

**Media Diplomacy in News Coverage of the Crimean Crisis by British and Chinese
State-owned Media Outlets in 2014-2015**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to examine what role media diplomacy had in the representation of the Crimean crisis in the period of 2014-2015 by two state-owned media companies, namely *BBC* and *Xinhua News Agency*. To do that, the analysis was carried out in two separate levels. First, to identify the foreign interests of the countries in question, their representatives' statements regarding the situation in eastern Ukraine presented in the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly meetings were studied. From this level of analysis, the patterns of countries' foreign policy and interests emerged. The investigation of the statements delivered by the British delegates revealed four main patterns of foreign interests: For Ukraine, Against Russia, Demanding Russia's Retreat, and International Community. In contrast, the foreign policy of China was characterized by four different themes: Objectivity and Impartiality, Opposing the Conflict, Non-violent Resolution, and International Cooperation. According to the identified patterns, the coding frame was divided into two parts, each corresponding to the country in question: coding frame for the news coverage of *BBC* was constructed according to the policy interests of the United Kingdom, while coding frame for the content published by *Xinhua* was created in relation to the expressed attitudes of the Chinese representatives. The second level of the research included the analysis of 50 articles published by *BBC* and 50 articles produced by *Xinhua News Agency* to analyze what role media diplomacy had in the news coverage in both state-owned media outlets. The results revealed that both newspapers were following the countries' official stance while reporting the Crimean crisis. Even though the coverage of the conflict differed significantly, both differences and similarities were found while comparing the certain techniques media outlets relied on to represent the conflict. The differences included the application of the binary oppositions, as well as using personal stories in the news coverage which was observed in *BBC* articles but not incorporated

by *Xinhua*. Regarding the similarities, both news outlets used the quotes or statements made by influential foreign actors to validate their countries' stance as well as to make them appear as supported by the international community, both used quotations of the politicians or other officials to establish mostly an undisputed position and both were observed to be covering the Ukrainian conflict selectively.

KEYWORDS: *Media Diplomacy, Media Coverage, Crimean Conflict, United Kingdom, China*

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1. Introduction

In 2014, right after the Winter Olympics in Sochi, the conflict started in the capital city of Ukraine, Kiev, when the president of the country, Victor Yanukovich, pressured by Moscow, refused to sign a trade deal with the European Union and accepted one from the Russian Federation (Reuters, 2020). Such actions caused resentment among the pro-European citizens of the country, which grew into protests and uprisings in the streets of the Kiev that lasted about three months and resulted in overthrowing the president. Moscow refused to acknowledge the new Ukrainian government officials as legitimate and condemned the overthrow of the president as illegal. Shortly after, using the chaotic situation of Ukraine's politics, Russian Federation occupied Crimea (Reuters, 2020). This act was justified by Vladimir Putin, the president of the Russian Federation, by claiming that the population of the Crimean Peninsula mostly consists of ethnic Russians (Popovici, 2020). However, the move was considered to be illegal by the Western world because of the violations of the former Soviet Union's territorial integrity (Popovici, 2020). Nevertheless, in 2015, the territory was added to the Russian Federation after a referendum and in July 2015 Dmitry Medvedev, the prime minister at the time, announced that the Crimean Peninsula is "fully integrated" into Russian Federation (McHugh, 2020). This referendum was considered illegal and illegitimate by most of the world's countries and it remains so to this day (Lihua, 2020). Five years later, Crimea is still de facto under a Russian rule, however, it is still not accepted by the global community (Lihua, 2020). The occupation started a conflict that resulted in the destroyed infrastructure of the country as well as the displacement of almost two million people (Popovici, 2020). The conflict in the territory of Ukraine is still ongoing to this day.

The events of the conflict were and still are covered by the media on a global scale. Gilboa (2007) states that the role of the media in contemporary international conflicts is increasingly more important and claims that it can determine national and foreign policies and actions towards the conflicts. The Crimean crisis is covered by both Western and non-western news outlets. However, according to Gilboa (2007), when one talks about "the media", it is usually the Western media that is referred to. Therefore, it is important to analyse the depictions of the global events and global conflicts specifically from both Western and non-western perspectives and observe how similar or different they are as well

as how they correspond and reflect foreign policies and interests of the countries that cover the crisis.

Academic Relevance

Even though the Crimean crisis is still ongoing and unresolved, it has already been researched to some extent by scholars. Research has already been conducted on the news coverage in some countries and its representation of the crisis. For example, Sorokina (2017) explores the representation of the conflict of Crimea regarding the depiction of the event's main actors and the construction of agency, from the perspectives of both liberal as well as conservative media in the United States of America. In contrast, Hutchings and Szostek (2015) examine the media discourse and narratives of the coverage of Russian media, which involves reporting from the perspective of a country that actively takes part in the conflict. Similarly, the non-western viewpoint is provided by the study conducted by Lehtisaari, Burkhanov, Turdubaeva and Pietiläinen (2018), who analyze the coverage of the conflict as well as the annexation in the newspapers of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan using the framing approach. Makhortykh and Sydorova (2017) also study the visual framing of the violence of the conflict in 2014 as well as how it is represented and perceived by both pro-Russian and pro-Ukrainian online groups and the deployment of social media in this specific context. Moreover, the framing of the Crimean crisis is analyzed by Hansen (2015) together with the role of Russian state-own media in depicting the conflict. The mainstream media coverage of the Crimean crisis is also studied by Gunnar et al. (2018) in terms of journalistic culture in Sweden, Russia, Ukraine and Poland. Besides, Fengler et al. (2018) compare the news coverage of the conflict in 13 European countries. Finally, Boyd-Barrett (2017) explores the media narratives and propaganda published by the Western mainstream media.

However, it appears that the topic has not been approached from the media diplomacy perspective. According to Cull (2019), public diplomacy is a vaguely defined practice as every country has its own definition and approach. Since media diplomacy is a part of public diplomacy, examining and comparing Western and non-western approaches would add to the more extensive knowledge. Therefore, this approach is selected for the analysis to explore new angles and viewpoints that can be found in the representations of the Crimean crisis as well as to add to the research of this conflict. To do that, two different

state-owned media outlets were selected for the study: British news agency *BBC* and *Xinhua News Agency*, which is owned by the Chinese government, to represent both Western and non-western perspectives. Furthermore, this can provide various insights into the topic as media diplomacy relates to and reflects the different aims and foreign policies of the two countries.

Societal Significance

This research holds social relevance as well. First of all, this study is concerned with both the biggest international organization in the world as well as two giant state-owned media companies. Therefore, this research can provide an insight into the connection between the directly expressed foreign interests in the United Nations affairs as well as the news coverage of international events using media diplomacy published by state-owned media outlets. Furthermore, numerous academics (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Ellul, 1973; Herman & Chomsky, 1988, Brown, 2019) have suggested that the news coverage is not always objective and can depend on various factors. This is especially the case when it reports the foreign events that are of significance to the national governments which have their own policy interests (Herman & Chomsky, 1988). Therefore, as the mainstream media play the main role in informing the audience, it is crucial to understand how the news is created and the implications the state interests can have on both the news selection and production. When the state-owned media outlets cater to international audiences, it is important to be aware of the possibly communicated national interests.

Research Question and Sub-questions

The proposed research question is:

“What role did media diplomacy have in the representation of the Crimean crisis in 2014-2015 by *BBC* and *Xinhua News Agency*?”

In addition, the sub-questions of the study are:

- 1) How did *BBC* convey the British foreign policy interests in the coverage of the Crimean crisis in 2014-2015?
- 2) How did *Xinhua News Agency* convey Chinese foreign policy interests in the coverage of the Crimean crisis in 2014-2015?
- 3) To what extent are the identified patterns similar or different?

To address these questions, this research adopted a qualitative approach, more specifically qualitative content analysis in order to investigate foreign policy interests of the United Kingdom and China expressed during the events of the United Nations and then compare them to the foreign news coverage published by the countries' state-owned media outlets, namely *BBC* and *Xinhua* respectively.

Thesis Outline

This thesis is divided into four chapters in addition to the introduction. The second chapter discusses the theoretical framework of the thesis which includes theories relevant to this study. Then, the third chapter presents the research design as well as explains how the analysis was executed. After that, the fourth chapter demonstrates the results of the analysis. Finally, the fifth chapter provides conclusions.

2. Theoretical Framework

The chapter covers the theories that are useful for this research. First of all, the news coverage of by Western and non-western media outlets is presented in order to set a background to the study and to discuss the similarities as well as differences of their news coverage. Then, the concepts of news values, ideology and propaganda are presented to conceptualize their influence on the news coverage. Finally, media diplomacy is presented in order to familiarize with the approach before applying it during the analysis.

Western and Non-western Conflict Coverage

Since the research aims to analyze and compare the reporting of Crimean crisis by Western and non-western state-own media outlets, in the context of this research, it is important to consider how foreign events have been covered as well as the differences and similarities of Western and non-western news coverage of foreign conflicts that have been studied and discussed by the scholars.

One of the examples of how Western media covers conflicts is the research conducted by Galtung and Ruge (1965). Their analysis is focused on the Norwegian media coverage of crises in Congo, Cuba, and Cyprus in the 1960s. Although, all three conflicts took place in remote places far from what is considered to be the elite parts of the world, the countries that were considered to be established world powers were involved and therefore, specific patterns are discovered in the news coverage. The traditional Cold War perspective of East and West is not used in its original way. However, this opposition is present in the context of the colonial relationships which makes the news coverage relevant to the Western world. Therefore, even though the conflicts were understood by many as fighting for independence, the news coverage depicts the events as internal and local with the countries represented as not self-sufficient and having no actual autonomy. In addition, to make the conflicts more newsworthy, groupings such as East-West division or the UN are mentioned. Galtung and Ruge (1965) claim that such crises become news because of their links to the assumed central powers of the world. Cultural and social factors are perceived as internal and without tangible consequences to the Western world. However, political, and economic

aspects of the conflicts are important for the newsworthiness of the conflicts (Galtung & Ruge, 1965).

A pattern of news selection and presentation based on interests of the nation-state are observed in the mainstream American media. Herman and Chomsky (1988) argue for the propaganda model by presenting the news selection and coverage of different events and conflicts around the world by American mainstream media outlets. Herman and Chomsky (1988) claim that both the news selection and coverage are biased as they select and present the events or conflicts in a way that complements and benefits the interests and agenda of the government. One of the examples is Herman and Chomsky's (1988) comparison of murders of two religious leaders in different countries. The murder of a Polish priest Jerzy Popieluszko appeared in the newspapers multiple times and was covered extensively and in vivid detail as a part of propaganda directed against the Soviet Union. At the same time, the murder of Archbishop Oscar Romero, the highest official of the catholic church in El Salvador was covered much less as well as presented as a remote event as Oscar Romero was an important figure in the opposition movement against the regime supported by the United States. In addition to this, the coverage depicted him as a threat and no outrage about the horror or violence of the political regime was expressed. Furthermore, hundreds of other murders committed by the political regimes in Honduras, El Salvador or Guatemala were only briefly mentioned in the American media or not covered at all because of countries' status as the client states. Herman and Chomsky (1988) call these worthy and unworthy victims and emphasize that choosing and covering specific events as horrible atrocities or completely remote and detached is a matter of editorial choice which is in line with national political agenda. They further conclude that refusing to publicize the crimes of the political regimes of the countries under the client status guarantees their protection as otherwise, the public backlash would be inevitable.

In a more recent study, Neureiter (2017) examines the biases that appear in American, British, and German newspapers in relation to Israeli– Palestinian conflict. The findings show that the news coverage is indeed biased in all the countries, but the degree of it is varied. Whereas the reporting is more biased especially in Germany and the United Kingdom than in the United States of America, the variation of biases in newspapers within the states can be explained by media outlets' ideological and political beliefs. In addition to this, demographics, interstate relation as well as the function of public opinion lead to the differences in media biases between the three countries. Neureiter (2017) claims that there is a reciprocal connection between interstate relation and public opinion: while it is believed

that public opinion can affect foreign policies, public opinion is at the same time heavily influenced by the agenda involved in the foreign policymaking process. Furthermore, according to Neureiter (2017), institutional, economic and ideological factors that cause the media biases should be conceptualized as complementary and interdependent instead of mutually exclusive as there could also be a relationship between the media coverage of the conflict and the state's Jewish community, its' relations with Israel as well as the public opinion. Interestingly, Neureiter (2017) adds that in the context of this research, the business interests of the countries do not play a significant role as the opposite is argued by Herman and Chomsky (1988).

In the context of this research, it is important to consider the news coverage of conflicts by non-western media outlets as well since it is one of the main elements of this research. For example, the study by Musa and Ferguson (2013) revealed that the reporting of the conflicts depends on the religious and regional affiliations of the newspapers. Also, the depiction of the sectarian conflict in 2008 by Nigerian newspapers is created through binary oppositions, as it was observed in Western media (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). However, in this case, the struggles between the South and North as well as different religious involved in the conflict are emphasized (Musa & Ferguson, 2013). The neutrality of the reporting is highlighted as an issue because the news coverage heavily depends on the geopolitical stance of different media outlets as it determines the presentation of issues as well as the incorporation of news values. Moreover, the representation of the opposing side involves the process of hyperbolizing, othering, demonizing, stereotyping and has the potential to misguide the audience and ignite violence. This, for example, is achieved by, careful selection of information, presenting specific images that demonize the "other" or repeatedly using particular derogatory terms or adjectives that reinforce stereotypes and prejudice. Moreover, a method of blaming is adopted in the news coverage as the opposing sides blame each other of multiple crimes without citing credible sources while trying to keep the impression of neutrality. Such techniques and the overall representation attempt to manipulate the perception of the audience, create the contraposition between the groups involved in the conflict as well as reinforce hostility (Musa & Ferguson, 2013).

