Sweden’s Public Diplomacy Strategy in the 21st Century

An Analysis

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Abstract
Public diplomacy is a form of diplomatic activity aimed at communicating directly with foreign publics. In light of the technological developments of recent decades, digital tools and platforms have transformed the field of public diplomacy and became a significant force in shaping the diplomatic field. Sweden is a country with a strong international presence, where public diplomacy is a prioritized field for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. This study contributes to the limited research on Swedish public diplomacy strategy by analyzing the way in which Sweden’s four core values are communicated in the digital sphere. The analysis is conducted in two segments. First, the Swedish public diplomacy strategy is examined. Secondly, using Critical Discourse Analysis, twelve articles published on the website for Swedish Foreign Policy Stories were analyzed. The analysis shows that the core values are incorporated in the texts. The values are not stated overtly, but strong indications in the discourse can be found suggesting their relevance. The size of the sample is not large enough to allow for generalizations of the findings. The study concludes that except for discourse, other elements, such as the visual semiotic choices also contribute to the communication of Sweden’s four core values.

Keywords: Public Diplomacy, Nation Branding, Sweden, Brand Sweden, Critical Discourse Analysis, social constructivism, Swedish values, New Public Diplomacy.
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1 Introduction

Diplomacy is a crucial element of foreign policy that facilitates cooperation and communication between different actors around the world. How most people around the world understand diplomatic work is that it focuses on state-to-state relations, in which government-appointed diplomats act as representatives of states on the international scene (Polkowska, 2020).

However, the turbulent events of the twentieth century triggered significant changes and developments in the field of diplomacy. World War I and II, the Cold War, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are only some of the many examples which prompted a need for improved diplomatic relations. The formation of new states and emergence of new multilateral actors over the course of the past century has resulted in the field of diplomacy becoming increasingly more complex (Karns & Mingst, 2010). It is no longer a state-to-state matter. Nowadays, actors involved in diplomatic work include not only states, but also intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations and even individual citizens. As the world becomes more and more globalized, the way in which states and multilateral organizations are perceived by the public can either benefit or hinder these actors on the global scene. This is why the fields of public diplomacy, as well as its counterpart from the field of strategic communications - nation branding - become significant.

Public diplomacy is not a new phenomenon. It has existed and been utilized around the world since as long ago as ancient Rome and Greece (Melissen, 2005, p. 3). Nonetheless, the developments of the past couple of decades have affected the way in which information is transmitted and accessed across the world, and therefore, the way in which public diplomacy is conducted. Due to fast-paced technological progresses, such as widespread access to the Internet, any person in the world is now able to obtain information anywhere and at any time. Wide access to information, which decades ago might have been considered a privilege for a select group of people, is today available to anyone within a click of a button. Any person with Internet access and a social media account is given the possibility to form and affect other people’s opinions, potentially reaching audiences on global scale. The notion of how people communicate and pass information between each other has been affected by the rise of social media and their impact on both the older and younger generations.
It is no wonder that in light of these recent developments, governments and political actors all over the world begin to recognize the impact of the new digital solutions and start to utilize them to their advantage. In the spheres of international relations and foreign policy, these new tools and methods of communication have particularly shifted how international politics is discussed. Non-state actors and the public become communicators and originators of opinion formation. As a result, the borders of what defines “diplomats” become smudged, and the so called “Public Diplomacy 2.0” emerges within the field of public diplomacy.

Sweden is generally considered as a state, which has incorporated public diplomacy and the concept of nation branding into its international work relatively early in comparison to some other states (Utredningen för ett effektivt offentligt främjande av utländska investeringar, 2018). It comes as no surprise that Sweden allocates many resources into its public diplomacy work. The Swedish Institute, which is an organization operating under the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, is allocated hundreds of millions of Swedish kronor every year to conduct its work of improving the perception of Sweden abroad, e.g., in the fiscal year 2021, the Swedish Institute’s budget is estimated at circa 470 million Swedish kronor (Utrikesdepartementet, 2020). This suggests that Sweden is very much preoccupied with its international reputation and that public diplomacy is considered a high priority for the Swedish government.

The literature review on Sweden’s public diplomacy is discussed in detail below in chapter 3, as investigations have been conducted in order to examine the effects and outcomes of Sweden’s public diplomacy strategy. The investigations, however, are limited and point to a certain gap in the way Sweden’s public diplomacy strategy is examined and evaluated. The research is primarily preoccupied with investigating the effects of the strategies, how and why the Swedish image has changed, as well as how the entire process of public diplomacy is managed by the Swedish government. It is surprising that the research does not focus on the way in which the image of Sweden is being conveyed, how the Swedish identity and core values – which are “Innovative”, “Open”, “Caring” and “Authentic” – are communicated in the media, and via which channels, despite the increasing importance of social media and various online platforms for the purposes of public diplomacy. The effects of Sweden’s public diplomacy are only a part of the equation – the other part being the extent to which these effects are in line with the intent of the transmitted messages.
1.1 Aim of the study
This study aims at contributing to the limited debates and analyses of Swedish public diplomacy strategy in order to examine the way in which the strategy is applied in the digital sphere. By studying the discourse of articles published by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the website “Swedish Foreign Policy Stories” (swemfa.se) this study aims to identify and analyze if the articles reflect the core values, which Sweden strives to be associated with internationally. By using the method of Critical Discourse Analysis, this study aspires to understand and evaluate in what way the website “Swedish Foreign Policy Stories” is reflective of Sweden’s public diplomacy strategy.

The assumption guiding this study is that public diplomacy can be used in a successful way as a tool for advancing foreign policy objectives (Sevin, 2017, p. 183). The analysis is thus focused on Sweden’s public diplomacy strategy and how it is applied, rather than being concerned with the effects and outcomes of said strategy. Rather than investigating whether there is a connection between the core values and Sweden’s message, it is assumed that such connection is present, and the focus is placed on the way in which these variables relate to each other.

1.2 Research questions
The research questions are as follows:
1. What aspects comprise Sweden’s public diplomacy strategy?
2. How is the website “Swedish Foreign Policy Stories” (swemfa.se) reflective of this strategy?
3. In what way are Sweden’s core values - Innovative, Open, Caring and Authentic – communicated through the website “Swedish Foreign Policy Stories” (swemfa.se) in order to promote the desired image of Sweden abroad?

1.3 Thesis disposition
This thesis is structured in the following way. The following chapter (2) presents the theoretical framework behind public diplomacy and nation branding. This section aims to explain how the notions of public diplomacy and nation branding emerge from the social constructivist approach and to provide definitions of said notions. The subsequent chapter (3) focuses on literature review concerning public diplomacy in Sweden. The purpose of this chapter is to present what has already been investigated, when it comes to Sweden’s public diplomacy and what conclusions were reached by other researchers. The next chapter (4) describes the
methodological approach used in this study, which is Critical Discourse Analysis, the limitations of this method. It also provides a description of what materials were used. The following two chapters (5 and 6) focus on analysis of the materials: the former focuses on examining and discussing Sweden’s public diplomacy strategy and its components, whereas the latter is an in-depth analysis of the way in which Sweden’s core values are communicated in the articles on the website “Swedish Foreign Policy Stories”. The conclusion and summary chapter (7) summarizes the research work conducted in this thesis.

2 Theoretical Background

In this chapter, two schools of theory are presented – the theory of public diplomacy, which emerges from the studies of international relations, as well as the theory of nation branding, which has its origin in the field of marketing and strategic communication. Public diplomacy and nation branding are sister concepts, both relating to the promotion of a state among foreign publics. Both stem from the concept of “soft power”, which is also discussed in this chapter. The research is anchored in the constructivist approach.

2.1 Early theories of public diplomacy

Public diplomacy is a field emerging from Nye’s theory of hard and soft power, where the former describes the power of coercion and physical compulsion, and the latter the power of attraction and persuasion (Nye, Jr., 2004, p. 6). According to Nye, soft power is a part of democratic politics, as preferences and attitudes can be formed and established by attracting and convincing the audience. Public diplomacy is thus a tool of soft power utilized by the governments in order to create a positive attitude towards their countries (Anholt, 2005, p. 13).

