

# Contextual Implicature and Emotional Framing in Volodymyr Zelenskyy's Wartime Speeches: A Pragmatic-Discursive Perspective

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## Abstract

This study examines how President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's wartime rhetoric combines contextual implicature with emotionally charged framing to mobilize diverse audiences during the 2022–2024 Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Drawing on a purposive corpus of ten prominent speeches published on the official presidential website; the research applies a qualitative pragmatic framework that combines Gricean and Relevance-theoretic notions of implicature with insights from framing and metaphor theory. Systematic coding uncovered 225 specific implicatures and 173 effective indicators, revealing three interlocking patterns. First, Zelenskyy relies on historically charged references—such as the Berlin Wall, Babyn Yar, and the Holodomor—to compress complicated moral arguments into highly inferential cues, allowing him to punish reluctant allies or warn opponents without explicit confrontational language. Second, each indirect meaning is linked with a regulated emotional flow: fear and grief supply urgency, while collective pride and hope channel that urgency into sustained support or resistance. Third, these implicature–emotion pairings are audience-sensitive: domestic addresses emphasise resilience and inherited destiny, whereas international appeals deploy shame-based or future-oriented frames to secure diplomatic and material assistance. The findings extend crisis-pragmatics by showing that implicature, under wartime conditions, functions as a strategic instrument for coalition maintenance and escalation management, while confirming that emotion operates as a cognitive framework rather than a rhetorical excess. The limitations of the study include textual importance and the absence of empirical reception data. Overall, the research contributes a nuanced model of “**emotion-indexed implicature**” applicable to political communication in high-stakes conflicts.

**Keywords:** contextual implicature; emotional framing; wartime rhetoric; political pragmatics; Zelenskyy; crisis discourse; persuasion.

**الإستلزام السياقي والتأطير العاطفي في خطابات فلاديمير زيلينسكي في زمن الحرب:****مقاربة تداولية خطابية**

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**المستخلص**

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى بيان كيفية دمج خطاب الرئيس فولوديمير زيلينسكي في زمن الحرب بين التضمين السياقي والتأطير العاطفي المشحون لإثارة الحماس الجماهيري من خلال الصراع الروسي الأوكراني (٢٠٢٢-٢٠٢٤). واستنادا إلى عشرة خطابات رئيسية نُشرت على الموقع الرئاسي الرسمي، يطبق البحث إطاراً تداولياً يجمع بين مفهوم غرايس للإستلزام ومفهوم نظرية الصلة له مع رؤى من نظرية التأطير والاستعارة. كشف الترميز المنهجي عن ٢٢٥ استلزماً محدداً و١٧٣ إشارة عاطفية، كاشفاً عن ثلاثة أنماط متشابهة. أولاً، يعتمد زيلينسكي على مراجع مشحونة تاريخياً، مثل جدار برلين وبابن يار والمجاعة الكبرى، للتركيز على المحاججات الأخلاقية المعقدة في إشارات استنتاجية للغاية، مما يسمح له بتوبيخ الحلفاء المترددين أو تحذير الخصوم دون لغة صريحة في المواجه. ثانياً، يقترن كل معنى غير مباشر بتدفق عاطفي مُعبر: فالخوف والحزن يُؤديان إلى الإلحاح، بينما يُوجّه الفخر والأمل إلى دعم أو مقاومة متواصلين. ثالثاً، تُعدُّ مزاجية الإستلزام والعاطفة هذه حساسة بالنسبة للجمهور: إذ تُؤكِّد الخطابات المحلية على المرونة والمصير التاريخي، بينما تُوظف النداءات الدولية أظراً قائمة على العار أو مُوجَّهة نحو المستقبل من أجل تأمين المساعدة الدبلوماسية والمادية. تُوسِّع النتائج لنطاق التداولية في الأزمات من خلال إظهار أن الإستلزام، في ظروف الحرب، يعمل أداة استراتيجية للحفاظ على التحالف وإدارة التصعيد، مع تأكيد أن العاطفة تعمل كسقالة معرفية وليست فائضاً بلاغياً. تشمل قيود الدراسة التركيز النصي للدراسة وغياب بيانات الاستقبال التجريبية. وبشكل عام، يُساهم البحث في نموذج دقيق لـ"الإستلزام المُفهرس بالعاطفة" قابل للتطبيق على التواصل السياسي في النزاعات عالية المخاطر.

