LEADERSHIP LANGUAGE IN THE COURSE OF WAR: FRAMING AND REFRAMING ASPECTS

The article presents a multimodal study of leadership language on the example of Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky’s speeches. The significance of the article is determined by the need to investigate the strategy of the modern political narrative of the leader by creating frames and its implementation in both the national and foreign mass media landscapes. The work analyzes how media coverage of Zelensky’s orations constructs frames of the Russian-Ukrainian war viewing. How media (using a mechanism that allows creating a new psychological frame to expand their perception) reframes the outlooks by imposing a specific interpretation onto events. As a result of both textual and visual analysis of Zelensky’s video messages, it is evident that to achieve the communicative goal, the President uses a complex system of argumentation schemes (from the sign “argument from the sign”, by analogy “argument by analogy”, cause-and-effect relationship). Numerous strategic and tactical communicative techniques and tools (metaphors, metonymies, epithets, comparisons, allusions, means of stylistic syntax) aimed at creating a frame of Ukraine and shaping its identity allow his speeches to sound clear and convincing.

Keywords: performative strategies; reframing; argumentation; emotional resonance; perlocution effect; leader’s rhetoric.

1. INTRODUCTION

The language of leadership is shaped by the national need to understand oneself from a historical perspective, one’s place in the national and world picture of the world, to determine the main parameters of national identity, and to actively oppose the cruel information war aimed at discrediting the fundamental values of the national idea.

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The significance of the article is determined by the need to investigate the strategy of the modern political narrative of the leader by creating frames and its implementation in both the national and foreign mass media landscapes. Framing in a political narrative creates a specially constructed image, in our case of national identity, since a frame is a central organizing idea for making sense of relevant events and suggesting an issue. Undeniably, facts remain neutral until framed; they shape the meaning by being embedded in a frame or storyline. Frame, for its part, organizes them and gives them coherence, selecting ones to emphasize the message while ignoring others to construct images and perceptions. Political speeches characterize the speaker’s rhetorical skills in framing the rhetoric of a leader, in our case, in the course of the war, which makes him not only a leader in the war but an icon of national resistance. Performative strategies, dynamism, engaging delivery, and language choices spiced with historical references are carefully chosen to appeal to the construct of the audience's image of the state. Since international relations evolved around the interplay of ideas, presidential speeches are considered image-making within the target audience.

The work considers the scientific ideas of modern scientists in linguistics and communication. Blakar, Bondarenko, Denisyuk, and Dilts investigated the cognitive-communicative approach to language analysis. Manakin (2011) insisted on the suggestive function of language in the context of semiotic structures: “The interaction of different modes of sensors is a convergent process of coexistence of verbal, non-verbal, and para-verbal semiotic means”. Zhabotynska, Karasik, Lakoff, Matuzkova, Parshina, Petlyuchenko, Seryakova, Sternin study language phenomena in the context of cognitive science. Morozova (2019) speaks about the synergetic nature of the formation of the image and investigate strategic macro narrative and conceptual metaphors in Ukraine’s journey to Europe. The researcher of communication in international politics Gray (1986) also studies the effectiveness of multimodal means of influence in wartime politics.

The article aims to analyze the coverage of President Zelensky’s speeches that provides frames of the Russian-Ukrainian war vision; how the media reframes this vision by imposing a specific interpretation of events. Media operates a mechanism that allows the creation of a new psychological frame around the content, experience, or situation to expand public perception. To achieve this aim, we outline the following objectives:

- to investigate how verbal and non-verbal choices enhance the Leader’s performance to stream audience perception of warfare;
- to present what ideas the Leader of the Nation framed in his speeches and how media reframed them in agenda setting, as news content affects public concern;
- to analyze the process of narrating warfare events in the Russian-Ukrainian war from the point of images and perception theory.

2. METHODS AND MATERIALS

The research data come from the 23 video recordings of the president's speeches to various world political and cultural communities and the types of reactions to them representing the recipients’ responsive actions. The number of script pages is 172 standard pages.