The theory of soft vs. hard power creates the building blocks for what nowadays is referred to as public diplomacy. Hard power refers to the “military and economic might” which has the ability to affect the positions of others with the use of inducements or threats (Nye, Jr., 2004, p. 5). Soft power, on the other hand, is defined as the “ability to attract others to our side” (Nye, Jr., 2004, p. xi). Rather than using force or money as methods to obtain cooperation, soft power relies on the power of attraction to persuade others. Both types of power are aimed at achieving “one’s purpose by affecting the behavior of others”, however the processes undertaken to reach this outcome are different (Nye, Jr., 2004, p. 7).
2.2 Constructivist approach to public diplomacy

Public diplomacy aims at affecting the public opinion of foreign audiences through the use of different strategic practices. This is achieved through “strategic social construction”, which can be defined as the process of changing previously established norms through careful and tactical use of practices (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). Norms are not fixed constants, but instead are fluid, in a way that they are established and fortified through observation, repetition, and practices. Over time, norms can be changed, and with the help of strategic social construction, actors aim at changing norms in a way that does not reduce their legitimacy (Barnett, 2017, p. 149).

This research is conducted using the constructivist approach to the topic of public diplomacy. According to constructivism, the world and reality are socially constructed through interactions between different actors (Onuf, 2013). Nature of reality and how it is viewed and understood can be formed and reformed. Instead of discussing human activities in terms of “behavior”, constructivists use the term of “practices” to situate how things are done within social context (Barnett, 2017, p. 148). Adler and Pouliot (2011, pp. 4-5) define practices as “socially meaningful patterns of action […] that are embedded in particular organized contexts”. These patterns rely on background knowledge in order to affect and intertwine the material and discursive areas and determine the correct way of how things are done (Adler & Pouliot, 2011, p. 7). Practices possess the ability to affect the ideas and beliefs that are held about the world, because they are reinforced and enacted on the world. In line with social constructivism, “historically produced and culturally bound knowledge enables individuals to construct and give meaning to reality” (Barnett, 2017, p. 148).

2.3 Traditional vs. public diplomacy

Traditional diplomacy aims at peaceful resolution of international issues and difficulties by establishing and managing international relations through negotiation between sovereign states via “the medium of accredited representatives” (Melissen, 2005, p. 5). Traditional diplomacy is thus limiting the number of actors involved in diplomatic relations to a select group of government officials, indicating primarily bilateral relations between sovereign states, with focus on, though not limited to resolving issues relating to economic and political affairs. Public diplomacy, on the other hand, aims at communicating directly with foreign audiences, rather than conducting private meetings and negotiations behind closed doors. The interests of a state are advanced by pursuing direct relations with a country’s citizens in order to gain their

When the term “public diplomacy” was used for the first time by Edmund Gullion in 1965, it was defined as follows:

Public diplomacy . . . deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those whose job is communication, as diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the process of intercultural communications (Cull, 2008, p. 19).

This thorough definition places public diplomacy as a field separate from traditional diplomacy. It also provides a comprehensive explanation of what public diplomacy consists of as a process and signifies that it is more than merely a marketing campaign that aims to advertise a state across the borders. Additionally, Signitzer and Coombs define public diplomacy as:

the way in which both government and private individuals and groups influence directly or indirectly those public attitudes and opinions which bear directly on another government’s foreign policy decisions (Signitzer and Coombs, 1992, p. 138).

This definition elevates the importance of nonstate actors, highlights the increasing interdependence among all actors and places public diplomacy both in the field of international relations and communications (Gilboa, 2008, p. 57). By including nonstate actors in the definition, a shift pointing to the importance of a multilateral network becomes evident.

2.3.1 New Public Diplomacy and Public diplomacy 2.0

It is said that the field of public diplomacy has changed and evolved over the course of years into a new phase of diplomatic representation called “New public diplomacy”, otherwise referred to as “Public diplomacy 2.0” (Melissen, 2005, p. xix). With the natural progression of
the world, different conflicts and the technological developments, the nature of public diplomacy has changed and evolved as well.

There are certain aspects, which distinguish the “old” public diplomacy from the “new” public diplomacy. New public diplomacy emerged in 21st century after the 9/11 attacks in New York City. The events of 9/11 are known as a formative moment in history, meaning that they prompted a wide variety of changes in the world (Esaiasson, et al., 2017, p. 130). In this case it affected the way in which the USA conducted its public diplomacy campaigns and the way in which they interacted with foreign audiences. As a frontrunner in the field of public diplomacy, the USA has therefore transformed what the field looks like (Pamment, 2012; Melissen, 2005). The USA is not responsible for creating “public diplomacy 2.0”. The events of 9/11 are however a time point at during which a shift can be seen in how states utilize public diplomacy as a foreign policy tool.

The main forces behind the evolution of public diplomacy are the technological advances such as the internet and social media, which are becoming incorporated in public diplomacy strategies due to their reciprocative nature. The focus of old public diplomacy, in the 20th century and before, lay on specific short-term objectives, with interactions between communicators and recipients being rather limited. One might say it was a one-way channel from governmental organisations to the public. New public diplomacy, on the other hand, is more normative in nature, and scholars are very much preoccupied with establishing what the processes should be ideally. Multilateral agents together with state actors cooperate in order to achieve their objectives, and the communication is no longer a one-way flow of information, as it is not only foreign ministries who communicate foreign policies. The internet, social networks and media allows for more flexible information flow (Pamment, 2012, pp. 314-315).

Thus, the Internet, new technological solutions and social media platforms allow for shifting of power structures and enable the democratization of interactions between states and foreign audiences. The use of platforms such as Twitter or Facebook as tools of public diplomacy is becoming more and more interesting to scholars in the field, bringing both the advantages and disadvantages of new ways of communication to the diplomatic arena (Seib, 2012). Digital platforms provide diplomats with new challenges of how to incorporate the new technological advances into their work. The target group for conducting diplomacy has shifted from peers – i.e., diplomats and governments officials – to international audiences (Melissen,
2005, p. 5). These audiences comprised of citizens are provided with global digital platforms and opportunities to make an impact within their societies. The power balance between actors has therefore shifted, as governments are no longer in control of their message to the degree they used to be. International organizations also become contributors on the scene of public diplomacy 2.0 (Ociepka, 2013). More actors become involved in the process, thus calling for a new type of diplomats to emerge. In order to keep their prominent positions, governments must adapt the roles of their foreign ministries to take into considerations these new tools and actors (Pamment, 2012).

It is vital to not overstate the importance and influence of public diplomacy. As in any process including multidirectional influence, possible impacts on the public and specific objectives and policies are challenging to determine decisively. There is a tendency in research to focus on how new public diplomacy is supposed to be practiced in an ideal environment, instead of investigating how it is changing through empirical data (Pamment, 2012, p. 315). Measuring the effects of new public diplomacy is a challenge in itself. Contexts, practices and expectations change, and there are issues arising with what method is most reliable to measure the outcomes of public diplomacy, especially with thousands of digital channels and platforms being factored into the equation (Pamment, 2012). This is a weakness for understanding the function of this field and how it is practiced, especially if the global changes and technological advances are pointed out as catalysts of change without empirical evidence to support the claims (Brown, 2004, pp. 25-26).

2.4 Nation branding and Competitive Identity

Anholt (2005, p.13) states that “[t]he vocabulary is immaterial: one can call these principles of soft power ‘marketing’ or ‘branding’, but one can equally call them psychology, diplomacy, rhetoric, politics, the art of persuasion, or plain good sense”. What students and scholars within the fields of international relations and political science refer to as “public diplomacy”, students and scholars of marketing and strategic communication would refer to as “nation branding”.

Nation branding can be defined as “the unique, multi-dimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences” (Johnston, 2008, p. 15). The term was first coined by Simon Anholt and is synonymous with his more recent term of “competitive identity” (Anholt, 2007, p. xi). The
negative connotations around the word “brand” pushed Anholt towards re-branding his own theory, in order to prevent the public from associating this concept with sales and promoting consumer goods (Anholt, 2007, p. 3, 7). The terms “competitive identity” and “nation branding” refer to the same theory developed by the same scholar and can thus be used interchangeably.

The theory of Nation Branding, or Competitive Identity aims at applying particular rules from communications and marketing studies to the fields of political science and international relations. Certain concepts from the field of marketing should thus be explained in relation to this theory. The concepts of “brand image” and “brand identity” are often used when discussing nation branding strategies. As mentioned above, the concept of a “brand” comes with certain presuppositions, however it is to be understood as “shorthand or signpost for value, or quality, or equity” (Anholt, 2005, p. 127). “Brand” also stands for culture, in a way that it is representative of it, and culture resides at the very center of a nation brand (Janonis, et al., 2007, pp. 72-73). “Brand identity” refers to how a country wishes to be seen by foreign audiences; it is the set of characteristics, which when interpreted by the audience becomes a brand image (Sääksjärvi & Samiee, 2011, p. 170). “Brand image” is the product of brand identity. The way in which brand identity is interpreted by target audience becomes the brand image of a country (Janonis, et al., 2007, p. 74). Both “brand image” and “brand identity” are important components of a Nation Branding strategy.