الكلمات الدالة: التضمين السياقي؛ التأطير العاطفي؛ خطابة زمن الحرب؛ البراجماتية السياسية؛ زيلينسكي؛ خطاب الأزمة؛ الإقناع.

**1. Introduction****1.1 Zelensky's Rhetorical Prominence During Wartime**

The February 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine changed the world's view of politics when the world finally met with Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelensky. Zelensky is an entertainer and media character who entered politics. Lately, he emerged as an effective communicator, using his speeches to motivate audiences at home and abroad. Unlike many leaders, Zelensky's speeches during the war encompass discourse-historical methods, irony, and performance in his speeches; although apparant gap remains in comprehensive pragmatic linguistic analyses of the implicatures, presuppositions, and speech acts that support audience cooperation and narrative constructing.

The absence of analysis indicates the need for the current study because of Zelensky's informal, online- mediated style of communication, highlighting the need for critical analysis to shed light on possible persuasive or cooperative illocutionary acts to earn support and promote the national identity. The study attempts to tackle this

shortcoming by examining these pragmatic instruments, which deal with the lack of awareness about how they are used to manipulate conceptions and geopolitical processes.

Today, the wars, where the media and the public understand what is significant, have become an essential tool for Zelenskyy's speech communication. He speaks on TV, at international meetings, and in videos. His style of speech is distinguished by immediacy, critical thinking, and diplomacy. Some people associate their leadership with that of Winston Churchill, but it is more relevant nowadays, where everything is interconnected to the media. Zelenskyy's ability to persuade the war comes from making war personal and important, using the language that correlates with the values of their audience. His speech, especially during a crisis, requires accurate study, employing a pragmatic and linguistic approach [1].

### 1.3 Research Objective and Problem Statement

#### Research Objective:

This study aims to examine the pragmatic-discursive strategies employed by Volodymyr Zelenskyy throughout wartime speeches, concentrating on contextual implicature and emotional framing. The analysis displays these strategies concerning the effectiveness of his political communication during times of armed conflict.

#### Problem Statement:

Despite the great attention presented to Zelenskyy's speeches in media and political discourse, there is a deficiency in exhaustive linguistic analysis exploring how his rhetorical strategies function at the pragmatic level. Particularly, academic studies have addressed the interconnection between contextual implicature and emotional framing in constructing persuasive wartime narratives. This study tackles this gap by investigating how meaning is indirectly constructed and emotionally charged in Zelenskyy's speeches, contributing to broader discussions in crisis discourse and political pragmatics.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Research Design

The study employed an **integrated qualitative** model that combines (a) **pragmatic micro-analysis**-focusing on contextual implicature and speech-act force-with (b) **critical discourse analysis (CDA)** of emotional framing, narrative structure, and metaphor. This dual model was chosen because the communicative success of wartime rhetoric depends on *how meaning is implied* (pragmatics) and *how it is felt* (discursive framing). The overall strategy was exploratory-interpretive rather than hypothesis-testing, allowing inductive insights to emerge while remaining grounded in established pragmatic theory (Grice, Sperber & Wilson) and informed by scholarship (Goffman, Lakoff).[2][3][4][5]

### 2.2 Corpus and Data Collection

A purposive corpus of **ten landmark speeches** by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was drawn from the **official English-language portal of the Office of the President of Ukraine** (president.gov.ua/en/news/speeches). The sampling window spans from Day 2 of the invasion (February 25, 2022) to August 19, 2024, ensuring both temporal breadth and rhetorical evolution. The selection criteria were:[6][7]

- **Relevance** – each speech explicitly addresses war-related themes;
- **Audience diversity** – domestic, regional, and global forums;
- **Rhetorical salience** – widely cited or circulated addresses;
- **Availability of an authenticated transcript** in English.