The study’s methodology rests on a cognitive-communicative approach (in particular, the dialectic-pragmatic school) to language analysis. Namely, it studies verbal/non-verbal influence on communicative and social behavior and a synergetic approach. It consists of identifying presuppositions in the performative strategies of the leader's language and the recipients’ responsive actions (immediate and media reframed), which can be used to determine the communicative success of the leader's performative language strategy. The recipients' responsive acts are divided into immediate (leader and audience are in the exact spatiotemporal coordinates) and reframed (leader and audience are in different spatiotemporal coordinates, and media frame audience responses).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Our work presents a communicative portrait of a political leader in a crisis based on the parameter of verbal-semantic content of his speeches and the pragmatic impact of successful communication of the presented message in the form of the recipients’ responsive actions. Responsive
communicative acts of recipients are divided into immediate (verbal: exclamations, short answers; non-verbal: applause, gestures) and media reframed (verbal: the emotive language of positive/negative evaluation on media theme reframing and non-verbal: total and average monthly number of views of the speech video). Charismatic leaders are the architects of their time as, for instance, images coming out of Ukrainian leaders framing the Rhetoric of War.

We present our scheme of the communicative act aiming to analyze a speech portrait of a political leader in a crisis. It highlights essential elements of the message (presuppositions) and distinguishes the communicative intention of the leader (inform, advise, warn, change recipients’ perception).

Communicative intention – to tell the audience more about the Ukrainian heroes; to persuade the representatives of the Nations to support Ukraine and stop Russian aggression.

Predicted result – to make the audience more aware of what Ukraine is going through now, to show how indomitable the Ukrainian people are, and to call for help in defeating the enemy not only of Ukraine but of the whole of Europe.

The synergy of the president’s speeches is multimodal framed by the signal effect of the description of sensations – the sensory matrix: tactile, sound, visual, and taste. The interaction of different modes of sensors is a convergent process of coexistence of verbal, non-verbal, and para-verbal semiotic means (Manakin, 2011). Example:

But now I feel a similar elation. Because I see your eyes and believe: many of you will be in Ukraine and help us rebuild after the war. Ukrainians, having passed this war, will remain just like that. Sincere, grateful and free. We became much closer in our feelings. We know for sure about ourselves that we mean the same thing when we say the word “freedom”. I know that this path will be very difficult. Very painful. Each of these words seems to be immediately understandable. But do you feel all their depth now? Look into their brave eyes, shake their strong hands.

The world needs to hear and know about them. Have a clear idea and understanding of the Ukrainian people.

Do not be afraid and come to Ukraine. Hear thousands more similar stories about us, about Ukrainians (Zelensky, 2022).

Non-verbal Image-making strategy: facial expressions, gestures, and prosody bond the speaker with his audience. So, Volodymyr Zelensky gives his speech to the US Congress in a calm and earnest tone, with no jokes. A slow rhythm accelerates at the mention of American presidents and values. The facial is lively; the eyebrows are raised and drawn to the center, which indicates sadness.
and pity.

In the video, no hands are visible, and the shoulders hardly move; it can be assumed that the president is holding the text of the speech. However, he reinforces his words by leaning slightly forward and nodding when emphasizing essential points. Also, Zelensky uses the hand-on-heart gesture twice, at the beginning and end of the speech, to show gratitude to the members of Congress.

For his speeches, the president chooses a casual style of clothing that has been characteristic of him and other central political figures in Ukraine since the beginning of the war. He wears t-shirts or khaki jackets with the symbols of the Armed Forces. President Zelensky does not have a military rank, so he does not have the right to wear a uniform. However, as the American news platform points out, this style shows solidarity with the military. It emphasizes that during the war, clothes do not matter. Considering his previous life as an entertainer, Zelensky has a keen self-awareness about his presentation and its message (Gehrke, 2022). It is a metaphor in cloth for the growing narrative of a Russian Goliath and Ukrainian David, of hubris and heroism, that is being played out in blood and arms. Dress, like music, movies, and literature, has long been used to deliver political messages and sway opinion making him a Folk Hero in wartime (Gray, 1986).

**Performative Strategies** are employed to feature Ukraine as a symbol of strength and patriotism, a host of values and purpose packed into an outline everyone knows.

