

Digital Diplomacy

A study of social media and the changing role of the diplomatic
service

Abstract

This study concerns digital diplomacy and the changing role of the diplomatic profession. By constructing a survey followed by descriptive in-depth interviews, this study demonstrates that Swedish diplomats have overall a positive view on social media's role within the profession. The use of social media has increased the transparency of the profession and the citizen dialogue. Furthermore, this thesis explores the opportunities and the risks of the increased prominence of social media in diplomacy from the perspective of Swedish diplomats' own views and their roles within this change.

Keywords: Digital Diplomacy, Public Diplomacy, Symbolic Capital, Power relations, Diplomatic core, Cultural diplomacy, Field of Struggle, Field Theory, Pierre Bourdieu.

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1. Social Media and the Diplomat

1.1. Introduction and background

Digital technology is constantly evolving and the use of social media in the political realm has been changing the nature of foreign policy and its power dynamics. The global network is more connected than ever and as the former British diplomat and author Tom Fletcher argues '...Facebook and Twitter didn't create our desire to connect. Our desire to connect created Facebook and Twitter' (Fletcher 2016, p. xxiv). He also argues that the digital world makes us feel better connected but less well informed (ibid, xiii). The speed of reaching out and collecting information between and within borders has never been more effective. However, as also argued by Fletcher, the problem does not lay in the lack of information but the abundance of it (ibid, xxiv).

In order to go through all information in a correct and secure manner, new institutions have been taking form in the last decade. For instance, in March 2015 the European Union External Action (EEAS 2018) opened two new institutions: Communication Policy and Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication. EEAS is an important institution in the field of EU's foreign policy and its diplomatic network worldwide (EEAS 2019). The two institutions mainly focused on the East StratCom Task Force and were created to mediate EU policies in the Eastern Partnership countries (EEAS 2018). The institution includes both traditional diplomatic work and strategic communicational tools such as social media. These developments invites scholars to engage with the role social media serves in diplomacy and how it changes.

The influence of digital negotiations and the use of social media among politicians and diplomats play a significant role in today's power relations. It has also challenged the area of responsibility to whom should or should not have access to certain platforms. One person of influence in Swedish diplomacy is former foreign minister Carl Bildt. In 2013 he declared that all Swedish embassies and consulates should open their own Twitter and Instagram accounts (Regeringens deklARATION 2013, p. 11). He also was lobbying for Sweden to be prominent in digital diplomacy (ibid). The rapid digitalization in political platforms has changed the role of the diplomat drastically and words such as Twiplomacy, Network diplomacy, Selfie Diplomacy, and Digital Diplomacy are commonly referred to. This has created a completely new field for the diplomat to adapt to. Today most foreign ministers and

diplomats communicate via social media and new digital platforms are evolving rapidly. How is this development perceived by the diplomats? And what possible conflict of interest between diplomats/non-diplomats working with strategic communication and other parts of diplomacy can be found?

1.1.1. Research Puzzle

The diplomatic service has historically not been famous for being transparent. Traditionally they have been working in the shadow of the public sphere. Today many diplomats and embassies have their own Instagram account where daily activities are updated frequently. The traditional role of being a diplomat has changed and needs to adapt to the new digital world. Access to information is also making more people involved in diplomacy. This does not mean that the diplomatic role should be undermined but instead demonstrate why they still are important players in the global arena. Because of the expectation of fast and disposable access to information, traditional diplomatic negotiations and relationship building manifest themselves differently than before.

I argue that there is a gap in this field where there is a lack of research on how digital diplomacy is *perceived* among diplomats. And also about what possible consequences or conflicts can be found between diplomats and the rather new department dealing with strategic communication. In line with digital media and the abundance of information public authorities, both on a national and international level, have responded by appointing new expertise and competencies in order to adapt to technical or digital change. The result is an expansion of a network of governmental and non-governmental actors getting more influence to shape policies (Pohle et al 2016, p. 2). The new shape of policies creates new constellations between actors and their roles allocated to the diplomatic profession (ibid). Why is this important? As argued by Giancarlo Summa at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) the increased use of social media also affects international organizations' legitimacy. Legitimacy is described as "...a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of a given entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions". Further, legitimacy is recognized by the actors, who obey its certain rules or institutions (Summa 2020, p. 7). Summa acknowledges two types of legitimacy for international organizations: Normative and social legitimacy. Normative legitimacy is described as the right of an international organization to establish rules which may be either binding or non-binding for states and societies. The set of rules must be in line with the common values and principles of the Member States. For instance, in terms of global governance, the UN Charter whereas the conventions are based on, for example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Social legitimacy is instead about acknowledging or accepting an international organization's supranational role. This legitimacy always needs to be strengthened and work activity to gain the trust of states and societies. This process in gaining legitimacy is based on constantly being relevant, maintaining good communication, and projecting a vision for the future. Summa also claims that, if the public learn that the international institution losing its legitimacy it can affect its viability and effectiveness (ibid, p. 7-8). How is this important when talking about digital diplomacy? As Summa argues the "perception of legitimacy matters, because, in a democratic era, multilateral institutions will only thrive if they are viewed as legitimate by democratic publics" (ibid).

By employing a sociological perspective on the increased use of social media, increased transparency, and the increased demand for strategic communication, I aim to investigate how the changing role of the diplomat is affecting the traditional understanding of the profession, and its possible consequences. Greater influences from strategic communication and other communicative methods may influence the own understanding of the diplomatic core. The contribution of this study is the collected empirics consisting of in-depth interviews and a survey subject to analysis. Assumptions regarding social media as a possible 'threat' against the traditional role can be made, and will be discussed in this thesis. Diplomats have a strong role that can possibly be threatened by those who are not part of the traditional professional community. Expectancy of a quick response in the use of social media and to reach out to citizens is usually more associated within the journalistic and communicative world whereas diplomats now need to find a place for themselves. The development can be seen in two ways regarding how the profession might be affected. The first is digital diplomacy as an extension of the profession. The second is a replacement of the profession (Bjola & Holmes 2015, p. 111). The assumed conflict between these two statements is what I will look deeper into in this thesis.

Beside this studies empirical contributions, it also contributes to theoretical discussion between diplomats' symbolic capital and digital media by adding a sociological framework to the study. One name who has had a large influence in sociological studies, and particularly research about field and group dynamics is by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. His ideas about Habitus, Symbolic capital, and Field will be my theoretical framework for this research. The term 'symbolic capital' which is coined by Pierre Bourdieu will be discussed later in this thesis. In order to answer the research question, the sociological approach together with in-depth interviews will contribute to a deeper understanding of the diplomatic profession in a changing world, and also what aspects are important to value about digital and public diplomacy. The relevance of this research is to pinpoint the possible challenges and

conflicts that can occur when a profession is changing at high speed and collides with another profession. Social media and digitalization of the diplomatic core take many forms and are understood in different ways which is why it is important to explore. This is also why I will focus on diplomats' own experience and understanding of social media and digital diplomacy. The two perspectives of digitalization as an asset or threat to the diplomatic profession will be the core problem of this study. The question is how diplomats experience this conflict and how it affects power relations. As claimed by Fletcher digital technology transforms the way governments engage with citizens. Internet eludes national boundaries (Fletcher 2016, p.15)

1.1.2. Research question

How is the traditional role of the diplomat being affected by social and digital media and how is this development perceived by Swedish diplomats?

2. Theory and prior research

2.1. The traditional diplomat

The diplomatic profession and its culture have a long history and little is known about the very first diplomats. One particular characteristic among diplomats is to mimic the world as it is. Technological innovations affecting politics and therefore also diplomacy (Fletcher, p. 2016). In history the diplomatic role has due to new innovations and technologies gained more influence and become important players between states (ibid). When the world or a certain situation changes, so do the diplomat, however the cultural understanding of the profession is another question. The cultural role of the diplomat has old roots but is constantly changing, so does the profession itself. Diplomats have historically taken many roles both nationally and internationally. What is interesting to bring up in the later discussion about the digital diplomat is how the diplomatic culture is understood by the diplomats themselves.

According to Geoffrey Wiseman diplomatic culture has been valued in four ways: The first statement is that diplomatic culture exists, but its importance is underestimated. This perspective is rooted in the English school of International Relations. The perspective of the English school is explained as *'the accumulated communicative and representational norms, rules, and institutions devised to improve relations and avoid war between interacting and mutually recognizing political entities'* (Wiseman 2005, p. 409–10). The diplomatic culture has been developed over time and the diplomatic corps have many codes of conduct such as special rights and responsibilities in power relations and peacemaking (ibid, p. 412). According to Wiseman diplomacy also attain the function of being symbols of the society of the State and to minimise the friction in international relations. This manifests itself in the communication between political leaders, negotiating and by gathering knowledge and information (ibid). Furthermore, the profession is described as: "...a custodian of the idea of international society, with a stake in preserving and strengthening it" (ibid, p. 413) The Second perspective is that diplomatic culture exists but is not important. This perspective is often brought up by negotiation theorists. The third perspective claims that the existence of the diplomatic culture is ignored or taken for granted. This perspective is presented by constructivist critique of neo- realism. Lastly we have the neo-conservative perspective claiming that diplomatic culture exists but harms the national interest (ibid, p. 409–430). Assuming there is a diplomatic culture, my concern is how social media is affecting this

culture, how it is understood, and most importantly, what it does to the legitimacy of the profession. Is social media a necessary tool, which develops the corps and/or is it a potential threat to the status of the diplomatic corps by blurring the boundaries of the professional role?

One important aspect to lift regarding diplomacy is to distinguish the profession from the more general concept of foreign policy. According to Wiseman foreign policy refers to the *formation* of a state's strategy. He claims that only a state can have a foreign policy and foreign policymaking tends to be authorized by policymakers. Diplomacy however, is described as the practical *implementation* of that strategy (Wiseman 2005, p. 410). According to the Westphalian tradition, only states can conduct diplomacy, today the definition of diplomacy is not as bounded whereas non-state actors can perform diplomacy as well (ibid). The main characteristics of the diplomatic core recognized by McConnell & Dittmer are the mutual endeavor towards peacemaking, the common intellectual culture, institutionalized norms, and the presumption that different diplomatic actors are equivalent (McConnell & Dittmer 2016, p. 2). Along with the institutionalization of the diplomatic service the codified diplomatic culture has increased. The diplomatic corps has aristocratic origins and has traditionally been understood as an elitist appearance of international culture (ibid, p. 6). In the twentieth century, the diplomatic culture moved away from this idea and changed into the ongoing professional diplomatic culture. The process of professionalization and gaining increased accreditation of interstate negotiation can be traced to the Congress of Vienna. The assumption of diplomats as being elitist and separated from the 'ordinary citizen' still exists whereas the tradition of privileges and immunities allocated to the core has reinforced this idea of separation. As Sharp argues, diplomats 'not only serve their professional universe, but they also constitute it' (ibid, p. 2-6). These assumptions which are rooted in the traditional aristocratic role and identity still affect modern diplomats (ibid, p. 5).

McConnell & Dittmer make a few key points of characteristics within the diplomatic core. The first is the shift from aristocratic to the ongoing professionalization of diplomacy. The second point is that this professionalization of the diplomats preserves the understanding of the diplomats themselves and is transferred to the next generation of diplomats. The third is the underlying tradition of tact, civility, and accurate communication. They also claim that today's diplomatic culture is dominated by European and Christian traditions (ibid, p. 4). Lastly McConnell & Dittmer acknowledge ratification of the profession moving the diplomats from the idea of being a generalist to specialists (McConnell & Dittmer 2016, p. 6). Today they are more engaged in other fields than foreign policy alone. For instance, trade, humanitarian aid, environmental policies, and public health (ibid, p. 5). The shift from generalist to specialist has moved away from the old diplomat into a completely new idea of the traditional comprehension of the profession. The development of communication, trade, and travel has made it more important to establish rules for diplomatic interaction (Fletcher 2016, p. 29).

