



Southwestern Mass Communication Journal

A journal of the Southwest Education Council for Journalism & Mass Communication
ISSN 0891-9186 (Print); ISSN 2641-6743 (Online) | Vol. 38, No. 1

Vietnam Twiplomacy: Target Audiences and Public Diplomacy - Behind the Tweets

Diep P. P. U.

Manship School of Mass Communication, Louisiana State University

By carrying out content analyses of three Vietnam Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Twitter accounts, this study examines their messaging to the world in 2020 through Twitter (N=1,276). The impact and reach of specific, targeted audiences are further analyzed to understand better engagement with the most-mentioned and most-followed users (N=353). The results suggest significant correlations between content category as well as the diplomatic language of the tweets versus other countries and users that Vietnam MOFA directs messages towards. In addition, it has thus far been observed that the Vietnam MOFA tends to communicate and interact with governmental/intergovernmental organizations and political users via tweets. Practical and theoretical implications of twiplomacy are discussed in terms of uses and gratifications.

Keywords: Twiplomacy, Vietnam, public diplomacy, Twitter, uses and gratifications

Since its debut in 2006, Twitter has become one of the most noteworthy social media platforms for political persuasion and engagement that appeals to governments worldwide as a prominent and wide-reaching communication channel (Choo & Park, 2011; Jansen, Zhang, Sobel & Chowdury, 2009; Parmelee & Bichard, 2012). Twitter is widely used for public diplomacy implementation or policy promotion by state leaders, governments, foreign ministries, and diplomats, since web-based public diplomacy plays an essential role in one aspect of foreign policy strategies (Choo & Park, 2011; Dumčiuvienė, 2016; O'Boyle, 2019).

Being a new phenomenon, Twiplomacy, i.e., Twitter diplomacy, is considered a storming concept in foreign policy and public diplomacy allowing discussion among practitioners and researchers (Gurskas, 2016). The rapid rise of Twiplomacy has vastly fostered the spread of direct information from one government to foreign nationals as well as extended augmented channels for digital public diplomacy, which aligns with how Twitter has strived to position itself in the political arena (Šimunjak & Caliandro, 2019; Su & Xu, 2015).

The existence of social media platforms, i.e., Twitter, is changing the landscape of governmental agencies and bureaucracies around the globe as they face an urgent need to update diplomatic instruments driven by new technologies and cyberspaces (Criado et al., 2013; Groshek, Guo, Cutino, & Elasmir, 2017; Stein, 2011). It leads to extensive social media usage by world leaders, for instance, by 2017, almost 180 of them have been available on Twitter for communicating with their peers and the public (Lüfkens, 2017). Amid the novel COVID-19 pandemic with travel restrictions and increasing virtually-based foreign affairs events, Twiplomacy has seemingly re-affirmed its position and benefits (Burson Cohn & Wolfe, 2020). Zhang and Fahmy (2015) suggested that Twitter was not solely a communication tool but represented a paradigm shift in public diplomacy implementation, which has raised questions on Twiplomacy practices, specifically in different countries, including the uses and gratifications of diplomatic organizations as well as their messaging and target audiences.

In contrast to the overall global trends, Twitter is just ranked seventh of the most-used social media in Vietnam, and does not appear in the top 20 most-visited websites, while Facebook is ranked first in Vietnam as of January, 2020 (Hootsuite & We Are Social, 2020). However, the Vietnam Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Vietnam MOFA) still tends to concentrate on Twitter rather than Facebook. On Twitter, it has three prominent active accounts including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (@MOFAVietNam), the Press and Information Department, the Spokesperson (@PressDept_MoFA), and Deputy Prime Minister/then-Foreign Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (@FMPhamBinhMinh, now changing to @DPMPhamBinhMinh). Meanwhile, on Facebook, it only has one active account of the Press and Information Department (@vuthongtinbaochi). Significantly, the followers on Twitter, from over 10,000 to 28,000, are much higher than on Facebook reaching over 3,000 followers, although these accounts were created in 2015 and 2016. Hence, the current study aims to investigate Twitter usage of the Vietnam MOFA by exploring their audiences, namely the users they are attempting to communicate with. The content of the Vietnam MOFA tweet will also be examined.

Crucially, there is a limited number of studies on Twitter in Vietnam, and amid an overarching call for the de-westernization of social media studies, this study proposed here fills a vital void. In this context, there are a variety of existing studies around topics that have focused on language and content discourse including vaccines, the South China Sea dispute, COVID-19, and ISIS, as well as sentiment and information flows on the social media platform (Becker et al., 2016; Guo, Mays, & Wang, 2019; Henry, Stattner, & Collard, 2018; Nguyen, Nguyen, & Snasel, 2016; Park et al., 2020; Ruhrberg et al., 2018). Nonetheless, governmental accounts, specifically of the foreign affairs agency, have not been examined and the current study aims to fill the gap.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media Diplomacy and Twiplomacy

The adoption of public diplomacy on social media, i.e., Twitter, by foreign ministries has drawn the attention of researchers (Bjola & Holmes, 2015; Pamment, 2013; Zaharna, 2016). Previous works on the application of social media to diplomacy shed light on how it was used by diplomatic institutions and its impacts, for instance, on the relationships between countries or states versus the foreign public (Bjola & Holmes, 2015; Cassidy & Manor, 2016; Zhong & Lu, 2013; Strauss et al., 2015). The latest technologies enable new means and practices of public diplomacies, such as Twiplomacy, for governmental bodies to achieve foreign policy goals and develop a more collaborative model of diplomacy (Dumčiuvienė, 2016; Groshek, Guo, Cutino, & Elasmir, 2017; Šimunjak & Caliandro, 2019).

Šimunjak and Caliandro (2019) assessed two limitations of existing research about social media diplomacy. First, there was still a lack of studies about government-to-government diplomacy (G2G), albeit the concept was mentioned by Khan et al. (2014) and Cassidy and Manor (2016). As social network sites (SNSs) provide an unprecedented chance for diplomatic missions to connect with the international public and engage in to-and-fro conversations (Shahin & Huang, 2019), it is vital to learn how governments communicate with each other. Secondly, the style of diplomatic communication was overlooked, while other issues of agenda-setting, reach, and engagement, have been investigated. Scholars were also attracted to the effectiveness of public diplomatic 2.0 employing Twitter and other SNSs (Bjola & Jiang, 2015; Metzgar & Lu, 2015; Sevin, 2017; Uysal et al., 2012), yet the content and potential target audience have not been studied. The current study will emphasize these elements of Twiplomacy with the case study of Vietnam's public diplomacy, as well as its conversations with other parties, i.e., government-to-government diplomacy (G2G).

