

A SPEECH ACTS ANALYSIS OF THE UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT'S SPEECH BEFORE THE JAPANESE PARLIAMENT: A PRAGMATIC APPRAISAL

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Abstract: This study examines speech acts in the Ukrainian President's speech held before the Japanese parliament on Wednesday, March 23, 2022 from a pragmatic perspective. The investigation seeks to decipher President Volodymyr Zelensky's encoded messages in the above mentioned speech to make sense of his real political and diplomatic intentions behind it. To attain these objectives, the study has employed the mixed quantitative and qualitative methodology. Among other important findings made by the study, President Volodymyr Zelensky has used representative speech acts overridingly to account for the ongoing war drawbacks on Ukraine civilians, the environment, and mankind not only today, but also in the long run. His use of these speech acts has allowed to decode the message that the ongoing war has to be regarded not just as Ukraine's business but as a misfortune befalling the globe owing to the boundless scope of its ravages. In that regard, President Volodymyr Zelensky recommends, from his disappointing bitter experience of the ongoing war, through directive speech acts that nations world wide join hands and efforts to develop new security guarantees, and reform the existing international institutions in order to act preventively and strongly every time peace is threatened. He pledged via commissive speech acts to perform amazing feats together with Japan for the sake of peace and security worldwide beseeching them to continue rallying round Ukraine not only in this war time but even after.

Keywords: Pragmatics, speech act, study, Ukraine, war.

ANALYSE DES ACTES DE LANGAGE DANS LE DISCOURS DU PRESIDENT UKRAINIEN DEVANT LE PARLEMENT JAPONAIS: UNE EVALUATION PRAGMATIQUE

Résumé : Cette étude examine, dans une approche pragmatique, les actes de langage dans le discours du Président Ukrainien tenu devant le parlement Japonais le Mercredi 23 mars 2022. L'étude vise à déchiffrer les messages encodés du

Président Volodymyr Zelensky dans le discours ci-dessus évoqué pour donner sens à ses intentions politiques et diplomatiques réelles derrière ledit discours. Pour l'atteinte de ces objectifs, l'étude a utilisé la méthodologie mixte, celle quantitative et qualitative. Au nombre des résultats importants auxquels a abouti la recherche, il ressort que Volodymyr Zelensky a utilisé les actes de langage représentatifs de façon prépondérante pour faire état des inconvénients de la guerre en cours sur les civils Ukrainiens, l'environnement et l'humanité non seulement dans le présent, mais également dans le long terme. Son usage desdits actes de langage a permis de décoder le message que la guerre en cours ne doit pas être considérée comme l'affaire de l'Ukraine, mais plutôt comme un malheur qui s'abat sur le monde entier en raison de l'étendu illimité de ses ravages. A cet égard, tenant compte de son expérience amère et décevante de la guerre en cours, il recommande à toutes les nations du monde entier, via les actes de langage directifs, d'unir leurs efforts pour développer de nouvelles garanties de sécurité et réformer les institutions internationales existantes afin d'agir de manière préventive et énergique toutes les fois que la paix est menacée. Il s'est engagé, via les actes de langage commis, à faire, ensemble avec le Japon, des exploits pour la paix et la sécurité dans le monde, les implorant de continuer à venir en aide à l'Ukraine non seulement en cette période de guerre, mais même après.

Mots-clés : Acte de langage, étude, guerre, pragmatique, Ukraine.

Introduction

The Russian-Ukrainian war has kept no one indifferent worldwide since its outbreak this year on February 24. The war has triggered so many drastic drawbacks beyond the boundaries of the two warring countries that people all over the world are scared of a possible third world war. According to Pereira et al. (2022), the ongoing war has “dramatically impacted the world economy, geopolitics, and food security”, (p. 1). In fact, this Russo-Ukrainian war which started in 2014 is today an escalation of eight years conflict that has already claimed over fourteen thousand lives (Technology and Social Change team, 2022). It has caused Europe's largest refugee crisis since World War II, with more than 8.8 million Ukrainians fleeing the country and a third of the population displaced (“2022 Ukrainian refugee crisis”, 2022, para.1.) The Ukrainian President, Volodymyr Zelensky, has not been unmoved by the mournful, distressing and grief-stricken situations his nation is undergoing. In search of ways and means to put an end to the war, he has recently held a speech before the Japanese Parliament precisely on Wednesday, March 23, 2022. This has captured our attention for several reasons. First why has the Ukrainian president chosen to resort to the Japanese parliament in this crucial period of the war and not to another parliament or an international institution responsible for managing war crises between nations? Next, what strategic position does Japan hold in the management of this war that has prompted the Ukrainian president to travel all that long way to have talks with them? The study is premised on the hypotheses that Ukraine cannot do away with Japan in this war time and that the latter is unquestionably the way out of the deadly ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia.

To explore all these concerns, this article looks into speech acts in the Ukrainian President's speech held before the Japanese MPs from a pragmatic perspective. The study seeks to decipher President Volodymyr Zelensky's encoded messages in order to make sense of his real political and diplomatic intentions and motives behind it. In addition to this introduction, the study is broken into five cruxes namely the theoretical framework and literature review, the methodology, data analysis and findings, the interpretation of findings and a conclusion. The theoretical framework briefly recaps what pragmatics deals with and summarizes the theory of speech acts in application in this article from Austin's (1962), Searle's (1969/1977) and Mey's (2001) perspectives. In the literature review, sub-component of the first crux, relevant related literature to the study at hand has been revisited. The methodology section has elaborated on the different methods employed in the data collection process. In the data analysis and findings subsection, the collected data have been statistically processed and analyzed. The interpretation of the findings part has been devoted to the interpretation of the collected and processed data within the context of the analyzed speech from a pragmatic angle. The conclusion rounds the study off summarizing the key findings of the study and highlighting the avenues that the study has opened up for further investigations. Like any scientific paper, this also has an abstract and a reference list.

I. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Under this subsection, the different aspects of the speech acts theory that are going to be considered for the identification, analysis, and interpretation of the speech acts embedded in the Ukrainian President's selected speech are summarized and the related literature to the study at hand reviewed.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

A careful examination of everyday conversations clearly shows that people usually communicate far more than they say to their communication partners. Understanding speakers' implicit or intended messages beyond the words they utter while interacting with others is the major concern in pragmatics. Indeed, pragmatics is "the study of 'invisible' meaning or how we recognize what is meant even when it is not actually said or written" (Yule, 2010, p.128). According to Mey (2001), "pragmatics is needed if we want a fuller, deeper and generally more reasonable account of human language behavior", (p.12). For Mey (ibid), pragmatic account is the only one that makes sense and as such, there is no understanding outside of pragmatics. It then goes without saying that communication depends on not only the recognition of the meaning of speakers' words in their utterances, but also the recognition of what they mean by their utterances. To be able to decipher speakers' intended meanings, it is important to know about speech act theory which is a subfield of pragmatics that studies the way people use words not only to give or present information but also to perform or to get others to perform actions.

First introduced by its principal exponent the Oxford philosopher John L. Austin (1962) in his posthumous work entitled *How to Do Things with Words*, the speech act theory was further developed and codified by the American philosopher John R. Searle (1969) who had studied under Austin in the fifties and subsequently became the main proponent and defender of his teacher's ideas. As a matter of fact, Searle (1969) defined

speech acts as “the basic or minimal units of linguistic communication”, (p.16). Searle (1969:16) emphasized that “the unit of linguistic communication is not, as has generally been supposed, the symbol, word or sentence, but rather the production of the symbol or word or sentence in the performance of the speech act.” Following Austin (1962), speech acts are classified into five categories chiefly verdictive, expositive, exercitive, behabitive and commissive acts (p. 109). This original categorization of speech acts has been criticized by Searle (1969) who thinks that his teacher has operated the classification not only with overlapping criteria, but also by including both incompatible elements and elements that do not rhyme within his categories. In fact, Searle’s most dissatisfaction about this classification of speech act is all about the fact that Austin apparently does not pay attention to the difference between speech acts and speech act verbs. Actually, contrarily to Austin’s perspective, the existence or non-existence of the latter cannot and should not be a criterion for the existence or non-existence of a particular speech act. In that vein, Leech (1983) also criticizes Austin for committing the grave error of supposing that “verbs in the English language correspond one-to-one with categories of speech act”. In Leech’s (1983) words, Austin’s classification of speech acts is a prime example of what he called the “Illocutionary-Verb Fallacy” (p.176). Owing to all these critics by well known scholars in the field of pragmatics, this article doesn’t use Austin’s taxonomy of speech acts presented above. It rather uses Searle’s (1977) classification of speech acts to analyze the selected speech.

Searle (ibid) has not just criticized Austin. Indeed, he went beyond mere criticism to suggest a more elaborated and codified taxonomy of speech acts. In fact, Searle (1977) classified speech acts into five categories namely representatives or assertives, directives, commissives, expressive and declarations (p.34). Representative speech acts are assertions about a state of affairs in the world hence they are also called assertive speech acts (Leech, 1983, p.128). They carry the values true or false and are basically utterances that are produced to state a fact or opinion based on the observation of a certain number of things. They include statements of facts, assertions, conclusions and descriptions. The following are speech act verbs that help identify representative speech acts: assert, claim, believe, state, conclude, agree, predict, guess, describe, deny, insist, assure, describe, report, remind, inform, tell, boast, characterize, diagnose, class, and complain. *I Guess Covid-19 is all over now in Benin especially as people no more wear face masks in the country* would be a perfect example of a representative speech act. Directive speech acts on the other hand embody an effort on the part of the speaker to get the hearer to do something, to ‘direct’ him or her towards some goal (the speaker’s one mostly). Directive speech acts include advising and suggesting, orders, commands, requesting, questioning, begging, pleading, praying, entreating, as well as permitting. Austin (1962) place directive speech acts under either exercitives or behabitives. An illustrative example is as follows: *You had better work harder if you wish to have more money*. The class of commissive speech acts turns out to be more or less identical with Austin’s one of the same name. Searle (1977) calls this class of speech acts ‘unexceptionable’ (p.35). Like directive speech act, commissive speech acts operate a change in the world by means of creating an obligation; however, this obligation is created in the speaker not in the hearer as in the case of the directives. In commissives, the speaker intends to do something by promising, offering,

pledging, threatening, or refusing. A very good illustrative instance is the difference between a promise and a request. The former is a commissive speech act while the latter is a directive speech act. Whereas promise creates an obligation in the promiser, request does so in the 'requiree'.

As for expressive speech acts, they express an inner state of the speaker; the expression is essentially subjective and tells us nothing about the world. They embrace congratulating, thanking, welcoming, apologizing, and consoling. *I am sorry not to have warned you beforehand* would stand as an example of expressive speech act. Declarations are Austin's (1962) 'original' category. In Searle's (1977) words, "declarations bring about some alternation in the status or conditions of the referred to object(s) solely by virtue of the fact that the declaration has been successfully performed" (p.37). They include appointing, nominating, resigning, naming, declaring, calling, defining, declaring the bride and bridegroom wife and husband, and pronouncing sentences. An instance of declarative speech act is *I declare you to be husband and wife*.