According to Fletcher everyone can become a diplomat in the digital age and reject the idea of diplomacy as a creed or code (ibid, p. 266). In the digital world, citizens can also be diplomats and are according to Fletcher necessary (ibid). This idea collides with the traditional role as separated from the citizens. In the digital world, new actors take place in the global arena, whereas the importance of handling information gets more important.

2.2. The digital diplomat

The use of social media is increasing in both national governments and international organizations and authorizes more actors to engage with foreign publics (Summa 2020, p. 11). This extends the idea of traditional media gatekeepers (ibid) Digital diplomacy can be described as [...the use of social media by international actors to accomplish their foreign policy goals and proactively manage their image and reputation] (ibid) According to Summa, social media has changed the nature of diplomacy as it has changed the tempo of diplomatic action and changed traditional procedure when interacting with different actors (Summa 2020, p. 11). With digitalization, the diplomatic platform has begun to interact with data analytics, citizen journalism, and social media (Bjola & Holmes 2015, p. 111). According to Amanda Clarke, this development can be seen from two perspectives. First as an *extension* of the diplomatic service and second digitalization as a *replacement* of the traditional role of the diplomat into a more civil society-driven model of diplomacy (ibid). As already mentioned, I will look deeper into these two perspectives. As Clarke argues the last perspective can be seen as a policy-changing phenomenon meaning that the social web has been readjusted. This is described in the following way:

Digital diplomacy signals a recognition amongst diplomats and foreign ministers that the social web has redistributed informational resources, ensuring the civil society - and not the government - is the best placed to perform the functions of networking, influencing and intelligence gathering and analysis that have long been preserve of state actors as per the state-to-state, intergovernmental model of International relations (Bjola & Holmes 2015, p. 111).

According to this perspective, digital diplomacy is a form of policy change. Joseph Nye argues that there are three dimensions of public diplomacy: Daily communication, political campaign, and long-time relations with key individuals (Zaharna 2007, p. 214) The traditional role of soft power has changed along with the constantly evolving technological opportunities. How we communicate with the public is defined by political players (ibid, p. 215) In Joseph Nye's book *Soft Powers* he argues that technological development has been

reducing the cost of processing and transmitting information. Further, this has led to an abundance of information and as he calls it a "paradox of plenty" (Nye 2004). As mentioned earlier in the research puzzle, accessibility has led to an abundance of information that today's diplomats must handle. Swedish embassies are quite small compared to other countries' embassies which make this even more problematic. At the smallest Swedish embassies, there are only a handful of people working and who oversee several areas of responsibilities, hereunder digital diplomacy. This raises questions regarding how social media and other digital platforms are prioritized.

Digital diplomacy can be described as a branch within public diplomacy. Public diplomacy has been a part of the diplomatic profession for a long time, social media not as long. The adaptation of social media has increased the citizen dialogs and created more forums to network globally. Further Ronald Deibert argues about "medium theory" which is based on communications impact on society. According to his theory communication can never be neutral and will create communication dynamics in the political realm (Zaharna 2007, p. 216-217) It is defined as:

The interactivity and connectivity of new media, combined with the diversity of new players and the ways that they are using the media, have arguably ushered in a new global communications' era, defined by connectivity, interactivity and cultural diversity. The underlying dynamic has shifted from a focus on information as a product, to communication as a process. This shift is significant, because it means a parallel shift from message content to message exchange. In this new terrain, those who master and facilitate message exchange command communication power (Zaharna 2007, p. 217)

This is important in the diplomatic core since they are one of the stakeholders in the digital world and must compete on the digital market without jeopardizing the content of the message. In 2013 Burson- Martsteller released a report on Twiplomacy. According to this report over three quarters of all world leaders were on Twitter (Bjola & Holmes 2015, p. 48) Today it is even more so. As mentioned earlier all Swedish embassies have their own Instagram and Facebook accounts together with many other digital platforms. According to Tom Fletcher, it is not possible to be a diplomat today without working with digital policy (Fletcher 2016). Due to the increased use of social media the field of work for diplomats has increased. According to the report by German Institute for International and Security Affairs in 2011 Diplomats need to understand the tension between individual needs and state requirements without opposing the state. They also need to use digitalization in favor of gaining efficiency and not jeopardize the efficacy (Stanzel 2011, p.1). There is also an increased expectancy from citizens to engage in social media making the demands on

communicative accuracy even more important. There are several aspects of how the increased use of social media is affecting the diplomat. One is the increased amount of information; another is the personalization of the diplomat. By making a diplomat more public they will also adopt a more personal image. This may contribute to a fine line between personal and professional when handling digital social platforms (Bjola and Holmes 2015, p. 49). According to Tom Fletcher, influential leaders have always needed to adapt quickly to the medium of their age in order to gain power and to maintain a good connection with the public (Fletcher 2016, p. 149). Today it is different. Communication in the digital world is much more complex because of the increased expectancy of authentic communication. According to Fletcher people are today more skeptical and don't trust authorities to the same extent as in the pre-digital age (ibid). This means that for example, diplomats need to be more transparent in what they do and how their work affects people. As claimed by Fletcher "*we want connection, not just connectivity*" (Fletcher 2016, p. 149). This may create pressure for diplomats to always stay updated and to act more public. Fletcher also claims that diplomacy faces a crisis of legitimacy. As mentioned earlier, the internet eludes national boundaries which affect the role of the diplomat as a representation of the state is one of their main functions (ibid, 14). One person who has been researching digital diplomacy is Elsa Hedling who has been exploring the relationship between politics and New Media. One aspect that is acknowledged by Hedling is the simplification of media logic. For instance, she describes Twitter as "immediacy, interactivity, spontaneity, personality, and informality that resonate with how the overarching media logic can tend to equate speed with quality" (Hedling 2018, p. 121-122). The frequent use of Twitter is described as both traditional and alternative journalism and works as a platform where citizens and/or political actors are able to be a part of real-time news (ibid). As already mentioned, this new way of communication is called Twiplomacy and has been recognized as a tool for gaining valuable opportunities in two-way engagement across national borders (ibid). According to Hedling the norms of social media are more associated with popularity and networking than commercialism and entertainment. As visibility and intensity are two important strategies in today's communication Hedling argues that crisis communication should strive for connectivity rather than connection (ibid, p. 131).

2.3. Theoretical framework

Is it possible to talk about the diplomatic corps as a group at all? And if so, how should one study it as a group? The boundaries are often unclear in the sense of what norms and rules define a certain group. It is just as difficult to define which norms and rules cannot belong to this group. Another problem is to understand the norms and choices of individuals, the group, and not least the society. As mentioned earlier this study will be based on a sociological perspective. The reason for this is to approximate and understand the diplomatic profession in the digital world. Further I will use Pierre Bourdieu's research on Field Theory and self-reflexivity. Bourdieu means that there is an objective truth within the subject. According to him, we need to reach the higher ground on objectivity which also includes the subject (Bourdieu 1997, p. 46) Bourdieu claims that social research often stumbles over the problem of the distinction of society and the individual. He claims that society exists together with the individual truth. It does not contradict each other. Every collective is based on an individual (ibid 1997, p. 43) Through norms within a group, the difference between the group's and the individual's views is blurred. To be part of the group, one must adopt certain norms, and this also becomes the individual position in the group. This reasoning can be important to adapt when the group's norms and values may be threatened from the outside. He also claims that practice is the product of processes that can both be unconscious or conscious by the group (Jenkins 1992, p. 72). This dualism is often described as 'Habitus' which is further described as a bridge-building exercise across the explanatory gap between individual behaviour and individual decision-making (ibid, p. 74).

Bourdieu has many times analyzed journalism as a field and describes it as a microcosm with its own laws which can be compared to the diplomatic profession. Further, these laws are defined by their given position and other microcosm influences (Bourdieu 1998, p. 39). He also mentions invisible power relations where objective power relations need to take into account in understanding of a field's structure. For example, a field with economic enterprises has the power to change the whole economic playing field (ibid. p. 40). If a company lowers the prices and increases the barrier of access it will also hinder new companies on the market (ibid). If we compare this to the diplomatic use of social media they too cooperate with companies that have the power to either lower or higher their position. By accumulating power the field will also change along with it (ibid). As described by Bourdieu, a field is a structured social space that contains people dominating and people getting dominated whereas actors either struggle for the transformation of the field or preservation of it (ibid). If we translate this into the diplomatic profession the struggle can be divided into the traditional and more "closed" diplomacy and the modern with the more "open" understanding of the field. Further, it is this struggle or power that defines the field and therefore also its strategies (ibid).

As mentioned above I will use Bourdieu's definition of the structure of power. So, what is symbolic capital and how can we understand it by looking at the diplomatic core? And what part of Bourdieu's work can be applied in order to guide this research forward? Power relations is one thing mentioned in this study and is rooted in the conflict of social media as an access or a threat to the traditional role as a diplomat. This is also rooted in status and the idea of symbolic capital. However, if we go back to the field theory the actions are limited by setting up rules and values that are always affecting the rule of actions. So how can we connect this model to digital diplomacy? If we consolidate diplomats in a social context and the group as a field shows common patterns in the way a group functions and understands itself in the digital world. A strong understanding of a profession can also be limiting in the practice. This is because you are bound to set up rules and traditions. This argument, on diplomats, is a bit paradoxical since the profession also has a tradition of adapting to the new world. This guides us into a discussion about the definition of digital and public diplomacy and how the definition is understood among diplomats. To recognize diplomacy in a social context is crucial in order to understand how digital diplomacy is affecting the diplomatic core. The reason for applying Bourdieu's ideas as a theoretical framework is simply to guide me in how the empirical material later will be analyzed.

2.3.1. Field theory, Habitus and the Symbolic capital

According to Bourdieu a field is structured internally and is often rooted in power relations. These particular fields or positions are closely connected to domination, subordination, and equivalence and are defined by access to a certain capital (goods or resources) (Jenkins 1992, p. 85). The term symbolic capital is used to describe all kinds of capitals that are recognized within a group. Further, Bourdieu recognized three types of symbolic capital: economic, social, and cultural. The economy often refers to the resources: money, material, etc. The social often includes prestige and social honor and the cultural knowledge and education within a certain field (ibid). The field is when you combine the capital with the habitus. The field requires autonomy whereas a common understanding of the field is crucial. Bourdieu describe a 'field' as:

‘...network or configuration of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations, they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation (situs) in the structure of the distribution of species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to specific profits that are at stake in the

field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions (domination, subordination, homology, etc.)' (Albright et al 2018, p. 4).