Anholt uses a hexagon to explain six different elements which come together to create the theory of Nation Branding or Competitive Identity. As presented in Figure 1 below, these elements are: Culture, People, Policy, Brands, Tourism and Investment (Anholt, 2007, p. 26). In order to create and maintain a competitive national identity, states must be able to coordinate the actions, policies, investments and communications of all six elements of the hexagon, as well as possess a clear framework for what their countries are, what they stand for and where they are heading. In reality, this is hardly ever achievable, as different stakeholders promote different images independently of one another.
This formula will not magically turn a nation with negative reputation into the epitome of all positive and desired values a state might possibly have. It does, however, contribute to development of both short-term and long-term goals, as well as opinion formation among the public, a wide variety of investments, increased profile in international media and better relations with other states (Anholt, 2007, p. 29). For this reason, it also requires patience and understanding of marketing mechanisms from the official bodies responsible for creating and executing the strategy, as well as direct support from the head of state (Anholt, 2005, pp. 15, 127). The latter is particularly important, if the project is to have any impact and be longstanding. The government and public organisations cannot conduct a successful nation banding campaign on their own. Full and transparent cooperation between the public and the private sector is required for a nation branding campaign to be effective. Backing from different organisations and institutions within a particular state reinforces the overall support for the strategy. Nation branding also comes with a certain economic spending, and the support from a wide variety of actors in a state can contribute to how well the strategy is implemented. Additionally, if a state possesses an attainable plan of economic and social development, it can be used as a basis for the nation branding strategy.

Creating a successful nation branding strategy consists of determining “the most realistic, most competitive and most compelling strategic vision for the country”, as well as ensuring that all acts of communication between the state and the foreign audience reinforce and support said strategy, while deemphasizing any perceptions of the nation, which do not contribute to it (Anholt, 2005, pp. 11, 117). This requires identifying and isolating beforehand
which of the existing perceptions of the nation are positive for the overall brand image of the nation, and to measure out how these can be enhanced on the global scene.

Nation branding, or competitive identity, is a long-term marketing process, with no actual guarantee of achieving the desired objectives. The image of any nation had been formed over the course of centuries through “wars, religion, diplomacy or the lack of it, international sporting triumphs or disasters, famous and infamous sons and daughters, and […] the brands it exports” (Anholt, 2005, p. 116). It cannot just be undone overnight. Because of this, branding a nation requires a lot of commitment from different areas. The exact message of the brand might get lost, or only delivered partially, which is not unusual, and which can later be filled in with additional information, as audiences and consumers become more familiar with the nation brand (Anholt, 2005, p. 127).

Anholt states that a state should not be viewed as a “product brand”, but rather a “corporate brand”, meaning that it should be viewed as “as something more like a holding company which manages a group of related sub-brands” (Anholt, 2005, p. 125). A state need not envelop all of its products and brands; it merely needs to provide the brands and products with its concentrated essence, and the essence is to be recognizable by foreign audiences. Anholt exemplifies this by mentioning that brand Italy supplements a product with sexiness, and brand France with chic. In the aforementioned examples, the message is not made to be too simple resulting in reduced interest in the nation; instead, it is concentrated around its essence, with possibilities for particular brands and products to adapt it to their needs. This exemplifies that the aim with nation branding is to evoke a certain feeling when calling attention to a particular nation.

Extensive knowledge of the subject of nation branding is quintessential to conducting a successful nation branding strategy. The vision must be clear in terms of what type of message the nation aims to broadcast (Anholt, 2005; Janonis, et al., 2007). The message must be well-constructed and uncomplicated, with clear guidelines, if other parties are to pass it on in a way that reflects its intentions best. Unless these conditions are fulfilled, and the same images are reinforced by the state’s strategies and campaigns, “it is highly unlikely that a clear image will ever form itself in the consumer’s mind” (Anholt, 2005, p. 117). This is in line with standard marketing practices.
2.5 Public Diplomacy vs. Nation Branding

It can be concluded from this chapter, that the theories of public diplomacy and nation branding share many similarities, as well as differences (Szondi, 2008). Despite the differences, these terms are often used interchangeably. Both stem from the theory of soft power, although the concept of public diplomacy is anchored in the political dimension, whereas nation branding entails mostly commercial aspects (Nye, Jr., 2004). This could indicate that public diplomacy is an identity driven field, whereas nation branding is driven by images. The receivers of public diplomacy are referred to as “the public”, whereas in nation branding as “consumers” (Signitzer & Coombs, 1992; Anholt, 2005). Both focus on advancing the interest of a state in the international sphere and creating a strategic vision to advance these interests, although the intended outcomes differ. Both are focused on including different actors – state, non-state and private. Mass media is widely utilized in both approaches. Both manage relationship building (Gilboa, 2008).

Finally, the mechanisms of public diplomacy are the same as traditional diplomacy – the messages are simply broadcasted to a large audience, rather than in private between diplomats. It is oriented around a state’s essence and values. Nation branding, on the other hand, diverts the attention of the foreign audience away from problematic areas to those more advantageous to its goals (Gilboa, 2008).

3 Literature Review on Sweden’s Public Diplomacy

Most of the studies conducted in the field of public diplomacy focus on the USA as the primary research object, which is indicative of an overall bias in the field (Melissen, 2005; Sevin, 2017). Public diplomacy is a culture-centric field, i.e., each state works towards generating their own unique image, based upon their values, culture, traditions, beliefs, etc. Research revolving around the actions and strategies undertaken by the American government and affiliated organisations cannot thus be generalized and applied universally to the field of public diplomacy and regimes around the world (Sevin, 2017). Even though the research concerning Sweden is limited when compared to that of the USA, there have been several studies conducted over the years.

Sweden has been relatively active in the field of public diplomacy and nation branding, prompting the government to conduct a variety of evaluations and investigations examining and assessing its processes and impacts over the years. In 2005, a study conducted on the
request of the Council for the Promotion of Sweden was published with the focus of examining
the way in which the image of Sweden has changed over the years, what the perception of
Sweden was at the time, and what methods can be developed to further investigate these trends
and views (Lundberg, 2005). The conclusions are that the overall image of Sweden abroad is
positive, but also unclear. A general recommendation in the report for moving forward with
Sweden’s public diplomacy is to communicate a more condensed image of Sweden and to
focus on the areas in which Sweden is already strong. Lundberg (2005, p. 10) also states that
Sweden is “not as well known as we perhaps like to think”, but it is “better known than
comparable European countries”. Clichés about Sweden remain deeply rooted in the foreign
perceptions, and some of the strongest ones include the Nobel prize, Abba, blonde hair and
blue eyes, good knowledge of English, Olof Palme, Ingmar Bergman, the Swedish welfare
model, IKEA, and Volvo. The image of Sweden is stable but should not be taken for granted
and should be updated (Lundberg, 2005; Pamment, 2012). Because of this report, the new
strategy for the promotion of Sweden was developed and updated in a way that better reflects
the challenges of the globalized and digitalized world on new public diplomacy (Pamment,
2012).

In 2011, an official investigation was conducted with the aim of determining what
direction the Swedish foreign policy should take. The findings include a recommendation for
Sweden to expand its focus in diplomatic work beyond state-to-state relations, and strengthen
its public diplomacy strategies, in order to improve the image of Sweden and the impact of
Swedish message abroad (Utrikesförvaltningsutredningen, 2011, p. 54). Diplomatic relations
are no longer to only to be understood in terms of traditional diplomacy, as “[p]ublic diplomacy
should be seen as a natural complement or alternative to state-to-state diplomacy”
(Utrikesförvaltningsutredningen, 2011, p. 61). In order to have an impact and achieve the
desired effect of improving the image of Sweden and knowledge about Sweden around the
world, it is crucial that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs conducts its work with openness and
utilizing modern technology.

A 2018 government report on Sweden’s communication strategies found that
for “Brand Sweden” to project a unified image of Sweden, it is best if coordinated by one
institution, and more specifically by the Swedish Institute, in cooperation with the Council for
the Promotion of Sweden Abroad (Utredningen för ett effektivt offentligt främjande av
utländska investeringar, 2018, p. 8). This is to be done in order to lay foundation for potential
future investments in Sweden, as well as new export opportunities. It indicates that there might be a business attitude as to why Sweden’s public diplomacy strategies and nation branding are important to the government. It is also concluded that for any type of strategic communication to be successful, it must be conducted in line with a state’s core values, and the extent to which these are included in the state’s actual work (Utredningen för ett effektivt offentligt främjande av utländska investeringar, 2018).