According to Yokossi (2022), "All the five categories of speech acts function differently not only according to their users, but also according to the situational and cultural contexts in which they are used", (p.3). Any of the speech acts presented above can function directly or indirectly. A direct speech act uses a declarative syntactic structure for the function of a statement, an interrogative syntactic structure for the function of a question, an imperative syntactic structure for the function of a command or request (Yule, 2010, p. 134). When a declarative, an imperative, or an interrogative syntactic structure is used to perform a function other than the one they are literally recognized for, the result is an indirect speech act. Both direct and indirect speech acts are assessed via the concept of politeness. In pragmatics, politeness is showing awareness and consideration of another person's face. Face is one's public self-image, viz., the emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone else to recognize. For Yule (2010), "face can be positive or negative" (p.135). While a negative face is the need to be independent and free from imposition, a positive face is the need to be connected, to belong, to be a member of a group.

From Yule's (1996) perspective, there are five types of felicity conditions indispensable for the realization of both direct and indirect speech acts. These include: general conditions, content conditions, preparatory conditions, sincerity conditions and essential conditions, (p. 50).

1.2 Literature Review

Several scholars and researchers from different fields of specialty have carried out many research works about Ukraine and Russia. These investigations range from, and are not limited to, knowing about the history between both nations, language-identity relationship as a barometer to distinguish between both nationalities, the historical, political as well as social causes of the ongoing war between both countries, the economic, socio-cultural and socio-political aftermaths of the ongoing war between both nations, as well as perspectives towards stopping the ongoing war. A few of these scholarly investigations have been reviewed under this subsection to help appraise the limits of research within the field to justify the validity and relevance of the investigation under consideration.

Bureiko and Moga (2019) carried out a research work entitled: *The Ukrainian–Russian Linguistic Dyad and its Impact on National Identity in Ukraine*. The investigation explored the importance of language in the composition of Ukrainian national identity, asking whether the dual use of Ukrainian and Russian precludes the formation of a national Ukrainian self-identification. More to the point, the research findings reveal that, in recent years, the importance of language in defining Ukrainian identity has in fact diminished and, instead, shifted to other components regarded by respondents as salient identity markers. The top five attributes part of the other components which define ‘being Ukrainian’, according to the preferences of the informants interviewed, were ‘to feel Ukrainian’, ‘to respect and follow Ukrainian traditions’, ‘to help compatriots’, ‘to respect Ukrainian political institutions and law’ and ‘to protect Ukraine’, while ‘to speak Ukrainian’ ranked among the last.

On the other hand, their findings show that in spite of the strong politicization of language issues since independence, linguistic preferences were not sufficiently relevant to show that a Russian-speaking identity is salient in Ukraine. Additionally, they observed that the reported native language is often not necessarily the language of everyday communication. Whereas the Ukrainian native-speakers surveyed frequently opted for Ukrainian–Russian bilingualism, Russian was used in communication twice more often than declared as native. The researchers conclude that despite acknowledging the potential of the Ukrainian and Russian languages to generate political cleavages, language controversies have not necessarily impeded the population’s attachment and loyalty to the Ukrainian state. Elsherbiny (2022) conducted a study on Europe on fire: *The Russo-Ukrainian war, its causes and consequences*. In this paper, the researcher stated that “the Russian war will not be limited to Ukraine only” (p.2). He further added that the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine “is a threat to humanity, considering that Russia is a country that possesses a huge nuclear arsenal” (p.2). The researcher thinks that the Russo-Ukrainian war will antagonize such nuclear countries as the United States and France. The findings of the study show that the strategic location of Russia, its rich natural resources and the fact that it’s the world-leading nuclear arsenal and one of the most powerful armed forces of any country, give the Russian state its authority and geopolitical power, which provides Moscow with an opportunity to play an important, influential and global role in the conflict. According to the researcher, Russia is right to feel disturbed by Ukraine's accession to NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) to encircle Russia from all sides with military forces of more than 30 countries knowing that some of them are hostile to Russia. He even appreciates that Russia's strategies in Ukraine are a reaction to its fear of the threat and danger of NATO's economic expansion and encirclement and threat to its national security. However, he does not subscribe to the logic that the goal behind this is to appear as a great power. From the researcher’s perspective, if NATO joins the war between Russia and Ukraine, it may lead to a third world war which will be nothing but a nuclear war that would put an end to human life on the globe. He concludes urging international organizations and other countries to continue making diplomatic efforts to settle the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine amicably.

Bauer (2022) published an article on: The Russo–Ukrainian War through a Historian’s Eye. In this article, the author underlined that a modern Ukrainian literature began to appear by the end of the eighteenth century. According to the researcher, to this day, the areas of northern Ukraine are inhabited by people who, when asked before and after World War I whether they were Poles, Ukrainians, Belarussians, or Russians, used to answer that they were “local people” (p.2). The investigation reveals that after the fall of Communism, Ukrainian nationalists chose to identify with the wartime legacy of the collaborators, and many of those figures became the object of glorification. Independent Ukraine was plagued by massive corruption and a struggle between pro-Western and pro-Russian politicians. But what seems to have happened was the rise of a young generation that sought to establish a liberal government that would struggle against corruption. It was then that the Jewish-born actor Volodymyr Zelensky appeared on the scene. As is well known, Zelensky comes from a Russian-speaking family of Soviet Jewish intellectuals in KryvyiRih, and learned Ukrainian as time passed. In free elections, he garnered more than 73 percent of the vote—truly an unprecedented achievement, more impressive still as his Jewish origins and identity were no secret.

