUSINESS IS PHYSICAL MOVEMENT emphasized tangible and logistical changes in business activities. For example, “*the bump retailers*

typically get from product ... largely gone” (A.9) likens temporary sales increases to small, sudden rises, while “*many are **retracting** their earnings governance*” (A.27) frames financial adjustments as pulling back. These expressions conveyed the physicality of managing sales, inventory, and financial projections under pandemic pressures.

BUSINESS IS NAVIGATION highlighted businesses as entities steering through uncertainties. The expression *run aground* (“... *biggest names to have run aground*”, A.2) likened financial difficulties to a ship being stuck, while “*retailers need to **set** their **course** to their true north*” (A.32) depicted strategic planning as determining a direction. These metaphors framed businesses as deliberate navigators, emphasizing foresight and the ability to adjust to unpredictable challenges. The specific metaphor BUSINESS IS SHIFT emphasized transformation and adaptability during the crisis. For instance, “***shift gears** quickly to accommodate expectations*” (A.81) illustrated businesses dynamically adjusting strategies to mitigate challenges, while “***move further** along their digital transformation journey*” (A.17) reflected proactive transitions towards modernized practices. This metaphor highlighted how businesses realigned operations to navigate and adapt to significant disruptions effectively.

In 2021-2022, the metaphors evolved, reflecting recovery and innovation. BUSINESS IS TRANSITION framed businesses as moving between states, as seen in “*retail is the first to **head into** a recession and the first to **head out***” (B.93), which portrays economic cycles as transitions. Similarly, “*the industry **parts ways** with the past*” (B.274) conceptualized the shift from traditional practices to modern approaches, reflecting the industry’s focus on long-term adaptation.

BUSINESS IS MOBILITY emphasized progress and accessibility. The expression *going forward* (“*e-commerce has evolved and is going forward*”, B.142) depicted forward movement into the future, while *ahead of the curve* (“*luxury brands have been ahead of the curve*”, B.173) framed innovation as being advanced or leading. These metaphors highlighted the proactive strategies businesses adopted to thrive in competitive markets.

The framing of BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT structured how the retail industry’s actions and responses were understood during the pandemic.

In 2020, BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT framed businesses as entities reacting to disruptions and navigating immediate challenges. The expression *running out of steam*

(A.130) and *run aground* (A.2) portrayed businesses as struggling with instability, directing stakeholders' attention to the need for resilience and adaptive strategies. The emphasis on motion and navigation underscored the reactive nature of business operations, prioritizing survival and immediate adjustments.

By 2021-2022, the framing shifted to emphasize progress, innovation, and forward momentum. Expressions such as *going forward* (B.142) and *ahead of the curve* (B.173) framed businesses as active agents of change, highlighting their ability to innovate and adapt to emerging trends. This framing encouraged stakeholders to focus on long-term recovery, competitiveness, and transformation, reflecting the shift from crisis management to strategic growth.

The framing of BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT captures the evolving narrative of the pandemic. In the crisis phase, businesses were framed as entities navigating turbulent waters and reacting to challenges, while in the recovery phase, they were portrayed as innovators and leaders in a dynamic landscape. This framing not only influenced public discourse and policy but also shaped organizational strategies, illustrating how metaphors articulate complex business realities and guide action during periods of disruption and transformation.

4.2.1.3. BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE

Figure 4.3

BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE



Under the generic metaphor BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE, the specific metaphors BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE, BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION, and BUSINESS IS FLEXIBILITY/STABILITY conceptualized resilience during the pandemic across two phases: 2020 and 2021-2022.

In 2020, BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE illustrated the persistent struggle of businesses to withstand immense pressures and survive unprecedented challenges. For example, “*retailers are generally a **durable** group*” (A.11) highlighted their resilience and strength in enduring the pandemic's impact. Likewise, *taking the brunt* (A.274) conveyed businesses absorbing the hardest economic hits, showcasing their capacity to endure severe consequences while continuing to operate amidst adversity. These expressions emphasized the metaphorical mapping of endurance onto the ability to navigate and persist through overwhelming challenges.

BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION in 2020 focused on the rapid adjustments businesses made to cope with pandemic disruptions. This was captured in expressions like *pivot* (A.45) and *shift gears* (A.81), which emphasized flexibility and dynamic responses. Businesses were conceptualized as entities constantly realigning their strategies to adapt to new consumer demands and operational challenges, mapping adaptation as a survival mechanism.

By contrast, in 2021-2022, BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE shifted toward recovery. Expressions such as “***thrive in the new normal***” (B.3) and “***healing brands***” (B.172) reflected a focus on growth and regaining strength despite lingering challenges. Businesses were depicted as resilient entities not just surviving but rebuilding and flourishing. Similarly, BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION in 2021-2022 evolved to reflect strategic, long-term adjustments. For instance, “***morphed into fulfillment centers***” (B.251) and “*retail sales dropped, **marking a shift***” (B.310) illustrated businesses transforming their operations and strategies to adapt to evolving market demands. This shift in focus highlighted resilience as a capacity for sustained transformation.

Finally, in 2021-2022, BUSINESS IS FLEXIBILITY/STABILITY emerged, framing resilience as balancing adaptability and steadiness. The expressions “***resilient spending***” (B.185) captured the ability of businesses to maintain operations and withstand market fluctuations, emphasizing stability as a critical component of resilience.

The framing of BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE structured perceptions of resilience during the pandemic, emphasizing different aspects across the two phases.

In 2020, resilience was framed through BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE and

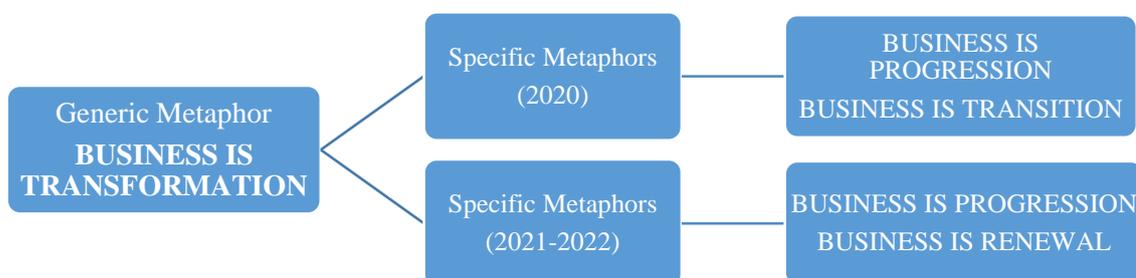
BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION, focusing on survival and immediate adjustments. Businesses were portrayed as entities battling to endure intense external pressures, as seen in expressions like “*struggled to navigate uncertainties*” (A.123) and “*pivot*” (A.45). This framing directed stakeholders’ attention to short-term strategies, such as adapting operational models or securing external support, to address the immediate crisis.

In 2021-2022, the framing evolved to emphasize recovery, long-term adaptation, and stability. Through BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE and BUSINESS IS STABILITY, resilience was framed as rebuilding and sustaining operations amidst lingering challenges. Expressions such as “*thrive in the new normal*” (B.3) and “*resilient spending*” (B.185) highlighted the importance of balancing adaptation with steadiness. This framing encouraged stakeholders to prioritize strategies for sustainable growth, transforming businesses into stable entities capable of navigating ongoing uncertainties.

4.2.1.4. BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION

Figure 4.4

BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION



The generic metaphor BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION is present in both 2020 and 2021-2022, with specific metaphors highlighting different facets of transformation. In 2020, these specific metaphors include BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION and BUSINESS IS TRANSITION, while in 2021-2022, they shift to BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION and BUSINESS IS RENEWAL.

BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION conceptualizes gradual development and adaptation in both periods. In 2020, it reflects recovery efforts, where businesses work toward improvement after the pandemic’s initial shock. For example, *turn around* (A.209) maps the idea of reversing direction to signify recovery, while *recover* (A.395)

depicts businesses rebuilding consumer trust and regaining sales. By 2021-2022, the focus shifts to renewal and growth. Expressions like *reemerging* (B.102) portray businesses as reappearing stronger, while *shed the past* (B.102) illustrates businesses discarding outdated practices to align with new market demands.

BUSINESS IS TRANSITION in 2020 highlights businesses adapting to pandemic disruptions. For instance, *shift* (“...shopping habits continue to shift ...”, A.229) reflects the process of adjusting to economic challenges, and *moving* (“... offline retailers moving into online ...”, A.66) conceptualizes the transition from physical stores to e-commerce. These expressions emphasize transformation as gradual adaptation to survive. In 2021-2022, this shifts to BUSINESS IS RENEWAL, where businesses focus on reinvention. For example, *emerged* (“Retailers that lead with technology ... have emerged stronger ...”, B.112) portrays businesses as renewed and improved, while *refined* (“... e-commerce experience has become incredibly refined ...”, B.136) highlights the enhancement of e-commerce practices, reflecting businesses’ evolution toward innovation and efficiency.

The framing of BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION underscores how businesses’ evolution during the pandemic was conceptualized and communicated, with notable shifts between 2020 and 2021-2022. This generic metaphor reflects how businesses were perceived as entities undergoing change, and the framing highlights the phases of recovery, adaptation, and reinvention.

In 2020, the framing focuses on PROGRESSION and TRANSITION, which conceptualize transformation as incremental and reactionary. Businesses are depicted as entities struggling to regain stability and adapt to immediate challenges. For instance, expressions like *turn around* (A.209) and *recover* (A.395) frame progression as an attempt to reverse the damage caused by the pandemic, emphasizing efforts to rebuild and stabilize. Similarly, TRANSITION frames change as a gradual adjustment to new circumstances. For example, *shift* (A.229) highlights the necessity of adopting new operational strategies, while *moving* (A.66) underscores the migration from traditional retail models to e-commerce. This framing portrays businesses as reactive and focused on survival, shaping perceptions of transformation as a response to external disruptions.

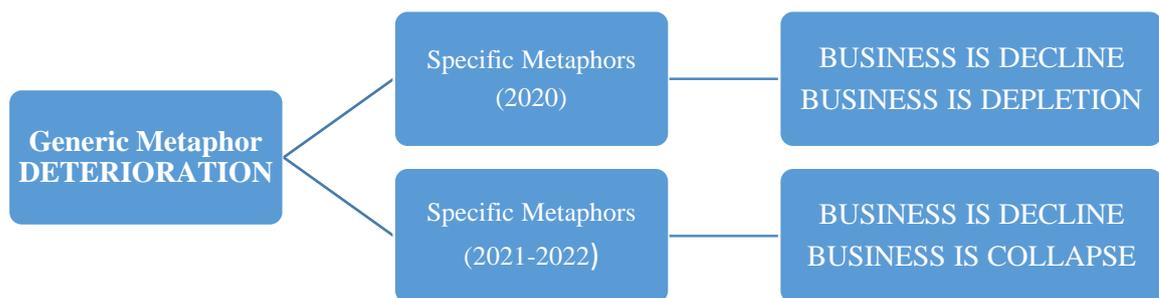
By contrast, in 2021-2022, the framing shifts toward renewal and proactive

reinvention, as seen in PROGRESSION and RENEWAL. Businesses are no longer depicted solely as recovering from setbacks but as actively embracing new opportunities and reimagining their roles. The metaphorical expression *reemerging* (B.102) frames businesses as revitalized entities that have overcome challenges and are poised for growth. Likewise, *shed the past* (B.102) frames transformation as a deliberate act of discarding outdated practices to align with modern demands. RENEWAL reframes businesses as dynamic, forward-thinking entities, emphasizing strategic innovation and the adoption of efficient practices (*refined*, B.I.136). This framing directs attention to long-term sustainability and competitive advantage, encouraging stakeholders to see transformation as an opportunity rather than a mere necessity.

4.2.1.5. BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION

Figure 4.5

BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION



The generic metaphor BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION captures the worsening conditions of businesses during the pandemic, with specific metaphors including BUSINESS IS DECLINE in both 2020 and 2021-2022, BUSINESS IS DEPLETION in 2020, and BUSINESS IS COLLAPSE in 2021-2022.

In 2020, BUSINESS IS DECLINE reflects the gradual downturn of business activities. For example, the expression *going under* (“... jobs going under,” A.189) conceptualizes employment opportunities as sinking, representing the collapse of job markets. Likewise, *disappear* (“... a quarter of a million jobs ... could disappear,” A.186) signifies the complete vanishing of workforce opportunities, highlighting the pandemic’s severe impact.

In 2021–2022, BUSINESS IS DECLINE emphasizes a deeper, more entrenched downturn. The expression *dying* (“... giant shopping malls are dying,” B.281)

conceptualizes retail spaces as losing vitality, indicating permanent closures. *Slipping* (“... *the economy ... slipping into a recession,*” B.I.182) portrays the economy as moving into a worsened state, signifying businesses’ ongoing struggles.

In 2020, BUSINESS IS DEPLETION conceptualizes the gradual exhaustion of resources. For instance, *dried up* (“... *revenues have dried up,*” A.176) compares financial reserves to a drying resource, symbolizing their exhaustion. Similarly, *plummeting* (“... *plummeting global markets,*” A.322) portrays the economic downturn as a steep and uncontrollable fall, emphasizing the sudden impact on businesses.

By 2021-2022, BUSINESS IS COLLAPSE depicts outright failure. The expression *tumbled* (“*Consumer confidence tumbled,*” B.V.315) conceptualizes consumer trust as collapsing drastically. Additionally, “... *transactions **falling** 14% ...*” (B.319) highlights the steep and uncontrollable descent in business activity, representing structural failure under mounting pressures.

The framing of BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION shifts across the two phases, structuring how stakeholders understood the pandemic's effects on the retail sector.

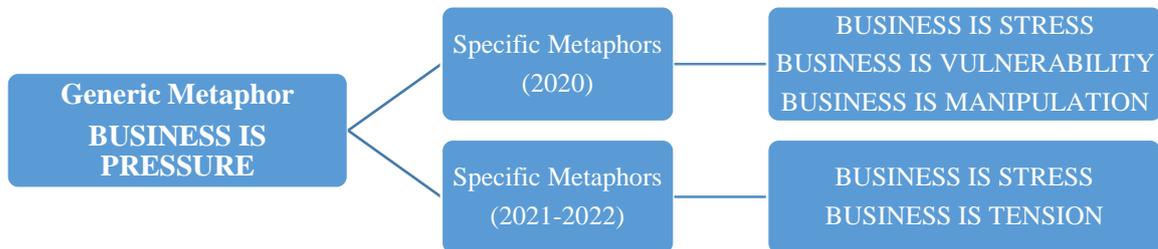
In 2020, BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION is framed through DECLINE and DEPLETION, emphasizing the gradual loss of resources and revenue. Expressions such as *dried up* and *disappear* frame businesses as entities trying to manage the depletion of critical assets. This framing portrays businesses as vulnerable, directing attention to survival efforts and external support to stabilize operations.

In 2021-2022, the framing evolves to focus on DECLINE and COLLAPSE, emphasizing prolonged and systemic struggles. Expressions like *dying* and *tumbled* frame businesses as facing irreversible failure, highlighting the need for transformative strategies and structural reform. This framing underscores the deepening challenges and long-term implications of the pandemic on the retail industry, shifting the discourse from immediate recovery to addressing systemic vulnerabilities.

4.2.1.6. BUSINESS IS PRESSURE

Figure 4.6

BUSINESS IS PRESSURE



The generic metaphor *BUSINESS IS PRESSURE* is evident in both 2020 and 2021-2022, illustrating the intense external and internal strains experienced by businesses during the pandemic. In 2020, it is reflected through the specific metaphors *BUSINESS IS STRESS*, *BUSINESS IS VULNERABILITY*, and *BUSINESS IS MANIPULATION*, while in 2021-2022, it manifests as *BUSINESS IS STRESS* and *BUSINESS IS TENSION*.

In 2020, *BUSINESS IS STRESS* conceptualizes the immediate pressures faced by businesses due to pandemic-induced disruptions. For example, *forced* (“... *growth of e-commerce ... forced many retailers to find new ways to compete...*,” A.133) maps external pressures onto businesses being compelled to adapt rapidly. Similarly, *tipping point* (“*Business owners ... at a tipping point,*” A.308) portrays a critical juncture where businesses are under enormous strain to survive. These expressions emphasize survival under intense operational and financial stress. In 2021-2022, *BUSINESS IS STRESS* evolves to focus on long-term financial and competitive strains. For instance, *squeezed* (“... *small companies ... squeezed out ...*,” B.190) maps shrinking opportunities onto competitive and financial pressures. Meanwhile, *pent-up* (“... *pent-up demand ...*,” B.169) conceptualizes accumulated pressure from consumer behavior, illustrating how businesses needed to release or adapt to built-up forces.

BUSINESS IS VULNERABILITY highlights the fragility of businesses exposed to the pandemic's risks. Expressions like *exposed* (“... *retailers ... highly exposed,*” A.47) map the lack of protection onto the susceptibility of businesses to external

threats. In the same vein, *suffer* (“... *economy will suffer*,” A.159) portrays businesses enduring hardships, and *injury* (“... *economic injury* ...,” A.232) maps physical harm onto financial damage, emphasizing their precarious state. BUSINESS IS MANIPULATION illustrates attempts by businesses to control their circumstances. For instance, *dominate* (“... *loyal consumers dominate* ...,” A.399) maps control over customer behavior onto strategic efforts to maintain loyalty. The expression *make up* (“... *won’t make up for retail losses*,” A.402) conceptualizes compensatory actions, showing businesses adjusting strategies to recover from losses.

By 2021-2022, BUSINESS IS TENSION depicts businesses employing forceful strategies to overcome challenges. The expression *slammed* (“... *slammed with higher costs* ...,” B.260) maps financial strain onto being hit forcefully, reflecting the aggressive pressures businesses faced. Additionally, *seizing* (“... *retailers are seizing the moment* ...,” B.131) conceptualizes businesses actively taking opportunities under pressure. These expressions portray businesses using resilience and strategic strength to tackle challenges.

The framing of BUSINESS IS PRESSURE highlights the evolving perceptions of business struggles across the two phases.

In 2020, BUSINESS IS PRESSURE is framed through STRESS, VULNERABILITY, and MANIPULATION, emphasizing immediate survival under strain. Businesses are depicted as fragile and exposed, as seen in expressions like *exposed* and *suffer*. This framing portrays businesses as entities needing to withstand intense pressures and adapt through strategic control, such as *dominate* and *make up*. This frame emphasizes the need for external support and internal adaptability to stabilize operations.

In 2021-2022, the framing shifts to STRESS and TENSION, focusing on sustained financial and operational pressures. Expressions like *squeezed* and *slammed* frame businesses as enduring ongoing challenges while employing forceful strategies to secure market positions. The emphasis on *seizing* opportunities reflects businesses’ active efforts to regain stability and thrive. This framing portrays businesses as more assertive, adapting to long-term pressures through strength and strategic action.

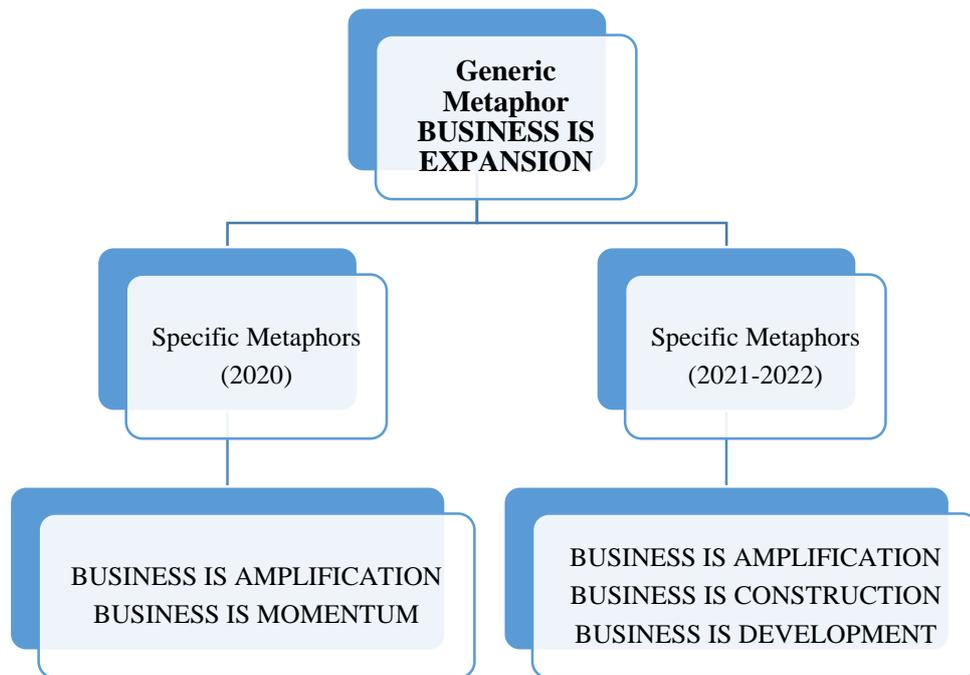
Overall, BUSINESS IS PRESSURE transitions from framing businesses as

fragile and reactionary in 2020 to emphasizing their proactive, forceful strategies in 2021-2022, shaping perceptions of resilience and adaptability in a pressured environment.

4.2.1.7. BUSINESS IS EXPANSION

Figure 4.7

BUSINESS IS EXPANSION



The generic metaphor BUSINESS IS EXPANSION captures the rapid growth, structural development, and forward momentum of businesses during the pandemic and recovery phases. It includes specific metaphors - BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION, present in both 2020 and 2021-2022, with BUSINESS IS MOMENTUM specific to 2020 and BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION and BUSINESS IS DEVELOPMENT introduced in 2021-2022. Notably, in 2021-2022, BUSINESS IS EXPANSION becomes the most prominent metaphor, with the highest number of metaphorical expressions, even surpassing BUSINESS IS WAR.

In 2020, BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION illustrates the rapid escalation of e-commerce activity. The expression *balloon* (“... *online shopping continues to balloon* ...,” A.250) conceptualizes the uncontrolled growth of online retail, likened to a balloon expanding. Similarly, *boom* (“... *boom in online shopping* ...,” A.253) highlights the sudden surge in activity, reflecting the sharp rise in demand for digital

services. These expressions depict businesses as expanding quickly to address immediate consumer needs.

In 2021-2022, BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION remains central, but it extends to include both digital and physical integration. The expression *proliferates* (“*As e-commerce proliferates ...*,” B.163) maps the spreading of e-commerce onto the integration of sales channels, showcasing retail spaces’ expansion. Additionally, *soared* (“*... restaurants and clothing stores, has soared,*” B.294) portrays the sharp increase in retail opportunities, emphasizing the substantial physical and digital growth during this period. BUSINESS IS MOMENTUM highlights the energy and speed driving business activities in 2020. The expression *full gear* (“*... trend too is now in full gear,*” A.185) maps peak business activity onto a machine operating at maximum capacity, illustrating acceleration. In addition, *surged* (“*... consumer prices surged ...*,” A.194) portrays a sudden burst of energy, reflecting the forceful progression of business trends during the pandemic.

In 2021-2022, BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION conceptualizes businesses as structures being built or strengthened. The expression *build* (“*... retailers can build resilient businesses,*” B.49) maps the act of constructing onto the creation of sustainable business models. Another example, *beef up* (“*... retailers rushed to beef up inventories,*” B.68), portrays the reinforcement of resources, symbolizing preparation for meeting consumer demand. BUSINESS IS DEVELOPMENT focuses on steady progress and innovation. The expression *move further* (“*... retailers ... move further along their digital transformation journey,*” B.17) portrays businesses advancing along a transformative path. Similarly, *parts ways* (“*... future of the industry parts ways with the past,*” B.274) highlights the shift away from outdated practices, mapping forward movement onto the adoption of innovative approaches.

In terms of framing, the BUSINESS IS EXPANSION metaphor is framed differently in 2020 and 2021-2022, reflecting the changing priorities and strategies of businesses during the pandemic and recovery phases. According to Kövecses (2017), the framing of a metaphor involves selecting specific aspects of a domain to highlight and structure discourse, shaping perceptions and guiding responses.

In 2020, the framing of BUSINESS IS EXPANSION emphasized immediate,

reactive growth to cope with the disruptive effects of the pandemic. Specific metaphors such as BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION and BUSINESS IS MOMENTUM framed businesses as scaling rapidly and moving energetically to meet sudden increases in consumer demand. Expressions such as *boom* and *balloon* foregrounded the sharp, sometimes uncontrollable, expansion in e-commerce, directing attention to the urgency and intensity of pandemic-induced changes. This framing positioned businesses as responding dynamically to external pressures, but with limited focus on sustainability or long-term planning.

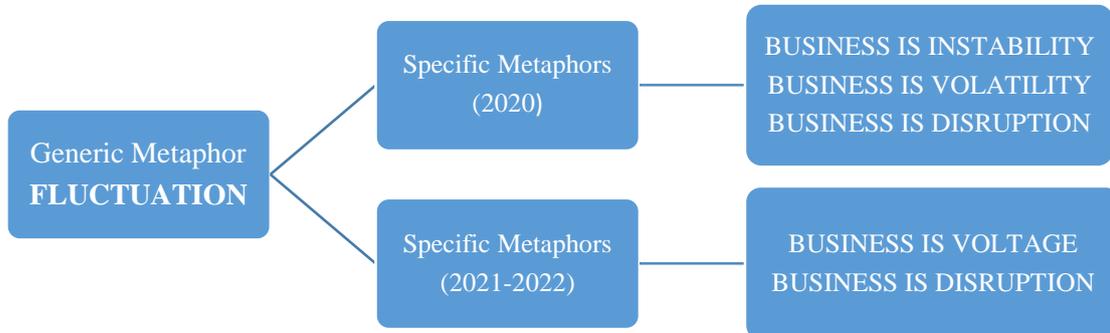
By 2021-2022, the framing shifted toward a more strategic and forward-looking perspective, emphasizing sustainable growth and innovation. The specific metaphors - BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION and BUSINESS IS DEVELOPMENT framed businesses as methodically building strong foundations and advancing through planned, incremental steps. For instance, the example *build resilient businesses* highlights the deliberate efforts to create lasting systems, while *move further along their transformation* portrays a steady progression in adapting to evolving market demands. This framing downplayed urgency and focused on stability and preparedness, encouraging perceptions of businesses as agents of transformation capable of thriving in a redefined market landscape.

In brief, the framing of BUSINESS IS EXPANSION evolved from highlighting rapid, reactive scaling in 2020 to showcasing deliberate, innovative growth in 2021–2022. This shift not only structured public and organizational discourse but also influenced expectations, steering narratives from survival to sustainability and long-term success.

4.2.1.8. BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION

Figure 4.8

BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION



The data highlights the presence of the generic metaphor BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION in both 2020 and 2021-2022. Across these periods, the metaphor evolves to represent different aspects of business instability and unpredictability. In 2020, the specific metaphors BUSINESS IS INSTABILITY, BUSINESS IS VOLATILITY, and BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION dominate the discourse, while in 2021-2022, BUSINESS IS VOLTAGE and BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION become prominent, reflecting the dynamic and heightened changes during the recovery phase.

In 2020, BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION conceptualizes the abrupt and widespread changes businesses faced. Expressions like *ground to a halt* (A.381) depict businesses as vehicles suddenly stopping, mapping onto the near-total pause in operations caused by lockdowns. Likewise, *topple* (A.162) portrays small businesses as fragile structures collapsing under economic strain. Another example, *making the switch* (A.245), conceptualizes businesses adapting to e-commerce as physically shifting gears, highlighting the suddenness of the required adjustments.

By 2021-2022, BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION reflects ongoing turbulence but with an emphasis on transformation. Expressions such as *turned upside down* (B.283) map the complete reversal of market conditions onto the destabilization of subscription-based businesses. Similarly, *upheaval* (B.I.64) characterizes major changes in the grocery sector, framing these shifts as a violent disturbance that businesses must navigate.

In 2020, BUSINESS IS INSTABILITY captures the precarious state of the retail sector. For instance, *teetering* (A.305) maps the image of a fragile structure on the verge

of collapse onto businesses facing bankruptcy. The expression *upended* (A.195) uses the imagery of overturning to reflect the destruction of stability, highlighting how the pandemic disrupted foundational aspects of retail operations. Additionally, *dipped* (A.191) conceptualizes employment levels as a sudden drop, reflecting the sharp decline in hiring caused by economic uncertainties.

BUSINESS IS VOLATILITY emphasizes the sharp, unpredictable fluctuations in business performance during 2020. For instance, *spiked* (A.148) portrays a steep rise in e-commerce sales, mapping volatility onto the sudden shifts in consumer behavior. Conversely, *tumble* (A.377) reflects traditional retailers experiencing sharp declines in sales, conceptualizing instability as an uncontrollable downward movement.

By 2021-2022, BUSINESS IS VOLTAGE emerges as a metaphor for extreme and rapid changes in retail dynamics. Expressions like *skyrocketing* (B.193) map steep increases in prices onto the image of a sudden voltage surge, highlighting the disruptive effects of inflation. In addition, *exploded* (B.245) conceptualizes the dramatic growth in online shopping as a sudden burst of energy, reflecting the accelerating shift in consumer habits.

The framing of BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION reveals how the retail sector's instability and rapid changes impacted stakeholders across both periods, shaping their roles and responses to the fluctuating business environment.

In 2020, BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION is framed as a crisis-driven narrative, emphasizing the fragility of businesses and their stakeholders' vulnerability. For instance, the example "*teetering on the edge of bankruptcy*" (A.305) frames businesses as precariously balanced, highlighting their instability and the imminent risk of collapse. This framing impacts stakeholders such as employees, who face job insecurity as businesses struggle to maintain operations. Retailers are depicted as reactive entities, focusing on survival amidst continuous financial strain, forcing employees and suppliers to adapt to reduced opportunities and delayed payments.

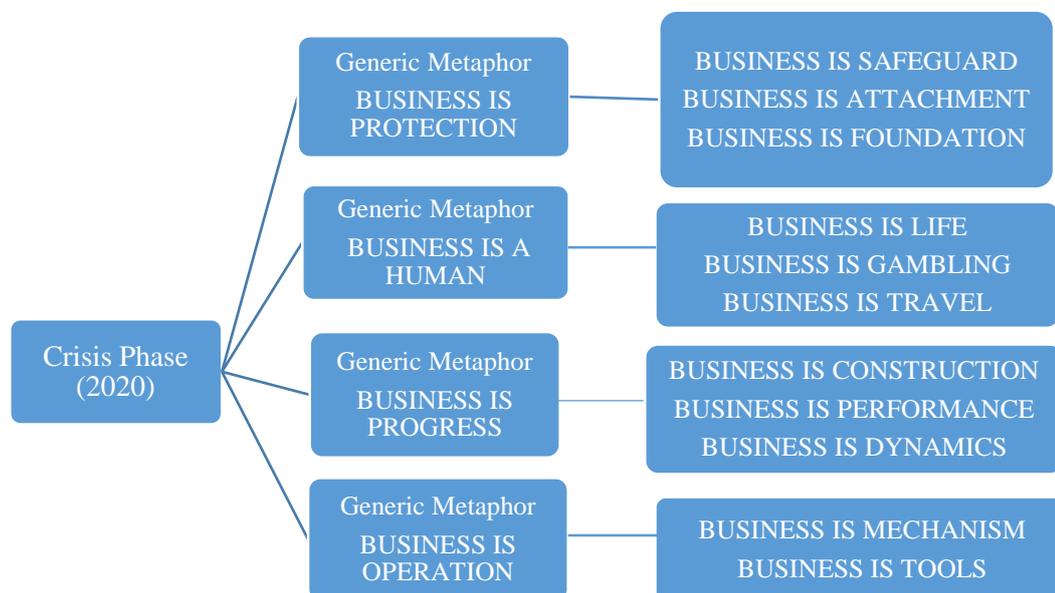
By 2021-2022, the framing shifts to a more dynamic representation of fluctuation, highlighting both challenges and opportunities for stakeholders. For example, the example "*skyrocketing price increases*" (B.193) frames fluctuations as abrupt and forceful, portraying retailers as under extreme pressure to manage rising costs. This

framing affects both consumers and businesses, consumers are depicted as bearing the burden of higher prices, while businesses face the challenge of balancing operational costs and maintaining competitiveness. Stakeholders are encouraged to innovate and adapt, with businesses leveraging these disruptions to recalibrate strategies and emerge stronger.

4.2.1.9. *BUSINESS IS PROTECTION, BUSINESS IS A HUMAN, BUSINESS IS PROGRESS, BUSINESS IS OPERATION*

Figure 4.9

BUSINESS IS PROTECTION, BUSINESS IS A HUMAN, BUSINESS IS PROGRESS, BUSINESS IS OPERATION (Crisis phase – 2020)



In addition to the previously discussed metaphors, the findings from the crisis phase in 2020 reveal significant conceptualizations of businesses as entities requiring protection, resembling human qualities, progressing systems, and operational mechanisms. These metaphors reflect the diverse strategies businesses adopted to survive the economic and societal disruptions caused by the pandemic.

Generic Metaphor: BUSINESS IS PROTECTION

Specific Metaphors: BUSINESS IS SAFEGUARD, BUSINESS IS ATTACHMENT, BUSINESS IS FOUNDATION

In 2020, businesses were conceptualized as protectors of themselves and their stakeholders, focusing on safeguarding, attachment, and foundational strength. For

instance, BUSINESS IS SAFEGUARD is exemplified through the expression *sheltered* (“... consumers already or on the precipice of being sheltered in place...,” A.400). Here, businesses are framed as providers of protection, akin to shelter shielding individuals from harm. Also, BUSINESS IS ATTACHMENT is illustrated by the phrase *clinging* (A.398), which depicts consumers and businesses holding onto familiar practices and financial strategies for security. BUSINESS IS FOUNDATION emerges in the expression *robust* (“... retailers are generally a robust group...,” A.228), symbolizing businesses as strong, structural entities capable of enduring crises.

The framing of BUSINESS IS PROTECTION reveals how businesses were perceived as stabilizers during the pandemic. By focusing on safeguarding consumers and reinforcing their operations, businesses were positioned as vital pillars of economic resilience. These metaphors foreground the critical role of protective strategies in ensuring continuity amidst uncertainty.

Generic Metaphor: BUSINESS IS A HUMAN

Specific Metaphors: BUSINESS IS LIFE, BUSINESS IS GAMBLING, BUSINESS IS TRAVEL

This metaphor highlights the human-like qualities of businesses, portraying them as living, decision-making, and journey-taking entities. For example, BUSINESS IS LIFE is reflected in the expression *maturing* (“AI-driven big data retailing has been maturing...,” A.16), mapping the growth and refinement of business practices onto the development of a living organism. BUSINESS IS GAMBLING appears in the phrase *winner* (“...the biggest winner to emerge is e-commerce...,” A.135), likening business success to triumphing in a high-stakes game. Lastly, BUSINESS IS TRAVEL is captured in *navigate* (“...retailers...navigate the challenges of Covid-19...,” A.I.78), conceptualizing businesses as travelers steering through obstacles and challenges.

The framing of BUSINESS IS A HUMAN underscores the adaptability and resilience of businesses during the crisis. By humanizing businesses, this metaphor highlights their capacity to grow, take risks, and navigate challenges, fostering empathy for their struggles and recognition of their efforts to survive the pandemic’s disruptions.

Generic Metaphor: BUSINESS IS PROGRESS

Specific Metaphors: BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION, BUSINESS IS PERFORMANCE,

BUSINESS IS DYNAMICS

In 2020, businesses were depicted as entities undergoing structured progress, public action, and energetic transformation. BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION is illustrated through *build* (“...sociocultural factors to build a connection with customers...,” A.328), which maps the act of constructing onto the creation of strong customer relationships. BUSINESS IS PERFORMANCE emerges in *act* (“...this crisis leaves them with no choice but to act...,” A.211), symbolizing businesses’ responses as visible actions under public scrutiny. BUSINESS IS DYNAMICS is demonstrated through *surging* (“...business at essential retailers...is surging...,” A.208), reflecting rapid, upward movement indicative of increased demand.

The framing of BUSINESS IS PROGRESS positions businesses as forward-moving entities, adapting and evolving to meet the challenges of the pandemic. By emphasizing construction, visibility, and dynamics, this metaphor highlights the proactive and transformative nature of businesses during the crisis.

Generic Metaphor: BUSINESS IS OPERATION

Specific Metaphors: BUSINESS IS MECHANISM, BUSINESS IS TOOLS

This metaphor captures the functional and instrumental aspects of businesses in 2020. BUSINESS IS MECHANISM is exemplified by *running* (“...massive near-term hiring plans to keep stores running...,” A.271), likening operational continuity to the functioning of a machine. BUSINESS IS TOOLS is reflected in *leverage* (“...retailers leverage advanced technology...,” A.199), which maps the use of tools onto the strategic employment of technology to optimize operations.

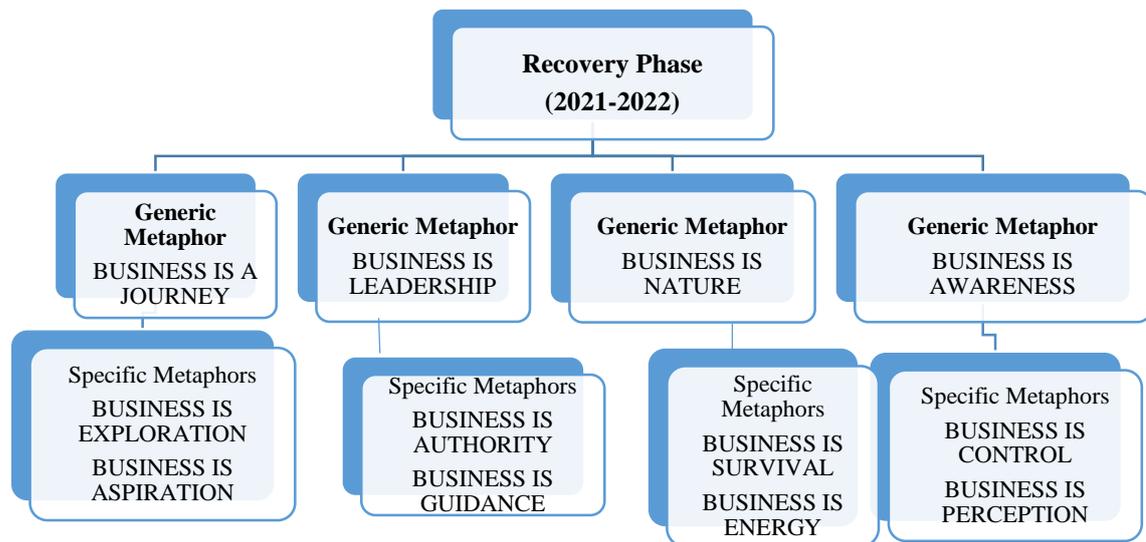
The framing of BUSINESS IS OPERATION emphasizes the systematic and instrumental efforts businesses made to maintain functionality during the pandemic. This metaphor frames businesses as complex systems requiring careful maintenance and effective tools to operate successfully under pressure.

By presenting these metaphors, the crisis phase of 2020 is conceptualized as a period where businesses were tasked with protecting their operations, embodying human qualities, progressing through challenges, and functioning as operational systems. Each metaphor frames businesses as resilient entities adapting to an unpredictable and demanding landscape.

4.2.1.10. *BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY, BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP, BUSINESS IS NATURE, BUSINESS IS AWARENESS*

Figure 4.10

BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY, BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP, BUSINESS IS NATURE, BUSINESS IS AWARENESS (Recovery phase – 2021-2022)



The recovery phase of 2021-2022 introduced distinctive conceptualizations of business through the metaphors BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY, BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP, BUSINESS IS NATURE, and BUSINESS IS AWARENESS. These metaphors highlight the ways businesses navigated challenges, assumed leadership roles, adapted to environmental pressures, and heightened their awareness to thrive in a transformed landscape.

Generic Metaphor: BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY

Specific Metaphors: BUSINESS IS EXPLORATION, BUSINESS IS ASPIRATION

In this phase, businesses were portrayed as explorers and aspirants in their pursuit of growth and recovery. BUSINESS IS EXPLORATION is illustrated through the expression “*charting a sustainable path forward*” (B.82), mapping the strategic planning for long-term success onto the navigation of uncharted territories. Similarly, *explore* (“... *retailers explore immersive experiences ...*,” B.36) signifies businesses seeking novel opportunities for consumer engagement, much like venturing into unfamiliar spaces. BUSINESS IS ASPIRATION emphasizes ambition, as seen in *chasing* (“... *consumers chasing limited availability on products ...*,” B.334), where the pursuit

of scarce goods mirrors businesses striving for competitive advantages.

The framing of BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY positions businesses as forward-moving entities, seeking new paths and ambitions. Through exploration, they are depicted as navigating uncharted markets and strategies, while aspiration highlights their intrinsic drive to achieve progress and adapt to consumer needs in the recovery phase.

Generic Metaphor: BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP

Specific Metaphors: BUSINESS IS AUTHORITY, BUSINESS IS GUIDANCE

Businesses assumed leadership roles during this period, as illustrated by BUSINESS IS AUTHORITY in the expression “*data is king*” (B.271), symbolizing supreme power in decision-making. Likewise, *pioneer* (B.154) aligns market leadership with innovation, as businesses dominated emerging sectors. BUSINESS IS GUIDANCE is captured in *navigating* (“... *navigating economic instability* ...,” B.186), conceptualizing businesses as entities providing direction amidst uncertainty, much like guiding through rough terrain.

BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP frames businesses as authoritative and guiding forces in the market. Authority emphasizes dominance and innovation, while guidance underscores their role in steering stakeholders through the challenges of the pandemic, reinforcing the perception of businesses as pivotal decision-makers and stabilizers.

Generic Metaphor: BUSINESS IS NATURE

Specific Metaphors: BUSINESS IS SURVIVAL, BUSINESS IS ENERGY

Businesses were framed as entities adapting to environmental pressures. BUSINESS IS SURVIVAL is evident in “*weather supply chain disruptions*” (B.80), mapping enduring adverse conditions onto businesses’ resilience against challenges. Additionally, *purge* (B.120) aligns survival tactics with eliminating inefficiencies, emphasizing strategic focus on viable operations. BUSINESS IS ENERGY is reflected in *surged* (“... *consumer prices surged last month* ...,” B.312), mapping rapid growth onto bursts of energy in dynamic market conditions.

The framing of BUSINESS IS NATURE positions businesses as adaptive and dynamic systems. Survival captures their resilience and focus on essential resources, while energy reflects the optimism and volatility of market conditions, depicting businesses as responsive entities thriving in a fluctuating environment.

Generic Metaphor: BUSINESS IS AWARENESS

Specific Metaphors: BUSINESS IS CONTROL, BUSINESS IS PERCEPTION

Businesses were portrayed as entities enhancing control and perception. BUSINESS IS CONTROL is seen in *eyes and ears* (“... *field and store teams as the eyes and ears of companies ...*,” B.247), mapping situational awareness onto operational oversight. BUSINESS IS PERCEPTION is illustrated in “*conscious consumption*” (B.331), reflecting deliberate and informed business decisions shaped by consumer behavior.

The framing of BUSINESS IS AWARENESS highlights businesses as mindful and strategic actors. Control emphasizes operational mastery, while perception underscores their attentiveness to consumer needs and market trends, reinforcing their ability to adapt and thrive during the recovery phase.