Transcripts were downloaded as plain text, stripped of web formatting, and cross-checked against video captions when available.

Table No.1

ID	Date	Venue / Primary Audience	Context & Genre	Word-count
S1	25 Feb 2022	Kyiv – National TV	“First full-scale war address”	2 231
S2	17 Mar 2022	German Bundestag	Diplomatic plea to the EU core	1 644
S3	4 Jul 2022	Univ. of Tokyo	Cultural diplomacy	1 270
S4	24 Aug 2023	Kyiv – Indep.-Day	Patriotic ceremony	1 925
S5	31 Dec 2023	National broadcast	New-Year reflection	1 801
S6	24 Dec 2023	Christmas address	Soldier-centred homily	1 497
S7	20 Sep 2023	UN Security Council	Legal/diplomatic critique	2 112
S8	19 Aug 2024	Joint EU presser	Defence-industrial appeal	1 586
S9	12 Mar 2024	EU Justice Forum	Rule-of-law mobilisation	1 438
S10	22 Sep 2023	U.S. Capitol	Transatlantic solidarity	1 902

[6][8][9][10][11][12][13][7][14][15]

### 2.3 Segmentation and Unit of Analysis

To maintain transparency in the analytic workload, each speech was segmented into pragmatic episodes-stretches of discourse that are internally cohesive and concentrated around a single rhetorical move (average length  $\approx$  approximately 60 words). Within this group, fifteen exemplar utterances are extracted for each analytical dimension:

- **Indirectness / Contextual Implicature**
- **Shared Cultural-Historical Allusion**
- **Emotion-laden Framing**
- **Pragmatics  $\times$  Emotion Integration**

Extraction followed *maximum-variation* logic: there are no two examples that originate from the same paragraph, and every speech contributes to every table. This guarantees representativeness while allowing close textual reading.[16]

### 2.4 Analytical Framework and Coding Procedure

#### 2.4.1 Pragmatic Layer

- **Conversational Implicature:** identification of maxim-flouting or relevance-based inferences.
- **Speech-Act Force:** classification per Searle (assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, declarative).[17]

#### 2.4.2 Discursive Layer

- **Emotion Frames:** resistance, fear, hope, unity-detected by appraisal language, evaluative epithets, and figurative clustering.
- **Metaphor & Narrative:** coded using the MIPVU protocol; mapped onto Lakoffian source–target domains (LIGHT/DARK, SHIELD/BODY, FAMILY/NATION).[18]

#### 2.4.3 Coding Workflow

1. **Develop a draft codebook** from pilot-coding 500 words of S1 and S2.

2. **Two independent coders** applied the codebook to the full corpus with NVivo 14.
3. **Inter-coder reliability:** Krippendorff's  $\alpha = .91$  for implicature tags;  $\alpha = .88$  for emotion frames. Discrepancies were resolved through adjudication sessions.
4. **Exemplar selection:** after full coding, NVivo queries isolated the highest-density nodes; researchers manually chose contextually richest lines to populate the four 15-row tables reported in Section 4.

### 2.5 Validity, Reliability, and Researcher Reflexivity

- **Triangulation:** textual findings were cross-checked against video tone, gesture, and published media reception to confirm interpretation.
- **Audit Trail:** all coding decisions, NVivo queries, and extraction rationales were logged in a shared repository for reproducibility.
- **Peer Debriefing:** an external pragmatics scholar reviewed 10% of coding units; feedback informed final category refinement.

### 2.6 Ethical Considerations

All materials are **public-domain governmental communications**; no personal data was processed. However, institutional review board oversight was unnecessary. Transcripts are cited verbatim, with URL links provided in analytic tables. Context was preserved to avoid misquotation, and analytical commentary refrains from partisan endorsement.

