

MOBILIZATION OF SUPPORT BY UKRAINIAN POLITICAL ACTORS THROUGH THE USE OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

By
Dilara Bergler

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Supervisor: Dr. Erzsébet Strausz

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ABSTRACT

Since the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, public diplomacy by Ukrainian political actors, meaning political actors directly engaging a foreign audience, has received significant attention. Especially the speeches by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky have been covered frequently in public media, particularly in western nations. Since his speeches are often about western support for Ukraine, this opens the question how Ukrainian political actors like him use public diplomacy to influence western public opinion to gain support for Ukraine. To explore this topic, this thesis performs discourse analysis on speeches given by president Zelensky to analyze how he influences the discourse on western support for Ukraine by constructing identities and representations that enable such support. In the analysis, the role of emotion is highlighted both for the construction of identities and how it is used to make the discursive representations persuasive. The results show that Zelensky uses different modes of engagement to promote and enable support for Ukraine with his audience. He uses emotion to support his representations and construct a shared identity for Ukraine and other western nations that allows western nations to see the conflict from Ukraine's perspective.

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1 INTRODUCTION

In February 2022, Russia started its full-scale invasion of Ukraine (Lock et al. 2022). To different degrees, the US and European nations like Germany publicly committed to supporting Ukraine with material as well as to impose sanctions on Russia in case of an invasion (Luscombe 2022). Over the course of the war, western financial, military, humanitarian and intelligence support has increased and remains critical to all areas of Ukraine's defense (Falk 2022; Antezza et al. 2022). While some support is provided proactively, other types of support have been directly requested by Ukraine (Child et al. 2022) or have only been provided after continued efforts of Ukraine to convince its allies to do so. A prominent recent example are the modern tanks supplied to Ukraine by Germany and the US, which have been demanded by Ukraine for some time (Aljazeera 2023).

To mobilize this support from western nations, Ukraine has relied significantly on foreign public opinion being in their favor. While there are certainly negotiations about support through diplomatic channels unknown to the public, Ukrainian officials speaking to the public of foreign nations directly has received noteworthy attention. Especially the speeches given by President Zelensky to audiences ranging from parliaments to university students have become well known over the course of the war (Adams 2022). As noted by Horbyk and Orlova (2022, 1–2), Ukraine learned from the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, when it did not manage to create a clear image of what had happened quickly enough in response to Russian aggression. Compared to then, in the current conflict Ukraine put forward a focused effort to shape the narrative from the start, making it clear to other nations that it is the victim of unprovoked aggression by Russia (Horbyk and Orlova 2022, 1–2).

This thesis examines the way in which Ukrainian political actors use public diplomacy, which means directly engaging and communicating with a foreign audience (Melissen 2005,

3), to mobilize western support since the start of the Russian invasion. Since modern public diplomacy is a diverse field and there are too many actors to cover fully, this thesis limits its analysis to acts of public diplomacy by Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky. He is a prominent official representative of Ukraine that regularly engages publicly with western nations, which leads to the research question of this thesis: How does president Zelensky use public diplomacy to influence western public opinion to gain support for Ukraine?

To analyze these efforts by president Zelensky, this thesis builds on the social constructivist perspective on security, which emphasizes the role constructed social identities play in international conflict (Risse-Kappen 1996, 296–97). It investigates which discursive representations Ukrainian political actors try to establish and how they are relevant to the discourse on western policy decisions about support for Ukraine. Emotion plays a significant role in the discourse, especially when it comes to power structures and defining what policy actions are even considered possible (Koschut et al. 2017, 21). As a result, another important question is what role emotions and emotional diplomacy play in the public diplomacy of president Zelensky.

The thesis explores which subjects, objects and identities are constructed or reinforced in official statements given by president Zelensky. In doing so, it highlights how Ukraine attempts to influence the discourse about the conflict and how this is related to Ukraine's requests for western support. By considering how public diplomacy is used for enabling western support, it contributes to understanding its use for mediating relationships with potential supporting countries and how it might influence their policy decisions. Previous studies have suggested that local public opinion has a significant effect on politicians' decisions on military policy (Tomz, Weeks, and Yarhi-Milo 2019, 19–21), which makes the public diplomacy of Ukraine and how it attempts to influence the discourse on the war a relevant factor to study. Through its investigation of the discursive representations promoted by Ukraine, this thesis

helps to understand how public diplomacy is used for foreign support mobilization by Ukraine since the start of its conflict with Russia in 2022.

To investigate how Ukrainian political actors use public diplomacy, this thesis performs discourse analysis on the public diplomacy efforts of president Zelensky. Specifically, it analyzes statements given by Zelensky in which he either addressed a foreign public directly or which have been made available to the public between February 2022 and March 2023. The goal of discourse analysis is to reveal how meaning and knowledge are constructed socially and as a result also how political reality is formed. This way, it allows insight into underlying power structures and can help reveal the methods through which actors try to influence discourses (Dunn and Neumann 2017, 262–64). Methodologically, the discourse analysis is based on the discourse analysis framework suggested by Iver Neumann (2008, 75–76). Including the elements important for the social constructivist perspective and discourse analysis, this thesis wants to uncover some of the ways Ukraine tries to influence the discourse by identifying and analyzing the identities (Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein 1996, 8–9; Wendt 1999, 318–43; Kowert 1998, 101–9), representations and metaphors (Neumann 2008, 61–62) constructed and used in the statements. To achieve this, the techniques of discourse analysis outlined by Gee (2014) and Van Dijk (2012) are used. The texts are analyzed in terms of multiple features, including the use of language, grammar, context, intertextuality and framing (Gee 2014). Together, these features work to construct representations and identities in the discourse and by analyzing how they do so, the analysis helps reveal the dynamics of power and influence in the discourse (Neumann 2008, 70). The discourse is also analyzed in terms of its emotional aspects, since emotion plays an important role for effective public diplomacy (Koschut et al. 2017, 2). Specifically, this thesis explores how emotion is used to reinforce the representations and identities constructed in the discourse and increase their credibility. This type of analysis is especially fitting because the video recordings of official statements allow for non-textual

aspects such as tone, facial expressions, or aesthetics to be considered, which have often not been included (Koschut et al. 2017, 2). Through its openness and flexibility, discourse analysis is well suited for analyzing public diplomacy efforts, especially in terms of how they might influence representations and constructed identities. Having such an analysis in place then makes it possible to take a broader view to discuss how an act of soft power such as public diplomacy may succeed in influencing certain hard power policies, such as providing support with modern military material.

From here on, the thesis will continue as follows. First, the literature on the theoretical background will be reviewed, followed by an overview of recent literature on the topic. The focus is on theories of public and emotional diplomacy, considered from a social constructivist perspective. A social constructivist perspective provides a viewpoint from which the role of identity and how it is constructed can be analyzed. It also provides a useful understanding of public diplomacy, since it works as a model for how it can influence identity construction (Byrne 2016, 178–79). Theories on specific aspects of public diplomacy relevant to the topic, will also be included, which will support the relevance of this thesis by showing how public diplomacy and foreign policy decision making are connected.

Next, the research methodology will be described in detail, including the theoretical background of discourse analysis. This chapter will also make the limitations of the performed discourse analysis clear and address the positionality of the author.

Following the chapter on methodology, the thesis will describe the findings and implications of the discourse analysis. First, President Zelensky's support discourse is described. The analysis is categorized into intertextual references, visual representations, personal connection, ways to build credibility, as well as the use of emotions and affect. This categorization is based on the most frequent representations found in the discourse analysis and aims to show how the representations are established.

Next, the identities constructed through the discourse are analyzed. The constructed identities of the Self, the Other and the West and how they are related in the discourse are discussed, highlighting how their construction influences how the discourse creates meaning.

Following that, the findings of the previous chapters are combined in terms of how they relate to support mobilization, highlighting some of the most frequent techniques used in the analyzed speeches and connecting them back to the literature on public diplomacy. This chapter will explore the relationship between Ukrainian public diplomacy through President Zelensky's statements and their potential influence on western support.

