

Strengthening Unity: allusion as a discursive practice in President Zelenskyy's war rhetoric

Iryna Nedainova

University of West Bohemia
Department of Philological Studies
11 Riegrova St, Pilsen 30100, Czechia
Email: ineda@ff.zcu.cz, nedafox@gmail.com
ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3785-0597>
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Abstract. This research examines the use of allusion as a powerful linguistic tool employed by President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy in his international war discourse. Faced with the urgent need to secure assistance and support from the world community throughout the first year of Russia's large-scale invasion, Zelenskyy strategically references well-known cultural facts to create a specific mental image of Ukrainians as a nation that upholds humanistic values such as tolerance, equality, and justice. The study analyses five types of audiences targeted by the Ukrainian President in his appeals: national parliaments, collective political bodies, business forums, educational institutions, and cultural assemblies. The findings demonstrate that allusion in his discourse is a key discursive practice tailored to each audience's specificity. In every instance, the identified allusions reveal their emotional, evaluative, and associative connotations. In President Zelenskyy's speeches, allusions also function as tactical instruments that yield effective results in his communication with international audiences. The paper concludes that the use of allusion makes the President's speeches emphatic and his audiences more receptive, showcasing a high pragmatic capacity to craft desired images within foreign linguistic and cultural contexts.

Keywords: President Zelenskyy; war discourse; allusion; a discursive practice; tactical instrument; targeted audience.

Introduction

Today, when Ukraine has been in the world's focus since Russia violated the country's sovereignty and integrity, the Ukrainians admit that they have never before been as close to any leader as they are to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Very quickly, the Ukrainians took a new look at their values; therefore, peace and the physical existence of a person were thrust to the fore in Ukrainian society. As President of a country at war, Zelenskyy

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consistently reminds policy-makers worldwide of the humanitarian tragedy unfolding in Ukraine and the country's urgent military needs.

Having spent many years on stage as a professional actor impersonating famous Ukrainian political figures, President Zelenskyy seems to speak his mind driven by impulse or emotions to convince the public. The President's appeals to the world community are strategically thought out and notable for a clear understanding of the enemy's image as well as of the wish to gain effective and rapid support to prevent the killing of Ukrainian sovereignty and the Ukrainian people. His pleas are always distinctive, emotional and utterly effective in providing a successful communicative act and reaching his intended goal – getting effective and strategically quick support.

President Zelenskyy delivers meticulously crafted speeches, each tailored to resonate perfectly with its intended audience (Adams, 2022; Del Monte, 2022; Lazar, 2022). It is widely acknowledged that he relies on a team of skilled speechwriters behind the scenes. However, Mykhailo Podolyak, an adviser to the Head of the President's Office, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, personally authored the key points: he set the framework and made the structural design. Under his leadership, the information vertical has been built based on the consolidating position of the state and the power, i.e., *a one-voice message* characterised by fidelity, heartedness and resilience. As Podolyak observes, President Zelenskyy has taken on the responsibility of being the primary figure in media communication, making it his personal frontline battlefield (Podolyak, 2023).

As noted by Nomi Claire Lazar, a politics professor at the University of Ottawa, Zelenskyy “may be setting the tone for a new kind of statecraft in the virtual age” (Lazar, 2022):

So Zelenskyy gets away with stepping into our living room, the heart of our nation, and saying to our prime minister: Justin, don't you love your children? Then help us save ours! (...) “Yeah, Justin!” we think in chorus. “Whose side are we on?” And Justin redirects our tax dollars, safe in the knowledge this is what we, the people want. It's easier to do the right thing when it's what the people want. And Zelenskyy's novel statecraft, his rhetorical masterstroke, has made the whole world want it.

This article seeks the manifestations of allusions in the international speeches of the President of Ukraine by assessing their gravity in creating the concept of Ukrainians' European identity. The aim is to prove that allusion works as a strategic means in Zelenskyy's discourse on the war to create the desired image, which, in this study, is understood as the concept of “a shared identity”. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) applied to the research is valuable in understanding how Zelenskyy's use of allusion helps to shape a shared European identity for Ukraine and allows us to examine the subtle ways language influences perceptions, power, and social identification. Through CDA, Zelenskyy's discourse emerges as a plea for support and a powerful tool for embedding Ukraine's identity within a broader European identity, fostering solidarity based on shared history and values. For this reason, this study rests upon Norman Fairclough and Ruth

Wodak's fundamental approach (Fairclough, Wodak, 1997, p. 258) to language "as a form of 'social practice'" as an orientation to the study of language means within the processes of social change in their discourse aspect.