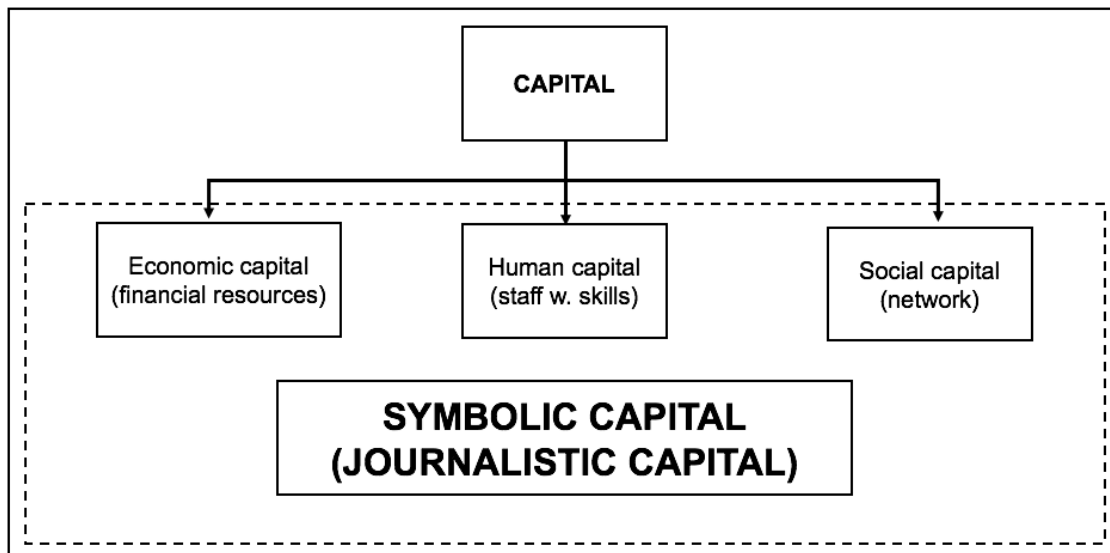
This field is a structural system of social positions which can be held by both individuals and institutions (Jenkins 1992, p. 85). A field is described to include resources and access to them. This is usually understood as 'stakes which are at stake' for instance, an intellectual distinction that is influenced by education, employment, power, lifestyle, etc. All of these specific fields hold a structure that according to Bourdieu often is taken for granted (ibid). Further Bourdieu defines two types of knowledge of the field. The first describes the logic of practice or the understanding of the cultural field. The second describes the reflexive relationship to that particular field and the role within it (Albright et al 2018, p. 2-3). He describes it as people with a field who are valued as 'successful' also can be bounded and contained by the field itself, making them limited in their practice (ibid). Bourdieu claims that the player can experience a good understanding of its own field, to be aware of the written and unwritten conventions governing it and what actions that are appropriate in different circumstances. The field is constantly changing by the player; however, these actions are determined by the constraints about what is possible and not possible (ibid). Bourdieu also acknowledges the autonomy of a field. He argues that external influences are always translated into the field's internal understanding of them. The autonomy of the field is described as: "*autonomy is reflected in the field's ability to legitimize existing social relations within itself through a defense of its Doxa, reason, and value for the field's existence*" (Albright et al 2018, p. 5). The more autonomous a field is the less influence from external powers (ibid). According to this argument, a profession is always able to adapt and to change but always in line with the set-up rules. However, as pointed out by Bourdieu there is the concept of 'field of struggle' which is explained as "in which agents' strategies are concerned with the preservation or improvement of their positions with respect to the defining capital of the field" (Jenkins 1992, p. 85).

Albright et al. describes the concept of an autonomous field's internal mechanisms, how it operates, and how it is shaped. The field of struggle exists in any field and is defined as a 'struggle for legitimation' which is explained as the domination of one set of principles over others (Albright et al 2018, p. 8). The legitimation produces a Doxa in the field which is what is taken for granted. Albright et al. means that there are four internal mechanisms that explain the boundary of a field's struggle: The first is described as the agreement about what is at stake. The second is about the players within the field and their position. The third is described as the consensus of the rules in which the field works. Lastly, there is the shared interpretive frame which is described as the logic of the field and allow those involved to make sense of how other actors of the field operates in a certain situation (ibid) The concept of 'Field of Struggle' will later be discussed in my operationalization of field theory. This

theory is based on how a group or a profession identifies themselves within a social context. It also acknowledges the common understanding of their professional role and the importance of the norms and values that govern within the profession. The research question is targeted at the role and the profession and how diplomats experience the possible conflict of interest, cooperation, and the changing way of working. The field theory allows us to understand diplomats as a group within a profession that has set rules, values, and norms. Further, this theory allows us to understand what happens to a group when it is challenged by new expectations.

2.3.2. Symbolic Capital

The symbolic capital is a concept used by Bourdieu to describe and capture what is recognized and what to be granted unreservedly to those qualified confidential for a particular field, title, or profession. The recognition of the diplomats enjoys the confidence of the general public. The symbolic capital is therefore relational in a sense (Broady 1991, p. 123). The symbolic capital generates symbolic power. The more recognition or status the more power. A title such as a diplomat is what is assigned a value provided there is a market of assets. In other words, there are people who are inclined to perceive this as an achievement or who think that this particular title has value (Ibid). The capital in Bourdieu's theory is therefore not restricted to the economical definitions only. Instead, he uses the term Symbolic capital whereas intelligence, social status, profession, etc. is valued as capital assets. In sum, symbolic capital includes the concept of values, assets, or resources (ibid, p. 169). Going back to the diplomatic profession, digital media can be seen as a resource or asset in order to gain (or the opposite) power and status. Since capital is something recognized by others the composition of a certain capital may not be as viable depending on environment and circumstances, and can manifest itself differently (ibid). According to this perspective, symbolic capital can appear and be understood differently depending on context. Based on this assumption I will carefully account for the selection of study subjects.



Source: (Raabe 2018, p. 26)

The diplomatic profession can be described in line with the figure above. The figure describes the journalistic capital but can be translated in a similar way for the diplomatic core. According to Bourdieu's definition of social capital, the access of capital generates access to more capital whereas the social capital strengthens the cultural capital (Broady 1991, p. 123). What is interesting to discuss is whether social media and digital media are contributing to generate more power and status to the diplomatic core measures by the diplomats understanding of the development. Bourdieu claims that it is impossible to explain the structure of the social world without acknowledging the capital and all its different shapes (Bourdieu 1986, p. 242) According to Bourdieu the cultural capital exists in three ways. The first is described as the embodied state which can include family and education. The second is the objectified state which includes cultural goods such as books, tools, etc. And the last one, an institutionalized state which includes for example educational qualifications (ibid, p. 243). Bourdieu describes the volume of the social capital in the following way: "...possessed by a given agent thus depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of space or even in economic and social space those to whom he is connected" (Bourdieu 1986, p. 249) Further he says:

"...the more the official transmission of capital is prevented or hindered, the more the effects of the clandestine circulation of capital in the form of cultural capital become determinant in the reproduction of the social structure. As an instrument of reproduction capable of disguising its own function, the scope of the educational system tends to increase, and together with this increase is the unification of the market in social qualifications which gives rights to occupy rare positions" (ibid 1986, p. 254- 255).

2.3.3. Habitus

Habitus is often something that is not recognized by the group/field themselves. As mentioned earlier the structure and idea of a group are able to change but within the framework of the underlying structure. Commonly used in Bourdieu's work is the concept of Habitus. The definition of Habitus helps us to understand how people's actions are influenced by the common understanding of themselves. Bourdieu often refers to the concept of symbolic capital which is described as a conception that is dominating or ruling ideas within the field (Albright et al 2018, p. 73). The common values and cultural understanding of the field set the framework and rules of action (ibid). The conflict/compromise that Bourdieu anticipated will occur is what I will look deeper into when investigating the diplomatic service and digital media. The use of this model will be the framework in order to answer the research question about how social media and digital diplomacy are perceived by diplomats. Further, the research and Bourdieu's idea about Habitus is rooted in power relations. According to Bourdieu's theory, different Habitus conflicts and compromises will occur when colliding.

2.3.4. Field

The field theory is rooted in inductive theory which is studied through empirics. The empirical study aims to study the logic of the field (Bourdieu 2000, p. 270). The field and the closely connected term Doxa, has been analyzed by Bourdieu through the journalistic profession before. Doxa is defined as what we take for granted, some kind of common sense, while the field is where the actors operate (Jenkins 1992, p. 85) When new actors or players occur in a field it can create forces for either transformation or conservation. This challenges the field's doxa in two ways, first by the field-specific capital of established players and second by their position within the field (Albright et al 2018, p. 210).

The journalistic field and the diplomatic field are similar in many aspects. One similarity is the professionalization of the two professions. Stephen R. Barnard who has been researching on *The Journalistic Field in a Time of Mediatization* and uses the field theory as an analytical toolkit. He refers to the element of practice which is the same analytical framework I will use in this study. This is also referred to as the structure of power (Barnard 2017, p. 4). In Bourdieu's work practice is explained as the relationship between an individual's habitus, symbolic capital, and the field of action (Power 1999, p. 48). According to the field theory the structure of the field is reproduced and shapes its power dynamics. Bourdieu claims that different fields such as political and cultural fields rule social relations and influence norms and values in fields with less power. The structures of social relations within and across the field may vary as disputation of power may arise. This is by Bourdieu referred to as the field of power. Further, discussed by Barnard each field has autonomy, deciding social actions

which can evolve differently. However, also argued by Barnard, field relations may be predictable as recurrent trends shape action and alteration (Barnard 2017, p. 1-15).

According to Pohle et al. all social fields are a combination between collaborative identity making and struggle. If we conceptualize this into the internet policy field this is translated into the struggle in the design of the technical infrastructure and modes of regulating the content and usage of the internet (Pohle et al, p. 4). Further, this struggle or competition also affects the role of the internet in modern society. For example, how the internet is framed as a public good or an area of risk that should be under constant surveillance. As claimed by Pohle there is a profound logic of the internet and its attributes. For instance, the internet is a global network that should be open for anyone, decentralized and non-hierarchical (ibid).

In sum, fields are described as *bundles of relations* where the actors struggle over different types of capitals, such as economic, social, or cultural. This struggle or “game” which in the field is competitive and the accumulation of capital and status is always at stake. The agents who are active in the field tend to perceive the field in terms of stakes, logic, and beliefs attached to the field. According to Bourdieu, fields are relational and involves a system of relations, and are therefore not composed of one entity (Albright et al 2018, p. 42). This is what I will take with me in the method and to analyze the material.

3. Methodology

3.1. Methods and Research design

The understanding of digital diplomacy as an extension or a replacement of the traditional role moves us back to Bourdieu's idea about alteration and how a certain group or profession handles this conflict. In order to understand the mutual understanding and interconnection between diplomats, I will apply a social research design with a descriptive approach. Descriptive research is used when we want to describe individuals, groups, situations, etc. This is often referred to as "thick descriptions" of social life (Leavy 2017, p. 5). Descriptive studies give answers to questions such as how, when, whom, what, and which (Esaiasson et al 2012, p. 36). In descriptive studies, the aim is often to make phenomena or trends more visible and more comprehensible (ibid). According to Esaiasson et al. there are three expectations in order to convey complete descriptive research which I will take into consideration. The first is a classification table that explains the conceptual apparatus. Secondly, the classification table functions as a tool for drawing conclusions about the collected material. Lastly, the case study must be based on a theory working for the purpose (ibid, 36-37). The idea is to create a study that other researchers can find useful for other purposes. In this study, I have framed the research question around personal attributes and perceptions. The research question is based on how a trend or a phenomenon, in this case, digital media, affects the diplomatic profession. Related methods to this approach are often observations or interviews whereas interviews will be applied in this study. Along with the descriptive approach I will use an ethnographic approach to analyzing the material, however not the main method for this study. The ethnographical strategy is used for the understanding of lifestyle and beliefs within a society (Denscombe 2014, p. 81) According to James C Scott the purpose of using an ethnographic framework is described as:

“...most social science, it seems to me, is not permissible without ethnographic inquiry of some kind. You can't explain human behaviour behind the backs of the people who are being explained. If you want to understand why someone behaves as they do, then you need to understand the way they see the world, what they imagine they're doing, what their intentions are.” (Wedeen 2010, p. 259).

Political ethnography is often focused on power relations and how it is expressed (Gustafsson & Johannesson 2016, p. 16). The political ethnographical framework contributes to political science studies by enabling a broad analysis of matters which are often overlooked. The approach is not really a method but a contextual and more nuanced understanding of phenomena (ibid). Usually, political ethnography is measured by observations and interviews but what I am interested in is to reach diplomats' own understanding of their role which is described as an 'inside perspective' or 'sensitivity' and the aim of the study is to collect information on how the study subjects interpret his/her social and political reality. A method often used for this purpose is by conducting interviews (ibid. p. 17). Usually, the political ethnographical framework consists of both the contextual and the inside perspective and is not bound to observations only. However, the methods within this framework are rooted in political phenomena and power relations (ibid, p.19). A political ethnographic approach in order to collect the material is preferable in this particular study because the purpose is to gain insights into how digital diplomacy is received and understood by the diplomats themselves.