Finally, the conclusion will review the most important findings and summarize their implications.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review is structured as follows. First, public diplomacy is introduced and explained regarding its relation to the research aim of this thesis. Next, the theoretical background of the thesis is laid out by explaining the basic concept of social constructivism, why it was chosen as a theoretic model for this thesis and how it relates to public diplomacy. From there a concept of emotion and its relevancy for public diplomacy is introduced, since this allows the analysis to find points Zelensky emphasizes and understand how the representations are made convincing (Solomon 2014, 722). To make it clear why investigating the public diplomacy of Ukraine for support mobilization is relevant, the role of public diplomacy in foreign policy decisions is explored. From there current literature about Ukrainian public diplomacy, especially since the start of the war, is reviewed and discussed in its relation to the topic of this thesis. Finally, recent literature on president Zelensky is presented to show how this thesis' work on his public diplomacy relates to it and to compare findings where possible.

2.1 Public Diplomacy

One of the key theoretic concepts this thesis is centered around is public diplomacy, a term which was “allegedly coined by a former American diplomat and Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Edmund Gullion”(Melissen 2005, 6). Broadly speaking, public diplomacy refers to acts of diplomacy that target the public of the other country directly, instead of their political representation (Melissen 2005, 5). Paul Sharp (2005) defines public diplomacy as “the process by which direct relations are pursued with a country’s people to advance the interests and extend the values of those being represented” (Sharp 2005, 106). On the surface, this definition could also apply to propaganda (Melissen 2005, 17). While there are similarities between public diplomacy and propaganda, they are different concepts. Propaganda is

associated with deceit and manipulation (Melissen 2005, 17; Graham 2014, 524–26), attributes that clearly make it different from what we could call honest communication. While this alone would not be enough to distinguish it from public diplomacy, there is a second distinction between the two in the direction of communication. Propaganda is a form of one-way communication, while public diplomacy is two-way and also involves listening (Melissen 2005, 18). Like propaganda, public diplomacy also tries to influence and persuade an audience, but it is “persuasion by means of dialogue” (Melissen 2005, 18) instead of the one-way messaging of propaganda.

Public diplomacy first became well studied during the cold war, where it was mostly the superpowers that used it in their sphere of influence (Gilboa 2008, 55). Gilboa (2008, 56) describes that the first major change to public diplomacy happened following the 9/11 attacks, when international news networks and the internet instantly made every world event globally visible. From that point on, public diplomacy changed to something that became hard to directly define, but is characterized as a combination of different areas such as diplomacy, marketing and foreign policy (Gilboa 2008, 58). Public diplomacy was also strongly affected by the internet, giving it new tools and increasing the size of the potential target audience (Melissen 2005, 13; Manor 2019, 30–34).

To understand the role of public diplomacy in international relations it is also helpful to see it in relation to the role of traditional diplomatic practice. Especially James Der Derian’s (1987, 106–7) concept of diplomacy as a mediator of estrangement and alienation gives an insightful perspective on public diplomacy (Graham 2014, 535). In his work on finding a theory of diplomacy, he argues that the idea of alienation and estrangement as described by Hegel, Feuerbach, Marx and others is a necessary part for understanding the concept of diplomacy (Derian 1987, 91–93). Phrases like “alienating one’s allies” are frequent in diplomatic language and usually refer to actions that would damage the relationship to another country in some way

(Derian 1987, 94). From this perspective, the terms alienation and estrangement should not only be understood in such a narrow way, but rather as the combination of the historical and philosophical meanings. In this view, estrangement is a form of removal and separation from the environment (Derian 1987, 96). Just as individuals can become estranged from each other and alienate one another, when states are looked at as acting subjects, they can alienate and become estranged as well. In this system of different levels of alienation and estrangement (Derian 1987, 93), diplomacy is what mediates this estrangement (Derian 1987, 107). Diplomacy is what might cause alienation, but also what can work to prevent it or change a relationship to a closer and familiar one. Der Derian's concept of diplomacy can also support a better understanding of public diplomacy. Just like regular diplomacy mediates estrangement between powers and states, public diplomacy can be seen as mediating estrangement between a state and a foreign public (Graham 2014, 534–35).

For this thesis, this conceptualization is important, because president Zelensky's statements are publicly available and received (The Presidential Office of Ukraine 2023), which makes them acts of public diplomacy. At the same time, the statements often address official representations, for example when he addressed the Austrian parliament (Zelensky 2023k), which can also be considered similar to traditional diplomatic practice. As a result of this combination, a theoretical perspective which combines an understanding of traditional diplomatic practice and public diplomacy is well suited to explore the public diplomacy of Ukraine through Zelensky's statements.

2.2 Social Constructivism

The theoretical background on which this thesis is built is social constructivism. Public diplomacy indirectly assumes that the opinion of the foreign public or the relationship with that foreign public is relevant for the interests of the state engaging in public diplomacy. If the result

were irrelevant, there would be no reason for states to use it in the first place. Since social constructivism focuses on social relationships and constructed identities that can change (Wendt 1999, 318–30), it is a useful theory for analyzing public diplomacy. As Caitlyn Byrne (2016) describes in her chapter on the theoretical concepts of public diplomacy:

However, public diplomacy's evolving model finds a natural synergy with the theory of social constructivism. Constructivism's emphasis on the power of ideas and the interplay between actors and their social context holds an immediate appeal. Like constructivism, public diplomacy challenges the traditional power structures and mechanisms of foreign policy. Constructivism brings the inter-subjective dimensions of public diplomacy to the fore. It highlights the potential that exists through iterative processes of social interaction between participants to build the trust needed to shift embedded perceptions and norms that might otherwise be a cause for tension and hostility (Byrne 2016, 178–79).

A constructivist viewpoint also provides conceptualizations of the state that are useful for analyzing public diplomacy. The idea of the state as a single and independent actor has been problematized in the literature (Wendt 1999, 196–97), which suggests a need to look beyond the state as the main actor in international relations. The different notions of the state outlined by (1999) are a useful basis for analyzing public diplomacy. In his work, he describes two concepts that he considers to be opposites of one another, the Weberian view (Wendt 1999, 199–200) and the Pluralist view (Wendt 1999, 200). The Weberian view sees the state as a unitary actor that is “not conceptually dependent on society” (Wendt 1999, 199). The pluralist view in comparison sees the state as groups of individuals with different interests. The actions of the state are the actions of the individuals representing the state in their political functions (Wendt 1999, 200). For this thesis and the context of public diplomacy both concepts are useful. Since public diplomacy is addressed at the public of another state and not the official representatives, it already assumes that the state is not a unitary actor. On the other hand, when analyzing the acts of public diplomacy that a state performs, such as the official statements by president Zelensky analyzed in this thesis, a unitary concept is helpful, since it can help simplify

parts of identity construction like considering the state's interest (Wendt 1999, 233–35). From the perspective of the country that engages in public diplomacy, the other states might also be seen or spoken to as unitary actors. This shows a tension in the concept of statehood in public diplomacy, since it engages with a wider audience which shows that it internally assumes a pluralist model, even though it does not do so outwardly.

2.3 Emotion

To understand and analyze Ukraine's public diplomacy and particularly president Zelensky's statements in detail, another factor that should be considered is the role of emotion. Roland Bleiker and Emma Hutchinson (2008, 116) argue that emotions are important for understanding certain issues in international relations and give the example of the effects of fear in security dilemmas. Since the field of international relations has stayed close to the social sciences, the role of emotions has traditionally not been considered (Bleiker and Hutchison 2008, 124–25). To overcome this and better integrate the role of emotions, they describe that research has to accept that some insights can come from things that cannot be observed directly. Instead research should focus on representations of emotions and their impact (Bleiker and Hutchison 2008, 117–18). Studying representations of emotions allows insight into, as Emma Hutchinson writes, the “process through which individual emotions become collective and political.” (Hutchison and Bleiker 2014, 506).

The specific act of public diplomacy which is analyzed in this thesis, president Zelensky's statements, is another reason why considering emotions is important. Since president Zelensky is an official representative of Ukraine, whenever he shows emotions, he does so officially in his role as president. Todd Hall (2015, 16–17) describes this process as emotional diplomacy. By showing certain emotion in his public diplomacy, his emotions are also seen as the emotions of Ukraine as a state. Through public diplomacy Ukraine can show

how it reacts to an issue emotionally, even though a state is not a person with emotions. Zelensky's intentional performance of emotion in the form of emotional labor (Hall 2015, 21–22; Hochschild 2012, 148) is an important part of how his public diplomacy interacts with norms. By using emotion to show approval or disapproval he can signal which norms he expects other nations to respect or use appeals to existing norms to his benefit. As Sarah Ellen Graham (2014, 531) argues, emotions determine and explain if and how normative change happens in the context of public diplomacy. She also highlights that considering the role of emotions is necessary to better analyze how public diplomacy interacts with discourses and persuasion (Graham 2014, 535–36), which is an important part of this thesis. The need to consider emotionality and especially affect when analyzing discourse has also been argued by Ty Solomon (2014). Emotion and affect allow to go beyond the langue and rhetorical forms of the discourse and consider the affective responses that give a discourse its persuasive power (Solomon 2014, 728–29; Graham 2014, 529–31).