The nature of the bilateral relationship among nations impacts social media's demonstration, which benefits diplomatic objectives (Bjola & Jiang, 2015). For instance, the findings of Dumčiuvienė (2016) indicated that Lithuanian governmental Twitter accounts' communication mainly was about relations with Ukraine and Russia, which were also the country's foreign policy priorities. As actors on the international ground, nations usually act based on their national identity vis-à-vis other countries (Shahin & Huang, 2019). Thus, two nations identifying each other as friends will practice differently on Twiplomacy than a pair of rivals.

Public diplomacy, particularly Twiplomacy, helps to establish and improve relationships with foreign nationals (O'Boyle, 2019), promote dialogue amongst diplomats (Dumčiuvienė, 2016), and influence public opinion by turning its foreign policy to the advantage of leaders (Sheafer & Gabay, 2009) in the name of national identity. To understand these efforts, scholars examined the way diplomats communicate and engage in conversation with other actors, which is crucial in diplomacy. In the context of Twitter, Barnett and Duvall (2005) argued the tweeting process could generate a system of meaning and significance in terms of international relations. The examination of Vietnam's Twiplomacy can strengthen the previous findings and suggest emerging practices on the platform, as it is imperative to ascertain Twiplomacy practice and its influences on worldwide public opinion (Wu, 2021).

Vietnam Twiplomacy

There are three main Twitter accounts of Vietnam MOFA. The ministry's official account is @MOFAVietNam, which acquires over 28,000 followers and follows 302 users. The Press & Information Department & the Spokesperson of Vietnam MOFA has an account @PressDept_MoFA following nine users and followed by over 11,800 accounts. Eventually, then-Foreign Minister, Pham Binh Minh, owns his account named @FMPhamBinhMinh, now changing to @DPMPhamBinhMinh, appealing to over 27,300 followers and following nine users. All the figures were as of May, 2021. The main language of these accounts is English.

To date, there has been no study about Vietnam's Twiplomacy despite its notable role within the relationships of China, Russia, and the U.S. and the position of a geostrategic player in Asia after establishing a positive partnership with the States (Chapman, 2017). The only research that mentioned Vietnam's Twiplomacy was Šimunjak and Caliendo (2019) examining U.S. President Donald Trump's tweets. It found President Trump referred to 19 foreign countries, a mix of allies and opponents, on Twitter in his first month of the presidency including Vietnam categorized as "provoked friendlies." Thus, the current study will focus on Vietnam's Twiplomacy when investigating its audiences and diplomatic messages to the world, specifically to its three prominent partners namely China, Russia, and the U.S., also the most influential nations on the economic and political worldwide landscape. Remarkably, 2020 is an unprecedented year impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore, cyber-based diplomacy, e.g., Twiplomacy, is worth examining that may implement future research in social media's roles and effects in public diplomacy as well as Twiplomacy strategies.

Vietnam's Bilateral Relationships

According to the Vietnam MOFA (2020), the Vietnam - China relationship is a comprehensive strategic partnership, while Vietnam and the U.S. hold a comprehensive partnership. Both countries are prominent trade partners of Vietnam, whose relations remain stable, Deputy Prime Minister Pham Binh Minh insisted (Vietnam MOFA, 2020). In total, Vietnam has established comprehensive partnerships with 14 countries, and upgraded strategic partnerships to higher diplomatic status, i.e., comprehensive strategic partnerships, which are defined by security and defense cooperation, with only three nations including China, India, and Russia (Nguyen, 2020). The partnership concept is one of the elements of the multidirectional strategy of Vietnam, a fundamental tool to both enhance its economic situation and eliminate potential threats to its sovereignty, territorial integrity, autonomy, and independence (Chapman, 2017).

Since 2008, Vietnam and China have forged the highest level of the bilateral relationship, a comprehensive strategic partnership, with a 16-word guideline, also known as the 16-golden-word motto of "friendly neighborliness, comprehensive cooperation, long-term stability, and future orientation" and four key symbolic roles as "good neighbors, good friends, good comrades, and good partners" (Wilson, 2018). As a small nation and one of the prime adopters of multidirectional foreign policies, Vietnam is flexible with a complex party, state, defense, and multilateral measures, to support this highly valued yet sometimes strained relationship with China (Chapman, 2017; Thayer, 2015a).

Although China has been the most crucial import market to Vietnam, the second-largest export market after the U.S. (Wilson, 2018), their relationship has gotten tense in recent years due to the South China Sea dispute. It led Vietnam to draw on the assistance of various powers economically, at the same time, to pursue a multipolar balancing strategy to avoid being stuck in choosing sides between an increased US-China rivalry (Chapman, 2017; Thayer 2015b). Vietnam-U.S. comprehensive partnership

landmark was agreed upon in 2013 and strengthened in 2017, with cooperation areas: maritime capacity building, economic engagement, climate change, environmental issues, education cooperation, and promoting respect for human rights (Chapman, 2017; The White House, 2017). They committed to continuing high-level contacts, including through regular dialogue between the U.S. Secretary of State and Vietnam's Minister for Foreign Affairs, which could be considerably assessed by conversations on Twitter.

In the 2019-2020 period, Vietnam and Russia are marking their 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, which later was leveraged into a comprehensive strategic partnership (Embassy of the Russian Federation in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2020). The bilateral relationship focuses on seven areas with key pillars namely defense-security and energy, as Russia is Vietnam's largest provider of military equipment and technology (Chapman, 2017).

Uses and Gratifications Theory

Uses and Gratifications theory (U&G) was first introduced by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974) assuming that people's needs could be satisfied by the media. Gratifications are conceptualized as satisfactions obtained by using media that match individuals' expectations. The root of the U&G approach was based on the social and psychological origins of needs (Katz et al., 1974). It concentrated on audiences as active agents who intentionally sought their pre-existing desires via media regardless of specific technological features of media (Haridakis, 2002; McQuail, 2010; Severin & Tankard, 2000). Over the past 60 years, U&G researchers had recognized a variety of gratifications using methodological approaches of surveys and focus groups (Greenberg, 1974; Lucas & Sherry, 2004; Rubin, 2009; Rubin & Bantz, 1987).

Nonetheless, with the emergence of new media, to capture the increasing and diverse gratifications obtained from technology such as Twitter, Sundar and Limperos (2013) suggested broadening the focus. Conceptually, these gratifications are not necessarily driven by innate needs but may be triggered by technological features from different media types. The new media is characterized by newer functionalities, hence, leading to adjusting process gratifications, which are obtained from using media (Sundar & Limperos, 2013; Rubin, 2009). Sundar and Limperos (2013) argued these newer media apparently had ushered in new rituals and new instrumental activities, for instance, Twiplomacy. Furthermore, the interactions in a given medium are controlled at least by affordances in the technology, which ultimately provide process gratifications (Norman, 2002; Rubin, 1984). With new media and approaches, it is imperative to propose and conduct new research methods, explanations, and interpretations of the uses and gratifications.