Another example is the study of the portrayal of the Syrian conflict in Russian newspapers. Brown (2014) compares Russian media outlets to three different Western newspapers. The results show that the violence is covered less extensively and in concise terms in Russian press than in its Western counterparts and is less detailed as no attempts to increase the emotional impact are made. In addition, Russian outlets managed to quickly

change their narrative after extremism emerged, while the Western newspapers demonstrated an unwillingness to alter their adopted narrative. Finally, major differences are reflected in the depiction of Russia's role in the Syrian conflict. While the Western newspapers represented Moscow as an ally to Damascus which defends its interests as well as opposes the opinion of the international community. Russian media, on the other hand, do not present the strategic or commercial aims of the country. Furthermore, Moscow is presented as an independent actor which defends the unstable international order from the reckless behavior of the United States of America (Brown, 2014).

The analysis of the visual coverage of the Arab Spring conflict by five transnational Arab news channels was conducted by Bruce (2014) which shows that there are both differences and similarities between how the conflicts in Yemen, Tunisia, Algeria, Syria, Egypt and Libya are depicted. Two main framing techniques are employed to do so. First of all, all the newspapers chosen for the analysis to some extent use a human-interest frame which puts emphasis on the emotional aspect of the covered events. Such a method was universally used by all five newspapers as it also highlights the civilians' involvement in the conflict. Furthermore, the political frame is also applied to the coverage of the conflict, which is used to accentuate the actions and participation of the politicians and authorities as well as to define specific attitudes about particular issues. Bruce (2014) emphasizes that while in some newspapers political frame is more prominent than others, it could indicate that a more important role in the coverage is given to the newspapers' benefactors' perspective of the political conflict in the region in the expense of balanced reporting.

A number of comparative studies of Western and non-western media coverage have been conducted concerning particular events and conflicts. For instance, while comparing news coverage of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria by Western outlet *CNN* and non-western *Al Jazeera*, Musa and Yusha'u (2013) claim that it is heavily influenced by social, political and economic elements in both newspapers. Furthermore, both outlets tend to use parachute journalism, especially when the conflict involves different religions due to practical constraints. According to Musa and Yusha'u (2013), both *CNN* and *Al Jazeera* lacked the understanding of conflict in Nigeria and *Al Jazeera* even misled its audience while presenting wrong footages. Also, it was not acknowledged that the real title of the sect is not Boko Haram but "yan boko" or its origin and context. Other mutual characteristics of the news coverage include polarization, presupposition, selectively chosen information, disguised stereotyping as well as "continuous peddling of misinformation" which is organized to in a specific way to leave a lasting impression on the public by

presenting particular “mental pictures” (Musa & Yusha’u, 2013, p.260). Finally, the outlets’ inability to acknowledge could indicate “their willingness to peddle falsehood irrespective of the repercussions” (Musa & Yusha’u, 2013, p.260).

Another comparative analysis is presented by Nossek (2004), who compares two western newspapers, the American *New York Times* as well as the British *The Times* with *Ha’aretz*, the Israeli news outlet. Nossek (2004) claims that the coverage of the newspapers can be explained by applying the national frame which explains why particular events are defined or not defined as political violence and, therefore, become the news or are ignored. For example, NATO bombardment in Bosnia is considered to be foreign news by all the outlets. However, the coverage of the event differs significantly. In the case of *The New York Times*, the newspaper mostly uses Washington and the Pentagon as sources and covers the conflict extensively. The coverage clearly implies the importance of the American involvement in the conflict and depicts the reached agreement as a victory of American diplomacy while also referencing the World War II and the Americans being the saviours of Europe. Besides, the role of Russia is criticized, and the country is representing as losing its global position and influence. *The Times*’ depiction of the bombardment is slightly less extensive and can be understood as more balanced and factual as more diverse sources are included in the news. Moreover, the paper emphasizes the local nature of the conflict as well as focuses on American-Russian perspective, however, the American involvement is assessed more critically. *Ha’aretz*, on the other hand, uses Western news agencies and covers the event significantly less extensively and implies a detachment from the event as the coverage is relatively balanced and factual. While it interprets Russia’s actions as attempts to regain its global power, the newspaper demonstrates a relative pro-American position. Another event is chosen for the analysis, explosion at the *BBC* offices that happened in Srinagar, Kashmir, was cover shortly only by *The Times*. Nossek (2004) argues that this illustrates that political violence, as well as foreign news, is conceptualized differently by different media outlets.

Media Coverage of International Conflicts

The purpose of the mass media is to serve as a system of communication of symbols and messages to the general population (Herman & Chomsky, 1988). News often covers

events related to institutions, issues and important organizations (Harcup & O'Neil, 2001). Gilboa (2007) states that the role of the media in contemporary international conflicts is increasingly more important and claims that it can determine national and foreign policies and actions towards conflicts.

According to Galtung and Ruge (1965), the world is divided into multiple territories, some of which are nations and can be considered autonomous. The structure of this "international community of nations" is perceived to consist of dominant as well as "underdog" nations (Galtung & Ruge, 1965, p.64) which implies the levels of organization between people: the international and inter-individual. In this specific research, both the United Kingdom and China are perceived as dominant nations since both are established as powerful countries while Ukraine is conceptualized as an "underdog" nation. This can be illustrated by Cull's (2019) argument that newer or smaller countries must establish a certain level of reputational security to attract a sufficient amount of attention from the global community. Since the Crimean crisis did not get the same amount of recognition as similar geopolitical conflicts, Cull (2019) claims that Ukraine's reputational security was not strong enough to distinguish itself from the Russian Federation.

Moreover, Galtung and Ruge (1965) emphasize that the two levels of human organization are interdependent and, as a result, more nations are co-dependent because of the growing mutual communication as well as increasing effectiveness of military action (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). In result, the depiction of international reality can determine international action (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). Since some nations are perceived to be more "elite" than others, their actions are understood to be more significant and have more important implications, at least in the short term. Consequently, these conditions prevent the events regarding less "elite" nations to become news and they are given less or no possibilities of representation as well as recognition (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). Galtung and Ruge (1965, pp.82-83) suggest that "the lower the rank of the nation", the more negative, culturally relevant, and consistent the event has to be in order to transition from events to the news. More recently, a similar argument is made by Golan (2006), who claims that some nations are perceived as more newsworthy by the gatekeepers. Furthermore, according to Chang (1998, p.528), in the area of international communication, countries that are perceived to be the members of "the core zone of the world system" are conceptualized as more newsworthy than the remaining countries which "have to go through several filters before they make it to the news".

In addition, Galtung and Ruge (1965) propose certain news values, a list of features that make events happening abroad newsworthy. Foreign events that are considered to be relevant in one's own country share specific characteristics and, thus, are reported in the media. The list consists of twelve factors and includes such news attributes as frequency, threshold (absolute intensity and intensity increase) unambiguity, meaningfulness (cultural proximity and relevance), consonance (predictability and demand) unexpectedness (unpredictability and scarcity) continuity, composition, reference to elite nations, reference to elite people, reference to persons and reference to something negative (Galtung & Ruge, 1965, pp.70-71). Galtung and Ruge (1965) then argue that for the events to become news, they have to satisfy these requirements. It is also important to mention that the news values listed below can also be inter-related.

Galtung and Ruge's (1965) work, as well as news values, remain influential but their theory has been criticized, revised and updated by many academics due to the changing media environment as well as scholarly study and journalism practice (Joye, Heinrich & Wöhlert, 2016). Joye, Heinrich and Wöhlert (2016) argue that the conclusions of such efforts are often conflicting: while some research confirms the results of Galtung and Ruge (1965) (Kheirabadi & Aghagolzadeh, 2012), others add their own news values in the attempts to specify the model. The most prominent work is done by Harcup and O'Neill (2001) who add a set of adjusted contemporary news values while arguing that Galtung and Ruge's (1965) news values remain relevant and can be effectively incorporated in a contemporary context if they are slightly reworded. More recently, Harcup and O'Neill (2017) also call attention to the growing significance of the spreadability of news and consider audio-visual content, as well as exclusivity and conflict as worthy news values. In addition to this, the importance of the impact that social media has on news production is highlighted. This, however, is debatable, as other academics claim that the output of international news published by online media does not significantly differ from the traditional media outlets (Wu, 2007). Wu (2007) argues that the coverage of foreign events is an expensive process and "the influence of the global economy on the news menu persists across different media and time frames" (pp.549-550).

A study of the application of the news values to the process of news selection in Iran media by Kheirabadi and Aghagolzadeh (2012) points out that while the twelve factors of newsworthiness formulated by Galtung and Ruge (1965) indeed play a significant role, they do not cover the most important factor found in the gatekeeping process of news coverage in Iran – ideology. This key argument can be linked to the classic work of Ellul (1973) who

notes that ideology depends and is an integral part of the propaganda system. Ideology could be conceptualized as a pretext for propaganda and disseminated through it as specific ideology could be spread through mass communication and media to lead the audiences to acceptance of certain political as well as economic acts or structures. Moreover, propaganda is understood as an element of the state powers as well as administrative and governmental methods. The selection of techniques is calculated and deliberate to reach its clearly distinguished political goals (Ellul, 1973).

According to Ellul (1973), mass media is a necessary condition for propaganda. This statement can be further connected to a highly influential study of American mass media conducted by Herman and Chomsky (1988). The scholars claim that to “inculcate individuals with values, beliefs and codes of behavior that will integrate them into the institutional structures of the larger society” based on disputes of class interests and wealth, a system of propaganda is needed (Herman & Chomsky, 1988, p.1). Their proposed propaganda model argues that the selection and presentation of the news depend on four filters – 1) size, ownership, and profit orientation of the mass media, 2) the advertising license to do business, 3) sourcing mass media news and 4) flack (negative responses to the media content) and the enforcers. The application of this model leads to the specific patterns that can be observed in the suppression or emphasis on the particular premises, the process of context selection as well as the overall agenda which in turn serves the needs of the government and other established power groups. What is more, the state’s political agenda also benefits from the distortion as well as an uncritical presentation of the statements of the officials (Herman & Chomsky, 1988).

Ellul (1973) makes a powerful statement that it is impossible to clearly separate propaganda from information as propaganda is based on truthful facts instead of errors. Propaganda can only be effective if it corresponds to political or economic phenomena as it derives its effectiveness through an interpretation of specific events (Ellul, 1973). In relation to propaganda model, it is important to mention that the media in the United States of America does not follow the methods of systematic propaganda used by the totalitarian regimes or states (Herman & Chomsky, 1988). Instead, the disagreement, critique and debate are permitted and encouraged, however, in an internalized arrangement of principles and preconditions that support a preferred consensus without awareness. Herman and Chomsky (1988) argue that the application of the propaganda model demonstrates that instead of providing the individuals with the necessary information that would empower them to take control and better understand the political processes, the mass media

institutions defend the interests of the state and the dominant groups as well as their social, economic, political aims and agenda. It is achieved by implementing certain measures and techniques: by including people who are related both to the government and the news corporations, filtering information, distributing concerns as well as careful selection and framing of messages, topics, issues and evasions, application of particular tone and emphasis. Therefore, while it is widely assumed that one of the main societal roles of the media is “a watchdog” (Dommering, 2008), Herman & Chomsky (1988) state that this is the case when the position of the government or other powerful players is threatened or trying to prevent such dangers. Finally, it is, thus, concluded that the result is “a powerful system of induced conformity to the needs of privilege and power” which has been strengthened by the pressures of right-wing politics on public media outlets, the accelerating media concentration, networks of national television as well as the increasingly sophisticated processes of managing the news and public relations (Herman & Chomsky, 1988, p. 306). Moreover, the mass media should be conceptualized as “effective and powerful ideological institutions” that exercises a function of system-obedient propaganda without obvious coercion that also relies on self-censorship and assumptions of the media outlets as well as market forces relations (Herman & Chomsky, 1988, p. 306).

In the environment where “ideological network”, corporate capitalism as well as the state are interrelated, Herman and Chomsky’s propaganda model (1988) has been disposed of as a “conspiracy theory” and harshly criticized for being too deterministic in regards to the behaviour of the media (Klaehn, 2002). Therefore, it has received relatively little attention within social sciences, sociology, communication and mainstream media studies even though it is a useful tool which could help to examine the interactions between ideology, power and social structures (Mullen & Klaehn, 2010). Moreover, it is also argued that the propaganda model should be included in the academic debate on the performance of the media (Klaehn, 2002; Mullen & Klaehn, 2010). Propaganda model can still be relevant in the modern media setting even more than when the model was originally established as the processes described by Herman and Chomsky (1988) are even more prominent and accelerated today: concentration of corporate media ownership, constraints caused by the right-wing pressure, expansion of the industry of public relations as well as the advertising values being included into the processes of the news production (Klaehn, 2002). It is stated that this critical-structural model could be beneficial while studying both domestic and foreign issues, topics and news (Mullen & Klaehn, 2010). Moreover, it could also help to understand the self-censorship of the reporters and editors as well as the manipulation of the

public opinion (Klaehn, 2002) and the role of “the media within contemporary capitalist societies” in general (Mullen & Klaehn, 2010, p.215).

The relationship between the government and the press is also accentuated by Brown (2019), who argues about the importance of conventional frames used to compose the news stories. In her analysis of the Afghanistan conflict, Brown (2019) gives the example of frames used by American journalists to cover foreign news that prioritize the intentions and concerns of the government as well as society: humanitarianism, economy, security, and diplomacy. While covering foreign events, the interests of the officials and the press are usually aligned, the outcome provides a way how the audience should think about specific issues which can lead to the legitimization of the state’s action as well as sustaining specific images. Besides, the cooperation with the news outlets allows the politicians to legitimize their actions and popularity through the exposure and support of the public (Carruthers as cited in Brown, 2019). Finally, the importance of the national frame is also highlighted as American journalists tend to abandon objective reporting while covering specific issues related to danger to public, tragedies and national security (Schudson as cited in Brown, 2019).