1. Methodology and corpus design

All discourses are pragmatic and organised. When it comes to political discourse, it is inherently dominant and shapes the way events and intentions are perceived (Chilton, 2004; van Dijk, 2008; Dunmire, 2012; Keach, 2015). When we speak of President Zelenskyy's appeals to the world community since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, we refer to the political strategy aimed at promoting the general welfare, which Higgins and Walker (2012) describe as "adducing irrefutable proofs of the speaker's belief". In addressing national and global security issues, international relations, and geopolitical strategies, Zelenskyy articulates his ideas to achieve specific goals, such as making or influencing decisions – decisions that pertain to joint action. In this context, allusion becomes a tool to strengthen the argumentation by drawing on widely recognized and emotionally charged references. It also helps construct an undeniable and urgent reality, compelling the international community to respond to the war in Ukraine. Through this device, the Ukrainian President adds layers of meaning to his speeches, which, combined with explicit and implicit information, create a persuasive and irrefutable call to action.

Since language emerges from social and cultural interaction, motivated by the struggles or opposite views among different groups of people, using it is never neutral. As Yule points out, "It is almost inevitable that our background knowledge structures, our schemata for making sense of the world, will be culturally determined" (Yule, 1996, p. 87). In this research, the cultural marking of allusion is seen as a generative factor for its emphatic function in President Zelenskyy's discourse when he intentionally uses culturally marked allusions in every socially targeted group for constructing the images for persuading the audience to give Ukraine all the needed assistance.

Leveraging the linguistic theories on the definition of allusion, its nature, types and use (Harmon, 2015; Lennon, 2004; Pasco, 1994; Roy, 2011; Valotka, 2019; Vasylenko, 2022), in the current study, it is considered as the act of alluding to some known fact and, in its common manifestation, as "'a frame' or a 'combination of words' that is accepted in the language community as an example of preformed linguistic material" (Leppihalme, 1997, p. 41).

This research is organised to support the argument that allusion serves as a powerful tactical tool in President Zelenskyy's wartime rhetoric. The study proceeds as follows:

1. identifies the strategic focus within Zelenskyy's discourse on specific events;
2. extracts tactical elements from selected discursive events;
3. analyses the presence of allusion within these tactical segments;
4. defines the function of each allusion, along with its source genre, within the context of the discourse;
5. assesses the associative connotations of each allusion and its emphatic role.

The corpus consists of President Zelenskyy's international speeches from the onset of Russia's expanded offensive (March 2022 to February 2023). These speeches span a variety of contexts and audiences, including addresses to national parliaments, political coalitions, business forums, educational institutions, and cultural gatherings. Each speech within the corpus has been chosen for its relevance to the study of allusion as a rhetorical tactical element in Zelenskyy's discourse, reflecting his efforts to mobilise international support and influence global perceptions of Ukraine. The dataset comprises 37 speeches sourced from the official website of the Ukrainian President, and 63 cases of allusion were identified¹. Some occurrences of allusion are included in the paper to illustrate the research hypothesis.

2. Allusion as a tactical instrument in President Zelenskyy's discursive practice according to the targeted audience

2.1 *National parliaments*

Addressing the national parliaments in different states, President Zelenskyy often makes reference to national heroes and political figures; he draws parallels with the events that have marked the national memory of various countries (e.g. Pearl Harbour, 11 September attacks, the Berlin Blockade). In the same way, he has quoted powerful men and women of the past (e.g. Winston Churchill, Golda Meir) or has touched upon culturally significant memories, such as referencing former Polish President Lech Kaczyński's 2008 speech, connecting past threats to present dangers and warning about Russian expansionism; or mentioning of the 2010 Smolensk tragedy to evoke empathy and a shared sense of loss, pointing to unresolved tensions with Russia. Delivering his speech to the House of Commons in the British Parliament in March 2022, he invoked Winston Churchill by repeatedly using a famous three-word phrase "*we shall fight*" that Winston Churchill repeated in his speech of 4 June 1940 to the House of Commons warning the UK Parliament of a possible German invasion. In his speeches, Zelenskyy strengthens a symbolic bridge between Ukraine and each audience, comparing Ukrainian cities to other cities and places in Europe (e.g. Mariupol to Genova and the ruins of Verdun in France in 1916). He reminds audiences of the risk of history repeating itself. For instance, when speaking before the Japanese Parliament, he raised the issue of nuclear disasters, and while addressing the Bundestag, he mentioned the word 'wall' sixteen times.