In sum, the metaphors BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY, BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP, BUSINESS IS NATURE, and BUSINESS IS AWARENESS collectively depict businesses in the recovery phase as ambitious explorers, authoritative leaders, resilient entities, and perceptive strategists. These conceptualizations underscore the multifaceted roles businesses adopted to navigate and succeed in a transformed economic landscape.

4.2.2. Discussion of the Findings

This section interprets the meanings of the findings for Research Question 2: “*How are the conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS conceptualized and framed?*” by examining both alignments and distinctions with previous studies on BUSINESS metaphors and situating these findings within the broader landscape of conceptual metaphors in economic news discourse.

4.2.2.1. Alignments with Previous Studies on Conceptual Metaphors of BUSINESS

The findings indicate substantial alignment with previous research on conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in economic news discourse, particularly through recurring metaphorical frames that consistently convey business dynamics.

BUSINESS IS WAR metaphor

The WAR metaphor remains one of the most prominent frames in both previous and current studies, highlighting business as a combative and competitive arena.

Expressions such as *battle, defense, competition, hit* ... frequently depict business interactions as high-stakes conflicts that demand strategic actions for survival. For instance, this study includes examples as follows:

*“Retailers play a pivotal role in the U.S. economy – and while they’ve been **hit hard** by the Covid-19 pandemic, the sector has adapted through innovation” (A.I.1)*

*“Brick-and-mortar retailers were among those **hit hardest** by the Covid-19 pandemic” (B.24).*

These expressions *hit hard, hit hardest* mirror those found in Maestre’s (2000) study, such as *“Imports **hit** footwear market.”* This consistency across studies supports the idea that WAR metaphors are particularly pervasive during times of crisis, reinforcing the view that business is a field marked by intense competition and resilience under pressure.

BUSINESS IS MECHANISM metaphor

The MECHANISM metaphor aligns across both the current study and previous research, portraying business as a structured, machine-like system that requires consistent function and maintenance. In both datasets, this metaphor frames business processes as mechanical, emphasizing the repetitive, sometimes strenuous aspects of business operations. An example from this study is as follows:

*“But as bad as that downturn was, sales never **ground to a halt** the way they have in recent weeks, said Jack Kleinhenz, chief economist for the National Retail Federation. (A.381)*

The metaphorical expression *ground to a halt* implies that business processes can *grind* to a stop, much like a malfunctioning machine. This aligns with Lăzărescu’s (2011) example, *“Workers are emerging from their **daily grind** in the factory,”* which likens business activities to a mechanical, repetitive routine that workers are part of.

These examples collectively underscore the MECHANISM metaphor, portraying business as a system that relies on seamless, repetitive operations. Disruptions, such as sales *grinding to a halt* or the *daily grind* of factory work, highlight the importance of continuous function, where any breakdown can impact overall productivity. This alignment reflects the view of business as a structured machine, requiring coordination and resilience to maintain efficiency.

BUSINESS IS A HUMAN metaphor

The HUMAN metaphor, which attributes qualities of life and health to business, is evident in both previous research and the present study through various metaphorical expressions. For example, *healthy* serves as a one of the key expressions to illustrate alignment. In the current study, the example “*Nothing about these numbers indicates that small business retailers are really **healthy***” (A.10) closely reflects Kovács’ (2006) use of “*The overall economy still seems **healthier** than it has been for a long time.*” This cross-domain mapping from human health to business stability frames business as an entity that, like a person, can thrive, struggle, or recover.

Through expressions like *healthy*, both studies allow readers to relate to economic conditions as natural life cycles, emphasizing that businesses can regain stability with proper intervention. The alignment in using health-related terms underscores the HUMAN metaphor’s role in making business resilience relatable, framing it as a living system capable of growth and recovery.

BUSINESS IS GAMBLING metaphor

The GAMBLING metaphor is evident in both the current study and previous research, portraying business as a realm of calculated risks and competitive stakes. Metaphorical expressions like *game, stake, bet, win* ... consistently frame business decisions as high-stakes moves with uncertain outcomes, much like a gamble.

To illustrate, in the current study, the metaphorical expression *win* in the example “*In this climate, discount retailers and value-oriented brands stand to **win***” (A.17) positions these retailers and brands as players in a market *game*, suggesting they hold favorable stakes as they navigate challenging economic conditions. In the same vein, Kovács (2006) uses *win* in “*They have **won** the strategic bets*” to equate successful business decisions with winning a high-stakes gamble, where success depends on carefully calculated risks.

This alignment illustrates the perception of business as uncertain yet opportunity-driven, where strategic choices hold the possibility of high payoff, much like a gambler pursuing victory in a risky game.

BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY metaphor

The JOURNEY metaphor appears across both the current study and previous

research, portraying business as a path that requires strategic shifts and purposeful steps. Expressions like *pathway*, *advance*, *go for*, *set for*, *move*, *drive* ... depict business as a journey that progresses through critical actions and navigational choices.

For instance, in the present study, the expression *move* (“*Firstly, there is the **move** to online shopping, which grew during lockdown to represent nearly a third of all retail sales*”, A.251) illustrates the retail industry’s adaptive shift, marking a strategic step in response to changing market demands. Similarly, Maestre’s (2000) example, “*Dunford’s reconstruction **move**,*” reflects a deliberate step within a restructuring journey. In both examples, *move* signifies a targeted action that pushes businesses forward, underscoring the JOURNEY metaphor where each *move* is a response to the evolving business landscape.

In short, the alignments between the present study and previous research underscore the consistency of BUSINESS metaphors in economic discourse, portraying business as competitive, mechanical, adaptive, strategic, and directional. Through metaphors - WAR, MECHANISM, HUMAN, GAMBLING, and JOURNEY, both datasets capture business as a dynamic arena marked by resilience, calculated risks, and purposeful progression, framing complex economic conditions in ways that are relatable and accessible to the audience.

4.2.2.2. *Distinctions in BUSINESS Metaphors Compared to Previous Studies*

The findings of this study reveal distinctive shifts and expansions in BUSINESS metaphors that differentiate them from previous studies. By identifying new metaphorical frames specific to the pandemic context, this study uncovers how the conceptualization of BUSINESS has adapted to reflect the unique challenges faced during the Covid-19 pandemic. The table below provides an overview of BUSINESS metaphors across two phases in the present study (2020 and 2021-2022) compared to those identified in previous research. The following discussion interprets these distinctions in terms of quantitative differences in metaphor variety, expanded metaphorical themes, the introduction of pandemic-specific frames, and a heightened focus on vulnerability and endurance.

Table 4.5*Conceptual Metaphors of BUSINESS compared to those identified in previous research*

CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF BUSINESS				
2020		2021-2022		Previous Studies
Generic Metaphors	Specific Metaphors	Generic Metaphors	Specific Metaphors	
BUSINESS IS WAR	BUSINESS IS A BATTLE BUSINESS IS A STRUGGLE BUSINESS IS MILITARY OPERATIONS BUSINESS IS A STAND FOR SURVIVAL	BUSINESS IS WAR	BUSINESS IS A BATTLE BUSINESS IS CONFLICT BUSINESS IS COMPETITION BUSINESS IS DEFENSE	BUSINESS IS WAR / A FIGHT BUSINESS IS COMPETITION
BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT	BUSINESS IS MOTION BUSINESS IS PHYSICAL MOVEMENT BUSINESS IS NAVIGATION BUSINESS IS SHIFT	BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT	BUSINESS IS MOTION BUSINESS IS TRANSIT BUSINESS IS MOBILITY	Not present
BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE	BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION BUSINESS IS FLEXIBILITY	BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE	BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION BUSINESS IS STABILITY	Not present
BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION	BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION BUSINESS IS TRANSITION	BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION	BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION BUSINESS IS RENEWAL	Not present
BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION	BUSINESS IS DECLINE BUSINESS IS DEPLETION	BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION	BUSINESS IS DECLINE BUSINESS IS COLLAPSE	Not present
BUSINESS IS PRESSURE	BUSINESS IS STRESS BUSINESS IS VULNERABILITY BUSINESS IS MANIPULATION	BUSINESS IS PRESSURE	BUSINESS IS STRESS BUSINESS IS TENSION	Not present
BUSINESS IS EXPANSION	BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION BUSINESS IS MOMENTUM	BUSINESS IS EXPANSION	BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION	Not present

CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF BUSINESS

2020		2021-2022		Previous Studies
Generic Metaphors	Specific Metaphors	Generic Metaphors	Specific Metaphors	
			BUSINESS IS DEVELOPMENT	
BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION	BUSINESS IS INSTABILITY BUSINESS IS VOLATILITY BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION	BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION	BUSINESS IS VOLTAGE BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION	Not present
BUSINESS IS OPERATION	BUSINESS IS MECHANISM BUSINESS IS TOOLS	BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP	BUSINESS IS AUTHORITY BUSINESS IS GUIDANCE	BUSINESS IS MECHANISM
BUSINESS IS PROTECTION	BUSINESS IS SAFEGUARD BUSINESS IS ATTACHMENT BUSINESS IS FOUNDATION	BUSINESS IS AWARENESS	BUSINESS IS CONTROL BUSINESS IS PERCEPTION	Not present
BUSINESS IS A HUMAN	BUSINESS IS LIFE BUSINESS IS GAMBLING BUSINESS IS TRAVEL	BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY	BUSINESS IS EXPLORATION BUSINESS IS ASPIRATION	BUSINESS AS A HUMAN / HUMAN BODY BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY BUSINESS IS GAMBLING
BUSINESS IS PROGRESS	BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION BUSINESS IS PERFORMANCE BUSINESS IS DYNAMICS	BUSINESS IS NATURE	BUSINESS IS SURVIVAL BUSINESS IS ENERGY	Not present

(a) Quantitative distinctions in metaphor variety

The quantitative findings demonstrate a notably broader range of conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in this study compared to previous research. The 2020 data includes 12 generic metaphors and 34 specific metaphors, while the 2021-2022 data includes 12 generic metaphors and 29 specific metaphors. In contrast, previous studies typically focused on a narrower set of BUSINESS metaphors, often emphasizing recurrent frames like BUSINESS IS WAR and BUSINESS IS MECHANISM.

This expansion in metaphor variety underscores the adaptability of BUSINESS metaphors in the face of the pandemic's unique challenges, capturing a more comprehensive and nuanced view of business operations and dynamics. The broader range of metaphors reflects the complex and evolving realities of the pandemic-impacted business landscape, where traditional frames alone were insufficient to convey the depth of the crisis. As Cesiri & Colaci (2011) argues, metaphors are particularly instrumental in providing a framework through which unprecedented economic turmoil can be understood and communicated. By encompassing a wider array of metaphorical expressions, this study offers valuable insights into how economic news discourse adapts to incorporate new and unforeseen circumstances, enhancing our understanding of how metaphors shape perceptions in times of crisis.

(b) Expansion of traditional conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS

The findings from this study demonstrate an expansion of traditional conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS, aligning with but also extending beyond previous conceptualizations. Traditional frames such as BUSINESS IS WAR, BUSINESS IS GAMBLING, BUSINESS IS A HUMAN, BUSINESS IS ORGANISM, BUSINESS IS AN ANIMAL AND BUSINESS IS HEALTH (*see section 2.6.3, chapter 2*) persist as central metaphors, yet this study introduces new layers at the frame level (Kövecses, 2020) that specifically capture the unique challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Table 4.6*Expansion of Traditional Conceptual Metaphors of BUSINESS*

CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF BUSINESS				
2020		2021-2022		Previous Studies
Generic Metaphors	Specific Metaphors	Generic Metaphors	Specific Metaphors	
BUSINESS IS WAR	BUSINESS IS A BATTLE BUSINESS IS A STRUGGLE BUSINESS IS MILITARY OPERATIONS BUSINESS IS A STAND FOR SURVIVAL	BUSINESS IS WAR	BUSINESS IS A BATTLE BUSINESS IS CONFLICT BUSINESS IS COMPETITION BUSINESS IS DEFENSE	BUSINESS IS WAR / A FIGHT BUSINESS IS COMPETITION
BUSINESS IS OPERATION	BUSINESS IS MECHANISM BUSINESS IS TOOLS	BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP	BUSINESS IS AUTHORITY BUSINESS IS GUIDANCE	BUSINESS IS MECHANISM
BUSINESS IS A HUMAN	BUSINESS IS LIFE BUSINESS IS GAMBLING BUSINESS IS TRAVEL	BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY	BUSINESS IS EXPLORATION BUSINESS IS ASPIRATION	BUSINESS AS A HUMAN / HUMAN BODY BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY BUSINESS IS GAMBLING

In the 2020 data, the metaphor BUSINESS IS WAR includes specific metaphors - BUSINESS IS A BATTLE (*hit hard, blow, survive, battered ...*), BUSINESS IS A STRUGGLE (*struggle, face, dead, waver, loser ...*), BUSINESS IS MILITARY OPERATIONS (*campaign, ramp up ...*), and BUSINESS IS A STAND FOR SURVIVAL (*struggle, resilient ...*). These metaphors emphasize the combative and defensive actions that businesses adopted in response to the abrupt challenges brought on by the pandemic. For instance, BUSINESS IS A STAND FOR SURVIVAL, such as in the example “*Many small businesses did not have a robust e-commerce business before the virus struck, and they have lost customers while they **struggle** to adapt*” (A.228), highlights businesses’ efforts to withstand external pressures and survive, rather than focusing solely on competition or aggression. By the 2021-2022 phase, BUSINESS IS WAR persists but takes on new specific metaphors, including BUSINESS IS CONFLICT (*challenged, compete ...*), BUSINESS IS COMPETITION (*win, lost, raised the game ...*), and BUSINESS IS DEFENSE (*barriers, hunkering down ...*). This shift reflects a transition from aggressive competition to a defensive strategy, as businesses sought to maintain stability in the prolonged crisis. Compared to prior studies, which focused mainly on BUSINESS IS WAR or A FIGHT and BUSINESS IS COMPETITION (Kovács, 2006; Maestre, 2000; Liendo, 2001; Koller, 2004; Greco, 2009; Vasiloaia *et al.*, 2011; Sun & Jiang, 2014; Jendrych, 2017; Skorczynska, 2012; Lăzărescu, 2011), the present study’s additional frames underscore resilience and protection, adapting the WAR metaphor to reflect businesses’ dual roles in confronting external threats and safeguarding internal stability.

Another metaphor, BUSINESS IS OPERATION, appears in distinct forms across the two phases. In the 2020 data, this generic metaphor includes BUSINESS IS MECHANISM (*running, driven ...*) and BUSINESS IS TOOLS (*leverage, gauge ...*), emphasizing the operational and systematic facets of business. These frames portray business as a machine requiring precision and maintenance, especially under the strain of pandemic-induced disruptions. However, in the 2021-2022 data, BUSINESS IS OPERATION evolves into BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP, incorporating specific metaphors such as BUSINESS IS AUTHORITY (*pioneer, king ...*) and BUSINESS IS GUIDANCE (*eyes and ears, leading ...*). This shift highlights the increased role of

leadership and strategic direction during the pandemic's prolonged effects. Leadership becomes a central part of business operations, reflecting an adaptive response to ongoing uncertainties. Previous studies primarily recognized BUSINESS IS MECHANISM (Lăzărescu, 2011) to describe operational aspects, but the emphasis on leadership-oriented frames in this study underscores the pandemic-driven need for authoritative guidance, adding a layer of strategic adaptability that earlier studies did not emphasize.

The generic metaphor BUSINESS IS A HUMAN also displays notable adaptations across the study phases, reflecting evolving conceptualizations of business. In the 2020 data, this metaphor includes specific metaphors like BUSINESS IS LIFE, BUSINESS IS GAMBLING, and BUSINESS IS TRAVEL, which collectively capture different aspects of businesses as dynamic entities encountering risks, growth, and movement. For example, BUSINESS IS LIFE (*maturing, growing, healthy ...*) conveys the vitality and fragility of businesses under sudden threats, aligning with the pandemic's pressures. Meanwhile, BUSINESS IS GAMBLING (*winner, losers, watch ... pennies ...*) and BUSINESS IS TRAVEL (*drives, horse and buggy ...*) frame business as a journey filled with risks and strategic decisions, emphasizing the uncertainty and high stakes faced by businesses during this period. By the 2021-2022 phase, this metaphor shifts to BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY, with specific metaphors like BUSINESS IS EXPLORATION (*navigate, charting ... path forward*) and BUSINESS IS ASPIRATION (*craving, chasing ...*). These metaphors represent a forward-looking perspective, focusing on adaptability, exploration, and aspirational goals as businesses enter the recovery phase. When compared to previous studies, the metaphor BUSINESS AS A HUMAN / HUMAN BODY has been noted in past research, such as Kovács (2006), Jendrych (2017), and Skorczyńska (2012), where it often underscores the personification of business, portraying it as an organism that can grow, decline, or face health issues. Additionally, BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY and BUSINESS IS GAMBLING were also recognized in earlier works (Kovács, 2006; Greco, 2009; Jendrych, 2017; Skorczyńska, 2012; Lăzărescu, 2011) albeit with less emphasis on the forward-looking, aspirational qualities found in the present study. The pandemic context in this study introduces a new dimension to these metaphors, expanding beyond traditional frames to include aspirations and explorative efforts, which highlight the adaptive and transformative

resilience of businesses in unprecedented times.

In brief, the findings reveal distinct expansions of traditional BUSINESS metaphors, adding layers that capture resilience, leadership, and aspirational growth unique to the pandemic context. These distinctions highlight a shift from conventional competitive frames to more complex views that reflect strategic adaptability and forward-looking resilience, setting this study apart from prior research.

(c) Introduction of crisis-driven conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS

The findings of this study reveal the emergence of crisis-driven metaphors that reflect the unique pressures and challenges businesses faced during the Covid-19 crisis. Unlike previous studies, which typically conceptualize business through metaphors such as BUSINESS IS WAR or BUSINESS IS GAMBLING, this study identifies a broader set of metaphorical frames (Kövecses, 2020) that capture the pandemic's impact. The following table provides an overview of these pandemic-driven metaphors across two phases, highlighting distinctions from earlier research.

Table 4.7*Crisis-driven conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS compared to previous studies*

CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF BUSINESS				
2020		2021-2022		Previous Studies
Generic Metaphors	Specific Metaphors	Generic Metaphors	Specific Metaphors	
BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT	BUSINESS IS MOTION BUSINESS IS PHYSICAL MOVEMENT BUSINESS IS NAVIGATION BUSINESS IS SHIFT	BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT	BUSINESS IS MOTION BUSINESS IS TRANSIT BUSINESS IS MOBILITY	Not present
BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE	BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION BUSINESS IS FLEXIBILITY	BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE	BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION BUSINESS IS STABILITY	Not present
BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION	BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION BUSINESS IS TRANSITION	BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION	BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION BUSINESS IS RENEWAL	Not present
BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION	BUSINESS IS DECLINE BUSINESS IS DEPLETION	BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION	BUSINESS IS DECLINE BUSINESS IS COLLAPSE	Not present
BUSINESS IS PRESSURE	BUSINESS IS STRESS BUSINESS IS VULNERABILITY BUSINESS IS MANIPULATION	BUSINESS IS PRESSURE	BUSINESS IS STRESS BUSINESS IS TENSION	Not present
BUSINESS IS EXPANSION	BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION BUSINESS IS MOMENTUM	BUSINESS IS EXPANSION	BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION BUSINESS IS DEVELOPMENT	Not present
BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION	BUSINESS IS INSTABILITY BUSINESS IS VOLATILITY	BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION	BUSINESS IS VOLTAGE BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION	Not present

CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF BUSINESS

2020		2021-2022		Previous Studies
Generic Metaphors	Specific Metaphors	Generic Metaphors	Specific Metaphors	
	BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION			
BUSINESS IS PROTECTION	BUSINESS IS SAFEGUARD	BUSINESS IS AWARENESS	BUSINESS IS CONTROL	Not present
	BUSINESS IS ATTACHMENT BUSINESS IS FOUNDATION		BUSINESS IS PERCEPTION	
BUSINESS IS PROGRESS	BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION BUSINESS IS PERFORMANCE BUSINESS IS DYNAMICS	BUSINESS IS NATURE	BUSINESS IS SURVIVAL BUSINESS IS ENERGY	Not present

In the 2020 phase, as the pandemic initially struck, the metaphors reflect an urgent response to crisis, with businesses portrayed as entities under immediate stress and challenge. For example, the generic metaphor BUSINESS IS PRESSURE includes two specific metaphors - BUSINESS IS STRESS (*exhausted, suffering ...*) and BUSINESS IS VULNERABILITY (*exposed, injury ...*), indicating a conceptualization of business as fragile and threatened by external forces. Likewise, BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION with frames such as BUSINESS IS DECLINE (*going under, disappear ...*) and BUSINESS IS DEPLETION (*dried up, erodes ...*) portrays businesses as entities experiencing loss and depletion. These metaphors align with Kövecses's (2010a) framework, where metaphorical conceptualization draws upon embodied experiences - in this case, reflecting physical stress and degradation in response to sudden disruptions. The immediate pressures faced by businesses are thus depicted as severe and taxing, symbolizing a struggle to endure the pandemic's abrupt impacts.

In the 2021-2022 phase, however, the metaphorical landscape shifts to reflect a more sustained and adaptive approach to ongoing challenges. BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE emerges with specific metaphors such as BUSINESS IS STABILITY (*anchor, harmonized ...*) and BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION (*morphed, agile ...*), signaling a transformation in how businesses conceptualize their roles in an uncertain environment. Here, the focus is on endurance and adaptability, depicting business as not only surviving but also adjusting to the "new normal" (Kozlova, 2021). This shift reflects Kövecses's idea of context-driven metaphorical evolution, where the cultural context - now one of prolonged crisis rather than immediate shock - necessitates a more nuanced and stable conceptualization of business.

The generic metaphor BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION also shows significant adaptation across the two phases. In 2020, specific ones like BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION (*evolve, turn around ...*) and BUSINESS IS TRANSITION (*shift, moving ...*) indicate a forced adaptation to immediate changes, as businesses were compelled to rapidly adjust to pandemic constraints. By 2021-2022, however, specific metaphors such as BUSINESS IS RENEWAL (*refined, revive ...*) signal a more deliberate process of

change, where businesses actively seek to rebuild and innovate rather than merely responding to external pressures. This distinction underscores how, over time, the concept of transformation evolved from a reactive stance to a proactive, growth-oriented outlook.

Similarly, the generic metaphor BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT captures a dynamic shift between the two phases. In 2020, specific metaphors BUSINESS IS NAVIGATION (*set their course, pivot ...*) and BUSINESS IS PHYSICAL MOVEMENT (*bump, retracting ...*) suggest businesses maneuvering through crisis-driven obstacles. By 2021-2022, specific metaphors such as BUSINESS IS TRANSIT (*flow in, head into, head out ...*) and BUSINESS IS MOBILITY (*going forward, ahead of the curve ...*) indicate a smoother, more forward-looking approach, as businesses adapt to new operational landscapes. This progression from chaotic navigation to structured mobility illustrates the evolving metaphorical framing of business resilience and flexibility.

A notable introduction in the 2021-2022 phase is the generic metaphor BUSINESS IS NATURE, with specific metaphors BUSINESS IS SURVIVAL (*weather, thrive ...*) and BUSINESS IS ENERGY (*exuberant, shrugged off ...*). These metaphors highlight the existential struggle of businesses as entities fighting to thrive amidst ongoing adversities. This conceptualization reflects the widespread perception of the pandemic as a survival test, further illustrating how embodied experiences of struggle and endurance permeate metaphorical language, as Kövecses (2010a) suggested in relation to culturally embedded metaphors. Unlike previous studies, which predominantly focused on growth and success, this frame emphasizes survival - a fundamental shift prompted by the prolonged uncertainties of the pandemic.

In conclusion, the distinctions across the two phases reflect how the unique pressures of the pandemic reshaped the conceptualization of business, introducing frames that capture both the initial shock and the subsequent adaptation processes. The introduction of pandemic-driven metaphors, such as BUSINESS IS PRESSURE, BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE, and BUSINESS IS NATURE, underscores the adaptability of metaphorical language in reflecting crisis-specific experiences. Kövecses's (2010a)

framework highlights the dual influence of embodiment and cultural context, illustrating how the pandemic's global impact contributed to a richer, more complex metaphorical landscape for understanding business dynamics. This evolution from immediate crisis response to sustained adaptation showcases the depth and versatility of business metaphors, situating them within a broader cultural and temporal context that previous studies did not capture.

4.2.2.3. Situating Findings within the Broader Context of Conceptual Metaphor Studies in Economic News Discourse

The findings from this research expand the scope of conceptual metaphor studies by positioning conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS within the broader landscape of economic news discourse, capturing a diversity of themes that emerged during the Covid-19 pandemic. While prior studies focus on target domains such as the ECONOMY, MARKET, and INDUSTRY (*see Section 2.6.1, Chapter 2*), this research's emphasis on conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS (BUSINESS as a target domain) offers new insights into how multiple crisis-responsive frames - such as resilience, transformation, deterioration, and pressure - contribute to the adaptability of conceptual metaphors in economic discourse as a whole. The two phases (2020 and 2021-2022) illustrate the shifting focus within conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS, reflecting changes in the pandemic's impact on the retail sector.

(a) Reinforcing diverse themes of resilience, defence, and pressure in economic news discourse

Economic metaphor studies frequently explore themes of resilience and defence, often through metaphors such as HEALTH (PROBLEM IS PAIN, Urbonaitė & Šeškauskienė, 2007), WAR (ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IS WAR, Cai & Deignan, 2019), and ORGANISM (THE ECONOMY IS AN ORGANISM, Charteris-Black & Ennis, 2001). These metaphors frame economic entities as capable of both recovery and conflict management, particularly in crisis situations.

The conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS identified in 2020 and 2021-2022 contribute nuanced perspectives on resilience and defence in economic news

discourse. For example, BUSINESS IS WAR in both phases includes specific metaphors such as BUSINESS IS A BATTLE and BUSINESS IS DEFENSE (*see 4.2.1.1*), emphasizing the active and defensive measures businesses adopt to survive economic turbulence. Similarly, BUSINESS IS PRESSURE in both years incorporates frames like BUSINESS IS STRESS and BUSINESS IS VULNERABILITY (*see 4.2.1.6*), highlighting how businesses withstand and manage stress. These conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS deepen traditional metaphors by presenting businesses as both resilient and defensive agents within an uncertain economic environment, situating them as critical players in broader crisis narratives.

(b) Interpreting crisis responses through transformation, fluctuation, and deterioration themes

During crises, economic news discourse often shifts to metaphors that underscore transformation and vulnerability. Scholars such as Skorczynska & Deignan (2006), White (1997), Telibaşa (2015), Cardini (2014) note that metaphors like MECHANISM (ECONOMY IS A MECHANISM, Andryukhina, 2021) and ANIMAL (ECONOMY/FINANCE IS AN ANIMAL, Cardini, 2014) capture shifts in economic stability and function, portraying economic systems as entities that can either adapt or break down under external pressures.

The conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS identified in this research, particularly across 2020 and 2021-2022, align with this shift. In 2020, BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION is reflected in frames such as BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION and BUSINESS IS TRANSITION, (*see 4.2.1.4*) capturing how businesses were preparing to move through the crisis. By 2021-2022, this theme evolved into BUSINESS IS RENEWAL and BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION, illustrating a shift from mere survival to adaptation and growth. Additionally, frames like BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION (*going under, disappear, dying ...*) (*see 4.2.1.5*) capture the challenges businesses face in response to prolonged disruption, emphasizing both their adaptive capacity and susceptibility to

economic pressures. These BUSINESS-specific metaphors extend traditional crisis metaphors by framing individual businesses as both adaptable and vulnerable, revealing the dual response of transformation and fluctuation in response to ongoing disruptions.

(c) Communicative function of stability and volatility in conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS

In economic news discourse, metaphors serve an essential communicative function by transforming complex economic concepts into accessible and relatable language (*see Section 2.6.2, Chapter 2*). Scholars such as Charteris-Black (2004) and Cai & Deignan (2019) argue that metaphors possess a persuasive potential, subtly shaping readers' perceptions and judgments through familiar images and connotations. This study's findings on conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS, particularly within the specific metaphors of STABILITY and VOLATILITY, underscore how metaphorical language effectively communicates both the reliability and vulnerability of the business sector in response to crisis-induced instability.

Prior research has demonstrated that metaphors HEALTH and WAR fulfill this communicative function by framing economic conditions as either battles or health crises, making abstract or intense economic conditions more relatable to the public (Boers & Demecheleer, 1997; Wang & Chen, 2013). Similarly, within the BUSINESS target domain, specific metaphors such as BUSINESS IS STABILITY (a frame within BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE in 2021-2022) and BUSINESS IS VOLTAGE (a frame within BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION in 2021-2022) fulfill this communicative role by portraying businesses as both anchors in uncertain times and as entities under external pressure.

For instance, BUSINESS IS STABILITY under the RESILIENCE domain in 2021-2022 includes expressions like *anchor* and *build*, which convey a sense of steadiness and durability, reinforcing the portrayal of businesses as stabilizing forces within a volatile economy. This communicative function mirrors previous studies, such as Boers & Demecheleer (1997), who highlighted how metaphors

like HEALTH used positive attributes (*slim* or *healthy*) to advocate for resilience and efficiency in businesses. By portraying businesses as steady and dependable, this metaphor contributes to a public narrative of businesses as stabilizing entities within fluctuating economic conditions.

Conversely, the specific metaphors such as BUSINESS IS VOLTAGE under FLUCTUATION highlight the instability and susceptibility of businesses to economic pressures. Metaphorical expressions like *surged*, *swing*, *jumps* ... communicate the dynamic and often erratic nature of the business environment, resonating with aggressive or turbulent imagery found in studies on crisis metaphors (e.g., CRISIS IS AGGRESSION in Cesiri & Colaci, 2011). These metaphors emphasize the pressures businesses face to remain adaptive within volatile conditions, making the concept of fluctuation more tangible and relatable to audiences.

Furthermore, just as Cardini's (2014) research used the metaphor ECONOMY IS A HUMAN BEING to communicate the strengths and vulnerabilities of economic entities, this research reveals how BUSINESS metaphors such as STABILITY and VOLATILITY humanize the business response to crises. By framing businesses as entities capable of serving as *anchors* or experiencing *surges*, these metaphors align with societal perceptions of businesses as both stabilizing agents and as entities subject to external economic fluctuations.

(d) Demonstrating the flexibility of metaphors in adapting to crisis contexts

Economic metaphors are known for their flexibility, especially in times of crisis. Scholars (Cesiri & Colaci, 2011; Cardini, 2014; Charteris-Black, 2004) have noted that metaphors evolve to capture shifting economic conditions, reflecting both immediate challenges and longer-term adaptations. This adaptability enables metaphors to encapsulate the complex and often unpredictable nature of economic upheavals. The generic metaphors identified in this study, such as BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE, BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION, and BUSINESS IS EXPANSION, demonstrate how conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS have evolved to reflect the specific demands of the Covid-19 crisis.

In 2020, businesses were primarily framed through themes of endurance and resistance, as seen in the generic metaphor BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE, specific metaphors BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE and BUSINESS IS FLEXIBILITY. This framing captures the initial survival strategies businesses adopted to withstand the uncertainties of the pandemic. For instance, the example “*It has not been easy, but retailers are generally a **durable** group, and the future will eventually be bright*” (A.11, BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE), uses a *durable group* to convey resilience and the ability to withstand stress. This reflects the necessity for businesses to persist despite the overwhelming challenges and pressures of the initial crisis phase, positioning them as entities focused on survival and stability.

By 2021-2022, the adaptability of conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS is evident in frames that highlight growth and recovery, such as in the generic metaphor BUSINESS IS EXPANSION with specific metaphors BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION and BUSINESS IS DEVELOPMENT. This shift illustrates a transition from mere survival to a phase of rebuilding and adaptation, capturing the evolving business landscape as it moved toward post-crisis recovery. An example of this metaphor is found in the expression, “*Retailers rushed to **beef up** inventories to meet booming demand*” (B.68, BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION), where *beef up* signifies a proactive approach to building capacity and strengthening operations. This metaphor emphasizes the expansion efforts businesses undertook to rebuild and adjust to the new economic demands of the recovery phase, highlighting their adaptability in response to renewed consumer needs.

Additionally, specific metaphors BUSINESS IS VOLTAGE and BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION under the generic metaphor BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION capture the instability and pressures that businesses faced as they navigated economic uncertainties. These metaphors emphasize both the adaptive capacity of businesses and their susceptibility to external pressures, highlighting the dual responses of transformation and fluctuation in response to ongoing disruptions. For instance, the example “*Since the pandemic began, online sales have **surged** and many brick-and-mortar retail stores have closed their doors permanently*”

(B.300, BUSINESS IS VOLTAGE) uses *surged* to illustrate the sudden and dramatic fluctuations in sales patterns. This metaphor underscores the instability businesses encountered as they contended with changing consumer behaviours and market demands, portraying a business landscape marked by both growth in some areas and decline in others.

In response to the disruptions, the specific metaphor - BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION reflect the heightened instability of the market. The expression *turned upside down* in the example “*Subscription businesses, which grew so rapidly over the last two years, are now facing a market **turned upside down***” (B.283) vividly conveys the reversal and unpredictability that businesses faced. This metaphor illustrates the extent to which the pandemic disrupted traditional business models, demanding rapid adjustments and a high level of adaptability.

By portraying businesses as entities that can endure, adapt, expand, or fluctuate, these conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS highlight the flexibility of metaphor in capturing shifting socio-economic realities.

Summary of Chapter 4

Chapter 4 presented the findings and discussion of the identification, conceptualization, and framing of conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in U.S. retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. Employing the Metaphor Identification Procedure (Pragglejaz Group, 2007) and WordSmith Tools (Scott, 2023), 480 metaphorical expressions were identified for the crisis phase (2020) and 419 for the recovery phase (2021-2022). These expressions were categorized into 39 specific source domains in 2020 and 29 in 2021-2022. The categorization process utilized manual analysis (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), dictionary-based methods (Gibbs, 2008), and input from educated native speakers (Skorczynska & Deigna, 2006; Arrese & Vara-Miguel, 2016), ensuring reliability in the identification of source domains.

The conceptualization and framing of conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS were examined through generic and specific-level structures, grounded in Kövecses’

(2010) framework. The analysis revealed 12 generic metaphors and 34 specific metaphors in 2020, alongside 12 generic metaphors and 29 specific metaphors in 2021-2022. These findings demonstrated the adaptability of BUSINESS metaphors, reflecting the distinct socio-economic challenges posed by the crisis and recovery phases of the pandemic.

The discussion of findings emphasized the dynamic nature of conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS across the two phases, with dominant metaphors such as BUSINESS IS WAR framing the crisis period (2020) and BUSINESS IS EXPANSION framing the recovery phase (2021-2022). These metaphors not only captured the socio-economic shifts during the pandemic but also revealed evolving conceptualizations of business resilience, innovation, and adaptation. The findings aligned with prior research (e.g., Maestre, 2000; Lăzărescu, 2011; Kovác, 2006) while highlighting distinctions in metaphorical framing specific to the retail industry during a global crisis.

CHAPTER 5: IDEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF BUSINESS

This chapter explores two key aspects of the conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in U.S. retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. The first dimension examines their ideological implications, focusing on how these metaphors embedded societal values and shaped public perceptions across the crisis and recovery phases. The second dimension investigates the contextual conceptualization of BUSINESS metaphors, analyzing how they reflected and adapted to the evolving socio-economic realities of the pandemic.

5.1. Ideological Implications of Conceptual Metaphors of Business in U.S. Retail Industry Discourse During the Covid-19 Pandemic

This section addresses Research Question 3 of the thesis: *How do conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS convey ideological implications in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic?* To explore this, the analysis applies Van Dijk's (1998) concept of ideology, which defines ideology as socially shared attitudes embedded within discourse, shaping collective understanding. The study also draws on the integration of Kövecses' (2020) Multi-level View of Conceptual Metaphor and Maalej's (2011) Ideological Dimensions of Metaphor to examine how metaphors convey ideology across conceptual, cognitive, and pragmatic levels. These levels reveal how metaphors serve as ideological tools that structure meaning, guide focus, and reinforce shared beliefs.

The ideological implications of conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS are examined across two phases: the crisis phase (2020) and the recovery phase (2021-2022). This division allows for a detailed exploration of how metaphors aligned with and reinforced the distinct socio-economic priorities and cultural narratives of each period. The following subsection focuses on the ideological implications of BUSINESS metaphors during the crisis phase.

5.1.1 Crisis Phase (2020) - Ideological Implications

During the crisis phase of the Covid-19 pandemic, conceptual metaphors in

retail industry discourse framed BUSINESS through narratives of conflict, resilience, and fragility. These metaphors served as ideological tools, shaping public perceptions of BUSINESS in alignment with societal priorities of survival, adaptability, and self-reliance. This section examines the ideological implications of these metaphors by exploring three key constructs: BUSINESS as a Battleground, emphasizing conflict and strain; BUSINESS as Resilient and Adaptive, highlighting movement and flexibility; and BUSINESS as Fragile and Unstable, reflecting vulnerability and decline. Using Maalej's (2011) three-dimensional framework - conceptual, cognitive, and pragmatic - alongside Van Dijk's (1998) concept of ideology, the analysis reveals how metaphors shaped dominant narratives and reinforced broader socio-economic values.

5.1.1.1. Constructing BUSINESS as a Battleground - Ideological Narratives of Conflict and Strain

The Covid-19 pandemic posed unprecedented challenges for the retail industry, forcing businesses to navigate operational disruptions, shifting consumer behaviours, and financial uncertainty. Within this context, metaphors emerged as essential tools for framing these disruptions, offering coherence to an otherwise chaotic reality. From the research findings, several generic metaphors such as BUSINESS IS WAR and BUSINESS IS PRESSURE were identified as dominant in conceptualizing the pandemic's impact on the retail sector.

Among these, BUSINESS IS WAR stands out as particularly significant due to its ability to encapsulate the adversarial and combative nature of the challenges faced by businesses. This metaphor encompasses specific-level metaphors, including BUSINESS IS A BATTLE, BUSINESS IS A STRUGGLE, BUSINESS IS MILITARY OPERATIONS, and BUSINESS IS A STAND FOR SURVIVAL, which collectively structure the pandemic as a battleground requiring resilience, adaptability, and strategic ingenuity.

The following table illustrates the construal of BUSINESS IS WAR and its specific-level metaphors, highlighting how each metaphorical frame captures distinct aspects of the adversarial and strategic dynamics faced by businesses during the pandemic.

Table 5.1

Construal of BUSINESS IS WAR

Construal of the Metaphors at Two Conceptual levels			
Domain Level		Frame Level	Examples
Generic Metaphor	Specific Metaphors		
BUSINESS IS WAR	BUSINESS IS A BATTLE	Suffering setbacks is receiving blows in a battle	"Retailers plays a pivotal role in the U.S. economy - and while they've have been <i>hit hard</i> by the COVID-19 pandemic..." (A.1) "The <i>hardest-hit</i> retail sectors are those deemed nonessential ..." (A.38) "But the coronavirus pandemic has affected... offline retail has been <i>hit</i> particularly <i>hard</i> ." (A.65)
		Closure of businesses is a decisive strike in battle	"These struggling retailers may <i>suffer their final blow</i> ". (A.87) "... a <i>potential deadly blow</i> for those chains teetering on the edge of bankruptcy." (A.304)
		Enduring operational challenges is surviving combat	"Efforts have been made at the City, State and federal levels... retail stores <i>survive</i> the pandemic." (A.283) "... adequately prepared to pivot witnessed explosive growth - or at least were able to <i>survive</i> ." (A.f6)
		Economic strain is damage sustained after a battle	"... reflecting a rare bright spot in the <i>battered</i> economy." (A.161) "The apparel industry and a slew of malls were <i>battered</i> as millions of Americans stayed home a..." (A.299)
		Facing market challenges is engaging the enemy	"Given all the retail bankruptcies that the industry has <i>faced</i> during the past year – many due to COVID closures ..." (A.92) "Segments of the industry <i>face</i> significant <i>challenges</i>" (A.300)
		Persisting in challenges is enduring hardships	"How retailers treat employees and consumers ... will likely have a lasting impact that will <i>endure</i> beyond the Coronavirus pandemic ..." (A387)

Construal of the Metaphors at Two Conceptual levels			
Domain Level		Frame Level	Examples
Generic Metaphor	Specific Metaphors		
		Key workers are frontline warriors	"But many retail workers, heralded as <i>heroes</i> during the first wave of the pandemic ..." (A.112) "They were hailed as <i>heroes</i> during the first wave of the pandemic..." (A.243)
		Striving to survive is fighting to remain	"... businesses that are <i>fighting</i> to remain open, such as the Paycheck Protection Program." (A.242) "... - all <i>fighting</i> for the consumer's attention." (A.324)
		Gaining advantage is utilizing power	"This dramatic consolidation would result in the surviving retailers having increased <i>leverage</i> over their manufacturer partners." (A.88)
	BUSINESS IS A STRUGGLE	Facing uncertainties is navigating through struggles	"... traditional or overleveraged retailers <i>struggled</i> to navigate through the uncertainties." (A.123)
		Addressing challenges is confronting obstacles	"Retailers and brands <i>face</i> a daunting multitude of short-term <i>challenges</i> ..." (A.147)
		Resisting decline is enduring the risk of collapse	"But the surprising fact is that the retail store as we've known it isn't <i>dead</i> (at least not yet)." (A.282)
		Facing bleak prospects is coping with despair in a struggle	"With news of larger retailers <i>crumbling</i> and the growing popularity of online shopping ..." (A.44)
		Coping with inequality is managing disparities	"... casting national chains into buckets of pandemic <i>winners</i> and <i>losers</i> ." (A.128)
	BUSINESS IS MILITARY OPERATIONS	Executing marketing campaigns is conducting tactical missions	"Nike's 'Play Inside, Play for the World' <i>campaign</i> is a fitting example ... encourage social distancing during the pandemic." (A.311)

Construal of the Metaphors at Two Conceptual levels			
Domain Level		Frame Level	Examples
Generic Metaphor	Specific Metaphors		
		Withstanding economic pressure is holding the line under attack	"When New York's economic lockdown started in March the hope was that the closing of businesses would be temporary and many could weather the financial <i>blow</i> ." (A.227)
		Expanding digital operations is mobilizing logistical units	"The number underscores that while many outlets are struggling, business at 'essential' retailers like grocery stores is surging, especially as online ordering <i>ramps up</i> ." (A.417)
		Aligning with industry trends is coordinating military strategies	"And the restaurant industry is rapidly <i>following suit</i> " (A.287)
		Utilizing unique business strengths is deploying specialized military resources	"Bricks and mortar stores... <i>played to the strengths</i> that in-person experiences can offer, such as more personal levels of service." (A.272)
	BUSINESS IS A STAND FOR SURVIVAL	Adapting to new conditions is enduring hardship to survive	"Some retailers might <i>survive</i> if they adapt to the new normal." (A.85) "Retailers have begun taking extreme measures to try to <i>survive</i> ." (A.120)
		Relying on innovation is utilizing survival tools	"E-commerce orders... have become a <i>survival tool</i> for the American family" (A.136) "Moving forward, an omnichannel marketing strategy is essential to <i>survival</i> ." (A.325)
		Rebranding efforts are shedding old identities to survive	"The Charlotte-based retailer has tried to <i>shake off</i> its image..." (A.12)
		Persisting through adversity is enduring setbacks	"For Lease' signs... evidence that businesses that tried to <i>ride out</i> the initial months... could no longer survive" (A.239)
		Stabilizing operations is regaining balance to survive	"Businesses are struggling to <i>find their feet</i> ..." (A.201)

Conceptual dimension

At the conceptual level, BUSINESS IS WAR provided coherence to the pandemic's challenges by framing them as a conflict between businesses and external adversities. This metaphor structured the narrative, portraying businesses as combatants actively engaging with adversarial forces. For instance, BUSINESS IS A BATTLE depicted setbacks as physical blows, as reflected in the expression *hit hard* (“Retailers... have been hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic”, A.1), and closures as decisive strikes, as in “*These struggling retailers may **suffer their final blow***” (A.87). The metaphor also framed operational endurance as combat, evident in “*Efforts have been made... to help retail stores **survive** the pandemic*” (A.283).