Another study conducted by Nossek (2004) also emphasizes the significance of the national frame. The analysis of the coverage of four different foreign events in three different newspapers in different countries suggests that the application of professional news values is reversely proportional to the reporters’ and editors’ national identity. Nossek (2004) claims that journalists and editors tend to apply professional news values less if the news coverage of specific events is related to the national interest and, in the case of terrorism or political violence, the existence and the application of such national frame are obvious. Furthermore, it is claimed that while the location of the event is not of particular significance, the national frame can be used to explain why some events are selected and reported as news. National government’s involvement in specific events or conflicts can be influential during the processes of defining the events as political violence and, therefore, for defining an event as foreign news. This, in turn, leads to a specific stance that the journalists and editorial boards must adopt while covering and presenting the news. Finally, Nossek (2004) concludes that even though the media landscape witnessed multiple significant changes in global economic, political and communications environment since the late twentieth century, the news coverage of foreign events has not changed since then as it the nation-state still holds an important role and the “foreign news is still a product of the existing frameworks of nationhood” (Nossek, 2004, pp.364).

In addition to this, according to the study by Wanta, Golan and Lee (2004), if a foreign nation received a lot of media coverage, the respondents were more likely to perceive that nation as significant to the interests of the United States of America. Also, if the news coverage of a nation is negative, the audience is more likely to perceive the nation in question negatively whereas the positive coverage does not influence the perception of the public (Wanta, Golan & Lee, 2004). However, the study of *AFP* photographs of Rohingya during the Bengali crisis by Yeung and Lenette (2018) show that the news coverage of a foreign emergency can shape the public's perception of the issues of crises and migration as well as stimulate compassion, self-reflexivity as well as evoke a wish to help in the countries that are considered to be stable politically. Analyzed photographs combine both features of the mundane as well as the shocking in order to let the audience think about the horrors of the events without ignoring those who are represented in the photos. The standard conventions of depiction are removed, and the representations of the people illustrate their humanity, suffering, challenges as well as agency.

Media Diplomacy

Schudson (2002) argues that the news media can be perceived as a political institution and can have various possible influences. It is claimed that if the news media convey the information supplied and supported by the government, that effect of the news is then initiated by the government officials (Schudson, 2002). A study conducted by Sande (1971) highlights the importance of the involvement of the government in the media process where its role can be understood as that of a gatekeeper. The coverage of international news can be affected by the governments' authority which becomes more important as the relationships with other countries as well as international networks are built and fostered (Sande, 1971). Thus, public relations can be conceptualized as an important media influence. Moreover, it is claimed that the public relationships of the government can act as a predictor which can decide and regulate the international news coverage, which emphasizes its efficiency (Sande, 1971). In addition to this, media has the power to legitimize certain events just by publishing them on a medium that is considered to be legitimate and prestigious (Schudson, 2002). Schudson (2002) concludes that the most important contribution of the

news media is the role of cultural actors as well as producers and messengers of specific messages, meanings and symbols.

To contextualize media diplomacy, it is important to understand diplomacy as well as public diplomacy specifically as they are closely connected. Diplomacy in a broad sense is defined as actions by “an international actor to manage the international environment” (Cull, 2009, p.12). Public diplomacy, in particular, is understood as “international actor’s attempt to manage the international environment through engagement with a foreign public” (Cull, 2009, p.12). It locates the process in the area of civic interstate relations and indicates a communication done by a government’s diplomats, however, it is established that international relations cannot be limited only to the contact between the governments of the nation-states, and sometimes it is more effective to reach out to a foreign public or foster the engagement between different foreign audiences, therefore making media diplomacy possible (Cull, 2019). According to Gilboa (1998), the traditional model of public diplomacy has been used in the context of hostile relationships in order to reach states’ long-term goals in foreign countries, create a positive opinion about nation-states’ economic and political systems, actions and policies. Another goal of public diplomacy was to provide a foreign audience with more balanced information as well as to fight the systems of domestic propaganda of the foreign government. Now, however, public diplomacy is employed in the ways beyond the original model: new participants are included in the processes and new kinds of relationships are formed between the nonstate and government actors who pursue new goals: creating support rather than replacement of existing laws and policies in other countries (Gilboa, 1998). Similarly, Cull (2009) also distinguishes between the old public diplomacy and the new public diplomacy which implies that there have been changes throughout the years, one of them being the blurring lines between international and domestic news scope facilitated by new global and real-time information technologies. The outcome of this is the fact that the new public diplomacy is characterized by its usage of soft power and branding. The practice is deemed important as it helps to shape public opinion, develop business relationships abroad and to avoid undesirable actions (Cull, 2019).

In the context of this research, to avoid confusion, it is necessary to emphasize that the term public diplomacy is of American origin, which is chosen by the academics because of its systematic approach as well as a convenience (Cull, 2019). However, there is no real agreement on the official terminology regarding the processes of foreign policy by communicating to the global communities. Thus, international actors from different countries use varying language to describe their actions and approaches. Countries, whose

state-owned media outlets are examined in this study have their own distinctive terms to describe their attempts to engage the foreign audiences. The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office defines their approach of the engagement of foreign audiences as strategic communication. Chinese international actors, on the other hand, use a term “xunchuan” which originally means both “pass on/teach” and “declare” and is employed by the Chinese officials as their equivalent of the western word “propaganda” (Cull, 2019, p.16). One could deduce that such differences in preferred and adopted terminology could imply, lead to and explain the differences between the conceptualization of the process as well as contrasting attitudes towards the process. What is more, it could also indicate the possibility of differences in approaches and the execution of foreign publics’ engagement.

Since public diplomacy operates on behalf of and in favour of various institutions as well as the nation-states more specifically, it is inevitable, that close parallels to propaganda are drawn and some observers do not consider them to be two separate phenomena (Gilboa, 1998; Cull, 2019). Gilboa (1998) argues that initially public diplomacy indeed served as a more polite term for propaganda. However, now that audiences have access to multiple sources of information from around the globe (Gilboa, 1998) and presenting one pivotal story to both home and foreign audiences has become more complicated (Cull, 2019), international actors have altered their approach (Gilboa, 1998). Instead of presenting the public with half-truth, innuendos and distortions, the officials are now using a method which is defined as “civilized persuasion” (Manheim as cited in Gilboa, 1998). What is more, the practice has also shifted towards a more scientific direction, “strategic public diplomacy”, as it is now based on behavioural studies in order to create and shape the attitudes and opinions of the global societies (Manheim as cited in Gilboa, 1998).

Cull (2019) further argues that while propaganda and public diplomacy are always connected, the main difference between the two is that propaganda is concerned with dictating a specific message to societies with the aim to persuade and convince people of its truthfulness and fairness, whereas public diplomacy is pursued in order to develop a mutual relationship and understanding. Moreover, propaganda is historically an integral part of international relations which is based on crude demonstration of power. Public diplomacy, on the other hand, is a concern based on a vision of mutual knowledge and cooperation. Cull (2019) also provides a list of differences between the two practices. Propaganda is a one-way process based on strict agenda as well as a selection of convenient truth which aims to alter the target group by incorporating the method of listening as well as disrespecting and disregarding the opposing opinion. In contrast, public diplomacy is a truthful, two-way

process, based on flexible guidelines that aims to learn and can only initiate changes in foreign public, while being mostly ethical and respectful of the conflicting attitudes. However, despite the differences in the execution of the practices, Cull (2019) claims that officials still anticipate the implementation as well as the outcome that is closer to that of propaganda.

Five distinct methods are used by international actors to engage foreign publics (Cull, 2009; Cull, 2019). The most relevant method for this study, international broadcasting can be understood as a part of public diplomacy practice as it attempts to engage and control the international environments as well as foreign audiences by implementing the technologies of television, radio and the Internet (Cull, 2009).

Its main component is understood to be the news and it has its own ethical and structural foundations (Cull, 2009) and is of vital importance to public diplomacy (Cull, 2019). The objective depiction of the world at large is not argued but presented or is claimed to be presented instead (Cull, 2019). Public diplomacy is capable of creating and shaping the specific discourses by using and exploiting the means of identifiable victims, emotion or authority (Cull, 2019) which can be linked to Herman and Chomsky's (1988) argumentation. The engagement of the public audiences' by international broadcasting has a great significance as throughout the history it assisted with winning wars and managing conflicts and is considered to be one of the reasons behind the shift towards a global society (Cull, 2019). Even though, Cull (2019) argues that the public tends to trust familiar news broadcasters from one's country, international media outlets gain their relevance by reconceptualizing their function as a global news provider and becoming content creators, as well as adapting to the platforms that are preferable to their target audience. In addition, both the quality and the brand of the news outlets are becoming significantly more important due to the emergence of the phenomenon of fake news (Cull, 2019). It is also important to mention that international broadcasting can also align with the other aims of public diplomacy regarding, for example, policy broadcasting, cultural diplomacy because of the possibilities of collaboration (Cull, 2009).

International broadcasting is significant for multiple reasons. First of all, the international news outlets are important collaborators for those, who do not possess the abilities or resources to broadcast (Cull, 2019). In addition to this, global contemporary broadcasting can also enter other fields of engagement as it seeks to protect and promote the civil international realm which is conjugated with certain interests and standards. Therefore, nowadays broadcasting is often involved in the development of journalism, exchange and

transmission of culture to foreign audiences as well as building capacity. Furthermore, public diplomacy is particularly important for the governments of the nation-states to create and maintain the possibilities for global discussions as well as free exchange of ideas and information. In relation to this, the process of public diplomacy can also include international management of information which manifests in intervening with the attempts of the actors from the opposing side to reach the foreign audience. This can also be related to the situations when intervention is needed because of the occurrence of criminal activities in the global information sphere. Finally, the most prominent sign of significance is the importance of international broadcasters during times of crises and emergencies. During such situations, familiar, well-known and renowned news outlets are the most trusted sources of global news due to the perception of their quality reporting as well as the capacity (Cull, 2019).

International broadcasting is closely related to what Gilboa (2002) more specifically defines as media diplomacy. Media diplomacy, however, is by definition more a narrow field than public diplomacy (Gilboa, 1998) and is conceptualized as the attempts of political leaders to use media resources to initiate negotiations, build and strengthen confidence as well as assembling and creating approval for specific agreements or actions (Gilboa, 1988; Gilboa 2002). Furthermore, media diplomacy model is helpful to position diplomatic processes based on communication in an appropriate context (Gilboa, 1998). What is more, while various channels are employed in the processes of public diplomacy to reach its long-term objectives, only mass media is used to conduct media diplomacy for more specific, short-term outcomes (Gilboa, 1998). Media diplomacy can be executed in the forms of conventional and unconventional media activities which include media events that can signal a beginning of a new era, press conferences, leaks, interviews or visits (Gilboa, 1998). Another important difference is that public diplomacy is used to create favourable attitude among a foreign community towards paramount social and political problems, while media diplomacy is used to foster a beneficial climate for precise diplomatic processes happening at a specific context and time (Gilboa, 1998). Finally, whereas public diplomacy is mostly pursued in the situations of ideological disputes and possibly employs the use of propaganda, media diplomacy is focused on conflict resolution and possible negotiations (Gilboa, 1998). Media diplomacy can also be used to pressure and influence the negotiators as well as create and strengthen confidence between the opposing sides that leads to negotiations and conflict resolution (Gilboa, 1998). While several other practices involve elected officials making use of the media resources, it is important to distinguish media

diplomacy from mediated public diplomacy which describes the short-term targeted efforts to boost the foreign support of particular foreign policies by using methods of mass communication (Gilboa, 2002).

To sum up, the theories and concepts discussed above provide a basis of understanding necessary for the research. Conceptualizing Western and non-western media coverage provides an overview of how different events or conflicts can be represented by different media outlets. The section of media coverage of international conflicts emphasizes how the representations of the events can be affected by ideology, propaganda, and news values. Finally, the analysis of media diplomacy is essential to the research as it is one of the chosen focus points of the study. In the next chapter, research design will be presented.

3. Research Design

Since this research aimed to analyze how the conflict in Crimea was represented in two different, British and Chinese, state-owned media outlets and the ways in which the depictions were related to the country's pursued media diplomacy, a qualitative approach was chosen for this study. Qualitative research can be conceptualized as a scientific and systematic inquiry which mainly aims to develop narratives as well as a comprehensive characterization, which reflect the researcher's comprehension of specific cultural or social phenomenon (Astalin, 2013). What is more, qualitative research can be conceptualized as a process of systematization which organizes data into identifiable patterns, relationships or categories and is generally inductive (McMillan & Schumacher as cited in Astalin, 2013). This indicates that both meaning and the data emerge from the context of the research (Astalin, 2013), which is in line with the proposed research question, as in order to answer it, the content of the official communications of the United Nations representatives, as well as the news articles, were chosen for the analysis. Furthermore, qualitative studies are based on sensitivity and flexibility to a particular social context (Mason as cited in Astalin, 2013), which is important considering the nature of this study. Moreover, since the nature of the type of the research question was qualitative, the qualitative approach was chosen because another important aspect of the qualitative approach is that it takes the details, context and the complexity of the studied material into the consideration (Mason as cited in Astalin, 2013). Finally, according to Bryman (2012), the qualitative research design is used to focus on words and thorough understanding of relevant concepts instead of the quantification of the data during the processes of the collection as well as analysis of the sampled material, which is essential in this research in order to answer the research question.

This chapter consists of seven sections. First of all, the data collection method is presented. After that, the procedure of sampling is described. Then, the coding process, as well as codes and categories, are provided. The procedure of data analysis is described and the coding frame which emerged from the first level of analysis that engaged the official United Nations communications is presented. Finally, validity and reliability of the study are explained.