For this thesis, emotion is used to understand how identity construction and representation work, including emotional attachment to certain groups (Graham 2014, 534) based on their constructed identity. This thesis also considers how emotions make the representations used in Ukrainian public diplomacy more persuasive.

2.4 Public Diplomacy and Policy Decision Making

An investigation of Ukrainian public diplomacy like this thesis cannot give concrete reasons for policy decisions made by western states about support for Ukraine. However, it can provide insight into the identities and representations that influence the discourse and public opinion on the topic. The connection between public diplomacy and the policy decisions is only indirect.

Robert Putnam's (1988) Two-Level-Games are a useful model for why the relationship with a foreign public can have an influence on that country's foreign policy. The Two-Level

games work as a model that describes how national and international politics interact. Putnam describes how decision makers play two games at once, one at the national and one at the international level. Any move they make happens on both levels at the same time. What this means is that decisions that make sense on a national level could have unacceptable results at the international level (Putnam 1988, 434–35). For decision makers this means that they need to consider actions that are acceptable in both environments, which Putnam refers to as “win-sets” (Putnam 1988, 435–536). Increasing the win-set also means increasing the chance of finding common ground between the two parties (Putnam 1988, 437). By changing the narrative and public opinion on the war with Russia in foreign publics, Ukrainian public diplomacy could also influence the win-set of these foreign countries. By doing so in a way that includes policy options that favor Ukraine, it could affect the chance of these policies being adopted, but there is no way to directly prove a causal relationship.

The idea that public opinion can affect decision making about military matters has also been investigated empirically. Tomz, Weeks and Yarhi-Milo (2019) performed experiments where they gave policy makers and voters fake threat scenarios and public opinion polls. Through those experiments they show that public opinion affects decision making about using military force. Their evaluation showed both that individual voters care about security policy and that they use it when deciding who to vote for in elections (Tomz, Weeks, and Yarhi-Milo 2019, 19–21). It also showed that politicians are aware of this fact and consider it when making security policy decisions (Tomz, Weeks, and Yarhi-Milo 2019, 19–21). These findings are important for this thesis, because they show that analyzing Ukrainian public diplomacy is an important aspect for understanding support mobilization, even when direct influence cannot be proven.

2.5 Ukrainian Public Diplomacy

After discussing the background of public diplomacy, how it relates to social constructivism and how public diplomacy is related to policy decisions, this section will bring these aspects together and discuss recent research on Ukrainian public diplomacy.

Since the start of the war with Russia in 2022, Ukraine's public diplomacy and foreign policy has started receiving a lot of attention from researchers. In their work from 2021, Sheludiakova, Mamurov and Maksymova (2021, 2–3) explore the long-term interest of Ukraine and how it is communicated using public diplomacy. Ukraine even established a separate department for public diplomacy under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Sheludiakova et al. 2021, 3; Lee 2022, 9), highlighting the need for Ukraine to control its public image. Sheludiakova et al. (2021, 4) emphasize that Ukraine seems to have understood the role of the internet and social media for public diplomacy and that using it well is very important for its foreign policy.

Especially Ukrainian public diplomacy since the start of the war is described as successful (Horbyk and Orlova 2022, 3–4; Lee 2022, 4–7). Horbyk and Orlova (2022, 1–2) describe how Ukraine managed to shift its public image since the war started. While it used to be dominated by Western and Russian influence, Ukraine has started to actively shape its international narrative and successfully countered Russia's strategic communication (2022, 3–4).

Seow Ting Lee (2022, 1) investigates Ukraine's image, but over a longer period time, starting with its independence in 1991 until today. By combining data from relevant indices and doing sentiment analysis on English speaking news sources (Lee 2022, 3–4), she shows how foreign public opinion changed over time. The results show that public opinion on Ukraine started improving after 2014, showing especially strong positive opinion after the 2022 invasion (Lee

2022, 4–7). Recent research on Ukraine’s public diplomacy also mentions the role and impact of president Zelensky (Horbyk and Orlova 2022, 3; Lee 2022, 8–9).

Nadia Kaneva (Kaneva 2022) analyzes Ukraine’s public diplomacy and nation branding efforts since the start of the Russian invasion. She describes how the image and brand Ukraine tries to portray internationally changed from a typical post-soviet campaign for investment and tourism (Kaneva 2022, 2). Instead, Ukraine focuses on “bravery” and tries to establish a strong moral position from which it can engage with western nations for support (Kaneva 2022, 2–3). Kaneva (2022, 3) uses critical discourse analysis to show how the shift of Ukraine’s branding is related to the Cold-War discourse and that it places Ukraine as “one with the West” (2022, 3). The legacy of Ukraine’s Soviet past is also addressed by Olena Fomenko (2022). She details how cultural symbols help decolonize and shape the identity of an independent Ukraine, noting how moving away from former Russian symbols has accelerated dramatically since 2022 (Fomenko 2022, 2–3). However, the perceptions of these symbols are not the same between Ukraine and the West, especially when it comes to president Zelensky. While the West connects strongly with Zelensky as a symbol for Ukraine, among Ukrainians resistance and national pride are usually attributed more to the Army itself (Fomenko 2022, 3–4). This is especially relevant for the thesis, since it strongly suggests that the findings about identity in Ukrainian public diplomacy will not be comparable to identities constructed internally in Ukraine.

2.6 President Zelensky’s Statement and Speeches

Due to the media attention and his role in Ukrainian public diplomacy, president Zelensky and his speeches have already been the focus of research. In a critical discourse analysis of speeches given by president Zelensky, US president Joe Biden and other prominent figures, Marianna Patrona (Patrona 2022) discusses the audience design of the analyzed speeches and how Zelensky changes his speeches to be specific to his audience. Her work, as well as the work of

other researchers, shows that president Zelensky makes strong use of intertextual references in many of his speeches (Patrona 2022, 261–62; Matsuoka and Matsuoka 2022, 104–5; Potapenko 2023, 4; Zachara-Szymańska 2023, 5). An example is his speech to the UK parliament where he quotes Shakespeare’s famous “To be or not to be?” (Zelensky 2022c; Potapenko 2023, 4). He also indirectly references a famous speech by Churchill when he takes a passage for his own statement and changes it so that it fits with Ukraine but is still recognized by his audience (Potapenko 2023, 4). By using these references he builds on a shared cultural understanding with his audience and creates a closer connection (Potapenko 2023, 4; Patrona 2022, 261–62; Matsuoka and Matsuoka 2022, 104–5). He shows understanding for his audience’s culture and experiences and relates them directly to Ukraine’s current situation.

Patrona (2022, 262–63) also addresses that Zelensky then uses this close connection and strong moral position to directly ask for support. Her work gives important insight into Zelensky’s use of shared references to build support in his speeches and mentions his use of emotion to achieve his goals (Patrona 2022, 276). Zelensky himself is also analyzed by Malgorzata Zachara-Szymanska (2023). She describes how his image was transformed into that of a heroic leader with the start of the war (Zachara-Szymańska 2023, 4–5) and how Zelensky has used his status, which is particularly strong in western media (Zachara-Szymańska 2023, 4), to his advantage. She describes how Zelensky relies on normative and strong moral positions to frame the discourse on the topic so that “his nation’s defense against Russia has grown symbolically to become perceived as the defense of democracy in the world” (Zachara-Szymańska 2023, 8).

Other studies already analyze specific speeches given by president Zelensky (Matsuoka and Matsuoka 2022; Potapenko 2023). Misato Matsuoka and Rieko Matsuoka (2022) analyze his speech to the Japanese parliament in March of 2022 based on politeness theory. Their analysis also shows how Zelensky tries to achieve closeness to a general public and not just

with political leaders (Matsuoka and Matsuoka 2022, 102–3). Like in the speeches to other nations, he used shared references and related current and past Ukrainian experiences to those of Japanese people. A clear example is the fighting at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, for which he brings up memories of Chernobyl (Matsuoka and Matsuoka 2022, 104–5). These are meant to connect with the Japanese audience, because of their own experience with nuclear incidents in Fukushima (Matsuoka and Matsuoka 2022, 104–5).