In his speech to both houses of the Parliament of the Czech Republic on 15 June 2022, Zelenskyy says:

These are words of extraordinary importance. They had such importance when **they sounded on Czech radio in 1968**, supporting the resistance. They are extremely important now as well, when – recalling them – we are talking about those who fought for freedom for your people. (Zelenskyy, 15.06.2022)

¹ In the case of the President addresses the same allusion multiple times within the same speech, it is counted as a single instance.

The President of Ukraine referred to the events of the Prague Spring in 1968, the period of political liberalisation and fierce mass protest in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic against the communist regime imposed by the Soviet Union. He alluded to “*the fateful Czech ‘eights’ – 1938, 1948, 1968*” relating to the number of events in the 20th-century, to the Munich agreement of 1938, the Communist takeover of the country in 1948, and the Soviet invasion of the Czech lands in 1968 as “*the comprehensive answers to all those who still want to “pacify” the aggressor by betraying European values and weakening Europe*”. To focus on the unity of the Europeans around the war in Ukraine, Zelenskyy mentions the appeal “*J sme s vámi, buďte s námi!*” a Czech radio broadcast that became a call to rise in revolt against the Nazis in 1945 and the words of *Václav Havel*, the first president of post-Communist Czechoslovakia and Czechia:

We can come – and we will come – to the fact that the principle of following the rule: “**J sme s vámi, buďte s námi!**” – will have a result that can be described in other important words – in the words of *Václav Havel*: “**Truth and love have to overcome lies and hatred.**” (Zelenskyy, 15.06.2022)

By focusing on these examples, the analysis demonstrates how Zelenskyy uses historical and cultural allusions, addressing the empowered audience to make strategic decisions for their nations, influence the universal struggle against oppression, and view Ukraine as a natural ally in this fight. Cultural references underscored by historical facts carefully chosen for their emotional resonance contribute to **symbolic bridge-building** invoking a common moral stance against Russian aggression.

2.2 Collective political bodies

In examining powerful collective political bodies for the research, the study addresses different collective international bodies or powerful political reunions like the European Council, the NATO Summit, the G7 Leaders' Summit, and the UN Security Council. Appealing to such influential reputable reunions, the President of Ukraine draws more upon historical allusions like mentioning the “*infamous Munich speech of one leader*”, alluding to Hitler's speech in 1929 to the German citizens and military, which began with the words: “If men wish to live, then they are forced to kill others”, or mentioning about “*gray zones*” like the territories of total war or giving the facts on genocide across various regions worldwide or referring to *the Cold War* which is not that old period in the world history. The better half of the President's allusions to these bodies go to the ones connected to World War II and the foundational instruments that today's world must uphold to live in peace and justice. In his speech before the UN Security Council, Zelenskyy invokes the UN Charter and its Chapter II to explicitly link the Russian Federation to violations of international law by a United Nations member. As the speech by the President of Ukraine at the video conference of the G7 leaders was delivered on 8 May 2022, when all humankind remembered the events of World War II, Zelenskyy alluded frequently to historical facts from that period, drawing comparisons to the present-day situation in Ukraine.

Today, 8 May, is a key **day of remembrance for all the victims of World War II**, for the fragility of peace and the inadmissibility of any anti-humanist regimes. But what is remembrance for others today, for our people is, unfortunately, just news, every day. (...) To do so is to imitate precisely the evil that **the Nazis brought to Europe**. The missile strikes at Odesa and our other cities are an imitation of how **the Nazis tried to bomb and destroy European cities by bombardment**. (...) What definitely shouldn't have returned to Europe 77 years after. But, unfortunately, I state: it's back. That is why the solidarity of the whole free world has returned. That is why such historical concepts as **"Lend-Lease" and "Marshall Plan"** have returned. I am grateful to the United States and our European colleagues for these initiatives. (Zelenskyy, 08.05.2022)

Zelenskyy's references to historical events and shared values suggest a long-term vision for Ukraine's alliances beyond the immediate need for support. By aligning Ukraine's struggles with fundamental elements of this audience's identity, he lays the groundwork for lasting alliances that transcend immediate wartime needs. This approach reinforces the idea that supporting Ukraine is part of a long-term commitment to international security and democratic values, making it difficult for countries to withdraw support without appearing to abandon these principles.