Data Collection

Qualitative content analysis was chosen to execute the research and answer the research question. Content analysis is a beneficial tool which helps to conduct an extensive analysis of the sampled research material and to understand its meaning and composition (Bryman, 2012). Mayring (2000) defines qualitative content analysis as one of the techniques intended for systematic analysis of texts. Besides, qualitative content analysis allows for concentration on the meaning and the context of the content which provides an empirical, controlled, and methodological text analysis without quantifying the research material (Mayring, 2000). This particular method is applicable to analyze the data as the sample material of the UN documents and news articles were textual (Schreier, 2013). Schreier (2013) argues that the systematic evaluation of the qualitative material is provided by the qualitative content analysis. Furthermore, qualitative content analysis enables the reduction of the quantity of the data to produce an organized assessment of the material as well as to focus on the meaning and information that can be discovered and recognized in the material and is essential for the study (Schreier, 2013). Finally, qualitative content analysis allows for a process of detailed and in-depth research as well as structure, comprehension, meanings and implications of the analyzed data (Bryman, 2012). Thus, since the number of official UN statements and news articles published by both British and Chinese state-owned media companies were sampled for examination, the method of qualitative content analysis was a fitting option to study the textual material and answer the research question sufficiently.

Sampling

The study was conducted in two stages, namely, analysis of the statements by British and Chinese officials in United Nations council regarding the Crimean crisis and the news coverage regarding the conflict by *BBC* and *Xinhua News Agency*. The first level of the analysis included the examination of the foreign policies as well as interests of the United Kingdom and China, which then led to the creation of the coding framework for further analysis of the media diplomacy in the news articles of state-owned media companies from two different countries. To do that, official United Nations communications made by British

and Chinese officials were studied. Mattes, Leeds, and Carroll (2015) argue that state interests and preferences determine the country's foreign policy and that it can depend on certain aspirations that the officials might have. Foreign policy is also determined by opportunities and demands of the nation-states as well as by its place in the international structure and geographic location. According to Mattes et al. (2015), these factors in part influence the countries' positions and activities in the United Nations operations. The United Nations has 193 member countries which makes it the largest international institution (United Nations, 2020). The organization presents its member with a forum where different views can be expressed, and various issues can be mutually tackled and solved by fostering dialogues and enabling negotiations (United Nation, 2020). What is more, since security and peace keeping are the highest priority, the United Nations aims to both prevent aggression as well as remove threats to international peace, resolve conflicts and promote international partnership and cooperation (United Nations, 2020). It is stated that all the member states have an equal status (United Nations, 2020). In addition, both the United Kingdom and China are permanent members of the organization (United Nations, 2020). Both were able to express their position regarding the Crimean crisis. While United Kingdom voted in favor of the sovereignty of Ukraine, China abstained from voting (Sengupta, 2014). Therefore, the official United Nations communications made by the representatives from the countries in question were chosen to fully grasp and examine the countries' position and interest related to the occupation of Crimea. The statements were sampled from the UN Digital Library (<https://digitallibrary.un.org/>) because it stores organizations' official documents, including the reports of the meetings with official statements of the countries' representatives translated into English.

The second level of the research included the analysis of the news coverage of the Crimean crisis by two different state-owned media outlets as well as its relation to the media diplomacy and interested of the national governments. Thus, the sampling units selected for this level of analysis and the sampling procedure were two different media companies, more specifically, *BBC* as well as *Xinhua News Agency*. *BBC* was chosen to explore the Western perspective whereas *Xinhua News Agency* represented the non-western position. These particular outlets were chosen because of several reasons. First of all, they are the largest state-owned media companies in the United Kingdom and China respectively and, in turn, have both covered the conflict in question. Another reason is that there is a potential to find media diplomacy reflected in the content published by the outlets because of the history of these newspapers as well as their relations to the national governments.

BBC strongly declares the independence of its editorial practices, journalism, contents, and output (Collins, 2007). However, an early work by Coatman (1951) suggests that *BBC* has been heavily influenced by the government as the state had a dominant position regarding the policies of broadcasting development. In addition, regardless of the statements about the autonomy in its formal charter, *BBC* is not entirely independent. Coatman (1951) points out that *BBC* is continuously subjected to both specific and implied pressures from the British government, parliament members and political parties. Similarly, a more recent study by Sreberny and Torfeh (2008) claims that *BBC* and its various branches are subject to concerns, priorities and interests of British foreign policy. For example, it is stated that the *BBC Persian Service*, in particular, has been instructed to broadcast the content that supported the objectives of the government during the conflict in Iran. Moreover, to understand the status of the newspaper better, it is important to mention that in order to ensure the outlet's future as well as legitimization of its institutional position, *BBC* embraced the notion of public value (Collins, 2007).

Xinhua News Agency is controlled by the Chinese Communist Party (Truex, 2016). According to Xin (2006), the interdependence between the news agency and the Party began with the creation of *Xinhua* which was driven by political motives. Through the organization, the Communist Party seeks to promote its political ideas and to legitimize its status. Furthermore, Cheng, Golan, and Kioussis (2015) argue that *Xinhua News Agency* serves as the main platform that promotes China's global narrative and, therefore, has been expanded during the last decade. Also, a study conducted by Truex (2016) reveals that *Xinhua News Agency* is perceived as the most pro-government (and the Chinese Communist Party) news outlet in China as well as the outlet with the highest degree of perceived pro-government biases.

Therefore, since the study was focused on the representation of the Crimea conflict in 2014-2015, databases, archives and main search windows of the chosen sampling units were used to search for the research material.

Coding Units

In order to gather a sample relevant to the study and avoid possible biases, a combination of purposive and random sampling was used. First of all, official communications (statements made in United Nations meeting in particular) from the UN

events were selected using purposive sampling to gather the appropriate material. Sarstedt, Bengart, and Shaltoni (2017) define purposive sampling as a sampling procedure based on the expertise of the researcher. Moreover, purposive sampling allows for composition of a sample that is created specifically with the aim of the research in mind, where the only coding elements included in the sample are relevant for the study and its focus (Sarstedt et al., 2017). Certain relevance criteria were implemented to sample the statements. Thus, keyword “Crimea” was used to find material that corresponds to the topic. In addition, the statements had to be made by British and Chinese officials. Lastly, ten statements per country were used to identify the emerging patterns of foreign interests that could be translated into media diplomacy in the content published by the state-owned media. The time frame that was of relevance to this study was the period from the beginning of the Crimean crisis, thus, the Russian occupation (27/02/2014) until Russia's declaration that Crimea was officially a part of Russian Federation (15/07/2015). After that, random sampling was implemented. Random sampling is a technique which implies that “the elements have a known and equal probability of being selected by a random procedure from a sampling frame” and, in turn, helps to avoid or minimize possible biases (Cochran, as cited in Sarstedt et al., 2017, p.4).

The Digital Library of the United Nations (<https://digitallibrary.un.org/>) was used to find statements of the British and Chinese (while the statements were given in Chinese, the English translation provided by the UN was used) officials made during the United Nations meeting. During the time period in question, 47 documents in total that were found under the keyword “Crimea”. Eighteen of them were relevant, including seventeen reports of Security Council meetings and one of the General Assembly meeting, where the question of Crimea was addressed. Both United Kingdom as well as China gave statements in sixteen of those meetings each. Then, random sampling procedure was done separately for both countries. Each meeting during which the country gave a statement regarding Crimean Crisis was assigned a number from 1 to 16 and a random number generator (randomizer.org) was used to select ten numbers/meetings. The overview of the sampled statements is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Overview of statements

British statements		Chinese statements	
UNSC Meeting	Date	UNSC/GA Event	Date
7124th	1 March 2014	SC 7125th	3 March 2014
7138th	15 March 2014	SC 7134th	13 March 2014
7154th	13 April 2014	GA 80th	27 March 2014
7157th	16 April 2014	SC 7154th	13 April 2014
7165th	29 April 2014	SC 7157th	16 April 2014
7205th	24 June 2014	SC 7165th	29 April 2014
7239th	8 August 2014	SC 7185th	28 May 2014
7311th	12 November 2014	SC 7239th	8 August 2014
7400th	6 March 2015	SC, 7253rd	28 August 2014
7457th	5 June 2015	SC 7400th	6 March 2015

The same technique of purposive sampling (Sarstedt et al., 2017) described above was applied to the sampling of the total of 100 articles from the same time frame. To have an equal distribution, 50 articles published by *BBC* and 50 articles by the *Xinhua News Agency* were sampled. News stories as well as features, opinions, and interviews were included in the sample. However, photo and video stories were excluded as the selected method was textual rather than visual content analysis and thematic analysis more specifically. Excluding such articles helped to concentrate on the analysis of the textual material. After that, random sampling was used again to avoid plausible biases (Sarstedt, et al., 2017). To sample news coverage by *BBC*, keywords “Ukraine conflict” were used to assemble the sample that corresponded to the focus of the research topic. *BBC* search engine was used for the process (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/search>). In total, 290 news items were found in total of which 91 met the set criteria. Fifty items were chosen randomly (randomizer.org) and all of them were

news articles specifically. Then, 50 articles by *Xinhua News Agency* were sampled using web.archive.org since Xinhua search option did not provided news articles published before 2018 and its archive was not functioning during the collection of the sample (May/June 2020). Keyword “Ukraine” was used as more narrow options did not provide any results and most of the articles were published during the first months of the conflict. Out of 64 working links, 50 were randomly sampled (randomizer.org) and all were news articles as well.

Codes and Categories

The process of coding was conducted separately for both levels of the analysis. Firstly, as the research was focused on news coverage, its representation of a certain event and its alignments with foreign policies of two different countries, official UN communications of countries’ officials were examined to understand the positions and foreign interests. The twenty statements were coded using Atlas.ti software to consistently extract relevant information as well as to code the textual material.

Qualitative content analysis can be conducted from both inductive and deductive approaches (Mayring, 2000). Both were used in this research. The coding and analysis were inductive in nature, as the first level of analysis was carried out in order to create a basis for the second part of the study. This was done to detect and identify the foreign policy interests in the communications of British and Chinese officials regarding the Crimean conflict. After that, the second level was executed in a deductive manner as the coding framework from the inductive research was applied to examine the news coverage.

The inductive approach implies the development of categories during the process of textual analysis and coding (Mayring, 2000). The certain relevant aspects of the textual material are determined through the formulation of criteria of definition, which are in turn acquired from the research question as well as the theoretical framework. After that, the research material is analyzed and categories are created and then corrected, improved, revised, and finally reduced to predominant patterns (Mayring, 2000). In a deductive approach, on the other hand, categories are formulated according to the relevant theoretical background and the coding framework is created prior the analysis of the text, which determines the definitions necessary to the coding process. Then, the research material is analyzed by assigning specific codes formulated prior to the analysis and assigned to the

relevant parts of the text. The procedure then is completed step by step and carefully revised (Mayring, 2000).

During the first level of analysis, the examination of the data was data-driven (Schreier, 2013) and began with the coding which can be conceptualized as reading and interpretation of the sampled units as well as separating it into meaningful parts (Boeije, 2010). That implies that to adequately concentrate on the data, and its analysis, no coding frame was designed before the beginning of the coding (Schreier, 2013). Coding was executed in three separate stages following the guidelines of Boeije (2010) who specifies differences between the steps of the process. First, open coding was used to start to conceptualize and examine the material. Furthermore, it helped to organize and compare the data. During the process of open coding, the initial codes were assigned to all the important material that corresponded to the same possible patterns. After that, the second stage of axial coding was conducted to reduce the amount of the initial codes into a meaningful quantity as well as to discover and establish the major reoccurring themes within the data. Then, the assigned codes were revised and arranged in order to recognize the emerging patterns. After that, the selective coding was conducted to finalize the main patterns and their titles as well as the relations between them and formulating the final conclusions (Boeije, 2010). Finally, the codes derived from the analysis of the United Nations official communications were used to construct the coding framework for further analysis. The framework consisted of two parts: one, that described the British position on the Crimean crisis and one that provided the Chinese perspective on the issue.

The analysis of the statements made by the representatives of the United Kingdom revealed the country's foreign interests that can be described as subjective. United Kingdom strongly expressed its support to Ukraine and expressed "commitment to Ukraine's territorial integrity, unity and sovereignty" (United Nations, Security Council, 69th year: 7124th meeting, 2014). Moreover, United Kingdom disapproved of Russia's actions: "we condemn any act of aggression against Ukraine" (United Nations, Security Council, 69th year: 7124th meeting, 2014). Its interests also included Russia withdrawing from the region of eastern Ukraine. Therefore, it was important for the UK to support economic sanctions implemented against Russia.

In contrast according to the United Nations statements, foreign interests of China was to remain neutral, stating that its position was "objective and impartial" (Security Council, 70th year: 7400th meeting, 2015). China also declared that the issue is very complex, and a diplomatic peaceful solution was needed. Thus, the country encouraged international action

in attempts to solve the conflict: “the international community should continue to increase diplomatic efforts to push for a political settlement of the crisis in Ukraine” (Security Council, 70th year: 7400th meeting, 2015).

Table 2. UK coding frame

Against Russia	For Ukraine	Demanding Russia’s Retreat	International Community
against annexation	difficult position	asking Russia to act diplomatically	UN position
against elections	supporting sovereignty	failure to comply	international action
against referendum	supporting Ukraine	withdrawing actions	
condemning actions	Ukraine’s democratic actions		
false pretext			
propaganda			
Russia as aggressor			
supporting separatists			
separatist crimes			
threat to human rights			

The coding frame that emerged from the analysis of the United Nations statements consisted of eight categories in total: four to describe UK’s foreign policy regarding Crimean Crisis and four to represent that of China’s. Categories for the United Kingdom were “Against Russia”, “For Ukraine”, “Demanding Russia’s Retreat”, and “International Community”. The first category, “Against Ukraine”, comprised fragments that denounced Russia’s actions in the region of Crimea. Then, “For Ukraine” expressed support for Ukraine during the Crimean conflict. “Demanding Russia’s Retreat” referred to the demands for Russia to stop its actions and end the conflict. Finally, “International Community” was identified as the United Kingdom’s attempts to emphasize its stance that was in line with the

international actors and organizations as well as their actions taken against the Russian Federation. Codes for each category can be found in Table 2.