In addition, BUSINESS IS A STRUGGLE emphasized persistence, illustrated by the expression “*Traditional or overleveraged retailers **struggled**... through the uncertainties*” (A.123). BUSINESS IS MILITARY OPERATIONS framed strategic adaptations as tactical missions, as seen in “*Bricks and mortar stores... **played to the strengths** that in-person experiences can offer*” (A.272), while BUSINESS IS A STAND FOR SURVIVAL highlighted resilience and innovation, as in “*E-commerce orders... have become a **survival tool** for the American family*” (A.136). These conceptual metaphors provided a coherent framework for understanding the multifaceted challenges of the retail sector, although they also carried ideological weight by obscuring systemic factors, such as uneven government support or structural inequalities.

Cognitive dimension

At the cognitive level, BUSINESS IS WAR influenced how public attention was distributed, emphasizing businesses' internal capacities while downplaying external systemic issues. This selective framing directed focus toward resilience, adaptability, and strategic foresight. For example, the construed metaphor at frame level “*Persisting in challenges is enduring hardships*” (BUSINESS IS A BATTLE) (“*How retailers treat employees and consumers... will **endure** beyond the Coronavirus pandemic*”, A.387) emphasized businesses' endurance amid adversity.

Similarly, the metaphor “*Facing market challenges is engaging the enemy*” (“*Segments of the industry face significant challenges ...*”, A.300) portrayed businesses as active agents combating challenges.

BUSINESS IS MILITARY OPERATIONS reinforced this narrative by highlighting calculated actions and tactical ingenuity, such as the metaphor “*Expanding operations is launching an offensive*” (“...especially as online ordering **ramps up**”, A.417). BUSINESS IS A STAND FOR SURVIVAL further foregrounded adaptability, as reflected in the metaphor “*Stabilizing operations is regaining balance to survive*” (“*Businesses are struggling to **find their feet**...*”, A.201). By directing attention to businesses’ internal capacities, these metaphors marginalized critiques of systemic shortcomings, such as unequal resource distribution or inadequate policy interventions, reinforcing an individualistic perspective that prioritized self-reliance over collective action.

Pragmatic dimension

Pragmatically, BUSINESS IS WAR embedded societal values of competitiveness, autonomy, and resilience into discourse, shaping public attitudes toward businesses’ responses to the pandemic. The specific-level metaphors reinforced narratives of autonomy and heroism, portraying businesses as entities capable of overcoming adversity through internal effort. For example, within the specific metaphor BUSINESS IS A BATTLE, the construed metaphor at Frame level “*Key workers are frontline warriors*”, as seen in “*Retail workers, heralded as **heroes**...*” (A.112), aligned with societal expectations of heroism and self-reliance. Likewise, “*Striving to survive is fighting to remain*”, as reflected in “*Federal funding can support economic activity... **fighting** to remain open*” (A.242), framed survival as a combative endeavour requiring effort and persistence. The metaphor “*Gaining advantage is utilizing power*”, as in “... retailers having increased **leverage** over their manufacturer partners” (A.88), reinforced narratives of competition and strategic positioning. These metaphors pragmatically shifted accountability for crisis management away from systemic actors and onto businesses, reinforcing an

individualistic ideology that prioritized competitiveness and resilience while marginalizing collective responsibility or systemic reform.

Through its conceptual, cognitive, and pragmatic dimensions, BUSINESS IS WAR constructed a multidimensional narrative of conflict, resilience, and autonomy. At the conceptual level, it organized the pandemic's challenges into a coherent battleground scenario, simplifying complexity and prioritizing narratives of survival and strategy. At the cognitive level, it shaped public perceptions by emphasizing businesses' internal capacities while suppressing systemic critiques. At the pragmatic level, it embedded societal values of autonomy and competitiveness into discourse, shaping public attitudes toward businesses as heroic, embattled entities. These metaphors provided coherence and focus but carried significant ideological implications, obscuring systemic inequities and reinforcing narratives of individual responsibility in crisis management.

5.1.1.2 BUSINESS as Resilient and Adaptive - Ideological Narratives of Movement and Flexibility

During the crisis phase of 2020, the U.S. retail industry faced immense pressures to survive and adapt to the rapidly changing landscape brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic. In this context, metaphors played a critical role in framing these disruptions, providing coherence to the chaotic experience and shaping public understanding of businesses' responses. From the findings, a number of generic metaphors emerging to conceptualize these dynamics include BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE, BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT, BUSINESS IS OPERATION, BUSINESS IS PROGRESS ... While these metaphors highlighted the dynamic and adaptive capacities of businesses, this section focuses on BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE, which encapsulates specific-level metaphors such as BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE, BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION, and BUSINESS IS FLEXIBILITY. These metaphors collectively constructed ideological narratives of resilience, agility, and movement, framing businesses as entities capable of navigating adversity through strategic and adaptive efforts.

Table 5.2

Construal of BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE

Construal of the Metaphors at Two Conceptual levels			
Domain Level		Frame Level	Examples
Generic Metaphor	Specific Metaphors		
BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE	BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE	Surviving long-term difficulties is enduring challenges	"... although some retailers may <i>survive</i> , it is likely that retail shopping will never look the same" (A.254)
		Sustaining heavy burdens is bearing the brunt of adversity	"... the stores that have closed and are <i>taking the brunt</i> of the impact of the pandemic" (A.274)
		Reaching a breaking point is exceeding limits	"... it will push retail tenants closer to their <i>breaking point</i> " (A.77)
		Resuming operations after closures is rising from the ashes	"Businesses that have been <i>forced</i> to close... will see a sharp recovery " (A.200)
	BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION	Adjusting to rapid changes is pivoting in response to challenges	"Smaller retailers... to <i>pivot</i> quickly enough" (A.45)
		Navigating uncertain times is finding the best path	"... is just what is needed for the retail landscape to <i>navigate</i> these difficult times" (A.104)
		Planning for a better future is setting sights on distant goals	"... to <i>set</i> company <i>sights</i> higher across stores, partnerships ..." (A.285)
		Transforming operations is adjusting in a new form	"Big brand names ... (or have <i>morphed</i>) into a healthier environment" (A.151)
	BUSINESS IS FLEXIBILITY	Recovering from setbacks is rebounding after adversity	"Even when the economy <i>rebounds</i> , consumers can experience 'economic scarring'..." (A.158)
		Adapting operational strategies is shifting to hybrid models	"... consumers... are eager to <i>shift</i> to a mobile-forward hybrid buying pattern..." (A.398)
		Seizing market opportunities is leaping forward	"Chains like Best Buy... have reported revenue <i>jumps</i> this summer..." (A.174)
		Innovating in evolving markets is experimenting with agility	"Brands must be <i>agile</i> , innovative, and ready to experiment..." (A.152)

Conceptual dimension

At the conceptual level, the metaphor BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE provided coherence by framing businesses as enduring and adaptable entities in the face of unprecedented challenges. This metaphor mapped the target domain (BUSINESS) onto the source domain (RESILIENCE), portraying businesses as capable of withstanding adversity and recovering from setbacks. Within this framework, BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE emphasized businesses' ability to persist under pressure, as reflected in the expression *taking the brunt* (“... *the stores that have closed and are taking the brunt of the impact of the pandemic*”, A.274) (the frame-level metaphor “*Sustaining heavy burdens is bearing the brunt of adversity*”), which framed survival as a test of resilience. In addition, BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION highlighted the strategic adjustments required to navigate uncertainty, as seen in the metaphor “*Adjusting to rapid changes is adapting in response to challenges*” (“*Smaller retailers... to **pivot** quickly enough*”, A.45), portraying businesses as agile entities responding to evolving circumstances.

BUSINESS IS FLEXIBILITY extended this narrative by emphasizing innovation and strategic transformation, as exemplified in the metaphor “*Innovating in evolving markets is experimenting with agility*” (“*Brands must be **agile**, innovative, and ready to experiment...*”, A.152). Collectively, these specific-level metaphors structured businesses as resilient forces capable of overcoming adversity through strategic adaptation and innovation. However, as Fairclough (1995) argues, the coherence provided by such metaphors often carries ideological implications, as it simplifies complex systemic challenges into narratives of individual effort, thereby marginalizing broader structural factors such as uneven resource distribution or policy failures.

Cognitive dimension

At the cognitive level, the metaphor BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE shaped public perceptions by directing attention toward businesses' internal capacities - such as their ability to adapt, innovate, and recover - while suppressing discussions about

external systemic influences. For instance, BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE emphasized persistence and recovery, as in “*Resuming operations after closures is rising from the ashes*” (“*Businesses that have been **forced** to close... will see a sharp recovery*”, A.200), which framed recovery as an innate ability of businesses rather than a result of external support.

BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION reinforced this narrative by portraying businesses as navigating challenges independently, as seen in “*Navigating uncertain times is finding the best path*” (“... is just what is needed for the retail landscape to *navigate these difficult times*”, A.104), which emphasized strategic problem-solving. Meanwhile, BUSINESS IS FLEXIBILITY highlighted the innovative strategies businesses adopted to seize opportunities, as reflected in “*Seizing market opportunities is leaping forward*” (“*Chains like Best Buy... have reported revenue **jumps** this summer...*”, A.174). These metaphors collectively shaped a cognitive bias that prioritized resilience and adaptability as the defining features of businesses, while obscuring the systemic barriers that many smaller entities faced, such as unequal access to capital or digital infrastructure. As Lakoff & Johnson (1980) assert, metaphors highlight specific elements while concealing others. In this case, the emphasis on internal capacities diverted attention away from systemic dependencies, such as the role of government policies in shaping businesses’ ability to adapt.

Pragmatic dimension

At the pragmatic level, the metaphor BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE embedded dominant societal values of self-reliance, innovation, and adaptability into discourse, shaping public attitudes toward businesses as inherently capable of overcoming crises. For example, BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE legitimized societal expectations of resilience, as reflected in the metaphor “*Surviving long-term difficulties is enduring challenges*” (“... although some retailers may *survive*, it is likely that retail shopping will never look the same”, A.254), which framed survival as a natural attribute of businesses rather than the result of systemic interventions. Similarly, BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION reinforced narratives of innovation and strategic foresight, as in

*“Planning for a better future is setting sights on distant goals” (“... to **set** company **sights** higher across stores, partnerships ...”, A.285), which positioned businesses as forward-thinking entities capable of shaping their own recovery. BUSINESS IS FLEXIBILITY pragmatically justified businesses’ ability to innovate and adapt, as seen in *“Adapting operational strategies is shifting to hybrid models” (“... consumers... are eager to **shift** to a mobile-forward hybrid buying pattern...”*, A.398), which reinforced the perception of businesses as agile and resourceful. These metaphors pragmatically shifted accountability for crisis management away from systemic actors, such as governments or institutions, and onto businesses themselves, reinforcing individualistic ideologies that prioritize resilience and flexibility while marginalizing collective responsibility or systemic reform. As Maalej (2011) highlights, metaphors at the pragmatic level act as tools to influence beliefs and expectations, legitimizing dominant societal narratives while suppressing alternatives.*

In sum, BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE constructed a multidimensional narrative of adaptability and movement during the crisis phase of 2020. At the conceptual level, it framed businesses as enduring and flexible entities capable of navigating adversity through strategic adjustments. At the cognitive level, it shaped public perceptions by emphasizing internal capacities while suppressing systemic critiques. At the pragmatic level, it embedded societal values of innovation and self-reliance into discourse, shaping public attitudes toward businesses as inherently capable of overcoming crises. By focusing on BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE, this section highlights how metaphors not only provide coherence to chaotic experiences but also shape ideological narratives that prioritize individual effort over collective responsibility.

5.1.1.3. BUSINESS as Fragile and Unstable - Ideological Narratives of Vulnerability and Decline

The crisis phase of 2020 profoundly destabilized the U.S. retail industry, revealing its vulnerabilities and systemic fragilities. Metaphors emerged as a means of structuring this instability into coherent narratives that made the chaos of the

pandemic comprehensible to public audiences. Among the dominant metaphors in this context, BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION stood out as an overarching generic metaphor that framed the retail industry's challenges in terms of instability, volatility, and disruption. Specific-level metaphors such as BUSINESS IS INSTABILITY, BUSINESS IS VOLATILITY, and BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION collectively constructed a narrative of fragility and decline, emphasizing the precariousness of business operations during the pandemic.

Table 5.3

Construal of BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION

Construal of the Metaphors at Two Conceptual levels			
Domain Level		Frame Level	Examples
Generic Metaphor	Specific Metaphors		
BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION	BUSINESS IS INSTABILITY	Faltering under pressure is losing operational control	"... chains <i>teetering</i> on the edge of bankruptcy" (A.305)
		Breaking apart is experiencing financial collapse	"... <i>collapse</i> in consumer spending" (A.217)
		Sinking is struggling to remain business	"... government-backed loans and grants to keep businesses <i>afloat</i> " (A.219)
		Shaking foundations is workforce uncertainty	"... employment hiring has significantly <i>dipped</i> since ... the pandemic" (A.191)
		Oscillating decisions is losing strategic focus	"... businesses that were <i>wavering</i> on making difficult decisions..." (A.211)
	BUSINESS IS VOLATILITY	Sharp increases are unexpected surges	"... online orders <i>surged</i> for retailers in the pandemic" (A.418)
		Rapid decreases are plummeting performance	"... sales <i>tumble</i> during the pandemic" (A.377)
		Fluctuating levels are unstable patterns	"... sales at general merchandise retailers <i>climbed</i> 50%" (A.347)
		increasing effects is intensifying dynamics	"... The latest sales data is likely to <i>amplify</i> calls for..." (A.368)
	BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION	Adapting strategies is reconfiguring systems	"Consumers' mindsets will <i>switch</i> to reduced consumption of non-essential items..." (A.386)
		Halting momentum is freezing activity	"... sales never <i>ground to a halt</i> the way they have..." (A.381)
		Destabilizing structures is dismantling networks	"... small businesses... are starting to <i>topple</i> " (A.162)

Conceptual dimension

The metaphor BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION provided coherence by structuring the crisis as a narrative of instability and uncertainty. Within this framework, BUSINESS IS INSTABILITY portrayed businesses as entities teetering on the edge of collapse, as seen in the frame-level metaphor “*Faltering under pressure is losing operational control*” (“... chains **teetering** on the edge of bankruptcy”, A.305) and “*Breaking apart is experiencing financial collapse*” (“... **collapse** in consumer spending”, A.217). These expressions *teering* and *collapse* framed business fragility as an inevitable consequence of external pressures, highlighting operational vulnerabilities without addressing systemic causes. Additionally, BUSINESS IS VOLATILITY emphasized unpredictability and fluctuation, as reflected in the metaphor “*Rapid decreases are plummeting performance*” (“... sales **tumble** during the pandemic”, A.377) and “*Sharp increases are unexpected surges*” (“... online orders **surged** for retailers in the pandemic”, A.418). These metaphors conceptualized business performance as subject to uncontrollable external forces, such as shifting consumer demand and supply chain disruptions.

BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION further extended this narrative by portraying businesses as entities struggling to maintain momentum and stability, as in “*Halting momentum is freezing activity*” (“... sales never **ground to a halt** the way they have...”, A.381). Collectively, these metaphors framed the pandemic as a destabilizing force that exposed the fragility of businesses, offering a structured narrative of decline while masking the systemic inequalities - such as uneven access to government support - that exacerbated these vulnerabilities.

Cognitive dimension

At the cognitive level, the metaphor BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION shaped public perceptions by directing attention toward the instability and volatility of businesses while suppressing discussions about systemic causes. For example, BUSINESS IS INSTABILITY emphasized existential threats to businesses, as seen in “*Shaking foundations is workforce uncertainty*” (“... employment hiring has

significantly *dipped* since ... the pandemic”, A.191), which drew attention to operational challenges without addressing broader structural factors, such as inadequate labour protections or inequitable access to capital.

BUSINESS IS VOLATILITY reinforced perceptions of unpredictability by emphasizing dramatic shifts in performance, as reflected in the metaphor “*Fluctuating levels are unstable patterns*” (“... sales at general merchandise retailers *climbed* 50%”, A.347). This metaphor highlighted the precariousness of the retail industry while suppressing discussions about systemic barriers, such as disparities in digital infrastructure that hindered smaller retailers. Meanwhile, BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION focused attention on the disarray caused by the pandemic, as in “*Destabilizing structures is dismantling networks*” (“... small businesses... are starting to *topple*”, A.162), which framed instability as a natural consequence of external forces while obscuring the role of systemic failures in exacerbating these challenges. As Maalej (2011) explains, metaphors influence attention distribution, amplifying some aspects of the target domain while concealing others. In this case, BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION prioritized narratives of instability and decline, deflecting attention from the structural inadequacies that constrained businesses’ ability to adapt during the crisis.

Pragmatic dimension

The metaphor BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION embedded societal narratives of vulnerability and decline into discourse, shaping public attitudes toward the retail industry’s struggles. BUSINESS IS INSTABILITY pragmatically invoked a sense of urgency and fragility, as reflected in the metaphor “*Sinking is struggling to remain business*” (“... government-backed loans and grants to keep businesses *afloat*”, A.219). This metaphor reinforced societal expectations of business resilience while suppressing critiques of systemic support mechanisms. Similarly, BUSINESS IS VOLATILITY emphasized the instability of performance, as seen in “*Increasing effects is intensifying dynamics*” (“... The latest sales data is likely to *amplify* calls for...”, A.368), which framed fluctuations as inherent to the crisis while downplaying

the role of structural inequalities in shaping these dynamics.

BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION pragmatically justified the disarray caused by the pandemic, as in the metaphor “*Adapting strategies is reconfiguring systems*” (“*Consumers’ mindsets will **switch** to reduced consumption of non-essential items...*”, A.386), which emphasized the need for businesses to independently adapt rather than relying on systemic reforms. These metaphors pragmatically shifted accountability for business fragility away from systemic actors, such as governments or institutions, and onto businesses themselves, reinforcing narratives of self-reliance and marginalizing the role of collective action or structural reform. As Maalej (2011) argues, metaphors act ideologically by shaping public evaluations and embedding societal beliefs into discourse, effectively legitimizing dominant narratives of vulnerability while suppressing alternative frameworks that emphasize systemic accountability.

In sum, the metaphor BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION constructed a multidimensional narrative of fragility and instability during the crisis phase of 2020. At the conceptual level, it provided coherence by structuring the pandemic as a narrative of instability and decline. At the cognitive level, it directed attention to the vulnerabilities of businesses while suppressing systemic critiques. At the pragmatic level, it embedded societal narratives of self-reliance and resilience into discourse, shaping public attitudes toward businesses as entities struggling to adapt to external pressures while downplaying the necessity of systemic reforms. By focusing on BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION, this section highlights how metaphors not only provide coherence to chaotic experiences but also reinforce ideological narratives that obscure broader structural responsibilities.

5.1.2. Recovery Phase (2021-2022) - Ideological Implications

During the recovery phase of the Covid-19 pandemic, retail industry discourse shifted its focus from survival to narratives of growth, leadership, and transformation. This change mirrored broader societal priorities as the crisis subsided, emphasizing BUSINESS as the driving force behind recovery and progress. Drawing on Maalej’s

(2011) three-dimensional framework, this section examines how metaphors during this phase framed BUSINESS as an authoritative leader, a transformative force, and an organic entity, central to the economic and social rebuilding process.

5.1.2.1. Constructing BUSINESS as Expanding and Thriving - Ideological Narratives of Growth and Opportunity

The recovery phase of 2021-2022 marked a significant shift in the conceptualization of BUSINESS, as metaphors centered on BUSINESS IS EXPANSION came to the forefront. This metaphor structured BUSINESS as a thriving and forward-moving entity, emphasizing growth, innovation, and adaptation in response to the challenges of the pandemic. Within this framework, three specific-level metaphors - BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION, BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION, and BUSINESS IS DEVELOPMENT - emerged as dominant themes. These metaphors collectively constructed an ideological narrative of growth and opportunity, framing BUSINESS as resilient and adaptive while downplaying systemic barriers or inequalities.

Table 5.4

Construal of BUSINESS IS EXPANSION

Construal of the Metaphors at Two Conceptual levels			
Domain Level		Frame Level	Examples
Generic Metaphor	Specific Metaphors		
BUSINESS IS EXPANSION	BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION	Increasing impact is broadening reach	"As e-commerce <i>grows</i> , physical stores must change." (B.138)
		Blurring distinctions is merging boundaries	"As e-commerce <i>proliferates</i> , the barriers separating physical and online shopping experiences will blur." (B.163)
		Accelerating growth is surging ahead	"While e-commerce has been on the rise since its inception, the unprecedented events of 2020 caused it to <i>skyrocket</i> ..." (B.140)
		Scaling capacity is building momentum	"... augmented reality is 'a huge opportunity for retailers to <i>scale</i> product trials...'" (B.37)
		Achieving peaks is reaching milestones	"Across Manhattan... the number of available ground-floor stores... has <i>soared</i> ." (B.294)
		Strengthening operations is elevating standards	"... e-commerce spending to remain <i>elevated</i> even as the pandemic recedes...." (B.164)
		Building resilience is thriving under pressure	"... big-box retailers, <i>thrived</i> , drawing more shoppers looking for food or homegoods." (B.118)
	BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION	Building resilience is laying foundations	"I examine how retailers can <i>build</i> resilient, responsible businesses." (B.49)
		Creating space is opening capacity	"...big grocery retailers... <i>made room</i> for it because of consumer demand." (B.42)
		Fortifying inventories is strengthening structures	"...they rushed to <i>beef up</i> inventories to meet booming demand." (B.68)
	BUSINESS IS DEVELOPMENT	Innovating strategies is charting new directions	"... <i>move further</i> along their digital transformation journey." (B.17)
		Leading change is steering evolution	"The retail industry has <i>led the way</i> in surmounting the Covid-19 pandemic's challenges with innovation..." (B.96)
		Transforming systems is evolving practices	"...will continue to shape how retail <i>evolves</i> in 2021 and, most likely, far beyond." (B.51)
		Bridging divides is unifying goals	"... retail is <i>taking on a movement</i> of bold innovation." (B.113)

Conceptual dimension

At this level, BUSINESS IS EXPANSION provided coherence to the discourse by framing the recovery phase as a period of growth and reinvention. For example, BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION highlighted the increasing impact of digital transformation, as seen in the metaphor at Frame level “*Increasing impact is broadening reach*” (“*As e-commerce **grows**, physical stores must change*”, B.138) and “*Accelerating growth is surging ahead*” (“*While e-commerce has been **on the rise** since its inception, the unprecedented events of 2020 caused it to skyrocket...*”, B.140). These metaphors depicted BUSINESS as dynamically expanding its boundaries, driven by opportunities in the digital realm.

In addition, BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION reinforced the narrative of resilience and capacity-building, as in “*Building resilience is laying foundations*” (“*I examine how retailers can **build** resilient, responsible businesses*”, B.49), which positioned resilience as the cornerstone of sustainable growth. Finally, BUSINESS IS DEVELOPMENT emphasized forward momentum and innovation, as reflected in “*Innovating strategies is charting new directions*” (“... **move further** along their digital transformation journey”, B.17). Together, these metaphors structured the recovery phase as a period of expansion, portraying BUSINESS as an entity capable of thriving through strategic reinvention and proactive adaptation.

Cognitive dimension

At the cognitive level, the generic metaphor BUSINESS IS EXPANSION shaped public perceptions by emphasizing growth and opportunity while suppressing systemic challenges. For instance, BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION drew attention to the transformative potential of e-commerce, as seen in “*Blurring distinctions is merging boundaries*” (“*As e-commerce **proliferates**, the barriers separating physical and online shopping experiences will blur*”, B.163), which underscored the seamless integration of traditional and digital markets. This narrative highlighted the innovative capacities of businesses while masking the uneven access to digital infrastructure that disadvantaged smaller retailers.

Similarly, BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION emphasized the proactive efforts of businesses to fortify their operations, as in the metaphor “*Fortifying inventories is strengthening structures*” (“...they rushed to **beef up** inventories to meet booming demand”, B.68). This metaphor directed attention toward businesses’ internal strategies while obscuring external dependencies, such as supply chain vulnerabilities or government support. Meanwhile, BUSINESS IS DEVELOPMENT reinforced the idea of businesses as agents of change, as in “*Leading change is steering evolution*” (“*The retail industry has **led the way** in surmounting the Covid-19 pandemic’s challenges with innovation...*”, B.96). This framing focused on the transformative agency of businesses, diverting attention from structural inequities or systemic reforms that shaped their capacity for growth. As Maalej (2011) notes, metaphors manipulate the distribution of attention, emphasizing certain aspects of the target domain while suppressing others. In this case, BUSINESS IS EXPANSION centralized narratives of innovation and opportunity, marginalizing systemic critiques.

Pragmatic dimension

The metaphor BUSINESS IS EXPANSION embedded societal expectations of growth, adaptability, and resilience into discourse, shaping public attitudes toward the retail industry’s recovery. For example, BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION pragmatically positioned e-commerce as a driving force of economic recovery, as seen in the metaphor construed at Frame level “*Scaling capacity is building momentum*” (“... *augmented reality is 'a huge opportunity for retailers to **scale** product trials...*”, B.37). This metaphor reinforced the belief that businesses could independently leverage new technologies to thrive, aligning with neoliberal ideologies that prioritize individual agency over systemic support.

BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION framed resilience as a proactive endeavour, as reflected in “*Creating space is opening capacity*” (“...*big grocery retailers... **made room** for it because of consumer demand*”, B.42). This metaphor pragmatically justified the onus on businesses to adapt and expand, side-lining discussions about the systemic constraints they faced. Finally, BUSINESS IS DEVELOPMENT emphasized the

transformative potential of businesses, as in “*Transforming systems is evolving practices*” (“...will continue to shape how retail *evolves* in 2021 and, most likely, far beyond”, B.51). This metaphor reinforced societal narratives of innovation and progress while suppressing the structural factors - such as workforce inequalities or resource disparities - that influenced businesses’ ability to innovate. As Maalej (2011) explains, metaphors act ideologically by shaping public expectations and evaluations, legitimizing dominant narratives while marginalizing alternative perspectives.

Overall, through three ideological dimensions, BUSINESS IS EXPANSION constructed a multidimensional narrative of growth and opportunity during the recovery phase of 2021-2022. At the conceptual level, it provided coherence by framing BUSINESS as an expanding entity driven by innovation and adaptability. At the cognitive level, it shaped public perceptions by emphasizing internal capacities while suppressing systemic critiques. At the pragmatic level, it embedded societal expectations of growth and resilience into discourse, reinforcing neoliberal ideologies of self-reliance and marginalizing calls for systemic reform. By focusing on BUSINESS IS EXPANSION, this section highlights how metaphors not only structure narratives of recovery but also reinforce ideological frameworks that prioritize individual agency over collective responsibility.

5.1.2.2. BUSINESS as Transformative: Ideological Narratives of Change and Renewal

The recovery phase of 2021-2022 brought forth a vision of BUSINESS not only as an entity adapting to survive but as one embracing transformation to thrive. The generic metaphor BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION encapsulated this ideological narrative, with its specific-level metaphors - BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION and BUSINESS IS RENEWAL - highlighting themes of change, reinvention, and renewal. These metaphors collectively framed BUSINESS as a dynamic and forward-moving force, leveraging past challenges as a springboard for innovation and growth. This section examines how these metaphors structured the conceptual, cognitive, and pragmatic dimensions of BUSINESS transformation during this period.

Table 5.5

Construal of BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION

Construal of the Metaphors at Two Conceptual levels			
Domain Level		Frame Level	Examples
Generic Metaphor	Specific Metaphors		
BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION	BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION	Adopting new dynamics is evolving pathways	"... that will continue to shape how retail <i>evolves</i> in 2021 and, most likely, far beyond." (B.51)
		Rising anew is recovering potential	" <i>Reemerging</i> from lockdown, the retail industry is presented with an enormous opportunity to start over..." (B.102).
		Discarding burdens is eliminating inefficiencies	"... to <i>shed</i> the past waste and inefficiencies." (B.102)
		Absorbing new opportunities is scaling frameworks	"Big e-commerce businesses also absorbed nearly 60 percent of all warehouse space available last year." (B.236)
		Embracing flexibility is adapting to agility	"If there's anything the last year-plus has taught us, it's how <i>agile</i> retail needs to, and can be." (B.9)
		Revitalizing growth is a forward leap	"... what's really underway is a retail <i>renaissance</i> ." (B.7)
	BUSINESS IS RENEWAL	Emerging stronger is rebuilding capacity	"Retailers that lead with technology combined with humanity have <i>emerged stronger</i> ." (B.112)
		Reviving opportunities is restoring momentum	"Retailers with brands that stayed strong during the pandemic are eager to <i>revive</i> expansion plans." (B.72)
		Transforming experiences is redefining frameworks	"The e-commerce experience has become incredibly <i>refined</i> ... huge gap and opportunity for the physical experience to mimic it." (B.136)
		Creating innovation is generating concepts	"... a new breed of 'digitally-native vertical brands' (DNVBs) were <i>birthed</i> across a spectrum of product categories." (B.179).

Conceptual dimension

At this dimension, BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION provided coherence by framing recovery as a process of renewal and reinvention. Within this framework, BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION portrayed transformation as an evolutionary journey, as seen in the metaphor construed at Frame level “*Adopting new dynamics is evolving pathways*” (“... *that will continue to shape how retail **evolves** in 2021 and, most likely, far beyond*”, B.51) and “*Rising anew is recovering potential*” (“**Reemerging from lockdown, the retail industry is presented with an enormous opportunity to start over...**”, B.102). These metaphors conceptualized BUSINESS as seizing opportunities to redefine itself, emphasizing a forward-looking trajectory. In the same vein, BUSINESS IS RENEWAL reinforced the narrative of regeneration and innovation, as in “*Emerging stronger is rebuilding capacity*” (“*Retailers that lead with technology combined with humanity have **emerged** stronger*”, B.112). These metaphors positioned transformation as both a necessity and an opportunity, portraying BUSINESS as an adaptive and resilient entity capable of redefining its frameworks to align with shifting market dynamics.

Cognitive dimension

At the cognitive level, BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION shaped public perceptions by emphasizing the adaptability and renewal of BUSINESS while suppressing systemic challenges. For instance, BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION directed attention to the retail industry’s capacity for evolution and agility, as seen in “*Embracing flexibility is adapting to agility*” (“... *it’s how **agile** retail needs to, and can be*”, B.9). This metaphor emphasized BUSINESS’s internal capacities for change, masking external barriers such as unequal access to technology or resources. Similarly, BUSINESS IS RENEWAL focused on the creative potential of businesses to redefine themselves, as in “*Transforming experiences is redefining frameworks*” (“*The e-commerce experience has become incredibly **refined** and personalized, ...*”, B.136). This narrative highlighted the innovative potential of businesses while downplaying systemic constraints, such as disparities in consumer access or market

saturation. According to Maalej (2011), metaphors influence the distribution of attention, amplifying certain aspects of the target domain while suppressing others. In this case, BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION prioritized narratives of innovation and renewal, marginalizing critiques of systemic inequities or external dependencies.

Pragmatic dimension

At the pragmatic level, BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION embedded societal expectations of innovation, adaptability, and resilience into discourse, shaping public attitudes toward BUSINESS renewal. For example, BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION pragmatically framed transformation as an ongoing journey, as seen in “*Discarding burdens is eliminating inefficiencies*” (“... to **shed** the past waste and inefficiencies”, B.102). This metaphor legitimized the narrative that businesses must continuously evolve to remain relevant, aligning with neoliberal ideologies of self-reliance and individual agency. Furthermore, BUSINESS IS RENEWAL reinforced the idea of transformation as a proactive endeavour, as in “*Reviving opportunities is restoring momentum*” (“Retailers with brands that stayed strong during the pandemic are eager to **revive** expansion plans”, B.72). This metaphor pragmatically justified the focus on innovation and growth, side-lining discussions about structural reforms or collective action that could address systemic inequalities. By embedding these ideological narratives, the metaphors reinforced societal beliefs in BUSINESS’s capacity for renewal, positioning it as the central agent of recovery while marginalizing the role of external support or systemic change.

Across its conceptual, cognitive, and pragmatic dimensions, BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION articulated a comprehensive narrative of reinvention and renewal, capturing the essence of the recovery phase in 2021-2022. At the conceptual level, it provided coherence by framing BUSINESS as a transformative force capable of adapting to and thriving in a shifting landscape. At the cognitive level, it shaped public perceptions by emphasizing BUSINESS’s capacity for innovation and renewal while suppressing systemic critiques. At the pragmatic level, it embedded societal expectations of adaptability and resilience into discourse, reinforcing neoliberal

ideologies of individual agency while marginalizing calls for systemic reform. By focusing on BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION, this section highlights how metaphors not only structure narratives of recovery but also reinforce ideological frameworks that prioritize innovation and self-reliance.

5.1.2.3 Constructing BUSINESS as a Leader: Ideological Narratives of Authority and Guidance

The recovery phase of 2021-2022 prominently positioned BUSINESS as a leader, emphasizing its role in driving innovation, mastering industry trends, and setting examples for adaptation. The generic metaphor BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP encapsulated these narratives, with specific-level metaphors such as BUSINESS IS AUTHORITY and BUSINESS IS GUIDANCE framing BUSINESS as both a dominant and guiding force. These metaphors collectively articulated ideological narratives of authority and guidance, portraying BUSINESS as not only navigating uncertainties but also leading the way toward a stabilized and prosperous recovery.

Table 5.6

Construal of BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP

Construal of the Metaphors at Two Conceptual levels			
Domain Level		Frame Level	Examples
Generic Metaphor	Specific Metaphors		
BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP	BUSINESS IS AUTHORITY	Claiming dominance is demonstrating authority	"U.S. q-commerce <i>pioneer</i> , Softbank-backed GoPuff, was looking at an IPO and a valuation of \$40 billion in January this year..." (B.154)
		Ruling data is mastering industry trends	"Data has always been <i>king</i> in retail..." (B.271)
		Setting trends is leading innovation	"...brands stay <i>ahead of the curve</i> " (B.178)
		Controlling directions is asserting control	"...we're unlikely to see brands and merchants <i>dictate</i> new worldwide trends..." (B.177)
		Driving growth is steering progress	"...online will keep growing and that's where the industry is <i>headed</i> " (B.273)
	BUSINESS IS GUIDANCE	Navigating challenges is guiding stability	"...the economy <i>navigates</i> the ups and downs of a shaky rebound..." (B.186)
		Observing market dynamics is sensing opportunities	"As the <i>eyes and ears</i> for companies, field and store teams have become even more of a key asset ..." (B.247).
		Avoiding risks is maintaining direction	"The economy is <i>skirting</i> the problem right now because unemployment is low..." (B.184)
		Leading transformations is forging paths	" <i>Leading</i> retailers are getting leaner and more agile" (B.56)
		Charting paths is setting examples	"The retail industry has <i>led the way</i> in surmounting the Covid-19 pandemic's challenges..." (B.96)

Conceptual dimension

On a conceptual level, BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP provided coherence to the discourse by framing BUSINESS as a central agent of progress and stability. Within this framework, BUSINESS IS AUTHORITY emphasized dominance and control, as reflected in the metaphor “*Claiming dominance is demonstrating authority*” (“*U.S. q-commerce **pioneer**, Softbank-backed GoPuff, was looking at an IPO and a valuation of \$40 billion in January this year...*”, B.154) and “*Ruling data is mastering industry trends*” (“*Data has always been **king** in retail...*”, B.271). These metaphors positioned BUSINESS as the driving force behind market trends and innovation, presenting it as an entity capable of shaping industry trajectories. In addition, BUSINESS IS GUIDANCE reinforced the narrative of BUSINESS as a stabilizing and forward-looking leader, as seen in “*Leading transformations is forging paths*” (“***Leading** retailers are getting leaner and more agile*”, B.56) and “*Charting paths is setting examples*” (“*The retail industry has **led the way** in surmounting the Covid-19 pandemic’s challenges...*”, B.96). These metaphors constructed BUSINESS as a proactive leader, guiding the industry and stakeholders through a complex recovery landscape.

Cognitive dimension

At this level, the metaphor BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP shaped public perceptions by emphasizing the strategic vision and adaptability of BUSINESS while suppressing systemic critiques. For instance, BUSINESS IS AUTHORITY highlighted BUSINESS’s ability to dictate trends and assert control, as in the metaphor at Frame level “*Setting trends is leading innovation*” (“*...brands stay **ahead of the curve***”, B.178). This metaphor drew attention to the strategic foresight of businesses while masking challenges such as unequal access to resources or competitive disadvantages faced by smaller entities. Furthermore, BUSINESS IS GUIDANCE focused on BUSINESS’s role in navigating uncertainties and seizing opportunities, as seen in “*Observing market dynamics is sensing opportunities*” (“*As the **eyes and ears** for companies, field and store teams have become even more of a key asset to reinventing experiences in stores*”,

B.247). This framing portrayed BUSINESS as a resourceful and insightful leader, diverting attention from systemic dependencies or external supports that facilitated its recovery. Maalej (2011) states that metaphors manipulate the distribution of attention, amplifying certain aspects of the target domain while suppressing others. In this case, BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP prioritized narratives of authority and innovation, marginalizing structural critiques or alternative perspectives.

Pragmatic dimension

At the pragmatic level, the metaphor BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP embedded societal expectations of authority, guidance, and adaptability into discourse, shaping public attitudes toward BUSINESS's role in recovery. For example, BUSINESS IS AUTHORITY pragmatically reinforced the idea that businesses must lead through innovation and control, as seen in "*Controlling directions is asserting control*" ("*...we're unlikely to see brands and merchants **dictate** new worldwide trends...*", B.177). This metaphor legitimized the notion that businesses should take the lead in shaping market trajectories, aligning with neoliberal ideologies of self-reliance and individual agency. Similarly, BUSINESS IS GUIDANCE framed leadership as a proactive and stabilizing force, as in "*Navigating challenges is guiding stability*" ("*...the economy **navigates** the ups and downs of a shaky rebound...*", B.186). This metaphor pragmatically justified the expectation that businesses should independently manage uncertainties and drive recovery, side-lining calls for systemic reforms or collective responsibility. By embedding these ideological narratives, the metaphors reinforced societal beliefs in BUSINESS's capacity for leadership, positioning it as the central agent of recovery while marginalizing the role of external support or collaboration.

In sum, BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP constructed a multidimensional narrative of authority and guidance during the recovery phase of 2021-2022. Conceptually, it framed BUSINESS as a dominant and stabilizing force, shaping industry trends and leading transformative efforts. Cognitively, it emphasized BUSINESS's strategic vision and adaptability while suppressing systemic critiques. Pragmatically, it reinforced societal expectations of BUSINESS as a leader, embedding ideologies of self-reliance and

individual agency into discourse. By focusing on BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP, this section highlights how metaphors not only structure narratives of recovery but also reinforce ideological frameworks that prioritize innovation and authoritative guidance.

5.2. Contextual Analysis of Conceptual Metaphors of BUSINESS

The contextual analysis of conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS offers critical insights into how socio-cultural and economic factors influenced metaphorical conceptualization during the Covid-19 pandemic. Drawing on Kövecses' (2010) framework of metaphorical conceptualization (*see section 2.2.6*), this section explores the interplay between universal embodied experiences and culturally specific contexts across the crisis phase (2020) and recovery phase (2021-2022). The findings reveal that metaphors such as BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE and BUSINESS IS EXPANSION reflect the dynamic relationship between the pandemic's shifting realities and the discourse surrounding BUSINESS in the retail industry. This analysis demonstrates how metaphors served as cognitive and communicative tools that evolved in tandem with the broader socio-economic narrative, helping shape public understanding of the pandemic's impact on BUSINESS.

5.2.1. Contextual Influences in the Crisis Phase (2020)

During the crisis phase, the U.S. economy experienced a contraction of historic proportions, marking the sharpest annual GDP decline (3.5%) since 1946 (Rushe, 2021). The retail sector was among the hardest hit, with widespread closures of brick-and-mortar stores, plummeting sales, and soaring unemployment rates that reached a staggering 14.8% in April 2020 (Debata & Mishra, 2020). Against this backdrop, conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS reflected themes of survival, struggle, and conflict, emphasizing the profound socio-economic pressures of the time.

The specific metaphor BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE (*see 4.2.2.3*) encapsulated the collective struggle to withstand these challenges. For example, in the expression *survive* from the sentence, "*The pandemic has accelerated the death of traditional retail shopping, and although some retailers may **survive**, it is likely that retail shopping will never look the same*" (A.254), the source domain of ENDURANCE mapped onto

BUSINESS underscores the extreme effort required to maintain operations amidst the crisis. This aligns with Kövecses' (2010) assertion that embodied experiences, such as survival and endurance, are foundational in shaping metaphorical conceptualization during periods of extreme stress.

Additionally, the generic metaphor BUSINESS IS WAR (*see 4.2.2.1*) captured the combative socio-economic climate, where resource scarcity and competition dominated the discourse. Its specific extensions, such as BUSINESS IS A BATTLE and BUSINESS IS A STRUGGLE, reinforced the notion of BUSINESS as a force navigating adversarial conditions. For instance, in the example “*Federal funding can support economic activity by extending expanded unemployment benefits and direct support to businesses that are **fighting** to remain open, such as the Paycheck Protection Program*” (A.242), the metaphorical expression *fighting* portrays BUSINESS as engaged in a battle for survival. This metaphor resonated deeply with the cultural narratives of perseverance and strategic resourcefulness, reflecting both the lived realities of businesses and the ideological values that emphasized resilience.

The crisis phase also highlighted the digital transformation within the retail sector, as consumer behaviour rapidly shifted toward online platforms. Companies like Amazon and Walmart recorded record-breaking online sales (Goldberg, 2020) illustrating the increasing reliance on e-commerce. However, many smaller retailers faced insurmountable challenges, leading to a wave of bankruptcies (Thomas, 2020). These socio-economic conditions further underscored the urgent need for adaptability and strategic endurance in the retail sector.