2.3 Business forums

When speaking to business circle audiences like the 26th Annual Economist Government Roundtable, the World Economic Forum in Davos, the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Lugano or Qatar's Doha Forum, Zelenskyy presents factual arguments aimed at mobilising global businesses around the world to support the economic sanctions imposed on Russia and stop their activities in this country not to sponsor those who wage war in Ukraine. The Ukrainian President keeps asking for post-war reconstruction support, inviting companies to join projects and taking "patronage" over rebuilding specific cities. He underscores that Ukraine is the gateway to Europe and that Ukraine is defending the principles of the international liberal order, particularly European values in business. For this reason, for example, he reminds business leaders about when the world powers and the business mightiest failed to prevent the two biggest tragedies of the 20th century: the First and the Second World Wars. Using the allusions to these facts, the Ukrainian President sends the message to the business world: Ukraine may become the ground for the third world war, and you should be aware of this danger:

So, history remembers many moments when everything changed dramatically. It remembers, for example, how just a few shots can lead to millions of casualties. If these were the shots **on 28 June, 1914 in Sarajevo**. History remembers how much grief one person's evil can cause if he sees that he is not being resisted enough. As it was, for example, **in 1938 in Munich**. (Zelenskyy, 23.05.2022)

He drops names as examples of how mainstream wisdom can do great things for one country to gain the good:

George Marshall, a well-remembered man, said in 1947: "Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist." (Zelenskyy, 23.05.2022)

The allusion refers to George Catlett Marshall, who advocated for US economic and political support for post-war European recovery and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1953 for the Marshall Plan, which bore his name in recognition of this work.

Using allusions like these, Zelenskyy frames Ukraine's struggle as a defence of European and global stability, and underscores that supporting Ukraine is a moral stance and an investment in regional security, which is vital for businesses.

2.4 Educational institutions

The student community is another strategically targeted group in President Zelenskyy's war discourse. The main idea of this communication is not only to construct the Ukrainian reality and demonstrate to students the humanitarian tragedy that the world is facing today but also to appeal to the democratic values that resonate with students and academic community. Given the young age of this audience, Zelenskyy primarily employs cultural allusions in his speeches that are familiar to today's youth, for instance, comparing a full-scale war in Ukraine with a *tsunami* during the meeting with the Japanese students or remembering the *Holocaust* and the *Menorah*, the two untouchable concepts for Israeli students.

In a similar vein addressing the student community of leading Canadian universities on 22 June 2022, Zelenskyy likened Ukraine's underdog status to that of the championship-winning basketball team *Toronto Raptors* or communicating the US university community and the Stanford University community on different dates of the same year he invoked the tragic all-American events like the *9/11 attack on the "twins"* and *24 May in Texas* – the Uvalde school shooting which come near the hearts of the American people.

Appealing to the students, the President of Ukraine often alludes to World War II, which stands to reason as it was one of the most ruinous conflicts in human history, resulting in the loss of millions of lives and causing significant geopolitical and social changes all over the world. World War II has remains alive in the memory of post-war generations, and Zelenskyy persistently resorts to the fact in his speeches to the students of French, German, Japanese, American and Canadian universities, i.e., to the young citizens of the countries that lived through the war.

Of all the speeches to the student community analysed in this research, the address to the community of notable educational institutions of Israel on 23 June 2022 best reflects the use of allusions in Zelenskyy's discourse. The allusions are mainly cultural by type as

he repeatedly references well-known Israeli people like *Golda Meir*, an outstanding Israeli politician, teacher, Israel's first and only female head of government, as well as the first in the Middle East; *Sholem Aleichem*, a prominent Jewish writer; the founders of the State of Israel *Yitzhak Ben-Zvi* and *Waldemar Haffkine*, remarkable scientists in human history, who created the first vaccines against plague and cholera; the great musician *Vladimir Horowitz* and the great physicist *Abram Joffe*; *Vladimir Jabotinsky*, a Zionist leader, author, a founder of the Jewish Self-Defense Organisation in Odesa; *Natan Sharansky*, a Soviet dissident and later Israeli politician, human rights activist. To emphasize the bonds between Ukraine and Israel, Zelenskyy resorts to the countries' common history:

Of course, these are places of sorrow that all mankind must remember and not forget. **The Babin Yar – a symbol of the Holocaust** from bullets, **the Drobytsky Yar** and other such places on the land of then occupied Ukraine, where **the Nazis killed innocent people**. (Zelenskyy, 23.06.2022)

Students and academicians have historically been defenders for free thought, and making them natural allies in supporting Ukraine's fight against oppression is quite strategic: young people and scholars pertain to the most active layer of the global society. Using allusions to intensify his messages about shared values, Zelenskyy states that the people in Ukraine are paying the ultimate price for freedom with their own lives simply because they aspire to have the same rights as other European citizens. References to prominent figures or historical and cultural events associated with democratic resistance can create a sense of solidarity and encourage the audience to perceive Ukraine's struggle as a continuation of these shared ideals.