Technological development has become a field within ethnographic research whereas technological conditions and use of the internet affect personal attributes (Denscombe 2014, p, 82). This approach is also called the life history approach involving an in-depth study of individuals, social groups, and communities (ibid. p, 82-83) Bourdieu's framework allows for both subjectively (individual perception and objectively (social structures). For this research, I am more interested in focusing on the subject and not the object. The purpose of this study is to get a deeper understanding of the individual level. For this reason, I want to combine surveys with interviews by first capturing an overall picture of the profession in the sociological context in order to focus on the individual perception. The research design, therefore, consists of two entries: one for the survey and one for the interview. This will be discussed further below. The reason for combining surveys with in-depth interviews is to find interesting patterns in a broader context in order to focus on its scope of application. In order to answer the research question, the material will be viewed through Bourdieu's theoretical framework. Theorizing Bourdieu can be made in many sociological areas and can be useful in studying many sociological concerns. A few examples are to understand the practical logic of everyday life, power relation, and to understand a group/field's self-reflexivity (Power 1999, p. 48).

3.2. Data collection

All in all, Bourdieu's field theory is about power and status. Is digital development affecting power and status within the diplomatic core? And is the influence from social media

considered as a threat or an asset? Will digital media enhance power and status or the opposite? By using Bourdieu's structure of power including Habitus, Field, and Symbolic capital I hope to find guidance in the collected empirics whether digital diplomacy strengthens the diplomatic profession or not. This is measured by Swedish diplomats' own opinions on social media and digital diplomacy. I will only focus on Swedish diplomats and the material will be collected by performing in-depth interviews and surveys.

3.2.1 Conducting a Web-based survey

The mentioned idea of embracing alteration linkages to the statement about digital diplomacy as an extension of the profession and not as a replacement. In this case, we can value social media as an asset for the diplomatic core. If we instead focus on the replacement the survey instead shows us results whereas diplomats reject the idea of increased use of digital tools in order to handle their tasks. What should be included in the profession and what should not be included. In order to collect this material, the survey will focus on statements such as:

'I find it necessary as a diplomat to work with digital diplomacy'

'I find it necessary for diplomats to be more involved in social media (For example Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)'

In order to collect information from the survey, I have contacted Swedish embassies and consulates. In order to collect the material, I will use the Sunet Survey tool which will later be analyzed. The web-based survey is meant to function as a guide for later interviews but will also be analyzed. The aim is also to map opinions and assumptions. I do not strive towards generalization but instead aim to find trends and as a basis for the interviews. The reason for this design is to find interesting focal points which I can dig into when conducting the in-depth interviews. It is also to collect valid material for formulating relevant questions.

Since the aim is to find out whether diplomats either embrace or reject digital diplomacy, I aim to ask questions geared towards answers on how the subject finds digital involvement necessary or not. When designing questionnaires there are several things to take into consideration. A few of them, which I will explain briefly, are Feasibility, Respond rate, full information, accurate information ethical stance (Denscombe 2014, p. 169). The questionnaires will be web-based which is suitable when conducting small-scale social research (ibid, p. 178). The questions will be both open and closed. Open questions are good when the aim of the research is to get the respondents to reflect on the answers. The advantage of open questions is that they often are short but provide long answers (ibid, p.

176). One example in the survey with this particular character is 'Do you think your role as a diplomat should involve digital diplomacy?' Closed questions are often structured by yes/no answers or alternatives which the respondent can choose from (ibid). One example from the survey is 'Do you consider diplomats should have a Twitter/Instagram account? This question is scaled from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. However, I will combine some of the questions with information on why which is related to the characteristics of the open questions. Another advantage of closed questions is that they can easily be analyzed. By pre-coding, the answers of the respondent the researcher can get a quick overview of potential patterns and trends (ibid). Pre-coded questions can also be a disadvantage because they impose a particular structure on the answers. (ibid. 181). One risk with pre-code questions is that the researcher imposes a structure that can shape the thinking of the respondents. One possible challenge is whether the information given is sensitive to share. Because of this concern, I will hand out surveys whereas all participants will be presented as anonymous. My expectation is that the result of the survey will guide me when performing the interviews. The survey will be limited to Swedish diplomats and will be handed out widely in order to get a more general opinion among Swedish diplomats about digital diplomacy and social media. The collected material will be analyzed through Bourdieu's framework on power relations and social capital.

3.2.2 Case-selection and empirics

The questionnaire will be handed out to Swedish embassies and consulates worldwide. As stated before, the diplomatic profession and culture are, by previous research, heavily influenced by European traditions and ideals which is why I will only focus on diplomats within this geographical area. The selection of respondents is not randomly selected since I have chosen beforehand whom it will be sent to. However, respondents are randomly selected on an individual level and from what department they are stationed. The survey's responses will be collected until saturation in the answers are reached, i.e., until no more new information can be gathered for a qualitative study that usually happens around 10-20 answers (Esaiasson et al 2012, s.259). As already mentioned I will not generalize the results but aim to find trends and assumptions which later will guide the interviews. For this survey, I find it necessary to collect as much information as possible in order to get an idea of diplomats' own understanding of digital diplomacy and how it is received. The survey consists of nine questions with a few options where longer statements can be made. The survey will be answered anonymously but will consist of a few questions regarding occupation, age, years in service, and so on. The questions about 'age', 'years in service' and 'area of responsibility' may give us clues on how different digital platforms are perceived differently within the profession. This is important to acknowledge in order to get an idea of how well-suited social

media is in modern diplomacy; what challenges may occur and how it should be understood. It may also tell us something about how social media affects power relations and status. This is rooted in the profession's legitimacy and loyalty.

List of responded embassies and consulates for the survey:

Embassies and consulates	Area of responsibility	Respondents	Years in service, (age)
Egypt, Cairo	Trade and cultural promotion, Political affairs	1	5 (29)
Germany, Berlin	Political department Business and promotion and Politics/Economics.	2	28 (51) 3 (32)
Denmark, Copenhagen	Ambassador Administration	2	34 (61) 40 (61)
MENA region	Promotion/ Communication	1	3.5 (32)
Netherlands, Haag	Defence Head of Mission	2	32 (52) 30 (56)
Finland, Helsinki	Political department	1	30 (59)
Russia, Moscow	Administration/consular Commercial	2	39 (64) 12 (55)
Ukraine, Kyiv	Defence Consular/Admin	2	39 (59) 6 (33)
Norway, Oslo	Consular/Administration	1	33 (61)
Chile, Santiago	x	1	8 (45)
Turkey, Ankara	Political counselor	1	5 (36)
Uganda, Kampala	Political and economic affairs, communication and promotion Communication	2	15 (45) 4 (33)
Spain, Madrid	Political/Economical	1	12 (43)
Europe	x Political	2	10 (49) 20 (20)
Iran, Teheran	Deputy Head of Mission	1	20 (55)
Cambodia, Phnom Penh	Development cooperation	1	20 (70)
Embassy	Political department x x	3	10 (36) 3 (33) 17 (61)

3.2.3 Conducting descriptive interviews

Since the sociological approach will be considered when analyzing the material, I will have descriptive questions for the interviews. Previous research shows that conducting face-to-face interviews is often preferable in order to get a strong connection between the researcher and the participant (Ritchie et al 2014, p. 182). However, the evolving role of technology allows us to perform valuable interviews online. The current situation of the COVID-19 will make it difficult to conduct face-to-face interviews and, as the ethnographic method suggests, to observe people in its natural field, which is why I will arrange all interviews via Zoom. Since the goal is to collect as much and substantial information as possible, I will conduct some of my queries beforehand and send them out to interviewee before, allowing them to feel prepared and aware of the content of the research. This being said, the interview will allow follow-up questions.

How will the interview subject help answer the research question? As already mentioned I will use a survey with a broad context in order to find patterns that can guide me in conducting the in depth-interviews with a descriptive and sociological approach. In this particular case, I find it necessary, to begin with, a survey in order to gain insights that will guide me in further and more individual-based research. The question is: what does the result from the survey matter for the research question? One advantage of using interviews is the capacity to produce data that can provide depth and detail (Denscombe 2014, p. 201). Moving on to the disadvantage of interviews there is a scope of validity and reliability problems that must be considered. Data from interviews are based on what people say and not necessarily what people do. The reliability lies in the risk of data being affected by specific contexts and the case- selection. Another aspect to consider is the interview effect which describes my role as a researcher and how my indent can affect the answers given by the interviewee (ibid, p. 202).

One important aspect to raise using interviews at an individual subjective level is the discussion regarding possible validity and reliability problems. This is based on which interviewee who responds I will get different answers. My own influence as a researcher can also not be ignored. However, using only Swedish diplomats in my in-depth interview will also give an opportunity for further research in comparative studies. Some examples are by comparing democratic and non-democratic states. Could it be that different diplomatic cultures could handle the issue in different ways? Is there one diplomatic culture or several? Could the understating of digital diplomacy differ depending on a nation's degrees of digitalization? Some countries have a long history of being transparent, some countries have not and may therefore not have the same expectancy of transparency in social media as perhaps Swedish citizens do. Also, access to social media differs from country to country. As

mentioned above Sweden is an early example of using social media which also may induce some practice and perfunctory in the digital world. We can also measure degrees of democratization and how open or closed a nation tends to be in other political areas. If you have a long history of being non-transparent or dealing with negotiations under-the-counter. In the analysis, I will raise these issues and also leave some of the aspects for further research. I will mainly focus on digital media in a Swedish context. All interviews will be held in Swedish. The transcription will later be translated into English. The questions regarding differences between diplomats and strategic communication have some validity and relatively problems. Since a diplomat and a strategic communicator sometimes can be equal I have interpreted the result from those who didn't work within the communicational section. I have also tried to focus on embassies where the departments/sections were separated from one another. However, some of the results of this question show that there is sometimes a conflict between traditional diplomacy and those working with social media.

3.2.4 Case-selection and empirics

For the in-depth interviews, the main interviewee subjects will be Swedish diplomats that have been working as a diplomat for at least 10 years. Since Carl Bildt introduced Instagram and Twitter accounts into the Swedish embassies in 2013, I hope to find people working as diplomats before this organizational change. Therefore, only Swedish diplomats will be considered for the interviews. However, the country of occupation will not be bound to Sweden only. I will only interview diplomats working on, or have worked on, an embassy and not involve NGO or other diplomatic platforms. One aspect that is important to lift regarding the selection of interviewees is the hasty assumption that all diplomats have the same culture. As mentioned in the section about the traditional diplomat it is commonly understood that the diplomatic core is largely influenced by Europeans and Christian tradition, but this doesn't mean that there is one culture that influences all perceptions of the diplomatic core. The reason for choosing Sweden lay, as already mentioned, in being an early example of increased use of social media. As Carl Bildt being one of the first ministers using social media as a tool within public diplomacy makes Swedish diplomats relevant for this particular study (Bjola & Holmes 2015. p, 48). Since Sweden has a rather long tradition of embracing new technology and innovations my hope is that digital diplomacy has been part of the diplomatic core for enough time to frame an idea of how Swedish diplomats are relating to it. One risk with only focusing on Swedish diplomats, when performing the in-depth interviews, is the limited access to a perhaps broader perspective gaining only a cultural understanding within a Swedish context. As mentioned above, diplomats mimic the world. This means that it mimics itself both nationally and internationally meaning that the social structure of being Swedish can not be denied as a possible factor of how a diplomat understands themselves.