The **compositional and semantic structure** of the speech is based on the logical scheme of arguments and the interaction of different modes of sensors to construct the meanings: the influence on the rational sphere of the addressee’s consciousness is achieved by using the performative strategy of logical argumentation.

So, for example, in the introduction to the speech to the US Congress to hook the audience, the President of Ukraine used a rhetorical technique—the tactic of identification, with the help of which he purposefully transferred all current military actions to the territory of the country to whose community he directly addresses. According to Robert Danish, the audience (Americans) needed to share the experiences of Ukrainians, identify with them, compare Ukrainians and Americans, and events in Ukraine and the United States (comparison with Pearl Harbor and September 11, 2001). In this way, Zelensky evokes the sympathy and understanding of members of Congress, boosting their emotional resonance. Moreover, in his speech to the Parliament of Canada, he appeals to the Prime Minister himself with a request to imagine that it is his children who come on the morning of February 24 and ask Justin Trudeau what is happening and if we are not going to die.

In the central part of the speech to the US Congress, the president provides statistics: numbers, the number of military equipment, and the names of Ukrainian hero cities. He expresses his gratitude for the assistance provided earlier. In the final part, the president calls on congress members for help because Ukraine defends the values of Europe and the world.

Therefore, argumentation schemes, as the most general and abstract models of reasoning, have infinite options for replacing elements. In this respect, they correspond to methods of logical reasoning in which arguments are used to persuade an audience. The pragma-dialectical school recognizes three scenarios corresponding to the three primary relationships that exist between
arguments and conclusions: 1) symptomatic relationships (for example, argument from sign “argument from the sign”); 2) relationships based on the comparison (for example, argument by analogy “argument by analogy”); 3) causal relationships (for example, causal argument and means-end argumentation) (Macagno, Walton & Reed, 2017).

An argument from a sign, or a sign argument, involves patterns of relationships, events, or changes that depend on each other. The peculiarity is that something can be predicted from the occurrence of something else. In a speech to the participants of the Cannes Film Festival, Volodymyr Zelensky calls the actions of the Russian army identical to the beginning of the war of Nazi Germany against the Soviet Union, predicting such an inglorious end of this army.

On February 24, 2022, Russia launched a full-scale war against Ukraine. Going to go further to Europe. This is in Ukraine in the morning, at four o'clock, when we heard the first explosions of rockets, when the airstrikes began, and when death, which was going to Ukraine across the border, marked its equipment with an analogue of the swastika, the symbol “Z”. “They all want to be better Nazis than Hitler”.

Thus, in a speech to the Stanford University community, the president used the second scheme of arguments, which presents relationships based on a comparison of the events in Ukraine and the recent tragedy in the United States:

On February 24, a full-scale war against Ukraine began when 18-year-old Russian boys, soldiers, entered the country, entered homes to kill, torture, rape our people. And exactly three months later, on May 24, on the other side of the globe, in Texas, an 18-year-old boy entered a regular school to kill 19 children and two adults. It is impossible to understand at all. This is a tragedy.

Argument from the position of knowledge (i.e., the third scheme) is also presented in the speech to the Stanford students: Everyone who studies at Stanford is equally familiar with the question: what matters most to you and why? To study at your university, you need to write an essay. Have you heard about the “Kyivsky list”? A document from the time of Ukraine-Rus, which is more than a thousand years old, which is kept in the Cambridge library?

**Emotional resonance.** The effect of influencing the emotional sphere of the addressee’s consciousness is achieved through a performative strategy of emotional argumentation. Since emotions perform an evaluation-oriented function (evaluation of facts based on the perception of them), regulatory-motivational (mood creation), and informative-signal (awareness of what you feel), the strategy of emotional argumentation involves using various stylistic devices, which in the president's rhetoric are a powerful tool for creating the necessary dynamic background of the message.

**Sinergy in emotional framing.** The cognitive mechanism of creating a frame of Ukraine, which is choosing its identity, uses a conceptual metaphor. When beliefs and perceptions are seen as significant explanatory variables, the importance of conceptualizing them for the image of the country increases. Since the images people operate with at the conscious level are shaped by metaphorical visualization and categorization (Morozova, 2019).