### 3.1 Contextual Implicature Analysis

#### 3.1.1 Indirectness & Inferred Meaning

Table No.2

No	Verbatim excerpt	Pragmatic move (how meaning is implied, not said)	Source
1	"We are <b>left alone</b> in defense of our state."	Hints that allies' hesitation equals complicity; invites guilt.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
2	"I <b>stay in the capital</b> , I stay with my people."	Performs <i>self-presentational bravado</i> → compares with leaders who flee.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
3	"You are <b>like behind the wall again</b> ."	Metaphorical accusation of German moral isolationism.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
4	" <b>Nord Stream was a weapon</b> , not an economy."	Re-categorises commerce as aggression without using the word "blame".	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
5	"Even <b>silence is a position</b> ."	Co-opts neutrality as tacit support for Russia.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
6	"Veto power in the hands of the aggressor has <b>pushed the UN into a dead end</b> ."	Delegitimises the UN without saying "UN is useless".	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
7	"So, the General Assembly <b>should be given real power</b> to overcome the veto."	Soft imperative (proposal) masked as gratitude.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
8	"We <b>defeated the darkness</b> ."	Double implicature—lights restored <i>and</i> evil confronted.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
9	"Ukraine <b>is alive... fights... advances</b> ."	Ellipsis forces listeners to fill in the unspoken hardship.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
10	"Guardian <b>angels</b> prove that <b>miracles do exist</b> ."	Invokes divine legitimation; enemy = evil by implication.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
11	"Russia <b>should feel what it has done</b> ."	Threat of retaliation delivered as a	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>

		moral empathy request.	
12	“The whole naïve concept of <b>red lines... crumbled</b> near Sudzha.”	Declares Western self-deterrence obsolete.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
13	“Everything depends <b>solely on courage.</b> ”	Frames hesitation as moral failure, not tactical debate.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
14	“Not a temporary pause of horror... Ukrainians have the right to <b>true and lasting peace.</b> ”	Rejects half-measures without naming mediators.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
15	“We will be <b>tough on anyone</b> who tries to undermine... from within.”	Coded warning to domestic elites couched as patriotism.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>

The previous instances confirm that Zelenskyy prefers **implicature over explicit accusation** when addressing sensitive audiences. Across the corpus, indirectness does three things:

1. **Preserves diplomatic face** (Rows 1,3,7) by avoiding overt blame while still signalling dissatisfaction;
2. **Elicits audience inference** (Rows 5,8,12), which deepens cognitive engagement compared with direct statements;
3. **Invites moral alignment** by letting listeners supply the ethical conclusion themselves (Row 10).

Such strategic understatement is a hallmark of high-stakes wartime rhetoric and fits Grice’s *maxim-flouting* framework.

### 3.1.2 Shared Cultural / Historical Knowledge

Table No.3

№	Excerpt + implicit reference	Why does it resonate pragmatically	Source
1	“Not the <b>Berlin Wall.</b> ” – Cold-War divide	Frames German inaction as historical <i>déjà-vu</i> .	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
2	“After the destruction of Kharkiv... <b>for the second time in 80 years.</b> ” – WWII bombing	Evokes the collective memory of Nazi air raids.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
3	“Remember what the <b>Berlin Airlift</b> meant to you.”	Implies a no-fly zone without uttering the term.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
4	“Attack on <b>Babyn Yar.</b> ” – Holocaust site	Equates Russian strikes with genocide.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
5	“Here, in <b>St. Sophia Square.</b> ” – Kyivan Rus origins	Claims civilizational authenticity over Russia’s.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
6	“I am in the <b>Kyiv Pechersk Lavra.</b> ”	Signals spiritual ownership; undercuts Moscow patriarchate.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
7	“We all wait for the <b>first star</b> on Christmas Eve.”	Shared Slavic ritual → national togetherness.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
8	“Our children were taken to <b>Russia’s filtration camps.</b> ”	Recalls Soviet deportations; moral outrage.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
9	“An operation near <b>Kursk.</b> ”	Mirrors 1943 Red Army offensive; roles reversed.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
10	“We remember the <b>Holodomor.</b> ” – 1930s famine	Historicizes present aggression as cyclical genocide.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
11	“1945 taught us peace is <b>not given, but won.</b> ”	Connects the WWII victory myth to the current struggle.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>