The profession can be divided both nationally and internationally. In the figure below all the interview subjects are listed whereas the interviews will be analyzed in the next section. One of the interviewees did not want to have a visual meeting because of technical issues and the meeting will instead be held via a recorded phone call. For my purposes, a visual interview is not necessary. Audio recording will provide enough data; however, visual clues may get lost. When suggesting recorded audio there is always a risk that the respondent will refrain from being recorded. If this situation occurs the researcher must rely on notes and be aware of the larger risk in too much interpretation of the interview (Denscome 2014, p. 197). The case selection contains six interview respondents of both male and female diplomats working in different departments. Two of the interview subjects work at the press and communication department which have a direct connection in daily use of social media. This is of course an asset in order to analyze how social media is perceived. However, in order to provide a range among diplomats, I have tried to vary the interview subject into different departments where the daily consumption and use of social media may vary. The idea of focusing on the "area of responsibility" lies in the possibility of different experiences and understandings of social media. The understanding of increased access to social media between someone who operates it daily for promotional use may differ for someone working with defense or consular tasks. This is a focal point in which I will investigate while analyzing the material. Is social media as prioritized as other working tasks? This may give us an idea of how social media is perceived among Swedish diplomats but also how it is valued within the diplomatic core. Since many of my questions involve strategic communication within the diplomatic profession, I also found it necessary to investigate deeper into this aspect. Therefore, I arranged one more interview. This was held with a Communications Officer who is working as a strategic communicator at the Swedish embassy in Washington DC. In the method, I suggested only interviewing people with a diplomatic background but in this case, I made an exception in order to get a broader view of digital diplomacy. Not only diplomats are involved in digital diplomacy, therefore I wanted to add this perspective as well.

List of Interview subjects:

Name, nationality	Area of responsibility	Occupational	Years in service	Date and platform for interview
Diplomat A Swe	Social media	Skopje, North Macedonia	4-5	Whatsapp, recording 9.30-10.30 8/4
Communications Officer Swe	Press and social media, Local employed.	Washington DC, USA	15	Zoom, recording 2-3 pm (local time) 19/4
Diplomat B Swe	Social media	UD-KOM Stockholm, Sweden	15	Skype, recording 1-2 pm, 15/4
Diplomat C Swe	Responsible for political reports and in charge of the section for trade, culture and communication.	Rome, Italy	14	Zoom, recording 9.30-10.00 am, 20/4
Diplomat D Swe	Defence Attaché	Haag, Netherlands	4	Phone call, recording 2-3 pm, 16/4
Diplomat E Swe	EU-affairs and trade promotion	Haag, Netherlands	14	Skype, recording 1-2pm, 21/4.

3.3 Operationalization for analyzing the material

To operationalize the work of Bourdieu there are a few key concepts to acknowledge. Symbolic capital, Habitus, and Field. By investigating patterns and symbols within the profession my hope is to find interesting aspects that affect a possible conflict or compromise.

In the scheme below I have tried to map what questions I will ask when reading the material and how they are connected to Bourdieu's key concepts. There are three columns in the scheme. The first column represents the key concepts. The second represents a short summary of what is included in these concepts. The explanation of the terms is only meant to function as an overview and is explained in more detail under the headline "Theoretical Framework" (2.3). The last column represents the questions that can be translated into the "real" world, in this case, the diplomat's role in the digital world. The point of the questions is to collect material for the analysis. The questions of the survey will be shown later in the analysis. In the collected material I have let the analytical questions below guide me together with Bourdieu's key concepts. The questions I ask in the survey are linked to the analytical questions, which are also followed up in the in-depth interviews I conducted with six individual diplomats. The operationalization of the interviews will be based on the same themes as from the survey. The questions asked in the survey are based on the analytical

scheme below with one exception. However, I have deliberately opted out of the economic perspective as an individual questionnaire in the survey because I do not find it relevant for this research. I consider the question of financial resources for the diplomatic corps to be subordinate when it comes to social media. Indirectly, however, this perspective is included. The open-ended questions provide space for answers that deal with how much time the diplomats should / must spend on social media. Time can be considered a resource in the same way as finances or property.

Table 1: Analytical scheme

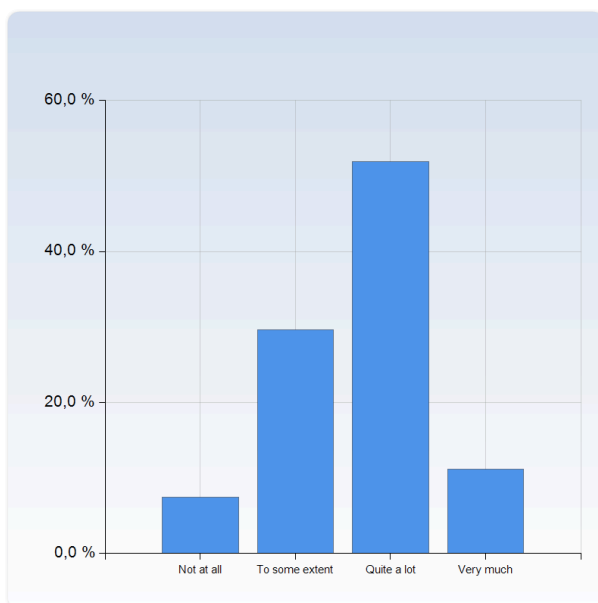
Term from Bourdieu	Definition	Analytical questions
Symbolic Capital	Social: Network, social relations. Economic: Money, material. Cultural : Knowledge and Education.	What social, economic and cultural resources are perceived by respondents? How/in what way is social media/strategic communication perceived or not perceived as a resource by the respondents?
Habitus	The recognition of the field which is unawarely reproduced by the group/field. This is translated as the identity of the diplomatic core	How do the respondents perceive the diplomatic identity? How do the respondents perceive the strategic communication identity? How is the respondents perception of the diplomatic identity affected by social media/strategic communication?
Field/Doxa	The field in this study is translated to the diplomatic profession. Include the object's position and the field's historical context. Includes key concepts such as: Field of struggle, Stakes which are at stake and what is taken for granted (Doxa).	How is the diplomatic profession perceived by the respondents? How is the strategic communication profession perceived by the respondents? How is the respondents perception of the diplomatic profession affected by social media/strategic communication?

4. Presentation of results

4.1 Results from the survey

First of all, I will analyze the material collected from the questionnaires. 26 Swedish diplomats responded to the survey from 16 different consulates and embassies. They had two weeks to respond and all questions in the survey were voluntarily answered. I chose to make the survey anonymous since the nature of the material might be sensitive, thus leading to the respondent not answering at all. The analysis was based on Swedish consulates and embassies worldwide. I will go through the results from the survey, then I will analyze the interviews. Each survey question had a section where the respondents could write a few sentences about their reflections which will also be included in this account. I will start this part by looking deeper into the written answers I received from the respondents. In the following section, I will compare them with the theoretical framework. The first question in the survey was:

- How would you say your role as a diplomat has changed as digital media has increased in daily working duties?

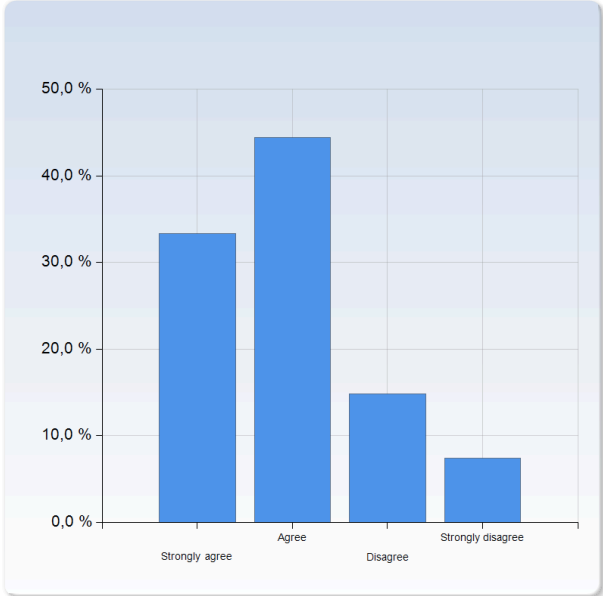


For this part of the survey, many diplomats shared the view of a significant change in how digital media has influenced the profession. This was understood similarly both for people

who had/have been working for over 30 years and for those recently starting their career. Only one person (representing 3.8 percent) claimed that digital media had not affected their daily working duties. 30.8 % answered 'To some extent' and 53.8 percent answered 'Quite a lot'. Lastly, 11.5 percent answered 'Very much'. The respondent rate of these questions was 26 diplomats from different departments. The respondent who answered 'Not at all' didn't work with social media directly, which can be one possible explanation of their understanding of the digital world. The results of the diagram were also supported by the open question which was attached to the first question of the survey. Several of the respondents admittedly pointed out that social media was a valuable tool but also that it is time-consuming. For instance, one respondent of the survey described social media in the following way:

‘News flow is much faster, I always need to check Twitter, etc. Also every project/event we do need to be worked out for social media as well’

- I find it necessary for diplomats to be more involved in social media (For example Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)



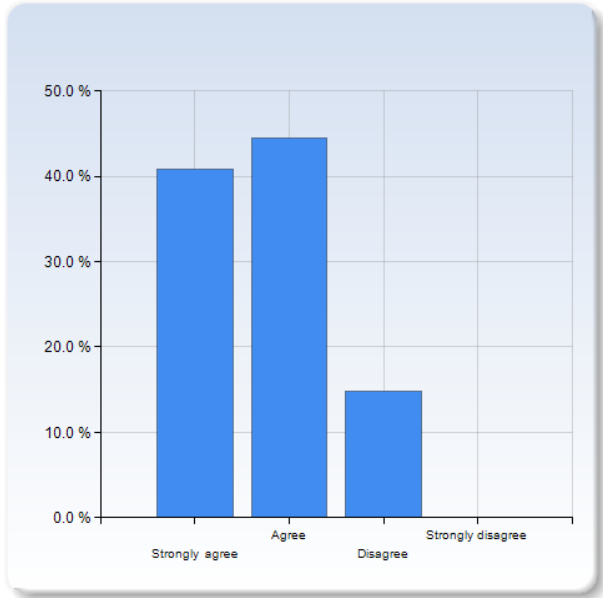
The results in this part of the survey were varying, from agreement to disagreement. Many, particularly those who did not work with digital media on a daily basis, didn't agree that diplomats should be more involved in social media. If we interpret the result from those who didn't think that social media should be extended in the profession we can assume that social media is not yet fully embraced by all diplomats, or fully understood. Further, we can analyze this in the framework of Habitus. This result shows that there may be a conflict and/or compromise in what should be involved and what should not be involved in the profession. The diplomats who didn't find it necessary were a minority and because of the low response rate, we can't really make any conclusions regarding this table. However, a majority of the

respondents did find the increased use of social media useful for the diplomatic profession. Two of the diplomats described in the following way:

“It is an excellent way to improve the image of Sweden abroad and to promote Swedish values, ideas, businesses and solutions. It is also a way of showing the public what the Embassy is doing - and to provide information about the Embassy's services to Swedish citizens ”

“Much of the commentary, news, opinions, etc are being debated on Twitter. Need to follow it to understand political developments.”

- I think that digital diplomacy is necessary for the diplomatic profession



When analyzing the diagram we see a similar response as the above results. A majority of the diplomats who answered this question accepted the importance of digital diplomacy and saw it as inevitable in today's society. Some of the comments from the open question stated that digital technology can't be overlooked since other parts of society are relying so heavily on it. Another described it as following:

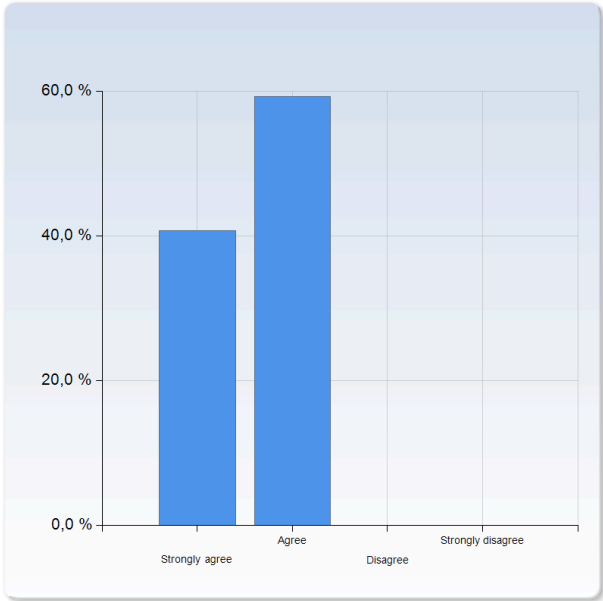
“It is a part of our outreach, and it is necessary for embassies to be present in this arena, even if challenging from a political point of view. Foreign missions have to be present on digital platforms for promotion reasons”

One aspect that was claimed by many was the possibility of reaching out with important to a much broader audience. However, some of the respondents showed some concern regarding

digital diplomacy. One of them pointed out that it is sometimes too easy to keep in touch with the public, and that it thus might happen too quickly. Another respondent was concerned about the risk of sharing sensitive information. This was described in the following way:

“It’s not 100% necessary, but it can be a compliment for the profession. Some topics though, are a bit sensitive to be posted on social media. Everything is going digital. Diplomacy has to be there too”

-I think social media is an asset for the diplomatic profession



The answers to this question made it very clear that all of the respondents saw social media as an asset for the diplomatic profession. In the open question section, some of the respondents found it as a tool to shape opinions that can be shared with both governments and non-government entities. One of the respondents stated that it gives opportunities to reach out to a broader audience and that it is possible to do so at any time.