The Swedish Institute, being the organization that manages the public diplomacy strategies of Sweden, is often the object of both internal and external evaluations. Every year, the Swedish Institute produces, among others, an annual report reporting on how Sweden is perceived around the world (Svenska Institutet, 2020). The categories evaluated are in what way and in amount is Sweden’s presence visible in foreign digital media, what is the image of Sweden in particular countries and how it has changed, as well as where Sweden stands in international rankings and measurements in comparison to other states and international actors in categories such as democracy, climate, innovation and talent (Svenska Institutet, 2020). The most recent of these reports also included a section on the image of Sweden abroad in relation to the covid-19 crisis (Svenska Institutet, 2020).

In 2015, the Swedish government has instructed The Swedish Agency for Public Management to analyze the Swedish Institute in terms of its qualifications, operations, results, and future challenges, as well as to evaluate how it is managed by the government. The overall conclusions of the analysis are positive in terms of how the work of the Swedish Institute is conducted, however there are reservations as to the ability to measure the results of the work of the Swedish Institute in an efficient and accurate way (Statskontoret, 2015, p. 8). The report calls for more clarity from the Swedish Institute when it comes to how the budget is being managed, as well as how the results and influences of the nation branding strategies are to be measured.

Sweden’s public diplomacy focuses on the importance of collaborative environments and “low politics” subjects, such as cultural, social and economic issues not directly relating to a state’s survival (Sevin, 2017, pp. 109-110). Some of the areas, in which Sweden’s presence is often recognized, include human rights, freedom, and internet security (Huijgh, 2013, p. 69). Pamment provides a compressed portrayal of the evolution of Sweden’s public diplomacy, analyzing its development since the late 1970s up until early 2010s (Pamment, 2012). This
analysis is a positive, though somewhat critical evaluation of Sweden’s public diplomacy strategies, pointing out their vagueness as well as lack of clear objectives and specific outcomes. There is a distinct gap in available data concerning specific campaigns overseen by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, which makes evaluating the outcomes of Sweden’s public diplomacy strategies practically impossible.

Since Sweden aims at becoming a pioneer in the field of digitalization on the international scene and being recognized as such, research often focuses on analyzing Sweden’s use of digital tools in advancing their Public Diplomacy strategies (Näringsdepartementet, 2017). Sweden is distinguished for its policy on and the strong utilization of its social media platforms (Huijgh, 2013, p. 69). In order to perpetuate the image of Sweden as the digitalization forerunner, the country is also known to make unconventional decisions concerning its official presence online. In 2007, Sweden became the first ever state to reveal a plan of launching a digital embassy in the online virtual world Second Life (Bengtsson, 2011). The embassy was opened soon after, and the avatar of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and a former Prime Minister of Sweden, Carl Bildt, cut the ribbon during the virtual opening ceremony. Although the opening ceremony was indeed conducted in the virtual world Second Life, the actual proceedings happened with mass media present on site. Bengtsson (2011, p. 2) states, that the mere action of creating the virtual embassy was an act of nation branding, regardless of the outcome of this project, as the idea of a virtual embassy generated interest from the traditional mass media and resulted in substantial coverage across the world.

4 Methodology

4.1 Materials
This study is carried out using primary qualitative materials (Bryman, 2012). The first part of the analysis (Chapter 5) consists of the materials, which are government-formulated documents about Sweden’s public diplomacy, which constitute the framework for Sweden’s public diplomacy strategy. In the second analysis section (Chapter 6) the materials consist of articles posted on the Swedish Foreign Policy Stories website - swemfa.se.

In order to attempt to answer the research questions, a Critical Discourse Analysis of the contents of the official website of Sweden’s Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Swedish Foreign
Policy Stories (swemfa.se) is conducted. In total, twelve articles were analyzed. The selection was conducted randomly, although certain filters were applied. The posts and articles on the website are divided into six different categories, discussed in detail in section 5.3. Two articles were selected from each of the six categories, resulting in an evenly distributed sample of articles published on the website. The sample pool was filtered by language, limiting it to articles published only in English. A conscious decision was made to choose articles published at different points in time, to additionally possibly examine whether the way in which the Ministry for Foreign Affairs communicates with foreign public has changed over time. Articles tagged as “Ambassador’s blog” were excluded from the sample, as they might target specific audiences or geographical areas, rather than focus on the overall promotion of Sweden’s image abroad.

4.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

The method chosen to best achieve this is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which is a constructionist theoretical, analytical and methodological framework that combines aspects of linguistics and social science (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 2007, pp. 6, 16). CDA differs from discourse analysis, in a way that it includes the importance of the context in which the text has been produced. It need not however relate exclusively to textual analysis. It can also incorporate other aspects of the researched subject, e.g., images, diagrams and any type of graphics accompanying a particular text (Machin & Mayr, 2012). This is sometimes referred to as Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis.

One of the fundamental concepts within CDA is the idea that power and ideologies can be practiced and conveyed through discourse (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 4). Discourse is not simply a reflection of social structures and processes, but rather it contributes to generating and reproducing these structures and processes. Meaning and context are crucial, as every single word and phrase in the discourse contributes to how the world is constructed through it (Fairclough, 2003). Ergo, “[l]anguage is a means of social construction and domination” (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 24). While texts might superficially seem to be neutral, according to CDA every word and phrase in a text is meticulously planned in order to convey a specific idea or advance a particular agenda. When analyzing the texts, it is crucial to do so critically and questioning the use of every single word, as none is to be taken for granted. It is also important to identify the participants in a text as well as relationships between different participants.
Machin and Mayr (2012) outline certain tools, which can be used in order to conduct a thorough CDA or MCDA. The objective in CDA is to establish the types of social relations of power, both explicit and implicit, existing in the analyzed texts, as well as what images of the world are produced, legitimized or perpetuated. The toolkit for conducting CDA includes lexical choices, impersonalization/personalization, individualization vs. collectivization, nomination vs. functionalization, “us vs. them” approach, aggregation, presuppositions, and visual semiotic choices.

*Lexical choices* refer to the choice of words which imply either positive or negative meanings (van Dijk, 1993, p. 264). The relationship that the reader develops in respect to the text depends to a large extent on the tone and formality used by the author of the text. This can include e.g., overlexicalization, which is the overemphasis of certain terms in order to indicate a problematic area, or lexical absence, which is the suppression of certain information in texts in order to reduce uncertainty and ensure the message comes across (Machin & Mayr, 2012, pp. 37-38).

*Impersonalization/personalization* refers to the way in which actors are mentioned in the texts, e.g., either as individuals and people or as institutions, states, organizations. It is not reasonable to suppose that all individuals in a particular institution think the same way, thus impersonalization is a way of concealing who stands for what and instead advancing the predominant interests of the institution (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 80).

*Individualization versus collectivization* pertains to whether the participants in the text are portrayed as individuals or as a part of something bigger. Presenting the participants as members of a collectivity can result in dehumanizing the participants.

Another aspect relating to the participants of the text is *nomination vs. functionalization* – the former referring to who the participant is, and the latter to what the participant does (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 81). Names are a type of nomination whereas examples of functionalization include professions or religious orientations. Functionalization can result in the texts sounding more legitimate and official, however it also de-humanizes the participants.
People are social animals, and as such they tend to categorize themselves and others into various social groups, partially in order to make sense of one’s own place in the social setting (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). This categorization often results in “us versus them” mentality towards those, who are viewed as different or other in some regard. With the use of “us vs. them” technique, the authors of a text aim at utilizing this social categorization tendency. The indication of otherness is evoked when using the term “they” or “them”, and the term “we” or “us” is used to highlight similar values or beliefs (Machin & Mayr, 2012, pp. 84-85). Another technique relating to “us vs. them” is the concept of structural oppositions, such as good-bad, young-old, democracy-communism (Machin & Mayr, 2012, pp. 39-40). These are not necessarily overt, nor are both words on the spectrum states within the text. It is enough that the text specifies one of them, as long as it also implies the qualities associated with this word or phrase.

Aggregation is used in order to quantify the participants in a text and discuss them as “statistics”, e.g., many thousands, dozens, few, scores etc. (Machin & Mayr, 2012, pp. 83-84). The specific numbers and figures are not provided, however the use of words relating to quantification is to give the conviction that the text is scientific, credible and objective. Such terms included in a text indicate an ideological agenda behind it.