12	“We are <b>not a buffer zone.</b> ” – Cold War jargon	Rejects spheres-of-influence thinking.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
13	“This is our <b>1939.</b> ”	Frames the invasion as Blitzkrieg; urgency to act.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
14	“The <b>Iron Curtain</b> rises again.”	Warns of global bifurcation if Ukraine falls.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
15	“Kyiv is the <b>cradle of Christian Europe.</b> ”	Civilisational ethos → claims leadership role.	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>

This table illustrates how Zelenskyy **anchors persuasion in collective memory**. References span WWII (Rows 2, 4), Cold-War symbolism (Rows 1, 10, 14), and medieval heritage (Row 5), enabling multi-layered bonding with both domestic and European audiences. The pattern shows two pragmatic pay-offs:

- **Legitimacy building** – positioning Ukraine as the rightful heir to European democratic traditions (Rows 5, 15);
- **Moral framing** – casting Russian aggression as a recurrence of universally condemned atrocities (Rows 3, 8, 10).

These allusions function as *contextual enrichers* that shorten argumentative distance: the historical analogy makes the persuasive work, so the speaker doesn't need to.

### 3.2. Emotional Framing Patterns

Table No.4

№	Quote	Dominant emotion	Discursive cue	Source
1	“ <b>Glory</b> to the Armed Forces of Ukraine!”	Pride / Hope	Epideictic exclamation	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
2	“Thousands of Ukrainians <b>died in three weeks.</b> ”	Fear / Moral shock	Stark numerals	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
3	“We cannot lay down our weapons, <b>or we will disappear.</b> ”	Existential dread → resolve	Conditional ultimatum	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
4	“We <b>defeated the darkness.</b> ”	Triumph	Light/dark metaphor	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
5	“Guardian <b>angels of Ukraine.</b> ”	Reverence	Religious metaphor	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
6	“Ukraine <b>is alive... fights... advances.</b> ”	Confidence	Anaphoric triad	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
7	“Veto should not serve as a <b>weapon</b> for those obsessed with hatred.”	Righteous anger	Metaphor + antithesis	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
8	“You are <b>behind the wall.</b> ”	Shame	Spatial metaphor	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
9	“Ukraine <b>will prevail.</b> ”	Certainty	Declarative future	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
10	“This is a <b>cruel paradox</b> of the XXI century.”	Tragic irony	Oxymoron	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
11	“Russia should <b>feel what it has done.</b> ”	Retributive justice	Metonymy	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
12	“The world hears and <b>supports</b> Ukraine.”	Reassurance	Inclusive “world” trope	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
13	“Not a temporary illusion ... <b>lasting peace.</b> ”	Security	Contrastive pair	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
14	“Everything depends <b>solely on courage.</b> ”	Inspiration	Value framing	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
15	“Spring will come <b>again.</b> ”	Hope	Seasonal metaphor	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>

**Macro-frames: Existential Struggle, Moral Superiority, Collective Resilience, Future-oriented Hope.**

The emotional taxonomy reveals an intentional **oscillation between threat and optimism**. Zelenskyy rarely leaves audiences in fear; every fear-laden datum (Rows 2, 3) is counter-balanced by statements of resilience or certitude (Rows 4, 6, 9). Stylistically, metaphors (*light vs darkness*), anaphora, and religious imagery (Row 5) are deployed as **emotional amplifiers**, transforming abstract geopolitical stakes into **visceral, human-centred narratives**. The pattern aligns with Lakoff's framing theory: by activating stable metaphoric schemas, the speaker primes audiences to adopt supportive stances almost automatically.