-What challenges have you experienced in the increased use of digital diplomacy? Please write a few sentences about your experience.

This question was an open question with no given alternatives. A majority of the diplomats found it challenging to be relevant and to stay updated. Time consumption was mentioned by several, also dealing with the high speed of the information flow. “Speed is a challenge. Also being brief and straightforward on social media. Very often digital diplomacy does not allow enough nuances. And diplomacy needs nuances”. This is interesting since it presupposes social media as something limiting for diplomats to achieve their full potential. This opinion collides with the assumption of social media as a compliment and extension of the diplomatic

profession. Some of the statement regarding the time consumption was described in the following way:

“Due to the fact that a diplomat has many different work tasks in an Embassy, it is difficult to find the time to keep up a pace in posting and responding to comments etc. - in order to maintain the level of communication that you want to. Suddenly, you may have to focus on different work tasks for a period of time, leading to less effort spent on digital diplomacy. Inactiveness on social media may cause a decrease in reach-out and number of followers, which is difficult to regain.”

“Finding the time to adapt to new media and going through all the information out there”

“Earlier my job was very much searching for useful information. Today it is more about corroboration of the amount of information at hand”

Another concern that was lifted was the difficulty in not being able to share material that is confidential which is, as claimed by the respondent, often the most interesting. One described social media as "a lot of fluff with little content". If we look deeper into these answers, many stated that digital diplomacy is time-consuming. Since this can be interpreted as a necessary challenge for the profession and as something not as prioritized as the rest of the task I chose to focus on this in the in-depth interview. If we look at the analytical schema above (figure 1) this fits into the question of whether social media should be involved in the profession or not. As the result of the questionnaire shows, 7.4 percent (representing two diplomats) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that diplomats should be more involved in social media. Another four of the respondents (14.8 percent) answered that they disagreed with the same question.

- Please rank (1=Most relevant,..7=Less relevant) the following departments in order of relevancy for the diplomatic profession

“Consular affairs is the most important issue, as the people needing these services are our employers, i.e. the Swedish taxpayers. According to my personal opinion, I would say that investment and trade comes next for a similar reason: Swedish companies create jobs and pay taxes and are hence also our employers. Of course, apart from the consular section (always being the most important), the other sections may vary in relevance depending on where the Embassy/Consulate is located. My ranking is based on my perception of my current position.”

Many of the responders didn't want to answer this question since they valued all areas as important for the diplomatic profession. However, for those who did answer, many agreed on

the Consular affair being the one most associated with the diplomatic profession. This field doesn't use social media in the same way as someone at the cultural or press section would and most information is confidential. One revolutionary opportunity mentioned by Tom Fletcher is access to information when, for instance, people abroad need consular assistance. One thing mentioned in his book is when catastrophes occur (Fletcher 2016, p. 82) Then digital platforms can be vital in order to receive fast information from the countries affected. When an earthquake strikes, people who survive can easily update on social media about their current positions and current state. This is an asset for everyone involved but also an asset for the diplomats to take action quickly. This can be interpreted as symbolic capital where digital media is an asset and alters the status and legitimacy of the profession.

- Do you experience a conflict between your role as a diplomat and diplomats/local staff working with strategic communication?

“A lot of what we do is sensitive and can't be broadcasted, and also misinterpreted in the fast world of social media”

This can be interpreted as mentioned earlier as all information can't go public. Some information is more suitable for the public to share and some information must continue being confidential to the public. For instance, Tom Fletcher writes in his book about Wikileaks, and the sensibility of sharing too much information on non-trustful digital platforms (Fletcher 2016, p. 121). It is of course not only fear of information leaking out where this is an issue. To contain confidential information is necessary to perform "good diplomacy". Some issues must be confidential for security reasons. In conclusion, many of the diplomats in this survey showed a rather positive attitude towards social media and other digital platforms that are used within the profession, but also the risk that may follow. One suggestion, which is not part of this survey, is to add LinkedIn to the questionnaire. This platform was used by many diplomats and would be interesting to analyze further.

4.1 Result from in-depth interviews

How is the traditional role of the diplomat affected by social and digital media and how is this development perceived by Swedish diplomats? This is what the research question suggested and which has been reflected in this thesis. I have interviewed six diplomats with different experiences and different areas of responsibility. The interviews have been structured to the extent that the questions followed the questionnaire responses but also by following Bourdieu's field theory in terms of questions and perspectives. Some of the questions from the

survey were sent out to the interview subjects beforehand. The results of the interviews showed similar reflections on digital diplomacy as in the results from the survey. I will first go through the individual answers to these questions followed by a section where I discuss them in the context of Bourdieu's key concepts within field theory. We have seen that the diplomatic role has gone from its traditional role which has been more "closed" into the digital which is more "open" and transparent. The idea of operating in the shadow of foreign policies has changed, making diplomats more public.

-How would you say your role as a diplomat has changed as digital media has increased in daily working duties?

One thing mentioned by Diplomat A who is working with social media on a daily basis was the increased opportunity of working with humor and to reach out to more people of all ages. However, working with humor was also experienced as something challenging and something that often is discussed whether it should be included or not. When asking him about how social media has been adopted within the diplomatic core he explained that the attitude in embracing or rejecting digital media as a tool for diplomacy sometimes could be generational. One important aspect regarding this interview, which was also mentioned by the other interviewees was Carl Bildt. He claims that Bildt's legacy has been very influential in how Swedish diplomats view today's public diplomacy. He had only been working as a diplomat after this particular change in Swedish diplomacy and could therefore not compare or experience a major change in how digital diplomacy changed his working duties at an individual level.

Diplomat E who is working with EU affairs and trade promotion also acknowledged this change. She says:

"...I think there may have been opposition in the beginning and perhaps there still is but I think that many experienced comforts in that the directive was coming from above. It was the foreign minister who gave directives and it can not be more clear than that. It was important for him to open up and I also think it is very important to do so". (Diplomat E, 21 April 2021).

In the interview, Diplomat E repeated the importance of the directive coming from above and not below or from her as a Press Secretary which was her working area at the time. This gave social media cogency and incitement to use among diplomats. Diplomat D who is a Defence Attaché at the Swedish embassy in Haag doesn't have the same connection to digital media as the other being interviewed. The reason for this is that most of the information he works with is confidential. As a Defence Attaché, he claims that not all information is well suited for going public where there is more sensibility and risks involved in his working tasks. In his

work, he thinks timing when to publish something online is very important. The abundance of sensitive information can sometimes make it challenging to adapt to the digital world (Diplomat D, 16 April 2021). However, he did not reject the use of digital media in the diplomatic profession, actually the opposite. He did find social media and digital platforms highly necessary for modern diplomacy in general terms.

Diplomat B who is working at UD-KOM which is the communication department of the Foreign Ministry in Sweden has experienced many changes during his time as a diplomat. For instance about how they communicate. He says:

“...It is a new way of thinking and a new way of working. We are not used to communicating in this way. For instance, social media is very much about communicating via an emotional angle, it has to be shocking or contribute to anger or joy. Some kind of feeling to it. Traditionally, we have worked with rather formal communication” (Diplomat B, 15 April 2021).

-What challenges have you experienced in the increased use of digital diplomacy?

Several of the respondents acknowledged the challenge of adapting to the set-up rules in the digital world. Many also alluded to the differences in size and capacity between the embassies, and also the time required for digital diplomacy. For instance, Diplomat B described the organizational change in the following way:

“...It is about adapting to what is new and that has certainly been a challenge for many. When I first started working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs we did not have social media and most events were held physically. Today you always need to consider if a meeting or an event can be held digitally. So it has become a completely different way of working. The organization of the work is one thing, but also the new way of communication which is quite foreign comparing to the traditional way” (Diplomat B, 15 April 2021).

Diplomat A claims that it sometimes could be time-consuming and difficult to be updated in the high-speed digital world which was also the opinion of many other diplomats who responded to the survey. Another thing that is considered a challenge is the rule and functions of the digital platforms. For instance, Diplomat B mentions the dilemma of reaching out. He says:

“...Because of changes in algorithms and oligopolistic competition, it is harder for us to reach out. These companies want us to put in money in the company making it harder for an organic

reach. Even though we create good content it is harder to reach out” (Diplomat B, 15 April 2021).

Diplomat A also mentions the difficulty of algorithms and says that algorithms control what is popular and not the latest in the profile (Diplomat A, 8 April 2021). Diplomat B claims that the change of algorithms makes it more difficult for diplomats to reach out in the digital world. He claims that the companies are not always in favor of authorities and affect the content making it more difficult to bring forth an organic reach (Diplomat B, 15 April 2021). As we have seen this changes the field whether it is intentionally or not. As claimed by the medium theory, communication can never be neutral. Social media is a tool in high-speed and diplomats needs to to get through the media buzz and stay updated. This was describes as something time-consuming and overwhelming for many of the the interviewee.

What challenges have you experienced in how digital diplomacy is used between strategic communicators and other diplomatic tasks?

This question was asked to answer my analytical question about how strategic communication is perceived by the respondents. Also, how the respondents' perception of the diplomatic profession is affected by social media and strategic communication.

"...Half of the colleagues at the communication department have a background within communication, the other half has a diplomatic background as myself. I think when these two backgrounds collide the best solutions occur. We as diplomats don't have the same experience as someone with a communicational background but we have the sure instinct about sensibility and to draw lines that someone with another background doesn't have in the same way. The meeting, where we work together, gives the best results." (Diplomat B, 15 April 2021).

Asking Diplomat D about a possible conflict between traditional diplomacy and strategic communication showed some concern about sometimes feeling pressured in updating events frequently. He did state the importance of social media, however, compared to other issues it was not always prioritized, especially not in smaller embassies where there is no communication department. Smaller embassies don't always have time or capacity to focus on social media. One example pointed out as a challenge is when someone who does not have the same education as a diplomat publishes pictures on social media that are not appropriate or have not been fully scanned before publication. In these cases, the cooperation between traditional diplomats and communicators becomes very important to maintain secret information. He also stated that digital diplomacy is under development and the digitalization of the profession is not yet established into its full potential. Many areas can work more

effectively and they always need to adapt to new areas. This can sometimes be time-consuming which is why they often divide the task and hire experts who are in charge of social media. Since they don't have the same diplomatic background they cooperate in many areas.

According to above statements, people with different backgrounds are embraced within the Swedish diplomatic core and work as a valuable complement for the diplomatic profession. The knowledge of communication is necessary for diplomats to adapt to the digital world. Diplomats need to embrace certain knowledge to feel relevant for the global platform. As mentioned by Diplomat B, diplomats are not experts in communication and must therefore involve expertise from others. One thing that is mentioned by the Communication Officer in Washington DC is that communication today permeates all parts of diplomacy, not just those who have communication as their primary area. Everyone should adopt a communicative approach. Despite this new way of working, traditional diplomacy continues. Digital diplomacy acts more like an extended arm to strengthen the work of diplomats. It is intended to reinforce, emphasize and clarify the diplomatic work carried out. She does not see it as a replacement but as a supplement for the diplomats to fulfil their duties (Communication Officer, 19 April 2021).