2.5 Cultural assemblies

During his address to the filmmaking community at the opening of the 75th Cannes International Film Festival on 17 May 2022, President Zelenskyy referred to the inaugural festival in Cannes and connected it with Charlie Chaplin's iconic film work:

The first festival was to begin on 1 September 1939 in Cannes. But **World War II** broke out. For six years, cinematography has been on the frontlines of this war, along with all mankind. For six years, cinematography has been fighting for freedom and also, unfortunately, for the benefit of the dictatorship... **"The Great Dictator" by Charlie Chaplin** did not destroy the real dictator then. But thanks to it, cinematography ceased to be dumb. (Zelenskyy, 17.05.2022)

In his online address at the Cannes Lions *International Festival of Creativity* on 21 June and at **the 79th Venice Film Festival opening ceremony in August**, Zelenskyy **emphasised** how the creative fraternity finds apt words and images to reach the depths of the human soul. He alluded to a series of globally recognised creative works such as *Refugee Flag*, *the Fearless Girl*, *the Ice Bucket Challenge*, and *the Rivers of Light*. He mentioned an Italian composer, orchestrator *Ennio Morricone*, whose music the Ukrainians

would prefer to listen “*rather to the tune of ugly chastushkas and sounds of explosions, shots and air raid alert wails*” (Zelenskyy, 31.08.2022).

He wants the audience to take a side of Ukraine and help in the way the cultural community can help – to foster the values of peace and justice and “*NOT to remain silent, NOT to be afraid, NOT to turn your back upon, NOT to walk on by, NOT to remain neutral to the war in Ukraine, the one Russia has unleashed*” (Zelenskyy, 31.08.2022).

The main reason why Volodymyr Zelenskyy uses the cultural arena for his appeals seems to be said by him in his introductory passage when he was opening the 73rd Berlin International Film Festival in 2023: “*Culture chooses a side when it decides to speak out against evil, and it takes a side when it remains silent and in fact helps the evil*”. (Zelenskyy, 17.02.2023). Playing to his audience of film buffs, Zelenskyy chose the movie metaphor to make his point when he referenced to the German director Wim Wenders’ 1987 classic film “Wings of Desire”:

It is enough to mention the story of **the great German director Wim Wenders**. In my opinion, in a certain sense of the word, he broke **the Berlin Wall** two years before its actual fall. In the outstanding **film Der Himmel über Berlin**, where the divided city is united by Angels flying freely over the wall. (Zelenskyy, 17.02.2023)

As the fighting continues, casualties rise, and the humanitarian crisis worsens, the Ukrainian President wants to get the support extended by drawing the world’s attention to the crisis unfolding in his country. His main message to the global cinematographic community is delivered in his first sentence at Berlinale: “*Cinema cannot change the world, but it can influence and inspire people who **can** change the world*”.

3. Functional types and source genre variation of allusion in President Zelenskyy’s discourse

3.1 President’s discourse strategies and tactics

Having studied the discursive events under analysis, the two strategies that President Zelenskyy implemented in his war discourse have been identified: these can be described as constructive and persuasive. He reinforces his discursive positions using vivid word pictures and compels evidence through allusions. Such strategies lead to understanding the advantages the international community shares in supporting Ukraine. Emotional connection with the audience is also intensified by allusions as it is responsive in advocating the President’s assurance of the Ukrainian victory over the Russians and proving that supporting Ukraine today means being on the right track.

Alongside these strategies, Zelenskyy’s war discourse employs various tactics, with a particular focus on *informative, interpretative, problem-solving, and values-sharing* approaches, which he consciously employs to shape the development of facts and arguments, thereby establishing the contextual frame for the allusions he uses.

Table 1 illustrates the use of these tactics in different discursive events.

Table 1. Implementation of discursive tactics based on audience specificity.