Sundar (2008) has suggested the MAIN Model classifying four types of technological affordances in digital media that may have perceptual and psychological impacts (Reeves & Nass, 2000). In the context of Twiplomacy, the current study focuses on Agency and Interactivity aspects. Each element of the paradigm offers a set of gratifications, including Modality, i.e., presentation methods of media content; Agency, i.e., information sources or agents; Interactivity, i.e., real-time content changes; and Navigability, i.e., movements through the medium.

The Agency affordance allows users to be agents or sources of information that facilitate agency enhancement, community-building, bandwagon, filtering/tailoring, and ownership gratifications (Stavrositu & Sundar, 2012). It is well-fitted for highly motivated and involved individuals, for instance, governmental officials or diplomats. Meanwhile, the core of Interactivity affordance is the audience's

activities and interactions with and through the medium. The presence of affordance on a website or application tends to convey meaning to users, while some interactive features are physiologically significant and require heightened attention (Sundar & Constantin, 2004; Sundar, 2008). To illustrate, many Twitter functions such as Retweet, Reply, or Mention users, assist the platform in creating an open, interactive, and transparent communication. Sundar and Limperos (2013) proposed that scholars adopt an affordance-based framework for identifying gratifications. Applying the approach allows the current study to contribute a new aspect of Twiplomacy under Uses and Gratifications 2.0.

Uses and Gratifications in Twiplomacy

Twiplomacy can contribute to two dimensions of public diplomacy including daily communication and strategic communication (Groshek, Guo, Cutino, & Elasmir, 2017), or broadly in the form of an integrated model. Golan (2013) suggested a three-element social media diplomacy framework which contained mediated public diplomacy, nation branding or country reputation, and relational public diplomacy. While the two latter facets are medium- and long-term strategies for effective public diplomacy; the first one, mediated public diplomacy, is a short-term aspect that enables the engagement of one government to the foreign public through third-party mediators, e.g., global media and international social media influencers (Golan, 2013; Snow, 2015). For instance, previous studies found that the U.S. Embassy Twitter use was to communicate and build relationships with the international public; while foreign missions' use of Twitter and other SNSs was to influence foreign public opinion and even the policies of other countries (Fitzpatrick, Fullerton, & Kendrick, 2013; Sevin, 2017).

Apart from communication with peers and foreign nationals, Twiplomacy is also a tool for countries' branding. It creates a platform for the public to understand and support nations' diplomacy policies, as well as be informed about their politics, society, and culture (Sobel, Riffe, & Hester, 2016; Su & Xu, 2015). Practices on SNSs, e.g., Twitter, are influenced by a diverse package of contextual and cultural interests and driven by national identities (Shahin & Huang, 2019). These identities and image-building efforts are encouraged to be considered in future research on SNS use for diplomacy as its adoption by diplomats is rapidly changing (Gurskas, 2016; Shahin & Huang, 2019). Given the literature review, the current study proposes the following research questions and hypotheses:

RQ1a: Who are the most mentioned accounts of three Vietnam MOFA's Twitter accounts?

RQ1b: Who are the following users of three Vietnam MOFA's Twitter accounts?

RQ2a: What content categories appeal more to interactions including Favorite and Retweet?

RQ2b: What kind of content media, i.e., photo, video, text, appeals more to interactions including Favorite and Retweet?

H1: There is a relation between diplomatic content (i.e., tweet categories) and the countries mentioned.

H2: There is a relation between diplomatic language and the countries mentioned.

METHODS

The study conducted a content analysis to explore the uses and gratifications of Twiplomacy in the national context of official Vietnamese public diplomacy. The method has two main objectives, first, identifying Vietnam MOFA's Twitter accounts' audiences, which are defined as their following and the

most-mentioned users; and second, analyzing their tweet content to examine their messages to all entities in 2020, particularly focusing on China, Russia, and the U.S.

Initially, using the *vicinitas.io* social media analytics platform, the study collected all tweets including retweets of three accounts in 2020 from January 1 to December 31 (N = 1,276).

@PressDept_MoFA: 205 tweets

@FMPhamBinhMinh: 277 tweets

@MOFAVietNam: 794 tweets

The research approach applied here then classifies and inspects the tweets into a priori coding categories of diplomatic language in terms of sentiments from Ananyeva (2020). The diplomatic language is suggested to be mostly neutral in its connotation due to its impact on the communication outcomes (Jonsson & Hall, 2003). The categories are adopted and defined as follows:

- (1) Positivity: implies confidence, effectiveness, determination, absoluteness, and full certainty;
- (2) Negativity: is defined as bad, harmful, refusing, prohibitory, doubting, and not constructive;
- (3) Neutrality: is the absence of emotions which is suggested for diplomatic language because of its high ritualization and institutionalization.

Additionally, the study employs the content analysis of Shahin and Huang's (2019) suggestion on the examination of Technological Features namely languages, media used, tweet types (i.e., tweet, retweet, reply), hashtag, and mention; and content categories from Kampf, Manor, and Segev (2015). Tweet categories which are based on the main content of each tweet are defined:

- (1) Relations with Other Nations: Bilateral, Multilateral, Tweet directed at other world leaders, and Diaspora;
- (2) Soft Power: Strategic partnerships, global initiatives, countries in global initiative;
- (3) Hard Power: Military, National security, Safety of abroad citizens;
- (4) Economic: Economy, economy-tourism, economy-trade, foreign aid, foreign-aid receiving;
- (5) Engagement with Followers/Users: Engagement, Invitation to engage, Invitation to read/watch;
- (6) National Achievements: Congratulations, cultural, scientific, history;
- (7) Diplomacy: MFA-related news, appointments, state visits;
- (8) Current Affairs: Immediate comments on events taking place around the world.

The collected data is also further divided into subsets in terms of countries, namely China, Russia, the U.S, Vietnam, and others, to scrutinize their relation with tweet content and diplomatic language. In sum, there are four elements in the content analysis of these tweets. The method allows absorbing Vietnam's Twiplomacy main themes that may suggest its Uses and Gratifications, as well as its content's efficiency in terms of interaction appeal.