5.2.2. Contextual Influences in the Recovery Phase (2021–2022)

As the U.S. economy began to stabilize during the recovery phase, the socio-economic narrative shifted toward themes of growth, collaboration, and stability. The broader reopening of businesses, bolstered by government stimulus measures like the CARES Act (Investopedia, March 2020), created an environment where metaphors emphasizing rebuilding and expansion became prominent. This shift aligns with Kövecses' (2010) argument that metaphorical conceptualization adapts to evolving

cultural and historical contexts.

The metaphor BUSINESS IS EXPANSION (*see 4.2.2.7*) gained prominence, reflecting efforts to rebuild economic foundations. Its specific metaphors - BUSINESS IS DEVELOPMENT and BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION - portrayed BUSINESS as an entity in the process of rebuilding and growing. For instance, the expression *taking on a movement* from “*Today, retail is taking on a movement of bold innovation*” (B.113) conceptualizes BUSINESS as a forward-moving and constructive force, aligning with the optimistic socio-economic narrative of recovery.

Despite the shift toward expansion, the metaphor BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE (*see 4.2.2.3*) persisted but adapted to reflect the recovery context. While in the crisis phase it emphasized ENDURANCE, during recovery it transitioned to STABILITY, focusing on maintaining progress in a less volatile but still uncertain environment. The metaphorical expression *anchor* in “*Grocers view their stores as the anchor of their business*” (B.256) illustrates this transition, emphasizing the stabilizing role of businesses in navigating uncertainty.

The continued emphasis on digital transformation further reinforced the recovery narrative. Retailers that embraced e-commerce and innovation positioned themselves as leaders in the economic rebound. This aligns with the metaphor BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP (*see 4.2.2.9*), which portrayed businesses as guiding forces in the recovery process. The metaphorical expression *navigates* in the example “*Inflation is also weighing on the data, as consumers expect rising prices as the economy navigates the ups and downs of a shaky rebound*”, (B.186) exemplifies this metaphor, framing BUSINESS as an active agent steering through challenges and uncertainties.

5.2.3. The Role of Context in Metaphorical Conceptualization

The conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS identified in this study vividly demonstrate the dynamic influence of contextual factors - physical, cultural, and social - on metaphorical conceptualization. Kövecses (2010a) emphasizes that metaphorical meaning arises from the interaction of universal embodied experiences and culturally specific narratives, both of which shaped the evolution of BUSINESS metaphors during

the pandemic.

In the crisis phase, generic metaphors such as BUSINESS IS WAR and BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE reflected embodied responses to external threats, such as survival and conflict. BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE focused on themes like endurance, as seen in specific metaphors such as BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE (“... *the stores that have closed and are **taking the brunt** of the impact of the pandemic,*” A.274). These metaphors captured the physical and emotional toll of navigating the pandemic, framing businesses as entities struggling yet striving to survive in an environment of uncertainty. Additionally, BUSINESS IS WAR embodied the experience of conflict, portraying BUSINESS as a combatant facing adversaries like economic downturns and operational challenges. These metaphors resonated with the immediate socio-economic realities of 2020, when survival was paramount.

In the recovery phase, the metaphors shifted to reflect optimism and forward-looking aspirations. Generic metaphors such as BUSINESS IS EXPANSION and BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP embodied the themes of growth, collaboration, and innovation, aligning with cultural narratives of resilience and ingenuity. For instance, BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP, through the specific metaphor BUSINESS IS AUTHORITY (“... *brands stay **ahead of the curve,***” B.178), positioned businesses as pivotal agents of recovery and progress. This shift highlights how cultural expectations of leadership and innovation shaped the discourse, portraying businesses not merely as survivors but as drivers of economic recovery and societal renewal.

The contextual factors that shaped these metaphors underscore their adaptability. As businesses transitioned from crisis management to recovery, the metaphors evolved to reflect changing socio-economic realities. This evolution aligns with Kövecses’ (2010) assertion that metaphors are not static but adapt dynamically to physical, social, and cultural contexts, serving as tools to make sense of complex and evolving circumstances.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 5

Chapter 5 analyzed the ideological implications and contextual analysis conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in U.S. retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic, applying Maalej's (2011) framework, Van Dijk's (1998) concept of ideology, Kövecses' (2020) construal of metaphor at two conceptual levels - domain and frame-level and Kövecses' (2010) framework of metaphorical conceptualization. The study highlighted how metaphors framed narratives of survival, resilience, growth, and transformation.

In the crisis phase (2020), generic metaphors such as BUSINESS IS WAR and BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE, with the specific metaphors BUSINESS IS A BATTLE and BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE, emphasized endurance and conflict during economic upheaval. In the recovery phase (2021-2022), metaphors shifted to BUSINESS IS EXPANSION, BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION, and BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP, with specific metaphors such as BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION and BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION, reflecting optimism, growth, and innovation.

The analysis revealed how socio-economic and cultural contexts influenced metaphorical framing, with metaphors adapting to evolving realities. These metaphors bridged universal embodied experiences with culturally specific narratives, demonstrating their dual role as cognitive tools and communicative devices that structured public discourse and reinforced dominant societal values.

CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUSION

Chapter 6 concludes the study by summarizing the key findings on the conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic. Drawing from 60 Forbes articles across the crisis and recovery phases, the research explored how metaphors such as BUSINESS IS WAR, BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE, and BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION influenced economic narratives. Using Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and Maalej’s ideological dimensions, the study highlights the role of metaphors in reflecting economic ideologies. This chapter discusses the implications of the findings, addresses the study’s limitations, and offers directions for future research.

6.1. Key Findings

6.1.1. *Conceptual Metaphors of BUSINESS in the Study*

The analysis of BUSINESS metaphors during the Covid-19 pandemic reveals distinct metaphorical shifts between the crisis phase (2020) and the recovery phase (2021-2022). In the crisis phase, 12 generic metaphors and 34 specific metaphors were identified, while the recovery phase yielded 12 generic metaphors and 29 specific metaphors. These findings highlight the evolution of metaphorical expressions as they reflect the changing economic context throughout the pandemic.

Crisis Phase (2020)

During the crisis, conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS were dominated by BUSINESS IS WAR, with specific metaphors such as BUSINESS IS A BATTLE and BUSINESS IS A STRUGGLE. These metaphors framed businesses as engaged in survival, emphasizing competition, resilience, and the battle against economic disruptions. Expressions like “retailers were *hit hard*” and “*fighting to remain open*” vividly conveyed the hostile environment businesses faced.

Recovery Phase (2021-2022)

In contrast, the recovery phase shifted towards BUSINESS IS EXPANSION, highlighting growth and rebuilding. Specific metaphors such as BUSINESS IS

DEVELOPMENT and BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION reflected optimism and renewal. Expressions such as “*scaling operations*” and “*e-commerce proliferates*” underscored this transition towards growth and market repositioning.

Despite this shift, BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE remained prominent throughout both phases. In 2020, BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE and BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION emphasized the need for businesses to adapt to crises. By 2021-2022, BUSINESS IS STABILITY reflected the shift towards long-term sustainability.

Metaphors and Continued Trends

The recovery phase also saw the rise of BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP, framing businesses as innovators and central players in economic recovery. Metaphors like BUSINESS IS AUTHORITY and BUSINESS IS GUIDANCE positioned businesses as key drivers of change in the post-pandemic economy.

Additionally, BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY emerged as a metaphor of aspiration, signalling long-term goals and market navigation, marking a clear contrast from the crisis phase, where no journey metaphors appeared.

These metaphorical shifts from survival-focused to growth-oriented frames reflect the evolving socio-economic conditions during and after the pandemic. The continuous presence of resilience metaphors highlights the ongoing need for adaptability, while the dominance of expansion and leadership metaphors signals optimism and recovery. Through these metaphors, the retail sector framed its challenges and strategies, influencing public perceptions of resilience, growth, and recovery during the pandemic.

6.1.2. Ideological Implications

The ideological implications of BUSINESS metaphors in retail industry discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic are reflected through metaphorical framing at the domain and frame levels. These metaphors reveal how economic challenges were framed in terms of survival, resilience, and growth, shaping public perceptions and societal values.

During the crisis phase (2020), BUSINESS IS WAR dominated, with specific

metaphors such as BUSINESS IS A BATTLE and BUSINESS IS A STRUGGLE framing businesses as engaged in ongoing conflict. These metaphors embedded ideologies of self-reliance, perseverance, and competition, emphasizing survival and resilience as moral imperatives. The cognitive dimension shifted focus to individual efforts, downplaying systemic issues like lack of government support, while the pragmatic dimension justified aggressive business strategies like layoffs and closures as necessary for survival.

In the recovery phase (2021-2022), BUSINESS IS EXPANSION became the dominant metaphor, shifting the focus from survival to growth. Specific metaphors such as BUSINESS IS DEVELOPMENT and BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION framed economic recovery as an opportunity for businesses to lead innovation and renewal. These metaphors reinforced ideologies of growth, innovation, and market dominance. The conceptual dimension framed businesses as key agents of economic transformation, while the cognitive dimension emphasized digital transformation, minimizing systemic inequalities. At the pragmatic level, BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION legitimized aggressive expansion strategies as vital for sustained recovery.

Despite the shift, BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE persisted across both phases, evolving from BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE in the crisis phase to BUSINESS IS STABILITY in the recovery phase. This continuity reinforced the ideological belief that resilience, rather than innovation, was the foundation for long-term survival and economic stability.

In conclusion, the study shows how metaphors at both the domain and frame levels not only provided coherence to the economic disruptions caused by the pandemic but also embedded ideological narratives. These metaphors shaped public discourse, reflecting survivalist ideologies during the crisis and growth-oriented ideologies during the recovery, positioning businesses as both survivors and leaders in economic transformation.

6.2. Contributions

6.2.1. Theoretical Contributions

This study contributes to CMT (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 2003) by demonstrating how metaphors of BUSINESS within economic discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic serve both cognitive and ideological functions. By integrating Kövecses' (2020) multi-level metaphor framework with Maalej's (2011) ideological dimensions, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of how metaphors operate at various levels. It distinguishes between domain-level metaphors (e.g., BUSINESS IS WAR) and frame-level metaphors (e.g., "key workers are frontline warriors"), emphasizing how metaphors evolve in response to changing socio-economic conditions. This research shows that metaphors not only structure economic realities but also reflect and reinforce dominant ideologies, providing deeper insights into how metaphors shape economic discourse.

6.2.2. Methodological Contributions

This study makes significant contributions to the methodology of metaphor analysis by integrating Multi-level Metaphor analysis, corpus linguistic tools, and ideological frameworks. The combination of domain and frame-level metaphor analysis (Kövecses, 2020) provides a nuanced view of metaphorical patterns, revealing both broad conceptual structures and context-specific meanings. The use of WordSmith Tools (Scott, 2023) and MIP (Pragglejaz Group, 2007) ensured consistent and systematic metaphor identification, enhancing the reliability of the findings. Furthermore, Croft & Cruse's (2004) conceptual categorization framework and Fillmore's (1982) Frame Semantics enriched the methodological approach, offering a structured way to explore the conceptualization of BUSINESS across different economic contexts. The integration of Maalej's (2011) ideological dimensions further deepened the analysis, linking metaphors to the ideological constructs they support.

6.2.3. Practical Contributions

This study emphasizes the practical role of metaphors in shaping business strategies, economic policies, and public perceptions. During the crisis phase (2020),

metaphors like BUSINESS IS WAR framed economic challenges as competitive struggles, influencing business decisions such as cost-cutting and digital transformation. In the recovery phase (2021-2022), metaphors such as BUSINESS IS EXPANSION and BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION shifted the focus towards growth, innovation, and sustainability, guiding businesses to adopt forward-looking strategies. The enduring presence of BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE underscores the importance of adaptability and long-term stability, driving investments in workforce resilience and sustainable practices. Furthermore, metaphors such as BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP shaped public discourse, positioning businesses as key drivers of economic recovery and societal stability. The influence of metaphors extends to policy-making, where metaphors like BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION align with initiatives aimed at digital innovation and economic resilience, reinforcing the role of metaphors in shaping public policies and societal progress.

6.3. Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

6.3.1. Limitations

This study provides significant insights into the conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in economic news discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic, but several limitations must be considered.

First, the scope and representativeness of the corpus are limited. The data analyzed was drawn exclusively from 60 articles published in Forbes, a prominent publication that reflects primarily U.S.-based economic perspectives. Although Forbes is a reputable source for retail and business discourse, it may not fully capture the diversity of global economic narratives or regional variations in metaphor use. To address this limitation, expanding the corpus to include articles from international publications would provide a more comprehensive and balanced view of metaphorical patterns across different socio-economic and geographical contexts.

Second, the study's temporal focus on two distinct phases - the crisis phase (2020) and the recovery phase (2021-2022) - may oversimplify the dynamic nature of economic discourse. While this division offers valuable insights into metaphorical

shifts during these phases, it does not account for the more fluid, continuous changes in economic conditions and metaphorical framing over time. Future studies could benefit from extending the analysis to a longer timeframe, especially post-recovery, to explore whether the metaphors of BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION and BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE persist, adapt, or are replaced by new conceptualizations in the aftermath of the pandemic.

6.3.2. Recommendations for Future Research

Building on the findings and limitations of this study, several promising directions for future research are proposed.

One important avenue for future research involves expanding the corpus beyond Forbes and incorporating economic news from diverse international sources. A wider array of publications from various countries and regions would allow for a comparative analysis of how conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS are framed in different cultural and socio-political contexts. This would help identify whether there are cross-cultural variations in metaphor usage and if the metaphorical structures identified in this study are universally applicable or culturally specific. By including diverse sources, future studies could contribute to a broader understanding of how metaphors shape economic discourse globally, thus enhancing the generalizability of the findings.

Additionally, another valuable direction for future research would be to focus on sector-specific metaphor analysis. While this study examines conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in retail industry discourse, it would be beneficial to explore how metaphors function within specific industries, such as technology, healthcare, or energy and so on. Each sector may present unique metaphorical patterns that reflect the industry's distinct challenges and opportunities, particularly during economic upheaval. A more focused analysis could provide deeper insights into how metaphors help frame sector-specific business strategies, public perceptions, and innovation efforts during periods of crisis. This approach would expand the scope of metaphor studies and offer targeted contributions to understanding the role of metaphors in

industry-specific narratives.

Closing Remarks

This study reveals how conceptual metaphors of BUSINESS in economic news discourse are used or created, and the role they play in shaping ideological implications, particularly within the context of the retail industry during the Covid-19 pandemic. By analyzing metaphorical expressions across the crisis (2020) and recovery phases (2021-2022), the research uncovers how metaphors such as BUSINESS IS WAR, BUSINESS IS EXPANSION, and BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE are employed to construct narratives of competition, growth, and adaptability. The dominance of BUSINESS IS WAR during the crisis phase reinforces the ideologies of competitiveness and survival, while the shift to BUSINESS IS EXPANSION in the recovery phase emphasizes growth, innovation, and leadership. The persistent use of BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE highlights themes of adaptability and sustainability in business strategies. These findings suggest that metaphors not only reflect but actively construct economic ideologies, likely influencing public perception and strategic decision-making. The integration of CMT, multi-level metaphor analysis and ideological analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of how social context and ideology shape economic discourse, offering valuable insights for policymakers and business leaders in navigating crisis communication and strategic planning.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Sentences Containing Metaphorical Expressions in Retail Industry Discourse

During the Crisis Phase (2020)

1. Retailers plays a pivotal role in the U.S. economy - and while they've have been **hit hard** by the COVID-19 pandemic, the sector has adapted through innovation.
2. Arcadia and Debenhams may be the biggest names to have **run aground** this year, but many other household names, from Bon Marche, Cath Kidston, TM Lewin, Laura Ashley, and Oasis and WarehouseCHEF 0.0% all went into administration.
3. Malls, in particular, are at most risk in these days of social distancing, which is why I see a retail Armageddon **on the horizon**.
4. If it looks like a **duck** and quacks like a **duck**, it is probably a retailer.
5. "A retailer **erodes** any sense of who they really are by trying to be everything to everyone," Thomas concludes.
6. 2020 can certainly be interpreted as a retailer's **nightmare**, yet those who were more adequately prepared to **pivot** witnessed explosive growth - or at least were able to **survive**.
7. Throughout the year, Walmart continued to adapt by **honing** its focus: consolidating multiple apps into one, adding expanded shopping and delivery abilities and offering a new rewards program.
8. As the coronavirus pandemic ravages an **already-struggling** retail landscape, the divide between "essential" and "non-essential" businesses has been thrown into stark relief.
9. The **bump** retailers typically get from product bought for school vacations, Easter, Mother's Day and other spring events is largely gone.
10. Nothing about these numbers indicates that small business retailers are really **healthy**.
11. It has not been easy, but retailers are generally a **durable** group, and the future will eventually be bright.
12. In recent years, the Charlotte-based retailer has tried to **shake off** its image as a staid "southern store."
13. In essence, checkout-free retail was already **moving at a rapid clip** prior to the coronavirus.
14. Conversely, retailers of non-essential products that are forced to shut down will **bear the brunt** of the economic impact.
15. Now that the coronavirus retail shutdowns are lifting, retailers across the country are **breathing a sigh of relief**.
16. AI-driven big data retailing has been **maturing** for some years now, with major retailers relying on advanced analytics to understand what should be stocked in their stores and drive efficiencies in logistics.
17. In this climate, discount retailers and value-oriented brands stand to **win**.
18. Will Covid-19 finally force discount retailers to **embrace** online selling?
19. The coming years may usher in the era of personalization in promotions, enabling retailers to **tailor** offerings to maximize every sale.
20. And identifying opportunities to increase prices based on **elasticity** will also be critical to ensure retailers and brands aren't **leaving money on the table**.
21. Retailers are **shifting** their existing business models to create in-store practices that provide safety and comfort for shoppers and employees.
22. Retailers continued to **learn** new **tricks** like curbside, next day, and on-line.
23. Retailers and brands need to prepare to **hunker down** some more, while simultaneously looking ahead to what the new post-COVID world might look like.

24. Gaps left by failed retailers and brands will *make way for* new innovative startups led by (out of work) Millennials and Gen Zers.
25. Fashion retailers need to *elevate* the status of their shopfloor employees, expanding their job responsibilities and training and increasing their pay along with it.
26. The net result for retail may be that a few retailers *emerge* stronger than ever, and that many specialty stores and independents no longer exist.
27. The economic climate for retailers is so uncertain, that many are *retracting* their earnings governance, and declining to provide investors estimates for their performance this year.
28. These two factors together would seem to spell the right circumstances for retailers to attempt mass promotions and deep discounts that would help them *tread water* and *salvage* a season that began auspiciously with lackluster early November sales.
29. It's time for retailers to *evolve* their marketing departments into "EX"-factor data intelligence teams that use their consumer insights to look forward, rather than backward.
30. It's time for retailers to *get bold* rather than *retreat* in the face of so many seemingly insurmountable *challenges*.
31. And these retailers are *making a retreat*.
32. And given the unprecedented nature of what retail is going through with no reliable historic data available to help forecast the way forward, retailers need to *set their course* to their true north: their best, most loyal customers.
33. While all this is enormously frustrating, retail will *survive*.
34. The future retail environment is *weighing on the minds* of companies, shoppers and employees.
35. And of course, the general retail market will continue to *shift* dollars on-line.
36. Even Sephora's announcement recently that it plans to open 850 stores inside of existing Kohl's stores further signals the demise of the department store or, better said, the once great retail *horse and buggy*.
37. It is not surprising, therefore, that there were gaps and shortages in the supply chain, especially at the beginning of the year where grocery retailers, in particular, *struggled* to keep up with demand in supermarkets.
38. The *hardest-hit* retail sectors are those deemed nonessential by government mandate.
39. Here are some insights into the current trends in retail and how they might *play out on the big stage* in the years to come.
40. As lockdown measures began to take hold in late winter, early spring of 2020, countless sectors in retail - but especially apparel - needed to *brace* for the worst.
41. Retail *faces* a doomsday scenario of biblical proportions now.
42. At this critical juncture, retailers will have to determine how to *evolve* to include new models of sales, marketing and customer service to better connect with customers, or perish.
43. In fact, many large retailers *saw* promotions on par or lower than previous years.
44. With news of larger retailers *crumbling* and the growing popularity of online shopping, it may feel as if bricks and mortar stores have a very gloomy future indeed.
45. "Smaller retailers who are able to adapt have come out on top compared to larger retailers who are too big to *pivot* quickly enough" he explains.
46. 2021 may not only present a *leaner* retail sector across the board, but it may present a smarter one as well.
47. Retail commentator Steve Dennis has referred to this trend previously the "great bifurcation" of retail - where consumers either move towards premium, higher quality goods or towards the discount-end of the retail spectrum, leaving retailers that *sit* in the middle highly *exposed*.
48. Now that the coronavirus retail shutdowns are lifting, retailers across the country are *breathing a sigh of relief*.
49. Since the pandemic lockdown, retailers have proven they *breathing a sigh of relief* to rapidly *overcome* the interruption of their operating models.

50. AI-driven big data retailing has been maturing for some years now, with major retailers relying on advanced analytics to understand what should be stocked in their stores and **drive** efficiencies in logistics.
51. Retailers and brands **face** a daunting multitude of short-term **challenges** around health and safety, supply chain, labor force, cash flow, consumer demand and marketing.
52. Without naming names, she points to a “very obvious mall retailer that used to stand for something very specific, but **lost its sense** of core brand values and strayed from what the customers were coming to them for.
53. Major national retailers largely ignored the prophetic warnings of the retail apocalypse and now **face** the final **battle** that will occur in the nation’s 1,200 malls, retail’s Meggido.
54. Much like with tariffs, however, many retailers and brands are considering **redrawing** supply chains to include new manufacturing hubs.
55. Many retailers announced massive near-term hiring plans to keep stores running and **ramp up** deliveries.
56. Many retailers **enter** the pandemic with a weak balance sheet loaded with debt.
57. Thanks to increasing tariffs, many retailers had already **stepped up** efforts to explore manufacturing options outside of China, including Bangladesh and Vietnam.
58. These are necessary steps to save people’s lives, yet it may result in the **death** of many retailers.
59. Many retailers today are emphasizing e-commerce offerings and curbside pickup options to **serve** customers safely.
60. Given how desperate 2020 was, it stands to reason that many retailers would’ve attempted to maximize Q4 profits by **slashing** prices and **moving** as much product as possible to close out the year.
61. Dollars per square foot will rise, and more retailers will be **healthier** post-bankruptcy.
62. More retailers could even **move** to a drive-thru model to better facilitate in-store collection.
63. But that is the very last place any retailer that hopes to **survive** can afford to be.
64. A retailer **erodes any sense** of who they really are by trying to be everything to everyone,” Thomas concludes.
65. But the coronavirus pandemic has affected the way every trend will play out in 2021, and offline retail has been **hit** particularly **hard**.
66. While the general trend has **seen** offline retailers **moving** into online by establishing e-commerce divisions of their businesses, more lately, we have seen online retailers developing a bricks 'n' mortar presence.
67. For now, we (retailers) can only **hunker down** and **shift to survival mode**.
68. Online retail, already **booming**, will **grow** even more as consumers spend less time in public.
69. Recycling will become a huge business as online retail continues to **grow** and billions of boxes need to be delivered.
70. ...other retailers that often don’t **serve** either as one-stop shops or cater to consumers’ stay-at-home needs.
71. Many other retailers were able to **grow** dramatically faster.
72. How retailers should **address** Covid in the 2020 holiday shopping season.
73. Ultimately, by ignoring mobile apps as their own distinct channel, especially during this disruptive period, retailers are **letting slip** the opportunity to capitalize on a unique audience that is conscientious, technologically savvy and agile.
74. Noting that physical retail has been on a “**downward spiral**” for years, the report envisions many more store closings as retailers must “rethink” their retail footprints in order to improve store-level ROI while **embedding** digital e-commerce “seamlessly” into operations.
75. In fact, they are now at best poor second choice options because they are all limited by the amount of products retailers can **carry** inside of their four walls.
76. Retailers that rely on in-person interactions could **face** a prolonged dip in store traffic as public officials continue to promote social distancing.

77. If landlords continue to demand rent when no sales are coming in, it will push retail tenants closer to their **breaking point**.
78. Retailers, i.e. the speciality players, will continue to **lose out**, as little by little, **in an almost death** by a thousand cuts fashion, consumers will have less and less reasons to actually visit their physical stores.
79. As a result, retailers like J.C. Penney and Macy's are **crumbling** right before the industry's eyes, while, on the flip side, one-stop shops, like Walmart WMT -1.9% and Target TGT 0.0%, continue to prove their staying power.
80. As retail **struggles**, Trump stalls signing of omnibus and stimulus bills.
81. In the short-term, while retail is **taking** a significant **hit** related to product flow, smart retailers and brands equipped with the right technology, **strong grasp** of customer expectations on pricing and product, and ability to **shift gears** quickly to accommodate those expectations, may feel a softer **blow**.
82. So retailers needed to **grow** faster than that to maintain share.
83. Some retailers and brands will be more **ingrained** in the consumers life than ever before.
84. The pandemic has accelerated the death of traditional retail shopping, and although some retailers may **survive**, it is likely that retail shopping will never look the same.
85. Although we can still expect another record-breaking year of closures, some retailers might **survive** if they adapt to the new normal.
86. Department stores, malls and speciality retailers will lose business and **shed** jobs, as people are not leaving their homes.
87. These **struggling** retailers may **suffer their final blow** from the coronavirus lockdown.
88. This dramatic consolidation would result in the **surviving** retailers having increased **leverage** over their manufacturer partners.
89. Thomas believes that retailers have been **led astray** by an over-reliance on big data as a substitute for intuition.
90. And, truth be told, if given the opportunity, there is a good chance that retailers will **slip back** into pre-pandemic strategies that have proven profitable in the past.
91. Major national retailers largely ignored the prophetic warnings of the retail apocalypse and now **face** the final battle that will occur in the nation's 1,200 malls, retail's Meggido.
92. Given all the retail bankruptcies that the industry has **faced** during the past year – many due to COVID closures and customer density limitations.
93. We were **forced** to live (and work) this year in response to the pandemic.
94. The **challenges faced** this year by the retail industry.
95. As the retail industry **navigates** these unprecedented times, here are some initial thoughts on how we see it unfolding and what retailers are (or will be) doing to **keep** their businesses **afloat** and **moving forward**.
96. A pulling together of cross-industry leaders is just what is needed for the retail landscape to **navigate** these difficult times.
97. **Facing** another month of closures, 96% of the retailers surveyed are seeking rent abatement from landlords.
98. There is also some significant public information in the media about retail - that may be true - but has skewed the facts and forced people (including members of Congress) to think retail is **healthier** than it really is.
99. At the same time, retailers are **stuck with** rent and other fixed costs of running a sprawling fleet of stores.
100. (People) say a heck of a lot more about where retail is **headed** than some umpteenth.
101. Without naming names, she points to a "very obvious mall retailer that used to stand for something very specific, but **lost its sense** of core brand values and **strayed** from what the customers were coming to them for.
102. The biggest question is: Will retail **survive** the pandemic? The answer is yes, but it's complicated.

103. But they (retailers) are **straining** to keep up with their supply chain and will also **face** significant **challenges** in maintaining a work force.
104. A pulling together of cross-industry leaders is just what is needed for the retail landscape to **navigate** these difficult times.
105. The future retail environment is **weighing on the minds** of companies, shoppers and employees.
106. Retail chains and small businesses are **struggling** in N.Y.C.
107. From 2009 to 2019, retail employment in the City **grew** by 19.7 percent, more slowly than total private sector employment (30 percent).
108. But our love of shopping is alive, and retail isn't **dead**.
109. But everyone I talk to on this subject says that brick-and-mortar retailers and small businesses will continue to **struggle** until people feel safe again to go outside and shop.
110. Many brick-and-mortar retail establishments (categorized as nonessential businesses) have shut or **faced** operational limitations for months.
111. With coronavirus cases rising across the country, retailers are preparing for another **rush** from shoppers worried about new lockdowns and pandemic shortages.
112. But many retail workers, heralded as **heroes** during the first wave of the pandemic, are not being provided with the same level of bonuses and raises this time, even as the health risks for them increase.
113. Retail at Hudson Yards was off to a strong start before this crisis **hit**, and we firmly believe that fashion and retail will always remain **core** to the vibrancy of New York," the spokeswoman, Kathleen Corless, said.
114. If retailers **survive** and can quickly reopen and rehire workers, the eventual economic recovery could be relatively swift.
115. The Neiman Marcus Group, the most glittering of the American department store chains, is expected to declare bankruptcy in the coming days, the first major retailer **felled** during the current crisis.
116. By spending their benefits on food, clothing and appliances, rather than saving the money, Americans have helped keep many retailers and their employees and suppliers **afloat**.
117. "So many of my peers are **struggling**."
118. Many retailers are also **grappling** with an unusual back-to-school shopping season, which typically **drives** sales in July and August.
119. Many retailers with a strong online presence or a product that serves the altered lifestyle and needs of people during the pandemic are **flourishing**.
120. Retailers have begun taking extreme measures to try to **survive**.
121. All types of retailers, both national brands and mom-and-pop stores, are **struggling**.
122. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the retail trade sector unevenly, with online retailers and some essential businesses experiencing **growth** and other large retail segments seeing falling revenues.
123. In many cases, traditional or **overleveraged** retailers **struggled** to **navigate** through the uncertainties.
124. Fifth Avenue, Times Square and Madison Avenue - some of the most prestigious retail spaces in the world - look like **ghost towns**.
125. Still, the increased emphasis on e-commerce has pushed retailers to **embrace** change.
126. When demand does rebound, it might come too late for some retailers, many of which were **struggling** even before the pandemic because of changes in mall traffic and a long-term shift to online sales.
127. But some retailers - wary of being perceived as accepting aid in place of struggling businesses - have **blocked** their workers from accessing the money, **baffling** state lawmakers.
128. The recovery continued to be strong for some retailers, while others have **struggled**, casting national chains into buckets of pandemic **winner**s and **loser**s.

129. It's helping the retailer *keep pace* with Amazon online, though the gap between the two remains large.
130. The *gains*, however, were smaller than in previous months, which some economists warned could be a sign that the retail recovery was *running out of steam*.
131. In the end, the retailers who will *win* are those who *watch their pennies*, focus on the customer, and build and sell great products that meet needs and fulfill aspirations.
132. Some of these retailers will *pare down* the number of their locations while others will close completely.
133. In order for the City to fully serve its residents and regain its identity as a favored destination for visitors, a *thriving* retail sector must return.
134. Commerce SPSC +1.4% will emerge from the pandemic a *vibrant* and critical part of consumer life.
135. Clearly the biggest *winner* to emerge is e-commerce, as Covid-19 has dramatically shifted brick-and-mortar purchases online.
136. As consumers are being asked to practice social distancing, e-commerce orders for groceries and other essentials have become a *survival tool* for the American family.
137. As e-commerce *picks up*, brick and mortar clothing stores, consumer electronics, furniture, and grocery stores are likely to bear the brunt of the impact.
138. E-commerce *reached new heights* this year as people stayed home.
139. The Census Bureau Advanced Monthly survey data does not report *pure* e-commerce sales but does report "Non-Store Sales" which are mostly comprised of e-commerce sales.
140. Indeed, commerce is about to change forever. But it will *survive*.
141. The post-pandemic commerce world will be *shaped* by three forces.
142. Brand loyalty is *eroding*.
143. Brands have so many human connection opportunities and places to *pivot* that they could actually come out of the COVID *fight* swinging.
144. They've *lost their sense* of self, who they were in terms of their core values.
145. And identifying opportunities to increase prices based on elasticity will also be critical to ensure retailers and brands aren't *leaving money on the table*.
146. In the short-term, while retail is taking a significant hit related to product flow, smart retailers and brands equipped with the right technology, strong *grasp* of customer expectations on pricing and product, and ability to *shift gears* quickly to accommodate those expectations, may feel a softer *blow*.
147. Retailers and brands *face* a daunting multitude of short-term *challenges* around health and safety, supply chain, labor force, cash flow, consumer demand and marketing.
148. Retailers and brands need to prepare to *hunker down* some more, while simultaneously looking ahead to what the new post-COVID world might look like.
149. Much like with tariffs, however, many retailers and brands are considering *redrawing* supply chains to include new manufacturing hubs.
150. Some retailers and brands will be more *ingrained* in the consumers life than ever before.
151. Big brand names have *re-emerged* (or have morphed) into a healthier environment.
152. Brands must be *agile*, innovative, and ready to experiment in what will become a constantly evolving new, marketing landscape.
153. As grocery shelves for popular items sit empty, consumers brand preference *erodes*.
154. All types of retailers, both national brands and mom-and-pop stores, are *struggling*.
155. And, as telecommuting and the "*crib* economy" becomes more prevalent and prominent, thus reshaping where and how people live, work, and shop, the cascading impact will necessitate new approaches toward reaching consumers.
156. The rise of the *crib* economy.
157. Consumer spending slowed, particularly for non-discretionary items, but the economy *moved forward*, albeit at a much slower pace.

158. Even when the economy *rebounds*, consumers can experience “economic scarring” that lasts far longer than the actual recession.
159. With less people working, there will be less spending and the economy will *suffer*.
160. The 116th Congress forgot to remember that two-thirds of the U.S. economy *revolves* around consumer spending, and 25% of all U.S.A. jobs are connected to or supported by retail.
161. Even as coronavirus infections continued to spread, in-person school reopening plans were scrapped and unemployment stayed near record highs, Americans kept shopping in July with retail sales rising 1.2 percent from June, reflecting a rare bright spot in the *battered* economy.
162. An expanding universe of distinctive small businesses - from coffee shops to dry cleaners to hardware stores - that give New York’s neighborhoods their unique personalities and are key to the city’s economy are starting to *topple*.
163. That is a significant number for the nation’s largest private employer, particularly at a time when the economy has been *shedding* jobs.
164. A combination of Saudi Arabia and Russia flooding the market with cheap oil, along with Americans traveling less, oil companies are doing poorly and the stock prices have been *crushed*.
165. Price and relative quality are still the primary *drivers* of consumer behavior, but have become blended with a new consciousness.
166. Across chains, prices for new merchandise sold via e-commerce have already been *slashed* by 40 percent in some cases.
167. As people rushed to place orders for everything from toilet paper to backyard swimming pools, Amazon dealt with out-of-stock items, price *gouging* and delayed or inaccurate shipments.
168. Further, Under Armour recently told investors that its revenues in the first few months of 2020 - and potentially beyond - would *take a hit* of \$50 million to \$60 million because of the outbreak.
169. Short term, the impact will be predictably grim, as billions of lost revenues immediately *hit* vulnerable retail, foodservice and entertainment sectors.
170. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the retail trade sector unevenly, with online retailers and some essential businesses experiencing growth and other large retail segments seeing *falling* revenues.
171. Mr. Garfield said the *healthy* revenue from drink sales was still not enough to make ends meet.
172. Its revenue *plummeted* by two-thirds since March, to about \$12,000 per week in June.
173. While large retailers like Walmart and Target were deemed essential businesses when the pandemic hit, many small stores were not, and they were forced to close their doors, leading to *lost* revenue and wasted inventory.
174. Yet, chains like Best Buy, Dick’s Sporting Goods and West Elm have reported revenue *jumps* this summer, with many Americans spending more on goods that they could use at home or while socially distancing outdoors.
175. Small-business owners said they have exhausted federal and local assistance and see no end in sight after months of sharp revenue *drops*.
176. Business owners have expressed concern about their ability to pay back rent since revenues have *dried up*.
177. From March 1 to the end of April, during the height of the pandemic in New York City, businesses in the city that use the payment company Square saw their revenues *drop* by half, according to an analysis the company provided to The New York Times.
178. Most discount retailers are operating on *razor-thin* profit margins, and over the years, the costs of doing business online have been rising.
179. Until now, discount stores have mostly lagged behind in terms of online selling due to their *razor-thin* profit margins, but will the pandemic finally force them to expand into ecommerce?
180. Big-box retailers’ profits *surge* as pandemic marches on.
181. Those that remained heavily reliant on in-store shopping saw profits *shriveled* in the second quarter.
182. Even as online buying increases during the pandemic, many retailers are seeing profits *drop*.

183. This was already trending before the pandemic, with exclusive store brands gaining marketshare, but this trend will now be **amplified**.
184. A recent consumer trend in apparel has been a **push** towards purchasing fewer, higher quality garments.
185. This trend too is now in **full gear**.
186. The Financial Times reported that a quarter of a million jobs in wholesale and retail could **disappear** by summer 2021, highlighting the biggest **challenge** was not just the amount of job cuts in the sector, but also the speed and scale of the crisis.
187. Sadly, these are the types of jobs that were **red hot up** until February's jobs report.
188. The Coronavirus effect: Here are the jobs that will be added and **lost**.
189. Professionals involved with real estate will notice their jobs **going under**.
190. There are a number of other sectors in which jobs will be savagely **cut**.
191. ... leisure, hospitality or administration - all categories in which employment hiring has significantly **dipped** since the beginning of the pandemic.
192. As the City reopened and progressed from Phase 1 (June 8) to Phase 4 (July 20), employment **grew, reaching** nearly 309,000 jobs by October.
193. While there was a small decline in employment in March, by April employment had **dropped** to 245,000 positions.
194. Employees nationwide have **staged** protests outside stores asking Kroger to reinstate the pay, especially given its booming business - sales are soaring, and it recently said its 2021.
195. In the past 14 months, she became one of many store employees whose lives were **upended** by bankruptcies - first at Barneys New York and more recently at Brooks Brothers.
196. For example, a business with a limited marketing budget may not **leverage** multiple channels to **reach** a wider audience.
197. Businesses that **strengthen** customer engagement will likely be able to **run** more successful marketing **campaigns**.
198. Target, a company who has historically struggled in grocery, has seen its grocery business **explode**.
199. This strategy revolves mostly around the timely creation of relevant content; however, businesses can **leverage** advanced technology to personalize content and further **strengthen** customer engagement.
200. Businesses that have been **forced** to close their doors have **suffered** heavy **losses**, but we anticipate many of these retailers will see a sharp recovery as consumers start shopping in stores again.
201. When many businesses are **struggling** to **find their feet**, CMOs who understand their company's purpose and know how to highlight it are the drivers of this navigation.
202. In March 2020, Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak promised to 'not leave you behind' and to 'do whatever it takes' but as thousands more businesses **face** another lockdown tonight, that promise will be more salient now more than ever.
203. As the coronavirus pandemic ravages an already-struggling retail landscape, the divide between "essential" and "non-essential" businesses has been **thrown into stark relief**.
204. Businesses that know why they exist, whom they **serve** and their purpose have successfully **navigated** through these uncertain times.
205. How many of those stores are located in malls is undetermined, but it stands to reason that a vast majority have significant mall **exposure**, since malls are filled with non-essential retail businesses which have been **forced** shut vs. essential ones that have remained open.
206. "Walmart, Costco, Target, and others were allowed to be open and sell clothing, sporting goods, crafts, education materials, and every other product in most regions while the small business was **forced** to shut down.
207. Sadly, many (businesses) are not going to **survive**, Buzek writes.

208. The number underscores that while many outlets are *struggling*, business at “essential” retailers like grocery stores is *surging*, especially as online ordering *ramps up*.

209. Hoping that the worst is over, retailers are encouraged that business will recover, maybe not in the third quarter, but that it will start to *turn around* by the fourth.

210. How shopping behavior will change; what consumers will expect from stores and brands; and the necessary changes to their business operating models to *thrive* in the new environment.

211. For those businesses that were *wavering* on making difficult decisions, this crisis leaves them with no choice but to act.

212. In order to ensure a future where businesses not only *survive*, but *thrive*, it is critical to anticipate what a post-pandemic world will look like, and then begin to transform to better match this new reality.

213. Retail sales plunged in March, offering a grim snapshot of the coronavirus outbreak’s effect on consumer spending, as businesses *shuttered* from coast to coast and wary shoppers restricted their spending.

214. Employees nationwide have staged protests outside stores asking Kroger to reinstate the pay, especially given its *booming* business - sales are soaring, and it recently said its 2021 business results “will be higher than we would have expected prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.”

215. It reflects how *nimble* certain businesses have become.

216. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the retail trade sector unevenly, with online retailers and some essential businesses experiencing *growth* and other large retail segments seeing falling revenues.

217. And months into the crisis, established businesses that once seemed invincible, including some that had ambitious expansion plans, are *cratering* under a sustained *collapse* in consumer spending.

218. “We were really in a *rough place*,” he said.

219. The \$2 trillion emergency package passed by Congress and programs announced by the Federal Reserve include government-backed loans and grants to keep businesses *afloat*.

220. Businesses at the outlet mall are *struggling* - and it was already hard to interview last year as a woman in her 60s, she said.

221. And in the months ahead, the question is how quickly spending will *bounce back* once the economy reopens, and how many businesses will *survive* until then.

222. While some essential stores, such as pharmacies and grocery stores, have remained open since the start of the pandemic, many brick-and-mortar retail establishments (categorized as nonessential businesses) have shut or *faced* operational limitations for months.

223. Five months later, those once prosperous businesses have *evaporated*.

224. The remaining businesses represent a broad *swath* of the city’s economy, including small law firms, beauty stores, spas and cleaning companies.

225. While the worst of the pandemic in the United States struck New York City first, small businesses across the country have been *clobbered*.

226. While New York is home to more Fortune 500 headquarters than any city in the country, small businesses are the city’s *backbone*.

227. When New York’s economic lockdown started in March the hope was that the closing of businesses would be temporary and many could *weather* the financial *blow*.

228. Many small businesses did not have a *robust* e-commerce business before the virus struck, and they have *lost* customers while they *struggle* to adapt.

229. Small businesses have been *hit* particularly *hard* because most do not have the resources like a national chain to survive a few days or weeks with little to no revenue, let alone five months.

230. A recent survey by a team of academic economists found that two-thirds of small-business owners said they could carry on if the crisis lasted a month, but only a third said they would *survive* if the disruption dragged on for four months.

231. Small-business owners said they have *exhausted* federal and local assistance and see no end in sight after months of sharp revenue drops.

232. EIDLs are nonforgivable, low-interest loans that provide working capital to small businesses *suffering* substantial economic *injury* due to the pandemic.

233. To address this concern, proposals in the State Legislature would lower rent payments for small businesses that have been *forced* to close or have lost substantial income.

234. The smallest of small businesses - the businesses with one employee - were *surviving* on a weekly \$600 federal stimulus check, but that benefit ended.

235. But it comes with a cost, particularly for small businesses, whose *survival* has long been threatened by the increasing dominance of corporate retailers.

236. But everyone I talk to on this subject says that brick-and-mortar retailers and small businesses will continue to *struggle* until people feel safe again to go outside and shop.

237. The small businesses won't be able to *survive* this.

238. But some retailers - wary of being perceived as accepting aid in place of *struggling* businesses - have blocked their workers from accessing the money, baffling state lawmakers.

239. In recent weeks, "For Lease" signs have started to appear on storefronts on streets throughout New York, evidence that businesses that tried to *ride out* the initial months or abruptly *shift* to new online business models could no longer *survive*.

240. So far, those businesses have *shed* 520,000 jobs.

241. I would disagree with the sentiment that if someone had a *thriving* business they should be able to *survive* this.

242. Federal funding can support economic activity by extending expanded unemployment benefits and direct support to businesses that are *fighting* to remain open, such as the Paycheck Protection Program.

