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## Exploring Redefinitions of COVID-19: The Case of Philippine Leading Newspapers

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### ABSTRACT

With the massive impact of COVID-19 in the lives of many Filipinos, many different connotations about the pandemic emerged. Therefore, using the news discourses of COVID-19 in three Philippine leading newspapers, namely The Manila Bulletin, The Philippine Daily Inquirer and The Philippine Star, this descriptive-qualitative study explored the redefinitions of COVID-19 through paraphrase analysis. This study used a self-built corpus consist of national news articles published in the said newspapers. Results show that 10 paraphrases of COVID-19 used the formula COVID-19 is, 2 used COVID-19 has, while only 1 used ... is the COVID-19. Based on the paraphrases of COVID-19, the following redefinitions were explored: COVID-19 is an enemy; COVID-19 is a threat to people's lives; COVID-19 is less terrifying with the development of vaccines; COVID-is a virus that many people still do not understand; COVID-19 is worse than other illnesses and diseases; and COVID-19 is an eye-opener. The redefinitions drawn from this study could make a great contribution to people's understanding of the COVID-19 pandemic and for the investigation of the language features of other discourse objects

### INTRODUCTION

The 2019 novel coronavirus infectious disease (COVID-19) has caused the most severe impact to many people's lives due to its large number of fatalities, disruptions in education like closure of schools and economic crisis.

With the massive effects of COVID-19, many forms of media have covered the pandemic to some extent. According to Gralinski and Menachery (2020), media have been instrumental in providing fresh and timely information which are instrumental in improving knowledge and spreading awareness during the times of pandemic. Likewise, media play an important function in communicating between many scientists, public health experts, researchers and funding agencies for immediate and effective global response. Thus, the COVID-19 pandemic has become central to the different forms of media.

Pandey (2020) also posited that all forms of media have been playing a crucial role in giving information and spreading awareness among people by bringing the latest news. Truly, the newspapers have been dishing out information about the disease and also about the measures taken by the public and the government to contain the spread of infection and the lockdown. The widespread coverage in the newspapers enabled the governments to plug the loopholes and provide suggestions to the common people in this hour of crisis. It has also helped in promoting hygienic habits among people.

In the Philippines, the Philippine leading newspapers have frequently and extensively reported the COVID-19 pandemic to provide relevant information about the virus. As COVID-19 has been published in newspapers, the public, in some ways, has better understanding about its meaning and its effects in their lives. However, despite

its prominent coverage in the different forms of media, many information about COVID-19 have remained unclear to many people. Perceptions about the pandemic have generated doubts, fear and ignorance among human beings which resulted to varying interpretations and meanings of COVID-19. Therefore, this study was pursued to explore the redefinitions about COVID-19 reflected in the three Philippine leading newspapers, namely, The Manila Bulletin, The Philippine Daily Inquirer and The Philippine Star, thus, making a great contribution to people's understanding on the meaning of COVID-19.

This study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the paraphrases of COVID-19 used in Philippine leading newspapers?
2. What redefinitions of COVID-19 can be deduced from the paraphrases?

This study was guided by its conceptual framework as shown in Figure 1. Using the news discourses of COVID-19 from the three Philippine leading newspapers, namely, The Manila Bulletin, The Philippine Daily Inquirer, and The Philippine Star, the paraphrases of COVID-19 were determined. By carrying out the paraphrase analysis, the different redefinitions of COVID-19 in the three newspapers were revealed.