The next component of the analysis examines the audience of the Vietnam MOFA by classifying the accounts based on their Twitter biographies and photos. The categories are adopted from (Ingenhoff, Calamai, & Sevin, 2021):

- (1) governmental and intergovernmental organizations;
- (2) NGOs and corporations: for-profit and nonprofit organizations;
- (3) political users: elected officials, bureaucrats, and diplomats;
- (4) prominent users: celebrities and journalists;
- (5) ordinary users: the rest of the individual accounts.

The study investigates the Twitter accounts followed by the Vietnam MOFA accounts, as well as their ten most-mentioned users. In this case, the corpus contains 317 accounts collected by R program, including overlapping accounts, such as friends of two or three Vietnam MOFA accounts. There are overlapping users in these findings that increase the assumption of target audiences/communicators.

Two trained coders have coded 20% of the 1,276 tweets (or 256 tweets), and 317 accounts, (or 64 accounts). The intercoder reliability was 0.816 for diplomatic language, 0.902 for tweet content category, 1.00 for country, and 1.00 for category and location of audiences as calculated using Cohen's Kappa.

RESULTS

RQ1a: Who are the most mentioned accounts of three Vietnam MOFA’s Twitter accounts?

The ten most-mentioned Twitter accounts were governmental and intergovernmental organizations, such as ASEAN with the highest frequency of mention by all three Vietnam MOFA accounts, and political figures like former U.S Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. Multiple accounts overlapped among three Vietnam MOFA accounts including ASEAN, APEC, UN, and MFA of Russia. These most-mentioned users are mostly based in Asian, North American, and European continents. Notably, two accounts namely MOFAVietnam and FMPhamBinhMinh were also commonly tagged.

Table 1

Ten most-mentioned Twitter accounts by Vietnam MOFA Twitter accounts

Mentioned by @PressDept_MoFA	Times	Mentioned by @FMPhamBinhMinh	Times	Mentioned by @MOFAVietNam	Times
ASEAN	30	ASEAN	62	ASEAN	190
APEC	20	FMPhamBinhMinh	50	FMPhamBinhMinh	78
UKinVietnam	5	UN	35	MOFAVietNam	68
WHO	5	APEC	13	UN	65
BNODesk	4	MofaJapan_en	13	APEC	53
UN	4	SecPompeo	9	AusAmbVN	27
EssexPoliceUK	3	mfa_russia	7	mfa_russia	26
eu_eas	3	MOFAVietNam	7	VietNam_UN	25
mfa_russia	3	MarisePayne	6	UKinVietnam	24
MOFAVietNam	3	Menlu_RI	6	USAsiaPacific	22
SecPompeo	3	moteging	6		
Trade_EU	3	VietNam_UN	6		

RQ1b: Who are the following users of three Vietnam MOFA’s Twitter accounts?

Accounts followed by three Vietnam MOFA accounts are mostly governmental and intergovernmental organizations ($n = 249$), and which are based in Vietnam, Asia, and Europe, 79 (or 24.9%), 79 (or 24.9%), and 64 (or 20.2%), respectively (Table 2). These accounts also intend to

communicate with political users ($n = 37$) and NGOs and corporations ($n = 23$ accounts). Three Vietnam MOFA accounts did not follow ordinary audiences, while Australia/Oceania had the least number of following accounts ($n = 3$, or 0.9%).

There is a significant relation between accounts' types and their locations, ($\chi^2(18) = 39.929, p < .001$) (Table 2). While governmental and intergovernmental organizations and political users followed by Vietnam MOFA accounts were based in Vietnam and Asia, for instance, foreign embassies and ambassadors in Vietnam; several NGOs and corporations accounts were located in North America, for example, United Nations. A statistically significant association also exists between those accounts and three Vietnam MOFA accounts, ($\chi^2(6) = 39.115, p < .001$) (Table 3), which could be due to the overwhelming number of following accounts of @MOFAVietnam account ($n = 298$, or 94%).

Table 2

Following accounts and locations by Vietnam MOFA Twitter accounts

<i>Following Users Accounts</i>	<i>Location</i>							<i>Total</i>
	Vietnam	Asia	Africa	Europe	N-America	S-America	Australia/Oceania	
1	57 22.9%	62 24.9%	31 12.4%	54 21.7%	28 11.2%	15 6%	2 0.8%	249 100%
2	5 21.7%	3 13%	0 0%	4 17.4%	11 47.8%	0 0%	0 0%	23 100%
3	14 37.8%	11 29.7%	2 5.4%	4 10.8%	5 13.5%	0 0%	1 2.7%	37 100%
4	3 37.5%	3 37.5%	0 0%	2 25%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	8 100%
5	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
<i>Total</i>	79 24.9%	79 24.9%	33 10.4%	64 20.2%	44 13.9%	15 4.7%	3 0.9%	317 100%

$$\chi^2=39.929 \cdot df=18 \cdot \text{Cramer's } V=0.205 \cdot \text{Fisher's } p=0.009$$

RQ2a: What content categories appeal more to interactions namely favorite and retweet?

Levene's tests indicated that the variances were not equal, $F(7, 1268) = 3.829, p < .001$, and $F(7, 1268) = 7.899, p < .001$, nonetheless, ANOVA tests showed significant impact of tweet content categories to interactions, including favorite and retweet from users, $F(7, 1268) = 2.15, p = 0.003$, and $F(7, 1268) = 4.16, p < .001$, respectively. Thus, a Kruskal-Wallis test was performed. It was found that the number of favorite and retweet practices differed over tweet categories, $H(7) = 56.123, p < .001$, and $H(7) = 45.755, p < .001$, sequentially.

Pairwise comparisons on favorite showed that tweets about relations with other nations had a remarkably higher number of favorites compared to other categories, except hard power content, while

tweets about soft power received the least favorite actions among others. Apart from that, content about hard power and diplomacy appealed to more favorites, whilst national achievements attracted slightly lower. Fairly similar, Dunn's post hoc comparisons across categories demonstrated that relations with other nations and hard power categories received the higher number of retweets in pair-comparison with others, while tweets about soft power and national achievements appealed the least retweets.

Table 3

Following accounts by each Vietnam MOFA Twitter accounts

Following Users Accounts	MOFA accounts			Total
	@PressDept_MoFA	@FMPhamBinhMinh	@MOFAVietNam	
1	5 2%	5 2%	239 96%	249 100%
2	3 13%	5 21.7%	15 65.2%	23 100%
3	1 2.7%	0 0%	36 97.3%	37 100%
4	0 0%	0 0%	8 100%	8 100%
5	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
Total	9 2.8%	10 3.2%	298 94%	317 100%

$$\chi^2=39.115 \cdot df=6 \cdot \text{Cramer's } V=0.248 \cdot \text{Fisher's } p=0.000$$

RQ2b: What kind of content media, i.e., photo, video, text, appeals more to interactions?