**3.3. Pragmatics × Discourse Integration**

**Table No.5**

Nº	Utterance	Hidden implicature	Emotion reinforced	Target audience	Source
1	"We are <b>left alone</b> ..."	Allies' inaction = betrayal	Urgent solidarity	NATO/EU leaders	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
2	"You are <b>behind the wall</b> again."	Germany shirks leadership	Shame → action	Bundestag MPs	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
3	" <b>Nord Stream was a weapon</b> ."	Energy trade financed the war	Moral anger	German public	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
4	"It's <b>just peace</b> ."	Peace is a basic right	Calm resolve	Japanese youth	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
5	"Veto power... <b>dead end</b> ."	UN reform indispensable	Frustration→Reform zeal	Global South diplomats	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
6	"Guardian <b>angels</b> ..."	Sacralises soldiers	Reverence	Domestic families	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
7	"We <b>defeated the darkness</b> ."	Victory achievable	Triumphal hope	Nationwide TV	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
8	"Russia <b>should feel</b> ..."	Implied counter-strike	Moral vengeance	Kremlin elite	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
9	"Red lines <b>crumbled</b> ."	West may escalate safely	Liberating boldness	Western strategists	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
10	"Not a <b>temporary illusion</b> ."	Warns against half-peace	Desire for permanence	Nordic Parliament	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
11	"Ukraine <b>will prevail</b> ."	Fate already sealed	Collective confidence	Independence-Day crowd	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
12	"Everything depends <b>solely on courage</b> ."	War = moral test	Inspiration	Diplomatic corps	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
13	"First star... <b>air raid over</b> ."	Blends ritual & danger	Bittersweet hope	Home-front civilians	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
14	"We're <b>capable of winning</b> ."	Self-legitimizing prophecy	Empowerment	Mixed audiences	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>
15	"General Assembly <b>should overcome the veto</b> ."	Directive was masked as a proposal	Determined optimism	UN member states	<a href="http://president.gov.ua">president.gov.ua</a>

Cross-mapping implicature with emotion shows synergistic layering: each hidden pragmatic step is buttressed by a targeted affective cue, maximising persuasive force. For external elites (Rows 1–5), shame or righteous anger nudges policy change without overt threats; for domestic stakeholders (Rows 6–9, 11–13), hope and empowerment sustain morale despite ongoing hardship. The table also demonstrates Zelenskyy's audience-adapted code-switching: the same conceptual tool (e.g., metaphor of a *weapon* or *wall*) is recalibrated emotionally to fit the listener's role and duty. This supports the article's thesis that effective wartime rhetoric depends on the seamless fusion of pragmatic indirection and emotional framing.

#### 4. Synthesis

Pragmatic *indirection* (what is inferred) and discursive *emotion* (what is felt) act in tandem. Indirect blame ("wall", "weapon", "dead end") is fused with **shame or duty**, motivating partners to act without overt confrontation. Domestically, implicatures of endurance ("defeated darkness", "prevail") pair with **hopeful frames**, sustaining morale. Video cues (measured tone for grief; emphatic gestures for resolve) synchronise with textual strategies, completing the multimodal persuasive effect.

#### 5. Discussion

##### 5.1 Interpretation of Findings

The analysis suggests that Volodymyr Zelenskyy's wartime speech is relevant, implicit, and an intensive interview of the emotion-laden framing through a lattice. Implications allow them to criticize, demand help, or threaten revenge while avoiding explicit, facial danger speech acts that can fracture the alliance or provide opponents with propaganda material. The audience is invited to supply the missing proposals - for example, when Germany is told that it is "**again behind the wall,**" the Bundestag should never estimate moral prosecution without listening to the words of appeasement or cowardice. This indirectness not only molds diplomatic relations; it binds the audience to become co-authors of a moral story, deepens cognitive engagement, and thus strengthens the persuasion.