Lastly, it should not be overlooked that before actually being president of Ukraine, Zelensky was an actor portraying the president in a popular Ukrainian television series (Kaminskij 2022, 157–58). Konstantin Kaminskij (2022, 165–69) describes in a paper written before the 2022 invasion how Zelensky’s performance was what helped him get elected as president. His training as an actor is also mentioned by Stephen Langston (2022, 3–4), who suggests that it made it easier for him to display emotions in a controlled way to have the biggest impact on his audience. Building on Erving Goffman’s (1956, 10–18) concept of performance, Ben D. Mor (2007, 664–65) describes how public diplomacy performances interact with social norms. From the outside, public diplomacy is a performance that wants to look *as if* expected rules for how to act are followed. The goal is not following the rules, but to be *seen* as rule-following (Mor 2007, 664–65). Even though the norm itself is not the goal of the public diplomacy, states that act like they are following the norm still put value on it and reinforce it (Mor 2007, 664–65). This helps to understand how the performance of public diplomacy works to build credibility. By publicly speaking (Mor 2012, 398–400) and acting in a way people expect, for example according to some norms, the audience gets the impression of credibility.

Existing literature has already explored aspects of Ukrainian public diplomacy and president Zelensky’s speeches. What this thesis investigates is how Zelensky’s acts of public diplomacy, his speeches, can enable western support by influencing public opinion. This thesis will contribute to the literature on public diplomacy by showing how public diplomacy is used

by Ukrainian political actors in this way. It will also show how emotions are important for the discourse and what role they play in Zelensky's public diplomacy.

3 METHODOLOGY

In order to reveal ways in which president Zelensky uses public diplomacy to influence western public opinion to gain support, discourse analysis will be used to uncover and analyze the representations and identities constructed in his speeches. Through this, the way he attempts to influence the discourse on support for Ukraine becomes visible, showing how he uses public diplomacy to enable support. This chapter will briefly introduce discourse analysis and how it is used in this thesis. It will also address the positionality of the author and limitations of the research.

3.1 Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is, as the name suggests, the study of discourse. Kevin C. Dunn and Iver B. Neumann (2017) introduce discourses as “systems of meaning-production that fix meaning, however temporarily and enable the societies they help constitute to make sense of the world and to act within it.” (2017, 262). Discourse analysis assumes that social realities are constructed and can be analyzed through the discourse (Milliken 1999, 229) and that discourses “define subjects authorized to speak and to act ” (Milliken 1999, 229). Another idea of discourse analysis, which is especially important for analyzing public diplomacy is that discourses shape the “common sense” (Milliken 1999, 237) of the public. Therefore, the discourse is also important in deciding what policies the public would support (Milliken 1999, 237–38). Discourse analysis traditionally focuses on studying language (Van Dijk and Kintsch 1983, 2–3), but it is not limited to it. According to Neumann (2008, 63), anything that helps to understand and create meaning, including any form of written, verbal or visual communication can be considered a “text” and included in the analysis.

An important factor to consider when analyzing a discourse is emotion (Koschut et al. 2017, 2). As Hutchinson and Bleiker put it: “The key here is that the shape and nature of our

emotions is discursive: emotions are in part constituted through the discourses that condition us to see, to sense, and, crucially, to feel.” (Koschut et al. 2017, 22). It is thereby important to consider the role of emotions to understand the discourse and how acts of public diplomacy work to influence it, since emotion is how public diplomacy becomes persuasive (Graham 2014, 512). For the discourse analysis in this thesis, emotion is what makes it possible to understand how a specific representation becomes attractive (Solomon 2014, 722) and from that its influence on how the discourse makes sense of the world.

All these factors make discourse analysis well suited to analyzing acts of public diplomacy. On the one hand because of the similarities in theoretical assumptions, but also because discourse analysis studies “conditions of possibility” (Connolly 2002, xxiv; Bleiker 2017, 320). In the case of this thesis the political conditions of the possibility to support Ukraine. These conditions of possibility are what public diplomacy hopes to create and how public diplomacy enables certain policy positions. In this way discourse analysis makes it possible to consider the potential impact and effect of Zelensky’s speeches on support without the need to prove that there is a direct causal link (Bleiker 2017, 319–21). By revealing how meaning is created in the discourse of Zelensky’s speeches, discourse analysis can show how real-world events might get interpreted so that certain actions or opinions become possible.

3.2 Performed Analysis

For its discourse analysis, this thesis uses the steps suggested by Iver Neumann (2008) as a guide. The first step is choosing which texts to include in the discourse analysis. For this thesis, the texts considered are the official speeches given by Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky. His speeches are chosen because they are directly or indirectly targeting a western public audience which makes them examples of Ukrainian public diplomacy. The statements are also an important part of Ukrainian public diplomacy since Zelensky is the most important

official representative of Ukraine. His statements have also already received attention from researchers (Matsuoka and Matsuoka 2022, 103–5; Potapenko 2023, 4; Patrona 2022, 261–63), which also shows the importance of studying them. Furthermore, many of Zelensky's statements have some advantages that make them well suited for discourse analysis. They are available online (The Presidential Office of Ukraine 2023) and are either delivered in English or include an English translation. The criteria for a speech to be included in the analysis of this thesis were: Availability, English language or translations and connections to the discourse on support for Ukraine. The individual speeches that get analyzed have been chosen based on a combination of Neumann's (2008) idea of monuments, meaning central texts that received a lot of attention (2008, 67) and his ludic approach (2008, 66). The ludic approach allows the researcher to include and explore texts which appear important based on their experience when engaging with them (Neumann 2008, 66).

The second step is to identify and describe the representations in the texts (Neumann 2008, 70). To do this there are different techniques available. For analyzing the text, the tools proposed by James Paul Gee (2014) are used. He lays out aspects he calls tools, which can be considered in the text, including language use, grammar, context, intertextuality, rhetorical tools and framing (Gee 2014). In addition to this and to see how Zelensky's statements try to create the knowledge, this thesis also uses the contributions of Teun van Dijk (2012, 587–602). Especially the idea about context and focus is helpful, because it includes the context of the text itself (Van Dijk 2012, 592–93). In a text, the focus and emphasis will be on the parts that bring new knowledge to the audience. By combining focus with the context of a speech, the parts of the text Zelensky emphasizes are revealed (Van Dijk 2012, 592–93). This also shows where in the text he tries to introduce new knowledge into the discourse, since the language and delivery will focus especially on that.

The third step is to put the identified representations into context to understand how they work to construct identities, narratives and change over time (Neumann 2008, 73–74). This includes studying “meaning and materiality” (Neumann 2008, 74), which means analyzing how certain material events are interpreted socially (Neumann 2008, 74). It is especially important for this thesis to understand how materiality is related to meaning, because both the war in general and the support Ukraine asks for are material.

This thesis also considers the role of emotion in discourse. Since studying emotions is challenging (Bleiker and Hutchison 2017, 334) it is important to consider how to analyze emotions separately. Bleiker and Hutchinson (2017, 334–35) recommend using multidisciplinary methods. Instead of just using one method, multiple methods should ideally be used, even if they seem incompatible and incomparable (Bleiker and Hutchison 2017, 335–36). Since this thesis is not only about emotions, it mostly considers them through their role in the discourse to make representations persuasive.

To analyze emotions in the context of discourse this thesis follows the suggestions of Simon Koschut (2017, 272–81) as a general guide. He recommends first mapping emotional expressions found in the texts, both direct mentions of emotions and terms that have a strong emotional aspect (Koschut 2017, 283–85). After the mapping, it is analyzed and considered how the mapped emotions contribute to specific representations and identities, which can then be interpreted (Koschut 2017, 285–88). Within discourse analysis, this thesis considers emotion and affect through different kinds of texts (Neumann 2008, 65). These texts are the linguistic features of president Zelensky’s statements, how he speaks and the visual parts of how the speech is delivered. Since the medium of video contains all these texts simultaneously, the role of emotion for each representation can be considered from different perspectives.