Bauer (ibid) contends that Western responses, led by the Biden administration, appear to be quite effective— not perhaps in the short run, but more and more so as time passes. True, China supports Russia, though rather cautiously and perhaps not wholeheartedly. But a point may come, and it may come sooner than later, when Putin’s administration realizes that the price it is paying outweighs any potential advantages, and it will be willing to stop the war, leaving Russia with Crimea as well as the “People’s Republics” of Dunetsk and Luhansk, and a pledge by Ukraine to desist, for now, from its attempts to join the EU and NATO. From the researcher’s perspective, that would be a partial victory for the Ukrainians, but as he argues, it would come at a heavy price.

The author wonders if the sanctions and the economic warfare against Russia will continue or be aborted. For him, unless a new Trump administration, or something similar to it, succeeds the current one in Washington, the outlines of a global Cold War situation can be seen quite clearly: the West (North America and Europe) against China and Russia, with illiberal regimes such as that of India, and others in the Middle East and parts of Africa and Latin America, and even a few in Europe as well, wavering, but not necessarily in any Western direction. At the moment, Israel can continue its fence-sitting, but it may ultimately have to choose a less ambiguous course of action. He concludes saying that he doesn’t know what the future holds. But as a historian, he has great difficulties in predicting the past; regarding the future, sadly, he is totally at sea.

In their article entitled: The analysis of illocutionary acts of judges’ comments in America’s next top model and Asia’s next top model competitions: A cross-cultural pragmatic study, Putri, Sartini, and Fajri (2020) discussed speech acts performed by judges of model competitions in America and Asia TV series viz. America’s Next Top Model and Asia’s Next Top Model. The aim of their study was to find out the illocutionary acts of the judges since they are considered as the decision makers in competitions. The detailed analysis between American and Asian cultures was presented to support the findings of the study. For the data of the study, they collected utterances in the America’s Next Top Model Session 21 Episode 5, and Asia’s Next Top Model Session 6 Episode 1 from YouTube. While analyzing the data, they transcribed all the collected utterances using orthographical transcription method. The data were then

analyzed and categorized in terms of the theory of illocutionary speech acts from Searle (1979) using qualitative description method. Their findings reveal that four (4) types of illocutionary acts are performed by the judges of America's Next top Model, namely: Assertive, Directive, Expressive, Declarative speech acts with a total of 72 utterances. However, in the Asia's Next Top Model episode, they found 4 speech acts namely Assertive, Directive, Expressive, and Commissive, with 74 utterances. The most dominant types of speech act in America's Next Top Model are assertive and declarative speech acts while in Asia's Next Top Model there are 29 expressive speech acts. Remarkably, the declarative function is not found in the Asian context while the commissive function does not exist in the American context. From the cross-cultural pragmatics perspective, the results of this study conclude that Asians are more expressive than Americans. More to the point, there is an apology statement in the American context whereas there is no expression of apology in the Asian context. Drawing upon their findings, the researchers think that Americans are more to the point, that is to say more overt than Asians. For them, Asians seem to have more empathy to encourage contestants by identifying the number of advice functions. As it can be witnessed from the literature reviewed so far, there has already been a lot of research works on the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian war. However, no investigation has so far, to our best knowledge, been carried out on the Ukrainian President's speech before the Japanese parliament using speech acts as a backdrop from a pragmatic perspective as this article does. Hence, the relevance, originality, and validity of the investigation at hand.

2. Methodology

For the attainment of the objectives of this investigation, a methodology is adopted. First of all, the selected speech is broken down into its utterances constituents. The utterances making up the speech have been numerated one after the other from beginning to end. This has allowed to know the exact number of the different speech acts embedded in the speech. Next, following Searle's (1977) taxonomy of speech acts, the five different speech acts have been identified all through the speech. Each of the one hundred and sixty-six utterances the selected speech is made up of is labeled according to the speech act it corresponds to. Once all the different speech acts embedded in the studied speech are identified they are organized per category, counted and statistically presented in a way that provides useful information about their number, prevalence as well as occurrence rate per type. This has helped to pave the way to the qualitative component of the mixed methodology appealed to via which the underlying meanings of the Ukrainian President's messages in his studied speech have been unveiled through the interpretation of the findings.

3. Data Analysis and Findings

Following the methodology presented above, the analysis of the selected speech has been carried out. The different types of speech acts identified have been categorized, counted along with the percentage calculation of the number of speech acts registered per category. The collected data are statistically presented in the table underneath.

Table 3.1. Recap statistical table of the different speech acts recorded in the analyzed speech

Types of speech acts	Number per category	Percentage
Representatives	115	70.55%
Directives	25	15.33%
Commissives	03	01.84%
Expressive	11	06.74%
declaratives	09	05.52%
Overall recorded speech acts	163	100%

As it can be witnessed from the above statistical table, all the five different types of Searle's (1977) taxonomy of speech acts in application in this study have been recorded. Before going down to specifics, it is important to highlight that the selected speech is made up of one hundred and sixty-three utterances representing the total number of the speech acts the selected speech is composed of. To descend to particulars, a careful observation of the collected data shows that the different categories of the identified speech acts have been recorded in various proportions ranging from the most occurring to the least occurring of them all. Looking closely into the number of speech acts recorded per category, one discovers that the representative speech acts category override, by far, the other types of speech acts recorded in the selected speech. Actually, representatives all alone add up to a total number of one hundred and fifteen (115) representing 70.55 % of the overall recorded speech acts. They are followed in the predominance ranking order by the directives which are twenty five (25) in number viz. four times less in number than the representatives in the analyzed speech. The directive speech acts represent 15.33% of the entire collected data. Expressive speech acts rank third in the order and are a global number of eleven (11) out of the one hundred and sixty-three speech acts recorded in the analyzed selected speech. In terms of percentage, they represent 06.74% of all the speech acts embedded in the studied speech. Declarative speech acts count nine (09) in number in the speech and are fourth in the ranking order with a low percentage of 05.52%. The least occurring speech acts are the commissives. They rank bottom of all the recorded speech acts. They count three (03) in number and are just 01.84% of the overall collected data. The linguistic configurations of the analyzed speech in terms of the different categories of speech acts it embeds together with their proportions in relation to the length of the studied text are very full of meanings considering both the situational and cultural contexts of the Ukrainian president's examined speech. The uncovering of all these meanings is going to be the concern in the subsection hereafter.