The next aspect of conducting CDA is presuppositions, i.e., “what kinds of meanings are assumed as given in a text” (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 153). In general, people process texts subconsciously, thus without questioning the aspects of a text which are as given. In CDA, this type of statements is assumed to be ideological and signifies that certain viewpoints are deliberately being endorsed and validated, whereas others are silenced and renounced.

As mentioned above, what and how the texts aim at communicating is not only limited to linguistic elements, but also other visual aspects, such as pictures, diagrams, iconography and symbols, the type and colour of the font (Machin & Mayr, 2012, pp. 49-56). This is referred to as the visual semiotic choices. The emotions and responses that the visual aspects bring about in the reader contribute to how the text is received. Semiotic choices can be analyzed by posing the questions: what ideas and values are communicated through these choices? In what way are they represented?
Finally, the overall tone of each of the articles is evaluated as either declarative, imperative or interrogative (Fairclough, 2003). Fairclough (2003) discusses the idea of grammatical mood in terms of declarative, imperative and interrogative sentences, where declarative sentences are most often statements of facts, and interrogative sentences are phrased as questions. In this study this approach is adapted to evaluate the overall tone of the article. An article that describes an event or project is considered as declarative; an article that calls to change and demands action is considered as imperative; and an article that questions a situation or an occurrence is evaluated as interrogative.

CDA is the most suitable approach to answering the second and third research questions because it takes into consideration the social and political context in which the articles were written. Thus, the ideas behind the official Swedish public diplomacy strategy are taken into consideration when analyzing the texts.

4.3 Limitations of the chosen method
Conducting CDA is a task of interpretation rather than pure analysis (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 210). It is subjective, in a way that it is deductive and dependent on what the researcher is looking for. As in the case of this study, the texts are analyzed with the purpose of looking for how Sweden’s four core values are communicated in them. The researcher is thus actively trying to identify these values knowing what they are. These preconceived notions of what the texts are communicating guide the work of this analysis, but they also limit the scope of what the researcher perceives as the important in the texts and the message they are trying to convey.

CDA is also highly dependent on the ability of the researcher to incorporate the “context” of the texts into its meaning and message. As mentioned above, context in which the texts are created is vital to successfully conducting CDA. The researcher’s ability to understand the references in the text, be aware of the setting the texts were written in, the agenda behind them and more, affects the findings and outcomes of the analysis. This is especially problematic is the researcher is not aware of the social, historical, economic or cultural contexts, and/or misinterprets the message of the texts, as it can skew the final results.

4.4 Validity and reliability
Due to the limitations listed above, the issues of validity and reliability emerge (Bryman, 2012). The articles were analyzed using CDA tools. The discourse in each of the articles was analyzed
in the same manner, as shown in Appendix C. Nonetheless, CDA is based on the researchers’ ability to interpret information provided in the texts.

While the coding of information as well as the choice of CDA tools used in this analysis are repeatable, future findings and interpretations of these articles might differ, depending on what themes and aspects the researchers are focusing on. The study can be replicated, if the same theory, tools and method are applied in future research.

The materials analyzed in this study are reliable, as they come from reliable and official governmental sources. Documents pertaining to Sweden’s public diplomacy strategy were obtained via Sweden’s official channels as well as upon request from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The articles were obtained directly from the Swedish Foreign Policy Stories (swemfa.se) website.

In terms of validity, the findings of this study cannot be generalized. Only twelve articles were analyzed, and while this is a big enough sample to answer the research questions in this study, it cannot be generalized across social settings. For that, a more extensive sample of articles should be analyzed. As mentioned above, public diplomacy is a culture-oriented field. Due to its uniqueness, results of this study cannot be applied to other cultures.

5 Analysis of Strategy 2.0 and the Direction of Sweden’s Public Diplomacy

5.1 The Council for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad

Sweden’s strategies for public diplomacy, as well as Brand Sweden, are organized and overseen by the Council for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad, consisting of The Swedish Institute, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, the Ministry of Culture, Business Sweden and Visit Sweden (Council for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad, June 2017). The main official platform for sharing information and stories about Sweden’s foreign policy is the website “Swedish Foreign Policy Stories” - swemfa.se (Utrikesdepartementet, 2019). The aim of this Council is to be a forum for dialogue and cooperation on how to promote the image of Sweden abroad in an effective way and with long-
term effects. The Council for the Promotion of Sweden owns and develops Sweden’s brand identity (Council for the Promotion of Sweden, 2021).

5.1.1 The Swedish Institute
Out of all the organisations in the Council for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad, the Swedish Institute (SI) is the one, which can be considered the expert organisation concerning the promotion of the image of Sweden across the world.

The Swedish Institute is a public agency with the objective of promoting interest and trust towards Sweden around the world. The Swedish Institute’s work is focused on four fields: culture, education, science and business. These are in line with the themes appointed to the Swedish Institute in 2013 by the government (Statskontoret, 2015, p. 21). Apart from collecting data on how Sweden is perceived by foreign audiences and conducting analyses based on said data, the Swedish Institute’s operations also include cooperating with both public and private Swedish actors in order to improve the strategies for communicating Sweden’s image abroad.

Thus, it can be understood that the Swedish Institute functions as an overseeing organisation for achieving a wide variety of Sweden’s international goals. It focuses on creating good relationships with other states, in order to increase Sweden’s “attractiveness” for potential future investments in the state, which implies a business-like attitude to why partnerships should be developed (Svenska Institutet, 2021). It is responsible for managing the official national Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts of Sweden, as well as the website Sweden.se. As the idea behind conducting a correct nation branding campaign is cohesiveness, having one organisation manage the national accounts and websites aimed at reaching foreign audiences suggests that there is an actual unified strategy in place. It is also a way to ensure that the same message is transmitted in the same way through different channels, thus projecting a cohesive image of Sweden.

Every year the Swedish Institute publishes its annual report on its website, where it can be accessed by the public. The report is primarily in Swedish, with a summary in English.
5.2 Strategies for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad

Sweden’s strategy for Public Diplomacy is based upon the political direction of the office during a particular term. The political objectives that the government decides upon become the building blocks for strategies that guide the Swedish Foreign Service. The current strategy, which is to be implemented and carried out by the Foreign Service, stems mainly from two governmental documents, “Strategy 2022” and “Sweden’s Trade and Investment Strategy”. Both of these documents consequently become the basis for structuring the Swedish public diplomacy campaigns.

The work of Swedish Foreign Service includes foreign and security policy, foreign trade and export promotion, international development cooperation and humanitarian aid (Utrikesdepartementet, u.d.). Public diplomacy is one of the tactical approaches that the Foreign Service incorporates into their work.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs uses an internal network in order to manage and organize its work, and a section of said network revolving around Sweden’s work with Public Diplomacy is referred to as “UD Portalen” (Utredningen för ett effektivt offentligt främjande av utländska investeringar, 2018). The focus for UD Portalen is Public Diplomacy and promotion of the image of Sweden to foreign audiences. This is shown in Appendix A, which can be considered a reference sheet for understanding the priorities of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, as well as understanding the building blocks behind Sweden’s Public Diplomacy campaigns of the current political term.

The documents and directives guiding the work of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in the field of Public Diplomacy are listed in the left bottom corner (Appendix A). These include the above-mentioned “Strategy 2022” and “Sweden’s Trade and Investment Strategy”, as well as “2.0 Strategy for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad”, “How to do co.diplomacy – in four easy steps”, and two other documents in Swedish on how to work on strategic communication.

The work is carried out through five cross-party dimensions: Agenda 2030, EU-cooperation, multilateral cooperation, Nordic cooperation and Team Sweden. These platforms enable the promotion of Sweden abroad, guided by ten specific focus areas. These are: The democracy initiative, Feminist foreign policy, Climate and environment, Free, fair and
sustainable trade, Peace and security, The innovative Sweden, Cultural & Creative industries, Trade & Investments, Knowledge & Talent, and Experience Sweden (Appendix A). The five cross-party dimensions and the ten focus areas together determine the scope of the work carried out by the Council for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad.

5.2.1 Strategy 2.0
In order for Sweden to promote a positive and consistent image abroad, the Council for the Promotion of Sweden follows a carefully constructed strategy. The strategy in question, Strategy 2.0, was developed as a result of the findings from a 2016 tactical analysis conducted by the Council for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad. According to the analysis, the conditions surrounding the promotion of Sweden in foreign states have changed to a large extent since 2012. The strategy takes into account these new demands, such as an increasingly polarized world, declining confidence between states, and the tougher climate in the media environment with “elements of hatred and threats, and less respect for facts and nuanced messages” (Council for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad, June 2017, p. 4).