243. They were hailed as *heroes* during the first wave of the pandemic, but wage increases were *fleeting*, and companies, whose businesses are *booming*, have been slow to pay out more.

244. We'll see an inflection point in digital retail grocery and other consumables as shopping, buying and fulfillment become *unbundled*.

245. While the e-commerce penetration of some key players is far greater today - over 30% at both NordstromJWN +1.7% and Neiman Marcus, for example - it's clear that relatively few customers who are predominantly brick-and-mortar shoppers are *making the switch*.

246. Will a vaccine bring *cooped-up* shoppers back into stores?

247. Digital shopping is here to *stay*.

248. With many independent retailers playing a vital role in supporting local communities during the pandemic, and with customers less willing to travel to larger shopping areas, the local shopping communities have *seen* a boost in visitors.

249. While more shoppers may *flock* online while they're stuck at home, there is no mistaking their reliance on stores.

250. As online shopping continues to *balloon*, shortages in "the final mile" delivery drivers and warehouse pickers and packers are *growing*.

251. Firstly, there is the *move* to online shopping, which *grew* during lockdown to represent nearly a third of all retail sales.

252. 2020 was the year that online shopping, which for a long time has been the fastest-growing sector of the retail industry, really *came into its own*.

253. As such, the *boom* in online shopping will continue, putting greater spotlight on last-mile delivery options.

254. The pandemic has accelerated the *death* of traditional retail shopping, and although some retailers may survive, it is likely that retail shopping will never look the same.

255. It does not take an expert to understand that retail shopping was already on a different *trajectory* before the pandemic, and there's no doubt that COVID-19 has accelerated some of those changes.

256. In some cases this is due to their preferred brands being out of stock, but financial concerns have also *come into play*, causing some shoppers to *switch* to lower- priced brands.

257. As such, they are unsustainable in their present form in the shopping environment that is *taking shape* now.
258. It will be interesting to see if this "shop local" approach continues to *flourish* as we move into 2021.
259. This suggests that while shoppers are turning to mobile apps, they're *sticking* with ones that have convenient, nearby physical locations.
260. In the early days of the pandemic, when grocery stores in the United States ran low on staples like toilet paper, people *flocked* to Walmart and Target to stock up.
261. The cumulative effect of these changes and what they mean for retail in the long term are still to be determined, but high-profile store closures indicate that certain subsectors may take longer to recover, while online shopping trends *coupled* with increased consumer preferences for contactless delivery may continue.
262. Apparel specialty players and moderate department stores have been *facing* significant headwinds for years, and many came into the pandemic with weak balance sheets and what might be charitably considered shaky liquidity positions.
263. Department stores, heavily dependent on fashion, *garnered* a 17.5% loss in revenues.
264. Look at the comparative set, and department stores *lose* across all five dimensions.
265. Department stores, malls and speciality retailers will *lose* business and *shed* jobs, as people are not leaving their homes.
266. Then, the department stores may have a chance to reopen their doors, *recoup* customers and bring back furloughed workers.
267. Investment bank Cowen & Co, in a research report, predicted that department stores only have sufficient cash available to *survive* for another five to eight months if their stores remain temporarily closed.
268. By contrast, department stores will be the biggest *losers*, with 66% saying they plan to buy less there.
269. As e-commerce picks up, brick and mortar clothing stores, consumer electronics, furniture, and grocery stores are likely to *bear the brunt* of the impact.
270. The number underscores that while many outlets are struggling, business at "essential" retailers like grocery stores is *surging*, especially as online ordering ramps up.
271. Many retailers announced massive near-term hiring plans to keep stores *running* and ramp up deliveries.
272. Bricks and mortar stores have adopted elements of the online experience to encourage us to continue visiting them, and also *played to the strengths* that in- person experiences can offer, such as more personal levels of service.
273. The article highlighted that a mass exodus of retail stores is *looming* in the wake of the pandemic, once retailers assess liquidity issues and determine solvency in a post-pandemic world.
274. The haves are the stores that remain open with lines out the doors to buy daily necessities while the have-nots are the stores that have closed and are *taking the brunt* of the impact of the pandemic.
275. Clothing stores were especially *hard hit* in last month's plunge, with sales falling by more than half.
276. Most apparel chains and department stores have *seen* sales *tumble* during the pandemic.
277. With malls and department stores *struggling*, brands like Levi's have been forced to think about the best way to reach customers.
278. The divide between essential businesses allowed to stay open and nonessential ones forced to close drove shoppers to big-box chains like Walmart, Target and Dick's and worsened *struggling* department stores' *woes*.
279. In the early days of the pandemic, when grocery stores in the United States *ran* low on staples like toilet paper, people *flocked* to Walmart and Target to stock up.
280. All types of retailers, both national brands and mom-and-pop stores, are *struggling*.

281. The steep sales drop underscores the huge role that physical stores continue to *play* within retailing.

282. But the surprising fact is that the retail store as we've known it isn't *dead* (at least not yet).

283. Efforts have been made at the City, State and federal levels to help retail stores *survive* the pandemic.

284. While large retailers like Walmart and Target were deemed essential businesses when the pandemic hit, many small stores were not, and they were *forced* to close their doors, leading to lost revenue and wasted inventory.

285. In closing, the McKinsey/BOF report calls on the fashion industry to look forward to a "better normal" and to *set company sights higher* across stores, partnerships and assortments.

286. The U.S. Pot Industry *scored* major *wins* - And Setbacks - In Pandemic-Ruled Year.

287. And the restaurant industry is rapidly *following suit*.

288. But the need to make it happen will probably create a ripple effect that will transform the way the industry operates, resulting in happier customers and a more *agile, resilient* and sustainable retail industry.

289. The *challenges faced* this year by the retail industry, and the supply chain that feeds it, cannot be underestimated.

290. Even prior to 2020, the retail industry has been *sounding alarms* of an impending "retail apocalypse," but none could anticipate the rapid dismantling of traditional shopping methods when consumers could no longer gather indoors.

291. As the retail industry *navigates* these unprecedented times, here are some initial thoughts on how we see it *unfolding* and what retailers are (or will be) doing to keep their businesses afloat and moving forward.

292. 2020 was the year that online shopping, which for a long time has been the fastest-growing sector of the retail industry, really *came into its own*.

293. These women may not reflect the "ideal" body image that fashion designs for, but the fact that so many women need that size, it's time the industry fully *embrace* "body positivity" with expanded sizing in fashion-forward clothing.

294. What they missed is credit relief for the companies that have difficulty financing inventory, given all the retail bankruptcies that the industry has *faced* during the past year - many due to COVID closures and customer density limitations.

295. But he says the industry has *fought* it "*tooth and nail*," because they want to keep their existing proprietary sizing.

296. Yet the pandemic also represents an inflection point for the industry in how they choose to *move forward*.

297. Although statewide shelter-in-place orders forced dispensaries to pivot from in-person shopping to delivery and curbside pickup in the early days of the pandemic, the industry *scored* a major coup when cannabis was deemed essential in most legal markets.

298. Consumers can expect to *see* a lot more promotions over the year, and unfortunately the industry will likely see more permanent store closures and bankruptcies.

299. The apparel industry and a slew of malls were *battered* as millions of Americans stayed home and a litany of dress-up events, from proms to weddings, were canceled or postponed.

300. Segments of the industry *face* significant *challenges* from reduced demand and changing consumer behavior.

301. Suppliers are also going to be *facing a bottleneck* in receiving new merchandise.

302. For example, discount chain B&M, which sells cut-price household essentials, *saw* sales growth of 20% during lockdown.

303. The *challenges* faced this year by the retail industry, and the supply chain that *feeds* it, cannot be underestimated.

304. With millions of Americans forced to stay home to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, foot traffic to malls and downtown shopping areas is quickly evaporating, a potential deadly **blow** for those chains **teetering** on the edge of bankruptcy.
305. By spending their benefits on food, clothing and appliances, rather than saving the money, Americans have helped keep many retailers and their employees and suppliers **afloat**.
306. Belk is no longer a family-operated company and its recent owner, the private equity firm Sycamore Partners, has **struggled** to update its identity and merchandise offerings and **take it beyond its roots**.
307. Business owners said they are at a **tipping point**.
308. Owners say they also have to cope with constant uncertainty - not just the threat of a resurgence of the virus but also having to **navigate** shifting reopening plans.
309. Small-business owners said they have **exhausted** federal and local assistance and see no end in sight after months of sharp revenue drops.
310. Target, a company who has historically **struggled** in grocery, has **seen** its grocery business explode.
311. Nike's "Play Inside, Play for the World" **campaign** is a fitting example of an agile marketing **campaign** in which the company **leveraged** its digital ecosystem to encourage social distancing during the pandemic.
312. The company remains adamant that they will not **make the move** online, but will the threat of further lockdowns force their hand?
313. "Walking Dead Brands" like New York & Company will continue to **fall**, depending on how long lame duck CEOs can keep the doors open.
314. But monthly retail sales - after plummeting in March and April - have returned to the level they were at in February, fed in large part by **behemoths** like Amazon, Walmart and Target.
315. The apparel industry and many malls were **battered** as millions of Americans stayed home and myriad dress-up events, including proms and weddings, were canceled or postponed.
316. With malls and department stores **struggling**, brands like Levi's have been forced to think about the best way to reach customers.
317. Scott Galloway, author of the book "Post Corona: From Crisis to Opportunity," recently advised marketers to extend every trend by 10 years to **gauge** how well their business models and cultures can keep up.
318. Nike's "Play Inside, Play for the World" campaign is a fitting example of an **agile** marketing campaign in which the company **leveraged** its digital ecosystem to encourage social distancing during the pandemic.
319. I think similarly **agile** marketing **campaigns** will become more common next year.
320. Localization will also accelerate marketing automation and data mining as marketers **struggle** to get a better grip of ROI.
321. ...despite mass lay-offs elsewhere and growing concerns over **plummeting** global markets.
322. While mass marketing may be **dead**, mass promotion is alive and well.
323. Shoppers 50 years and older represent 71% of the nation's wealth, according to AdAge, yet 10% of marketing dollars **target** them.
324. This paradigm of marketing relied heavily on a combination of website visits, email sales, social media and digital ads - all **fighting** for the consumer's attention.
325. Moving forward, an omnichannel marketing strategy is essential to **survival**.
326. And of course, the general retail market will continue to **shift** dollars online.
327. Successful marketing **campaigns leverage** these sociocultural factors to **build** a connection with customers and encourage consumption.
328. .. and Publix Super Markets **sped up** its tech transition to accept contactless payments ahead of intended plans.
329. Its infrastructure was devastated and its lucrative tourism market **evaporated**.
330. While mass marketing may be **dead**, mass promotion is alive and well.

331. The Covid-19 pandemic has abruptly altered consumers' behaviors and attitudes, *upending* brands' marketing strategies and plans.

332. Sales are predicted to *drop* between 7% to 12% in the U.S. in 2021 compared with 2019.

333. This has largely been enabled by tech-driven supply chain innovation, making "drop-shipping" possible - direct delivery from manufacturers to customers via a sales agent, such an influencer or popular website, that can *run* a retail business without the hassle of buying stock or fulfilling orders.

334. There is a lot of value interacting with a salesperson in the store who can *curate* the selection and customize it for customers," Solomon says.

335. On the other hand, MasterCard data showed department store sales *dropped* 10%; apparel sales *tumbled* 19%; and sales of luxury items excluding jewelry *slumped* 21%. Jewelry sales *fell* 4.3%.

336. Home furniture and furnishings sales *rose* 16%; home-improvement sales *rose* 14%; grocery sales *gained* nearly 7%; and electronics and appliances sales *climbed* 6% in the expanded 75-day holiday season tracked by MasterCard SpendingPulse.

337. Sales of indoor exercise gear continue to *grow* - stationary bike maker Peloton recently reported first-quarter sales *growth* of 232%.

338. Subscriptions of some meditation apps are *on the rise*, and 59% of consumers have said they are shopping more health consciously.

339. With the stores' closure, sales have *fallen off a cliff*.

340. Target recently announced that its digital sales had *grown* 275% in April, and that this steady *growth* more than made up for the decline in in-store sales.

341. Earlier this year, FMI revised its estimates for U.S. e-grocery sales to almost \$150 billion, *up* from \$100 billion just three years earlier.

342. This paradigm of marketing relied heavily on a combination of website visits, email sales, social media and digital ads - all *fighting* for the consumer's attention.

343. The "digital sprint" that McKinsey/BOF identifies has resulted in e-commerce's share of fashion sales *growing* from 16% to 29% in only eight months during the pandemic, effectively "*jumping forward* six year's of growth."

344. Its sales have *plummeted* as 600 of Macy's retail locations were closed.

345. While Olive Garden and LongHorn were making up some of the shortfall with increasing online orders for off-premise sales, Darden's fine-dining segment including The Capital Grille saw sales *slide* 31%.

346. Online sales at general merchandise retailers *climbed* 50% on March 13, according to Rakuten Intelligence, which tracks electronic receipts.

347. And this is expected to increase in the coming years as online sales continue to *grow*.

348. Online sales for apparel and footwear retailers *fell* 37% on March 11 alone, according to Rakuten.

349. Online sales *jumped* 23%, the government data showed.

350. Online sales worked to *bolster* the shopping season, representing an increase in sales by 22%, and inching Black Friday over \$9 billion in sales.

351. The headlines from May through October showed retail sales *accelerating* ahead of last year and *stepping back* a bit in November.

352. March retail sales *fell* a record 8.7%, and it seems a virtual certainty that the April numbers will be far worse given that the wide-spread shuttering of "non-essential" brick-and-mortar operations across the United States did not take hold until mid-month.

353. In North America, some \$125 billion in retail sales have *shifted* from general merchandise retailers (e.g. department stores, apparel retailers) and hard goods (e.g. furniture, appliances, jewelry, sporting goods) to grocery, mass merchants, warehouse clubs and online (e.g. Amazon), according to IHL.

354. Through November, retail sales in clothing and fashion accessories stores declined 28.5% year-over-year, the *steepest drop* in all of retail, even worse than the 19.4% decline in the *hard-hit* restaurant sector.

355. That's how much retail sales in the United States **dropped** in March, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, from \$529 billion in February to \$438 billion in March.

356. The headline of this release is that retail sales **went down** 1.1% from October to November of this year.

357. Euromonitor predicts that U.S. retail sales will **drop** 6.5% in 2020 and may not **recover** to 2019 levels until at least 2022.

358. Darden's fine-dining segment including The Capital Grille saw sales **slide** 31%.

359. Food service and drinking places, once an industry outperformer, saw sales this year through November **fell** 19%, with the rate of decline outpaced only by a nearly 29% **slide** from clothing and clothing accessories stores, according to U.S. Commerce Department's November retail sales report released this month.

360. At the other end of the spectrum, department store sales (with a large concentration of fashion-related offerings) **fell** some 25%, and apparel and accessory store revenues **cratered** 52%.

361. Sales at gas stations, pushed down by low oil prices as well as reduced commuting, **fell** 17 percent.

362. That persistently low traffic - following weeks and even months of temporary store closures - helps to explain why a record number of retailers have declared bankruptcy or closed down during the pandemic, even as sales of products like groceries, at-home entertainment and appliances have been **booming**.

363. Employees nationwide have **staged** protests outside stores asking Kroger to reinstate the pay, especially given its booming business - sales are **soaring**, and it recently said its 2021 business results "will be higher than we would have expected prior to the Covid-19 pandemic."

364. Sales were **driven** by a consumer focus on the home, core repair and maintenance activities, and wallet share shift away from other discretionary spending.

365. Target said its curbside sales **grew** more than 700 percent in the last quarter, while Best Buy reported nearly \$5 billion in online revenue in the second quarter, a company record, and said 41 percent of that had come from curbside or in-store pickup.

366. We saw this trend on Mother's Day, when jewelry sales **sparkled** with double-digit increases.

367. The latest sales data is likely to **amplify** calls for Congress to pass another round of stimulus before the November election.

368. But monthly retail sales - after **plummeting** in March and April - have returned to the level they were at in February, **fed** in large part by behemoths like Amazon, Walmart and Target.

369. Retail sales **climbed** 0.6 percent in August, but the increase was smaller than in previous months, prompting concerns of a recovery that is running out of steam.

370. Despite an end to the federal stimulus measures that have propped up consumer spending, retail sales **climbed** for the fourth straight month in August, extending a **bounceback** that has lasted longer than many economists had expected.

371. U.S. retail sales have been **climbing** steadily since late May, though several categories are still **struggling**, according to monthly data from the Commerce Department.

372. Retail sales **plunged** in March, offering a grim snapshot of the coronavirus outbreak's effect on consumer spending, as businesses shuttered from coast to coast and wary shoppers restricted their spending.

373. When the stimulus checks hit early in the Covid cycle, retail sales **spiked**.

374. Many analysts had predicted that retail sales would be **dented** in July by surging infections in states like Arizona, California and Texas, which forced restaurants and stores to close again.

375. As consumers shifted their purchases to online retailers, sales at many chain stores nationwide **suffered**, forcing some into bankruptcy with resultant store closures.

376. Most apparel chains and department stores have seen sales **tumble** during the pandemic.

377. Sales at electronics and appliance stores **jumped** 23 percent in July while spending at clothing and clothing accessories stores rose almost 6 percent.

378. Some areas that saw **strong** sales in the previous month, like furniture and home furnishings stores and the category of sporting goods, hobby, musical instruments and bookstores, were **flat** or declined in July.

379. The sales of clothing and accessories **fell** by more than half in March, a trend that is expected to only get worse in April.

380. But as bad as that downturn was, sales never **ground to a halt** the way they have in recent weeks, said Jack Kleinhenz, chief economist for the National Retail Federation.

381. Clothing stores were especially **hard hit** in last month's plunge, with sales **falling** by more than half.

382. But selling goods online is by no means a **panacea**.

383. In 2020, changes in the way we are engaging, selling and retailing have **accelerated**.

384. In the retail industry, they would call that a **weak** performance.

385. Consumers' mindsets will **switch** to reduced consumption of non-essential items and anti-ostentation," Euromonitor reports.

386. Also, consumers are likely to **come out** of the cloud of COVID expecting more from brands and people - the rise in kindness and empathy has been nothing short of inspirational.

387. How retailers treat employees and consumers, particularly when it comes to health and safety, will likely have a lasting impact that will **endure** beyond the Coronavirus pandemic, and consumers are **acting with their wallets** already.

388. Amazon, for example, hired 175,000 new employees as consumer spending on Amazon **jumped** 35%, according to Factiveus.

389. The result will be a delayed decline in sales in those categories as consumers **work through** their home inventory.

390. Even prior to the coronavirus, consumers had **embraced** the change.

391. As grocery shelves for popular items sit empty, consumers brand preference **erodes**.

392. According to our data tracking consumer behavior since late February, consumers continue to **cut back** on spending amid the pandemic.

393. If it extends for multiple months, it will be difficult for consumers and retailers to **sustain** a prolonged shock to the system.

394. Although enterprises have begun to fully resume business, it takes time for consumer confidence to **recover**, and the traffic and sales of department stores and shopping centers have only recovered to 30% to 40% percent of normal as of April 2020.

395. Consumers will **emerge** from the pandemic in a new economic reality, changing commerce behaviors in profound ways.

396. While some demand will drop after lockdowns are lifted, many consumers will permanently **shift** to e-commerce, following in the footsteps of South Korea after the MERS outbreak in 2015.

397. Consumers, wary of in-person shopping but **clinging** to the familiarity of old habits, are eager to **shift** to a mobile-forward hybrid buying pattern that prioritizes online shopping and scheduling pickups in order to minimize physical interaction.

398. Zenreach recommends that when facing limited capacity in stores it is important to ensure that a store's high value, loyal consumers **dominate** over low-ticket transactional customers.

399. With many consumers already or **on the precipice** of being **sheltered** in place, digital grocery has become the only option or at least a more desirable option, even in just facilitating order pickup, than going into an actual grocery store full of other, potentially virulent people to shop.

400. With many consumers **facing** reduced household incomes and continued economic uncertainty, it's no surprise that discount, or value retailers, have fared better than most during the pandemic.

401. But even that massive consumer spending **shift** to online won't begin to **make up** for the retail **losses** in 2020.

402. Consumers have **shifted** spending toward necessities and away from discretionary purchases that malls depend upon.

403. And, what's more, the vast majority of consumers who have increased their use of digital and omnichannel services, such as home delivery, curbside pickup, or shopping via social media platforms, expect to **sustain** these activities into the future.
404. Older consumers generally don't **enter** new life stages.
405. Consumers will **emerge** from the pandemic in a new economic reality, changing commerce behaviors in profound ways.
406. **Faced** with this new reality, consumers are likely to be more germ cautious than ever before.
407. While some consumers may **shift** back to their pre-pandemic behaviors quickly and unabashedly.
408. And it was the consumer who **led us out of** recession as spending led to the economy's recovery.
409. Those consumers could **emerge** from the pandemic with entirely new brand preferences or lower overall brand loyalty.
410. According to our data tracking consumer behavior since late February, consumers continue to **cut back** on spending amid the pandemic.
411. The pandemic not only is changing how people live across demographics, it is causing unexpected consumer segments to **emerge** as key players of certain behavioral traits.
412. Mr. Anderson said. "People (consumers) are having trouble **wrapping their minds** around the extent of the economic **losses**."
413. Some consumers **shifted** discretionary spending toward travel and dining out rather than purchasing goods such as clothing.
414. As consumers **shifted** their purchases to online retailers, sales at many chain stores nationwide suffered, forcing some into bankruptcy with resultant store closures.
415. As consumers are being asked to practice social distancing, e-commerce orders for groceries and other essentials have become a **survival tool** for the American family.
416. The number underscores that while many outlets are struggling, business at "essential" retailers like grocery stores is surging, especially as online ordering **ramps up**.
417. Online orders have **surged** for retailers in the pandemic, as curbside pickup helps Americans satisfy their desire to hop in a car and drive to the store.
418. Online credit-card transactions **soared**.
419. Without a large subsidy, economists predict, consumption will **stall** in August and into the **fall**, damaging the broader economy.

APPENDIX B

Sentences Containing Metaphorical Expressions in Retail Industry Discourse

During the Recovery Phase (2021-2022)

1. Retail's pending recession is **fueled** by inflation with seeds of stagnation.
2. Retailers **scramble** to adapt as inflation, supply chain **woes** persist.
3. Drawing on my experience working with over 130 retailers who are using experiential retail to **reinvent** the retail space, here's what to expect and how retailers can **thrive** in the new normal.
4. Retail industry **challenged** to adapt to a digital world.
5. Retailers are **exploring** autonomous delivery and fulfillment.
6. After 70 retailers declared bankruptcy in 2020, we are now **enjoying** the lowest levels of retail bankruptcy filings in the past five years, contributing to a continued decline of store closures.
7. Although some speak of a retail **apocalypse**, what's really underway is a retail **renaissance**.
8. I have been speaking about "retail's great **bifurcation**" for years.
9. If there's anything the last year-plus has taught us, it's how **agile** retail needs to, and can be.
10. Due to the pandemic, nearly all retailers were **forced** rather swiftly into **embracing** online selling.
11. As brands and retailers **compete** for consumer loyalty, consumers are demanding to know their stances on socio-political issues.
12. Sellers get cash in their wallets, and retailers **get traffic** in their stores.
13. Until recently, retailers would choose to either become **leaner** or become more **agile**.
14. But last year proved them wrong: Brands and retailers need both if they want to **keep afloat**.
15. Brands and retailers relying on instinct, historical sales data, and, too often, hope will never be able to **compete** in **driving** their important product-based decisions.
16. Apparel retailers and department stores, in particular, **felt the brunt** of the Covid-19 pandemic, with analysts predicting 20% less retail real estate by 2025.
17. The retail industry expects to **see** a rise in smaller-format and experience-centered stores as retailers look closely at their investments and seek to **move further** along their digital transformation journey.
18. Even as retailers **raise** prices on many items, they're also beginning to offer bigger, better deals on products such as televisions and furniture in an effort to attract customers and clear inventory.
19. Retail pricing strategies in flux as economy **wilts**.
20. In the near term, if they don't **get a handle** on things, they won't deliver for the holiday season.
21. From mass store closures and strict occupancy limitations to demand challenges and global supply shortages, both retailers and consumers around the world were **forced** to **evolve**.
22. Major corporations like Bloomingdale's and Apple have **embraced** ideas like small-format stores, while other trends like "buy online, pick-up in store" (BOPIS) and curbside pickup have given customers new ways to shop and help brick-and-mortar retailers **compete** with online retailers.
23. The COVID-19 roller coaster took many brick-and-mortar retailers for a **ride** in 2020 and 2021, with notable department stores, restaurants, and apparel stores shuttering permanently.
24. Brick-and-mortar retailers were among those **hit hardest** by the Covid-19 pandemic.
25. Being the first **line of defense**, both online and brick-and-mortar retail will **suffer** growing consumer frustration.
26. Clearly, all business owners have been battered by the pandemic, but retail - because its business model is often based on seeing customers in person - has been especially hard **hit**.
27. Sauron said that, "an understanding of current and emerging trends is essential but retailers should not **fall into the trap** of responding to all of them.
28. Whatever the case, retail prices (for sure) are **going up**, and inflation is likely to continue well into 2023.

29. Retail *saw* its largest decline and fastest recovery in 2020.
30. It can help all consumer *facing* retailers and brands get ready for the power shift coming under Web 3.0.
31. Just as Airbnb and Uber mobilized utility value locked up in single-use properties and vehicles, respectively, opening retail supply chains for capacity and infrastructure sharing between cooperating retailers presents a potentially attractive model of efficiency without requiring them to *surrender* to dependency on one of the scale platforms.
32. Retailers have been *facing* constant change for the past decade, and that pace has only accelerated since Covid-19 struck.
33. The lines between online and in-store shopping have been blurring for many years, but relatively few retailers truly *embraced* this blur.
34. So the ongoing and ever-changing supply-chain issues are a constant theme for retailers - small businesses are *feeling the brunt*.
35. The “Uberization” of retail supply chains is underway with new cooperative models and hypernetworked logistics promising an escape for retailers *stuck* between the costly privilege of supply chain independence and superdependence on the retail *behemoths*.
36. There’s a whole range of different immersive experiences and digital engagement channels for retailers to *explore*.
37. Matt Maher, founder of retail tech advisor agency M7, says augmented reality is “a huge opportunity for retailers to *scale* product trials ... to give you a retail experience anywhere in the world.”
38. It will be crucial for retailers who want to *thrive* in a post-pandemic world.
39. Research results have shown that the in-store experience is still important to customers, but new and emerging trends have forced retailers to *shift* how they approach meeting the needs of those customers.
40. As we *move forward*, retailers everywhere will have to deal with the new scenario in the best possible way.
41. In general, retail interactions are relatively *calm* right now, but that may change as the return to bankruptcy alley could be around the bend.
42. When that happened, big grocery retailers didn’t need to be convinced to carry the product, they *made room* for it because of consumer demand.
43. The COVID-19 pandemic introduced lockdown policies that forced several grocery retailers to *shift* to e-commerce and offer online shopping and delivery services.
44. Now we find ourselves in the hybrid wave, where e-commerce and physical retail are much more intrinsically linked (I call this “*harmonized* retail”).
45. While we were always *headed* to a more blended world, the pandemic accelerated the journey.
46. These ongoing challenges have retailers *scrambling* daily to *reinvent* how they operate as conditions seem to lurch from quarter to quarter even affecting those previously able to avoid like Amazon’s financial performance announcement today.
47. Understanding which trends are likely to remain strong even after the pandemic ends can help retailers anticipate their needs, and *embracing* open, scalable and agile technology can ensure they are ready for anything the future might hold.
48. Right now, for example, it could help retailers re-price their excess inventory in such a way as to *boost* sales, *win* new customers, *ease* working capital, and *bring down* the number of products sitting in warehouses.
49. I examine how retailers can *build* resilient, responsible businesses.
50. Drawing on my experience working with over 130 retailers who are using experiential retail to *reinvent* the retail space, here’s what to expect and how retailers can *thrive* in the new normal.
51. There are six key forces that characterized how 2020 unfolded and that will continue to shape how retail *evolves* in 2021 and, most likely, far beyond.

52. Data has always been king in retail, and this was especially true as the industry *grappled* with the pandemic.
53. The disruption of traditional retail began long before COVID-19, which only exacerbated trends that were already making it difficult for independent retailers to *compete* with rising e-commerce giants.
54. Retailers are worried and are acting now to *boost* their work crew.
55. Retailers have generally purpose *built* their supply chains with a network of service providers, warehouses and distribution centers scoped to their regional profile and throughput needs.
56. *Leading* retailers are getting *leaner* and more *agile*.
57. However, although this has sadly translated into lay-offs in the short term, those retailers who *reinvented leaner* retail networks with more agile methods are those who will still be *standing after the storm*.
58. Most legacy retailers remained *siloed* in their digital and physical operations.
59. Retailers need to offer the best products, at the best price, in the least amount of time to *thrive* for the long term.
60. Although many retailers have done the right things the right way at the right time during the pandemic, others did not, and *suffered* for it.
61. Covid pushed many retailers to *make the shift* to digital payments, rewards and delivery more quickly than they had initially planned to.
62. As more and more retailers *face* an unhappy choice between costly supply chain independence and uncomfortable superdependence on the scale retail platforms, perhaps a third way is to be found in cooperation with the competition and in hypernetworking supply chains into a new type of scale platform where the *power* lies in the sum of its parts.
63. Retailers should consider *honing* their abilities in these environments today, since many of the underlying capabilities - strong data and analytics, information security, deep understanding of customers, digital know-how, experience design - will play a central role in future metaverse experiences.
64. And yet, there's probably no sector of retail *on the verge* of more change and *upheaval* than grocery.
65. Overall, the future of retail real estate remains *murky*.
66. They (Multichannel retailers) also must stand out from the competition, especially online-only retailers, which is essential for *survival*.
67. Other retailers *have room* to maneuver in response to income pressures, but the last thing a subscription business wants is to lower its revenue per subscriber," Portell explained.
68. In an effort to outflank last year's supply chain bottleneck, and despite a steady decline in consumer sentiment, they and other retailers rushed to *beef up* inventories to meet booming demand.
69. Retailers are *leveraging* today's technology to ensure a more seamless - and positive - BOPIS and curbside experience.
70. An increase in sellers brings *traffic* and potential customers to a store, an advantage for partner retailers and brands that *run* their own resale programs.
71. Retail store locations used to be the *key* to unlocking loyalty.
72. Plus, retailers with brands that *stayed strong* during the pandemic are eager to *revive* expansion plans to test out new concepts and take advantage of the larger scope of offers and lower rent.
73. Retailers that want to *compete* in the future successfully need to address all of these trends.
74. The pandemic offered them a chance to *escape* from the relentless cycle of deals and discounts, which consumers had come to expect, and sell more items at full price.
75. Until recently, retailers would choose to either become *leaner* or become more *agile*.
76. As store and shopping center closings hit new highs and bankruptcy filings (and complete business liquidations) become more common, the remaining retail *pie* will be shared among fewer *competitors*.

77. Some categories (dressier apparel, as but one example) and formats (mall-based department stores) are likely to remain contracted relative to 2019 levels, putting even more pressure on remaining retailers to **grab** a bigger share of a shrinking sector.
78. The past two years have required retailers to **exercise** every bit of agility and creativity they have been able to **muster** to **navigate** the challenges of COVID-19, the inexorable rise of online sales and supply chain volatility, and the pressures continue.
79. She said, "Retail, especially grocery, was **forced** to **evolve** at breakneck speed, and most did a great job listening to the needs of their customers and adapting, leading to what I believe will be massive transformation."
80. To **weather** supply chain disruptions, she says, retailers should, for example, be analyzing the results of promotions and resetting them, "as you go, not months after the promotion has ended and you just see it in the review mirror and cannot change anything."
81. Retailers seem to now **face** a stark choice.
82. By blending digital and real-world shopping, retailers are maximizing sales and **charting** a sustainable **path** forward.
83. Modern technology has allowed both large and small retailers to **pivot** to a more agile and responsive customer experience, and tools like 5G and RFID have increased the interconnectivity of those stores.
84. Authenticity is a retail business's greatest asset, so retailers should be **showcasing** the thoughts and feedback, good and bad, directly from their customers.
85. Now some retailers are **stuck** with something akin to buyer's remorse, loaded down by too much of the wrong sorts of inventory.
86. Some retailers **viewed** the crisis as an opportunity to adapt to changing customer needs by accelerating their digital transformations and enhancing their brick-and-mortar store and online operations.
87. Retailers measure consumer sentiment to **gauge** the frustration level on a per-product basis.
88. But according to Mark Quinn and Mark Kinsley, retail experts and authors of the new book Come Back to Bed, one thing is for certain: in order to **survive**, retailers must be willing to adapt.
89. Quinn and Kinsley say it's time (for retailers) to stop **playing** it safe and take some risks.
90. **Battered** by Black swans, retail industry **hunkers down**.
91. It's exciting to ponder all that retail has to offer the American consumer as we **emerge** from the fog of Covid.
92. Now that retailers in the U.S. have started to **rev up** again, what kind of shopping behaviors can we expect to see?
93. Other analysts may look at different inflation or recovery guides, but the truth tells us that retail is usually the first to **head into** a recession, and the first to **head out**.
94. Retailers who prepare now and continue to upgrade their environments and technology to address the demands of consumers will be the most successful in retaining, and maybe even **growing**, their customer base.
95. We are also seeing the resurrection of brands that once seemed destined for the retail **graveyard**, only to re-emerge as online-only entities.
96. The retail industry has **led the way** in surmounting the Covid-19 pandemic's challenges with innovation and creativity.
97. Covid-19 has created a heretofore unimaginable disruption of the retail industry, but it has also created a unique opportunity for the retail industry to **evolve**.
98. As the retail industry **shifts**, and collaborations between small and large retailers become more common, small businesses need to be aware of how **weighted** the law is against them, and how best to **protect** themselves in case of a larger business going into administration.
99. The retail industry **faces** a long slog as last year's crisis morphs into this year's new normal.

100. In response to the pandemic, the retail industry began to **embrace** the idea of turning brick-and-mortar locations into fulfillment centers.
101. Now the economy appears to be slipping into (or is already in) a recession and the retail industry **faces** yet another year of scrambling to readjust to rapidly changing conditions.
102. **Reemerging** from lockdown, the retail industry is presented with an enormous opportunity to start over with a fresh, bold, innovative approach - to **shed** the past waste and inefficiencies that brought many a hallowed brand into the dustbin of history and **embrace** new models that tightly align the needs of brands' customers and talent.
103. The retail **playbook** is in the process of being re-written.
104. It remains to be seen precisely how and to what extent the pandemic will alter the retail **playing field** and reshape customers' long-term needs, wants, and expectations.
105. We need to be innovative and ambitious - removing best before dates where safe to do so, trialling new ways to sell our products and **galvanising** our customers to get creative with leftovers and **embrace** change.
106. There's high pressure for the retail sector to **absorb** rising costs and small companies have to work even harder to keep up because they are not only affected by supply chain disruptions but higher prices squeeze them out of competing with larger companies.
107. It's even possible for the retail worker to share achievements and personal bests and challenge other sales associates to **raise their game**, enabling the construction of a community culture even when workers aren't physically connected.
108. After a busy day, the retail worker once more uses digital checklists to **streamline** the process of closing down their station and ensuring the store is ready for the next day's business.
109. It's a "coopetition" supply chain and it's succeeding in clawing back the cost disadvantage these retailers **faced** acting alone, leveling the competitive playing field.
110. However, although this has sadly translated into lay-offs in the short term, those retailers who **reinvented leaner** retail networks with more agile methods are those who will still be **standing after the storm**.
111. Despite in-store shopping coming to a near-standstill at times, retailers quickly **pivoted** their strategies to make up for lost revenue and maintain customer loyalty.
112. Retailers that lead with technology combined with humanity have **emerged** stronger.
113. Today, retail is **taking on a movement** of bold innovation.
114. The pie has gotten bigger, and 2020's retail winners will **grab** even more of it in the future.
115. With the pandemic keeping millions of New York City office employees home for the past year, restaurants, coffee shops, apparel retailers and others **struggled** to stay **afloat**.
116. Some retailers, such as department stores and apparel retailers, **struggled** last year with closed stores, weak online sales or products that became less popular, such as work clothing.
117. But other big retailers are **staying quiet** on whether they plan to start requiring that all customers, including the fully vaccinated, wear masks again.
118. Others, such as big-box retailers, **thrived**, drawing more shoppers looking for food or homegoods.
119. Brick-and-mortar retailers have been **decimated** in recent years.
120. Retailers will continue to **purge** underperforming locations while negotiating lower rents from landlords to make the remaining spaces more viable.
121. Retailers **lose out** on impulse purchases when shoppers don't come into stores.
122. For retailers that were **forced** to close for at least part of 2020, there might be little motivation to potentially alienate needed customers over masks.
123. But there is evidence that an ever increasing number of those sales are going to giant retailers that have been able to use their scale and digital abilities to **grab** larger market share during the pandemic.
124. "Spending at nonstore retailers should **bounce**, but services spending will be weaker," they said in a note.

125. “If we get back to a more normal situation, retailers will get *exuberant* and buy too much and have to mark down,” said Stephen Sadove, the former CEO of Saks.
126. Some retailers *shrugged off* the July sales report.
127. Some retailers, such as department stores and apparel retailers, *struggled* last year with closed stores, weak online sales or products that became less popular, such as work clothing.
128. *Weaker players* such as Lord & Taylor and J.C. Penney Co. filed for bankruptcy protection and closed hundreds of stores, while big companies such as Walmart Inc., Target Corp. , Amazon.com Inc. and Home Depot Inc. HD 0.49% consolidated their power.
129. And other specialty retailers - especially those without existing e-commerce platforms - *struggled*.
130. This helps explain why Nike and other apparel brands *struggle* to stock retail outlets with their wares.
131. Those retailers are *seizing* the moment to look even more like department stores.
132. Physical traffic to retail stores *fell* sharply this holiday season, according to firms that use sensors and cameras to track in-store shopping.
133. The *growth* of e-commerce amid the pandemic *forced* many retailers to find new ways to *compete*, such as creating new supply chain efficiencies.
134. It’s undeniable that e-commerce (buy online, pick up in-store; buy online, pick up curbside; buy online, ship to address; etc.) was retail’s *saving grace* last year, with online sales accounting for 101% of all growth in 2020, per the same Digital Commerce 360 report.
135. “Some licensees commented that their new e-commerce capabilities had become a source of competitive advantage, *driving* new licenses their way,” the study reported.
136. The e-commerce experience has become incredibly *refined* and personalized, and there's a huge gap and opportunity for the physical experience to mimic it.
137. The disruption of traditional retail began long before COVID-19, which only exacerbated trends that were already making it difficult for independent retailers to compete with *rising* e-commerce giants.
138. As e-commerce *grows*, physical stores must change.
139. I have read hundreds of stories and seen dozens of presentations where much is made about how e-commerce growth is assumed to *come* completely at the expense of physical retail.
140. While e-commerce has been *on the rise* since its inception, the unprecedented events of 2020 caused it to *skyrocket* as consumers avoided the risks of in-person shopping.
141. As what we label “e-commerce” has *evolved*, there is a growing and really important distinction between how a product is ordered and how it is fulfilled.
142. It’s time to take a closer look at how what we call “e-commerce” has *evolved* and understand what it all means *going forward*.
143. In fact, the retail e-commerce industry continued to *grow* by 16 per cent in 2021, generating around 4.9 trillion dollars in sales worldwide.
144. Regardless of the general feeling that e-commerce is *killing* retail stores (a sentiment that has increased ever since the pandemic began in my view), the reality shows otherwise.
145. Bain & Company research shows that U.S. retail e-commerce penetration will *grow* to nearly 30% of total sales by 2025.
146. The rate of e-commerce penetration in the U.S. *grew* by 10 years in 90 days in 2020, reaching around 33%, according to data from McKinsey.
147. The toolsets of big e-commerce players such as Amazon will finally *reach the hands* of small, local businesses - and we’ll all benefit from it.
148. In January, e-commerce represented 13% of retail sales. That number *spiked* to almost 20% of sales in April and leveled back to about 16% by the end of the year.
149. It’s quite likely that what gets booked as “e-commerce” revenue will *grow* at a much faster rate than sales rung up in a physical store in the future.

150. Department stores, which are predominantly dependent on apparel sales, lost their assortment advantage as clothing brands shifted their focus to direct-to-consumer sales, and e-commerce sites **emerged** with limitless assortment, instead.
151. Despite the e-commerce **surge**, Target doubled down again earlier this year, announcing even more investment in stores and related technology to support its leading edge omni-channel capabilities.
152. Merchants' payment partners were pressured by **soaring** e-commerce volumes during 2020.
153. As a key **driver** of transformation in retail over the last decade, e-commerce was already **growing** rapidly.
154. U.S. q-commerce **pioneer**, Softbank-backed GoPuff, was looking at an IPO and a valuation of \$40 billion in January this year, according to the New York Post.
155. As the q-commerce world **spins** ever faster, watch this space.
156. Yet, Facebook is still playing catch-up with the Asian market where social commerce has been a **staple** for consumers for longer.
157. According to Statista, social commerce in the United States was estimated to be worth more than \$35 billion in 2021, which marked an extraordinary **rise** of 35% from the previous year.
158. E-commerce alone **grew** by 33.6 percent in 2020.
159. Big e-commerce businesses also **absorbed** nearly 60 percent of all warehouse space available last year, according to real estate analysts at CoStar Group.
160. When you're a small business, e-commerce is **tougher** than it looks.
161. The pandemic accelerated the **growth** of online commerce," said Loren Padelford, vice president of Shopify, the e-commerce platform that predominantly **serves** independent retailers.
162. It **woke** a lot of people **up** to the idea that if you have to close your physical door, you need to have a digital door.
163. As e-commerce **proliferates**, the **barriers** separating physical and online shopping experiences will blur.
164. Executives said slower deliveries are still likely because they expect e-commerce spending to remain **elevated** even as the pandemic recedes.
165. Brands are **king**.
166. Like a row of dominos, the decline in spending on apparel impacted department stores, which then impacted the malls and shopping districts that are dependent on those **anchor** brands.
167. The bottom line: The retail world has changed for the better, and brands that **fail** to adapt could find it hard to **stay** in business.
168. It's not just big brands that are **embracing** AR, digital platforms have also started to roll out tools to help small businesses offer virtual experiences.
169. Some big brands have already **voiced** optimism about post-crisis **pent-up** demand bringing customers rushing back to stores for new shopping experiences.
170. Department stores, which are predominantly dependent on apparel sales, lost their assortment advantage as clothing brands **shifted** their focus to direct-to-consumer sales, and e-commerce sites emerged with limitless assortment, instead.
171. Reemerging from lockdown, the retail industry is presented with an enormous opportunity to start over with a fresh, bold, innovative approach - to shed the past waste and inefficiencies that brought many a **hallowed** brand into the dustbin of history and embrace new models that tightly align the needs of brands' customers and talent.
172. Our aim is to help incredible **healing** brands, products, and leaders have more impact on the world.
173. BCG's Sarah Willersdorf, who led the study, notes that luxury brands have been **ahead of the curve** in adopting Web 3.0 capabilities such as blockchain, DAOs (decentralized autonomous organizations) and NFTs linked to physical and digital products.
174. But many mass brands are **dipping their toes** in Web 3.0 as well, including Coca-ColaKO - 0.9%, Pepsi, Burger King, McDonalds and GapGPS +0.7%.