Conceptual metaphors find their expression in a system of symbolic models. Metaphorical modeling of reality is embodied with the help of selected image-forming means of various levels, acting as the cognitive-discursive basis for building the country's image in the war. The president's speeches demonstrate several metaphorical models:

- **a war for freedom:** ...this war is not against someone, but a war for oneself, for one’s lands and for one's freedom, and certainly for one's future. Together with allies from the anti-Hitler coalition, it was able not only to defend itself, but also to become an outpost of freedom, that is, to win back a significant role in the further liberation of Europe; For freedom to endure, everyone must do their part.

- **war against tyranny and evil:** Because tyranny is against us again. And you can feel better than other nations what kind of evil Russia is bringing to the continent. The occupiers created real hell on our land in the city of Mariupol; ...

- **war is a battle for life:** In your great story you have pages that allow you to understand... And this story is about life. Which definitely wins.
The fateful day of 2001, when evil tried to turn your independent territories, your cities into a battlefield.

Russia has turned the Ukrainian sky into a source of death.

From State Duma deputies to the last official who lacks the morals to break with state terror. So that evil was immediately punished. He can finally put an end to a battle that has been going on for over a hundred years. This battle began with the arrival of the train.

The specificity of the evaluation category in the president’s speeches is that it is based on value dominants characteristic of the target audience. This category is manifested in using vivid and rhetorical epithets in Zelensky’s speeches.

Ukraine was beautiful. But now it will become big, because this is our people. I am addressing you as a citizen, as a president, of also a big country, with a dream and big effort. Who give the best of their children to stop a full-scale Russian invasion. I recall the faces of your distinguished presidents. In your great history, you have pages that allow you to understand...

The president, evaluating certain phenomena of reality, expresses his emotional attitude towards them and thus determines the value orientations of the nation.

An equally frequent stylistic device in Zelensky’s speeches is metonymy:

Glad to welcome you ... from a city that is under rocket attack ... but does not give up.
Russia has turned the Ukrainian sky into a source of death.
This is a terror that Europe has not seen.
Ukraine is grateful to the United States for its extremely important support.

We suggest that the United States include in the sanctions lists all political figures of the Russian Federation who remain in official positions and do not sever ties with those responsible for aggression against Ukraine.

The rhetorical device that Zelensky uses in every speech is called allusion. Allusions are references to well-known events, people, or places that remind audiences of the values they share with. Zelensky’s allusions are part of his impressive speeches, which often end with: We will not give up and we will not lose. We will fight in the forests, in the fields, on the shores, in the streets. We will continue fighting for our land, whatever the cost.

“I have a dream” – these words are known to everyone. (The title of a speech by Martin Luther King). Forbes published an article in which it goes that Volodymyr Zelensky relies on the knowledge of his listeners’ knowledge to convince the world. Moreover, he calls his allusions a powerful tool for an impressive speech.

In order to strengthen the description of the hostilities and show the relationship between the image of the country in the war and the experience of the audience, and to intensify the emotional effect of the message and cause the desired reaction in the addressee, the president uses ideologues that affect the world of personal meanings of the audience. This is independence, hope, freedom, honor, duty, responsibility, pride, and gratitude:

Now, going back to that movie, we can see how freedom marched to victory. Cinema spoke, and it was the voice of the future victory of freedom.
She threw tanks and planes against our freedom; We want to remain reference to Luxembourg’s national slogan (Mir wëlle bleiwe wat mir sinn).
Why are we fighting today? It’s to remain who we are. This is a war for values. Tyranny must lose what we are, as your motto states.
Democracy, independence, freedom and care for everyone.
About the response to terror.
Anaphora plays an important suggestive role in the tactics of visualizing the image of terror during the war and allows the target audience to think that their countries have also experienced such an experience:
Remember, remember, remember 9/11. When people were attacked, ordinary innocent people. Our state is experiencing this terror, it is daily, now, right now... which Europe has not seen, has not seen for 80 years.
You know how much depends on the battlefield on the ability to use aviation, powerful aviation.
And we offer them. We propose to create an association of U-24.