-Do you think social media is an asset in performing diplomacy? Why? Why not?

This question was asked to examine what capital might be at stake and how social media is perceived within the diplomatic corps. The interview with Diplomat A showed mostly a positive view on social media. He claims that there are endless capabilities for the diplomatic profession and that the potential grows even stronger. He describes it as: "...social media is an outreach to the public and an asset for democratizing the diplomatic profession" (Diplomat A, 8 April 2021). Further, he did not experience that the increased media within the diplomatic profession was something negative in general but as an asset to find new ways in communicating. As mentioned, he describes social media as a democratization of the profession which can be interpreted in how the understanding of the profession has changed and what path it follows. Another thing learned from the interview was the increased opportunities in aid and assisting internationally. One recent example is the use of social media during the COVID-19 pandemic. Updated information about the pandemic and assisting Swedish citizens abroad have proven social media as an important tool in crisis management. Another thing mentioned in the interview is the opportunity to share information between other embassies or counter partners. This was experienced as an asset in order to gain more experience and make diplomacy more effective. By using social media the diplomatic profession extends into many new areas and has the availability to learn from other

counterparts. Interpreting this argument, social media benefits diplomatic status by gaining more influence worldwide.

All departments use social media in different ways and as Diplomat A says: "the biggest challenge is not disinformation but the information itself" (Diplomat A 8 April 2021). He also claims that local staff is an asset for communication since they contribute with the cultural perspective and more detailed information about the area. Information that would get lost otherwise. If we go back to the symbolic capital we can, in analyzing this interview conclude that social media is an asset for the diplomatic profession. The gained knowledge from local staff and cooperation between other embassies is seen as something valuable for the diplomatic service. The following aspects contribute to many challenges but were not stated as a threat. Diplomat B works with digital diplomacy daily and finds many aspects of the digital world necessary. For example, as also claimed by Diplomat A, digital diplomacy has been an important tool in assisting Swedish citizens during the pandemic. Concerning the pandemic, Swedish diplomats have been working actively on providing information regarding wearing masks and more recently, information about vaccination. He also explains that Sweden's ambition is to be a world leader in the field of digital diplomacy. The reason for this is to be able to influence political issues about for example, feminist and environmental policies (Diplomat B, 15 April 2021). The attitude of social media within the foreign ministry in Sweden is, according to Diplomat B, open-minded and is seen as a tool for gaining more influence. The opportunities are many and the effort of discovering digital media's full potential is explored. Diplomat E agrees:

"I think it is really important for us to be a leading example...In my new position that I will start this summer, it will be about communicating with the EU. This is about making Swedish people more interested, more knowledgeable, and more inserted in Swedish European policies and European knowledge in general. To make complex issues more understandable and easily understandable. Without this, we end up with a population who doesn't see any value in Brussel" (Diplomat E, 21 April 2021).

There are two things to mention regarding these statements. The first is that she mentions knowledge and the second is to gain legitimacy and status of the field itself. She means that the use of social media can be beneficial in order to bury knowledge dictated by prejudices. She also says that skilled diplomatic communication can inform, gain people's interest, attract and defuse the idea of being a diplomat. She claims that there is sometimes a malicious portrayal of an official from the foreign ministry which can disappear by increased knowledge and also show the important messages that Sweden stands for" (Diplomat E, 21 April 2021).

The Communication Officer calls attention to monitoring as an important tool for being updated on what is said and written about Sweden abroad. If incorrect information is disseminated, it can be refuted and corrected. This part of the work provides insight of the Swedish image abroad and can help diplomats set the agenda for what information is to be communicated (Communication Officer, 19 April 2021). If we look at a recent example of a culture that can appear within a field this is one example of this. There is a general assumption of the diplomatic core which collides with the "real" identity which social media can help to acknowledge. This also acknowledges the idea of a clear culture within the diplomatic core that is often taken for granted. Another asset that is brought up is the access to receive fast information. In the interview with Diplomat E, the natural disaster in Thailand in 2004 is one clear example of when digital diplomacy should have been more used within the diplomatic core. The lack of information contributed to slow management and also raised criticism directed to the Foreign Ministry (Diplomat E, 21 April 2021).

The Swedish embassy in Italy is working actively with LinkedIn. This is, according to Diplomat C, a good tool to reach, for instance, companies and other partners worldwide. This platform is used strategically and gives valuable access to promotion and to spread Swedish values or expertise. Diplomat C also raises that there is more potential to explore how they can work as strategic with Twitter (Diplomat C, 20 April 2021)

“... On the one hand, we must see what is happening so that we can deal with it if there are serious errors. Sometimes it can be best to just leave things so that it does not give even more attention. But there are also examples of where you need to go out, respond and provide correct information” (Diplomat C, 20 April 2021).

According to Diplomat C external monitoring is a valuable tool in order to intercept disinformation and a false image of Sweden. This tool can help to avoid disinformation getting spread and to consolidate. She describes it in the following way:

"...I only see positive things about digital diplomacy, if people can get a better insight into what diplomats do. It is up to us to use the channels in a good way. It is very popular to show the embassy's inner world and so on. It is really popular on all channels. We probably just have to gain more transparency. But then you should also take responsibility and highlight a plan, and think through what it is you want to show. If you make it interesting and good, you will hopefully get attention for it and then the space for negative attention is reduced simply if you are convinced and have support and are also looking for partners. So I also think you get a big positive impact." (Diplomat C, 20 April 2021)

Do you think that the traditional idea of diplomacy and the modern idea of the more public modern diplomacy can collide? What risk do you experience today?

Only a few of the diplomats expressed a collision, on the contrary, they pointed out the benefits of being more transparent. However, they all raised a note of caution. One clear example is from the Defence Attaché who needs to be very careful in assessing what information that should be public and not. However, both Diplomat E and Diplomat D think that this development has led them to become more aware and more careful of what information is being published. One clear example is from the Defence Attaché who needs to be very careful in assessing what information that should be public and not. However, both Diplomat E and Diplomat D think that this development has led them to become more aware and more careful of what information is being published.

"...I defiantly think there is opposition to some degree as you learn as a diplomat to be careful in sharing too much information...the precautionary principle is important and all of a sudden we changed into more personal communication...I think many became frightened in the beginning. But we must understand what tool it is and what it can be." (Diplomat E, 21 April 2021).

5. Analyzing the results

5.1 Symbolic Capital: What resources and assets are there?

In this part, I will analyze the interviews through answers that can fit into Bourdieu's definition of symbolic capital. As we already have stated, capital can be divided into different categories. However, overall, it is about status as symbolic capital. The analytical questions for this concept were to find out what social, economic, and cultural resources that are perceived by respondents and how social media is perceived as a resource by the respondents. As resources and recognition can be seen as a measure of power (Broady 1991 p. 123). In this sense, social media is beneficial for the diplomatic core since they get more recognized in the public sphere.

If we look at Bourdieu's definition of symbolic capital and social media as an asset for diplomats this gives us proof that, in this case, Carl Bildt was highly symbolic in how it was legitimated within the profession. Carl Bildt's position as a foreign minister was significant to give social media validity. As Bourdieu would argue, an asset to gain more status. All diplomats in the survey testified that digital media has become an increasingly important tool that strengthens their role as diplomats rather than erodes it. This is also clearly evident through quotes that highlight collaborations with strategic communicators to strengthen them in the diplomatic role.

“...I think when these two backgrounds collide the best solutions occur.”
(Diplomat B, 15 April 2021).

A threat is not experienced by the interviewed diplomats, rather the opposite. Several of the diplomats also say that the new way of working also provides increased knowledge, which in turn is used to strengthen both the professional role and the communication with the citizens. Several examples are mentioned, in particular when it comes to crises and disasters. An example mentioned by several of those interviewed is how the various digital platforms functioned as aids during the current corona pandemic.

Further Diplomat E pinpointed that this was embraced differently and with skepticism in the beginning but got more and more accepted over time.

The concept of time consumption moves us to the problem discussed earlier smaller embassies not being able to prioritize social media in its full potential. This also moves us into the discussion of economical capital whereas material access fits into this description. As mentioned earlier companies can influence the microcosm by either lower or higher precision whereas the field must adapt to the new playing ground (Bourdieu 1998, p. 40). Some of those I interviewed mentioned this particular aspect. The differences between embassies are obvious simply because a large embassy has more employees required which in turn means that the new tasks fall harder on those who do not have special departments for communication. Here, too, the time required for the news media's greater needs means that they do not embrace it as much as at the larger embassies.

5.2 Field: What should and should not be included?

The statements about how the diplomatic profession is experienced today can be analyzed through Bourdieu's eyes on the field of struggle, stakes which are at stake, and what is taken for granted. As the definition tells us a group or field can experience a struggle in what it should be and what it should not be. This is one example where social media has affected the diplomatic core. The analytical question was to study how the respondents' perception of the diplomatic profession was affected by social media/strategic communication. Many of the Swedish diplomats in the survey and interviews agree on social media as an asset however to what degree is unclear. As Diplomat E mentions an embassy needs to be allowed to draw the line for how much time they can spend on social media and how many platforms they should use. In Sweden, this is comparing to many other countries that are more liberal and there is a lot of freedom in how to use social media. As mentioned above in field theory the structure of the field is reproduced and shapes its power dynamics. It is also described as access to resources and as argued by Jenkins 'stakes which are at stake' (Jenkins 1992, p. 85). This is further described as intellectual distinction.

So how can we interpret the results into this definition? As many of the respondents did not think that social media was a threat to the diplomatic core, we can instead understand social media as an asset for diplomatic legitimacy. Many agreed on social media to take part in the profession but with prudence. However, if we move on to the concept of *Doxa* and what is taken for granted is how these tools affect the structure without diplomats' control. The competition in reaching out to the global public becomes harder whereas the content of information sometimes needs to adapt to be relevant for the global web.

The field is described as where actors are operating. Today diplomats have adapted a two-way dialog with citizens creating a new field between the private and the public. With an increased citizen dialog and more cooperation between other fields, digital diplomacy expands this field. Diplomat A also points out the increased democratization, transparency, and openness within the diplomatic corps. All this points to a constantly expanding field where perhaps also the boundaries of what belongs to the diplomat's duties are both widened and become more blurred on the margins.

5.3 Habitus: How is identity affected by social media?

In this section, we explore the identity of the Swedish diplomats and how it is affected by social media. In the analytical scheme Habitus is described as the recognition of the field which is unconsciously reproduced by the group/field. Habitus is how the individual experiences or perceives a field, consciously or unconsciously. This is understood as to how diplomats experiences their role within this particular field. The analytical questions that have guided the material were: *How do the respondents perceive the diplomatic identity?* As argued in the field section above the diplomats have become more personal and transparent both professionally and privately. As Diplomat A claimed there has been a democratization of the profession. And as claimed by Diplomat E, the prejudice of diplomats as a professional living in glamour has changed. If we move back to legitimacy many of the respondents agreed on social media as increasing loyalty towards the profession. As increased use of media local staff has been a key player in communicational tasks. Today there is more cooperation between organizations and other professions. As we have seen, diplomats can also be titled strategic communicators and many embassies have their communication department. In a world where access to information is only increasing the role of digital tools within the diplomatic core is becoming more important than before. As Diplomat E claims it is also important to sometimes draw a line of how many digital platforms an embassy should use.