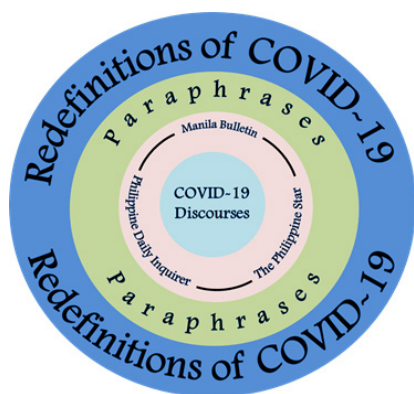
### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Paraphrase as Source of Meaning

Language study which is solely based on scientific methods needs complementation of methods used in the humanities. If people desire to explore what a unit of meaning suggests, there is a need to interpret the evidence (Wang, 2013). Stahl (2006) argued that meaning involving the context of collaboration is regarded as an important aspect of communication. Thus, meaning is essentially

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**Figure 1:** Research Paradigm

shared within a discourse community. Relatedly, meaning is defined for and by the community that is involved in the particular context or situation. The interpretation of that meaning is up to the individuals who are members of a particular discourse community. Therefore, the meaning of language signs is based on the constructions of language users.

With this view, corpus linguistics deals also with the negotiation of meaning in process. This aspect makes corpus linguistics a branch of the humanities paradigm. Interestingly, Cheung (2009) suggested that in corpus linguistics, the interpretation of meaning can also be in the form of paraphrase.

Teubert (2005) asserted that meaning is paraphrase. Paraphrases are sentences that provide explications and explanations and attempt to redefine units of meaning. Consequently, a new focus of corpus linguistics towards an analysis of paraphrase, an examination how units of meaning in a discourse are defined, described, explained, negotiated or even replaced was established. In the same vein, Teubert (2009) explained that paraphrases can shed light on the meaning of lexical items as unique occurrences. In relation, the lexical item's citations contain all the paraphrastic content available. A new paraphrase tells something new and relevant to the common meaning of a lexical item. If a discourse is interlinked with other texts, every new paraphrase is an explanation and interpretation of previously generated paraphrases. Such paraphrases are redefined and reinterpreted or rejected by the other members of the discourse community. In this way, people can generate common knowledge and understanding about a word, however, they are not also prohibited to disagree.

Moreover, Teubert (2005) posited that there is no universal, fixed and true meaning. A unit of meaning can be paraphrased by people in whatever ways they want. Thus, it can be understood that the meaning of a word is always temporary or provisional. Revisions on the meaning of a lexical item can be seen in paraphrases. It is in this context that people continue to negotiate whether they may agree or not to what a unit of meaning means. In here, the issue lies not in reality or truth, but acceptance. Consequently, a paraphrase which is widely re-used and accepted is more significant and relevant compared to a

paraphrase which is never repeated.

Further, a lexical item gains its meaning on what is said about it. The negotiated meaning is a contribution to discourse. Through paraphrasing, discourse participants understand how a lexical item is used in discourses. It is the paraphrastic content that tells what a lexical item means. Therefore, paraphrases are seen as attempts to reformulate and to redefine the meaning, to make a new meaning and suggest a new way to talk about on what was said before about a certain lexical item (Wang, 2013).

### COVID-19 in News Discourses

Media have been instrumental in providing fresh and timely information which are instrumental in improving knowledge and spreading awareness in these times of pandemic. Likewise, media play an important function in communicating between many scientists, public health experts, researchers and funding agencies for immediate and effective global response. Thus, the COVID-19 pandemic has become central to the different forms of media (Gralinski & Menachery, 2020).

Interestingly, Pandey (2020) conducted a study on the role of print media in spreading awareness on Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). The finding of his survey and the analysis suggested that print media has been assuming a vital function in providing news articles about the COVID-19 pandemic. It is clear from the content analysis and survey form of the newspaper that print media is playing a strong role by reaching the right information to the people. In addition, news related to Coronavirus are also being published prominently. Such efforts by the leading newspapers have been extremely vital in clearing the doubts and myths on COVID-19.