Multiple lexical repetitions in combination with anaphoric and epiphoric syntactic repetition of parallel constructions create a kind of lexical rhythm, which significantly increases the effectiveness of suggestive influence on the addressee and promotes motivational reasoning: To protect your people, your children, your freedom, the land. We have already become part of the anti-war coalition. The great anti-war coalition, which unites many states, dozens of states.

The active use of comparisons, antitheses, and repetitions in the president's speeches allows for the meaningful selection of individual parts of the speech; they put the necessary accents and strengthen the impact on the target audience to construct the image of the country at war and influence the emotional sphere of the audience’s psyche:

A hero and an antagonist came out of it.
And so, a confrontation was born on the screen, which passed into real life.
Since that time, from those words of the hero Chaplin, mankind has made many beautiful films.
It seemed that everyone had already understood that you can subjugate people with the beautiful, gathering them near the screens, and not with the ugly, gathering them in bomb shelters.
Technology that provides us with prosperity has left us in poverty.
We think too much and feel too little.

At the syntactic level, Zelensky often uses rhetorical questions in his speeches (the effect of this technique is to consciously direct the addressee’s thoughts in the necessary direction):
Is this a big request to create a no-fly zone over Ukraine? Is that too much?
And rhetorical exclamations: Show leadership!
Exclamatory sentences have an exceptionally emotional and expressive potential. The emotional charge of these structures makes it possible to activate the addressee’s interest to tune them to the emotional perception of the message.

In addition, the functional-semantic category of modality, which expresses the probability or improbability, the possibility or impossibility of performing specific actions or attitudes, is presented in the president’s speeches among the other linguistic means that affect the volition sphere of the recipient’s psyche.

The modality of the leader actualizes by material predicates (audial, kinesthetic, visual, digital). They show how the leader represents his experience when transferring it to other people at the level of language communication. The predicate analysis takes on sentiment construction, telling the recipient whether the content expresses positively, negatively, or neutrally.
- axiological aspect: But I perceive it as a distinction not of my personal activity, but of our joint struggle. The struggles of all Europeans who truly respect our shared values.
- epistemic aspect: Therefore, Ukraine has the necessary moral right to propose a reform of the world security system.
- the temporal aspect: If every time there is such a need, everyone in the world had the certainty that help would come, the world would definitely be safer.

The performative effect realizes in speech acts through performative verbs:

Directives: Many of you will be in Ukraine and help in our reconstruction after the war, because this is the largest defense project of freedom, in which your generation can participate.
And we ask for an answer, for an answer from the world.
However, now, in the darkest time for our country, for all of Europe, I call you to do more!
Remember how difficult it was for the world to do the simplest thing – just give everyone vaccines.

Constatives: I know that this path will be very difficult. But I also know that for Ukraine there will definitely be a stage on this path, for with which peace will begin.
You know what defense systems we need. S-300 and other similar systems. You know how much on the battlefield depends on the ability to use aviation.

Satisfactory:
I am grateful to President Biden for his personal involvement, for his sincere dedication to the protection of Ukraine and democracy everywhere in the world.
I am grateful to you for the resolution that recognizes all those who commit crimes against the Ukrainian people as war criminals.

The recipients’ responsive actions reframed by the media. The manifestations of the pragmatic perlocutionary effect of successful communication of the Leader’s speeches are studied on the recipients’ responsive actions. Thus, all foreign tabloids in the headlines emphasize the fervor of the president’s speech to the European Parliament and the thunderous applause of the parliamentarians, which illustrates an openness and their positive perception:

An impassioned speech by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky highlighting his country's determination and worth received a standing ovation from the European Parliament and choked up a translator.

The speeches have a single urgent purpose - to master international support - and President Zelensky goes about it with a series of highly tailored messages

At the graphic level, to enhance the visual effect, there is a trend towards using boldface by the most famous English-language periodicals. Each heading highlights the main messages of the speech of the President of Ukraine. For example, the BBC emphasizes the need to close the sky over Ukraine, and The National Post highlights the degree of seriousness of the president’s actions. The communicative implementation of the performative strategy of Ukraine's image (identification strategy) in the war was covered by the main news publications, which used bold outlines and emphasized the main request of the president – to close the sky over Ukraine. In particular, The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times report that the president does this not for the first time.