4. Interpretation of Findings

One remarkable thing as said *inter alia* in the third section of this article above is that all the different types of Searle's (1977) taxonomy of speech acts being applied in this study have been identified in the selected speech. This implies that the Ukrainian President's speech before the Japanese parliament on Wednesday, March 23, 2022 being scrutinized falls in with the study at hand. Under the present subsection, the Ukrainian

president's underlying messages via his various selections of speech acts are going to be laid bare considering the contextual conditions of his utterances for as Mey (2001) puts it, "if the contextual conditions for a particular speech act being realized are not met, then there simply is no speech act, no matter what is said or written", (p.126). Conspicuously, representative speech acts are head and shoulders above all the recorded speech acts. Their predominance in the studied text is not without meaning. In fact they have been used by the Ukrainian President to account for the state of affairs of the ravaging ongoing war effects on Ukraine civilians, its multiple nuclear power plants chiefly Chernobyl and Zaporizhzhia, the largest nuclear power plant in Europe, the environment, and the whole world not only in the present time, but also in the long run. Knowing that representative speech acts commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition especially as they are used to state a fact or opinion based on the observation of a certain number of things, the Ukrainian President's statements, assertions, conclusions, and descriptions via the representative speech acts embedded in the studied speech, are no doubt facts based pieces of information that are real and truthful. Indeed, they have, in large numbers, enabled the president to depict and lay emphasis on the various damages Ukraine is going through to help Japan MPs fully grasp the pros and cons of the realities of the conflict in order for them to understand the urgency of the Ukrainian President's call for rescue and support. The president's use of the representative speech acts testifies to his strategic and diplomatic techniques of communication before the Japanese Parliament to capture their attention and gain their engagement by his side for peace and security restoration in Ukraine.

Some of the representative speech acts have been used by the Ukrainian president to express his opinions about the ongoing bloody conflict opposing his country to Russia. Actually he said insightful things that require political and diplomatic decisions from Japan, the entire world leading countries and institutions towards putting an end to the Russo-Ukrainian war. For instance, in the twenty-fifth utterance of his speech, the Ukrainian President said the following: "...without peace for Ukraine, no person in the world will be able to look to the future with confidence". What the Ukrainian President implies through this representative speech act is that what is happening to Ukraine today should keep no one indifferent in the world. The Russo-Ukrainian ongoing war has to be regarded not just as Ukraine's business but as a misfortune befalling the globe. Radioactive dust is lifted into the air by the Russian armored vehicles that passed through the 30-kilometer zone around the Chernobyl station. Such gasses as ammonia and sarin are released in the atmosphere as well owing to the war. The war is taking such an alarming and expansive proportion in terms of drawbacks that the whole world is going to be victim of if care is not taken and decisions made to stop that deadly war. In this perspective, the Ukrainian president insightfully remarked through the forty-third, forty-fourth, and forty-fifth representative speech acts that "it will take years after Russian troops leave Ukraine to investigate the damage they have done to Chernobyl; what sites of radioactive materials disposal were damaged; and how radioactive dust spread on the planet." These representative speech acts are revelatory of the boundless scope of the damages of the ongoing war. They also bring to light the Ukrainian president's woeful worries for his country as well as the world today,

and in the short-, medium-, and long-term future. They further highlight the need for quick salutary measures to be taken by the entitled international institutions and political authorities to put an end to the drastically dreadful ongoing war. More to the point, the above mentioned representative speech acts are descriptive of the fact that Volodymyr Zelensky's speech before the Japanese parliament is not just a selfish plea for his country but an appeal for the whole world rescue from peril in days to follow. It goes without saying that the Ukrainian president is not a self-interested person but a selfless peace maker.

From Volodymyr Zelensky's perspective, international institutions have failed including the U.N. and the Security Council to name but a few. One can witness this in the eighty-third and the eighty-fourth representative speech acts available in the appendix. This is no doubt the key reason why the Ukrainian president falls back on Japan by travelling all that long way to the Japanese parliament to let them hear his *cri de Coeur* through this speech of his being scrutinized for the rescue of Ukrainians and mankind. His choice to make do with Japan government in this crucially critical period of the history of his country is well thought out. In fact, Japan had already set the example by diligently providing aid and support to Ukraine against Russia since the last outbreak of the Russo-Ukraine war on February 25, 2022. Volodymyr Zelensky's implicit message through his resort to Japan is an appeal to the whole world by and large and to the international institutions in particular to rally and learn from Japan's good example by putting their footsteps into the latter's ones for a more globally peaceful and happier world. Current international peace and security institutions can no more be trusted according to the Ukrainian President. For him, "they need an injection of honesty, to become effective, to really decide and really influence, not just discuss." The folded message of the Ukrainian President through these representative speech acts is that international institutions have not proved they are up to it. Not only are they dishonest, but they are also neither effective nor influential and therefore cannot help save the day. As a result, he thinks that worldwide efforts should be joined to reform them all to meet the original missions they were set up for.