Categories for China were “Impartiality and Objectivity”, “Opposing the Conflict”, “Non-violent Resolution” and “International Cooperation”. First of all, “Impartiality and Objectivity” referred to the China’s objective stance in relation to the Crimean crisis. The second category, “Opposing the Conflict” comprised the elements that expressed the opposition to the escalated conflict. Then, “Non-violent Resolution” expressed China’s encouragements to resolve the conflict using peaceful and diplomatic means. Lastly, “International Cooperation” signified China’s position that the Crimean crisis could be solved with the help of the international actors. Codes for each category can be found in Table 3.

Table 3. China coding frame

Impartiality and Objectivity	Opposing the Conflict	Non-violent Resolution	International Cooperation
neutrality	against confrontation	encouraging diplomacy	international action
distant involvement	against violence	encouraging peace	previous agreements
complex issue	concern threat to human rights		

The second level of the analysis was executed by coding the news coverage. The coding frame built using the themes identified in the United Nations communications was applied to the sampled news coverage to examine how the patterns of nation-states’ foreign interests were reflected in the media as media diplomacy. According to Bryman (2012), the coding frame serves as instructions on how to code and it includes the list of possible categories as well as subcategories that fall under each category. It was important in this stage of analysis since it provided the guidelines about the interpretation as well as the coding of the material (Bryman, 2012). During this stage, the news articles sampled from the *BBC* were coded according to the patterns that were derived from the analysis of the

official United Nations statements made by the British officials and the articles from *Xinhua News Agency* were coded according to those of the Chinese.

Data Analysis

This research was focused on the thematic patterns that were expressed in the official United Nations statements as well as their manifestation, implementation, and recurrence in the news articles by two different state-owned media outlets. One of the techniques of interpretative qualitative analysis that can be used for qualitative studies aims to analyze the reoccurring patterns, themes or categories that can be identified throughout the data set (Boeije, 2010). More specifically, since the study was concerned with media diplomacy and depictions of the Crimea conflict in 2014-2015 by *BBC* and *Xinhua News Agency*, thematic analysis was selected and for the study. It was applied during the first, inductive stage of analysis to identify the emerging themes in the official UN statements. Then, the established themes and codes were used as a coding frame during the deductive analysis of the news articles to determine which themes and to what extent were present in the news coverage. During this stage, no new topics or codes were created. Thematic analysis was chosen because it can be used as a flexible and suitable tool to identify, analyze and report of the recognized and acknowledged patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Therefore, to adequately answer the proposed research question, the reoccurring patterns of foreign interests and official positions of the countries were found, identified, properly named, studied, described and disclosed as discussed by Braun and Clarke (2006) and then applied to the analysis of the news articles to check whether and how it is observed as an expression of media diplomacy.

Validity and Reliability

First of all, according to Elo et al. (2014), the trustworthiness of qualitative content analysis can be ensured by the selection of well-saturated, diverse, appropriate, and rich research data which implies that data collection, data analysis and the reporting of the results are closely interconnected. This is applied was the research as the chosen sampling method both provides a possibility to gather the relevant and data that is necessary to answer the

research question. Furthermore, to verify the trustworthiness of the process of the data collection, precise details and the description of the sampling procedure was also provided (Elo et al., 2014).

Qualitative analysis is both interpretative and reflexive by nature which, therefore, implies a certain degree of subjectivity (Schreier, 2012). Furthermore, Schreier (2012) argues that the interpretation of the data, as well as the results, can be subjected to the discussion as biases of the researcher can influence the procedures. Thus, a few methods of precautions were implemented to guarantee the credibility of the study. First of all, every procedure of the study was presented and described in a detailed and transparent fashion in order to ensure reliability which is conceptualized as trustworthiness and adherents of the established methodology (Silverman, 2011). Moreover, a clear theoretical perspective of media diplomacy was chosen to conduct the study which established the transparency of the research. In addition, the theoretical background, as well as the arguments constructed in the theoretical framework, were used to guide the study throughout the different stages as well as data interpretation and becoming acquainted with the topic (Silverman, 2011). After that, the validity of the research was established by implementing the constant comparison approach as described by Silverman (2011). This implies that the results of different stages of the research were constantly compared to take the variations observed within the data set into an account. Finally, comprehensive treatment of the data was applied to explore the sampled research material to ensure that no information that was relevant and important to answer the research question was missed (Silverman, 2011).

4. Results

In this chapter, the results of the research are presented. The relation between the countries' foreign policies and the news coverage of the state-owned media companies is identified and described. The sections are divided by countries and the sub-sections are separated by themes.

The United Kingdom and *BBC*

The *BBC* coverage of the Crimean crisis was rather extensive, with the focus on the events that took place during the crisis. International affairs were also covered. Detailed descriptions were provided about the conflicts as well as the political situation. In addition, more personal stories of the civilians and fighters were also published by *BBC*.

Against Russia

The most prominent code identified under this category was “propaganda” which conveyed both the coverage as well as condemnation of Russian propaganda which also was in line with the accusations made by the United Kingdom representatives in the United Nations meetings. This code was observed in 78% (39 out of 50) of the articles. One example was a statement that state propaganda in the Russian media is "alive and well" (Bell, 2014). Furthermore, more specific reports were provided as well. For instance, *BBC* published an article on Russian propaganda that was claimed to use the rhetoric of the Second World War. Here, pro-Russian media outlets described the Ukrainian government as “neo-nazi” (Shevchenko, 2015) as well as “nazi” or “fascist” (BBC, 2014g). In addition to this, the explosions in the capital city were presented as work of “partisans” and “the anti-fascist underground” (Shevchenko, 2015). Finally, Russian media also proclaimed children, allegedly involved in the Crimean conflict as “heroes” (Shevchenko, 2014a).

Besides, Russia's actions were depicted in a condemnatory manner as the code “condemning actions” was observed in 56% (28 out of 50) of all articles. This could be illustrated by the NATO representative's accusation, that Russia was using force as

“intimidation technique” as well as using “Hybrid warfare” which consisted of various types of threats, such as cyber, subversion and conventional (BBC, 2015j). Another appropriate example was the media coverage of allegations made by Ukraine and the United States of America according to which Russia was blamed of deceiving international community as well as breaking the ceasefire agreement (BBC, 2015g).

In United Nations meetings, Russia was repeatedly accused of supporting separatist groups by the representatives of the United Kingdom. It was a widely identifiable pattern in *BBC* coverage of Ukraine’s crisis as the code “supporting separatists” was coded in 72% (36 out of 50) of the articles. For example, a pattern of separatists being called “Russian-backed rebels” (BBC, 2015e) or “pro-Russian insurgents” (BBC, 2015a) was visible, however, without clarifying that this was the official position of the United Kingdom. In addition, *BBC* presented the accusations made by NATO, Western countries, and Ukrainian officials according to which, the evidence of Russia supplying separatists with soldiers as well as heavy weaponry was revealed (BBC, 2015i). Furthermore, to strengthen this claim, *BBC* also covered the fact that Gazprom, a giant Russian gas company “began supplying gas directly to rebel-held parts of eastern Ukraine” (BBC, 2015h).

In relation, the separatist groups were depicted as guilty of numerous crimes. The code “separatist crimes” was observed in 54% (27 out of 50) of the articles. One of the examples could be considered the reports that raised the possibility of pro-Russian separatist using children in warfare as Russian media presented reports about under-aged boys undergoing military training (Shevchenko, 2014a). Concerning this, another example was a report that covered the story of separatist groups parading the captured soldiers of the Ukrainian government through the streets of the separatist-held city of Donetsk. The incident was reported as being condemned by the Ukrainian government officials as the spokesman's description of the event was that “the organisers of this disgusting event cannot be considered human” as well as claiming that “nothing is holy for them” (BBC, 2014j).

Correspondingly, *BBC* depicted Russia’s and separatists' actions as a “threat to human rights” in of the 38% (19 out of 50) of the articles. Reports of figures of deaths 5,300 and 1.5 million displaced people were presented (BBC, 2015e). *BBC* also published the reports of accusations of pro-Russian separatists beating, abducting, and torturing people (BBC, 2014f). Amnesty report is quoted as well, according to which journalists, as well as protestors, were targeted (BBC, 2014b). Furthermore, the situation was described as “inhumane” as families were divided because of the inability to go back to territories taken by the separatists (Burridge, 2015). The situation in the separatist areas was depicted as

harsh without communications or electricity (BBC, 2014h) and the lives of refugees were described as extremely difficult where a shortage of basic needs was endured (BBC, 2014f).

Another prominent code was “against annexation” which indicated the illegitimacy of Russia’s annexation of the Crimea region. This was coded in 50% (25 out of 50) of the articles. The code could be clearly illustrated by such examples as presenting the Western perspective of the conflict: “the West has criticised Russia for annexing the Crimean peninsula” (BBC, 2015j) and that the annexation of Crimea was “a move condemned around the world” (BBC, 2014k). Moreover, the situation was also acknowledged and portrayed in more simple ways: simply as “Russia's annexation of Crimea” (BBC, 2014g).

Table 4. Overview of code distribution under category “Against Russia”

Code	Frequency	
	(n=50)	Percentage
propaganda	39	78%
condemning actions	28	56%
supporting separatists	36	72%
separatist crimes	27	54%
threat to human rights	19	38%
against annexation	25	50%
Russia as aggressor	10	20%
against elections	3	6%
against referendum	2	4%
false pretext	2	4%

Finally, Russia was presented as the aggressor. The code “Russia as aggressor” was identified in 20% (10 out of 50) of the articles published by the news outlet. A lot of evidence was used to support this position. It could be proved by the Ukrainian National Security representative’s quote which accused Russia of “yet another act of provocation” (BBC, 2014d). Similarly, it was expressed that Russia was accused by both Ukraine and the Western countries of inciting violence (BBC, 2015c) as well as “orchestrating the separatist

insurgency” in eastern territories of Ukraine (BBC, 2014d). What is more, accusations for shooting the An-26 transport plane were also mentioned in the news coverage (BBC, 2014d). Finally, identifying Russia as the aggressor could also be strengthened by the reports of Russian military planes spotted moving towards the air space of the United Kingdom (BBC, 2015j). The representation of the code could accurately be summarized by using the quote by Barrack Obama, the President of the United States of America who declared that “Russia is on the wrong side of history” (Mardell, 2014).

The remaining three codes were less prominent. The code “against elections” was recognized in 6% (3 out of 50) of the articles and referred to the illegitimacy of the separatists’ elections in Crimea: “rebels staged their own elections” (BBC, 2014l). Then, the codes “against referendum” and “false pretext” were each identified in 4% (2 out of 50) of the articles. “Against referendum” revealed the United Kingdom’s opposition to the separatist-organized referendum, which was described as “disputed” (BBC, 2015b). Lastly, “false pretext” indicated the illegitimacy of Russia’s annexation of Crimea, which was presented by Russia as “humanitarian operation” (BBC, 2014i).

For Ukraine

The official British representatives declared the country’s complete support to Ukraine. This position was also maintained by *BBC*. Even though it was not expressed directly, the news outlet’s favoritism towards the Ukrainian government was coded with “supporting Ukraine” code which was observed in the conflict coverage in 28% (14 out of 50) of the articles. While the position of the government of the United Kingdom was not emphasized, support was demonstrated by showing the endorsement of other countries or international bodies. For example, IMF mission chief praised Ukrainian government for its commitment to its democratic aims and aspirations to reform the country as well as its achievements during the time period that was extremely difficult for the country (BBC, 2015k). Another example was Angela Merkel’s gratitude for the Ukrainian President for his efforts to put an end to violent confrontations: “Chancellor Merkel thanked President Poroshenko” (Doucet, 2015).

Other codes were identified through the data sample, however, were less prominent. For example, the code “supporting sovereignty” was expressed through repeated claims that

supported Ukraine's territorial integrity and was coded in 8% (4 out of 50) of the articles. For instance, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom was quoted saying that “Ukraine must be able to protect its sovereignty” (BBC, 2015d). The position of Ukraine’s government was also identified, according to which upholding the country’s sovereignty is of immeasurable significance (Rainsford, 2015). To add to that, *BBC* reported a fighter’s claim that she was involved in the crisis in order to “protect Ukraine's territorial integrity” (BBC, 2014a).

The last identified element was referring to Ukraine’s gruesome situation. The code ‘difficult position’ was found in 6% (3 out of 50) of the articles. This was represented by more personal stories of “grim reality[of] the soldiers' lives” that provided a depiction of danger, fear, and discomfort (Shevchenko, 2014b). Also, the commentary of Ukraine’s “exceptionally difficult environment” by the mission chief of the International Monetary Fund was provided (BBC, 2015k).

Finally, the code “Ukraine’s democratic actions” was not found in the news coverage published by *BBC*.

Table 5. Overview of code distribution under category “For Ukraine”

Code	Frequency (n=50)	Percentage
supporting Ukraine	14	28%
supporting sovereignty	4	8%
difficult position	3	6%
Ukraine’s democratic actions	0	0%

Demanding Russia’s Retreat

The position taken by the United Kingdom was to demand Russia to retreat, stop its actions in Crimea and de-escalate the conflict. It was represented by the code “asking Russia to act diplomatically”. This pattern was directly presented by *BBC* in 24% (12 out of 50) of the articles. To illustrate this, a request to find a peaceful solution by Federica Mogherini, foreign policy chief of the European Union was presented (BBC, 2015c) Moreover, an

American official was reported to call for Russia to “use its influence with the separatists and end these attacks immediately” (BBC, 2014k).

Another closely related element was the goal to force Moscow to withdraw from the region which was characterized by the code “withdrawing actions” that was coded in 18% (9 out of 50) of the articles. It could be illustrated by presenting Ukraine’s, EU and US goals with regards to the ceasefire agreement: “withdrawal of all Russian troops and heavy weapons” (BBC, 2015f).