Hons (2020) also conducted a discourse analysis exploring the construction of meanings and realities surrounding COVID-19 within mainstream news media. The study explained that the war metaphor gives meaning to COVID-19 by attributing the threat of the war to virus. The study further concluded that mainstream news media have evidently utilized the concepts of war and imprisonment in response to the COVID-19 crisis to generate different meanings and realities of events. As COVID-19 is being published in newspapers, people, in some ways, have better understanding about its meaning and impact in their lives. Carey (2020) claimed that COVID-19 is a social construct and that people getting sick and dying is a biological thing. Likewise, people staying home, locking down cities, selling off stocks, are a result of people's mental and cultural landscape. COVID-19 is a real threat, thus, people need help one another as a society to fight against the virus. The threat to the society is at least as much a social thing as a biological thing.

In a study conducted by Sowden, Borgstrom and Selman (2021), it was found that COVID-19 was presented in British online newspapers at this time as an unpredictable and uncontrollable virus. Sensationalist language, particularly in article headlines and introductions, emphasized its deadly nature, its risks and the unusual or especially distressing COVID-19 deaths. Likewise,

Lavell, Mansilla, Maskrey and Ramirez (2020) conducted a study titled “The Social Construction of the COVID-19 pandemic: disaster, risk accumulation and public policy.” The study claimed that COVID-19 is a pandemic and considered by some countries as a catastrophe since public health systems have been pressed hard in their response against the pandemic. Also, it was found out that COVID-19 has caused an emerging catastrophic impact on the global economy. Moreover, the study proposed that if the risks brought about by COVID-19 are socially constructed, it is also important to ask if the aim of public policies recovers the same economic model which built and shaped the risk in the first place or to use such resources to transform the model in a way that future risk can be reduced and that the social inequalities that the pandemic has exposed are addressed. In another perspective, Peng (2020) claimed that COVID-19 has already become a potential threat to the global public health. Also, the burden on the economic impact caused by the pandemic is substantial and considerable in several aspects like loss of job and deteriorated finance. Kamath, Ganguly and Nivea (2020) likewise posited that COVID-19 is an enemy which knows no distinction between geopolitics, economic stature, or religious morality. It is an enemy that requires people to face it in tandem but alone.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study used the descriptive-qualitative research design involving paraphrase analysis of the discourses of COVID-19 in Philippine leading newspapers. COVID-19 was chosen as the discourse object. It utilized a self-built corpus which consists of national news published from January to December 2020, in the three Philippine leading newspapers namely, The Manila Bulletin, The Philippine Daily Inquirer and The Philippine Star. The corpus was limited only to news articles in which the term Coronavirus infectious disease 2019 (COVID-19) and related terms like SARS-Cov2, Novel coronavirus (nCov) occurred at least three times to reduce the corpus to a manageable size and ensure that all the selected news articles are fully relevant and suitable to the study. Therefore, the corpus has 1, 565 news articles with 646, 576 words. To reveal the redefinitions of COVID-19 in the three Philippine leading newspapers, paraphrase analysis was carried out. This followed the method of Wang (2013) which used the formula noun + is (the standard formula for defining discourse objects). In this study, the formula ... is the + noun was considered. Therefore, in this study, the paraphrases of COVID-19 were limited only to sentences in which the phrases COVID-19 is and ... is the COVID-19 have occurred. Likewise, the paraphrase of COVID-19 as a respiratory disease or illness, was not considered for examination, since the focus of the study is to explore if there is a redefinition of COVID-19 in the three newspapers. Paraphrase analysis was used to focus mainly on sentences in which the phrases COVID-19 is, COVID-19 has and ...is the COVID-19 occurred to

examine the redefinitions of COVID-19 based on its paraphrases in the three newspapers.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This part presents the redefinitions of COVID-19 based on the exploitation of the corpus which includes all news articles in which the word COVID-19 occurred at least three times and published from January to December 2020 in the three Philippine leading newspapers, namely, The Manila Bulletin, The Philippine Daily Inquirer, and The Philippine Star.