In other respects, the use of the declarative speech acts in the selected speech is also full of meanings. The Ukrainian president used declarative speech acts right from the beginning of his speech to name the very important personalities of the Japanese parliament that showed up on the occasion of the deliverance of his speech. In the process, he used formal forms of address to name each of them. To be explicit, these forms of address are made up of titles and last names of the addressed people. Such a state of affairs is evocative of a formal situation. As such, it is, no doubt, a planned meeting for serious matters. The presence of such important Japanese political figures as Hiroyuki Hosoda, Akiko Santo, and Fumio Kishida, respectively speaker of the House of Representatives, member of the house of Councilors in the Diet, and prime Minister of Japan government at that meeting is illustrative of its importance and the seriousness of its subject matter for Japan, Ukraine and the whole world.

The total absence of endearment terms as well as the first names of the addressed people in the speech reveals that contact between the Ukrainian President and the Japanese MPs is not frequent but rather occasional and that affective involvement among them is low. More to the point, the Ukrainian President has used declarative speech acts in his speech to pay honor to whom honor is due. Hence he has shown

concern, awareness and consideration for the Japanese MPs' and all the meeting attendees' positive face. By naming such key people as the ones in his speech with formal forms of address, the president has made his message formal and specific. He has further targeted, by so doing, those the real concerns of his messages in his speech are incumbent upon.

The Ukrainian president has not just contented himself with giving an account of the state of affairs of the ongoing war against his nation but he also made suggestive recommendations towards stopping the war and guaranteeing peace not only for his country but also for the whole world. To do so he used directive speech acts. Indeed, of the twenty five directive speech acts that he used, seventeen are suggestions, seven stand as pleadings and one is a piece of advice. Obviously, there are no orders, commands, or requests among the directive speech acts used by the Ukrainian president before the Japanese Parliament. The absence of these sub-categories of the directive speech acts class in his speech show how much tactful, modest and nice he has been at that meeting to all its attendees. Hence his high sense of humility and politeness. He was the most important political personality at that meeting in terms of social ranking. On top of all this, his nation is in trouble and need urgent non-negotiable assistance and wholehearted support. As such, he could have misused his authority commending and ordering what decisions were to be taken and what necessary things were to be done in his nation's interest. But that wasn't the case. This really highlights his worry for his audience positive face. Some of the directive speech acts used call for collaboration. In this vein, he said: "We need to develop new security guarantees so that it is possible to act preventively and strongly every time there is a threat to peace". The underlying message of the president via this directive speech act is that current security international institutions are neither proactive, nor precautionary even less strong enough to face peace challenges in the world. This entails that the existing international institutions have to be reformed and strengthened. In addition, peace forces all over the world need to join hands and efforts for sustainable security and peace guarantees.

Commissive speech acts are the least occurring ones in the speech. Their low rate within the contextual conditions of the speech is highly meaningful. Indeed, President Volodymyr Zelensky has avoided promising to do whatever thing or engaging himself for whatever future cause because no one can guess what the future holds for his country and the whole world with the current ongoing war. This certainly justifies the few number of the commissives recorded in the speech. In all the commissive speech acts he used, he prioritized cooperation. As the proverb goes united we stand, divided we fall. His strong desire to overcome the trial they are going through led him to suggest acting collaboratively with other nations working for security and peace in the world especially Japan. One striking example is his statement in the following commissive speech act: "We can do a lot together with you, even more than we can imagine". This commissive speech act implies that Ukraine cannot make it without Japan. Through it, the Ukrainian president acknowledges Japan as the potential ally with whom they could achieve supernatural attainments. Considering Japan's aid and support to Ukraine since the outbreak of the war; considering that the commissives in the studied speech have been uttered by the president of a nation in trouble looking for ways out of the rut, the felicity

preparatory, sincerity, general, and essential conditions for the implementation of the Ukrainian president's dreams through these speech acts are definitely met. One can hopefully expect both nations to join efforts against tyranny for peace and security sake in the future. Expressive speech acts have been used to account for the president's state of mind about the ongoing war and his gratitude to Japan government who have been by their side since the outbreak of the ongoing war thanking them for giving him, for the first time in the history of their political and diplomatic relationship, the privilege to plead for more support from the Japanese parliament.

Conclusion

This study has used Searle's (1977) taxonomy of speech acts to analyze the Ukrainian president's speech delivered before the Japanese parliament last Wednesday, March 23, 2022 from a pragmatic perspective. The investigation aims to decipher President Volodymyr Zelensky's encoded messages in the studied speech to make sense of his real political and diplomatic intentions behind it. The study is motivated not only by this research objective but also by the desire to appraise the real motives of the Ukrainian president's speech before the Japanese parliament to see to what extent they could contribute in bringing the war his nation is suffering to an end. The research has employed the mixed quantitative and qualitative methodology to attain its objectives.

The study has arrived at important findings. Among others available in the foregoing subsection, some of the representative speech acts have been used in large numbers, by the president to depict and lay emphasis on the various damages Ukraine is going through to help Japan MPs fully grasp the realities of the conflict in order for them to understand the urgency of his call for rescue and support. One of the crucial encoded messages that representative speech acts have allowed to decode is that the Russo-Ukrainian ongoing war has to be regarded not just as Ukraine's business but as a misfortune befalling the globe because of the boundless scope of its damages in the present time as well as in the short, medium, and long term future. More to the point, representatives have permitted to understand that President Volodymyr Zelensky's resort to Japan is an appeal to peace and security international institutions in particular, and to the whole world by and large to rally round learning from Japan's good example by putting their footsteps into the latter's ones for a more globally peaceful and happier world. This substantiates the research first hypothesis. More to the point, the president's strong recommendations via his directive speech acts is that nations world wide should join hands and efforts not only to develop new security guarantees but also to reform and strengthen the existing international institutions in order to act preventively and strongly every time there is a threat to peace. Via his use of the commissive speech acts the Ukrainian President has made his mind known to the Japanese MPs that he trusts them a lot and that his nation can get out of the mess with their support alone. He pledged himself to do exceedingly far more than they can imagine if Japan could continue rallying round Ukraine. These encoded messages that the commissive speech acts have allowed to decipher actually corroborate the second hypothesis of the investigation.