The last code “failure to comply” was found in 4% (2 out of 50) of the articles. It specifically referred to blaming Russia for breaking the Minsk agreement (BBC, 2015l).

Table 6. Overview of code distribution under category “Demanding Russia’s Retreat”

Code	Frequency (n=50)	Percentage
asking Russia to act diplomatically	12	24%
Withdrawing actions	9	18%
Failure to comply	2	4%

International Community

In the conflict coverage published by *BBC*, this category was represented by the code “international action” which was encountered in 52% (26 out of 50) of the articles. The code mostly comprised the fragments that presented the decisions to impose sanctions on Russia made by the Western countries as well as the international institutions. This could be shown by the inclusion of sanctions in the news content. For example, *BBC* reported the economic sanctions imposed on Russia by both the European Union and the United States of America that aimed to target the sectors of defense equipment as well as oil and sensitive technologies as well as finance, energy and arms industries (BBC, 2014e). Moreover, there were also less prominent actions presented by the media. These included cooperative measures taken by the international community in response to Russia’s aggression. A fitting example could be the reports about NATO efforts to “increase its co-operation and

intelligence sharing with the EU” or increasing its military presence in the region of eastern Europe (BBC, 2015j).

The second code “UN position” was not identified in the articles.

Table 7. Overview of code distribution under category “International Community”

Code	Frequency	
	(n=50)	Percentage
International action	26	52%
UN position	0	0%

China and *Xinhua* News Agency

The news articles published by *Xinhua* were significantly shorter than those of *BBC*. It is possible that it was in line with the fact that the Chinese statements given during the United Nations meetings were considerably shorter than those of the United Kingdom which would imply that the Chinese involvement in the conflict was not as direct and prominent or that the Chinese government had fewer interests regarding the situation. Furthermore, in contrast to *BBC*, *Xinhua* focused on concise reports of the events, not providing many details.

Impartiality and Objectivity

Xinhua’s reporting of the Crimean crisis was consistent with China’s position regarding the conflict, taken during the United Nations’ Security Council and General Assembly meetings. The category was mainly represented by the code “complex issue” which depicted the country’s clearly defined position that the Crimean crisis was a complex problem. This code was observed in 58% (29 out of 50) of the articles. The conflict was described through the lens of “complexity of the Ukrainian situation” (Xinhua, 2014o). According to *Xinhua* articles, there were specific reasons why the conflict started and escalated and, to find a solution, “historical and contemporary factors of the Ukraine issue”

had to be taken into consideration (Xinhua, 2014b). What is more, the complexity of the issue was highlighted by presenting a need to resolve the crisis by taking into an account different ethnic groups living the crisis-affected eastern Ukraine, namely “ethnic Russians and pro-Russian Ukrainians” (Xinhua, 2014f), Ukrainians as well as Ukrainian Tartans, without expressing exclusive support for any of them (Xinhua, 2014t).

Moreover, the code “neutrality” was identified in 14% (7 out of 50) of the articles and directly presented the main position the country took during the international affairs. For instance, some articles used similar quotes to those expressed by the Chinese representatives in the United Nations meetings. The neutrality that was unquestionably presented in the news articles could be illustrated by the following statements that “China's stance on the current situation in Ukraine is objective, just, fair and peaceful” (Xinhua, 2014f). In addition, it was stated that the country “always sticks to the principle of non-interference in any country's internal affairs” (Xinhua, 2014b) which highlighted its unwillingness to directly participate in the conflict and the lack of support for only one country engaged in the dispute. Finally, neutrality was also established by describing China’s “open attitude toward any proposals and suggestions that could help ease the tensions in Ukraine” which signaled the willingness to work with any involved parties towards the resolutions of the crisis (Xinhua, 2014o).

Finally, *Xinhua* also reported China’s role as being one of the neutral communicators. This was illustrated by code “distant involvement” which portrayed China in the exchange of communication with “various parties” in order to contribute to the de-escalation of the Crimean crisis (Xinhua, 2014f). The code was found in 2% (1 out of 50) of the articles.

Table 8. Overview of code distribution under category “Impartiality and Objectivity”

Code	Frequency (n=50)	Percentage
Complex issue	29	58%
Neutrality	7	14%
Distant involvement	1	2%

Opposing the Conflict

Another foreign policy interest of the Chinese government that was clearly reflected in *Xinhua* news coverage was speaking out against the conflict. First of all, the country's concern about the situation in Ukraine was emphasized through the code "concern", which was found in 16% (8 out of 50) of all the articles. For example, direct quotations of the Chinese representatives' speeches in United Nations were used to establish China's concern: "China is deeply concerned about the current situation in Ukraine" (Xinhua, 2014c). Similar claims made by other Chinese politicians echoed the nation's foreign interests, for instance, "China has been closely watching the situation in Ukraine, and regrets the casualties caused by conflict" (Xinhua, 2014a). Also, opinions of other countries' or organizations' that are similar to that of Chinese were provided, for instance, the NATO statement about Crimean crisis "having direct and serious implications for the security and stability" (Xinhua, 2014d).

"Against violence" was used to identify the Chinese governments' criticism toward the escalating violence reflected in the news articles. This was coded in 16% (8 out of 50) of the articles. For example, even though the escalation of the conflict was not specifically blamed on one of the groups involved, the Chinese position was expressed as specifically condemning recent acts of extreme violence. (Xinhua, 2014c). Another way to illustrate the code could be *Xinhua*'s reports how the violence was used as a tool in the political conflict as well as about "violent clashes" between Ukrainian police and "anti-government protestors" that resulted in deaths of 20 people (Xinhua, 2014a).

Some other, less prominent elements in line with Chinese position were also observed in *Xinhua* media coverage. One of them, closely linked to the previously mentioned code was "threat to human rights" which was identified in 4% of the articles (2 out of 50 articles). This could be proven by *Xinhua* using the official communication of the United Nations and reporting their claims about "human rights violations" as well as their attempts to encourage "respect for human rights" (Xinhua, 2014s).

The last code of the category was "against the confrontation" which was also found in 4% of the articles (2 out of 50 articles). This could be illustrated by providing examples of *Xinhua* addressing countries with different perceptions of the Crimean crisis as well as how their actions could push the situation to further escalation. For instance, fears that irrational actions of the United States of America would damage the prospects of resolution:

“U.S. warship's movements raise fears that the stand-off between Russia and Ukraine and the West over Crimea could become more militarized” (Xinhua, 2014j).

Table 9. Overview of code distribution under category “Opposing the Conflict”

Code	Frequency	
	(N=50)	Percentage
concern	8	16%
against violence	8	16%
threat to human rights	2	2%
against confrontation	2	2%

Non-violent Resolution

During the meetings of the United Nations, Chinese officials emphasized the priority of finding peaceful and diplomatic resolution of the Crimean crisis. This was also observed in the *Xinhua* coverage of the conflict and was expressed through two main codes. The first one, “encouraging diplomacy” was identified in 54% (27 out of 50) of the articles. China was depicted as calling “for dialogue among Ukraine's different factions to restore social order” (Xinhua, 2014a) or “on all parties involved in the tense situation in Ukraine to seek a political solution to their disputes through dialogue and negotiations” (Xinhua, 2014c). Moreover, China encouraged to “seek a political resolution of their differences through dialogue and negotiation based on respect for international law and norms, governing international relations in order to uphold regional peace and stability” (Xinhua, 2014c). Once again, a similar pattern of international actors declaring the same position was covered by *Xinhua*. For example, communication between Russian President Vladimir Putin and British Prime Minister David Cameron was introduced as both leaders agreed that “they both want to find a "diplomatic solution" to the situation in Ukraine” (Xinhua, 2014n). The United States of America was described as looking for a diplomatic solution as well, however, only with the Ukrainian government: “[US] starting talks with Ukrainian interim government to find a diplomatic solution” (Xinhua, 2014m). Finally, it was also reported

that German Chancellor Angela Merkel hoped to reach “an appropriate solution through dialogue”. Furthermore, she also asked to “strengthen communication” with China in attempts to find a resolution of the Crimean crisis as Germany “attaches importance to China's role” (Xinhua, 2014p).

The second code to characterize the category was “encouraging peace” and was identified in 22% (11 out of 50) of the articles. This could be illustrated by quotes such as “China called for calmness and restraint” (Xinhua, 2014f) or “called for regional peace and stability” (Xinhua, 2014q). Furthermore, to establish the need for peace in the Crimea, *Xinhua* also included similar opinions from the international actors. Here, for instance, the statements from the United Nations officials were used. A quote from the Secretary-General stating the “need for peace and stability in the region” was implemented into the news coverage (Xinhua, 2014i). What is more, other United Nations officials were cited as the region of Crimea “urgently needed de-escalation” of the crisis (Xinhua, 2014i). Similarly, an international community was described as calling for “de-escalation of tensions in Ukraine” (Xinhua, 2014h).

Table 10. Overview of code distribution under category “Non-violent Resolution”

Code	Frequency	
	(n=50)	Percentage
encouraging diplomacy	27	54%
encouraging peace	11	22%

International Cooperation

The last topic discovered in both the country’s foreign interests as well as *Xinhua* coverage of the Crimean crisis focused on the international actions, that should be taken and executed by the co-operation of the international community. The code “international action” was observed in 72% of (36 out of 50) the articles. For instance, a monitoring mission by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Conflict Prevention Centre and a number of countries was reported to take place (Xinhua, 2014n). In addition to this, cooperation between countries involved in attempts to solve the problem was depicted.

For example, the involvement of NATO or the travel of the Ukrainian Prime Minister to the White House were reported (Xinhua, 2014r). Then, the need to grant Ukraine financial aid was discussed frequently as multiple international actors deemed it necessary to prevent the country from going bankrupt: “the International Monetary Fund is ready to provide financial and technical assistance” (Xinhua, 2014g) or “EU will provide Kiev with financial aid” (Xinhua, 2014l). Another important action that was covered was imposing certain sanctions on Russia. This could be illustrated by examples of news coverage of the financial sanctions as well as travel restrictions imposed by the United States of America (Xinhua, 2014m) or “Western powers” more generally (Xinhua, 2014k). While such means were opposed in the United Nations by the Chinese representatives, Chinese perspective was generally not reflected in the *Xinhua* news coverage of the Crimean conflict. This, however, was expressed by quoting Russian politicians who claimed that the sanctions against Russia were “counterproductive” and would further increase the international financial and political instability (Xinhua, 2014e).

Another code “previous agreements” was identified in 2% (1 out of 50) articles and mentioned “Vienna document's Chapter III on faith and security building measures” (Xinhua, 2014n).

Table 11. Overview of code distribution under category “International Cooperation”

Code	Frequency (n=50)	Percentage
international action	36	72%
previous agreements	1	2%

5. Conclusions & Discussion

The aim of the study was to examine the role of media diplomacy in the news coverage of the Crimean crisis in the period of 2014-2015 by two state-owned media companies, namely *BBC* and *Xinhua News Agency*. The findings of the examination of the *BBC* news coverage have shown that all main foreign interests of the United Kingdom were observed as reoccurring topics in the news article. The most prominent themes were expressing the contraposition against Russia and its actions as well as declaring support for Ukraine. While the other two topics, demanding Russia's retreat as well as taking and emphasizing the position of the international community were less prominent, they were expressed clearly, nevertheless. First of all, *BBC* presented the United Kingdom's stance against Russia by condemning Russia's extensive implementation of propaganda directed against the Ukrainian government, expressing open disapproval of its actions in the Crimean conflict, emphasizing Russia's close relationship with the separatists as well as covering the crimes committed by the separatist groups and the violations of human rights, condemning Russia's annexation of Crimean Peninsula and portraying Russia's role as the sole aggressor which was in line with the position of the United Kingdom and the Western world. Then, United Kingdom's backing of Ukraine was expressed through direct declarations of support and defending the country's sovereignty more specifically as well as presenting Ukraine's position as complicated and endangered. After that, another characteristic of the United Kingdom's foreign interest in demanding Russia's retreat was expressed by asking Russia to act in a diplomatic manner so that the crisis could be de-escalated as well as the attempts to force Moscow to withdraw from the region of eastern Ukraine. Finally, the last theme of supporting the position of the international community was supported through the news coverage of sanctions imposed against Russia and by covering the events of mutual cooperation of nation-states as well as international organization directed against the activities of Russia.

Since the identified patterns of Chinese foreign interests differed significantly from those of the United Kingdom, media diplomacy was also implemented to cover the Crimean crisis differently in the content published by *Xinhua*. First of all, China's chosen position of impartiality towards the conflict was directly emphasized through the country's declared neutrality as well as reflecting the official stance that Crimean crisis was a complex issue without showing support to any actor involved in the conflict. Besides, another interest of the Chinese foreign policy of opposing the conflict was covered by presenting China's

concern about the crisis, denouncing the escalated violence, emphasizing the country's chosen stance to oppose the confrontation as well as expressing distress about the violations of human rights. What is more, the following policy goal of the country was a resolution of the conflict achieved by peaceful and diplomatic action, which was conveyed in a straightforward way by presenting the position of the government, that encouraged the international community to stay calm and, thus, to solve the conflict in a diplomatic fashion. Finally, *Xinhua* presented the last theme of emphasizing the importance of international cooperation which was covered through the cooperative activities which were declared as a necessity by the Chinese representatives as a resolution of the Crimean crisis.