**Paraphrases of COVID-19 in Philippine Leading Newspapers**

In exploring the paraphrases of COVID-19 in the three Philippine leading newspapers, the focus is mainly on sentences in which the phrases COVID-19 is (the standard formula for defining objects) and ...is the COVID-19 have occurred. As Teubert (2005) argued, paraphrases are statements providing explanations, explications, or re-definitions of units of meaning. Therefore, the paraphrases of COVID-19 are seen as an attempt to reformulate its meaning, to replace what was said before about it and by suggesting a new way to talk about it. In this section, the frequency distribution of the paraphrases of COVID-19 used in Philippine leading newspapers is presented in Table 1. It could be gleaned from the table

**Table 1:** Frequency distribution of paraphrases of COVID-19 used in Philippine leading newspapers

Formula	Paraphrases of COVID-19 (f)
COVID-19 is	10
COVID-19 has	2
...is the COVID-19	1
Total	13

that there are 10 paraphrases of COVID-19 which used the formula COVID-19 is, 2 paraphrases of COVID-19 used the formula COVID-19 has while only one paraphrase used the formula ...is the COVID-19. Overall, there are 13 paraphrases of COVID-19 which are significant in exploring the redefinitions of the pandemic as further discussed in the next section.

**Redefinitions of COVID-19**

In this section, paraphrase analysis is presented to reveal the different redefinitions of COVID-19 in the three Philippine leading newspapers. It is important to clarify that the formulae COVID-19 is, COVID-19 has, and ...is the COVID-19 do not only occur at the beginning of sentences, but are mostly found in other position, specifically in the middle of sentences as reflected in the excerpts. This indicates that when COVID-19 is talked about, it is always connected to some other important topics. As a result, there are six redefinitions deduced from the paraphrases of COVID-19 in the three Philippine leading newspapers. The different paraphrases of COVID-19 (COVID-19 is is colored blue, COVID-19 has is colored green, while ...is the COVID-19 is colored

red) are presented for discussion.

**COVID-19 is the country's number one enemy**

With the emergence of the words related to COVID-19 response, the construction of the meaning of COVID-19 as the country's number one enemy sprang as evidenced by the paraphrases taken from the news discourses of the three newspapers. Since COVID-19 has contributed negatively toward mortality and morbidity, and has caused severe social, economic and even emotional disruption, COVID-19 is not only regarded as an enemy (E4), but the foremost (E5), and number one enemy (E1 and E3) and problem (E2) of the country. The following excerpts are presented for further discussion:

(E1) Palace: COVID-19 is country's enemy No. 1

*-Palace: COVID-19 is country's enemy No. 1*

*(The Manila Bulletin, July 1, 2020)*

(E2) The new coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is the country's foremost enemy while the University of the Philippines (UP) is like a "ringside commentator" amid the public health emergency, presidential spokesman Harry Roque said Wednesday after drawing a stinging rebuke over his congratulatory remark for beating UP's coronavirus forecast.

*-Palace: COVID-19 is country's enemy No. 1*

*(The Manila Bulletin, July 1, 2020)*

(E3) "Dahil public enemy number one nga itong COVID-19, inanunsyo ng Pangulo na siya ay magbibigay ng pabuya na hanggang ₱10 milyon sa kahit sinong Pilipino na makakadiskubre ng vaccine laban sa COVID-19 (Because COVID-19 is the public enemy number one, the President announced that he is giving a P10-million reward to the one who can discover a vaccine)," Roque said.

*-Palace agrees with WHO: Worst of COVID-19 yet to come*

*(The Manila Bulletin, April 22, 2020)*

(E4) COVID is the foremost enemy, not government.

*-COVID-19 is the enemy, not government,' Duterte tells critics*

*(The Philippine Daily Inquirer, August 3, 2020)*

(E5) President Rodrigo Duterte just recently considered that the number one problem of the country is the COVID-19 amid the continuing rise of cases and nearly four months into the quarantine measures to supposedly contain its spread.