There is no significant effect of the content media on interactions, namely favorite and retweet, $F(3, 1270) = 0.688, p = 0.559$, and $F(3, 1270) = 0.494, p = 0.687$, respectively. However, post hoc comparisons suggested that text-only tweets could appeal to the most favorite actions, while video had the least. Conversely, for retweet practices, tweets including video received more of this course of action than text-only ones, although the difference was not statistically significant.

H1: There is a relation between diplomatic content (i.e., tweet categories) and countries mentioned.

In the total of 1,276 tweets from the Vietnam MOFA accounts, soft power ($n = 460, 36.1\%$) and current affairs categories ($n = 245, 19.2\%$) were predominantly utilized, following were diplomacy; relations with other nations; economic; engagement with followers/users; and national achievements, respectively. Information about or cast to Vietnam ($n = 382, 30\%$) and nations excluding China, Russia, and the U.S. ($n = 766, 60\%$), were dominantly the most. Meanwhile, the presence of China and the U.S. were balanced, 52 and 54 tweets, respectively; Russia was mentioned in 22 tweets, or 1.72%.

There is a significant relation between tweet categories and countries mentioned, ($\chi^2(28) = 611.392, p < .001$) (Table 4). Vietnam MOFA tweets discussed mainly hard power ($n = 23$, or 44.2%), such as national security with China, and about diplomacy and bilateral relations with the United States (37% and 31.5%, respectively). Information on current affairs and comments about worldwide events apparently mentioned Vietnam, while information on soft power was cast to other countries. Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Table 4

Vietnam MOFA accounts' tweet categories across countries

Country	Category								Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1	14 26.9 %	8 15.4 %	23 44.2 %	1 1.9 %	0 0 %	0 0 %	5 9.6 %	1 1.9 %	52 100 %
2	6 27.3 %	7 31.8 %	0 0 %	1 4.5 %	0 0 %	0 0 %	8 36.4 %	0 0 %	22 100 %
3	17 31.5 %	7 13 %	5 9.3 %	4 7.4 %	0 0 %	0 0 %	20 37 %	1 1.9 %	54 100 %
4	3 0.8 %	124 32.5 %	12 3.1 %	22 5.8 %	32 8.4 %	8 2.1 %	15 3.9 %	166 43.5 %	382 100 %
5	147 19.2 %	314 41 %	8 1 %	32 4.2 %	25 3.3 %	9 1.2 %	154 20.1 %	77 10.1 %	766 100 %
<i>Total</i>	187 14.7 %	460 36.1 %	48 3.8 %	60 4.7 %	57 4.5 %	17 1.3 %	202 15.8 %	245 19.2 %	1276 100 %

$$\chi^2=611.392 \cdot df=28 \cdot \text{Cramer's } V=0.346 \cdot \text{Fisher's } p=0.000$$

H2: There is a relation between diplomatic language and countries mentioned.

In terms of diplomatic language, these accounts primarily employed neutral words and sentiment in their tweets, which comprised 87.2% (or 1,113 tweets) of the corpus. Positive language (11.1%) was dominantly used when compared to negative tone (1.7%).

A chi-square test was performed to examine the difference in the diplomatic languages across countries namely China, Russia, United States, Vietnam, and others. The analysis is statistically significant, ($\chi^2(8) = 252.519, p < .001$) (Table 5). Balanced neutral and positive languages were more common when mentioning the United States, but when mentioning China, tweets from the Vietnam MOFA accounts were largely negative. In fact, fifteen over a total of twenty-two negative tweets were cast towards China. For instance, a [tweet](#) posted on 10 May, 2020, indicated, “*Viet Nam rejects China's unilateral decision. Given the current regional and global context, Viet Nam asks China not to further complicate the situation in the East Sea.*” Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Table 5

Vietnam MOFA accounts' tweet diplomacy language across countries

<i>Country</i>	<i>Diplomatic Language</i>			<i>Total</i>
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	
China	2 3.8%	15 28.8%	35 67.3%	52 100%
Russia	0 0%	0 0%	22 100%	22 100%
US	14 25.9%	0 0%	40 74.1%	54 100%
Vietnam	47 12.3%	3 0.8%	332 86.9%	382 100%
Others	78 10.2%	4 0.5%	684 89.3%	766 100%
<i>Total</i>	141 11.1%	22 1.7%	1113 87.2%	1276 100%

$$\chi^2=252.519 \cdot df=8 \cdot \text{Cramer's } V=0.315 \cdot \text{Fisher's } p=0.000$$

DISCUSSION

The findings of tweets' dominant themes had partly unfolded Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs' uses and gratifications of Twiplomacy. The highly frequent utilization of soft power, relations with other nations, current affairs, and diplomacy, suggested that Vietnam MOFA used Twitter to provide domestic and diplomatic news, express its stand on current issues, and enhance relationships with other countries. Given the situation of the global pandemic, most of its tweets under the current affairs category were about COVID-19 updates, for instance, quarantine policies, and under the relations with other nations was about the assistance from and to multiple countries, for instance, facemasks donation. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic is considered a chance for the world to observe and evaluate countries' handling and managing capacity, which may impact the public's perception of a country's reputation (Lee, 2021).

Predominant usage of soft power is also worth noting since it is relevant to Vietnam's current situation and diplomacy orientation. Tweets about the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) occupied a large portion of the category since Vietnam took the chairmanship of the association in 2020. ASEAN is a vital partner and organization for Vietnam in terms of economic, social, and cultural development, as well as a crucial actor vis-à-vis China, particularly on the South China Sea issue

(Ministry of National Defense of Vietnam, 2019). In 2002, ASEAN and China concluded the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), which directly impacted Vietnam to maintain a peaceful relationship with China, whilst still protecting its sovereignty.

Fostering soft power, for instance, joining regional and global initiatives or establishing partnerships with other nations, is one of Vietnam's public diplomacy orientations (Chapman, 2017). The approach is cooperative power which influences others' perceptions to change their behaviors voluntarily (Lee, 2021). In contrast, hard power content was rarely employed by Vietnam MOFA accounts, only 3.8% of the corpus. Recognizing Asia as an area that "occupies an increasingly important geo-economic, geo-politic and geo-strategic," target communicators with Vietnam MOFA accounts are mostly based in the region.

Public diplomacy orientations are also demonstrated via the dominant use of a neutral tone. Vietnam is well-known for its balanced and flexible policies in the defense strategy called four-nos including no military alliances, no siding with one country against another, no foreign military bases, and no using force or threatening to use force in international relations (Ministry of National Defense of Vietnam, 2019). Nonetheless, when it came to the hard power category, for instance, the South China Sea issue, Vietnam MOFA utilized a negative tone to affirm its stand on sovereignty protection.