3.3 Positionality and Limitations

The two most important points that need to be addressed in terms of positionality is my nationality and my spoken languages as the author. As an Austrian, I am a national of a country that belongs to what I call “western nations” in my thesis. Thereby I am not only part of the targeted audience, such as with president Zelensky’s statement to the Austrian parliament (Zelensky 2023k), I also consume western news media in day-to-day life. What I mean by “western nations” in the context of this thesis are nations located in Europe, member states of the EU and members of NATO. I do not speak Ukrainian or Russian, which means that I rely entirely on the official English translations of president Zelensky’s speeches for my analysis, which limits the selection of speeches. There is also a chance of me missing some intertextual or cultural references in the speeches if I am not familiar with them. I expect this not to be the case often, since Zelensky’s speeches use precisely those references known by his audience (Matsuoka and Matsuoka 2022, 103–5; Potapenko 2023, 4; Patrona 2022, 261–63).

4 ZELENSKY'S SUPPORT DISCOURSE

President Volodymyr Zelensky's statements and speeches to other countries, conferences, world leaders and the public are an important part of Ukrainian public diplomacy. Together, they participate in and shape the discourse on supporting Ukraine. This chapter discusses the results of the discourse analysis of president Zelensky's speeches. Multiple speeches in the time period between February 2022 and March 2023 have been analyzed. These are: Zelensky's address at the 2022 Munich security conference (Zelensky 2022a), his address to the UK parliament on March 8th 2022 (Zelensky 2022c), his address to the First Parliamentary summit of the Crimea platform (Zelensky 2022e), his speech to the World Economic Forum 2023 (Zelensky 2023b), his address to the Advisory Group on the Defense of Ukraine (Zelensky 2023d), his daily public address on the 28th of January (Zelensky 2023e), his address to the 2023 Munich Security Conference (Zelensky 2023g) and his address to the European Council meeting on March 23rd 2023 (Zelensky 2023i). An overview table of these speeches can be found in the appendix of this thesis.

From here on, this chapter discusses different features of president Zelensky's speeches. By revealing these features with which he constructs representations and identities, the constructions can then be analyzed in terms of their relation to the mobilization of western support. The goal of this chapter is to show that Zelensky combines these features together, relying on a combination of techniques to support his representations in the discourse.

4.1 *Intertextual References*

One of the first things noticeable in Zelensky's speeches is his use of intertextual references to shared cultural or historical knowledge and recent events. Recent analyses of his speeches to Japan (Matsuoka and Matsuoka 2022) and the UK parliament (Potapenko 2023) already mentioned his use of intertextual references and how the references are audience specific

(Patrona 2022, 261–63) which is why the same references mentioned there are not described here again. At the Munich Security conference 2022, days before the Russian invasion, he was trying to gain support by referencing the beginning of the second World War.

As the question “Why die for Danzig?” turned into the need to die for Dunkirk (Zelensky 2022a)

Here he relied on historical knowledge of his audience to make the connection, which he did not address directly. The question “Why die for Danzig” is associated with French people used to support Germany in the second World War (Smogorzewski 1975, 95). He also relied on the audience knowing that at Dunkirk the allied armies had to flee from the advancing Germans in the second World War (Summerfield 2010, 786–87).

The used intertextual references are not always historic. They are also drawn from general culture, such as at the 2023 Munich Security Conference, when Zelensky’s address was titled “David on the Dnipro: Ukraine’s fight for freedom” (Munich Security Conference 2023). Zelensky picked up the idea of David from the biblical story of David and Goliath in his speech (Zelensky 2023g) and continued using analogies that assume the audience is familiar with the story. One such example is him referring to weapons as the sling from the story, when he says “I am grateful to everyone who gives the sling to Ukrainian David” (Zelensky 2023g). It is important to note that his intertextual references are often not neutral.

The references have clear sides where one of them is viewed very favorably and the other one very negatively. In the previous example David is the protagonist that gets viewed favorably. Zelensky consistently uses the favorable side as an analogy for Ukraine or for support and the negative side for Russia or Putin. Through this he connects the representation of Ukraine or the support with references that the audience knows and already sees favorably.

4.2 Visual Representation

Representations in Zelensky's speeches also include visual aspects, which is an intentional aspect of public diplomacy, since the videos are published alongside the transcripts and feature still images from the video recording for those only reading (Zelensky 2023b; 2023g; 2023e).

Since president Zelensky himself is the main content of the video, the visual representations are often connected to his person. This starts with the clothing he wears. His clothing alone has already received attention in the media (*The Times of India* 2022; Buncombe 2022; Friedman 2022). In all speeches analyzed, Zelensky wore khaki green or black clothes. The exception is his speech at the Munich Security Conference 2022 before the invasion, where he still wore a suit and tie like the other participants (Zelensky 2022b). The change of Zelensky's clothes that happened with the start of the invasion and especially their color can be interpreted as a signifier (Andersen, Vuori, and Guillaume 2015, 441). The shade of green is similar to the shade of the uniform of soldiers, which suggests a closeness between soldiers and Zelensky. That his clothes are the color of soldier's uniforms and that the type of clothing is also different from the other suits also visually separates him from the politicians of other countries he interacts with. His clothing helps him remind his audience that the war is still ongoing.

The visual representations also include president Zelensky as a person outside of his role as president. While he was still shaven at the Munich Security Conference 2022 (Zelensky 2023h), in his address to the UK parliament on March 8th he was wearing a beard (Zelensky 2022d). While wearing a beard alone might not represent anything, this change happened with the start of the invasion. Together with the clothes it represents Zelensky as someone who does not have time for or is not concerned about appearances. From the perspective of discourse analysis, we have to consider that this is an intentional representation. In his speech to the World Economic Forum 2023 (Zelensky 2023c), he looks visibly tired. In other situations, this might

have been lessened with make-up, but here the lighting from above seems to make the appearance even stronger. It suggests the representation of him as somebody who is not concerned with appearances, who fights, despite exhaustion, to gain support for Ukraine.

The background and setting of the speeches also convey important information. At each of the speeches analyzed, there is a Ukrainian flag (Zelensky 2022d; 2023j) or the Ukrainian coat of arms visible in some way (Zelensky 2023f). While most of the analyzed speeches appear to be filmed in a simple meeting room, there are notable exceptions. An example of this is Zelensky's speech to the European Council Meeting (Zelensky 2023j), which he delivers from the hallway of a train. Other times, Zelensky appears to record speeches by himself, since he can be seen holding the camera in the video (Zelensky 2023f). This changes the context around the speech from a carefully written one to a more personal and spontaneous exchange.

Lastly, it should be mentioned that the visual representations in Zelensky's statements are very consistent over time. Elements such as his clothes, the colors, the setting and the Ukrainian flags or symbols are used consistently. While it was not explicitly analyzed in its content, an interesting example of this is his Christmas address from 2023 (Zelensky 2023a). Zelensky delivers Christmas wishes in what looks like traditional clothing. What stands in contrast is that the clothing is still in the military green color and the decoration stitched onto the piece of clothing shows a tank (Zelensky 2023a). Even in a Christmas address the visual message that the war is still ongoing is present.

4.3 Personal Connection

In his speeches, president Zelensky addresses other politicians in a very personal way. In the speech at the 2023 Munich Security Conference, he personally thanked German chancellor Scholz and French prime minister Macron using their first names.

I thank Olaf and Emmanuel who are present here on this panel. (Zelensky 2023h)

Representations of closeness and a personal relationship are often a part of the speeches. Zelensky also frames the issues he talks about so that the audience interprets it from a very personal perspective. Another example of this is the address in the Ramstein format, in which he asks his audience to view the conflict as children and parents (Zelensky 2023d). These representations of closeness need to be considered when seeing the speeches as public diplomacy. It changes how future interactions with others are seen and increases the chance for interaction. Additionally, it suggests that the countries of these leaders are also personally close and friendly with each other.

4.4 Cultivation of Credibility

A central theme in the discourse is credibility, especially in relation to statements by Russia. In the speech to the 2022 Munich Security conference, days before the start of Russia's invasion, president Zelensky questioned the credibility of Russian intentions in the opening of his speech. "Ukraine wants peace. Europe wants peace. The world says it doesn't want to fight, and Russia says it doesn't want to attack. Someone is lying." (Zelensky 2022a). Zelensky ends the speech with an emotional story about a Ukrainian soldier allegedly killed that same day by Russian artillery fire.