*-Duterte said 'perhaps' COVID-19 is the country's top problem*

*(The Philippine Star, July 22, 2020)*

It can be understood that COVID-19 is the country's enemy number one because the Philippines has been in an everyday battle that has confronted many Filipinos regardless of who and what they are, and where they come from. It can be further noted in excerpt (E3) that even the President is threatened by the pandemic as proven by his claim to reward ₱10 million pesos, a tremendous amount, actually, to whosoever can discover the treatment that could end the fight against COVID-19, a manifestation that the country has been suffering from this major problem. As the threat of COVID-19 continues to strike the country, Filipinos also continue to suffer and fight for the battle against the pandemic.

Likewise, the pandemic has massively affected almost all the aspects of human life which has made people struggle and suffer physically, emotionally and economically. Such situation has a great contribution to the construction of the meaning of COVID-19 as the country's number one enemy. The definition of COVID-19 as an enemy supports the study of Qian, Ren, Wang, Guo, Fang, Wu, Liu and Han (2020) which concluded that the COVID-19 is a new disease that has caused great impacts to the people's daily life extraordinarily and that countries are in a battle against the common enemy, the new coronavirus. This finding can also be linked to what Kamath, Ganguly and Nivea (2020) claimed that COVID-19 is an enemy that knows no distinction between geopolitics, economic stature, or religious morality. It is an enemy that requires people to face it in tandem but alone. This implies that COVID-19 is not just an ordinary problem but also poses great suffering to many people since it is regarded like an enemy, causing major destructions to people's lives.

COVID-19 is a threat to people's lives. COVID-19 might not have hit all places equally, but the threat of the virus is serious and real because it has caused significant mortality, economic decline, joblessness, and even hunger and poverty. Excerpts are presented to further discuss the meaning of COVID-19 as a threat to people's lives.

(TH1) "Moreover, COVID-19 has likewise dampened prospects for the global economy, which could negatively impact tourism, trade, overseas Filipino remittances and foreign investments," the agency explained.

*- April inflation seen lower than previous months' as COVID-19 crimps demand (The Philippine Daily Inquirer, April 2, 2020)*

(TH2) "This COVID-19 has caused great suffering around the world," said 23-year-old Tupas, expressing relief after the uneventful delivery.

*-COVID-19 recoveries in Philippines approach 1,000 as number of cases now at 7,958 (The Philippine Star, April 28, 2020)*

(TH3) "We are in the middle of an unfolding catastrophe – unprecedented in scale and devastating in impact for all. We face a new and different kind of enemy. In the most visceral way, COVID-19 is upending the totality of our way of life. And this virus threatens to exact the highest tolls – on our peoples and our economies," Duterte said during the virtual special ASEAN summit on COVID-19 Tuesday.

*-Duterte calls for closer ASEAN solidarity, cooperation to combat COVID-19 (The Manila Bulletin, April 14, 2020)*

As mentioned in the above statements, COVID-19 has caused great suffering (TH2), dampened the prospects for the global economy (TH2), and is upending the totality of people's way of life (TH3). These indicate that the pandemic has brought suffering to populations everywhere, thus, it can be understood that everyone is not safe from COVID-19. Because COVID is creating devastating waves, increased poverty, malnutrition, and excess mortality, it is indeed a threat to all people and an especially serious threat for people who are affected. In relation, Lavell, Mansilla, Maskrey and Ramirez (2020) conducted a study titled "The Social Construction of

the COVID-19 pandemic: disaster, risk accumulation and public policy.” The study claimed that COVID-19 is a pandemic and considered by some countries as a catastrophe since public health systems have been pressed hard in their response against the pandemic. Also, it was found out that COVID-19 has caused an emerging catastrophic impact on the global economy. Likewise, Peng (2020) claimed that COVID-19 has already become a potential threat to the global public health. Also, the burden on the economic impact caused by the pandemic is substantial and considerable in several aspects like loss of job and deteriorated finance.