The analysis revealed that media diplomacy had a significant role in the news coverage by both state-owned media companies to express their foreign interests in the Crimean crisis. As observed, the foreign policy of both countries differed substantially. Therefore, even when similar codes were identified, the application of media diplomacy incorporated those patterns to establish and legitimize the state's foreign interests. One similarity between the two was the expressed concern about the violations of human rights, however, used in different contexts as well as supporting contrasting interests. While the concern over human rights in a general was observed in the news coverage of *Xinhua*, *BBC* portrayed the human rights endangered by Russia's and separatist actions specifically. Similarly, the interests of both countries were also presented by the coverage of international action by both media outlets. However, whereas *BBC* covered the international events to highlight the attempts of the international community as well as the Western world to punish Russia for its action against Ukraine's sovereignty and force the country to seize its actions, *Xinhua* presented international actions in the context of international cooperation, which demonstrated the efforts initiated by various countries and organizations to work together in order to diplomatically resolve the conflict. Finally, the media outlets presented different perspectives on the implementation of sanction in accordance with their own interests.

While the differences between the foreign policy interests of the United Kingdom and China were obvious, both differences as well as similarities were found in the implementation of media diplomacy in state-owned media outlets. The main difference between the implementation of media diplomacy was that the two media companies used different approaches of implementation of binary oppositions that can play an important part in the news coverage as observed and discussed by the academics (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Musa & Ferguson, 2013). The analysis of the *BBC* news articles uncovered that the outlet

incorporated a classic binary opposition used to frame foreign news while reporting the Crimean conflict – the opposition between the Western and non-western world as discussed by Galtung and Ruge (1965). This was expressed through the emphasis on the support to Ukraine which was backed by the Western world as well as condemning Russia's actions while indicating Russia as the sole aggressor whose actions were illegitimate. In contrast, no classic binary oppositions were observed in coverage of Crimean crisis by *Xinhua* which used only the opposition between Ukraine and Russia, two countries that are considered to be non-western as well as different nationalities of people involved in the crisis, namely Ukrainians and Russian speaking population that supported Russia. While keeping in mind that China strongly declared its position as neutral, one could argue that such choice by *Xinhua* was made to support the country's stance and highlight the complexity of the conflict.

What is more, the analysis of media diplomacy also displayed the difference between the portrayal of the situation of Crimea in the news outlets. *BBC* used personal stories of the people involved in the conflict to strengthen the foreign policy's importance and prominence. In contrast, *Xinhua* refrained from such methods and its coverage appeared as more impersonal and relied solely on the words of Chinese representatives and politicians as well as other international actors. This difference was the direct reflection of the specific foreign interests of the countries: while China maintained its neutral position in the *Xinhua* publications, *BBC* illustrated the policy of the United Kingdom using such techniques as its position of the country was declared as in favor of Ukraine.

On the other hand, several similarities were observed between the applications of the approach by *BBC* and *Xinhua*. Both newspapers implemented similar techniques, such as using direct quotations of the politicians or other officials to establish mostly an undisputed position towards the Crimean crisis. What is more, both news outlets used the quotes or statements made by influential foreign actors to validate their countries' stance as well as to make them appear as supported by the international community. In addition, both *BBC* and *Xinhua* were observed to be covering the Ukrainian conflict selectively. For example, *Xinhua* did not acknowledge the presence of separatist groups in Crimea as they were only referred to as "ethnic Russians" or "Russian speakers" while *BBC* repeatedly covered the separatists' involvement in eastern Ukraine. At the same time, *BBC* did not mention Russia's claims of supporting the possibility of peaceful resolution of the crisis, while it was covered by *Xinhua*. Therefore, keeping in mind the foreign policies of both the United Kingdom and China, one could also argue that this kind of selective news coverage is

directly related to the foreign interests of the countries.

Since media diplomacy was used to present both countries' interests in the state-owned news outlets, it could be argued that the Western and non-western distinction (Galtung & Ruge, 1965) between the news outlets as well as the countries could not directly determine the presence or absence of media diplomacy or its role in the foreign news coverage. The results of this study shown that media diplomacy indeed played a significant role in both of them. Moreover, since the news channels generally followed the countries' foreign policy interests while covering the Crimean crisis, it could also be claimed that the presence or absence and the role of media diplomacy as well as how it is implemented was directly connected and determined by the specific policy interests and the best ways to present them to the audiences. While one could speculate how countries' foreign interests were connected to their position in the global arenas well as the Western and non-western opposition (Galtung & Ruge, 1965), it is beyond the scope of this paper.

The conflict received a substantial amount of attention from both state-owned media enterprises. One could claim that this is in line with the theory of Harcup and O'Neill (2017) who claimed that conflict could be considered as a news value, making the event worthy of becoming news. Interestingly, whereas all the main fundamental points of countries' foreign interests were reflected in the articles, some specific details regarding the interests failed to make it to the news. For example, while during the United Nations meetings the United Kingdom repeatedly blamed Russia for illegitimate elections and annexing Crimean region under a false pretext, this was identified only in a few articles published by *BBC*. Similarly, whereas in the UN statements, China emphasized the importance of past agreements, both made in the past as well as in relation to the specific conflict of Crimea, it was observed in one *Xinhua* article. This could indicate that particular details were not considered newsworthy enough by the outlets (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Joye, Heinrich & Wöhlert, 2016; Harcup & O'Neill, 2001; Harcup & O'Neill, 2017; Kheirabadi & Aghagolzadeh, 2012) or that they were too complex to be packaged and presented to the audiences in a simple and understandable way (Brown, 2019).

The findings of the study also provided an interesting perspective on the relationship between media diplomacy and propaganda. Even though both Gilboa (1998) and Cull (2019) strongly distinguish between public diplomacy and media diplomacy from propaganda, in the case of this research the line between the two was blurry. While it is argued that nowadays public diplomacy employs "civilized persuasion" which is used instead of propaganda, both news outlets used the technique of selective reporting which could be

conceptualized as half-truth which, in turn, is an element of propaganda (Manheim as cited in Gilboa, 1998). According to Ellul (1973), it is almost impossible to separate propaganda from objective information because propaganda is based on real facts instead of blunt lies and gains effectiveness through its distinct interpretation of specific events. This then could further be related to propaganda model formulated by Herman and Chomsky (1988) which implies that the agenda, process of context selection and the suppression or emphasis on the specific patterns of the news coverage is chosen and executed purposefully. Since media diplomacy was used by both media outlets to represent the Crimean crisis in relation to the countries' foreign policy interests, the practice of media diplomacy, in this case, could be considered similar to that of propaganda.

This research also confirmed other theories discussed in the chapter of the theoretical framework. First of all, the analysis of the *Xinhua*'s content confirms Gilboa's (1998) theory about media diplomacy which states that it is focused on conflict resolution as well as possible negotiations. In the Chinese case, the state-owned media enterprise was a tool to express its willingness to resolve the conflict peacefully as well as to report its efforts towards it. Moreover, while the United Kingdom did not extensively use media diplomacy for such activities, it can still be argued that *BBC* incorporated media diplomacy into its coverage in order to establish and foster the publics' support for the actions undertaken by the United Kingdom, in this context executing it in form of conventional media product, as described by Gilboa (1998). Moreover, Cull (2019) emphasizes the importance of international broadcasters in the times of various emergencies and crises, stating that during such times, established news outlets are the most trusted sources as they provide quality reporting, capacity and perception which was highlighted by this study.

Moreover, this research was also in line with the work of Kheirabadi and Aghagolzadeh (2012) as well as Herman and Chomsky (1988) who claim that ideology is an essential part of the news coverage. The analysis also matches the statement made by Herman and Chomsky (1988) that media institutions defend interests of the state and the dominant groups as well as their social, economic, political aims and agenda. Furthermore, the results also confirmed the relevance of Nossek's (2014) and Brown's (2019) theories about the importance of the national frame in the coverage of foreign news. Nossek's (2014) statement that "foreign news is still a product of the existing frameworks of nationhood" (Nossek, 2004, pp.364) was proven to be correct in the context of this research. Nossek (2014) also notes that journalists and editors tend to apply professional news values less if the news coverage of specific events is related to the national interest which also seems

legitimate in the light of the research. Finally, Nossek (2014) also suggests that the national frame can be used to explain why specific events are chosen and presented as news. Nossek (2014) highlights the national government's involvement in conflicts as possibly influential for defining what foreign news is, which is supported by the results of the analysis as it demonstrates the government's interests having an influence on how specific events are represented. Moreover, the findings also support the work of Neureiter (2017) who points out that variation of biases between different countries can be explained by the ideological and political beliefs of the media outlets. In conclusion, the results of the research support the mixture of these theories which could be used to explain the representations of the Crimean conflict by both The United Kingdom and China. Even though the articles did not come across as being obvious propaganda, certain biases of the state-owned media outlets reflected their countries' expressed interests of foreign policy that were identified.

This study can help to better understand media diplomacy and how it is implemented in the news coverage. Since this study was specifically focused on the news coverage of international conflict, it can provide an insight into how media coverage can be applied and used in such situations. Moreover, this research can be beneficial to better understand the similarities as well as differences between other theoretical concepts. For example, it gives a perspective on the relation between media as well as propaganda and ideology. In addition to this, since media diplomacy is closely related to public diplomacy, it could be useful while understanding public diplomacy as different countries have their own approaches and its definition is said to be broad and vague by Cull (2019). Then, this study provided a perspective towards the news coverage provided by state-owned media as well as its relation to the policy and interests of the national governments. What is more, in this specific case, the chosen news outlets, *BBC* and *Xinhua* are not only state-owned but also massive media outlets. Finally, this study further contributes to the research about the representation of Crimean crisis by different media companies in different countries.

It is also important to acknowledge the limitations of the research as well. First of all, since the focus of the study was a specific period, this study cannot determine how the conflict was covered later and whether the foreign interests of the countries remained the same or changed over time considering the fact that the Ukrainian crisis remains unresolved to this day. What is more, the research was focused on two specific countries as well as two particular state-owned news outlets. Therefore, the results of the analysis cannot be generalized to other countries as different states determine their own foreign policies. Furthermore, the outcome of the analysis of coverage of *BBC* and *Xinhua* cannot be

generalized to other news outlets as the representation of the same event can differ significantly because of various factors. Then, since the examination of the news coverage was based on the official statements given in the United Nations meeting by countries' representatives, it is beyond the scope of this study to determine whether the declared foreign interests were expressed truthfully and if the countries' activities upheld their expressed positions and actually acted according to them. Finally, the inability to gather the sample directly from *Xinhua* archive because it was not functioning during the process of data gathering imposed a constraint on the analysis.

Finally, this research suggests possibilities for future studies. First of all, more studies with a focus on media diplomacy could be conducted in order to better grasp how it could be applied in various settings. What is more, additional work could also be done to explore and clarify the relationship between media diplomacy and propaganda, specifically in today's coverage of foreign news in both Western and non-western contexts. Besides, more research could be done on state-owned media outlets to broaden the knowledge of how such institutions cover both domestic as well as international affairs. Furthermore, a more in-depth political analysis of the reasons behind certain foreign interests in relation to the Crimean conflict as well as why they are important or advantageous for the countries would be beneficial. Concerning this, some research could be conducted to determine whether the actions of both the United Kingdom and China actually corresponded to their foreign policy interests as well as whether and how they were upheld. Finally, more work can be conducted on the coverage of the Crimean conflict considering the fact that the crisis is still ongoing. The analysis of the news coverage published in different countries, as well as both state-owned and private media outlets, would be useful to determine not only if and how the coverage of the conflict differs across the countries but also newspapers and other media outlets.

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7. Appendix 1

First Level of Analysis (UK)

Coding Process

UN United Kingdom - ATLAS.ti

File Home Search Project Analyze Import & Export Tools & Support Document Tools View

Create Free Quotation Open Code In List Quick Coding Auto Coding Rename Delete Unlink Flip Relation Word Cloud Word List Search Document

Explore

Search

UN United Kingdom

Documents (10)

Codes (163)

Memos (0)

Networks (0)

Document Groups (0)

Code Groups (4)

Memo Groups (0)

Network Groups (0)

Multimedia Transcripts

Code Group Manager

Document Manager

D 1: S.PV.7124-EN

Addressing Russia

crisis

concern

Russian responsibility

conflict

threat to territory

asking explanation

sovereignty of Ukraine

UK involvement

need for solution

communication with Ukraine

support of sovereignty

protection of minorities

supporting Ukraine

supporting past agreements

immediate action

UN United Kingdom - ATLAS.ti

File Home Search Project Analyze Import & Export Tools & Support Document Tools View

Create Free Quotation Open Code In List Quick Coding Auto Coding Rename Delete Unlink Flip Relation Word Cloud Word List Search Document

Explore

Search

UN United Kingdom

Documents (10)

Codes (163)

Memos (0)

Networks (0)

Document Groups (0)

Code Groups (4)

Memo Groups (0)

Network Groups (0)

Multimedia Transcripts

Code Group Manager

Document Manager

D 1: S.PV.7124-EN

D 10: S.PV.7457-EN

previous agreements

escalation of crisis

separatist crimes

against annexation

previous agreements

sponsoring separatists

propaganda

Russia lying

false pretext

UK involvement

undemocratic actions

sanctions

undemocratic actions

asking Russia to act diplomatically

sponsoring separatists

previous agreements

Russia lying

UK supporting Ukraine

UK supporting Ukraine

Russia as addressor

escalation of crisis

international action

separatist crime

propaganda

Russia lying

sponsoring sep.

false pretext

undemocratic a

undemocratic actions

UN action

sponsoring sep.

previous agree

sponsoring sep.

international ac

undemocratic a

Fragment of Quotation Output

8:27 OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (13:696 [13:726]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

OSCE Special Monitoring Mission

8:28 significant numbers of troops and military (13:743 [13:784]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

significant numbers of troops and military

8:29 equipment moving in convoy in separatist-held areas (13:787 [13:837]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

equipment moving in convoy in separatist-held areas

8:30 report (13:870 [13:875]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

report

8:31 convoy of more than 40 unmarked (13:916 [13:947]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

convoy of more than 40 unmarked

8:32 military vehicles (13:950 [13:966]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

military vehicles

8:33 19 unmarked Kamaz trucks (13:1021 [13:1045]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