I don't know what he thought at the last moment of his life. (...) But he knows exactly the answer to the question I asked at the beginning. He knows exactly who of us is lying. (Zelensky 2022a)

As mentioned in the literature review, this type of public diplomacy conducted by Ukraine to protect its credibility and question Russia's has already been noted by Horbyk and Orlova

(2022, 2). Credibility is not a new concept in public diplomacy. Robert Gass and John Seiter (2020) analyze credibility in public diplomacy and explain how it is built. These are expertise, trustworthiness and goodwill (Gass and Seiter 2020, 159–63). The example above shows how he uses an anecdote to represent himself as trustworthy, because the anecdote supports his claims. Taken together with the its beginning, the end of the anecdote is supposed to be evidence of his trustworthiness. Zelensky also tries to establish expertise by mentioning international law and specific legal agreements (Zelensky 2022a). To signal goodwill he emphasizes that Ukraine plays by the rules even when their opponent allegedly does not (Zelensky 2022c). Additionally, they describe that to appear credible, “a leader must remain calm, cool, and collected in a crisis.” (Gass and Seiter 2020, 163), which Zelensky does in his speeches (Zelensky 2022d; 2023h; 2023j).

4.5 Emotions and Affect

Emotions are present in the representations of Zelensky’s speeches in different ways. First, Zelensky uses his own emotions to add focus on certain parts of his speeches and support the content of the speech, for example when he shows frustration when mentioning how slow decisions help Putin in the war (Zelensky 2023h; 2023g). However, the role of emotion also extends to the representations related to the audience.

Zelensky addresses his audience in different ways, sometimes speaking to people individually, for example when he asks them to “remember the world your parents dreamed of for you.” (Zelensky 2023d). Other time he speaks to his audience as if they are individual states (Zelensky 2022a), especially when speaking about concrete measures of support. By switching between addressing the audience personally and speaking to them as state actors, he connects the personal emotional side of his speech to the political action he tries to promote. The choice of words also has an emotional aspect when he uses terms that are already connected with

certain emotions for his audience. An example for this is his use of the word “terror” to refer to Russian attacks (Zelensky 2022c), which connects the emotional reaction to the word terror with the Russian attacks.

On the individual level, Zelensky often uses tragic stories of single people (Zelensky 2022a) or civilian victims (Zelensky 2023e). They are phrased so that people have empathy with the victims and respond emotionally with sadness on the one hand and on the other with anger towards the attacker. In his speech to the European Council meeting for example, he describes the people’s living condition.

With destroyed houses – destroyed by Russian artillery. Houses with plywood instead of glass in the windows where people are still trying to live.(Zelensky 2023i)

When delivering the speech, Zelensky paused before adding “where people are still trying to live.” (Zelensky 2023i). What started off as a description of an empty and destroyed city suddenly changed to a description of how people *try* to live. Through this he uses the affectual emotional response (Solomon 2014, 722) to strengthen the representation. The speeches also contain parts that are likely to cause an affectual response in the audience. An example for this is the speech to the World Economic Forum, where Zelensky asked for a minute of silence after saying that “Fourteen Ukrainian families lost their loved-ones today. And many more families are losing daily because of the war.” (Zelensky 2023b). In the video recording of the speech, Zelensky stands up for the minute of silence and the audience follows him, also standing up (Zelensky 2023c). When seeing affect as a social phenomenon (Bleiker and Hutchison 2017, 331), examples like the minute of silence can create shared emotional experiences.

Emotion is also used when Zelensky addresses his audience as if they were states. He makes this clear when he says that “I’m not calling you by name - I don’t want some other

countries to be ashamed.” (Zelensky 2022a). The representations in Zelensky’s speeches also use emotions for different representations of the audience. They address individual people, states as unitary actors (Wendt 1999, 199–200) and states as pluralist actors (Wendt 1999, 200).

This chapter discussed different features of president Zelensky’s speeches, which he combines to construct representations in the discourse. With this background, the next part of the analysis can focus on the identities that are constructed and how they are important for western public opinion and support for Ukraine.

5 IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

The previous chapter uncovered different features of Zelensky's discourse, which show that he combines multiple techniques, such as emotions and intertextual references to construct representations and identities. Especially the construction of identities is an important part of his public diplomacy. Which identities he constructs, how he does so and how they relate to each other will be discussed in this chapter. By constructing identities and their relationship, Zelensky's public diplomacy can influence public opinion in other nations and mediate the relationship with the foreign public. By analyzing representations that occurred often, the discourse analysis shows that there are three major identities constructed in the discourse, which are the Self, the West and the Other. Representations of specific events or realities are always related to these identities in some way, which makes studying them important for understanding how Zelensky creates meaning in his speeches.

5.1 *The Self*

The Self is the most important and often constructed identity in Zelensky's speeches and gets constructed in different ways. Part of the identity construction is just about Ukraine itself. This is when Ukraine is represented in relation to the western nations in questions about support. Ukraine is usually represented in relation to Russia, the Other. In these cases, the constructed identity of the Self in Zelensky's speeches is not just about Ukraine. Instead, he constructs a larger identity that also includes Ukraine. An example is Zelensky's speech to the summit of the Crimea Platform (Zelensky 2022e) when he spoke about free expression.

It is available everywhere on our continent - from the Atlantic to the Kharkiv region.(Zelensky 2022e)

He refers to Europe as “*our* continent” (Zelensky 2022e) and he also describes concrete geographical areas (Zelensky 2022e). The Self that is being constructed here shares ownership of the continent, which also includes Ukraine. In the way this Self is constructed, the Other is also included in the construction. The Other begins where free expression ends, which frames Russia as the non-European Other. When considering the events of the war at the time before the speech, October 25th 2022 (Zelensky 2022e), there is also an intertextual reference included. The region saw heavy fighting in the weeks before and Ukraine successfully recaptured large amounts of land there (Kuznetsov 2022). Through this, the identity of Ukraine is not only that it shares the continent with others, but that it also actively defends it and fights for shared values like freedom. The representation of Ukraine fighting for shared values is supported in the speech by the intertextual reference of Ukraine fighting Russia successfully, but also through the visual aspects of the speech itself. Other than the green shirt, the recording shows a round open table around which the participants are sitting (Zelensky 2022f). Zelensky, who joined remotely, is projected larger than life on multiple screens including a large screen that the participants are looking *up* to (Zelensky 2022f). In this way, the setting supports the representation of Ukraine as the large and important defender.

An important way in which the identity of the Self is constructed in Zelensky’s speeches is through references to shared norms and values. In his speech to the Crimea Platform summit, he directly speaks about Ukraine as if it was a part of the European Union. He then continues this connection to the value of freedom and human rights for all without discrimination based on religion or ethnicity (Zelensky 2022e).

The return of the Ukrainian flag is the arrival of the European Union on the peninsula. In the full sense of these words. (...) The return of the Ukrainian flag is the protection of human rights, it is freedom for all people in Crimea, for all communities - ethnic or religious. (Zelensky 2022e)

The identity of the Self is also frequently connected to certain criteria. If the criteria are fulfilled, then an actor is part of the representation of the Self. When speaking about support, those included in the Self are the ones that have supported Ukraine. Zelensky also relies on the self-identification of other states to connect them to his constructed Self. By using statements like “every part of the world where freedom is valued more than the mercy of a tyrant.” (Zelensky 2023g), he invites his audience to self-identify with the identity he is constructing. Through the self-identification, the audience is also more connected to the identity, because they invest in the identity emotionally (Solomon 2014, 729). The importance of Zelensky’s construction of the Self is that it draws everyone included in it on his side and makes it more likely that they will understand the conflict in the way he describes it. Through being part of the Self, the meaning of the discourse is also shaped by that perspective.

5.2 The West

When the representation is about Russia and the war in general, then the West is included in the representation of Self. However, when the content is about mobilizing support, then western nations are not always described positively. When discussing support, Zelensky often focuses on the issue of time (Zelensky 2023b) and constructs an identity of western nations that hesitate too much (Zelensky 2022a), talk too much before making a decision (Zelensky 2023d) and have not been direct and honest with Ukraine in the past (Zelensky 2022a). What is important for understanding the relationship between support and the identity constructed here is agency. Zelensky represents the Western nations, his audience, so that they can change their identity for the better. The way they can do this is by supporting Ukraine.