COVID-19 is less terrifying with the development of vaccines. The idea that having a vaccine is the best way to fight COVID-19 is depicted in the corpus. It is hoped that vaccines could be the answer to lessen COVID-19 cases and ultimately to end the pandemic in the country. The following excerpts are presented to support the meaning of COVID-19 as less terrifying with the development of vaccines.

(LT1) COVID-19 is no longer very frightening with the development of a vaccine nearing development in the United States, President Rodrigo Duterte said in a pre-recorded address aired Tuesday night.

*-COVID-19 not as scary with vaccine development nearly completed – Duterte (The Philippine Daily Inquirer, November 10, 2020)*

(LT2) In a speech late Tuesday, President Rodrigo Duterte erroneously claimed the threat of COVID-19 is now less terrifying as vaccines are now available and being sold.

*-Coronavirus cases in Philippines top 400,000; death toll at 7,710 (The Philippine Star, November 11, 2020)*

As claimed by the statements above, COVID-19 is no longer very frightening (LT1), and the threat becomes less terrifying (LT2) because of the development and availability of vaccines. Many people hoped that the war against COVID-19 only ends until vaccines arrive in the country. Thus, the best way to fight this pandemic is to have a vaccine. With the efforts of all scientists, researchers, and health experts in the world, COVID-19 vaccines have been formulated and developed, and are now available in the country. Consequently, it is already in the thoughts of people that the best way to end this pandemic is to have a vaccine. In consonance to the finding, Cascella, et al. (2021) claimed that the most crucial step to contain the COVID-19 pandemic is to have a vaccine. Extraordinary efforts by clinical researchers worldwide during this pandemic have resulted in the development of vaccines against COVID-19 at an unprecedented speed to contain this viral illness that has devastated communities worldwide.

COVID-19 is worse than other serious illnesses and diseases. With the serious threat of COVID-19 to human health, the construction of the meaning of COVID-19 as worse than other serious illnesses and diseases was carried out as evidenced by the paraphrases. The severity of the effects of COVID-19 to people’s health plays an important role in defining what COVID-19 is. Throughout history, there have been many viruses

experienced in the country like Ebola, Swine Flu, Bird Flu and Severe Acute Respiratory syndrome (SARS). Likewise, many Filipinos are battling against cancer which has become threatening to them because vast sum is spent, and may lead to death if not detected and treated immediately. However, COVID-19 is considered worse than all of these because of the rapid spread of cases and deaths, and the great suffering it has brought to the Filipino people. The following excerpt is presented to further discuss the meaning of COVID-19 as worse than other serious illnesses and diseases.

(CA1) Thus, Cecile stressed that COVID-19 is more intense than cancer.

*-COVID-19 and cancer: Cecile Guidote-Alvarez shares story as survivor (The Philippine Star, June 8, 2020)*

As manifested in the above sentences, COVID-19 is more intense than cancer (CA1) because the latter is more treatable and the recovery is better than the former since cancer has a treatment standard when it is detected early. A look at the sentence in which COVID-19 is compared to other serious diseases, indicates that COVID-19 is constructed as a human health problem, affecting many aspects of human life, a manifestation that it is more than a cancer in the society.

COVID-19 is a virus that many people still do not understand. With all the things that COVID-19 has caused in the country, this still remains as a vague concept to many Filipinos. This construction of the meaning of COVID-19 occurred in the news discourses of Philippine leading newspapers. Although it is said that COVID-19 is a real disease, still many people do not understand what really it is as mentioned in excerpt VC1. This may be due to lack of information dissemination in the different communities or ignorance at all. However, this may not only pertain to the literal understanding of people about the virus. In a deeper sense, it is the aspects related to COVID-19 which people do not understand. The excerpt below is presented for further discussion.

(VC1) In a statement, Roque wrote that the Palace was taking the WHO’s assessment seriously and that the Chief Executive likewise agreed that COVID-19 is a virus that many people still do not understand.