19 unmarked Kamaz trucks

8:34 howitzer artillery piece (13:1063 [13:1086]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

howitzer artillery piece

8:35 personnel in green uniforms without insignia (13:1102 [13:1145]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

personnel in green uniforms without insignia

8:36 Kraz troop carriers; 6 fuel tankers (13:1152 [13:1186]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

Kraz troop carriers; 6 fuel tankers

8:37 Bronetransporter armoured personnel carrier (13:1206 [13:1248]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

Bronetransporter armoured personnel carrier

8:38 this pattern (13:1265 [13:1276]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

this pattern

8:39 military vehicles entering Ukraine (13:1308 [13:1341]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

military vehicles entering Ukraine

8:40 fighting by separatists (13:1365 [13:1387]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

fighting by separatists

8:41 cannot disguise (13:1451 [13:1465]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

cannot disguise

8:42 they come from Russia (13:1482 [13:1502]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

they come from Russia

8:43 explanation (13:1526 [13:1537]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

explanation

8:44 Russia continues to deny that fact, (13:1553 [13:1588]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

Russia continues to deny that fact,

8:45 its attempts at deception (13:1612 [13:1636]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

its attempts at deception

8:46 Russian television station (13:1675 [13:1700]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

Russian television station

8:47 footage of an armoured personnel carrier (13:1717 [13:1756]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

footage of an armoured personnel carrier

8:48 column in Donetsk (13:1776 [13:1792]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

column in Donetsk

8:49 from the Russian city of Ryazan (13:1812 [13:1842]) - D 8: S_PV.7311-EN

from the Russian city of Ryazan

Fragment of Quotation Output

8:1 deeply concerned and worried (11:2826 [11:2853]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

deeply concerned and worried

8:2 continued worsening of the armed conflict (11:2866 [11:2906]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

continued worsening of the armed conflict

8:3 has caused great loss (11:2935 [11:2955]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

has caused great loss

8:4 all the parties (11:3006 [11:3020]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

all the parties

8:5 must exercise restraint (11:3033 [11:3055]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

must exercise restraint

8:6 principled (11:3131 [11:3141]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

principled

8:7 this occasion, (11:3184 [11:3197]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

this occasion,

8:8 will refrain from repeating it. (11:3202 [11:3234]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

will refrain from repeating it.

8:9 crisis (11:3274 [11:3279]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

crisis

8:10 can be resolved only by political means. (11:3293 [11:3332]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

can be resolved only by political means.

8:11 all the parties concerned (11:3359 [11:3383]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

all the parties concerned

8:12 achieve a prompt ceasefire, (11:3389 [11:3415]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

achieve a prompt ceasefire,

8:13 promote a political resolution of the crisis in Ukraine, (11:3442 [11:3497]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

promote a political resolution of the crisis in Ukraine,

8:14 fully accommodate the legitimate rights (11:3500 [11:3538]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

fully accommodate the legitimate rights

8:15 all regions and ethnic groups (11:3571 [11:3599]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

all regions and ethnic groups

8:16 ake into full consideration (11:3618 [11:3645]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

ake into full consideration

8:17 concerns of all parties, thereby achieving a balance (11:3662 [11:3714]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

concerns of all parties, thereby achieving a balance

8:18 international community (11:3740 [11:3762]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

international community

8:19 urge the parties concerned to make good use (11:3772 [11:3814]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

urge the parties concerned to make good use

8:20 various mechanisms for dialogue and liaison (11:3820 [11:3862]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

various mechanisms for dialogue and liaison

8:21 communications (11:3875 [11:3888]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

communications

8:22 mutual trust (11:3932 [11:3943]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

mutual trust

8:23 China supports all efforts (11:3947 [11:3972]) - D 8: S_PV.7253-EN

China supports all efforts

9. Appendix 3

Second Level of Analysis (BBC)

Codebook:

Project: BBC

Code Report

All (20) codes

○ against annexation

1 Groups:

Against Russia

○ against elections

1 Groups:

Against Russia

○ against referendum

1 Groups:

Against Russia

○ asking Russia to act diplomatically

1 Groups:

Demanding Russia's Retreat

○ condemning actions

1 Groups:

Against Russia

○ difficult position

1 Groups:

For Ukraine

○ **failure to comply**

1 Groups:

Demanding Russia's Retreat

○ **false pretext**

1 Groups:

Against Russia

○ **international action**

1 Groups:

International Community

○ **propaganda**

1 Groups:

Against Russia

○ **Russia as aggressor**

1 Groups:

Against Russia

○ **Separation from rest of Ukraine and reco**

0 Groups

○ **separatist crimes**

1 Groups:

Against Russia

○ **supporting separatists**

1 Groups:

Against Russia

○ **supporting sovereignty**

1 Groups:

For Ukraine

- supporting Ukraine

- 1 Groups:

- For Ukraine

- threat to human rights

- 1 Groups:

- Against Russia

- Ukraine's democratic actions

- 1 Groups:

- For Ukraine

- UN position

- 1 Groups:

- International Community

- withdrawing actions

- 1 Groups:

- Demanding Russia's Retreat

Coding Process

The screenshot displays the BBC - ATLAS.ti software interface. The top menu bar includes File, Home, Search Project, Analyze, Import & Export, Tools & Support, Document, Tools, and View. Below the menu is a toolbar with icons for creating quotations, opening files, coding, and other functions. The main workspace is divided into three panes: Explore, Code Manager, and Document Manager. The Explore pane on the left shows a hierarchical view of the project, including Documents (50), Codes (20), Memos (0), Networks (0), Document Groups (0), Code Groups (4), Memo Groups (0), Network Groups (0), and Multimedia Transcripts. The Document Manager pane in the center displays the text of the document 'D 28: Ukraine conflict, Poroshenko calls for UN peacek...'. The text is divided into paragraphs, and various coding tags are applied to different parts of the text. The tags include 'international action', 'withdrawing actions', 'separatist crimes', 'supporting Ukraine', and 'propaganda'. The bottom status bar shows the current page is 1 of 15, and the zoom level is 88%.

Fragment of Quotation Output

All (879) quotations

1:1 economic sanctions (1:268 [1:285]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

economic sanctions

1:2 The sanctions (1:363 [1:375]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

The sanctions

1:3 sanctions (1:586 [1:594]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

sanctions

1:5 EU sanctions (2:155 [2:167]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

EU sanctions

1:6 US imposed its own sanctions on Moscow (2:335 [2:372]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

US imposed its own sanctions on Moscow

1:7 EU states also voted (2:541 [2:560]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

EU states also voted

1:8 to extend a ban (2:574 [2:590]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

to extend a ban

1:9 approval of EU foreign ministers (2:716 [2:747]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

approval of EU foreign ministers

1:10 decisions taken at ambassador level within the EU (2:791 [2:840]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

decisions taken at ambassador level within the EU

1:11 The EU and US have ratcheted up sanctions (2:1181 [2:1221]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

The EU and US have ratcheted up sanctions

1:12 restrictions on major Russian state banks and corporations (2:1267 [2:1324]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

restrictions on major Russian state banks and corporations

1:13 argeted: Rosneft, Transneft and Gazprom Neft, t (2:1374 [2:1420]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

argeted: Rosneft, Transneft and Gazprom Neft, t

1:14 blacklisted dozens of senior Russian officials, separatist commanders (3:144 [3:212]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

blacklisted dozens of senior Russian officials, separatist commanders

1:15 accused of undermining Ukrainian sovereignty. (3:233 [3:279]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

accused of undermining Ukrainian sovereignty.

1:17 EU leaders said sanctions would continue until the "complete implement..... (3:290 [3:364]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

EU leaders said sanctions would continue until the "complete implementation

1:18 ceasefire deal a (3:373 [3:388]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

ceasefire deal a

1:19 violation of February's Minsk agreement (3:567 [3:606]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

violation of February's Minsk agreement

1:20 rebels seized large parts of two eastern region (3:855 [3:901]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

rebels seized large parts of two eastern region

1:21 More than 6,400 people have been killed in eastern Ukraine (3:750 [3:807]) - D 1: EU 'to extend sanctions' against Russia by six months - BBC News

More than 6,400 people have been killed in eastern Ukraine

2:1 The sanctions (1:457 [1:469]) - D 2: France seeks end to Russia sanctions over Ukraine - BBC News

The sanctions

2:2 despite a ceasefire agreement (1:1230 [1:1259]) - D 2: France seeks end to Russia sanctions over Ukraine - BBC News

10. Appendix 4

Second Level of Analysis (BBC)

Codebook:

Project: Xinhua

Code Report

All (11) codes

○ against confrontation

1 Groups:

Opposing the Conflict

○ against violence

1 Groups:

Opposing the Conflict

○ complex issue

1 Groups:

Impartiality and Objectivity

○ concern

1 Groups:

Opposing the Conflict

○ distant involvement

1 Groups:

Impartiality and Objectivity

○ encouraging diplomacy

1 Groups:

Non-violent Resolution

○ encouraging peace

1 Groups:

Non-violent Resolution

- international action

- 1 Groups:

- International Cooperation

- neutrality

- 1 Groups:

- Impartiality and Objectivity

- previous agreements

- 1 Groups:

- International Cooperation

- threat to human rights

- 1 Groups:

- Opposing the Conflict

Coding Process

The screenshot displays the Xinhua - ATLAS.ti software interface. The main window shows a news article titled "International community urges de-escalation of Ukraine crisis amid upcoming Crimea referendum". The article text is visible, and the right side of the interface shows a list of codes applied to the text, including "international action", "encouraging peace", "complex issue", "international action", "encouraging diplomacy", "concern", and "complex issue". The left sidebar shows the "Explore" panel with a search bar and a list of documents and codes. The top menu bar includes options like File, Home, Search Project, Analyze, Import & Export, Tools & Support, Document, Tools, and View. The bottom status bar shows the page number "1 / 2" and the zoom level "125%".

Fragment of Quotation Output

1:1 reasonably negotiated solution (1:852 [1:881]) - D 1: Austrian minister calls for negotiated solution to Crimea crisis - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

reasonably negotiated solution

1:2 Russia's arguments on their actions concerning Ukraine must be listened..... (1:949 [1:1022]) - D 1: Austrian minister calls for negotiated solution to Crimea crisis - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

Russia's arguments on their actions concerning Ukraine must be listened to

1:3 nclude the seizure of power in Kiev, (1:1049 [1:1084]) - D 1: Austrian minister calls for negotiated solution to Crimea crisis - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

nclude the seizure of power in Kiev,

1:4 The mostly Russian-speaking Crimea became the epicenter of the ongoing..... (1:1340 [1:1416]) - D 1: Austrian minister calls for negotiated solution to Crimea crisis - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

The mostly Russian-speaking Crimea became the epicenter of the ongoing crisis

1:5 Russia called a coup. (1:1641 [1:1661]) - D 1: Austrian minister calls for negotiated solution to Crimea crisis - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

Russia called a coup.

1:7 calls for negotiated solution (1:663 [1:691]) - D 1: Austrian minister calls for negotiated solution to Crimea crisis - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

calls for negotiated solution

1:8 agreement (1:1176 [1:1185]) - D 1: Austrian minister calls for negotiated solution to Crimea crisis - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

agreement

1:9 Yanukovych, Ukrainian opposition leaders, and the European Union (EU)..... (1:1230 [1:1307]) - D 1: Austrian minister calls for negotiated solution to Crimea crisis - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

Yanukovych, Ukrainian opposition leaders, and the European Union (EU) mediator

1:11 symbolic measures adopted at a special EU summit (1:1690 [1:1739]) - D 1: Austrian minister calls for negotiated solution to Crimea crisis - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

symbolic measures adopted at a special EU summit

1:12 immediate sanctions (1:1807 [1:1826]) - D 1: Austrian minister calls for negotiated solution to Crimea crisis - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

immediate sanctions

2:1 United Kingdom Minister of State responsible for European issues and N..... (1:317 [1:447]) - D 2: Britain urges _clear message_ by EU to support Ukraine - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

United Kingdom Minister of State responsible for European issues and NATO David Lidington (L) speaks with Luxembourg Foreign Affair

2:3 "biggest crisis" i (1:1208 [1:1225]) - D 2: Britain urges _clear message_ by EU to support Ukraine - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

"biggest crisis" i

2:5 EU foreign ministers meeting (1:487 [1:515]) - D 2: Britain urges _clear message_ by EU to support Ukraine - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

EU foreign ministers meeting

2:6 Britain wanted the EU to send a "very clear message of support" (1:645 [1:707]) - D 2: Britain urges _clear message_ by EU to support Ukraine - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

Britain wanted the EU to send a "very clear message of support"

2:7 he way forward is for there to be direct contact between the governmen..... (1:942 [1:1013]) - D 2: Britain urges _clear message_ by EU to support Ukraine - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

he way forward is for there to be direct contact between the governments

2:8 statement on arrival at the EU body in Brussels. (1:1060 [1:1107]) - D 2: Britain urges _clear message_ by EU to support Ukraine - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

statement on arrival at the EU body in Brussels.

2:9 visit to Kiev for talks with the new Ukrainian government. (1:1263 [1:1322]) - D 2: Britain urges _clear message_ by EU to support Ukraine - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

visit to Kiev for talks with the new Ukrainian government.

2:10 Russia reserves the right to protect (1:1421 [1:1457]) - D 2: Britain urges _clear message_ by EU to support Ukraine - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

Russia reserves the right to protect

2:11 nterests and Russian speakers living in Ukraine if violence spreads (1:1464 [1:1530]) - D 2: Britain urges _clear message_ by EU to support Ukraine - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

nterests and Russian speakers living in Ukraine if violence spreads

3:1 Cameron, Putin want "diplomatic solution (1:654 [1:693]) - D 3: Cameron, Putin want _diplomatic solution_ to Ukraine crisis_ Spokesperson - Xinhua _ English.news.cn

Cameron, Putin want "diplomatic solution"