175. As Mazza explains: "2022 is the year mega brands are *exploring* the metaverse.
176. But by *embracing* the transition to omnichannel retail, and committing to digitizing real-world retail to add value across the commerce pipeline, brands can still succeed and *thrive*.
177. Of course, we'll continue to buy and wear clothes, but we're unlikely to see brands and merchants *dictate* new worldwide trends like before.
178. It is critical that brands *stay ahead of the curve*.
179. Established retailers of all kinds got more serious about their own .com operations, and a new breed of "digitally-native vertical brands" (DNVB's) were *birthed* across a spectrum of product categories.
180. This helps explain why Nike and other apparel brands *struggle* to stock retail outlets with their wares.
181. He didn't expect the service to be a huge revenue generator, but he saw the future coming, as online brands such as Chewy and Winc *wooded* his customers *away*.
182. Now the economy appears to be *slipping into* (or is already in) a recession and the retail industry faces yet another year of scrambling to readjust to rapidly changing conditions.
183. He targeted sales of men's underwear using the MUI (Men's Underwear Index) as a guide with the fairly accurate belief that when the economy *gets stressed*, consumers are slow to buy staple products like men's underwear.
184. The economy is *skirting* the problem right now because unemployment is low, but if inflation remains high and retail sales start to fall off, then the unemployment numbers will rise.
185. "The economy and consumer spending have proven to be much more *resilient* than initially forecasted," said NRF chief executive Matthew Shay.
186. Inflation is also weighing on the data, as consumers expect rising prices as the economy *navigates* the ups and downs of a shaky rebound, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York reported last week.
187. Retail sales fell in July, highlighting a *rocky* economic recovery.
188. Consumer prices won't be able to *roll back* to pre-COVID times, and the adage kicks in that - as prices *go up*, sales will go down, and jobs will eventually get lost.
189. The closest Walmart or Kroger is 20 miles away, a costly trip when gas prices have *soared* past \$4.20 a gallon.
190. There's high pressure for the retail sector to *absorb* rising costs and small companies have to work even harder to keep up because they are not only affected by supply chain disruptions but higher prices *squeeze* them *out of* competing with larger companies.
191. Price is *center stage* and is going to be there for a while.
192. Raising prices *turns off* shoppers.
193. In the context of Frost, retail doesn't exactly know how their consumers will perform as they face a barrage of *skyrocketing* price increases.
194. Consumer prices also *surged* last month from a year earlier, fueling concerns among some economists that the Federal Reserve won't raise interest rates soon enough to contain inflationary pressures.
195. It's quite likely that what gets booked as "e-commerce" revenue will *grow* at a much faster rate than than rung up in a physical store in the future.
196. Despite in-store shopping coming to a near-standstill at times, retailers quickly *pivoted* their strategies to make up for *lost* revenue and maintain customer loyalty.
197. Shopify's revenue *grew* by nearly 90 percent last year, and it now serves 1.7 million merchants globally.
198. Small and midsize businesses rely upon *razor-thin* profit margins and don't have the ability to increase salaries.
199. Research results have shown that the in-store experience is still important to customers, but new and emerging trends have *forced* retailers to shift how they approach meeting the needs of those customers.

200. Sauron said that, “an understanding of current and *emerging* trends is essential but retailers should not fall into the trap of responding to all of them.
201. This accelerated already *growing* trends and digital transformation in retail to keep up with changing consumer expectations.
202. With that in mind, those in the e-commerce sphere should keep an eye on new and *emerging* industry trends to stay competitive.
203. With that in mind, those in the e-commerce sphere should keep an eye on new and *emerging* industry trends to stay competitive.
204. Payment card cybersecurity software - particularly using AI - is one trend that is already *exploding*.
205. The second trend - the “spending *shuffle*” - reveals how, as consumers (and lower-income groups in particular) feel increasingly *squeezed* by the economy, they’re having to make more trade-offs in their spending.
206. Consumer prices won’t be able to *roll back* to pre-COVID times, and the adage kicks in that - as prices go up, sales will go down, and jobs will eventually *get lost*.
207. For instance, safety *dropped* as one of the driver’s main concerns, scheduling now ranks 11th, but job expectations *jumped* to 3rd spot, and the #1 reason for leaving remains career growth.
208. At stores selling clothing and clothing accessories, employment is *down* more than 40% from a year ago, according to a recent report by the state comptroller’s office.
209. While the Delta variant of the coronavirus has again delayed plans by many companies to bring employees back to offices en masse, workers who have been *trickling* into Midtown are discovering that many of their favorite haunts for a quick cup of coffee and a muffin in the morning or sandwich or salad at lunchtime have disappeared.
210. “We just feel like we’re *sitting ducks*,” said Ms. Wainwright, who estimated that far fewer than half of patrons wore masks on a recent Sunday.
211. As “unsecured creditors,” they are the last to be paid when a business *goes under*.
212. With a business that has been *built* on the experience of trying tester products at the counter before buying, this industry will need to *transform* how its beauty advisors interact with customers to close the sale.
213. Clearly, all business owners have been *battered* by the pandemic, but retail – because its business model is often based on seeing customers in person – has been especially hard hit.
214. After a meteoric rise during the pandemic, the buy now, pay later (BNPL) business is *facing* a future clouded by deteriorating economic conditions, competition from the likes of Apple and bank credit card issuers and a looming regulatory crackdown.
215. As traditional brick-and-mortar businesses *burn* through cash reserves and consumers opt for e-commerce, many retail properties will remain vacant in the first half of 2021.
216. Now, with no legal recourse to recouping her lost stock or revenue, she’s taken to Instagram to share how the unpaid invoices took her business to the *brink* of closure.
217. Businesses at the outlet mall are *struggling* - and it was already hard to interview last year as a woman in her 60s, she said. Amazon is hiring, but she is concerned about the risk of accidents in a warehouse.
218. Even during the pandemic, which forced many businesses to *shutter*, Amazon was able to double its sales profit from \$2.6 billion in 2019 to \$5.2 billion in 2020.
219. So the ongoing and ever-changing supply-chain issues are a constant theme for retailers - small businesses are *feeling the brunt*.
220. 2021 will see the rise and acceleration of local e-commerce, as more small businesses “close to home” will *shift* to platforms such as Shopify.
221. Small businesses *take* a real *leap* of faith when it comes to working with large brands.
222. With deeper pockets and huge buying power, they’re deemed to have the power to *wield* life changing influence on small businesses.
223. Subscription businesses are *stuck*.

224. One hope for subscription businesses is to **leverage** their in-depth consumer data to either sell it, merge with other companies or cross into related categories, from food to health and wellness, for example.
225. As “unsecured creditors,” they are the last to be paid when a business **goes under**.
226. With a business that has been **built** on the experience of trying tester products at the counter before buying, this industry will need to transform how its beauty advisors interact with customers to close the sale.
227. After a meteoric rise during the pandemic, the buy now, pay later (BNPL) business is **facing** a future clouded by deteriorating economic conditions, competition from the likes of Apple and bank credit card issuers and a looming regulatory crackdown.
228. They also have a **strong, durable** business model, which positions them well.
229. Some that rapidly **scaled** their e-commerce businesses in the early days of the pandemic found themselves overwhelmed by chargebacks.
230. How has the pandemic changed the retail business in ways that are going to **endure** in the months and years ahead?
231. Business had been recovering from August through November, but slowed again in December, **dragged down** by weakness in gift-card purchases.
232. Recent increases in PPI may indicate that businesses are **passing on** the higher production costs to customers, some of which are **translating** to higher retail price tags on store shelves across the country.
233. Ultimately, business is likely to further its **embrace of lean** for the simple reason that it has yielded profits.
234. “I might be less efficient, but I have a more special and unique business and that’s what **draws** people to our store,” Ms. Lutz said.
235. The company continued trading under new ownership, in a seamless handover that left many customers unaware the business had even changed **hands** at all.
236. Big e-commerce businesses also **absorbed** nearly 60 percent of all warehouse space available last year, according to real estate analysts at CoStar Group.
237. As day-to-day existence becomes more and more digital () consumers’ interest in VR as a shopping channel has **grown**.
238. As store and shopping center closings **hit** new **highs** and bankruptcy filings (and complete business liquidations) become more common, the remaining retail pie will be shared among fewer competitors.
239. Retailer’s ability to connect with consumers is more critical than ever as shopping habits continue to **shift** in the midst of the worldwide economic disruption brought on by the pandemic.
240. Here’s some welcome news for shoppers **pinched** by inflation: Even as retailers raise prices on many items, they’re also beginning to offer bigger, better deals on products such as televisions and furniture in an effort to attract customers and clear inventory.
241. TikTok live shopping is **booming** in 2022.
242. Any **friction** takes away from the experience and makes it more likely your shopper will **jump ship**”.
243. Yet even as giant shopping malls are **dying** and many storefronts are **shuttered**, the big box stores that **anchor** strip malls throughout the exurbs are **enjoying** something of a renaissance.
244. That lifelong shopping habit **went into hibernation** during the Covid-19 pandemic, but I figured it would **return**.
245. As online shopping **exploded**, giants like Amazon weren’t the only beneficiaries.
246. Everyone has had to do more with less, and field and store teams have become the **eyes and ears** for retail headquarters.
247. As the **eyes and ears** for companies, field and store teams have become even more of a key asset to **reinventing** experiences in stores.

248. The COVID-19 roller coaster **took** many brick-and-mortar retailers **for a ride** in 2020 and 2021, with notable department stores, restaurants, and apparel stores **shuttering** permanently.

249. The divide between essential businesses allowed to stay open and nonessential ones forced to close drove shoppers to big-box chains like Walmart, Target and Dick's and worsened **struggling** department stores' **woes**.

250. With consumers going to stores less because they're buying electronically, store locations that were the **anchor** of the industry won't matter nearly as much.

251. On the other hand, grocery store chains that **embrace** ways to skillfully engage their customers digitally are able to take this opportunity to **grow** sales and launch new businesses that let them **capture** new revenues," he said.

252. With many stores **shifting** to smaller format operations, inventory tracking has become particularly important.

253. That means store will have to **build** staff and start training the associates now in order to have a trained crew ready to serve the throngs.

254. With so many multibrand stores **forced** to close, direct-to-consumer (D2C) has gained more traction.

255. But the truth is that physical stores are **poised** to make a big comeback: In-store retail is still the dominant retail channel, and it's still very much part of the customer **journey**.

256. Grocers view their stores as the **anchor** of their business.

257. Stores are **shifting** to a new economic model to adapt to what customers want, giving them more control over customer acquisition and experience, competitive intelligence and, simultaneously, sales margins.

258. Across Manhattan, the number of available ground-floor stores, normally the domain of busy restaurants and clothing stores, has **soared**.

259. Some retailers, such as department stores and apparel retailers, **struggled** last year with closed stores, weak online sales or products that became less popular, such as work clothing.

260. Department stores and dressy clothing brands **suffered** last year; furniture, home goods and athletic brands fared better.

261. Stores **morphed** into Amazon-style fulfillment centers during the pandemic as retailers looked for places to pack online orders.

262. The apparel industry and a slew of malls were **battered** as millions of Americans stayed home and a litany of dress-up events, from proms to weddings, were canceled or postponed.

263. Perhaps most challenging of all, the apparel industry **lost** its ability to create trends and **drive** demand for new products.

264. There is no one size fits all answer but there are actions small businesses can take and strategies they can adopt to mitigate this ever-changing and **challenging** industry.

265. With that in mind, those in the e-commerce sphere should keep an eye on new and **emerging** industry trends to stay competitive.

266. In response to the pandemic, the retail industry began to **embrace** the idea of turning brick-and-mortar locations into fulfillment centers.

267. The retail industry **faces** a long slog as last year's crisis morphs into this year's new normal.

268. Now the economy appears to be slipping into (or is already in) a recession and the retail industry **faces** yet another year of scrambling to readjust to rapidly changing conditions.

269. Covid-19 has created a heretofore unimaginable disruption of the retail industry, but it has also created a unique opportunity for the retail industry to **evolve**.

270. A return to broad discounting would further pressure profits in the retail industry, which has already been **slammed** with higher costs on labor, products and shipping.

271. Data has always been **king** in retail, and this was especially true as the industry **grappled** with the pandemic.

272. Looking at where the industry is **headed**, Quinn and Kinsley predict Physical stores will likely become a customer acquisition tool, not just a means of distribution.

273. If an online grocer can match or beat physical stores on those points, online will keep growing and that's where the industry is **headed**.
274. That is where the future of the industry **parts ways** with the past.
275. While American regulation could ultimately help the BNPL giants, the industry still **faces** its share of challenges.
276. The auto industry has been **hit** by a shortage of computer chips, causing Toyota Motor to announce recently plans to slash production by about 40 percent.
277. Many of Modern Bungalow's suppliers are **struggling** to quickly deliver furniture to the retailer because of shortages of raw materials including lumber, foam and plywood, a recycled plastic.
278. Clearly, all business owners have been **battered** by the pandemic, but retail - because its business model is often based on seeing customers in person - has been especially hard hit.
279. At Urban Outfitters, the company is **hunkering down** on the cost side, among other tactics weeding out SKUs that generated low-quantity orders and were thus less profitable.
280. "We have a mall in my town that was always kind of a **dead** mall and I don't see it making a comeback," said Daniel Robbins, a 37-year-old owner of a podcast network who lives in Mission Viejo, Calif.
281. Yet even as giant shopping malls are **dying** and many storefronts are shuttered, the big box stores that anchor strip malls throughout the exurbs are enjoying something of a renaissance.
282. The mall isn't **dead** yet.
283. Subscription businesses, which grew so rapidly over the last two years, are now facing a market **turned upside down**.
284. To do this, retailers must quickly respond to market developments and apply **agile** marketing strategies.
285. Alternative healing and therapy is a **booming** market valued at \$82 billion and predicted to grow at more than 22% per annum until 2028.
286. Defined as transactions that take place entirely within the social media platform, the social commerce market is set to value \$1.2 trillion by 2025 - **growth** that will be driven predominantly by Millennial and Gen Z consumers, who will account for 62% of all spending.
287. Out of the ashes of the pandemic we're beginning to see the emergence of a new class of customer, one that is going to have a profound influence on all consumer-**facing** marketers.
288. Whatnot has been the fastest-**growing** marketplace in the nation for the past two years, according to the Marketplace 100 list assembled by Andreessen Horowitz.
289. Certainly, the financial markets are **worried about** a potential downturn for retail, even the XRT retail index has dropped about 16% year to date.
290. However, as the food market continues to **evolve**, the future of grocery retailers and food relies on global trends such as e-commerce, lifestyle, sustainability, strategic partnerships and experience economy.
291. Once widespread vaccinations are deployed, many markets will have **headroom** to develop new stores or formats with vacancies even in the most developed cities.
292. Marketplaces are the natural **evolution** of the stand-alone Web store.
293. Others, who were more fortunate, benefited from the **booming** stock market and increases in real estate and home prices, contributing to about 1.2 million older Americans deciding to cash in their chips and take an early retirement.
294. The company, which started out as a **struggling** marketplace for Funko Pop toys.
295. So why has the market **soured**, almost as rapidly as q-commerce companies can deliver?
296. Tech giants such as WeChat, Alibaba and Pinduoduo currently dominate this **thriving** market and they are forecast to continue growing.
297. When your market is **growing** quickly, you must grow at least as rapidly as the market itself.
298. Grocery sales **grew** much faster than other categories, "which means its taking up a larger percentage of the things that are bought online," he said.

299. In 2020, online grocery sales **jumped** 103% year-over-year to \$73.7 billion.

300. But since the pandemic began, online sales have **surged** and many brick-and-mortar retail stores have closed their doors permanently.

301. When the influence of Covid-19 abates, restaurant sales will **bounce back**, but like the **dinosaurs** of the Cretaceous period, department stores and apparel sales are not likely to ever **return** to pre-pandemic levels.

302. After **falling** to record lows about a year ago, sales **bounced back** sharply this spring, only to **swing** from month to month, **driven** by the ebb and flow of government stimulus and the persistence of the virus.

303. The 1.1 percent decline was sharper than economists had expected and came as sales of cars and home goods **dropped**.

304. As a result, auto sales **fell** last month.

305. Amazon has also said its holiday sales in 2020 **hit** a record, but it has not yet provided detailed figures.

306. Last fiscal year, that company saw its sales **surge** 100 percent even as Live Cycle Delight's revenue fell 80 percent.

307. Online sales also **dropped**, signaling a **pivot** to more in-person shopping, Tuesday's Commerce report showed.

308. By contrast, in November and December online sales **grew** 32.2% year-over-year to \$188.2 billion, according to Adobe Analytics.

309. Retail sales **dropped** in July, the Commerce Department reported Tuesday, a sign that consumer spending was hampered amid an uneven economic recovery from pandemic-induced restrictions.

310. Retail sales **dropped** in May, **marking a shift** in consumer spending from big-ticket items to goods and services related to going out amid business reopenings and higher vaccination rates.

311. Retail sales **fell** more than expected last month, the Commerce Department reported on Tuesday, a sign of the uneven **recovery** of the American consumer and a **shift** in spending patterns as the country reopens after the coronavirus pandemic.

312. Last year, the NRF estimated that total retail sales **hit** around \$4.02 trillion, with \$920 billion from purchases made through online channels.

313. The National Retail Federation now expects retail sales to **grow** up to 13.5% in 2021, a substantial revision from its prior forecast, delivered in February, of 6.5% growth.

314. The National Retail Federation said Wednesday it expects retail sales to **jump** between 10.5% and 13.5% to more than \$4.44 trillion this year compared with last.

315. The National Retail Federation said it expects retail sales to **jump** as much as 13.5% this year, a greater rise than it predicted in February.

316. Stephen Stanley, chief economist at Amherst Pierpont Securities LLC, said December retail sales were "an absolute **disaster**."

317. Gus Faucher, chief economist at PNC Financial Services Group, predicted on Tuesday that retail sales would **grow** at a "moderate pace" in the near future because many American consumers, on balance, were in a good financial condition.

318. Sales are **shifting** month to month as the economy's unsteady reopening continues.

319. Restaurant sales **rose** in April, while sales **shrank** in a range of retail store categories including furniture, sporting goods, clothing and general merchandise.

320. That was already evident in their **resilient** performance last year despite relying very little - or not at all - on e-commerce.

321. Some executives don't think retailers can maintain that discipline once the economy opens up and consumer demand **snaps back**.

322. Consumer prices also **surged** last month from a year earlier, **fueling** concerns among some economists that the Federal Reserve won't raise interest rates soon enough to contain inflationary pressures.

323. “We expect consumers’ spending to *struggle* until falling Covid cases allow restrictions to be eased, starting in March,” he said.
324. Consumer spending *fell* 0.7 percent, the Commerce Department reported, as the economic recovery showed signs of stalling.
325. Consumer confidence *tumbled* more than 13 percent in early August from July, according to preliminary results from the University of Michigan’s consumer sentiment index.
326. Consumers *trimmed* purchases of big-ticket items and spent more on dining out.
327. The personal-saving rate, the portion of after-tax income that consumers *sock away*, was 12.9% in November, according to the Commerce Department, well above the 7.5% rate a year earlier.
328. But for brick-and-mortar stores considering e-commerce, success isn’t always as easy as posting a website and watching orders *flow in*.
329. Walmart CEO, Doug McMillon told investors “shoppers are making far fewer trips to stores, with total transactions *falling* 14%.
330. Home Depot reported on Tuesday that transactions *fell* to \$481.7 million in the three months that ended Aug. 1, a 6 percent decrease from a year earlier.
331. A recent Accenture survey found that two out of three consumers are making more choices based on sustainability, intend to continue doing so, and would like to see government legislation promote “*conscious* consumption.”
332. “As supply chain constraints ease and consumer demand *wanes*, warehouses are filled to the brim,” Jefferies analyst Jonathan Matuszewski wrote in a recent note to clients.
333. Everyone (consumers) is *craving* a return to normal face-to-face interactions.
334. It was made easier by off-the-charts demand and supply chain woes that meant consumers were *chasing* limited availability on many products.
335. During the pandemic, Regan said, consumers were *gravitating* toward “what’s familiar and what gives us comfort.”
336. From mass store closures and strict occupancy limitations to demand challenges and global supply shortages, both retailers and consumers around the world were *forced* to *evolve*.
337. The second trend - the “spending shuffle” - reveals how, as consumers (and lower-income groups in particular) feel increasingly *squeezed* by the economy, they’re having to make more trade-offs in their spending.
338. As consumers *face* into increasingly higher food prices and living costs there will be a continued focus on value for money and may well sharpen focus on weekly household waste.
339. But as consumers *move* more towards parking lot pickup and home delivery, the rent and expense of stores is a cost less supported by consumer shopping every day.
340. Consumers are a significant *force* in driving demand.
341. On the opposite end of the industry, we could see more direct-to-consumer brands enter the brick-and-mortar space to *strengthen* their relationship with customers.
342. “Consumers absolutely were *migrating* to evergreen properties, what’s tried and true,” Maura Regan, President of Licensing International said in an interview.
343. Bazaarvoice points out that “with endless products available at their digital fingertips, consumers are more willing than ever to try out new brands when they *face* shortages, stockouts - or just a lack of inspiration from brands they were once loyal to.”
344. The biggest thing you’re commoditizing is consumers, and if consumers are *falling* into debt, then they may not continue to go into debt and just withdraw from the market.
345. Consumers have also *shifted* their spending away from things like couches and sweatpants to makeup, dressy attire and luggage as they worry less about Covid-19 and return to the office, social events and travel.
346. Consumer behaviors are really *driving* this transformation of retail.
347. An amazing result is that greater than 50% of consumers revealed that more of their lives are *moving* into digital spaces.

348. Now with restaurants open, consumers' weekend ritual is **returning** to a night-out, rather than a night-in.
349. **Pent-up** consumer demand is boosting retail sales across all sectors, leading to healthier fundamentals for retail real estate and a new era of brick-and-mortar shopping.
350. As the pandemic progressed, consumers **settled** into a new normal as to the percentage of their grocery basket they are buying online versus what they are buying in a store, he said.
351. Some (consumers) will **win** and others will **lose**," Portell said.
352. They are **shifting** down to lower-priced "house label" consumer goods, giving that category a boost.
353. Last year, with supply limited and inflation expectations rising, consumers **loaded up** on essentials.
354. Raj Dhiman of Retail Strategy Group said that when they shop, "consumers **go on a journey** that is dark to retailers." As technology improves, retailers will be better able to see how consumers arrived at the purchase decisions they've made.
355. Our "Behavior That Sticks" research, which echoes research from Google, shows that consumers aren't going back to their old ways but are readily **embracing** these new ways.
356. Key insights from the 2022 Shopper Experience Index finds that consumers who were **forced** to shop online during 2020 and 2021 are **staying** there, and those **venturing** back in-store are largely relying on online product research to guide their decisions.
357. After months of being **nagged** daily by creeping inflation - from the cost of bread to the price of gas - the consumer state of mind seems to have **passed a tipping point**.
358. In the context of Frost, retail doesn't exactly know how their consumers will perform as they **face** a barrage of skyrocketing price increases.
359. Today's consumers **display** a clear preference for smaller, free-standing shopping experiences, and this trend will likely continue after the pandemic's end.
360. Consumers have largely put up with higher prices, but there are now signs that many are beginning to **feel the squeeze** by switching to store brands and cutting back on discretionary purchases.
361. In spite of low unemployment and higher wages, consumers have been **losing** buying power for staples like gasoline, food, and shelter.
362. It remains to be seen how wholeheartedly consumers will **embrace** these out-of-the-box food concepts but for now novelty and surprise are critical factors driving retail's rebound.
363. All demand, no supply is a **recipe** for disaster.
364. The product supply side continues to **take a hit**, with retail flashing lights blinking furiously.
365. But now the supply pendulum is **swinging** the other way, and they're loaded down with inventory they don't need.
366. Shipping containers were backed up and demand was **outstripping** supply.
367. In an effort to outflank last year's supply chain bottleneck, and despite a steady decline in consumer sentiment, they and other retailers rushed to beef up inventories to meet **booming** demand.
368. Retailers rapidly expanded their supply chain bandwidth to meet the **explosive** demand, whether through localized fulfillment centers or direct-to-consumer (D2C) capabilities.
369. Late arriving merchandise and **flattening** demand produced a predictable inventory glut at the largest companies included in S&P consumer indices - collectively up a staggering 26% over a year earlier, according to a Bloomberg report.
370. There's still enormous **pent-up** demand for real-world shopping and dining, but digital tech is urgently needed to deliver smart, compelling omnichannel experiences for returning customers who've become used to the convenience of online shopping.
371. With **pent-up** shopping demand potentially bringing teeming hordes hungry for tactile shopping experiences back to stores sometime this year, how will retailers prepare to meet a new challenge?

APPENDIX C

Generic Source Domains and Specific Target Domains of the Target Domain BUSINESS

CRISIS PHASE - 2020		
Generic Source Domains	Specific Target Domains	Metaphorical Expressions
WAR	BATTLE	face ... final battle, face (6), hit hard (4), hit (4), take ... hit, blow (3), suffer ... final blow, suffer ... injury, fight (2), battered (2), heroes (2), leverage (3), overleveraged, survive, endure, retreat, make a retreat
	STRUGGLE	struggle (11), struggling, challenge (3), face (5), face ... challenge(s) (3), dead (3), waver, cling, crumble, navigate (3), crater ... collapse, suffer, exhaust, loss, lose (2), loser, winner
	MILITARY OPERATIONS	campaign (7), ramp up, score wins, following suit, score, heroes, boom, play, play to the strengths, let slip, overcome, loss (2), weather ... blow
	STAND FOR SURVIVAL	survive (16), survival (2), ride out, struggle (6), brace, find their feet, navigate, face, shake off, shed (2)
MOVEMENT	MOTION	grow (8), growth (5), downward spiral, move at a rapid clip, shift (7), head, navigate (8), hit, hone, slash, fell, pare down, run out of steam, pick up, plummet, take on a movement, speed up, evaporate, flock, reach new heights, make ... movement
	PHYSICAL MOVEMENT	bump, step up, elevate, move (3), carry, soar, retract, retreat, shift gears (2), shift (6), fleet
	NAVIGATION	run aground, on the horizon, set the course, shift (4), pivot (2), brace, stuck with, driver
	SHIFT	shift gears, shift, make a shit, pivot, navigate, move forward, move further, shake off
RESILIENCE	ENDURANCE	durable, bear the brunt, straining, breaking point, force, breathing ... relief, cooped up, flock, flourish, woe, on the precipice, plague, push, erode x 2, lose sense, take the brunt, bounce back
	ADAPTATION	pivot (3), agile (8), shift gears, re-emerge, hunker down, grasp, take it beyond its roots, set sights, unfolding, navigate, move forward

CRISIS PHASE - 2020		
Generic Source Domains	Specific Target Domains	Metaphorical Expressions
	FLEXIBILITY	shift, jump, agile, push, elasticity, resilient, rebound, witch, shift, jump, lead out of, sustain
FLUCTUATION	INSTABILITY	teeter, upend (2), dip (2), collapse (2), afloat (3), waver
	VOLATILITY	razor-thin, surge (2), shrivel, drop, grow (2), climb (5), spike, drop (4), fall (2), slump (3), tumble, amplify, suffer
	DISRUPTION	make the switch, switch, sound alarms, take shape, see a boost, crush, grind to a halt, shutdown, topple, upend
DETERIORATION	DECLINE	ghost town, core, lead astray, let slip, crater (2), disappear, lose, cut, go under, red hot up, fall
	DEPLETION	hit (3), take a hit, fall (5), plummet (3), drop (7), lose, dry up, erode, on the precipice, cut back
PRESSURE	STRESS	forced, suffer (5), thrown into relief, strain, push (2), weight on the mind, struggle, tipping point, navigate, exhaust
	VULNERABILITY	weak, expose, exposure, suffer (2), injury, waver
	MANIPULATION	act with ... wallets, dominate (2), wrap minds, make up, come into play, shape (2), gouge
PROTECTION	SAFEGUARD	crib (2), rebind (2), battered (2), shelter, wrapping ... mind
	ATTACHMENT	embrace (4), cling, stick (2), stuck
	FOUNDATION	ingrain, core, embed, strong, robust, pure, strengthen
HUMAN	LIFE	mature, grow, healthy (2), crumbling, death, breathe ... relief, learn ... tricks, resilient
	GAMBLING	win, winner, loser, keep pace, grapple, leaving money on the table, watch pennies
	TRAVEL	drive, shift gears, journey, horse and buggy, explore, navigate
TRANSFORMATION	PROGRESSION	evolve, thrive, flourish, erode, crumbling, grow, thrive, turn around, come out, work through, emerge, recover
	TRANSITION	shift, move, garner, recoup, dead
PROGRESS	CONSTRUCTION	redrawing, ramp up (2), block, build, durable

CRISIS PHASE - 2020		
Generic Source Domains	Specific Target Domains	Metaphorical Expressions
	PERFORMANCE	see (2), play out on ... stage, stage, unfold, act
	DYNAMICS	leverage, run, shift, explode, run, loom, force, boom, reach, surge, vibrant
EXPANSION	AMPLIFICATION	come into ... own, stay, balloon, move, grow, boom, grow, climb, jump, accelerate, soar, bolster, panacea
	MOMENTUM	amplify, push, full gear, drive, surge, gain, build
OPERATION	MECHANISM	drive, run, grind to a halt, curate, feed, dented
	TOOLS	leverage, gauge, cut, grind, durable
FORCE	PHYSICAL FORCE	crush, slash, gouge
	TRAJECTORY	revolve
	GRAVITY	dip, drop
PHYSICAL PROCESSES	EVOLUTION	grow, stage
	RESPONSE	sound alarms, embrace

RECOVERY PHASE - 2021-2022		
Generic Source Domains	Specific Target Domains	Metaphorical Expressions
EXPANSION	AMPLIFICATION	reinvent (3), thrive (6), scale (2), stay strong, revive, emerge (2), grow (13), proliferate, evolve (4), spike, soar, rise (3), elevate, growth (6), emerge (2), force, explode, build, leverage, shift, take a leap, cross into, hands, ignite, scale, translate, evolve, rise (2), elevate, stable, rise, headroom, thrive, proliferate, boom
	CONSTRUCTION	build (2), have room, make room, beef up
	DEVELOPMENT	move further, take on a movement, lead the way, part ways, growth, evolve
WAR	BATTLE	battle (6), surrender, face (6), hit (2), take a hit, hit hard (4), line of defense, suffer, survival, force (4), grapple (2), decimate, challenge (3), overwhelmed, force, endure, tactics, raise the game, maneuver, mobilize, escape, win, lose
	CONFLICT	struggle (3), force, suffer (2), friction, compete, competitor, stick, face, challenge (2)

RECOVERY PHASE - 2021-2022		
Generic Source Domains	Specific Target Domains	Metaphorical Expressions
	COMPETITION	batter, win, lose, challenge (2), hit, raise ...game, face, tactics, strategic, woo ... away, compete, weak player
	DEFENSE	hunker down, barrier, line of defense, shelter, poised, protect
RESILIENCE	ENDURANCE	tough, endure, surge, rock, struggle (2), thrive, healing, slip, get stressed, resilient, rocky, batter, feel the brunt, face, stuck, absorb (2), settle, evergreen, wane, bounce back, endure, strong, durable
	ADAPTATION	morph, renaissance, shift (3), eyes and ears x 2, pivot, face, make a shift, resilient, agile
	STABILITY	anchor, firm, hallowed, poised, anchor x 2, embrace, build, harmonized, calm
MOVEMENT	MOTION	get traffic, shift (2), make the shift, head, move forward, ride, streamline, take on a movement, get lost, jump, flow in
	TRANSITION	head (2), head into, head out, emerging, part way, spin (2), evolve, shift (2), move (2), migrate, gravitate (2), fall, tumble
	MOBILITY	drive, driver, go forward, ahead of the curve, reach the hands, snap back, move forward
FLUCTUATION	VOLTAGE	roll back, surge (3), skyrocket, squeeze, turn off, grow (2), explode, boom, swing, jump, bounce back, fall, drop (2), bounce, volatility
	DISRUPTION	boom (2), struggle, sour, turn upside down, disaster, worried, murky, upheaval
PRESSURE	STRESS	get stressed, kill, weight on the mind, force (3), pent-up, struggle, face (3), pinched, feel the squeeze, nagged
	TENSION	slam, grab, felt the brunt, embrace (3), seize, muster, get a handle, grab (3), exercise, razor-thin
TRANSFORMATION	PROGRESSION	evolve, re-emerge, shed, absorb, agile, hunker down, see (3), renaissance, driver, thrive
	RENEWAL	refine, saving grace, emerge, wake up, revive
DETERIORATION	DECLINE	down, slip into, wane, go under (2), shutter, burn, dinosaur, drag down, pass on, dying (4)
	COLLAPSE	fall (2), tumble

RECOVERY PHASE - 2021-2022

Generic Source Domains	Specific Target Domains	Metaphorical Expressions
JOURNEY	EXPLORATION	explore (2), navigate, chart a path forward, head into, head out, bifurcation, explore, take a leap of faith, dip toes
	ASPIRATION	chase, crave, embrace (2), go on a journey
LEADERSHIP	AUTHORITY	pioneer (2), king, dictate, stay ahead of the curve (2), head
	GUIDANCE	navigate, skirt, eyes and ears, voice, leading, lead the way
NATURE	SURVIVAL	weather, hone, purge, siloed, thrive, go into hibernation, reach the hands
	ENERGY	galvanize, exuberant, shrug off, play
AWARENESS	CONTROL	stay quiet, eyes and ears, playbook, center stage, embrace, power, galvanize
	PERCEPTION	ease, bring down, escape, conscious
BALANCE		stay quite, harmonize, calm
ENGAGEMENT		woo ... away, voice, embrace
IMPACT		hit (2), pinched
DELIBERATION		conscious
FRAGILITY		razor-thin

APPENDIX D

Cross-mapping Mappings of Conceptual Metaphors of BUSINESS

Crisis Phase - 2020				
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor - BUSINESS IS WAR				
Specific-level Metaphor - BUSINESS IS A BATTLE				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain	Mapping	Target domain
		BATTLE		BUSINESS
A. 53	Major national retailers largely ignored the prophetic warnings of the retail apocalypse and now <i>face the final battle</i> that will occur in the nation's 1,200 malls, retail's Meggido.	Confronting enemies	→	Facing market challenges
A.1	Retailers plays a pivotal role in the U.S. economy - and while they've have been <i>hit hard</i> by the COVID-19 pandemic, the sector has adapted through innovation.	Receiving a blow or strike in battle		Suffering setbacks
A.87	These struggling retailers may <i>suffer their final blow</i> from the coronavirus lockdown.	Fatal strike		Business closure
A.283	Efforts have been made at the City, State and federal levels to help retail stores <i>survive</i> the pandemic.	Surviving a battle		Staying operational
A.161	Even as coronavirus infections continued to spread, in-person school reopening plans were scrapped and unemployment stayed near record highs, Americans kept shopping in July with retail sales rising 1.2 percent from June, reflecting a rare bright spot in the <i>battered</i> economy.	Damage from battle		Economic downturn
A.92	Given all the retail bankruptcies that the industry has <i>faced</i> during the past year – many due to COVID closures and customer density limitations.	Facing the enemy in battle		Dealing with business obstacles
A.387	How retailers treat employees and consumers, particularly when it comes to health and safety, will likely have a lasting impact that will <i>endure</i> beyond the Coronavirus pandemic, and consumers are acting with their wallets already.	Enduring challenges		Persisting in maintaining influence
A.30	It's time for retailers to get bold rather than <i>retreat</i> in the face of so many seemingly insurmountable challenges.	Retreating in battle		Stepping back from business challenges
A.112	But many retail workers, heralded as <i>heroes</i> during the first wave of the pandemic, are not being provided with the same level of bonuses and raises this time, even as the health risks for them increase.	Heroes in battle		Essential workers
A.242	Federal funding can support economic activity by extending expanded unemployment benefits and direct support to businesses that are <i>fighting</i> to remain open, such as the Paycheck Protection Program.	Fighting to survive in battle		Striving to stay open
A.88	This dramatic consolidation would result in the surviving retailers having increased <i>leverage</i> over their manufacturer partners.	Using strategic advantages in battle		Exerting business power

Specific-level Metaphor - BUSINESS IS A STRUGGLE				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain	Mapping	Target domain
		A STRUGGLE		BUSINESS
A.123	In many cases, traditional or overleveraged retailers <i>struggled</i> to navigate through the uncertainties.	Overcoming obstacles in a struggle		Managing challenges in business
A.147	Retailers and brands <i>face</i> a daunting multitude of short-term <i>challenges</i> around health and safety, supply chain, labor force, cash flow, consumer demand and marketing.	Facing adversaries in a struggle		Addressing business challenges
A. 282	But the surprising fact is that the retail store as we've known it <i>isn't dead</i> (at least not yet).	Surviving in a struggle		Staying operational
A.211	For those businesses that were <i>wavering</i> on making difficult decisions, this crisis leaves them with no choice but to act.	Lacking decisiveness in a struggle		Delaying decisions under pressure
A. 228	Many small businesses did not have a robust e-commerce business before the virus struck, and they have <i>lost</i> customers while they struggle to adapt.	Losing ground		Losing customers
A. 44	With news of larger retailers <i>crumbling</i> and the growing popularity of online shopping, it may feel as if bricks and mortar stores have a very gloomy future indeed.	Breaking apart		Failing under competitive pressures
A.217	And months into the crisis, established businesses that once seemed invincible, including some that had ambitious expansion plans, are <i>cratering</i> under a sustained <i>collapse</i> in consumer spending.	Collapsing in prolonged struggles		Failing under financial pressure
A.375	As consumers shifted their purchases to online retailers, sales at many chain stores nationwide <i>suffered</i> , forcing some into bankruptcy with resultant store closures.	Experiencing pain in a struggle		Facing setbacks or closures
A.96	A pulling together of cross-industry leaders is just what is needed for the retail landscape to <i>navigate</i> these difficult times.	Steering through challenges		Managing business during uncertainty
A. 128	The recovery continued to be strong for some retailers, while others have struggled, casting national chains into buckets of pandemic <i>winners</i> and <i>losers</i> .	Winners: Successful individuals in a struggle Losers: Defeated individuals in a struggle		Businesses achieving success; Businesses failing to survive
Specific-level Metaphor - BUSINESS IS MILITARY OPERATIONS				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain	Mapping	Target domain
		MILITARY OPERATIONS		BUSINESS
A.311	Nike's "Play Inside, Play for the World" <i>campaign</i> is a fitting example of an agile marketing campaign in which the company leveraged its digital ecosystem to encourage social distancing during the pandemic.	Strategic military operations		Planned business marketing efforts

A.227	When New York’s economic lockdown started in March the hope was that the closing of businesses would be temporary and many could <i>weather</i> the financial <i>blow</i> .	Enduring strikes in military operations		Surviving challenges in business
A.417	The number underscores that while many outlets are struggling, business at “essential” retailers like grocery stores is surging, especially as online ordering <i>ramps up</i> .	Increasing military readiness or efforts		Expanding business activities
A. 286	The U.S. pot industry <i>scored</i> major <i>wins</i> - and setbacks - in pandemic-ruled year.	Securing victories in military missions		Achieving key business successes
A. 287	And the restaurant industry is rapidly <i>following suit</i> .	Imitating tactical moves		Adopting effective strategies
A. 272	Bricks and mortar stores have adopted elements of the online experience to encourage us to continue visiting them, and also <i>played to the strengths</i> that in-person experiences can offer, such as more personal levels of service.	Using tactical strengths in military missions		Employing business strengths to gain market advantage
A. 73	Ultimately, by ignoring mobile apps as their own distinct channel, especially during this disruptive period, retailers are <i>letting slip</i> the opportunity to capitalize on a unique audience that is conscientious, technologically savvy and agile.	Missing strategic opportunities		Failing to capitalize on business opportunities
A. 243	They were hailed as <i>heroes</i> during the first wave of the pandemic, but wage increases were fleeting, and companies, whose businesses are booming, have been slow to pay out more.	Acknowledging heroes in military missions		Recognizing key business contributors
A.49	Since the pandemic lockdown, retailers have proven they breathing a sigh of relief to rapidly <i>overcome</i> the interruption of their operating models.	Defeating obstacles in military campaigns		Triumphing over business challenges
Specific-level Metaphor - BUSINESS IS A STAND FOR SURVIVAL				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain A STAND FOR SURVIVAL	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A. 85	Although we can still expect another record-breaking year of closures, some retailers might <i>survive</i> if they adapt to the new normal.	Enduring challenges for survival		Adjusting operations to meet market demands
A.136	As consumers are being asked to practice social distancing, e-commerce orders for groceries and other essentials have become a <i>survival tool</i> for the American family.	Essential tools for survival		Vital strategies for maintaining operations
A. 307	Belk is no longer a family-operated company and its recent owner, the private equity firm Sycamore Partners, has <i>struggled</i> to update its identity and merchandise offerings and take it beyond its roots.	Making efforts to overcome obstacles		Efforts to adapt and redefine its identity
A. 201	When many businesses are struggling to <i>find their feet</i> , CMOs who understand their company's purpose and know how to highlight it are the drivers of this navigation.	Regaining balance or stability to continue		Recovering and redefining purpose
A. 96	A pulling together of cross-industry leaders is just what is needed for the retail landscape to <i>navigate</i> these difficult times.	Finding a path through difficulties		Coordinating efforts to manage uncertainties
A. 12	In recent years, the Charlotte-based retailer has tried to <i>shake off</i> its image as a staid “southern store.	Escaping limitations for survival		Repositioning brand image to thrive

A.239	In recent weeks, “For Lease” signs have started to appear on storefronts on streets throughout New York, evidence that businesses that tried to <i>ride out</i> the initial months or abruptly shift to new online business models could no longer survive.	Persisting through harsh conditions		Sustain business operations
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor - BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT				
Specific-level Metaphor - BUSINESS IS MOTION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain MOTION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.216	The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the retail trade sector unevenly, with online retailers and some essential businesses experiencing <i>growth</i> and other large retail segments seeing falling revenues.	Upward movement		Changes in business performance
A.67	For now, we (retailers) can only hunker down and <i>shift</i> to survival mode.	Moving to a different state		Adapting business strategies to survive
A.100	(People) say a heck of a lot more about where retail is <i>headed</i> than some umpteenth.	Moving toward a destination		Retail’s future development direction
A.96	A pulling together of cross-industry leaders is just what is needed for the retail landscape to <i>navigate</i> these difficult times.	Finding the best path		Managing challenges in business environments
A.130	The gains, however, were smaller than in previous months, which some economists warned could be a sign that the retail recovery was <i>running out of steam</i> .	Slowing down or losing energy		Losing momentum in recovery
A.138	E-commerce <i>reached new heights</i> this year as people stayed home.	Ascending or climbing		Significant growth in e-commerce
A.322	...despite mass lay-offs elsewhere and growing concerns over <i>plummeting</i> global markets	Falling rapidly		Sudden decline in the global market
A.329	Publix Super Markets <i>sped up</i> its tech transition to accept contactless payments ahead of intended plans	Moving quickly		Accelerating business operations
A.223	Five months later, those once prosperous businesses have <i>evaporated</i> .	Disappearing or vanishing		Businesses closing or failing
Specific-level Metaphor - BUSINESS IS PHYSICAL MOVEMENT				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain PHYSICAL MOVEMENT	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.9	The <i>bump</i> retailers typically get from product bought for school vacations, Easter, Mother’s Day and other spring events is largely gone.	A small, sudden rise or increase		Temporary sales increase due to events
A.251	Firstly, there is the <i>move</i> to online shopping, which grew during lockdown to represent nearly a third of all retail sales.	Changing location or state		Shift from physical to online retail