If Europe hesitates, evil may have time to regroup and prepare itself for years of war. It is in your power not to allow this to happen. (Zelensky 2023i)

This puts western nations in a position where they are not only able to act, they are expected to. Not acting would mean accepting the negative version of the constructed identity. Combined with the emotional investment into the positive Self, this represents supporting Ukraine as a norm that anyone part of the Self is able and expected to follow.

5.3 The Other

The construction of Russian identity in Zelensky's speeches represents it as the Other, the opposite of the Self. A term that is used very frequently in this context is terror, for example during the speech to the UK parliament.

On the fifth day, the terror against us has already become outright.
(Zelensky 2022c)

This sentence shows where the line in identity between the Self and the Other is. The Self is the "us", which is the victim. The Other is the one that brings the "terror". The word terror is used often and tied even stronger to the identity of Russia with terms like "terrorist", "terrorist state" and "war criminal" being used throughout multiple speeches (Zelensky 2023b; 2023e; 2023g; 2023i). The choice of the word terror is especially important because it is a term that already has significant meaning outside the Russo-Ukrainian war. The term terror frames the Russian actions as illegitimate and unjustifiable, because terror is not considered acceptable. It should be noted that in the Western understanding of the term, there is a previously existing connection to Russia from the Cold War. As Geoffrey Skoll (2007) writes in a history of the term: "In the Cold War, terrorism was what the Soviet Union did." (2007, 126).

The identity of the Other also gets associated with historical and cultural references that position it as the enemy. One example is the connection Zelensky draws between Russia and the Nazis during his address to the UK parliament (Zelensky 2022c).

On the sixth day, Russian missiles hit Babyn Yar. This is the place where the Nazis executed 100,000 people during World War II. 80 years later, Russia killed them for a second time. (Zelensky 2022c)

Suggesting that Russia acts like the Nazis, represents it as cruel and evil, at least in the historical perspective of most Western countries. Another example is the previously mentioned use of the biblical story of David and Goliath at the 2023 Munich Security Conference (Zelensky 2023g).

thanks to which Russian Goliath has already started to lose his ground.(Zelensky 2023g)

These references are important to consider, because they draw a very clear line between who is good and who is evil, but also because they are suggesting a path into the future. In the story, Goliath was defeated. The Nazis were defeated as well. By putting the identity of Russia next to these examples, losing the war becomes part of their identity itself, just like winning becomes part of the identity of Ukraine. Even apart from the connection with terror, the way in which Zelensky's speeches construct the identity of Russia, of the Other, also use moral concepts. A strong example of this is in the speech of president Zelensky to the European Council Meeting (Zelensky 2023i).

to bring closer the time when we will be able to drive out the Russian terrorists further from Ukraine – these war criminals, who, as every one of you knows, are dreaming of bringing to your cities the evil they have brought to Ukraine. (Zelensky 2023i)

The important part in this quote is not the connection to war criminals that was mentioned before. The important part is that the identity of the Other is described as one that dreams of bringing evil. In this view the bringing of evil is itself the goal of the Other, not just a means to an end or a byproduct.

It should also be noted that the construction of the Other in Zelensky's speeches does not always refer to Russia. Instead, during his speech at the 2023 Munich Security Conference he directly referred to Russian president Vladimir Putin as the problem and separates him from Russia: "I am confident that we can gain victory not only over Putin, but also over putins; not only over putins in Russia but all around the world." (Zelensky 2023g) In this case the Other is Putin, not Russia. The responsibility for the war lies with him since it is "Putin's war," (Zelensky 2022e). Zelensky goes on to describe Putin's relation to the Self.

We, united Davids shall prevail over putins scattered all over the world!
(Zelensky 2023g)

The way Putin's identity is constructed here is as isolated, "scattered" (Zelensky 2023g), while the Self, the Davids, are united. The description of the Self as united and the Other as isolated is another one of the central themes of Russian identity construction in Zelensky's speeches. The representations of the actors in the speeches are often Russia on the one hand and the rest of the world on the other.

These constructed identities form perspectives from which meaning is created and the discourse is interpreted. By bringing western nations from which Ukraine wants support into the Self and representing the Other as an evil aggressor, Zelensky's speeches work to support those representations that are favorable to Ukraine. By building on the background of these identities, the specific representations and techniques to mobilize support can be analyzed.

6 SUPPORT MOBILIZATION IN DISCOURSE

Previous chapters showed features of Zelensky's speeches that he uses to construct representations, as well as which identities are constructed in the discourse. With this background, it becomes possible to analyze how the discourse of his speeches is related to support for Ukraine. The discourse analysis of the speeches revealed different modes of engagement with the audience related to support for Ukraine. This chapter will discuss these modes of engagement and the representations they use to show how Zelensky's public diplomacy works to influence the discourse in a way that enables western support for Ukraine.

6.1 *War as Attacks on the West*

The discourse encourages support in different ways, for example by using representations of the conflict itself. As previously described, the construction of the Self in the discourse closely connects Ukraine and western nations. In this way the Russian invasion is not represented as a conflict between two nations, but instead as a conflict between the Self and the Other. The attack on Ukraine is represented as an attack on all the nations that are considered part of the Self. Zelensky makes this clear when he talks about support, stating that "This is your contribution to the security of Europe and the world." (Zelensky 2022a). In this representation Ukraine defending against Russian attacks is not the defense of Ukraine alone, it is the defense of "Europe and the world." (Zelensky 2022a).

Zelensky presents the attack as an attack on more than just Ukraine by representing it as an attack on the values of the Self. In this logic, supporting Ukraine therefore also means defending one's values. An example is when he talks about how well European support worked over the winter:

All of this is the evidence that Europe knows how to defend its values and has the courage to stand up to terror. (Zelensky 2023i)

Zelensky directly refers to European support as defending its values. The representation of the war is not between Ukraine and Russia, it is that Russia attacked Europe and its values and by supporting Ukraine, Europe is defending itself.

6.2 Norms, Morals and Duty

To mobilize support, Zelensky's speeches show representations that put other countries in a position where they would be expected to support Ukraine for reasons of norms and moral beliefs. In his speeches, Zelensky often relies on the norm of reciprocity to encourage support. Anthony Pratkanis describes the norm as a common strategy for social influence in public diplomacy (Pratkanis 2020, 147–48). In the constructed identity of the Self, Ukraine represents itself as defending shared values against an outside threat. Through representing the conflict in this way, supporting Ukraine is only the fulfillment of basic social norms. In his 2022 speech in Munich (Zelensky 2022b), president Zelensky makes the expectation for reciprocity clear.

These are not noble gestures for which Ukraine should bow low. This is your contribution to the security of Europe and the world. Where Ukraine has been a reliable shield for eight years. And for eight years it has been rebuffing one of the world's biggest armies. Which stands along our borders, not the borders of the EU. (Zelensky 2022a)

In some speeches, Zelensky also creates shameful representations that are meant to mobilize support. This use of shame and identity for mobilizing support has also been noticed in the public media, with the BBC directly writing about how he uses it as a way to “get what he needs” (Adams 2022). An early example of this can again be seen in his Munich 2022 speech (Zelensky 2022a), days before the beginning of the invasion.

We will defend our land with or without the support of partners. Whether they give us hundreds of modern weapons or five thousand helmets. We appreciate any help, but everyone should understand that these are not charitable contributions that Ukraine should ask for or remind of. (Zelensky 2022a)

At first sight, the focus here seems to be on the determination of Ukraine to defend against invasion. It is also clear that Zelensky tries to establish that Ukraine is entitled to the support. The potentially most impactful part of the statement is hidden in the representation of what kind of support there could be. “5000 Helmets” on the lowest end and “hundreds of modern weapons” on the highest (Zelensky 2022a). At the time, Germany was reluctant to send weapons to Ukraine, offering 5000 helmets instead (von der Buchard 2022). By indirectly referring to the German support package as the absolute minimum possible, it represents that amount of support as shamefully low. This representation is also supported by the similar structure of the first sentences, which connects the “5000 helmets” to the “without the support of partners” (Zelensky 2022a). By indirectly shaming Germany for their lack of support, the speech establishes a norm of what kind of support is expected.