The Sydney Morning Herald writes about politicians’ right, positive reaction to the speech: The politicians gave him a standing ovation, before and after his remarks.

The New York Times also publishes comments made by politicians after the speech.

Zelensky's message is simple: “Close the skies or give us planes”, Senator Ben Sasse, Republican of Nebraska, said in a statement after the meeting. “Let's be clear-eyed about our options: A no-fly zone means sending American pilots into combat against Russian jets and air defenses – in a battle between nuclear powers that could spiral out of control quickly”.

Mr. Sasse added that the United States “should absolutely send Ukrainians planes, helicopters and U.A.V.s.”, or unmanned aerial vehicles.

“We should be signaling to the Poles and Romanians and others that this is something we would want to help them do”, Mr. Malinowsky said.

The BBC reports that Zelensky will address the US Congress in a completely undiplomatic language: In a speech to the US Congress littered with references to Pearl Harbor, Martin Luther King and Mount Rushmore, President Zelensky rebuked his audience in distinctly undiplomatic
language. “We ask for a response”, he pleaded. “For the response to terror. Is this too much to ask?”

Emphasizing the power and emotion of the speech to the Parliament of Canada, the online edition of the Canadian television and radio broadcasting company CBC, in turn, notes the comments and reactions of various Canadian figures expressed after the speech.

**Dominque Arel, chair of Ukrainian studies at the University of Ottawa, said:** “Zelensky effectively illustrated to Canadians the consequences of Ukraine losing this war”.

“President Zelensky, we do not want to let you down”, Elizabeth May said. “We fear we may inevitably let you down, but we will find every tool we can find and where there are inadequate tools, by God, let’s invent them”.

Interim Conservative leader Candice Bergen said that while the images coming out of Ukraine are “heart-breaking and painful”, the courage shown by ordinary Ukrainians defending their homeland is inspiring. “Putin's brutal attack on Ukraine is an attack on all of us”, Bergen said. “That is the lesson history has taught us and one we cannot ignore”.

**4. CONCLUSIONS AND SCOPE FOR THE FURTHER RESEARCH**

Therefore, the language of President Volodymyr Zelensky’s leadership to the world's national and social communities creates a frame – the idea of protecting national identity. This frame is created at the expense of communication solutions (argumentation schemes) and performative and image-forming strategies. For greater persuasiveness, Zelensky uses an extensive system of argumentation schemes and numerous strategic and tactical communication techniques and tools, which allows speeches to sound clear and convincing. We distinguished that the performative strategy is a key factor in the semantic organization of speech and its composition and stylistic register. The semantic organization employs such linguistic means as rhetorical questions, a list of the tree (putting very different or opposing ideas together for effect), emotive language, statistics, exaggeration, repetition of words and phrases, and contrasts. The primary perlocutionary effect of his speeches is evidenced by numerous lengthy standing ovations (sometimes standing), indicating the audience’s undeniable support. The secondary perlocutionary effect, due to the presentation of Zelensky’s speeches by mass media, also testifies to the power and emotionality through graphic means and numerous complementary comments by political figures.

This study opens perspectives for further investigation on the relationship between emotions and cognitive images and judgments in the speeches of political leaders in times of crisis by building up the methods of multimodal analysis of communicative performance enhancement.

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Ірина Волощук, Наталія Гліка, Галина Усик. Мова лідерства під час війни: аспекти фрейму та референції. У статті представлено мультимодальне дослідження риторики лідерства на прикладі промов президента України Володимира Зеленського. У роботі аналізується, як медійний простір на основі риторики Зеленського виглядає фрейм у трансляції українсько-російської війни та використовує механізм, який дає змогу створити новий психологічний фрейм для розширення сприйняття пільовою аудиторією. У результаті текстового і візуального аналізу відеозвернень Володимира Зеленського доведено, що для досягнення комунікативної мети президент України використовує комплекс аргументаційних схем (аргументація на основі знаку, аргументація на основі риторики конструє фрейми у риториці президента України, а також у формуванні ідентичності, а медійний простір посилює емоційний резонанс від промов засобами референції.

Ключові слова: перформативні стратегії; референція; аргументація; емоційний резонанс; ефект перлюкуції; риторика лідера.