Documents pertaining to this strategy have been made available to the public via online sources, both in Swedish and in English, although not all documents in Swedish are available in English, and those which are, seem to be revised and more concise. One might remark that this is either a question of resources required to translate all the texts into English, or perhaps a conscious choice to not make certain aspects of the strategy widely available to the non-Swedish-speaking population. These documents are available for free via sharingsweden.se – a website managed by the Swedish Institute, with the main aim of providing international audiences with resources and materials about Sweden (The Swedish Institute, 2020). The documents are both a tool used for planning an overarching strategy for how Sweden in general is to be portrayed internationally, as well as for guiding smaller-scale campaigns organized by particular Swedish organisations and/or companies.

Both the Swedish and the English versions contain explanation of the building blocks of the strategy, and how these are related. As shown in Figure 1 below, there are five main components to how Sweden’s public diplomacy strategies are constructed. The first aspect, which lays foundation for the entire strategy and provides a direction for what is to be achieved by it, is the vision. Sweden’s vision is: “In a world with major challenges, Sweden’s free and
open society functions as a hub for innovation and co-creation” (Council for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad, June 2017, p. 5). Key words from this statement are “innovation” and “co-creation”, as these aim at inviting foreign parties into continuous pioneering development processes, thus presenting Sweden as an attractive partner for any potential collaborations. “Free and open society” is alluding to Sweden’s longtime culture of openness and freedom, and links back to the democracy initiative, which the Swedish government and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs are actively considering as one of their prime directions (Appendix A).

The second building block is the four core values, which serve the purpose of ensuring that different actors convey the message about Sweden in a similar, if not the same, way, and that the message is in line with these core values (Council for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad, June 2017, p. 7). The four core values are: Innovative, Open, Caring and Authentic. These values together aim at presenting Sweden as a progressive state (Nämnden för Sverigefråmjande i utlandet, 2017, p. 5). When different actors, such as organisations and companies, convey the image of Sweden via their actions, they should ultimately aim for indicating to their recipients that Sweden is a progressive nation with these values guiding its development. The core values serve as part of the objective – they represent the ideal response from the recipients, when they encounter any of Sweden’s campaigns.

The third building block of the Sweden image strategy is the profile areas. While core values relate to the design and the “how” of the campaigns, profile areas are concerned with what is actually done. The four profile areas are: Society, Innovation, Creativity and Sustainability. The choice to limit the focus of profile areas to four has been a conscious
decision with the aim of creating a concentrated and strong message concerning Sweden, rather than a fragmented one. These particular areas have been selected, as studies have shown that they are the ones, in which Sweden holds a strong position (Nämnden för Sverigefrämjande i utlandet, 2017, p. 6). The profile areas complement each other, meaning that a particular activity “can focus on one or several profile areas, for maximum clarity and impact” (Council for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad, June 2017, p. 6).

The fourth building block is target group strategy. The image of Sweden strategy is concerned with communicating the message to two significant target groups, which are identified as “connectors” and “co-creators”. This communication method is referred to as the “multiplier strategy”, which relies on the snowball effect. Rather than targeting a broad and undefined audience, it is more cost-effective to target a specific and narrow audience, which in its turn spreads the message onwards to the broad end target group. “Connectors” have access to large networks of contacts, which enable them to spread information within economic, political, cultural and social circles. “Co-creators” already possess a certain interest in Sweden and often are professionally involved in areas relating to Sweden. They use their own channels and own content to spread information about Sweden. In some instances, this might even result in “co-creators” spreading information to their “connectors” and creating a new snowball effect. Both “connectors” and “co-creators” play an important role in today’s world, where social media enables a quick and easy way to share information, and where even the smallest of trends or movements can become impactful in the society (Nämnden för Sverigefrämjande i utlandet, 2017, p. 9).

The fifth and final building block of this strategy is visual identity. This refers to the strategic use of visual aspects, in order to promote a particular brand abroad. In marketing and when relating to business environments, the term describing these aspects of a strategy is “brand identity” (da Silveira, et al., 2013).

A brand identity plays an important role in the creation of any strategy for nation branding and is a tool used to create a brand image. Sweden’s brand identity is referred to simply as “Brand Sweden”. Brand Sweden consists of a logo based on the Swedish flag, a font called “Sweden Sans” created specifically for this purpose as well as carefully selected use of language. Visual aspects are an important tool of creating a reliable brand identity. Sweden’s visual identity revolves around its flag and the name “Sverige”, whether it be in Swedish or
different languages around the world (Board for promoting Sweden abroad, 2014). Since the colours of the Swedish flag are blue and yellow, the graphic profile of Sweden features primarily these two colours, however it includes many other elements, e.g., different brand marks and logotypes, typography, a wide variety of design-related guidebooks etc. There are three main principles that guide the processes of creating the designs, and these are: consistency, simplicity, and contextuality (Council for the Promotion of Sweden, 2021). To ensure that all official communication about Sweden abroad is conducted in line with Sweden’s visual identity, and thus aims at projecting the same values and images about Sweden, all information about Sweden’s graphic profile is available online at identity.sweden.se.

There are however certain shortcomings in the documents concerning the strategies for promotion of Sweden abroad, which are available via “Sharing Sweden” (sharingsweden.se). The information provided in these strategies seems at times outdated, e.g., in the documents the website identity.sweden.se is not mentioned at all, and the recommended website for guidelines about the graphic profile of Sweden is instead sweden.identitytool.com – the latter being currently nonexistent. Taking into consideration the fact, that the main focus for the strategy is to depict a certain image of Sweden, and with core values such as “open”, “innovative” and “authentic”, this type of an inaccuracy does not contribute to the overall objective of the strategy. Moreover, it displays a certain lack of professionalism and coordination, if the initial address of the website had been changed to the current, and the documents had not been updated with the new information.

Additionally, in both the English and the Swedish version of “Strategy 2.0” it is unclear how one should go about and apply the building blocks of the strategy when planning any specific public diplomacy campaigns. There is no explanation provided on how to actually plan a strategy, and even though the documents are visually appealing and describe the different building blocks of the Swedish strategy, they are rather vague. It is not addressed in the texts if the different building blocks, and especially the core values and the profile areas, are representative of a process, or if they are hierarchical or independent of one another, and which one influences the other and in what way. Complementary information is necessary in order to formulate a full picture of what aspects constitute Sweden’s public diplomacy strategy. This is when the other documents mentioned in the “UD Portalen” need to be taken into consideration (Appendix A). These are not publicly available online and need to be obtained from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.
The Communications Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs recommends a four-step method of innovative communication planning called “co.diplomacy” in order to conduct public diplomacy projects (Utrikesdepartementet, 2019). The outline for how to plan a public diplomacy project is described in two documents, which are not available publicly, but are published on the intra-net of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs – “Vägledning för strategisk kommunikation & offentlig diplomati” and “How to do co.diplomacy – in four easy steps” (Utrikesdepartementet, 2019, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, u.d.).

The steps are as follows:

1. Conversation – the first step is the identification of the themes and narratives. The themes are the changes that are to be affected by the campaign, and the narratives are the ways in which the themes are to be framed, e.g., by creating a catchphrase, a hashtag or anything else that can be associated with it. It is encouraged to focus on issues which entail more than one actor,

2. Cooperation – having identified the issue, it is then time to find cooperation partners, which are able to co-create the project together with the Swedish authorities. No matter what the project is, it is likely to face challenges, which is why involving other actors for which this particular issue is also important simplifies the process of the project. An example of a cooperation is e.g., organizing an event or a workshop, where cooperation partners are encouraged to participate and contribute,

3. Connectors – this relates to the fourth building block of the strategy - the target group, and more specifically the audience which can carry the message further to others via their networks. Other than the partners, which are identified in the previous step, other actors need to be involved in order to reach as many receivers as possible,

4. Context – the final step is to determine the message that is to be communicated, and in what way it is to be conveyed, in other words: where and how to act. This can involve using different channels or different mediums to share the message, as well as instead of the Swedish authorities communicating the message, other actors can be delegated to do so, e.g., celebrities, magazines, universities etc.

This process is referred to as “co-diplomacy” because it revolves around including different actors and advancing particular issues in cooperation with them (Ministry for Foreign Affairs, u.d.). These steps together with the information obtained from the “Strategy 2.0”
documents provide a comprehensive overview of what aspects comprise Sweden’s public diplomacy strategy.