Although Vietnam established the highest partnership with China, its MOFA accounts implemented a high percentage of negative tone towards the counterpart. It is not in line with previous studies suggesting a parallel tone based on nations' relationships (Bjola & Jiang, 2015, Shahin & Huang, 2019). However, given Vietnam's situation and aforementioned strategies, these practices are reasonable and may contribute to future mediated public diplomacy-related studies proposing that the implementation depends heavily on national political standpoints and current contexts, not only foreign affairs status.

Implications

While the theory of uses and gratifications has been widely applied in media and journalism studies, it is seldom used to examine public diplomacy scholarship. The current research suggested that by investigating the content of one nation's twiplomacy, the gratifications and orientations of its diplomatic agencies could be revealed as scholars proposed (Sundar & Limperos, 2013; Rubin, 2009). Content analysis can be a new method direction to employ the theory of uses and gratifications, instead of the frequently used survey method, in investigating public diplomacy. The codebook of this current study on tweets' content, diplomatic language, and target audiences is considerably a foundation for content analysis on twiplomacy, which is able to uncover the gratifications of using Twitter for public diplomacy in different countries. Other attributes of diplomacy may incorporate into the codebook to fulfill various purposes of future research.

In terms of platforms, Twitter indeed offers various technological features for users, such as reply, retweet, and favorite, to fulfill diplomatic agencies' emerging needs. Two affordances of agency and interactivity of uses and gratifications theory 2.0 (Sundar & Limperos, 2013) were highlighted in the case of Vietnam's twiplomacy. Twitter provides a platform for highly motivated individuals, i.e., diplomats, to create their content, cast their desiring messages, and build their community. Vietnam, for instance, would like to communicate with a group of countries following their diplomatic orientation, as shown in the results. Furthermore, the interactivity affordance allows and facilitated interactive and

transparent communication. With the start of two affordances examination, two others of the uses and gratifications theory 2.0 (i.e., modality and navigability) can be suitable to use in future studies.

The current study also filled two voids in the literature about digital public diplomacy pointed out by Šimunjak and Caliandro (2019). First, the diplomacy of government-to-government has been explored, focusing on Vietnam and three other countries which have the highest bilateral relations with Vietnam and are influential worldwide. The results can show countries' diplomatic orientations and allow the comparison between theoretical proposed diplomatic policies on papers and real-life practices on virtual platforms. Secondly, the communication style in digital diplomacy was revealed through the main topics and diplomatic languages of tweets and the target audiences of foreign affairs agencies' Twitter. Future research can replicate the current one to investigate other nations' (digital) diplomacy in relation to their partner countries, based on the used codebook and constructs of the uses and gratifications theory 2.0.

Limitations

The findings also had several limitations. Due to the extraordinary COVID-19 pandemic as well as Vietnam's role in certain events, the number of tweets under some categories is much higher than in others, which may affect the result. Regarding audiences/communicators, the method of social network analysis can be applied in the future to fully examine the relations among accounts by tagging or replying, not just following. Moreover, the impact of the technological features' hypothesis was not supported, therefore, other appropriate approaches should be employed in future studies. Plus, other technological aspects or models to improve Twiplomacy's effectiveness might need to be fully investigated.

To address those limitations, further studies can employ social network analysis to have a broader picture of the connection and conversations between the primary agent (e.g., diplomats) and its audiences (e.g., diplomats in other countries). It can further demonstrate the gratifications of using virtual-based platforms for public diplomacy, for instance, a channel for diplomatic exchanges or national information dissemination. Moreover, reaching out to the diplomats after analyzing their digital content is also a means to see the sameness in diplomatic orientations or adjustment while using social media for modern diplomacy.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed, W. (2018). Using social media data for research: An overview of tools. *Journal of Communication Technology*, 1(1), 78-93. <https://joctec.org/articles/1-1/116.pdf>
- Ananyeva, E. (2020). Russia as a Rising Power in Multilateral Institutions. Dissertation thesis (PhD.). Charles University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Institute of Political Studies. Department of International Relations. <http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11956/122833>
- Barnett, M., & Duvall, R. (2005). Power in international politics. *International Organization*, 59(1), 39-75. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818305050010>
- Becker, B. F., Larson, H. J., Bonhoeffer, J., van Mulligen, E. M., Kors, J. A., & Sturkenboom, M. C. (2016). Evaluation of a multinational, multilingual vaccine debate on Twitter. *Vaccine*, 34(50), 6166-6171. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaccine.2016.11.007>
- Bjola, C., & Holmes, M. (2015). *Digital diplomacy: Theory and practice*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Bjola, C., & Jiang, L. (2015). Social media and public diplomacy: A comparative analysis of the digital diplomatic strategies of the EU, U.S. and Japan in China. In C. Bjola & M. Holmes (Eds.), *Digital diplomacy: Theory and practice (71-88)*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Burson Cohn & Wolfe. (2020). The Twiplomacy Study. <https://twiplomacy.com/blog/twiplomacy-study-2020/>