*-Palace agrees with WHO: Worst of COVID-19 yet to come (The Manila Bulletin, April 22, 2020)*

The connotation about COVID-19 as a virus that many people still do not understand can be attributed to the implementation of rules to curb COVID-19 in the country which can be confusing and frustrating. The government implements rules to prevent the spread of the virus. However, when these rules reach the communities, varied versions are being implemented. This, in some ways, confuses people which may lead them break unawares rules they do not really understand. Therefore, it is vital that the government improves communication of rules and policies, and ensures that they are as simple to understand.

COVID-19 is an eye-opener. As presented in the previous paraphrases, there is a negative construction

of the meaning of COVID-19. However, a positive construction of COVID-19 is also depicted in the news discourses. The pandemic might have certainly turned everyone's world upside down, but, at some point, there is also a good side of it. Generally, the pandemic has taught people many lessons, a manifestation that the pandemic brought something that people should ponder on. An excerpt is presented to support the meaning of COVID-19 as an eye opener.

(EO1) "This pandemic, COVID-19, is an eye opener. Why do I say this is an eye opener? Binuksan, ang ating mga mata sa kahinaan pala ng sistemang pangkalusugan ng Pilipinas. Nakita natin ang (It opened our eyes on the weakness of the Philippine health system. We have seen the) cracks, fissures in the Philippine healthcare system," said Duque during a dialogue with the local government officials of Quezon City Saturday.

*-Pandemic called eye opener on plight of PH healthcare system (The Manila Bulletin, August 29, 2020)*

The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly overwhelmed healthcare systems around the world and the Philippine healthcare system is not an exception. Amid the pandemic, loopholes have seen in the health system of the country. As the system has been grappling with the severe effects of the pandemic, it was determined what to gear up and improve to be more prepared and more resilient in times of great suffering like what the pandemic brought to the country. Although the pandemic has brought negative effects to many Filipinos, there is still a positive aspect about the pandemic because it became a challenge to improve the healthcare system in the country. Therefore, as stated in excerpt EO1, COVID-19 is an eye opener.

## CONCLUSIONS

The present study explored how the news discourses from the three Philippine leading newspapers, namely, The Manila Bulletin, The Philippine Daily Inquirer and The Philippine Star redefine COVID-19 through the paraphrases used in the said newspapers. After a series of close readings, redefinitions of COVID-19 were found based on the paraphrases of COVID-19 in the three newspapers. It can also be concluded that most of the redefinitions viewed COVID-19 negatively. Likewise, it can be concluded that news discourses are a good source of data in exploring the redefinitions of a discourse object since these texts are authentic and are produced in a particular discourse community. This study further concludes that paraphrase analysis was helpful in exploring the redefinitions of COVID-19, thus, revealing how people from a discourse community viewed the pandemic. Therefore, based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that paraphrase analysis was successfully applied to provide important insights about COVID-19. Since the present study are confined with its limitations, several recommendations are offered. The paraphrase analysis was only limited to the phrases in which the formulae COVID-19 is, COVID-19 has and ... is the COVID-19 were used, thus, it is recommended that

other formulae will be used in exploring the redefinitions of COVID-19 to have more valid findings about the meanings of the pandemic. A similar study may likewise be conducted using a larger corpus consisting of other texts or discourses like medical journals, editorials, local news and even social media posts to explore how these discourse sources define COVID-19. Moreover, the corpus of the study was only taken from three Philippine leading newspapers, thus, it would be interesting to form a corpus from other countries' publications to carry out a comparative analysis about the redefinitions of COVID-19 in different perspectives. Since COVID-19 has not reached an end and that the interpretation is not the final version of the definition of COVID-19, researchers should continue building different corpora to compare the significant changes on the meanings of COVID-19 in different time periods. Finally, the contributions this study has made can be employed by language experts for the investigation of the language features of COVID-19 and other significant lexical items or discourse objects.

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