5.2.2 The four core values
As mentioned above, the four core values are representative of the ideal emotional response from the recipients of the Swedish public diplomacy strategy. This section seeks to further examine the meaning of the four core values, and as well as how to identify if they are incorporated in the texts and contents of public diplomacy campaigns.

The core values are: Innovative, Open, Caring and Authentic. These characterize the essence of what Sweden is as a state. The values do not need to be understood literally, but they are the foundations for what Sweden aims to be recognized as. The idea is to not state these explicitly in whatever is being communicated, but to use them as signposts in different projects. Incorporating the values in a correct way is one of the challenges of Sweden’s public diplomacy strategy (Nämnden för Sverigefråmjande i utlandet, 2017). In line with Critical Discourse Analysis, the core values are a way to construct a preferred message in any produced material pertaining to Sweden’s public diplomacy.

The first value is *Innovative*. Sweden strives to become, and to be seen as, the number one most digitalized state in the world and a pioneer in driving innovative digital solutions (Näringsdepartementet, 2017, p. 10). Thus, a vast number of digital solutions are often included in the day-to-day activities and tasks within both the private and the public sector in Sweden. This can be reflected in how well Sweden places in a multitude of different international studies and indexes regarding digital transformations, e.g. placing 1st out of 134 economies in the 2020 Network Readiness Index, positioning 4th out of 63 in the IMD World Digital Competitiveness Ranking 2020, and placing 2nd out of all the member states in the EU in the Digital Economy and Society Index 2020 (Portulans Institute, 2020; IMD World Competitiveness Center, 2020; European Commission, 2020).

The innovative aspect of Sweden can be understood in technological terms (Lundberg, 2005). Companies such as Volvo, Ikea and Spotify are innovators in their fields, and are associated with high quality and innovative technology. Sweden is openly supporting the stance that a strong presence in international trade results in prosperity and technological advancement (Svenska Institutet, 2020). The Nobel Prize and Sweden’s strong background in research within
the fields of medicine, nanotechnology, climate and environment, and even space technology contributes to not only Sweden’s export successes, but also how innovation is being understood and constructed in the society (Nämnden för Sverigefrämjande i utlandet, 2017). The Nobel Prize entails much more than just purely technological and science-oriented advancement, thus indicating that innovation is multifaceted, and can even be applied to literature or creative endeavours, such as gaming, e.g., the game Minecraft, and communications, e.g., Skype (Nämnden för Sverigefrämjande i utlandet, 2017). “Innovative” thus synonymous to “cutting-edge”, “creative”, “inventive”, “forward-thinking”, “leading” and “original”. Sweden is innovative in terms of technological developments, but also in terms of coming up with new and creative ideas.

The second value is Open. Sweden is already very strongly associated with being an open state where equality is celebrated (Lundberg, 2005). Being open can either be applied to being understanding and open to other cultures, but also being open to new solutions, cooperations, and possibilities. It can be associated with democratic, economic and social development (Äkerlund, 2020, p. 40). It contributes to the democratic cultural exchange. It promotes free access to information, as many governmental documents and decisions are easily accessible to the public. It advocates for feminist foreign policy all around the world, as well as stronger laws and policies concerning climate protection (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019; Karns & Mingst, 2010). The value “Open” is can be understood in terms of “inclusive”, “accepting”, “transparent”, “objective”, “accessible” and “welcoming”.

The third value is Caring. Sweden can be understood as caring through the prism of what work is done on behalf of Sweden that benefits its own citizens as well as citizens from other states. Sweden’s membership in the UN and the continued work promoting the importance of diplomacy, feminist foreign policy, human rights, peace, climate and environment, all contribute to the image of Sweden as a caring state (Karns & Mingst, 2010). Sweden has a long history with the UN and is committed to the UN peace and development missions. Dag Hammarskjöld, a Swedish diplomat, was the second Secretary General of the United Nations in 1953-1961 (Fröhlich, 2008).

Sweden follows the objectives of “The Swedish Model”, which aims at providing evenly distributed wealth to its citizens and promoting equal value to all human beings (Swedish Ministry of Finance, 2017). One of the central beliefs in the “Swedish Model” is that
people have the fundamental right to lead independent and autonomous lives. Sweden combines a universal welfare state, equitable income distribution and good economic performance in order to provide its citizens with prosperous and equal lives (Swedish Ministry of Finance, 2017). Sweden’s international cooperation and development work is guided by the government bill “Shared responsibility – Sweden’s policy for global development” (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2015). The focus of the bill is to work towards poverty elimination across the world, as well as global sustainable development. One of Sweden’s actors mentioned in this document, which contribute to promoting Sweden’s caring qualities abroad is Sida - the Swedish government agency for development cooperation. Sida, together with its partners, provides international aid to those most in need. Taking into consideration the above examples, the value “Caring” can be understood in terms of “support”, “nurturing”, “kindness”, “compassionate”, “providing for”, and “hospitable”. Sweden is caring both internally towards its citizens, but also externally towards people around the world and the environment.

The fourth and final value is Authentic. The message that Sweden is promoting abroad will only be considered authentic if Sweden’s actions support the claims. As discussed above in reference to the other values, Sweden is involved in many different fields (climate and environment, democratic and social development), projects (e.g., Nobel Prize) and organizations (e.g., the UN). Merely stating that these are the areas in which Sweden is active does not contribute to Sweden being viewed as “authentic”. Actions must follow. This contributes to the authenticity of intentions, as it indicates that Sweden is authentic to its own values and beliefs.

Another way of understanding the value “authentic” is the act of being transparent. Sweden considers transparency as one of its democratic foundations (Nämnden för Sverigefråmjande i utlandet, 2017). This can be applied both to the value “open” as well as “authentic”. By creating a comprehensive public diplomacy network, Sweden indicates its international transparency (Melissen, 2005, p. 8). Information is available to everyone, and governmental processes are overt to a large extent.

Sweden is also “authentic” by staying true to its cultural uniqueness. Brand Sweden is an example of how the unique cultural aspects of Sweden are utilized and intertwined in the official work of the government. The Swedish flag is celebrated and incorporated in the design, thus indicating that Sweden is true to its cultural heritage. The value “authentic” can therefore
be understood in terms of “real”, “genuine”, “legitimate”, “reliable”, “unique” and “true to oneself”.

5.3 swemfa.se – Swedish Foreign Policy Stories
The Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs has recently redesigned its website, changing its name from “Swedish Foreign Policy News” to “Swedish Foreign Policy Stories”. The website is entirely in English and aims at foreign rather than Swedish audiences. The focus of the website is to share stories about Sweden and Swedish Foreign Policy, as well as those involved in the work and it is done; all with the ultimate aim of increasing interest in Sweden via public diplomacy (Sweden Abroad, 2018). Graphically, the website is organized in line with the graphic guidelines of Brand Sweden.

As of May 2021, the website has not been updated since late 2020 in terms of publishing new articles. Appendix B shows the main page of the website at the time of this study. The design and the structure of the website are rather simple. Upon entering the main page of swemfa.se, visitors are presented with six image thumbnails, each representing one of six different themes: Drive for democracy, Peace and security, Free, fair and sustainable trade, Climate and environment, Creative Sweden and Feminine foreign policy (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2020). Every post and article on the website is catalogued into one or more of these categories. The six categories correspond to six out of ten focus areas for Sweden’s foreign policy work (Appendix A). Underneath each of the six thumbnails, there is a tagline, accompanied by a short text describing what the categories are, as well as a “Read more” button. There is a seventh category called “Ambassador’s blog”, however this category is not listed under the “Theme” tab. Ergo, this category cannot be selected and accessed directly from the menu.

The way in which these categories are presented suggests a certain underlying hierarchy, which is not overtly mentioned in the official texts on Sweden’s public diplomacy strategy. On top of the page, these is a large thumbnail stretching itself across the entire page. It is a link to a video, which is embedded on the website and can be played directly from it. Below the video, there are two smaller thumbnails with captions belonging to categories “Peace and Security” and “Free, fair and sustainable trade”. These two are placed in the same row. Below them, in the third row, the three remaining categories are placed: “Climate and
Environment”, “Creative Sweden” and “Feminist foreign policy”. This structure can be seen in Appendix B.