This study has not explored pragmatic acts in the selected speech. It has not explored the Gricean cooperative principle maxims therein either. Moreover, the investigation has not explored such other areas of macro pragmatics as addressivity,

forms of address, and social deixes in the studied speech. As a result, all these aspects of pragmatics and macro pragmatics constitute open avenues for further research works to uncover deeper levels of meanings in the examined speech.

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Appendix

The following is the full text of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's speech before the Japanese parliament as released by his office on Wednesday, March 23, 2022:

1. Dear Mr. Hosoda! **(Declarative)**
2. Dear Mrs. Santo! **(Declarative)**
3. Mr. Prime Minister Kishida! **(Declarative)**
4. Distinguished Members of the Japanese Parliament! **(Declarative)**
5. Dear Japanese people! **(Declarative)**
6. It is a great honor for me, the President of Ukraine, to address you for the first time in the history of the Japanese Parliament. **(Expressive)**
7. Our capitals are separated by a distance of 8,193 kilometers **(Representative)**. 8. On average, it's 15 hours on a plane, depending on the route **(Representative)**. 9. But what is the distance between our feelings of freedom? **(Representative)** 10. Between our desires to live? **(Representative)** 11. Between our aspirations for peace? **(Representative)** 12. On February 24, I did not see any distance. **(Representative)** 13. Even a millimeter between our capitals. **(Representative)** 14. Even a second between our feelings. **(Representative)** 15. Because you immediately came to our aid. **(Representative)** 16. And I'm grateful to you for that. **(Expressive)** 17. When Russia destroyed peace for the entire Ukraine, we immediately saw that the world is truly against the war. **(Representative)** 18. Truly for freedom. **(Representative)** 19. Truly for global security **(Representative)**. 20. Truly for the harmonious development of every society. **(Representative)** 21. Japan has become the leader of this position in Asia. **(Representative)** 22. You immediately started working to stop this brutal war started by the Russian Federation **(Representative)** 23. You immediately started working for peace in Ukraine **(Representative)**. 24. Hence, in Europe, and this is really very important, it is important for everyone on Earth **(Representative)** 25. Because without peace for Ukraine, no person in the world will be able to look to the future with confidence **(Representative)**. 26. Each of you knows what Chernobyl is **(Representative)**. 27. Nuclear power plant in Ukraine, where a powerful explosion occurred in 1986. **(Representative)** 28. Radiation release **(Representative)**. 29. The consequences of which have been recorded in different parts of the planet **(Representative)** 30. The 30-kilometer zone around the Chernobyl station is still closed **(Representative)** 31. It is hazardous. **(Representative)** 32. During the elimination of the consequences of the explosion at the station, thousands of tons of contaminated materials, debris and cars were disposed of in the forests in the closed area **(Representative)** 33. Just in the ground. **(Representative)**
34. On February 24, Russian armored vehicles passed through this land **(Representative)** 35. Lifting radioactive dust into the air **(Representative)** 36. The Chernobyl station was captured **(Representative)**. 37. By force, by weapon **(Representative)** 38. Imagine a nuclear power plant where a disaster happened **(Representative)** 39. Confinement that closes the destroyed reactor **(Representative)** 40. Operating nuclear waste storage facility. **(Representative)** 41. Russia has turned this facility into an arena of war as well. **(Representative)** 42. And Russia is using this 30-kilometer territory, this closed zone, to prepare new attacks against our defense forces **(Representative)** 43. It will take years after Russian troops leave Ukraine to investigate the damage they have done to Chernobyl. **(Representative)** 44. What sites of radioactive materials disposal were damaged **(Representative)**. 45. And how radioactive dust spread on the planet. **(Representative)**
46. Ladies and gentlemen! **(Declarative)**
47. There are four operating nuclear power plants on our land! **(Representative)** 48. These are 15 nuclear units **(Representative)** 49. And they are all under threat **(Representative)** 50. Russian troops have already fired from tanks at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, the largest in Europe **(Representative)** 51. The fighting has damaged hundreds of plants, many of them particularly dangerous **(Representative)** 52. The shelling threatens gas and oil pipelines **(Representative)** 53. Coal mines **(Representative)**. 54. The other day, Russian troops also fired at a chemical plant in the Sumy region of Ukraine. **(Representative)** 55. There was a leak of ammonia. **(Representative)** 56. We are warned about possible chemical attacks, in particular with the use of sarin **(Representative)**. 57. As it was in Syria **(Representative)**. 58. And one of the main topics for discussion of world politicians is the question: how to react if Russia also uses nuclear weapons. **(Representative)** 59. Any confidence of any person in the world, any country is completely destroyed. **(Representative)** 60. Our servicemen have been heroically defending Ukraine for 28 days already **(Representative)**. 61. Twenty-eight days of full-scale invasion of the largest state in the world **(Representative)**. 62. But not the greatest in potential **(Representative)**. 63. Not the most influential **(Representative)**. 64. And the smallest from a moral point of view **(Representative)**. 65. Russia has used more than a thousand missiles against peaceful cities in Ukraine **(Representative)**. 66. Countless bombs **(Representative)**. 67. Russian troops destroyed dozens of our cities **(Representative)**. 68. Some were burned to the ground **(Representative)**. 69. In many towns and villages that have come under Russian occupation, our people cannot even bury their murdered relatives, friends and neighbors with dignity **(Representative)**. 70. They have to bury them right in the yards of broken houses, near roads, anywhere where it is possible **(Representative)**.
71. Thousands have been killed, including 121 children **(Representative)**. 72. About 9 million Ukrainians were forced to leave their home, their native places, fleeing from Russian troops. **(Representative)** 73. Our northern territories, eastern, southern are becoming empty, because people are fleeing from this deadly threat **(Representative)**. 74. Russia has even blocked the sea for us **(Representative)**. 75. Usual trade routes **(Representative)**. 76. Showing some other — potential — aggressors of the world how to put pressure on free nations by blocking sea navigation. **(Representative)**
77. Ladies and gentlemen! **(Declarative)**
78. Today, it is Ukraine, the partner states and our anti-war coalition that can guarantee that world security will not be completely destroyed **(Representative)**. 79. That in the world there will be a foothold for the freedom of nations **(Representative)**. 80. For people and for the preservation of diversity in societies **(Representative)**. 81. For security of borders **(Representative)**. 82. To make sure that we, our children, our grandchildren still have peace **(Representative)**. 83. You see that international institutions have not worked **(Representative)**. 84. Even the U.N. and the Security Council... **(Representative)** 85. What can they do? **(Representative)** 86. They need reform **(Representative)**. 87. They need an injection of honesty **(Representative)**. 88. To become effective **(Representative)**. 89. To really decide and really influence, not just discuss **(Representative)**. 90. Due to Russia's war against Ukraine, the world is destabilized **(Representative)**. 91. The world is on the verge of many new crises **(Representative)**. 92. And who is