- Carscaddon, L., & Chapman, K. (2013). Twitter as a marketing tool for libraries. *Marketing with social media: A LITA guide*, 147-163. https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1108&context=univ_lib_facpub
- Cassidy, J., & Manor, I. (2016). Crafting strategic MFA communication policies during times of political crisis: A note to MFA policy makers. *Global affairs*, 2(3), 331-343. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23340460.2016.1239377>
- Chapman, N. (2017). Mechanisms of Vietnam's multidirectional foreign policy. *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, 36(2), 31-69. <https://doi.org/10.1177/186810341703600202>
- Choo, S. E., & Park, H. W. (2011). Government organizations' innovative use of the Internet: The case of the Twitter activity of South Korea's ministry for food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries. *Scientometrics*, 90, 9-23. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-011-0519-2>
- Criado, J., Sandoval-Almazan, R., & Ramon GilGarcia, J. (2013). Government innovation through social media. *Government Information Quarterly*, 30(4), 319-325. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2013.10.003>
- Dumčiuvienė, A. (2016). Twiplomacy: the meaning of social media to public diplomacy and foreign policy of Lithuania. *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, 35(1), 92-118. <http://doi.org/10.1515/lfpr-2016-0025>
- Embassy of the Russian Federation in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. (2020) Party General Secretary, State President Nguyen Phu Trong on Thursday held phone talks with Russian President V. Putin on the occasion of the National Day of Russia (June 12). https://vietnam.mid.ru/web/vietnam-en/main/-/asset_publisher/JR0sSxNIVFWP/content/party-general-secretary-state-president-nguyen-phu-trong-on-thursday-held-phone-talks-with-russian-president-v-putin-on-the-occasion-of-the-national-d
- Fitzpatrick, K., Fullerton, J., & Kendrick, A. (2013). Public relations and public diplomacy: Conceptual and practical connections. *Public Relations Journal*, 7(4), 1-21. <https://prjournal.instituteforpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2013FitzpatrickFullertonKendrick.pdf>
- Golan, G. (2013). An integrated approach to public diplomacy. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 57(9), 1251-1255. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764213487711>
- Greenberg, B. S. (1974). Gratifications of television viewing and their correlates for British children. In J. G. Blumler & E. Katz (Eds.), *The uses of mass communications: Current perspectives on gratifications research* (pp. 71-92). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Groshek, J., Guo, L., Cutino, C., & Elasmr, M. (2017). A sample methodology for extracting and interpreting country concept from social media users and content. *Shaping international public opinion: A model for nation branding and public diplomacy*, 57-76.
- Guo, L., Mays, K., & Wang, J. (2019). WHOSE STORY WINS ON TWITTER? Visualizing the South China Sea dispute. *Journalism Studies*, 20(4), 563-584. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2017.1399813>
- Gurskas, M. (2016). 'Tviplomatiija – nauja šiuolaikinės viešosios diplomatiijos forma?', (Twiplomacy – new form of contemporary public diplomacy?). *Politikos mokslų almanachas*, 19, 161-180. <https://doi.org/10.7220/2335-7185.19.8>
- Haridakis, P. M. (2002). Viewer characteristics, exposure to television violence, and aggression. *Media Psychology*, 4, 235-353. http://doi.org/10.1207/S1532785XMEP0404_02
- Henry, D., Stattner, E., & Collard, M. (2018). Information propagation routes between countries in social media. In *Companion Proceedings of the The Web Conference 2018 (WWW '18)*. International World Wide Web Conferences Steering Committee, Republic and Canton of Geneva, CHE, 1295-1298. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3184558.3191569>
- Hootsuite & We Are Social. (2020). DIGITAL 2020: VIETNAM. <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2020-vietnam>
- Ingenhoff, D., Calamai, G., & Sevin, E. (2021). Key Influencers in Public Diplomacy 2.0: A Country-Based Social Network Analysis. *Social Media+ Society*, 7(1), 2056305120981053. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305120981053>
- Jackson, S. T. (2019). A turning IR landscape in a shifting media ecology: The state of IR literature on new media. *International Studies Review*, 21(3), 518-534. <https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viy046>
- Jansen, B., Zhang, M., Sobel, K., & Chowdury, A. (2009). Twitter power: Tweets as electronic word of mouth. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 60(11), 2169-2188. <http://doi.org/10.1002/asi.21149>
- Jönsson, C., & Hall, M. (2003). Communication: An Essential Aspect of Diplomacy. *International Studies Perspectives*, 4(2), 195-210. Retrieved March 17, 2021, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44218264>
- Kampf, R., Manor, I., & Segev, E. (2015). Digital diplomacy 2.0? A cross-national comparison of public engagement in Facebook and Twitter. *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, 10(4), 331-362. <https://doi.org/10.1163/1871191X-12341318>

- Katz, E., Blumler, J. G., & Gurevitch, M. (1974). Utilization of mass communication by the individual. In J. G. Blumler & E. Katz (Eds.). *The uses of mass communications: Current perspectives on gratifications research* (pp. 19–32). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage
- Khan, G. F., Ho Young Yoon, H. Y., Kim, J., & Park, H. W. (2014). From e-government to social government: Twitter use by Korea's central government. *Online Information Review*, 38(1), 95–113. <https://doi.org/10.1108/OIR-09-2012-0162>
- Khatib, L., Dutton, W., & Thelwall, M. (2012). Public Diplomacy 2.0: A Case Study of the US Digital Outreach Team. *Middle East Journal*, 66(3), 453–472. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23256656>
- Lee, S. (2021). Public Diplomacy and International Communication. *Global Journalism: Understanding World Media Systems*, 213.
- Lucas, K., & Sherry, J. L. (2004). Sex differences in video game play: A communication based explanation. *Communication Research*, 31, 499–523. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0093650204267930>
- Lüfkens, M. (2017). Twiplomacy Study 2017. *Burson Cohn & Wolfe* <http://twiplomacy.com/blog/twiplomacy-study-2017/>
- Marres, N. (2015). Why map issues? On controversy analysis as a digital method. *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, 40(5), 655–686. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243915574602>
- McQuail D. (2010). *McQuail's mass communication theory, 5th ed.* Book Review. Reference & Research Book News, 20, 20–21.
- Metzgar, E. T., & Lu, X. (2015). Tweeting the pivot? The United States and PD 2.0 in Northeast Asia. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 11(3), 204–215. <https://doi.org/10.1057/pb.2015.3>
- Ministry of National Defence of Vietnam. (2019). *2019 National Defence White Paper* [White paper]. National Political Publishing House. <http://mod.gov.vn/wps/wcm/connect/08963129-c9cf-4c86-9b5c-81a9e2b14455/2019VietnamNationalDefence.pdf>
- Nguyen, Q. D. (2020, January 2). Trump-Trọng Summit Remains in Limbo. *YaleGlobal and the MacMillan Center, Yale University*. <https://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/trump-trong-summit-remains-limbo>
- Nguyen, V. H., Nguyen, H. T., & Snasel, V. (2016). Text normalization for named entity recognition in Vietnamese tweets. *Computational social networks*, 3(1), 10. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40649-016-0032-0>
- Nick, S. (2001). Use of language in diplomacy. In Kurbalija, J., & Slavik, H. (Eds.), *Language and diplomacy*. Diplo Foundation.
- Norman, D. A. (2002). *The design of everyday things*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- O'Boyle, J. (2019). Twitter diplomacy between India and the United States: Agenda-building analysis of tweets during presidential state visits. *Global media and communication*, 15(1), 121–134. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1742766518818859>
- Pamment, J. (2013). *New public diplomacy in the 21st century: A comparative study of policy and practice*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Park, S., Han, S., Kim, J., Molaie, M. M., Vu, H. D., Singh, K., ... & Cha, M. (2020). Risk communication in asian countries: Covid-19 discourse on twitter. *arXiv preprint* <https://arxiv.org/abs/2006.12218v3>
- Park, S. J., & Lim, Y. S. (2014). Information networks and social media use in public diplomacy: a comparative analysis of South Korea and Japan. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 24(1), 79–98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01292986.2013.851724>
- Parmelee, J. H., & Bichard, S. L. (2011). *Politics and the Twitter revolution: How tweets influence the relationship between political leaders and the public*. Lexington Books.
- Reeves, B., & Nass, C. (2000). Perceptual bandwidth. *Communications of the ACM*, 43(3), 65–70. <http://doi.org/10.1145/330534.330542>
- Rubin, A. M., & Bantz, C. R. (1987). Utility of videocassette recorders. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 30, 471–485. <http://doi.org/10.1177/000276487030005003>
- Rubin, A. M. (1984). Ritualized and instrumental television viewing. *Journal of Communication*, 34(3), 67–77. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1984.tb02174.x>
- Rubin, A. M. (2009). The uses-and-gratifications perspective on media effects. In J. Bryant & M. B. Oliver (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research 3rd ed.* (pp. 165–184). New York, NY: Routledge.