As mentioned by Diplomat B diplomats are traditionally not experts in digital communication which is why local staff and other backgrounds are important to fulfill the diplomatic tasks. However, it becomes more and more integrated with the profession even for those with a diplomatic background. What does this do to the identity? Modern diplomats move further apart from the traditional idea of the diplomatic service. Today they are more involved in digital diplomacy and citizen dialogs. This, based on the interviews for this survey, is not rejected by Swedish diplomats. Based on the result of both the survey and descriptive interview the identity of being more transparent and personal is embraced by many Swedish diplomats. This new approach also legitimizes the profession according to the respondents of

this research. Social media can strengthen the diplomatic role by giving the public a more profound picture. The transparency makes the profession more visible which affects the diplomatic image both for the public eye but also, as we have seen for the diplomat herself.

As claimed by Diplomat A, diplomats' are not always experts in digital media which is why local staff who has the other background are important in modern diplomacy (Diplomat A, 8 April 2021) He didn't find this adaption as a threat but instead as an asset and complement to reach out diplomatic issues. Looking back on Bourdieu's definition of symbolic capital the respondent valued digital platforms and the expertise of strategic communicators as an asset for modern diplomacy. With more people working with diplomacy with no diplomatic background may not affect the status directly, and is not experienced as it either, but it blurs the boundaries of who can title themselves to be called a diplomat and not.

Another aspect in this area is how diplomats communicate in the digital world. Several of the interviewees pointed out that social media has influenced the traditional way of communicating. From a formal language to a more informal language, which today is often loaded with humor, emotions, and pre-coded formulations. Whether this can collide with traditional values within the diplomatic corps will be left open. Several of the interviewees have also commented that they are constantly learning about the new media and the new conditions.

6. Discussion

In this section, I will analyze the result from above and discuss how we can understand it using field theory. How can we interpret these results from the analysis? If we start with the symbolic capital the result from the survey shows that social media is understood as an asset for the diplomatic profession. Many of the respondents agreed on social media as being a tool for reaching out to more people.

Does the perception differ between diplomats based on what department/area of responsibility they have? In the interviews, I have mostly interviewed diplomats that were involved in social media but also diplomats who worked in other departments. One difficulty in this selection is that not all embassies were divided into different departments. Larger embassies may have political, consular, trade, culture, press and defense sections whereas some embassies have only one section focusing on all areas. Because of this matter, I have tried to interview people working in the embassy whereas the departments are more separated from each other. The point of this is to get an assumption on how diplomats understand themselves and their different roles. Also, how they understand digital media in maybe different ways. As the survey showcases, involvement in digital diplomacy differs depending on what department is working on. As learned from the interviews there is a will among authorities to keep up. This may sometimes affect the quality. It is not just about whether we should or not, we also must ask what it gives and at what (Diplomat E, 21 April 2021). Thoughtfulness has become more important and to be updated in the digital world.

As mentioned above Tom Fletcher argues that all citizens can become a diplomat these days (Fletcher 2016, p. 266). This is in line with how journalism and communications sometimes are seen as well. Many of the interviewed diplomats were optimistic about the way digital diplomacy can be used. Some of them were concerned about the many challenges that will follow but the potential threat was not mentioned by any. How can we interpret these results? Does this mean there is no conflict? Not necessarily. Many of the answers showed that several of those who embraced social media also had some concern about its risk of being time-consuming. There were also significant differences between diplomats in how much time they spent on social media and not. The time required for social media is interesting because there are clear directives on how social media should be used, but not as clear directives on how much time should be spent. Another factor is how social media should be used. The answers

indicate a certain amount of uncertainty, even though a lot of information is available. Someone pointed out that the light-hearted tone used in social media is facing a greater contrast to the traditionally more formal role of a diplomat. This indicates some uncertainty about how the new way of working will be incorporated into diplomatic work. The question of how social media can affect the legitimacy of the diplomatic profession can also be discerned to a certain extent. Social media is not perceived as a threat, but on the other hand, one must learn the rules of the new media. Ultimately, it is about strengthening one's professional role, or as Fletcher puts it. To use the tools to strengthen their capital. Typically, several were skeptical at the start but learned more during the game. The boundaries of what is to become public are constantly shifting, but the response to the interview also shows that there is a boundary and thus also an embrace of social media and a certain concern for how far openness can go. At a time when "everyone can become a diplomat online", it is also about safeguarding one's professional role. This may explain the skepticism that can be felt behind many interview answers but also shows how the Swedish diplomatic corps realized the potential of the new tools at an early stage.

In what way do the Swedish diplomats' attitude to the new tools and the changed reality that they entail differ from other professional roles. Pierre Bourdieu has focused on studies of journalism, but the similarities with the diplomatic corps are obvious. The field is constantly changing and as Bourdieu describes, the player changes the field constantly as well as they are bound to what is possible and not. As we have stated before Bourdieu also acknowledges the autonomy of a field. According to his theories, external influences are translated into the field's internal understanding of it, and also, the more autonomous the field is the less influence of external powers. As already mentioned he means that autonomy is reflected in the "*field's ability to legitimize existing social relations within itself through a defence of its doxa, reason, and value for the field's existence*" (Albright et al 2018, p. 5). The diplomatic corps has always been dependent on political decisions. Traditionally, they have been a closed circle that today has become more open through, among other things, two-way communication. If it makes the field less autonomous, I leave it unsaid. But since diplomats are always dependent on adaptation and on the political decisions that are made, it is difficult to claim that it is a stable autonomous field.

According to this argument, a profession is always able to adapt and to change but always in line with the setup rules. However, as pointed out by Bourdieu there is the concept of 'field of struggle' which is explained as "in which agents' strategies are concerned with the preservation of improvement of their positions with respect to the defining capital of the field" (Jenkins 1992, p. 85).

5. Conclusions

As the research question suggests, the aim with this research has been to show how the traditional role of the diplomat has been affected by social media and how this particular development is perceived by the diplomats themselves. By using the eyes of Bourdieu and his analytical framework of Field Theory I found many interesting conclusions. The point of using Field Theory was to find out how a group, in this case, diplomats becomes challenged on its symbolic capital and introduced to adapt new tools to embrace within the core. This new *tool* has been studied through the increased use of social media. The traditional symbolic capital of protocols and sometimes lack of transparency has been challenged by new technologies making the profession more “open” to the public. I have aimed to show whether this development is embraced or rejected by diplomats by letting through their own opinion.

If we go back to the research puzzle involving the premises of a potential feeling of erosion or replacement of the diplomatic core the results mostly show the opposite. Many of the respondents of the survey were open to the idea of more transparent and personal diplomacy and valued social media as an asset to get more legitimacy and also a more honest idea of the diplomatic profession. In turn, this would amplify the power relations and legitimacy of the diplomatic core by giving them more influential power. As argued by Tom Fletcher it is not possible to be a diplomat today without public diplomacy (Fletcher 2016) and as this study has shown, not digital diplomacy either. Diplomats who valued social media as an asset for the diplomatic profession were overrepresented and understood social media as an asset. If we look at the research question about how social media is affecting the traditional role of the profession there is a revolutionary change. However, even though diplomatic work is more visible to the public, all areas are not affected by digital media. One example is when certain situations need to be kept confidential in order to not affect the outcome. Ongoing confidential negotiations are not suitable for the public to know and probably never will.

Overall, the survey and the in-depth interviews didn't find major conflicts between strategic communications and other diplomatic tasks. The research shows, in contrary to the preconceived belief, symbolic capital is not decreased by social media. However, for further research, I suggest comparing attitudes towards digital diplomacy with non-democratic countries. Also further research on how digital diplomacy was used in practice during the pandemic of Covid-19. A majority of the diplomats were embracing social media as an important tool for public and digital diplomacy. As mentioned in the beginning diplomats

have always been adapting to the modern world and gained power from it. The traditional diplomat with codes and protocol is not dead. It has just shifted into new shapes. In the collected material a majority thought of social media as an extension of diplomacy and not a replacement. This has gained them more assets to reach out to the public and as this pandemic has shown, Swedes abroad have found diplomats very much necessary during the corona crisis. What other conclusions can we make? The research question suggests answers on how diplomats are affected by social media and digital diplomacy. The short answer to this is that social media is affecting diplomats differently depending on what department they work in. However, based on the interviews many saw social media and strategic communication as a complement for the profession and not as a replacement or a threat.

7. Literature

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8. Appendix 1

A study of social media and the changing role of the diplomatic service

My name is Frida Theander and I am writing my Master's thesis in Political Science at Lund University. The purpose of this survey is to investigate how diplomats experience social media. Select the answer or statement that you find most accurate, and which reflects your own experience as a diplomat. Please note that the first section of the survey - 'location of embassy or consulate' - is optional for reasons of anonymity.

Estimated time for this survey is 5-10 minutes.
Deadline for the survey is the 13th of April.

Thank you for your time

Frida Theander
E: frida.theander.2602@student.lu.se

Respondent

Age	<input type="text"/>
Years in service	<input type="text"/>
Location of Embassy or consulate	<input type="text"/>
Nationality	<input type="text"/>
Area of responsibility/Department	<input type="text"/>

How would you say your role as a diplomat has changed as digital media has increased in daily working duties?

	Not at all	To some extent	Quite a lot	Very much
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comment?

Please rank the following platforms in order of professional usage (1=daily,...5=never):

Twitter	<input type="text"/>
Facebook	<input type="text"/>
TikTok	<input type="text"/>
Blog	<input type="text"/>
Instagram	<input type="text"/>

Comment?

I find it necessary for diplomats to be more involved in social media (For example Instagram, Facebook, Twitter)

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why/Why not?

I think that digital diplomacy is necessary for the diplomatic profession

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why/Why not?

I think social media is an asset for the diplomatic profession

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comment?

How would you say your role as a diplomat differ from that of a strategic communicator? Please select the statement that is the most accurate for you as a diplomat

Not at all	To some extent	Quite a lot	Very much
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comment?

What challenges have you experienced in the increased use of digital diplomacy? Please write a few sentences about your experience

Do you experience a conflict between your role as a diplomat and strategic communicators?

Not at all

Sometimes

Often

Very much

Comment?

Please rank (1=Most relevant,..7=Less relevant) the following departments in order of relevancy for the diplomatic profession

Investment & Trade

Consular Section

Defence Section

Political Section

Economic Section

Press and information

Cultural Section

Comment?

Thank you for your participation in this survey!

If you have any questions on this survey you are welcome to contact me at frida.theander.2602@student.lu.se. Thank you again for your participation!



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Appendix 2

Number of participants: 6

These questions are only representing a few of the questions asked. On average the interviews were between 30-50 minutes per diplomat. Depending on what department the diplomat worked at other questions were raised during the interview. For instance, more questions regarding confidential information were given to the Defence Attaché. All interviews started with a short presentation of themselves and their working duties.

Q1 How would you say your role as a diplomat has changed as digital media has increased in daily working duties?

Q2 Do you think diplomats should have a Twitter/Instagram account? Why, why not?

Q3 What challenges have you experienced in how digital diplomacy is used between strategic communicators and diplomats?

- Is there any conflict of interest?

Q4 What challenges have you experienced in the increased use of digital diplomacy?

Q5 Do you think social media is an asset in performing diplomacy? Why? Why not?

Interview references:

A brief presentation of the interviewees and their areas of expertise:

Diplomat A: Embassy of Sweden Skopje, North Macedonia 8 April 2021. Working daily with social media and digital diplomacy.

Diplomat B: The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden 15 April 2021. Responsible for strategies communication and the Swedish program Digital Diplomati 2.0. Working at the communication department at the Ministry for Sweden Affairs in Stockholm.

Diplomat C: Embassy of Sweden Rome, Italy 20 April 2021. Responsible for political reports and in charge of the section for trade, culture, and communication.

Diplomat D: Embassy of Sweden The Hague, Netherlands 16 April 2021. Defence Attaché

Diplomat E: Embassy of Sweden The Hague, Netherlands 21 April 2021. Responsible for EU affairs and trade promotion.

Communications Officer: Embassy of Sweden, Washington U.S.A. 19 April 2021. Working at the press, communication, and cultural section and are responsible for the strategic communication at the embassy.