now sure what tomorrow will be like? **(Representative)**93. Turbulence in world markets is a problem for all countries that depend on imports of raw materials **(Representative)**94. Environmental and food challenges are unprecedented. **(Representative)**95. And most importantly, it is now being decided whether all the aggressors on the planet — explicit and potential — will be convinced that the war they have waged will lead to a punishment so powerful that they should not start a war **(Directive)**96. That they should not destroy the world **(Directive)**97. And it is absolutely logical and correct that the responsible states unite to protect peace **(Directive)**98. I am grateful to your state for its principled position at such a historic moment **(Expressive)**99. For real help to Ukraine **(Expressive)**100. You were the first in Asia to put real pressure on Russia to restore peace **(Representative)**101. Who supported the sanctions against Russia. **(Representative)**102. And I urge you to continue to do so. **(Directive)**103. I call for the united efforts of the Asian countries, your partners, to stabilize the situation **(Directive)**104. So that Russia seeks peace **(Directive)**105. And stops the tsunami of its brutal invasion of our state, Ukraine. **(Directive)**106. It is necessary to impose an embargo on trade with Russia **(Directive)**107. It is necessary to withdraw companies from the Russian market so that the money does not go to the Russian army **(Directive)**108. It is necessary to help our state, our defenders, our soldiers who are holding back Russian troops even more **(Directive)**109. It is necessary to start thinking about rebuilding Ukraine already now **(Directive)**110. About the return of life to the cities destroyed by Russia and the territories devastated by it **(Directive)**111. People need to go back to where they lived **(Directive)**112. Where they grew up **(Directive)**113. Where they feel is their home **(Directive)**114. Their small homeland **(Directive)**115. I'm sure you understand this feeling **(Expressive)**116. This need **(Expressive)**117. The need to return to your land **(Expressive)**118. We need to develop new security guarantees **(Directive)**119. So that it is possible to act preventively and strongly every time there is a threat to peace **(Directive)**120. Is it possible to do this on the basis of existing international structures? **(Representative)**121. After such a war — definitely not. **(Representative)**122. We need to create new tools **(Directive)**123. New guarantees **(Directive)**124. Which will work preventively and strongly against any aggression **(Directive)**125. Which will really help **(Directive)**126. Japan's leadership can be indispensable in their development. **(Representative)**127. For Ukraine, for the world **(Representative)**128. I offer it to you **(Commissive)**129. So that the world can feel confident again **(Representative)**130. Confident about what tomorrow will be like **(Representative)**131. Confident that tomorrow will come and will be stable and peaceful **(Representative)**132. For us, for future generations **(Representative)**.

133. Ladies and gentlemen! **(Declarative)**

134. Japanese people! **(Declarative)**

135. We can do a lot together with you **(Commissive)**136. Even more than we can imagine **(Commissive)**137. I know what a brilliant history of development you have **(Representative)**138. How you can build and defend harmony **(Representative)**139. Follow the principles and value life **(Representative)**140. Protect the environment **(Representative)**141. The roots of this are in your culture **(Representative)**142. Which Ukrainians really love **(Representative)**143. My words are not unsubstantiated **(Representative)**144. This is actually true **(Representative)**145. Back in 2019, literally six months after I became President of Ukraine, my wife Olena took part in a project for children with visual impairments **(Representative)**146. In the project to create audiobooks **(Representative)**147. And she voiced Japanese fairy tales **(Representative)**148. In Ukrainian **(Representative)**149. Because they are understandable for us, for children **(Representative)**150. And it was only a drop in the huge sea of our attention, the Ukrainian attention, to your attainment **(Representative)**.

151. We have similar values with you despite the huge distance between our countries **(Representative)**152. A distance that doesn't really exist **(Representative)**153. Because we have equally warm hearts **(Representative)**154. Thanks to joint efforts, thanks to even greater pressure on Russia, we will come to peace **(Directive)**155. And we will be able to rebuild our country **(Directive)**156. Reform international institutions **(Directive)**157. I am sure that Japan will be with us then — just as it is now **(Representative)**158. In our anti-war coalition **(Representative)**159. At this crucial time for all of us **(Representative)**.

160. Thank you! **(Expressive)**

161. Arigatogozaimasu! **(Expressive)**

162. Glory to Ukraine! **(Expressive)**

163. Glory to Japan! **(Expressive)**