A.75	In fact, they are now at best poor second choice options because they are all limited by the amount of products retailers can <i>carry</i> inside of their four walls.	Transporting or holding items		Retailers' capacity to manage inventory
A.27	The economic climate for retailers is so uncertain, that many are <i>retracting</i> their earnings governance, and declining to provide investors estimates for their performance this year.	Pulling back		Withdrawing financial projections
A.30	It's time for retailers to get bold rather than <i>retreat</i> in the face of so many seemingly insurmountable challenges.	Moving back or withdrawing		Businesses pulling out due to challenges
Specific-level Metaphor - BUSINESS IS NAVIGATION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain NAVIGATION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.2	Arcadia and Debenhams may be the biggest names to have <i>run aground</i> this year, but many other household names, from Bon Marche, Cath Kidston, TM Lewin, Laura Ashley, and Oasis and WarehouseCHEF 0.0% all went into administration.	A ship being stuck or stranded		Getting stuck in financial difficulties
A.3	Malls, in particular, are at most risk in these days of social distancing, which is why I see a retail Armageddon <i>on the horizon</i> .	Seeing a disaster ahead		Foreseeing a retail crisis coming soon
A.32	And given the unprecedented nature of what retail is going through with no reliable historic data available to help forecast the way forward, retailers need to <i>set their course</i> to their true north: their best, most loyal customers.	Determining a direction for a ship		Identifying business strategy
A.143	Brands have so many human connection opportunities and places to <i>pivot</i> that they could actually come out of the COVID fight swinging.	Changing direction in navigation		Adjusting business models
A.40	As lockdown measures began to take hold in late winter, early spring of 2020, countless sectors in retail - but especially apparel - needed to <i>brace</i> for the worst.	Preparing for an impending storm		Preparing for difficult business conditions
A.99	At the same time, retailers are <i>stuck with</i> rent and other fixed costs of running a sprawling fleet of stores.	A ship caught or immobilized		Facing fixed financial burdens that limit flexibility
A.185	(A recent consumer trend in apparel has been a push towards purchasing fewer, higher quality garments.) This trend too is now in <i>full gear</i> .	A ship or vehicle operating at full speed		Gaining momentum and accelerating
Specific-level Metaphor - BUSINESS IS SHIFT				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain SHIFT	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.81	In the short-term, while retail is taking a significant hit related to product flow, smart retailers and brands equipped with the right technology, strong grasp of customer	Changing gears		Adapting business strategies

	expectations on pricing and product, and ability to <i>shift gears</i> quickly to accommodate those expectations, may feel a softer blow.			
A.375	As consumers <i>shifted</i> their purchases to online retailers, sales at many chain stores nationwide suffered, forcing some into bankruptcy with resultant store closures.	Shifting position		Changing shopping preferences
A.251	Firstly, there is the <i>move</i> to online shopping, which grew during lockdown to represent nearly a third of all retail sales.	Making a move		Transitioning to digital business models
A.17	The retail industry expects to see a rise in smaller-format and experience-centered stores as retailers look closely at their investments and seek to <i>move further</i> along their digital transformation journey.	Moving forward		Improving business practices
A.12	In recent years, the Charlotte-based retailer has tried to <i>shake off</i> its image as a staid "southern store."	Removing an obstacle		Rebranding to stay competitive
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor - BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain ENDURANCE	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.254	The pandemic has accelerated the death of traditional retail shopping, and although some retailers may <i>survive</i> , it is likely that retail shopping will never look the same.	Continuing to exist		managing to stay in business
A.11	It has not been easy, but retailers are generally a <i>durable</i> group, and the future will eventually be bright.	Strong and able to withstand stress		showing strength and endurance
A.274	The haves are the stores that remain open with lines out the doors to buy daily necessities while the have-nots are the stores that have closed and are <i>taking the brunt</i> of the impact of the pandemic.	Absorbing the hardest hit or pressure		suffering the most severe consequences
A.123	In many cases, traditional or overleveraged retailers <i>struggled</i> to navigate through the uncertainties.	Facing great difficulty but persisting		trying to cope with the uncertainty
A.103	But they (retailers) are <i>straining</i> to keep up with their supply chain and will also face significant challenges in maintaining a work force.	Exerting effort under pressure		working hard to maintain
A.77	If landlords continue to demand rent when no sales are coming in, it will push retail tenants closer to their <i>breaking point</i> .	Reaching the limit of endurance		nearing the limit
A.76	Retailers that rely on in-person interactions could <i>face</i> a prolonged dip in store traffic as public officials continue to promote social distancing.	Standing up to a challenge		confronting the challenge of reduced foot traffic
A.200	Businesses that have been <i>forced</i> to close their doors have suffered heavy losses, but we anticipate many of these retailers will see a sharp recovery as consumers start shopping in stores again.	Being compelled by external pressure		Being forced to close due to the pandemic
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION				

	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain ADAPTATION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.319	Nike's "Play Inside, Play for the World" campaign is a fitting example of an <i>agile</i> marketing campaign in which the company leveraged its digital ecosystem to encourage social distancing during the pandemic.	Quick, flexible movement		adapting quickly to the pandemic conditions
A.45	"Smaller retailers who are able to adapt have come out on top compared to larger retailers who are too big to <i>pivot</i> quickly enough" he explains.	Adjusting direction rapidly		adjusting more quickly to market changes
A.81	In the short-term, while retail is taking a significant hit related to product flow, smart retailers and brands equipped with the right technology, strong grasp of customer expectations on pricing and product, and ability to <i>shift gears</i> quickly to accommodate those expectations, may feel a softer blow.	Changing speed or approach smoothly		modifying their operations or strategies
A.104	A pulling together of cross-industry leaders is just what is needed for the retail landscape to <i>navigate</i> these difficult times.	Finding a way through challenging terrain		adjusting to survive
A.151	Big brand names have <i>re-emerged</i> (or have morphed) into a healthier environment.	Evolving into something new		adjusting in a new business environment
A.291	As the retail industry navigates these unprecedented times, here are some initial thoughts on how we see it <i>unfolding</i> and what retailers are (or will be) doing to keep their businesses afloat and moving forward.	Gradually developing or revealing		Adapting to survive by evolving strategies
A.67	For now, we (retailers) can only <i>hunker down</i> and shift to survival mode.	Taking a defensive position		focusing on survival by reducing risks and costs
A.296	Yet the pandemic also represents an inflection point for the industry in how they choose to <i>move forward</i> .	Progressing or advancing		adapting business models to progress
A.285	In closing, the McKinsey/BOF report calls on the fashion industry to look forward to a "better normal" and to <i>set</i> company <i>sights</i> higher across stores, partnerships and assortments.	Aiming for future growth and improvement		adapting by setting new goals
A.307	Belk is no longer a family-operated company and its recent owner, the private equity firm Sycamore Partners, has struggled to update its identity and merchandise offerings and <i>take it beyond its roots</i> .	Evolving beyond original limits		adapting by expanding and evolving
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS FLEXIBILITY				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain FLEXIBILITY	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.158	Even when the economy <i>rebounds</i> , consumers can experience "economic scarring" that lasts far longer than the actual recession.	Bouncing back		recovering after a recession
A.288	But the need to make it happen will probably create a ripple effect that will transform the way the industry operates, resulting in happier customers and a more agile, <i>resilient</i> and sustainable retail industry.	Moving quickly and easily, adapting to change		becoming more adaptable and flexible

A.20	And identifying opportunities to increase prices based on <i>elasticity</i> will also be critical to ensure retailers and brands aren't leaving money on the table.	ability to stretch and return to original shape		ability to adjust prices while maintaining profitability
A.398	Consumers, wary of in-person shopping but clinging to the familiarity of old habits, are eager to <i>shift</i> to a mobile-forward hybrid buying pattern that prioritizes online shopping and scheduling pickups in order to minimize physical interaction.	changing position smoothly		adapting to new shopping behaviors
A.174	Yet, chains like Best Buy, Dick's Sporting Goods and West Elm have reported revenue <i>jumps</i> this summer, with many Americans spending more on goods that they could use at home or while socially distancing outdoors.	A sudden increase or rise		A rapid increase in sales
A.152	Brands must be <i>agile</i> , innovative, and ready to experiment in what will become a constantly evolving new, marketing landscape.	Quick to adapt and experiment		be flexible and quick in strategies
A.184	A recent consumer trend in apparel has been a <i>push</i> towards purchasing fewer, higher quality garments.	A forceful movement forward		shifting preferences towards higher-quality products
Cross-domain mapping of Generic Metaphor: BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS INSTABILITY				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain INSTABILITY	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.305	With millions of Americans forced to stay home to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, foot traffic to malls and downtown shopping areas is quickly evaporating, a potential deadly blow for those chains <i>teetering</i> on the edge of bankruptcy.	Being on the edge of falling		Businesses on the brink of collapse
A.195	In the past 14 months, she became one of many store employees whose lives were <i>upended</i> by bankruptcies - first at Barneys New York and more recently at Brooks Brothers.	Sudden overturning		businesses being overturned by the crisis
A.191	... leisure, hospitality or administration - all categories in which employment hiring has significantly <i>dipped</i> since the beginning of the pandemic.	A sudden fall		Employment levels dropping
A.219	The \$2 trillion emergency package passed by Congress and programs announced by the Federal Reserve include government-backed loans and grants to keep businesses <i>afloat</i> .	Staying above water, preventing sinking		Businesses surviving due to financial support
A.217	And months into the crisis, established businesses that once seemed invincible, including some that had ambitious expansion plans, are cratering under a sustained <i>collapse</i> in consumer spending.	Sudden collapse		Businesses experiencing rapid downfall
A.211	For those businesses that were <i>wavering</i> on making difficult decisions, this crisis leaves them with no choice but to act.	Unsteady, lack of stability		Businesses facing uncertainty

Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS VOLATILITY				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain VOLATILITY	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.418	Online orders have <i>surged</i> for retailers in the pandemic, as curbside pickup helps Americans satisfy their desire to hop in a car and drive to the store.	A rapid and powerful increase		Online orders rapidly increasing
A.148	In January, e-commerce represented 13% of retail sales. That number <i>spiked</i> to almost 20% of sales in April and leveled back to about 16% by the end of the year.	Sharp, sudden increase		E-commerce sales experiencing a sharp increase
A.377	Most apparel chains and department stores have seen sales <i>tumble</i> during the pandemic.	Falling rapidly and uncontrollably		Retailers experiencing rapid sales declines
A.336	... and sales of luxury items excluding jewelry <i>slumped</i> 21%.	Falling steeply		Luxury sales rapidly dropping
A.347	Online sales at general merchandise retailers <i>climbed</i> 50% on March 13, according to Rakuten Intelligence, which tracks electronic receipts.	Gradual or steady increase		Online sales rising steadily
A.368	The latest sales data is likely to <i>amplify</i> calls for Congress to pass another round of stimulus before the November election.	Increase or intensify		Sales data increasing
A.181	Those that remained heavily reliant on in-store shopping saw profits <i>shrivel</i> in the second quarter.	Decrease in size or strength		In-store profits shrinking dramatically
A.179	Until now, discount stores have mostly lagged behind in terms of online selling due to their <i>razor-thin</i> profit margins, but will the pandemic finally force them to expand into ecommerce?	Very small or tight margins		operating with extremely low-profit margins
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain DISRUPTION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.245	While the e-commerce penetration of some key players is far greater today - over 30% at both NordstromJWN +1.7% and Neiman Marcus, for example - it's clear that relatively few customers who are predominantly brick-and-mortar shoppers are <i>making the switch</i> .	Physical movement		Business shifting due to disruption in consumer behavior
A.386	Consumers' mindsets will <i>switch</i> to reduced consumption of non-essential items and antiostentation," Euromonitor reports.	flipping a switch		Shift in consumption patterns due to disruption in priorities
A.381	But as bad as that downturn was, sales never <i>ground to a halt</i> the way they have in recent weeks, said Jack Kleinhenz, chief economist for the National Retail Federation.	A vehicle stopping completely		Business facing a major disruption but not a complete collapse
A.15	Now that the coronavirus retail <i>shutdowns</i> are lifting, retailers across the country are breathing a sigh of relief.	The act of closing a machine or operation		Business activity halted or stopped

A.162	An expanding universe of distinctive small businesses - from coffee shops to dry cleaners to hardware stores - that give New York's neighborhoods their unique personalities and are key to the city's economy are starting to <i>topple</i> .	The act of collapsing or falling over		Disruption causing a collapse of local small businesses
Cross-domain mapping of Generic Metaphor: BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS DECLINE				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain DECLINE	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.189	Professionals involved with real estate will notice their jobs <i>going under</i> .	Sinking or failing		Jobs failing
A.186	The Financial Times reported that a quarter of a million jobs in wholesale and retail could <i>disappear</i> by summer 2021, highlighting the biggest challenge was not just the amount of job cuts in the in the sector, but also the speed and scale of the crisis.	Vanishing or ceasing to exist		Jobs disappearing
A.265	Department stores, malls and speciality retailers will <i>lose</i> business and shed jobs, as people are not leaving their homes.	Gradually declining or disappearing		Retail businesses losing revenue and jobs
A.190	There are a number of other sectors in which jobs will be savagely <i>cut</i> .	Reducing or eliminating forcefully		Jobs being drastically reduced
A.124	Fifth Avenue, Times Square and Madison Avenue - some of the most prestigious retail spaces in the world - look like <i>ghost towns</i> .	Places abandoned or desolate		Retail spaces becoming empty and deserted
A.89	Thomas believes that retailers have been <i>led astray</i> by an over-reliance on big data as a substitute for intuition.	Misguided, moving away from success		Retailers making poor decisions
A.73	Ultimately, by ignoring mobile apps as their own distinct channel, especially during this disruptive period, retailers are <i>letting slip</i> the opportunity to capitalize on a unique audience that is conscientious, technologically savvy and agile.	Losing control or missing an opportunity		failing to take advantage of a critical opportunity
A.187	Sadly, these are the types of jobs that were <i>red hot up</i> until February's jobs report.	Extremely active, now cooling down		Jobs that were thriving but are now in decline
A.217	And months into the crisis, established businesses that once seemed invincible, including some that had ambitious expansion plans, are <i>cratering</i> under a sustained collapse in consumer spending.	A rapid collapse from a high point		Businesses deteriorating due to the negative impact
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS DEPLETION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain DEPLETION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.176	Business owners have expressed concern about their ability to pay back rent since revenues have <i>dried up</i> .	Running out of a resource		Revenues depleting
A.392	As grocery shelves for popular items sit empty, consumers brand preference <i>erodes</i> .	Gradually wearing away		Consumer brand preferences weakening

A.322	...despite mass lay-offs elsewhere and growing concerns over <i>plummeting</i> global markets.	Falling rapidly		Global markets rapidly declining
A.170	The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the retail trade sector unevenly, with online retailers and some essential businesses experiencing growth and other large retail segments seeing <i>falling</i> revenues.	Declining or reducing		Retail segments losing revenue
A.175	Small-business owners said they have exhausted federal and local assistance and see no end in sight after months of sharp revenue <i>drops</i> .	Sudden decreases in amount		Small businesses facing continuous decreases
A.393	According to our data tracking consumer behavior since late February, consumers continue to <i>cut back</i> on spending amid the pandemic.	Reducing usage		Consumers reducing their spending
A.168	Further, Under Armour recently told investors that its revenues in the first few months of 2020 - and potentially beyond - would <i>take a hit</i> of \$50 million to \$60 million because of the outbreak.	Suffering a significant loss		suffering financial losses
A.400	With many consumers already or <i>on the precipice</i> of being sheltered in place, digital grocery has become the only option or at least a more desirable option, even in just facilitating order pickup, than going into an actual grocery store full of other, potentially virulent people to shop.	On the edge of a critical point		exhausting options for safe shopping
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor - BUSINESS IS PRESSURE				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS STRESS				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain STRESS	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.133	The growth of e-commerce amid the pandemic <i>forced</i> many retailers to find new ways to compete, such as creating new supply chain efficiencies.	Compelled by external pressure		being pressured to adapt
A.308	Business owners said they are at a <i>tipping point</i> .	A critical point of change		feeling extreme pressure to avoid failure
A.310	Small-business owners said they have <i>exhausted</i> federal and local assistance and see no end in sight after months of sharp revenue drops.	Completely used up		feeling the pressure from financial assistance running out
A.232	EIDLs are nonforgivable, low-interest loans that provide working capital to small businesses <i>suffering</i> substantial economic injury due to the pandemic.	Undergoing pain		experiencing financial pressure and hardship
A.203	As the coronavirus pandemic ravages an already-struggling retail landscape, the divide between “essential” and “non-essential” businesses has been <i>thrown into stark relief</i> .	Forced into a position of sudden clarity		Being pressured more visibly
A.103	But they (retailers) are <i>straining</i> to keep up with their supply chain and will also face significant challenges in maintaining a work force.	Experiencing great stress		under significant pressure

A.184	A recent consumer trend in apparel has been a <i>push</i> towards purchasing fewer, higher quality garments.	Exerting force to move forward		responding to pressure by shifting
A.34	The future retail environment is <i>weighing on the minds</i> of companies, shoppers and employees.			
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS VULNERABILITY				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain VULNERABILITY	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.159	With less people working, there will be less spending and the economy will <i>suffer</i> .	Endure pain or hardship		experiencing hardship
A.47	Retail commentator Steve Dennis has referred to this trend previously the "great bifurcation" of retail - where consumers either move towards premium, higher quality goods or towards the discountend of the retail spectrum, leaving retailers that sit in the middle highly <i>exposed</i> .	Lacking protection		becoming vulnerable and at risk
A.385	In the retail industry, they would call that a <i>weak</i> performance.	Lacking strength		performing poorly
A.205	How many of those stores are located in malls is undetermined, but it stands to reason that a vast majority have significant mall <i>exposure</i> , since malls are filled with non-essential retail businesses which have been forced shut vs. essential ones that have remained open.	Being open to danger or risk		being vulnerable to risks
A.232	EIDLs are nonforgivable, low-interest loans that provide working capital to small businesses suffering substantial economic <i>injury</i> due to the pandemic.	Physical damage		experiencing significant financial damage
A.211	For those businesses that were <i>wavering</i> on making difficult decisions, this crisis leaves them with no choice but to act.	Being uncertain		being forced to make decisions under pressure
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS MANIPULATION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain MANIPULATION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.399	Zenreach recommends that when facing limited capacity in stores it is important to ensure that a store's high value, loyal consumers <i>dominate</i> over low-ticket transactional customers.	Exerting control or influence over something		Businesses controlling customer behavior
A.402	But even that massive consumer spending shift to online won't begin to <i>make up</i> for the retail losses in 2020.	compensating or adjusting for loss		Business efforts to adjust for financial deficits
A.388	How retailers treat employees and consumers, particularly when it comes to health and safety, will likely have a lasting impact that will endure beyond the Coronavirus pandemic, and consumers are <i>acting with</i> their <i>wallets</i> already.	using money as a tool to show preferences		Businesses being directed by consumer spending behavior
A.256	In some cases this is due to their preferred brands being out of stock, but financial concerns have also <i>come into play</i> , causing some shoppers to switch to lower- priced brands.	influencing a situation		Business decisions being affected by financial situations

A.141	The post-pandemic commerce world will be <i>shaped</i> by three forces	molded by external forces		Business environment being influenced by specific factors
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor: BUSINESS IS PROTECTION				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS SAFEGUARD				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain SAFEGUARD	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.I.155	And, as telecommuting and the “ <i>crib</i> economy” becomes more prevalent and prominent, thus reshaping where and how people live, work, and shop, the cascading impact will necessitate new approaches toward reaching consumers.	A protected, enclosed space		Protecting the business environment
A.I.158	Even when the economy <i>rebounds</i> , consumers can experience “economic scarring” that lasts far longer than the actual recession.	Recovering from a situation to shield further damage		Economic protection and recovery from recession
A.V.400	With many consumers already or on the precipice of being <i>sheltered</i> in place, digital grocery has become the only option or at least a more desirable option, even in just facilitating order pickup, than going into an actual grocery store full of other, potentially virulent people to shop.	Safeguarded from harm		Business strategies protecting consumers
A.V.413	Mr. Anderson said. “People (consumers) are having trouble <i>wrapping their minds</i> around the extent of the economic losses.”	mentally shielding oneself from the impact		protect understanding from economic challenges
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS ATTACHMENT				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain ATTACHMENT	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.398	Consumers, wary of in-person shopping but <i>clinging</i> to the familiarity of old habits, are eager to shift to a mobile-forward hybrid buying pattern that prioritizes online shopping and scheduling pickups in order to minimize physical interaction.	Holding tightly		Business strategies attached to traditional methods
A.18	Will Covid-19 finally force discount retailers to <i>embrace</i> online selling?	Actively holding onto something		Businesses holding onto new forms of commerce
A.259	This suggests that while shoppers are turning to mobile apps, they’re <i>sticking</i> with ones that have convenient, nearby physical locations.	Staying attached to something		Consumers staying attached to traditional stores
A.I.99	At the same time, retailers are <i>stuck with</i> rent and other fixed costs of running a sprawling fleet of stores.	Unable to separate from something		Retailers being tied to operational costs
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS FOUNDATION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain FOUNDATION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS

A.83	Some retailers and brands will be more <i>ingrained</i> in the consumers life than ever before.	Strong, permanent attachment to a foundation		Business becoming essential in consumer practices
A.113	Retail at Hudson Yards was off to a strong start before this crisis hit, and we firmly believe that fashion and retail will always remain <i>core</i> to the vibrancy of New York,” the spokeswoman, Kathleen Corless, said.	The central part of a structure		Retail plays a fundamental role
A.74	Noting that physical retail has been on a “downward spiral” for years, the report envisions many more store closings as retailers must “rethink” their retail footprints in order to improve store-level ROI while <i>embedding</i> digital e-commerce “seamlessly” into operations.	integrating into a foundation		E-commerce becomes foundational for retail operations
A.379	Some areas that saw <i>strong</i> sales in the previous month, like furniture and home furnishings stores and the category of sporting goods, hobby, musical instruments and bookstores, were flat or declined in in July.	Structural integrity		Stable business sectors amid market volatility
A.197	Businesses that <i>strengthen</i> customer engagement will likely be able to run more successful marketing campaigns.	Reinforcing a foundation		Businesses ensuring long-term success
A.228	Many small businesses did not have a <i>robust</i> e-commerce business before the virus struck, and they have lost customers while they struggle to adapt.	Strong, durable foundation		Businesses withstanding the impact of the crisis
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor: BUSINESS IS HUMAN				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS LIFE				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain LIFE	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.16	AI-driven big data retailing has been <i>maturing</i> for some years now, with major retailers relying on advanced analytics to understand what should be stocked in their stores and drive efficiencies in logistics.	Process of growth and development		Business systems becoming more efficient
A.250	As online shopping continues to balloon, shortages in “the final mile” delivery drivers and warehouse pickers and packers are <i>growing</i> .	Physical growth or increase		Business operations expanding
A.10	Nothing about these numbers indicates that small business retailers are really <i>healthy</i> .	Physical well-being		Financial health of businesses
A.58	These are necessary steps to save people’s lives, yet it may result in the <i>death</i> of many retailers.	End of life		Business failures or closures
A.15	Now that the coronavirus retail shutdowns are lifting, retailers across the country are <i>breathing</i> a sigh of <i>relief</i>	Relief and relaxation		Resilience and recovery in business
A.22	Retailers continued to <i>learn</i> new <i>tricks</i> like curbside, next day, and on-line.	Acquiring new skills		Business innovation and adaptation

A.288	But the need to make it happen will probably create a ripple effect that will transform the way the industry operates, resulting in happier customers and a more agile, <i>resilient</i> and sustainable retail industry.	Ability to recover and remain strong		Business continuity and sustainability
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS GAMBLING				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain GAMBLING	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.135	Clearly the biggest <i>winner</i> to emerge is e-commerce, as Covid-19 has dramatically shifted brick-and-mortar purchases online.	A gambler who wins the game		E-commerce succeeding during the pandemic
A.268	By contrast, department stores will be the biggest <i>losers</i> , with 66% saying they plan to buy less there.	Gamblers who lose		Department stores struggling or failing
A.145	And identifying opportunities to increase prices based on elasticity will also be critical to ensure retailers and brands aren't <i>leaving money on the table</i> .	Not taking advantage of a betting opportunity		Retailers missing out on potential profits
A.131	In the end, the retailers who will <i>win</i> are those who <i>watch their pennies</i> , focus on the customer, and build and sell great products that meet needs and fulfill aspirations.	Winning in gambling Managing limited resources carefully		Retailers succeeding in business strategy Carefully managing costs and expenses
A.52	Data has always been king in retail, and this was especially true as the industry <i>grappled</i> with the pandemic.	Struggling in a risky game		Retail industry dealing with pandemic challenges
A.129	It's helping the retailer <i>keep pace</i> with Amazon online, though the gap between the two remains large.	Keeping up with competitors in gambling		Retailers competing with online sales
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS TRAVEL				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain TRAVEL	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.118	Many retailers are also grappling with an unusual back-to-school shopping season, which typically <i>drives</i> sales in July and August.	Leading or propelling forward		Retail sales leading the business
A.36	Even Sephora's announcement recently that it plans to open 850 stores inside of existing Kohl's stores further signals the demise of the department store or, better said, the once great retail <i>horse and buggy</i> .	Outdated transportation		Outdated business models
A.146	In the short-term, while retail is taking a significant hit related to product flow, smart retailers and brands equipped with the right technology, strong grasp of customer expectations on pricing and product, and ability to <i>shift gears</i> quickly to accommodate those expectations, may feel a softer blow.	Changing gears (driving)		Changing business strategies
A.36	There's a whole range of different immersive experiences and digital engagement channels for retailers to <i>explore</i> .	Traveling through new areas		Exploring new business channels

A.78	The past two years have required retailers to exercise every bit of agility and creativity they have been able to muster to <i>navigate</i> the challenges of COVID-19, the inexorable rise of online sales and supply chain volatility, and the pressures continue.	Steering a course		Steering through business challenges
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor: BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain PROGRESSION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.42	At this critical juncture, retailers will have to determine how to <i>evolve</i> to include new models of sales, marketing and customer service to better connect with customers, or perish.	Evolving into something more advanced		adapting to new market conditions
A.209	Hoping that the worst is over, retailers are encouraged that business will recover, maybe not in the third quarter, but that it will start to <i>turn around</i> by the fourth.	Turning from a negative situation to a better one		changing their direction to recover
A.395	Although enterprises have begun to fully resume business, it takes time for consumer confidence to <i>recover</i> , and the traffic and sales of department stores and shopping centers have only <i>recovered</i> to 30% to 40% percent of normal as of April 2020.	Gradual recovery of previous levels		regaining consumer trust and sales
A.396	Consumers will <i>emerge</i> from the pandemic in a new economic reality, changing commerce behaviors in profound ways.	Emerging into a new state		adjusting their behaviors
A.396	The result will be a delayed decline in sales in those categories as consumers <i>work through</i> their home inventory.	Processing challenges step by step		adapting to reduced consumer demand
A.387	Also, consumers are likely to <i>come out</i> of the cloud of COVID expecting more from brands and people - the rise in kindness and empathy has been nothing short of inspirational.	Coming out from a difficult period		adjusting their expectations and behaviors
A.82	So retailers needed to <i>grow</i> faster than that to maintain share.	Expanding in size or scope		growing to maintain market share
A.212	In order to ensure a future where businesses not only survive, but <i>thrive</i> , it is critical to anticipate what a post-pandemic world will look like, and then begin to transform to better match this new reality.	Changing to better match		transforming to thrive
A.119	Many retailers with a strong online presence or a product that serves the altered lifestyle and needs of people during the pandemic are <i>flourishing</i> .	growing in a favorable environment		growing in the new market landscape
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS TRANSITION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain TRANSITION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS

A.229	Retailer’s ability to connect with consumers is more critical than ever as shopping habits continue to <i>shift</i> in the midst of the worldwide economic disruption brought on by the pandemic.	Gradual change		adapting to the new economic environment
A.263	Department stores, heavily dependent on fashion, <i>garnered</i> a 17.5% loss in revenues.	Accumulate or gather		accumulating losses
A.266	Then, the department stores may have a chance to reopen their doors, <i>recoup</i> customers and bring back furloughed workers.	Regain something that was lost		recovering customers and employees
A.66	While the general trend has seen offline retailers <i>moving</i> into online by establishing e-commerce divisions of their businesses, more lately, we have seen online retailers developing a bricks 'n' mortar presence.	Changing location or state		transitioning between physical and online spaces
A.108	But our love of shopping is alive, and retail isn’t <i>dead</i> .	Not existing or functioning		still being active and adjusting
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor: BUSINESS IS PROGRESS				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain CONSTRUCTION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.417	The number underscores that while many outlets are struggling, business at “essential” retailers like grocery stores is surging, especially as online ordering <i>ramps up</i> .	Process of building something quickly		Businesses expanding rapidly
A.54	Much like with tariffs, however, many retailers and brands are considering <i>redrawing</i> supply chains to include new manufacturing hubs.	Altering blueprints		Reorganizing business strategies
A.127	But some retailers - wary of being perceived as accepting aid in place of struggling businesses - have <i>blocked</i> their workers from accessing the money, baffling state lawmakers.	Halting construction		Hindering employees' access to resources
A.328	Successful marketing campaigns leverage these sociocultural factors to <i>build</i> a connection with customers and encourage consumption.	Constructing something		Building customer engagement
A.11	It has not been easy, but retailers are generally a <i>durable</i> group, and the future will eventually be bright	Strength and longevity in construction		Business resilience
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS PERFORMANCE				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain PERFORMANCE	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.364	Employees nationwide have <i>staged</i> protests outside stores asking Kroger to reinstate the pay, especially given its booming business - sales are soaring, and it recently said its 2021 business results “will be higher than we would have expected prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.”	Setting up a performance		Businesses conducting actions publicly

A.39	Here are some insights into the current trends in retail and how they might <i>play out on the big stage</i> in the years to come.	Enacting a play in a large venue		Business developments being exposed on a major scale
A.276	Most apparel chains and department stores have <i>seen</i> sales tumble during the pandemic.	Visual representation of action on stage		Observing business performance decline
A.291	As the retail industry navigates these unprecedented times, here are some initial thoughts on how we see it <i>unfolding</i> and what retailers are (or will be) doing to keep their businesses afloat and moving forward.	Progression of events in a play		Business developments gradually becoming clearer
A.211	For those businesses that were wavering on making difficult decisions, this crisis leaves them with no choice but to <i>act</i> .	performing in a play		Businesses making decisions in response to crises
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS DYNAMICS				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain DYNAMICS	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.208	The number underscores that while many outlets are struggling, business at “essential” retailers like grocery stores is <i>surging</i> , especially as online ordering ramps up.	A rapid upward movement		Businesses experiencing rapid growth
A.21	Retailers are <i>shifting</i> their existing business models to create in-store practices that provide safety and comfort for shoppers and employees.	Changing direction		Business models are being adjusted
A.68	Online retail, already <i>booming</i> , will grow even more as consumers spend less time in public.	Expanding rapidly		Online retail experiencing a rapid increase
A.198	Target, a company who has historically struggled in grocery, has seen its grocery business <i>explode</i> .	Sudden, massive growth		experiencing sudden and rapid growth
A.192	As the City reopened and progressed from Phase 1 (June 8) to Phase 4 (July 20), employment grew, <i>reaching</i> nearly 309,000 jobs by October.	progressing to a new level		Employment levels hitting a target number
A.312	Nike's "Play Inside, Play for the World" campaign is a fitting example of an agile marketing campaign in which the company <i>leveraged</i> its digital ecosystem to encourage social distancing during the pandemic.	Utilizing resources to gain an advantage		Strategic use of resources for business advantage
A.233	To address this concern, proposals in the State Legislature would lower rent payments for small businesses that have been <i>forced</i> to close or have lost substantial income.	Compelled to take action		Businesses reacting to financial pressure
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor: BUSINESS IS EXPANSION				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain AMPLIFICATION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS

A.250	As online shopping continues to balloon , shortages in “the final mile” delivery drivers and warehouse pickers and packers are growing.	inflating		increasing rapidly in volume and scale
A.348	And this is expected to increase in the coming years as online sales continue to grow .	Expanding in size or volume		expanding and increasing in scope
A.253	As such, the boom in online shopping will continue, putting greater spotlight on last-mile delivery options.	Sudden and rapid increase		experiencing a significant surge in activity
A.174	Yet, chains like Best Buy, Dick’s Sporting Goods and West Elm have reported revenue jumps this summer, with many Americans spending more on goods that they could use at home or while socially distancing outdoors.	Sudden increases in amount		increasing sharply
A.384	In 2020, changes in the way we are engaging, selling and retailing have accelerated .	Speeding up		evolving and growing faster
A.351	Online sales worked to bolster the shopping season, representing an increase in sales by 22%, and inching Black Friday over \$9 billion in sales.	Supporting and increasing strength		boosting the shopping season
A.252	292. 2020 was the year that online shopping, which for a long time has been the fastest-growing sector of the retail industry, really came into its own .	Fully developing		dominating retail
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS MOMENTUM				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain MOMENTUM	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.185	This trend too is now in full gear .	Operating at maximum capacity		reaching its peak performance
A.368	The latest sales data is likely to amplify calls for Congress to pass another round of stimulus before the November election.	Increasing the volume or intensity		Increasing pressure for additional stimulus measures
A.184	A recent consumer trend in apparel has been a push towards purchasing fewer, higher quality garments.	Driving forward		pushing retail trends forward
A.50	AI-driven big data retailing has been maturing for some years now, with major retailers relying on advanced analytics to understand what should be stocked in their stores and drive efficiencies in logistics.	Propelling forward with purpose		being propelled by data-driven decision-making
A.194	Consumer prices also surged last month from a year earlier, fueling concerns among some economists that the Federal Reserve won’t raise interest rates soon enough to contain inflationary pressures.	A rapid increase		Rapid increase in consumer prices
A.130	The gains , however, were smaller than in previous months, which some economists warned could be a sign that the retail recovery was running out of steam.	Incremental improvements		slowing down as momentum fades
A.328	Successful marketing campaigns leverage these sociocultural factors to build a connection with customers and encourage consumption.	Constructing connections		fostering stronger consumer relationships
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor: BUSINESS IS OPERATION				

Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS MECHANISM				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain MECHANISM	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.271	Many retailers announced massive near-term hiring plans to keep stores <i>running</i> and ramp up deliveries.	A machine in continuous operation		Businesses operating smoothly
A.365	Sales were <i>driven</i> by a consumer focus on the home, core repair and maintenance activities, and wallet share shift away from other discretionary spending.	Guided or controlled		Sales being propelled
A.335	There is a lot of value interacting with a salesperson in the store who can <i>curate</i> the selection and customize it for customers,” Solomon says.	Organize and manage resources		Retailers managing and optimizing product selections
A.304	The challenges faced this year by the retail industry, and the supply chain that <i>feeds</i> it, cannot be underestimated.	Provides necessary inputs to keep something running		Supply chain supporting and sustaining retail operations
A.381	But as bad as that downturn was, sales never <i>ground to a halt</i> the way they have in recent weeks, said Jack Kleinhenz, chief economist for the National Retail Federation.	Stopped functioning		Sales nearly stopping
A.420	Without a large subsidy, economists predict, consumption will <i>stall</i> in August and into the fall, <i>damaging</i> the broader economy.	Stop progressing or operating		Consumption coming to a halt
A.375	Many analysts had predicted that retail sales would be <i>dented</i> in July by surging infections in states like Arizona, California and Texas, which forced restaurants and stores to close again.	Damaged or impaired slightly		Retail sales being negatively impacted
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS TOOLS				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain TOOLS	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
A.199	This strategy revolves mostly around the timely creation of relevant content; however, businesses can <i>leverage</i> advanced technology to personalize content and further strengthen customer engagement.	Utilizing a tool to gain an advantage		using technology as a tool to optimize operations
A.318	Scott Galloway, author of the book “Post Corona: From Crisis to Opportunity,” recently advised marketers to extend every trend by 10 years to <i>gauge</i> how well their business models and cultures can keep up.	Measure or assess using a tool		assessing performance using analytical tools
A.190	There are a number of other sectors in which jobs will be savagely <i>cut</i> .	Using a tool to remove		reducing workforce
A.11	It has not been easy, but retailers are generally a <i>durable</i> group, and the future will eventually be bright.	Strong and lasting like a well-made tool		being resilient and capable of enduring challenges

Recovery Phase 2021 - 2022

Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor - BUSINESS IS EXPANSION

Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS AMPLIFICATION

	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain AMPLIFICATION	Mapping	Target domain: BUSINESS
B.138	As e-commerce <i>grows</i> , physical stores must change.	increasing in size or scale		expanding online presence
B.163	As e-commerce <i>proliferates</i> , the barriers separating physical and online shopping experiences will blur.	spreading or increasing rapidly		expansion leads to integration of sales channels
B.37	Matt Maher, founder of retail tech advisor agency M7, says augmented reality is “a huge opportunity for retailers to <i>scale</i> product trials ... to give you a retail experience anywhere in the world.”	expanding reach or capacity		growing their market reach
B.294	Across Manhattan, the number of available ground-floor stores, normally the domain of busy restaurants and clothing stores, has <i>soared</i> .	rising sharply		rapid growth in available spaces
B.140	While e-commerce has been <i>on the rise</i> since its inception, the unprecedented events of 2020 caused it to skyrocket as consumers avoided the risks of in-person shopping.	increasing gradually		increasing steadily, especially online
B.148	In January, e-commerce represented 13% of retail sales. That number <i>spiked</i> to almost 20% of sales in April and leveled back to about 16% by the end of the year.	sudden sharp increase		a sudden surge in sales
B.164	Executives said slower deliveries are still likely because they expect e-commerce spending to remain <i>elevated</i> even as the pandemic recedes.	staying higher than usual		E-commerce spending remains higher
B.112	Retailers that lead with technology combined with humanity have <i>emerged</i> stronger.	coming out in a stronger position		becoming stronger after challenges
B.118	Others, such as big-box retailers, <i>thrived</i> , drawing more shoppers looking for food or homegoods.	growing vigorously and successfully		experiencing significant growth

Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS CONSTRUCTION

	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain CONSTRUCTION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.49	I examine how retailers can <i>build</i> resilient, responsible businesses.	create something solid and lasting		creating strong, sustainable businesses
B.68	In an effort to outflank last year’s supply chain bottleneck, and despite a steady decline in consumer sentiment, they and other retailers rushed to <i>beef up</i> inventories to meet booming demand.	reinforce something		strengthening inventory
B.42	When that happened, big grocery retailers didn’t need to be convinced to carry the product, they <i>made room</i> for it because of consumer demand.	creating space for something new		adjusting capacity or resources

B.67	Other retailers <i>have room</i> to maneuver in response to income pressures, but the last thing a subscription business wants is to lower its revenue per subscriber,” Portell explained.	having space		having capacity to adapt
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS DEVELOPMENT				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain DEVELOPMENT	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.17	The retail industry expects to see a rise in smaller-format and experience-centered stores as retailers look closely at their investments and seek to <i>move further</i> along their digital transformation journey.	advancing or making progress		advancing in transformation initiatives
B.113	Today, retail is <i>taking on a movement</i> of bold innovation	a series of actions aimed at progress		embracing a wave of innovation
B.274	That is where the future of the industry <i>parts ways</i> with the past.	moving forward		evolving by discarding past methods
B.96	The retail industry has <i>led the way</i> in surmounting the Covid-19 pandemic’s challenges with innovation and creativity.	being at the forefront of progress		pioneers in overcoming difficulties
B.133	The <i>growth</i> of e-commerce amid the pandemic forced many retailers to find new ways to compete, such as creating new supply chain efficiencies.	continuous increase or expansion		expanding operations
B.51	There are six key forces that characterized how 2020 unfolded and that will continue to shape how retail <i>evolves</i> in 2021 and, most likely, far beyond.	developing gradually over time		gradually transforming
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor - BUSINESS IS WAR				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS A BATTLE				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain A BATTLE	Mapping	Target domain: BUSINESS
B.31	Just as Airbnb and Uber mobilized utility value locked up in single-use properties and vehicles, respectively, opening retail supply chains for capacity and infrastructure sharing between cooperating retailers presents a potentially attractive model of efficiency without requiring them to <i>surrender</i> to dependency on one of the scale platforms.	Losing control in battle		Businesses maintaining independence
B.25	Being the first <i>line of defense</i> , both online and brick-and-mortar retail will suffer growing consumer frustration.	Taking the initial impact in battle		Businesses facing the first wave of difficulties
B.21	From mass store closures and strict occupancy limitations to demand challenges and global supply shortages, both retailers and consumers around the world were <i>forced</i> to evolve.	Being compelled to adapt under attack		Businesses adapting to market challenges
B.119	Brick-and-mortar retailers have been <i>decimated</i> in recent years.	Suffering heavy losses after a battle		Businesses suffering significant impacts

B.261	Data has always been king in retail, and this was especially true as the industry <i>grappled</i> with the pandemic.	Struggling hand-to-hand in combat		Businesses struggling with external crises
B.66	They (Multichannel retailers) also must stand out from the competition, especially online-only retailers, which is essential for <i>survival</i> .	Fighting to survive on the battlefield		Businesses striving to remain relevant
B.24	Brick-and-mortar retailers were among those <i>hit hardest</i> by the Covid-19 pandemic.	Receiving a severe blow in battle		Businesses severely affected by the pandemic
B.101	Now the economy appears to be slipping into (or is already in) a recession and the retail industry <i>faces</i> yet another year of scrambling to readjust to rapidly changing conditions.	Facing continuous enemy attacks		Businesses confronting changing conditions
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS CONFLICT				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain : CONFLICT	Mapping	Target domain: BUSINESS
B.313	“We expect consumers’ spending to <i>struggle</i> until falling Covid cases allow restrictions to be eased, starting in March,” he said.	intense effort or fighting		battling against economic pressures
B.4	Retail industry <i>challenged</i> to adapt to a digital world.	facing a difficult task		facing technological changes
B.60	Although many retailers have done the right things the right way at the right time during the pandemic, others did not, and <i>suffered</i> for it.	experiencing losses or harm		experiencing negative outcomes
B.242	Any <i>friction</i> takes away from the experience and makes it more likely your shopper will jump ship.	clashes between opposing forces		facing resistance or obstacles
B.11	As brands and retailers <i>compete</i> for consumer loyalty, consumers are demanding to know their stances on socio-political issues.	fighting to win		fighting to win customer loyalty
B.76	As store and shopping center closings hit new highs and bankruptcy filings (and complete business liquidations) become more common, the remaining retail pie will be shared among fewer <i>competitors</i> .	opposing forces		battling for dominance
B.35	The “Uberization” of retail supply chains is underway with new cooperative models and hypernetworked logistics promising an escape for retailers <i>stuck</i> between the costly privilege of supply chain independence and superdependence on the retail behemoths.			
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS COMPETITION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain COMPETITION	Mapping	Target domain: BUSINESS
B.48	Right now, for example, it could help retailers re-price their excess inventory in such a way as to boost sales, <i>win</i> new customers, ease working capital, and bring down the number of products sitting in warehouses.	achieving victory over opponents		outperform competitors and gain market share