Targeted audience	Applied Tactics			
	Informative	Interpretative	Problem-solving	Values-sharing
National parliaments			v	v
Collective political bodies		v		v
Business forums	v		v	
Educational institutions		v		v
Cultural assemblies		v		v

A *values-sharing tactic* prevails when implemented with legislators and policy-makers such as national parliaments and collective political bodies and when fostering solidarity and moral obligation to support Ukraine within educational and cultural communities. It is followed by *an interpretative tactic* more effective within collective political unities, educational societies, and cultural assemblies. A *problem-solving tactic* is effective when Zelenskyy speaks to the national parliaments and at business forums as he tries to connect the allusion with some practical solutions in line with the legislative priorities of the parliaments or business structures. An *informative tactic* is employed when the President appeals to business forums, particularly those related to economic benefits or risks, to allude to facts that emphasise the business community's interest in stability and growth.

The data demonstrates that Zelenskyy's strategic use of these tactics makes the used allusions more relevant and understandable and also significantly amplifies their impact. By tailoring his approach to different audiences, the President of Ukraine ensures that his messages resonate deeply, effectively bridging cultural and contextual gaps, and ultimately strengthening his communication efforts.

3.2 Allusion source genres in discursive events

The data reveal that although the targeted audiences are from different social backgrounds, President Zelenskyy resorts to the same source generic types of allusions, namely the numerous instances of *cultural and historic allusions* in his speeches to every targeted audience. These allusions are powerful because they evoke the collective memory of the horrors and lessons of those events, urging the global community to take action in the face of a similar threat. Zelenskyy taps into universal themes of justice, freedom, and resistance by alluding to well-known cultural symbols or narratives. He frequently refers to the names of prominent people in his speeches, particularly among historical and cultural allusions, and it which often evoke strong emotional responses from the audience – especially when those figures are widely admired or represent shared values.

Cinematographic allusions can be found only in appeals to the cultural assemblies, whereas *literary allusion* is relatively scarce in appeals to every targeted audience. There are no examples of *mythological, biblical and folklore allusions*. The complex nature

of these allusions can explain this: they go beyond general knowledge as they reflect complicated philosophical concepts and moral principles. Such complexity can make understanding the analogies Zelenskyy is trying to produce in his speeches difficult.

Table 2 illustrates a quantitative breakdown of the used allusions used by their source genres regarding the targeted audience.

Table 2. Statistics of recognized allusions by their source genres

Allusion source genre	Targeted audience					Number of instances
	National parlia- ments	Collective political bodies	Business forums	Educational institu- tions	Cultural assem- blies	
	Number of used allusions					
Biblical	–	–	–	–	–	0
Cultural (including alluded personalia)	2	2	1	12	3	20
Cinematographic	–	–	–	–	8	8
Folklore	–	–	–	–	–	
Historical (including alluded personalia)	11	11	4	4	2	32
Literary (including alluded personalia)	1	–	–	2	–	3
Mythological	–	–	–	–	–	0
Total	14	13	5	18	13	63

Conclusion

In a year of the war against Russian aggression, Volodymyr Zelenskyy made more than 500 public appearances. As the president of a country at war, he sees this activity as his battlefield: *“I am engaged in diplomacy so that we have something to fight”*. Mastering the principles of rhetoric, Zelenskyy always customizes his speeches to suit the national audience, and in this way, he tries to connect the audience with the Ukrainians as he speaks on behalf of his citizens. This is where allusion plays a key role.

The argument throughout this study has been that allusions activate relationships between people. Being a symbolic use of comparison and having a covert meaning, allusion creates communicative closeness between the speaker and the recipient, grounded on their shared knowledge. Allusion's emotional, evaluative, and associative connotations are deeply tied to the cultural and contextual significance of the referenced material. These connotations are rooted in the collective understanding of the audience, making allusions a powerful rhetorical tool for influencing perception, emotions, and interpretations.

The study results suggest that a high use of allusions as core tactical tools of the discursive events on the international political arena characterizes President Zelenskyy's

war discourse. The analysis shows that in his constructive and persuasive strategies, he resorts to different source genres of allusions regarding the audience to which it is intended. Based on the study, it can be concluded that although the President's communication with the audience includes an unequal number of allusions, these allusions are always primarily intended for the members of a particular social group.

Zelenskyy's appeals have led to concrete political outcomes, and these outcomes are direct consequence of the political discourse he has engaged in. Allusion allows President Zelenskyy to effectively communicate his message, enhance his rhetorical appeal, and foster a shared cultural understanding with his audience, strengthening unity between Ukraine and its partner countries.

Future research directions of Zelenskyy's war discourse analysis could be expanded on the current study. Research on the conceptual shifts in his rhetorical approach appears promising, especially after he has achieved his pragmatic goal: two years after the outbreak of the war, Ukraine continues to receive firm moral support and constant military aid from the majority of the international community.

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