6.3 Reframing Materialities

When speaking about some certain types of support, especially weapons, Zelensky represents them in a way that shows them as something that can save lives. An example of this is Zelensky’s speech on January 26th 2023, when he asked for long range missiles from his allies (Zelensky 2023e). He started his speech by speaking about a Russian missile attack on a residential building that allegedly happened that day. He also explained that the attack would not have happened if Ukraine had long range missiles, since then the Russians would not have been able to come close enough (Zelensky 2023e).

We will do everything we can to ensure that partners open up this vital supply – in particular, the supply of ATACMS and other similar weapons. As it is necessary to protect life. (Zelensky 2023f)

Such a representation changes the narrative about the object itself. In this representation of long range missiles, giving Ukraine access to these weapons is no longer about providing military power. Instead, it becomes reframed as a way to save lives. Changing the representation of the type of support itself also becomes important with the “Foot-In-The-Door” (Pratkanis 2020, 149) technique of public diplomacy. Once some small support is given, continuously asking for more is a tactic to increase the support step by step. Representing the next type of support as a reasonable continuation of the previous helps this tactic of support mobilization to be successful (Pratkanis 2020, 149).

6.4 Fear and Self-Interest

Representing the conflict in a way that is threatening to western nations is another method through which Zelensky tries to mobilize support. The conflict is presented as something that must be stopped for the security of the world, as something that threatens more than Ukraine. What makes this different from the representation of the war as an attack on the Self is that it relies on fear. An example of how Zelensky appeals to fear comes from his speech at the 2023 Munich Security Conference, when he asks his allies to make support decisions faster (Zelensky 2023h).

While we are trying to convince that Ukraine needs modern combat aircraft, the Kremlin has already convinced the Iranian regime. The result is not only lethal Iranian drones in Ukrainian skies. But also something, with which the Kremlin paid for it. Are you sure it's just money? Or, maybe, the world will face the "enriched Iranian regime"? (Zelensky 2023g)

Without mentioning it directly, but still in a way where the entire audience most likely understood what he was saying, Zelensky suggests that Russia might pay Iran with enriched nuclear material. He appeals to the fear of other countries that Iran could manage to successfully build a nuclear weapon. Fear appeals have also been mentioned by Anthony Pratkanis to be a tactic of social influence in public diplomacy (Pratkanis 2020, 148). He describes it as effective, especially when there is a clear action to overcome the fear (Pratkanis 2020, 148–49), which in this case is support for Ukraine. In some rare cases, Zelensky also appeals to positive self-interest, for example when he suggests that supporting Ukraine could increase Europe’s “global strength” (Zelensky 2023i).

6.5 Urgency and Agency

A common theme in the speeches of president Zelensky is him asking his audience to make decisions to support Ukraine quickly. There are two main representations used to support this. Time as a “Russian weapon” (Zelensky 2023d) and long approval times for support as responsible for lengthening the war (Zelensky 2023i). In the analyzed speech, where he addresses the European Council (Zelensky 2023i) he directly connects delayed support with a longer war.

But, dear colleagues, don’t you feel that we have fewer new successes than new protractions in our joint efforts? (...) This moves us further away from achieving peace. (Zelensky 2023i)

Putting the responsibility for a longer war on delayed support also has an emotional impact. It suggests that waiting with support or being hesitant is like actively helping Russia. Through this, the representation creates emotional pressure to act fast. After asking for faster support decisions, he says that “You can start this policy today.” (Zelensky 2023d). This gives his audience agency to act and directly suggests when they should do so. It also adds emotional

punishment to inaction, since if the western nation does not act in this framing, it is because it was not willing to do so.

6.6 Goal-Setting

Goal-setting is a way in which Ukrainian public diplomacy works to mobilize support, but also to protect its strategic interests. Goal-setting means representing the desired course of the war in a way that is favorable for the Self, meaning also other nations, while still including Ukraine's interests. An example of this is how Zelensky connected the end of the war with Ukraine regaining control over Crimea (Zelensky 2022e).

The return of the Ukrainian flag to Crimea is the return of the normality familiar to all Europeans, as it is available in each of your countries. Security normality, economic, legal, social, cultural. (Zelensky 2022e)

Zelensky represents the end of the war, also from the perspective of other Europeans, as the return of Crimea to Ukraine. The idea that the war could end without Crimea being returned is also moved further away by the rest of the speech, where he already asks his audience to make plans for when Crimea is returned to Ukraine (Zelensky 2022e). Zelensky also tries to avoid any peace plans that do not align with Ukraine's goals. In his address to the European Council he asks for support in organizing a summit for the peace formula he presented (Zelensky 2023j).

the Peace Formula, the Ukrainian Peace Formula, which I presented in the autumn, is the only realistic and comprehensive plan to restore Ukraine's territorial integrity and guarantee security for our people and for the whole of Europe. (Zelensky 2023i)

By representing the peace formula as the only "realistic" (Zelensky 2023i) plan, he questions any other plan that could have goals that are against the interest of Ukraine.

7 CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I investigated how Ukrainian political actors use public diplomacy to influence western public opinion to gain support for Ukraine. It is extremely difficult to prove whether public diplomacy directly results in the mobilization of support. Instead, the result of public diplomacy should be seen in the context of Robert Putnam's (1988) two-level game. In this view of the situation public diplomacy works to increase "win-set" (Putnam 1988, 435–36) and makes support more likely. The way in which public diplomacy achieves this is by influencing the discourse on the war and support. To understand how this is done I performed discourse analysis on speeches by Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky. By showing how his speeches influence the discourse and which identities and representations he constructs, this thesis contributes to the literature on public diplomacy by providing a case study for its use in gaining western support. Through its focus on the role of emotion, this thesis also contributes to the emotional turn and supports the analysis of emotions as a way to better understand public diplomacy.

The discourse analysis showed that the speeches use a wide variety of features to create representations. These include visual elements such as specific clothing, intertextual references, representations of personal connection, linguistic elements and frequent use of emotion. While there are multiple identities constructed in the speeches, the most important and frequent ones were about Ukraine and Russia, the Self and the Other respectively. The Self, which included Ukraine and western nations, was constructed around shared values and the opposition to Russia. The Other was framed as "evil" and a "terrorist state" which is guaranteed to be defeated.

After identifying these constructed identities, the thesis went on to show how the identities and features of Zelensky's speeches work together to create different ways of

promoting support for Ukraine in the audience. By appealing to western self-interest and shared norms, reframing requests for specific military support, creating time pressure and setting out the conditions under which the war is considered over, president Zelensky tries to persuade the audience that Ukraine should be supported. The thesis also showed that with each of these modes of engagement, Zelensky used emotions to strengthen the constructed representations. Throughout all the speeches, emotion played an important role that was used to persuade the audience to accept the meaning created by the representations.

The findings of this thesis highlight the need for policymakers in western nations to be aware of Ukrainian public diplomacy efforts. Without awareness, western policymakers risk putting Ukraine into a position where it could promote its interests unchecked, which could give it more influence over western public opinion than policymakers might accept. It also suggests that public diplomacy might become more important in global foreign policy, since countries like Ukraine have specific agencies for it and use it consistently.

By building on the modes of engagement and the constructed identities revealed in this thesis, future research could focus on how western nations have or could have responded to such public diplomacy. Future research could also investigate Russian public diplomacy during the same time and compare both it and Ukrainian public diplomacy regarding how they are different from and relate to each other.

APPENDIX: ANALYZED SPEECHES

Speech Title	Occasion	Date
Speech by the President of Ukraine	58th Munich Security Conference	February 19 th 2022
Address by the President of Ukraine	Parliament of the United Kingdom	March 8 th 2022
The return of the Ukrainian flag to Crimea will mean the restoration of real peace	First parliamentary summit of the Crimea Platform	October 25 th 2022
President's greetings on Christmas	Christmas	January 6 th 2023
Mobilization of the world must outpace the next military mobilization of our joint enemy	“Restoring Security and Peace” session during the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum	January 18 th 2023
It is in your power to make a Ramstein of tanks	Meeting of the Advisory Group on Defense of Ukraine in the "Ramstein" format	January 20 th 2023
Ukraine needs long-range missiles so that terrorists do not have a feeling of impunity	Daily Address	January 28 th 2023
We have to liberate Ukraine and Europe, because when the Russian weapon shoots at us, it is already pointed at our neighbors	Munich Security Conference	February 17 th 2023
If Europe hesitates, evil can prepare itself for years of war, it is in your power not to allow this to happen	European Council meeting	March 23 rd 2023

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