Emotion-framing acts as the driving force that pushes these ideas into action. Fear and sadness are felt but quickly transform into feelings of pride, anger, or hope directed towards the group. This back-and-forth creates a cycle where negative emotions form a sense of urgency, while positive emotions create a sense of confidence. Above all, each emotional moment is connected to a specific action, like supporting sanctions, giving up weapons, or continuing during power cuts. The overall effect is a way of speaking that is both full of meaning and strong in emotion, making things clear through connection rather than direct statements.

For people inside the country, the messages focus on strength and fairness from a higher power, which assist to create a picture of someone who has been wronged and is heroic. For international lawmakers, the messages are more focused on feelings of guilt, shame, and a future for Europe that everyone shares. In all cases, using metaphors connects these ideas. Zelenskyy changes complicated political ideas into simple,

everyday comparisons like light and dark, walls and freedom, or weapons and shields. This makes it easier for people to understand and feel strong emotions about the message. His video style, with steady eye contact, pauses, and simple but powerful body language, supports these messages and makes them feel more real.

### 5.2 Implications for Understanding Political Emotion and Persuasion

The study reinforces emerging consensus in political communication that **emotion is not ancillary to persuasion; it is constitutive of it**. Zelenskyy's speeches clarify how discrete emotions map onto distinct persuasive objectives:

- **Fear** triggers urgency, pushing passive audiences toward immediate attention;
- **Hope** sustains long-term commitment by promising eventual reward.
- **Righteous anger** legitimises punitive policies and delegitimises conciliatory voices;
- **Collective pride** fosters social cohesion and prosocial sacrifice.

By coupling each emotional surge with carefully curated implicatures, Zelenskyy secures what rhetorical theorists call *actionability*: listeners are not merely moved; they are shown a pathway to morally congruent action (sending arms, fortifying shelters, lobbying parliaments). The findings also a warning against viewing emotional appeals as manipulative in themselves; rather, they serve **cognitive scaffolds** that anchor abstract geopolitical stakes in concrete, personally resonant texts. For scholars and practitioners, this means that effective crisis messaging should be evaluated not simply on “**accuracy versus propaganda**,” but on how well it harmonises emotional rhythm with inference workload.[19]

## 6. Conclusions

Through the investigation of the ten main speeches given by President Volodimir Zelensky between 2022 and 2024, the study illustrated how leaders convince people during war by using two main ideas to work together: reference-based meanings and carefully chosen emotions. The first idea, called reference-dependence, puts the blame on the speaker, bids for action, and warns, without addressing direct accusations to the official people. This method helps to keep important alliances strong while people still get to take the right action. These hidden meanings get power from the context of famous, emotionally charged events such as the Berlin Wall, Holodomor, or Bebin Yaar, carrying a lot of moral meaning in a single, clear indicator.

Zelenskyy crosses feelings such as fear or sadness, disappointment, into pride, determination, and hopeful feelings, which give people a clear way from anxiety to active support. Research illustrates that a considerable part of their speeches is when a hidden message and an emotion come together, such as constructive criticism with a sense of shame or a subtle promise with a shared pride. This combination makes the same message effective for both domestic supporters, who need to feel confident, and international allies, who may want a combination of encouragement and moral support before assisting.

This study adds to understanding how the language works in an emergency; it shows that indirect meaning is not only a good way but an important tool for the management of groups and to control how things grow. It also supports modern views

that emotions are a basic part of how people think, not just something for effect. For those who occupy power positions or crisis communication, this model can be helpful in balancing honesty with diplomacy.

The current study mainly looked at the text of speeches and only examined visual and tone clues in a general way. It didn't measure how people felt or if their views changed over time. Future works could deal with body language and speech patterns, alongside testing how people respond, or compare Zelenskyy's style with other leaders in different conflicts to observe how these emotional and indirect messages work across cultures and media.

### CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

There are no conflicts of interest

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