- Ruhrberg, S. D., Kirstein, G., Habermann, T., Nikolic, J., & Stock, W. G. (2018). #ISIS—A Comparative Analysis of Country-Specific Sentiment on Twitter. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(06), 142. <http://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2018.66014>
- Severin W. J., & Tankard J. W. (2000). *Communication theories: Origins, methods, and uses in the mass media*. Boston: Addison Wesley Longman.
- Sevin, E. (2017). *Public diplomacy and the implementation of foreign policy in the U.S., Sweden and Turkey*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Shahin, S., & Huang, Q. E. (2019). Friend, Ally, or Rival? Twitter Diplomacy as “Technosocial” Performance of National Identity. *International Journal of Communication*, 13, 5100-5118. <https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/download/10921/2833>
- Sheafer, T., & Gabay, I. (2009). Mediated public diplomacy: A strategic contest over international agenda building and frame building. *Political Communication*, 26(4), 447-467. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584600903297240>
- Šimunjak, M., & Caliandro, A. (2019). Twiplomacy in the age of Donald Trump: Is the diplomatic code changing?. *The Information Society*, 35(1), 13-25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01972243.2018.1542646>
- Snow, N. (2015). Public Diplomacy and Public Relations: Will the Twain ever meet? In Golan, G., Yang, S-U., & Kinsey, D. (Eds.), *International Public Relations and Public Diplomacy (73-90)*. New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Sobel, M., Riffe, D., & Hester, J. (2016). Twitter Diplomacy? A Content Analysis of Eight U.S. Embassies’ Twitter Feeds. *The Journal of Social Media in Society*, 5(2), 75-107. <https://thejsms.org/index.php/TSMRI/article/view/168>
- Stavrositu, C., & Sundar, S. S. (2012). Does blogging empower women? Exploring the role of agency and community. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 17, 369–386. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2012.01587.x>
- Stein, J. G. (Ed.). (2011). *Diplomacy in the digital age: essays in Honour of Ambassador Allan Gotlieb*. Signal.
- Strauss, N., Kruike-meier, S., van der Meulen, H., & van Noort, G. (2015). Digital diplomacy in GCC countries: Strategic communication of Western embassies on Twitter. *Government Information Quarterly*, 32(4), 369-379. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2015.08.001>
- Su, S., & Xu, M. (2015). Twiplomacy: social media as a new platform for development of public diplomacy. *International Journal of E-Politics*, 6(1), 17-30. <https://doi.org/10.4018/IJEP.2015010102>
- Sundar, S. S., & Constantin, C. (2004, May). Does interacting with media enhance news memory? Automatic vs. controlled processing of interactive news features. Paper presented at the 54th annual conference of the International Communication Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Sundar, S. S., & Limperos, A. M. (2013). Uses and grats 2.0: New gratifications for new media. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 57(4), 504-525. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2013.845827>
- Thayer, C. A. (2015a). Vietnamese Diplomacy, 1975-2015: From Member of the Socialist Camp to Proactive International Integration. *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 1(3), 194-214.
- Thayer, C. A. (2015b). Why Vietnam’s Foreign Policy Won’t Change after Its Party Congress. *The Diplomat*. <http://thediplomat.com/2015/12/why-vietnams-foreign-policy-wont-change-after-its-party-congress>
- The White House. (2017). Joint Statement for Enhancing the Comprehensive Partnership between the United States of America and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/joint-statement-enhancing-comprehensive-partnership-united-states-america-socialist-republic-vietnam/>
- Uysal, N., Schroeder, J., & Taylor, M. (2012). Social media and soft power: Positioning Turkey’s image on Twitter. *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication*, 5(3), 338–359. <https://doi.org/10.1163/18739865-00503013>
- Vietnam MOFA. (2020). Deputy Prime Minister Pham Binh Minh responded to press interviews about Vietnam foreign affairs in 2019 and its orientation in 2020. <http://www.mofa.gov.vn/vi/nr040807104143/nr111027144142/ns200115100436>
- Wilson, J. (2018). Vietnam in the Indo-Pacific: Challenges and opportunities in a new regional landscape. *Perth: Perth USAsia Centre at The University of Western Australia*. <https://researchrepository.murdoch.edu.au/id/eprint/41797/1/Vietnam.pdf>
- Wu, H. D. (2021). Technology’s Role in Global Journalism and Communication. *Global Journalism: Understanding World Media Systems*, 29.
- Xiguang, L., & Jing, W. (2010). Web-based public diplomacy: The role of social media in the Iranian and Xinjiang riots. *Journal of International Communication*, 16(1), 7-22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13216597.2010.9674756>

- Zaharna, R.S. (2016). Reassessing “whose story wins”: The trajectory of identity resilience in narrative contests. *International Journal of Communication, 10*, 4407–4438. <https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/5121/1775>
- Zhang, J., & Fahmy, S. (2015). The use of social media in public diplomacy. In *International Public Relations and Public Diplomacy*, ed. Guy Golan, Sung-Un Yang, and Dennis Kinsey, 315-31. New York, NY: Lang Publishing.
- Zhang, J. (2013). A strategic issue management (SIM) approach to social media use in public diplomacy. *American Behavioral Scientist, 57*(9), 1312-1331. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0002764213487734>
- Zhong, X., & Lu, J. (2013). Public diplomacy meets social media: A study of the US Embassy's blogs and micro-blogs. *Public Relations Review, 39*(5), 542-548. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2013.07.002>

Funding and Acknowledgements

The authors declare no funding sources or conflicts of interest.

About the Author(s)

Diep P. P. U. is a first-year Ph.D. student at Manship School of Mass Communication, Louisiana State University. She was a Graduate Teaching Assistant at A.Q. Miller School of Media and Communication, Kansas State University and earned a master’s degree from the University.

Online Connections

To follow these authors in social media:

Uyen Diep: @uyendpp