B.263	Perhaps most challenging of all, the apparel industry <i>lost</i> its ability to create trends and drive demand for new products.	failing to win in a contest		failed to maintain influential position
B.107	It's even possible for the retail worker to share achievements and personal bests and challenge other sales associates to <i>raise their game</i> , enabling the construction of a community culture even when workers aren't physically connected.	improving performance to overcome a rival		enhance performance and competitiveness
B.262	The apparel industry and a slew of malls were <i>battered</i> as millions of Americans stayed home and a litany of dress-up events, from proms to weddings, were canceled or postponed.	being severely affected by an opponent		significantly impacted by external circumstances
B.109	It's a "coopetition" supply chain and it's succeeding in clawing back the cost disadvantage these retailers <i>faced</i> acting alone, leveling the competitive playing field.	confronting challenges directly		confront challenges of high costs and competitive disadvantages
B.128	<i>Weaker players</i> such as Lord & Taylor and J.C. Penney Co. filed for bankruptcy protection and closed hundreds of stores, while big companies such as Walmart Inc., Target Corp. , Amazon.com Inc. and Home Depot Inc. HD 0.49% consolidated their power.	less strength compared to their opponents		less competitive and unable to survive
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS DEFENSE				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain DEFENSE	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B. 163	As e-commerce proliferates, the <i>barriers</i> separating physical and online shopping experiences will blur.	Physical barriers used to block or separate		Establishing boundaries
B. 279	At Urban Outfitters, the company is <i>hunkering down</i> on the cost side, among other tactics weeding out SKUs that generated low-quantity orders and were thus less profitable.	Taking a defensive stance		Protecting their financial stability
B. 25	Being the first <i>line of defense</i> , both online and brick-and-mortar retail will suffer growing consumer frustration.	Initial protection against attacks		Guarding their reputation and customer loyalty
B. 245	But the truth is that physical stores are <i>poised</i> to make a big comeback: In-store retail is still the dominant retail channel, and it's still very much part of the customer journey.	Being ready to respond or act defensively		Preparing for a strategic comeback
B. 98	... small businesses need to be aware of how weighted the law is against them, and how best to <i>protect</i> themselves in case of a larger business going into administration.	Ensuring safety against harm or threats		Defending their viability against external pressures
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor - BUSINESS IS RESILIENCE				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS ENDURANCE				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain ENDURANCE	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS

B.3	Drawing on my experience working with over 130 retailers who are using experiential retail to reinvent the retail space, here's what to expect and how retailers can <i>thrive</i> in the new normal.	growing and flourishing despite challenges		succeeding despite difficult conditions
B.160	When you're a small business, e-commerce is <i>tougher</i> than it looks.	more challenging and requiring strength to endure		facing unexpected challenges that demand resilience
B.172	Our aim is to help incredible <i>healing</i> brands, products, and leaders have more impact on the world.	recovery and regaining strength		recovering to regain market strength
B.190	There's high pressure for the retail sector to <i>absorb</i> rising costs and small companies have to work even harder to keep up because they are not only affected by supply chain disruptions but higher prices squeeze them out of competing with larger companies.	enduring and managing pressure		enduring financial pressures without breaking
B.116	Some retailers, such as department stores and apparel retailers, <i>struggled</i> last year with closed stores, weak online sales or products that became less popular, such as work clothing.	experiencing difficulty but continuing to try		enduring hardships but continuing efforts to survive
B.187	Retail sales fell in July, highlighting a <i>rocky</i> economic recovery.	unstable and full of obstacles		experiencing an unstable recovery
B.219	So the ongoing and ever-changing supply-chain issues are a constant theme for retailers - small businesses are <i>feeling the brunt</i> .	experiencing the worst impact		suffering the most from disruptions
B.301	When the influence of Covid-19 abates, restaurant sales will <i>bounce back</i> , but like the dinosaurs of the Cretaceous period, department stores and apparel sales are not likely to ever return to prepandemic levels.	recovering quickly after setbacks		recovering after the pandemic
B.88	But according to Mark Quinn and Mark Kinsley, retail experts and authors of the new book Come Back to Bed, one thing is for certain: in order to <i>survive</i> , retailers must be willing to adapt.	continuing to exist despite adversity		enduring adverse conditions to continue operating
B.321	311. Some executives don't think retailers can maintain that discipline once the economy opens up and consumer demand <i>snaps back</i> .			
	Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS ADAPTATION			
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain ADAPTATION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.251	Stores <i>morphed</i> into Amazon-style fulfillment centers during the pandemic as retailers looked for places to pack online orders.	changing form or shape to adapt		transformed operations to meet new demands
B.310	Retail sales dropped in May, <i>marking a shift</i> in consumer spending from big-ticket items to goods and services related to going out amid business reopenings and higher vaccination rates.	A change in focus to new conditions		adapting to changes in consumer preferences
B.274	To do this, retailers must quickly respond to market developments and apply <i>agile</i> marketing strategies.	being able to adapt quickly		respond to market changes

B.185	“The economy and consumer spending have proven to be much more <i>resilient</i> than initially forecasted,” said NRF chief executive Matthew Shay.	ability to recover quickly		maintaining stability and recovering quickly
B.211	In order to ensure a future where businesses not only survive, but thrive, it is critical to anticipate what a post-pandemic world will look like, and then begin to <i>transform</i> to better match this new reality.	making significant changes to adapt		modifying practices to adapt
B.196	Despite in-store shopping coming to a near-standstill at times, retailers quickly <i>pivoted</i> their strategies to make up for lost revenue and maintain customer loyalty.	changing direction quickly		altering strategies
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS STABILITY				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain STABILITY	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.256	Grocers view their stores as the <i>anchor</i> of their business.	stability and prevents drifting		a stable foundation for business operations
B.243	That means store will have to <i>build</i> staff and start training the associates now in order to have a trained crew ready to serve the throngs.	creating a strong, stable structure		strengthening workforce to ensure stability
B.255	But the truth is that physical stores are <i>poised</i> to make a big comeback: In-store retail is still the dominant retail channel, and it's still very much part of the customer journey.	being ready and stable for action		in a stable position to grow again
B.266	In response to the pandemic, the retail industry began to <i>embrace</i> the idea of turning brick-and-mortar locations into fulfillment centers.	accepting change to achieve stability		accepting new strategies for continued stability
B.44	Now we find ourselves in the hybrid wave, where e-commerce and physical retail are much more intrinsically linked (I call this “ <i>harmonized</i> retail”).	working smoothly together		online and in-store shopping work together
B.41	In general, retail interactions are relatively <i>calm</i> right now, but that may change as the return to bankruptcy alley could be around the bend.	stability without disruptions		steadiness and lack of volatility
Cross Mapping of Generic Metaphor - BUSINESS IS MOVEMENT				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS MOTION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain MOTION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.40	As we <i>move forward</i> , retailers everywhere will have to deal with the new scenario in the best possible way.	progressing or advancing		advancing in dealing with new scenarios
B.39	Research results have shown that the in-store experience is still important to customers, but new and emerging trends have forced retailers to <i>shift</i> how they approach meeting the needs of those customers.	changing direction		changing approaches
B.61	Covid pushed many retailers to <i>make the shift</i> to digital payments, rewards and delivery more quickly than they had initially planned to.	transitioning or changing position		transitioning to digital methods

B.45	While we were always <i>headed</i> to a more blended world, the pandemic accelerated the journey.	moving towards a destination		progressing towards a mixed business environment
B.207	For instance, safety dropped as one of the driver’s main concerns, scheduling now ranks 11th, but job expectations <i>jumped</i> to 3rd spot, and the #1 reason for leaving remains career growth.	moving quickly to a new position		shifting quickly in response to workforce needs
B.23	The COVID-19 roller coaster <i>took</i> many brick-and-mortar retailers <i>for a ride</i> in 2020 and 2021, with notable department stores, restaurants, and apparel stores shuttering permanently.	experiencing an unpredictable journey		undergoing an uncertain period
B.113	Today, retail is <i>taking on a movement</i> of bold innovation.	engaging in a dynamic change		embracing new innovations
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS TRANSITION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain TRANSITION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.328	But for brick-and-mortar stores considering e-commerce, success isn’t always as easy as posting a website and watching orders <i>flow in</i> .	continuous movement		steady order inflow in e-commerce
B.93	Other analysts may look at different inflation or recovery guides, but the truth tells us that retail is usually the first to <i>head into</i> a recession, and the first to <i>head out</i> .	head into: entering head out: exiting		transitioning into and out of economic recessions
B.265	With that in mind, those in the e-commerce sphere should keep an eye on new and <i>emerging</i> industry trends to stay competitive.	new or developing trends		adapting to new developments
B.274	That is where the future of the industry <i>parts ways</i> with the past.	diverging from a previous path		
B.186	Inflation is also weighing on the data, as consumers expect rising prices as the economy <i>navigates</i> the ups and downs of a shaky rebound, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York reported last week.	steering a complex pathway		managing challenges
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS MOBILITY				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain MOBILITY	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.142	It’s time to take a closer look at how what we call “e-commerce” has evolved and understand what it all means <i>going forward</i> .	moving ahead in a certain direction		progressing into the future
B.173	BCG’s Sarah Willersdorf, who led the study, notes that luxury brands have been <i>ahead of the curve</i> in adopting Web 3.0 capabilities such as blockchain, DAOs (decentralized autonomous organizations) and NFTs linked to physical and digital products.	being advanced or leading		adopting new technologies before others

B.263	Perhaps most challenging of all, the apparel industry lost its ability to create trends and <i>drive</i> demand for new products.	pushing forward		pushing forward demand for new products
B.153	As a key <i>driver</i> of transformation in retail over the last decade, e-commerce was already growing rapidly.	a force that causes movement		a force pushing transformation in retail
B.147	The toolsets of big e-commerce players such as Amazon will finally <i>reach the hands</i> of small, local businesses - and we'll all benefit from it.	arriving at or becoming accessible		becoming accessible to more players
B.40	As we <i>move forward</i> , retailers everywhere will have to deal with the new scenario in the best possible way.	progressing or advancing		advancing into new market scenarios
Cross Mapping of Generic Metaphor - BUSINESS IS FLUCTUATION				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS VOLTAGE				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain VOLTAGE	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.300	But since the pandemic began, online sales have <i>surged</i> and many brick-and-mortar retail stores have closed their doors permanently.	a sudden increase		a sharp increase in online sales
B.302	After falling to record lows about a year ago, sales bounced back sharply this spring, only to <i>swing</i> from month to month, driven by the ebb and flow of government stimulus and the persistence of the virus.	shifting between extremes		Sales fluctuating
B.174	Yet, chains like Best Buy, Dick's Sporting Goods and West Elm have reported revenue <i>jumps</i> this summer, with many Americans spending more on goods that they could use at home or while socially distancing outdoors.	a sudden upward change		experiencing unexpected revenue growth
B.170	The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the retail trade sector unevenly, with online retailers and some essential businesses experiencing growth and other large retail segments seeing <i>falling</i> revenues.	declining		experiencing decreasing revenue
B.309	Retail sales <i>dropped</i> in July, the Commerce Department reported Tuesday, a sign that consumer spending was hampered amid an uneven economic recovery from pandemic-induced restrictions.	decreasing significantly		Retail sales falling sharply
B.245	As online shopping <i>exploded</i> , giants like Amazon weren't the only beneficiaries.	increasing suddenly and dramatically		Online shopping growing dramatically
B.68	In an effort to outflank last year's supply chain bottleneck, and despite a steady decline in consumer sentiment, they and other retailers rushed to beef up inventories to meet <i>booming</i> demand.	expanding rapidly		a strong increase in demand
B.124	"Spending at nonstore retailers should <i>bounce</i> , but services spending will be weaker," they said in a note.	increasing again		Spending expected to recover
B.193	In the context of Frost, retail doesn't exactly know how their consumers will perform as they face a barrage of <i>skyrocketing</i> price increases.	rising rapidly and dramatically		Prices increasing rapidly

B.188	Consumer prices won't be able to <i>roll back</i> to pre-COVID times, and the adage kicks in that - as prices go up, sales will go down, and jobs will eventually get lost.	reverting to a previous lower level		Prices unable to decrease
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS DISRUPTION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain DISRUPTION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.283	Subscription businesses, which grew so rapidly over the last two years, are now facing a market <i>turned upside down</i> .	completely disrupted or reversed		experiencing market instability
B.217	Businesses at the outlet mall are <i>struggling</i> - and it was already hard to interview last year as a woman in her 60s, she said. Amazon is hiring, but she is concerned about the risk of accidents in a warehouse.	facing disruptions in maintaining stability		facing challenges in keeping operations stable
B.295	So why has the market <i>soured</i> , almost as rapidly as q-commerce companies can deliver?	becoming negative or unfavorable		becoming less favorable rapidly
B.289	Certainly, the financial markets are <i>worried about</i> a potential downturn for retail, even the XRT retail index has dropped about 16% year to date.	uncertain due to disruptions		anxious about potential negative trends
B.64	And yet, there's probably no sector of retail on the verge of more change and <i>upheaval</i> than grocery.	major disruptive changes		experiencing significant disruption
Cross Mapping of Generic Metaphor - BUSINESS IS PRESSURE				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS STRESS				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain STRESS	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.10	Due to the pandemic, nearly all retailers were <i>forced</i> rather swiftly into embracing online selling.	being compelled under pressure		Being compelled by the pandemic to move online
B.98	As the retail industry shifts, and collaborations between small and large retailers become more common, small businesses need to be aware of how <i>weighted</i> the law is against them, and how best to protect themselves in case of a larger business going into administration.	having unequal pressure		facing disadvantages due to regulatory pressures
B.190	There's high pressure for the retail sector to absorb rising costs and small companies have to work even harder to keep up because they are not only affected by supply chain disruptions but higher prices <i>squeeze</i> them <i>out of</i> competing with larger companies.	applying pressure to force out		being forced out of competition by financial pressures
B.205	The second trend - the "spending shuffle" - reveals how, as consumers (and lower-income groups in particular) feel increasingly <i>squeezed</i> by the economy, they're having to make more trade-offs in their spending.	feeling restricted by external pressures		feeling financial pressure

B.183	He targeted sales of men's underwear using the MUI (Men's Underwear Index) as a guide with the fairly accurate belief that when the economy <i>gets stressed</i> , consumers are slow to buy staple products like men's underwear.	under pressure or strain		Economic pressure affecting consumer spending behavior
B.169	Some big brands have already voiced optimism about post-crisis <i>pent-up</i> demand bringing customers rushing back to stores for new shopping experiences.	built-up pressure that seeks release		Consumer demand building up and then being released
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS TENSION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain TENSION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.260	A return to broad discounting would further pressure profits in the retail industry, which has already been <i>slammed</i> with higher costs on labor, products and shipping.	hit forcefully by an external force		experiencing severe financial strain
B.123	But there is evidence that an ever increasing number of those sales are going to giant retailers that have been able to use their scale and digital abilities to <i>grab</i> larger market share during the pandemic.	taking something with force		aggressively taking more of the market
B.131	Those retailers are <i>seizing</i> the moment to look even more like department stores	taking control of an opportunity forcefully		taking opportunities to expand offerings
B.78	The past two years have required retailers to <i>exercise</i> every bit of agility and creativity they have been able to <i>muster</i> to navigate the challenges of COVID-19, the inexorable rise of online sales and supply chain volatility, and the pressures continue.	<i>Exercise</i> : using strength or power to act effectively <i>Muster</i> : gathering strength or forces		using skills and creativity to face challenges gathering creativity and resources
B.219	So the ongoing and ever-changing supply-chain issues are a constant theme for retailers - small businesses are <i>feeling the brunt</i> .	experiencing the main force of impact		taking on the worst effects
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor - BUSINESS IS TRANSFORMATION				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS PROGRESSION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain PROGRESSION	Mapping	Target domain: BUSINESS
B.51	There are six key forces that characterized how 2020 unfolded and that will continue to shape how retail <i>evolves</i> in 2021 and, most likely, far beyond.	gradual transformation		undergoing continuous development
B.102	<i>Reemerging</i> from lockdown, the retail industry is presented with an enormous opportunity to start over with a fresh, bold, innovative approach - to <i>shed</i> the past waste and inefficiencies that brought many a hallowed brand into the dustbin of history and embrace new models that tightly align the needs of brands' customers and talent.	<i>Reemerging</i> : coming back in a renewed form <i>Shed</i> : removing unwanted elements		rebounding with renewed strategies discarding old inefficient practices
B.7	Although some speak of a retail apocalypse, what's really underway is a retail <i>renaissance</i> .	revival or renewed growth		going through a period of growth and renewal

B.236	Big e-commerce businesses also <i>absorbed</i> nearly 60 percent of all warehouse space available last year, according to real estate analysts at CoStar Group.	taking in or incorporating something		taking in significant resources
B.9	If there's anything the last year-plus has taught us, it's how <i>agile</i> retail needs to, and can be.	flexible and quick to adapt		being adaptable and responsive to change
B.176	But by embracing the transition to omnichannel retail, and committing to digitizing real-world retail to add value across the commerce pipeline, brands can still succeed and <i>thrive</i> .	growing vigorously and successfully		flourishing despite challenges
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS RENEWAL				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain RENEWAL	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.112	Retailers that lead with technology combined with humanity have <i>emerged</i> stronger.	coming back renewed or improved		reappearing after challenges
B.162	It <i>woke</i> a lot of people <i>up</i> to the idea that if you have to close your physical door, you need to have a digital door.	making someone alert to new possibilities		realizing the need for digital transformation
B.136	The e-commerce experience has become incredibly <i>refined</i> and personalized, and there's a huge gap and opportunity for the physical experience to mimic it.	improved or made more sophisticated		becoming more personalized and effective
B.72	Plus, retailers with brands that stayed strong during the pandemic are eager to <i>revive</i> expansion plans to test out new concepts and take advantage of the larger scope of offers and lower rent.	bringing back or restarting something		restarting growth initiatives
B.179	Established retailers of all kinds got more serious about their own .com operations, and a new breed of "digitally-native vertical brands" (DNVB's) were <i>birthed</i> across a spectrum of product categories.	created or brought into existence		introducing new market concepts
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor - BUSINESS IS DETERIORATION				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS DECLINE				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain DECLINE	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.281	Yet even as giant shopping malls are <i>dying</i> and many storefronts are shuttered, the big box stores that anchor strip malls throughout the exurbs are enjoying something of a renaissance.	declining or losing vitality		losing customers and closing
B.332	"As supply chain constraints ease and consumer demand <i>wanes</i> , warehouses are filled to the brim," Jefferies analyst Jonathan Matuszewski wrote in a recent note to clients.	decreasing or weakening		Consumer demand gradually decreasing
B.182	Now the economy appears to be <i>slipping into</i> (or is already in) a recession and the retail industry faces yet another year of scrambling to readjust to rapidly changing conditions.	gradually moving into a worse state		Economy entering a recession

B.211	As “unsecured creditors,” they are the last to be paid when a business <i>goes under</i> .	collapsing or failing		becoming financially unsustainable and failing
B.218	Even during the pandemic, which forced many businesses to <i>shutter</i> , Amazon was able to double its sales profit from \$2.6 billion in 2019 to \$5.2 billion in 2020.	closing down completely		closing their physical locations
B.215	As traditional brick-and-mortar businesses <i>burn</i> through cash reserves and consumers opt for ecommerce, many retail properties will remain vacant in the first half of 2021.	depleting resources quickly		using up financial reserves
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS COLLAPSE				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain COLLAPSE	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.315	Consumer confidence <i>tumbled</i> more than 13 percent in early August from July, according to preliminary results from the University of Michigan’s consumer sentiment index.	A sudden drop		A decline in business confidence
B.319	Walmart CEO, Doug McMillon told investors “shoppers are making far fewer trips to stores, with total transactions <i>falling</i> 14%.	Uncontrolled downward motion		A deterioration in market metrics
B.320	Home Depot reported on Tuesday that transactions <i>fell</i> to \$481.7 million in the three months that ended Aug. 1, a 6 percent decrease from a year earlier.	Loss of structural support		reduction in business transactions
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor - BUSINESS IS A JOURNEY				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS EXPLORATION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain EXPLORATION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.78	The past two years have required retailers to exercise every bit of agility and creativity they have been able to muster to <i>navigate</i> the challenges of COVID-19, the inexorable rise of online sales and supply chain volatility, and the pressures continue.	guiding a path through obstacles		finding ways through complex situations
B.82	By blending digital and real-world shopping, retailers are maximizing sales and <i>charting a sustainable path forward</i> .	planning a route		planning for sustainable growth
B.93	Other analysts may look at different inflation or recovery guides, but the truth tells us that retail is usually the first to <i>head into</i> a recession, and the first to <i>head out</i> .	<i>Head into</i> : entering a phase during a journey <i>Head out</i> : exiting a phase during a journey		entering an economic downturn exiting the economic downturn
B.36	There’s a whole range of different immersive experiences and digital engagement channels for retailers to <i>explore</i> .	discovering new areas		discovering new engagement opportunities
B.221	Small businesses <i>take a real leap of faith</i> when it comes to working with large brands.	making a risky move, often with hope or trust, during a journey		taking risky yet hopeful actions in partnerships

B.82	I have been speaking about “retail’s great <i>bifurcation</i> ” for years.	a point where a path splits into two, offering different routes		diverging into two distinct directions
B.257	Stores are <i>shifting</i> to a new economic model to adapt to what customers want, giving them more control over customer acquisition and experience, competitive intelligence and, simultaneously, sales margins.	changing direction		changing economic model
B.174	But many mass brands are <i>dipping their toes</i> in Web 3.0 as well, including Coca-ColaKO -0.9%, Pepsi, Burger King, McDonalds and GapGPS +0.7%.	committing to a new path or venture		experimenting with new technologies
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS ASPIRATION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain ASPIRATION	Mapping	Target domain: BUSINESS
B.333	Everyone (consumers) is <i>craving</i> a return to normal face-to-face interactions.	having a strong desire or longing		longing to return to in-person interactions
B.334	It was made easier by off-the-charts demand and supply chain woes that meant consumers were <i>chasing</i> limited availability on many products.	pursuing something desirable		pursuing products with limited availability
B.181	He didn’t expect the service to be a huge revenue generator, but he saw the future coming, as online brands such as Chewy and Winc <i>wooed</i> his customers <i>away</i> .	attracting or enticing someone		attracting customers
B.169	Some big brands have already <i>voiced</i> optimism about post-crisis pent-up demand bringing customers rushing back to stores for new shopping experiences.	expressing a hopeful expectation		expressing hope for consumer behavior
B.255	But the truth is that physical stores are poised to make a big comeback: In-store retail is still the dominant retail channel, and it's still very much part of the customer <i>journey</i> .	striving towards a goal		striving towards a desired outcome
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor - BUSINESS IS LEADERSHIP				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS AUTHORITY				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain AUTHORITY	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.154	U.S. q-commerce <i>pioneer</i> , Softbank-backed GoPuff, was looking at an IPO and a valuation of \$40 billion in January this year, according to the New York Post.	leader or innovator		leading in the q-commerce sector
B.271	Data has always been <i>king</i> in retail, and this was especially true as the industry grappled with the pandemic.	holding supreme power		playing a critical leadership role
B.178	It is critical that brands <i>stay ahead of the curve</i> .	leading or being in front		maintaining a leadership position
B.177	Of course, we’ll continue to buy and wear clothes, but we’re unlikely to see brands and merchants <i>dictate</i> new worldwide trends like before.	controlling or leading others		setting global trends
B.273	If an online grocer can match or beat physical stores on those points, online will keep growing and that’s where the industry is <i>headed</i> .	leading the way		leading market direction

Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS GUIDANCE				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain GUIDANCE	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.186	Inflation is also weighing on the data, as consumers expect rising prices as the economy <i>navigates</i> the ups and downs of a shaky rebound, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York reported last week.	guiding through challenging terrain		finding a way through market challenges
B.247	As the <i>eyes and ears</i> for companies, field and store teams have become even more of a key asset to reinventing experiences in stores.	gathering information for better guidance		using teams to stay informed
B.184	The economy is <i>skirting</i> the problem right now because unemployment is low, but if inflation remains high and retail sales start to fall off, then the unemployment numbers will rise.	finding a way around an issue		avoiding immediate obstacles
B.56	<i>Leading</i> retailers are getting leaner and more agile.	guiding others, setting an example		taking the lead in market adaptation
B.96	The retail industry has <i>led the way</i> in surmounting the Covid-19 pandemic's challenges with innovation and creativity.	showing the path or being the guide		guiding the market
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor - BUSINESS IS NATURE				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS SURVIVAL				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain SURVIVAL	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.80	To <i>weather</i> supply chain disruptions, she says, retailers should, for example, be analyzing the results of promotions and resetting them, "as you go, not months after the promotion has ended and you just see it in the review mirror and cannot change anything."	Enduring adverse conditions		Resilience and adaptation in business operations
B.63	Retailers should consider <i>honing</i> their abilities in these environments today, since many of the underlying capabilities - strong data and analytics, information security, deep understanding of customers, digital know-how, experience design - will play a central role in future metaverse experiences.	Sharpening skills for survival		Business skill development and preparation
B.120	Retailers will continue to <i>purge</i> underperforming locations while negotiating lower rents from landlords to make the remaining spaces more viable.	Removing threats for survival		Streamlining business operations for efficiency
B.58	Most legacy retailers remained <i>siloed</i> in their digital and physical operations.	Isolation affecting survival		Inefficiencies impacting business performance
B.118	Others, such as big-box retailers, <i>thrived</i> , drawing more shoppers looking for food or homegoods.	Flourishing despite challenges		Business growth under challenging conditions
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS ENERGY				

	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain ENERGY	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.125	“If we get back to a more normal situation, retailers will get <i>exuberant</i> and buy too much and have to mark down,” said Stephen Sadove, the former CEO of Saks.	High energy and excitement		Intense business activity
B.126	Some retailers <i>shrugged off</i> the July sales report.	Dismissing without concern		Nonchalant reaction to business data
B.147	The toolsets of big e-commerce players such as Amazon will finally <i>reach the hands</i> of small, local businesses - and we’ll all benefit from it.	Passing energy or resources		Distribution of resources in the business environment
B.312	Consumer prices also <i>surged</i> last month from a year earlier, fueling concerns among some economists that the Federal Reserve won’t raise interest rates soon enough to contain inflationary pressures.	Rapid increase in energy		Volatility in business pricing
B.335	During the pandemic, Regan said, consumers were <i>gravitating</i> toward “what’s familiar and what gives us comfort.”	Movement toward a source of comfort		Consumer loyalty and preference shifts
Cross-domain Mapping of Generic Metaphor - BUSINESS IS AWARENESS				
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS CONTROL				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain CONTROL	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS
B.247	As the <i>eyes and ears</i> for companies, field and store teams have become even more of a key asset to reinventing experiences in stores.	tools for gaining awareness and oversight		gaining insight and control over operations
B.103	The retail <i>playbook</i> is in the process of being re-written.	set of strategies for controlling outcomes		modifying operational control strategies
B.105	We need to be innovative and ambitious - removing best before dates where safe to do so, trialling new ways to sell our products and <i>galvanising</i> our customers to get creative with leftovers and <i>embrace</i> change.	<i>galvanising</i> : encouraging control through motivation <i>embrace</i> : taking control of something new		motivating customers to adapt taking control of change
B.62	As more and more retailers face an unhappy choice between costly supply chain independence and uncomfortable superdependence on the scale retail platforms, perhaps a third way is to be found in cooperation with the competition and in hypernetworking supply chains into a new type of scale platform where the <i>power</i> lies in the sum of its parts.	ability to control or influence		collaborating to gain greater control
Specific Metaphor - BUSINESS IS PERCEPTION				
	Metaphorical expressions	Source domain PERCEPTION	Mapping	Target domain BUSINESS

B.331	A recent Accenture survey found that two out of three consumers are making more choices based on sustainability, intend to continue doing so, and would like to see government legislation promote “ <i>conscious</i> consumption.”	being fully aware and deliberate		making deliberate choices
B.48	Right now, for example, it could help retailers re-price their excess inventory in such a way as to boost sales, win new customers, <i>ease</i> working capital, and <i>bring down</i> the number of products sitting in warehouses.	<i>Ease:</i> making something less difficult <i>Bring down:</i> reducing or minimizing something		making financial management more efficient becoming aware of the need to minimize inefficiencies
B.35	The “Uberization” of retail supply chains is underway with new cooperative models and hypernetworked logistics promising an <i>escape</i> for retailers stuck between the costly privilege of supply chain independence and superdependence on the retail behemoths.	finding a way out of an undesirable situation		gaining awareness of solutions to reduce operational dependencies

APPENDIX E

List of Articles in the Data Source (2020)

1. Retail Impacts Of Covid-19: Softening The Blow Before Holiday (Greg Petro, Feb 28, 2020)
2. Retail In The Age Of Coronavirus (Neil Stern, Mar 16, 2020)
3. The Coronavirus Effect: Here Are The Jobs That Will Be Added And Lost (Jack Kelly, Mar 19, 2020)
4. The Impact Of Covid-19 On U.S. Brands And Retailers (Jason Goldberg, Mar 29, 2020)
5. The Domino Effect: Ways Coronavirus Will Forever Change Retail (Chris Walton, Apr 2, 2020)
6. Coronavirus Has Hit Retail – Hard (Karl Haller, Apr 10, 2020)
7. COVID Karma: How Retailers Treated Workers May Impact Shopping Behavior Post-Pandemic (Greg Petro, Apr 20, 2020)
8. Coronavirus Shutdowns Came At The Worst Possible Time For Fashion And Luxury Retail (Steve Dennis, Apr 21, 2020)
9. COVID-19 Accelerates Change Already Afoot In Retail (Steven Barr, Apr 23, 2020)
10. Retail Stores Create The New Normal As Businesses Begin To Open Up (Shelley E. Kohan, Apr 27, 2020)
11. 7 Predictions For How COVID-19 Will Change Retail In The Future (Michelle Evans, May 19, 2020)
12. Retailers, If You Think 2020 Is Bad, Wait Because It Is Going To Get Worse (Pamela N. Danziger, Jun 14, 2020)
13. Retail Chains Abandon Manhattan: ‘It’s Unsustainable’ (Matthew Haag and Patrick McGeehan, Aug 11, 2020)
14. Big-Box Retailers’ Profits Surge as Pandemic Marches On (Gillian Friedman, Aug 19, 2020)
15. Virus Cases Rise, but Hazard Pay for Retail Workers Doesn’t (Michael Corkery

and Sapna Maheshwari, Nov 19, 2020)

16. COVID Erected Barriers In Retail. Broadcast Selling Breaks Them Down (Pamela N. Danziger, Sep 4, 2020)
17. How Retailers Should Address Covid In The 2020 Holiday Shopping Season (Charles Taylor, Sep 29, 2020)
18. The Trends That Will Stay With Us And Change Marketing, Even After The Corona Is Gone (Avi Dan, Nov 2, 2020)
19. The 5 Biggest Retail Trends In 2020 (Bernard Marr, Nov 16, 2020)
20. 4 Covid Shopping Trends That Will Outlive The Pandemic (Bryan Pearson, Nov 23, 2020)
21. The 5 Most Important Retail Events Of 2020 Had Nothing To Do With Covid-19 (Chris Walton, Dec 11, 2020)
22. How 2020 Reshaped The Retail Industry (Catherine Erdly, Dec 16, 2020)
23. November Retail Sales Aren't As Ominous As You Think - Just A Clear Set Of Covid-19 Winners And Losers (Jason Goldberg, Dec 18, 2020)
24. Top Predictions For Retail 2021 (Greg Petro, Dec 20, 2020)
25. Insights On The Top Marketing Trends For 2021 (Janét Aizenstros, Dec 22, 2020)
26. As Retail Struggles, Trump Stalls Signing Of Omnibus And Stimulus Bills (Rick Helfenbein, Dec 23, 2020)
27. How Lessons Learned In The Pandemic Can Shape Retail Strategy Going Forward (Jonathan Treiber, Dec 23, 2020)
28. New Coronavirus Restrictions Are Dealing Another Major Blow To Many Restaurants This Holiday Season (Andria Cheng, Dec 24, 2020)
29. In Memoriam - A Look At 6 Department Stores That Closed Their Doors In 2020 (Michael Lisicky, Dec 27, 2020)
30. 2020 Was The Year Fashion Almost Died. Here's How To Bring It Back To Life In 2021 (Pamela N. Danziger, Dec 27, 2020)

List of Articles in the Data Source (2021-2022)

1. Retail Was Remarkably Resilient In 2020, But Has Been Changed Forever (Jason Goldberg, Jan 16, 2021)
2. Five Ways Retail May Evolve After The Pandemic (Rob Almond, Feb 25, 2021)
3. The 6 New Forces Of The Covid Retail Economy (Steven Danis, Mar 17, 2021)
4. The Future Of Retail Real Estate: What To Expect (Jeffrey Bartel, Mar 22, 2021)
5. What Business Leaders Can Learn From Retailers' Response To Covid (Edward Segal Apr 19, 2021)
6. Here's Why There Are Millions Of Job Openings, But Little Hiring (Jack Kelly, May 7, 2021)
7. Shopping Trends Change But Pandemic Behaviors Are Here To Stay (Catherine Erdly, May 31, 2022)
8. Is Experiential Retail Still Relevant In 2021? (Benjamin Zenou, Jun 4, 2021)
9. Four Trends Reshaping The Future Of Retail (Bjoern Petersen, Jun 23, 2021)
10. Upgrades In Tech: Why 2021 Is A Pivotal Year For Retail (Damian Scalerandi, Sep 8, 2021)
11. The 8 Biggest Retail Trends Every Retailer Needs To Be Ready For (Bernard Marr Sep 20, 2021)
12. Consumers Demand Sustainable Products And Shopping Formats (Greg Petro, Mar 11, 2022)
13. The Retail Metaverse Is Heating Up. Here's How Small Businesses Can Benefit (Catherine Erdly, Mar 18, 2022)
14. What We Often Get Wrong About E-Commerce - And Why It Matters (Steve Dennis, Mar 31, 2022)
15. You're Not Imagining It—Stores Are Locking Everything Up (Lauren Debter, Apr 2, 2022)
16. Retailers Eye Smaller Stores And Human Connections (Greg Maloney, Apr 4, 2022)
17. Retail's Pending Recession Is Fueled By Inflation With Seeds Of Stagnation (Rick

Helfenbein, Apr 11, 2022)

18. The Myth Of The Great E-Commerce Acceleration (Steve Dennis, Apr 19, 2022)
19. Retailers & Consumers Respond To Rising Inflation And Cost Of Living Crisis (Kate Hardcastle, Apr 29, 2022)
20. Small Businesses Speak Out Over “Ruinous” Impact Of Paperchase’s Administration (Catherine Erdly, May 5, 2022)
21. The Great Unsubscribe (Pamela N. Danziger, May 10, 2022)
22. The Biggest Challenges Facing Retailers Now (Richard Kestenbaum, May 17, 2022)
23. How Dollar General Is Spreading Like Hot Gossip In Tiny Towns Across The Country (Lauren Debter, May 20, 2022)
24. Escaping The Retail Supply Chain Squeeze (Niall Murphy, Jun 17, 2022)
25. Why Regulation Will Help The Buy Now, Pay Later Giants (Dylan Sloan, Jul 12, 2022)
26. How Consumers Are Responding During Turbulent Times (Jill Standish, Jul 20, 2022)
27. Prime Day 2022 Delivered Despite Macroeconomic Concerns (Daniel Newman, Jul 21, 2022)
28. Licensing Still A Big Business During The Pandemic, As Sales Top \$315 Billion (Joan Verdon, Jul 26, 2022)
29. Grocery Retailers And The Food Market: Trends And Future Prospects (Dennis Mitzner, Jul 31, 2022)
30. American Dream Mall Finally Has Its Trendy Food Hall, As Well As Valuable Leasing Momentum (Joan Verdon, Jul 30, 2022)

APPENDIX F

Introduction to Forbes Journalists and Their Expertise in Retail

1. Andria Cheng covers retail from fashion to grocery, and its dance with technology.
2. Avi Dan is CEO of Avidan Strategies, a consultancy that specializes in advising marketers about optimizing agency practices.
3. Benjamin Zenou is CEO & Co-Founder @SimpliField, the ultimate all-in-one mobile platform for retail operations, communications and employee performance.
4. Bernard Marr is a world-renowned futurist, influencer and thought leader in the fields of business and technology, with a passion for using technology for the good of humanity.
5. Bjoern Petersen, President of Sensormatic Solutions, leads the enterprise to power retail operations and create unique shopping experiences.
6. Bryan Pearson covers the intersection of retail, loyalty and customer experience.
7. Catherine Erdly is a UK-based small business retail expert.
8. Charles Taylor is a professional looking for deep insights into marketing.
9. Chris Walton is a senior contributor, a Target executive-turned reporter who covers retail.
10. Damian, as VP of Operations at BairesDev, oversees the entire customer relations life-cycle, safeguarding the company's operations.
11. Jack Kelly is a senior contributor. He covers career growth, job market and workplace trends.
12. Janét Aizenstros is the CEO of Ahava Digital, which provides corporations with ethically-sourced verified data on American consumers.
13. Jason Goldberg is a Chicago based reporter who covers commerce.
14. Jeff Bartel is chairman and managing director of Hamptons Group, a private investment and strategic advisory firm headquartered in Miami.
15. Jill Standish examines how retailers can build resilient, responsible businesses.
16. Greg Maloney writes on the confluence of shopping centers, commerce and consumers.

17. Karl Haller is a consumer expert for IBM Global Business Services, based in New York.
18. Kate Hardcastle is a consumer expert & broadcaster, UK & USA-based.
19. Michelle Evans covers how digitalization is reinventing retail.
20. Michael Lisicky writes about department stores: past and present.
21. Niall Murphy covers the digital reinvention of retail and consumer products.
22. Pam Danziger reports on retail, focused on the luxury consumer market.
23. Pamela N. Danziger reports on retail, focused on the luxury consumer market.
24. Rick Helfenbein is focused on retail, trade and politics.
25. Richard Kestenbaum does mergers & acquisitions in retail/consumer and write about trends.
26. Rob Almond is the CEO of NEST, a pioneer of Integrated Facilities Management (IFM) in North America.
27. Shelley E. Kohan covers the retail industry and is based in New York.
28. Steven Dennis is a senior contributor, top retail influencer, strategic advisor and author.
29. Steven Barr writes about trends shaping the retail and consumer marketplace.

APPENDIX G

A Sample of Researcher's Coding Manual

Phase	Sentence	Lexical Unit	Basic Meaning	Contextual Meaning	Source Domain	Target Domain	Coding Decision (Metaphorical or Literal)
2020	Consumers are having trouble wrapping their minds around the extent of the economic losses. (A.412)	V: having trouble	to face difficulty or challenge	struggling to comprehend or deal with the economic situation	STRUGGLE	Retailer	Metaphorical
		V: wrapping their minds	to physically encompass or encircle	mentally grasp or understand	MANIPULATION	Retailer	Metaphorical
		N: around the extent	around something, typically indicating a boundary or limit	the full scope of the losses	CONTAINMENT	Retailer	Metaphorical
		N: economic losses	reduction in value or financial damage	The financial loss faced by businesses or consumers during the pandemic			Literal
2021-2022	I examine how retailers can build resilient, responsible businesses. (B.49)	V: build	to construct or form something	to establish or develop businesses in a way that ensures stability and strength	CONSTRUCTION	Retailer	Metaphorical
		Adj: resilient	able to withstand or recover from difficult conditions	the ability of businesses to recover and adapt in challenging circumstances	RESILIENCE	Business	Metaphorical
		Adj: responsible	morally accountable or reliable	the need for businesses to adopt ethical practices and strategies during crises			Literal

(V: Verb; N: Noun; A: Adjective)

APPENDIX H

A Sample of Comparison of Coding Results from Two Coders

An Example of Comparison of Coding Results from Two Coders							
Phase	Example	Target Word (under the target domain 'BUSINESS')	Lexical Unit	Coder 1 (Researcher)	Coder 2 (Native Speaker)	Agreement	
2020	Consumers are having trouble wrapping their minds around the extent of the economic losses. (A.412)	Consumer					
			<i>having trouble</i>	Literal	literal	Yes	
			<i>wrapping their minds</i>	Metaphorical	Metaphorical	Yes	
				<i>around the extent</i>	Metaphorical	Metaphorical	Yes
	2020 can certainly be interpreted as a retailer's nightmare, yet those who were more adequately prepared to pivot witnessed explosive growth - or at least were able to survive. (A.6)	Retailer					
			<i>nightmare</i>	Metaphorical	Metaphorical	Yes	
			<i>prepared</i>	Literal	Literal	Yes	
			<i>pivot</i>	Metaphorical	Metaphorical	Yes	
			<i>witnessed explosive growth</i>	Literal	Literal	Yes	
			<i>able</i>	Literal	Literal	Yes	
			<i>survive</i>	Metaphorical	Metaphorical	Yes	
			<i>economic losses</i>	Literal	Literal	Yes	
2021-2022	I examine how retailers can build resilient, responsible businesses. (B.49)	Retailer					
			<i>build</i>	Metaphorical	Metaphorical	Yes	
			<i>resilient</i>	Metaphorical	Metaphorical	Yes	
				<i>responsible</i>	Literal	Literal	Yes
	Yet even as giant shopping malls are dying and many storefronts are shuttered, the big box stores that anchor strip malls throughout the exurbs are enjoying something of a renaissance. (B.245)	Mall					
			<i>dying</i>	Metaphorical	Metaphorical	Yes	
		Store					
			<i>shuttered</i>	Metaphorical	Metaphorical	Yes	
			<i>anchor</i>	Metaphorical	Metaphorical	Yes	
			<i>throughout the exurbs</i>	literal	literal	Yes	
<i>enjoying</i>	Metaphorical	Metaphorical	Yes				
<i>renaissance</i>	Metaphorical	Metaphorical	Yes				

APPENDIX I

Bibliography of Native Speaker Contributor

John A. Riley is an Assistant Professor of English at Woosong University/SolBridge International School of Business, South Korea. A native of the United Kingdom, he specializes in teaching academic writing to PhD students, with a focus on writing for publication, as well as Business English. His academic expertise and extensive teaching experience in language and writing make him a highly qualified contributor to this study, particularly in his roles as an independent coder during the metaphor identification phase and as a validator during the source domain categorization phase.

Selected Contributions:

Independent Coder: Applied the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) to ensure accurate identification of metaphorical expressions in the dataset.

Source Domain Categorization Validator: Validated the categorization of metaphorical expressions, ensuring they were appropriately assigned to the correct source domains based on contextual meaning.