The video belonging to the first thumbnail is titled “Free the Speech” and is approximately one minute long. It can also be accessed via the Ministry for Foreign Affairs official YouTube channel (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2018). In the video, three separate instances are shown when a public figure and an activist has taken the podium to hold a speech but remained silent instead. The three public figures in the video are Emma Watson, Leonardo DiCaprio and Malala Yousafzai. At the end of the video three separate sentences are shown one after another. These are: “The world becomes awfully quiet without free speech”, “More and more voices are being silenced by legislation, self-censorship and intimidation”, and “Help us #freethespeech”, in this order (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2018). Only when the last statement is shown, the translated logotype of Brand Sweden – the Swedish flag, accompanied by the word “Sverige” and the English word for the country, “Sweden” – is shown in the bottom right corner on the screen. The video is marked as belonging to the “Drive for Democracy” category, and the tagline of this post is “A leading force that stands up for democracy”.

Placing the Brand Sweden logotype at the very end of the video is a clever strategic move, as it points to the fact that the focus of the video is the message, while at the same time still managing to subtly indicate which state promotes it. It is interesting that the participants in the video are three internationally well-known activists, yet none of them is Swedish. This points to the fact that the ability to speak freely should transcend beyond state boundaries and is instead a collective issue for all of humanity. No matter where a person comes from and who they are, free speech is a basic human right.

Other than the abovementioned sections, there is a search button on the website, and at the very bottom there is contact information to the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, links to related websites, as well as links to different social media accounts of Sweden on Twitter, YouTube, Facebook and Flickr. The latter is not existent anymore.
6 Analysis: Swedish Foreign Policy Stories

6.1 Analysis of the texts on swemfa.se

There is an overall context that can be applied to the analyzed articles, as well as to all of the other articles published on the Swedish Foreign Policy Stories (swemfa.se) website. The articles are aimed at foreign audiences; thus, the majority is written in English and languages other than Swedish. They were all written with the purpose of being published on this website, meaning that the language had to have been adjusted accordingly. Some of the thumbnails on the website redirect the reader to other websites, where the articles are available and where they were originally posted. The articles that do not redirect to an outside source are original content written for the purposes of being published on swemfa.se. All of the articles were published within the last decade. The features are generally rather short and concise pieces of text. Each “post” on the website is accompanied by an image or icon at the top of the page.

Swedish Foreign Policy Stories is a governmental website, and its contents are written in line with the type of language that is generally used in governmental texts. There are limitations to the way in which information can be presented in official governmental texts. This comes from both the official type of language, but also experience in working with a specific type of texts and policies. In order to be as objective as humanely possible, it is important to take this into consideration while conducting discourse analysis. The way in which topics are approached, the use of particular words and phrases, as well as the structure of the texts can all be affected by organizational culture and guidelines.

The analysis below is conducted with the use of Critical Discourse Analysis. The core values behind Sweden’s Public Diplomacy strategies are incorporated in the texts on swemfa.se in different ways (Appendix C).

Value: Innovative

The value of being innovative is included in the texts quite straightforwardly. For example, article nr. 5 – “Eureka Innovation Week 2016 – ‘A great exchange of experiences’” – focuses on the topic of innovation and Stockholm being a hub for creative thinking and technological development (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2016). The word “innovation” is included in the title, which is also part of the name of the event described in the text: “Eureka Innovation Week 2016 – ‘A great exchange of experiences’”. There are certain lexical choices made in the
By stating that “more than 900 participants from 33 countries met up in Stockholm” to participate in the event, it is implied that the event is attractive internationally to interested parties, and participation from all around the world is welcome. Another excerpt from the text points out that the event is conducted in order “to give participants the opportunity to meet, share ideas and discuss smart cities” – this phrasing indicating an environment that encourages creativity and new ideas, thus pointing to the importance of innovation for Sweden. This also indicates that Stockholm is a city that welcomes innovation and new technological and creative solutions. This contributes to the already existing image of Stockholm abroad as an innovative city (Lundberg, 2005).

The article mentions that Sweden is the then-current Chair at EUREKA’s Secretariat, and that Sweden has thus come up with three main priorities during its time as Chair. The first priority mentions “greater efficiency and transparency”, which relates to the value of openness discussed below (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2016). The second and the third priorities are about creating and implementing a new tool relating to smart globalization, as well as anchoring EUREKA as an “important stakeholder in European Innovation Policy”. This indicates that Sweden focuses on being forward thinking during this Chairmanship. As the priorities are set by Sweden, this is a good example of how Swedish values are infused and projected in Sweden’s work not only as part of public diplomacy, but also in a variety of international activities.

In the same article it is stated that “EUREKA is all about finding new partners for transnational R&D collaboration” and “[t]he goal is to establish EUREKA as an important stakeholder in European Innovation Policy” (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2016). Phrases such as “finding new partners” and “important stakeholder” are relating to business, investments and profit. R&D stands for “Research and Development”, although this is never clearly stated in the text. One could speculate as to why this particular event was chosen to be highlighted on the swemfa.se website, especially if taking into consideration the business-oriented phrases in the text. Hosting this type of an event generates revenue for Sweden and contributes to the overall image of Sweden abroad. It can also be linked to the digitalization initiative and advancing the image of Sweden as a technological pioneer. The phrase “finding new partners” is indicative of the fact, that the parties involved in the event might have a covert cause for Sweden being a participant in the event. Incorporating this statement in the published text also contributes to sending a message for foreign audiences that Sweden is looking for new
and innovative projects. This points to the fact that the articles are written with a target group audience in mind – the connectors and the co-creators (Nämnden för Sverigefrämjande i utlandet, 2017). “Finding new partners” is one of the basic objectives of Swedish public diplomacy strategy, and incorporating clear signs of this supports the notion, that the strategy is actually applied in practice. There are certain presuppositions in the text, which indicate that the text might have been written with a specific target group in mind. As mentioned above, the term “R&D” is not explained in the text, which indicates that the authors of the text assume that the readers possess the knowledge of what it stands for. Another type of presupposition is made about what EUREKA is – whether it is an organization, a network or just an event is not stated or clarified in the text. The same can be concluded about other participants mentioned in this text, e.g., Enterprise Europe Network, as well as the projects awarded during the EUREKA event. The analysis shows that the aim of this text was to promote the image of innovative Sweden abroad.

Another interesting example of incorporating the value of innovation in governmental texts can be found in article nr. 1, “midwives4all” (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2015). This article discusses the importance of the midwifery profession and Sweden’s initiative of bringing attention to this topic by launching an online campaign about it. The lexical choices in the text point to an innovative image of Sweden, e.g., “we will draw on our networks to innovate, share knowledge and make an impact”. Sweden is presented via this text as a leader in the field with the abilities to inspire and support other states in the process of becoming more knowledgeable. Sweden is prepared to share this knowledge by using “a co-creative and innovative communication approach”. This indicates a willingness to cooperate, to create new solutions and contribute to the development of the world. However, in the same article, today’s data on the mortality of mothers and newborn children in Sweden is compared to data obtained in 1751. There is no doubt that this is to highlight the long process of development that Sweden has gone through in order to come to the position it holds today. The medical processes relating to childbirth, sterility in hospitals, and the quantity of births in hospitals compared to home births have changed quite drastically since the eighteenth century, which is why this argument loses validity and does not essentially contribute to the overall purpose of this text.

Another article, which points to the innovative aspect of Sweden is article nr. 4 – “I’m running business like a Swede and it’s a winning thing” (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs,
The focus of the article is a hip-hop music video performed in English but created by a Swedish civil servant trade union. The storyline in the song and the video is such that an American company is successful because it follows the Collective Agreement and provides certain perks to the employees. Most of the examples in the song, e.g., work insurance, parental leave, six-week vacation and wellness allowance, are generally quite common aspects for employees in Sweden, but not in many other countries around the world, like the USA. There isn’t much text in the article, and its contents are rather informal, including statements such as “believe it or not” and “next stop the Grammys?”. Through the song, Sweden sends a message of being progressive when it comes to working conditions of employees in Sweden and encourages other states to follow this model. The song could have been about Sweden, but the choice was made to show an American company benefitting from the employees being given certain perks. It is inventive and forward-thinking, because providing employees with these kinds of work-related advantages is not common in the USA. Additionally, this article is categorized into “Free, fair and sustainable trade” theme, while it could also be categorized as “Creative Sweden” theme. The theme this article was categorized into suggests that this text is aimed as business leaders and invites them to change the working conditions for their employees.

Another article that clearly incorporates the Swedish value of being innovative is article nr. 10 – “Vindelälven-Juhtatdahka and Voxnadalen become new biosphere reserves” (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019). The article focuses on the establishment of two new biosphere reserves in Sweden. Phrases such as “reserves encourage sustainable development” and “[i]n biosphere reserves, new solutions are tested and a scientific basis is created” indicate that the process of creating new biosphere reserves leads to original and progressive ideas.

In Article nr. 12, “Sweden seeks to lead Action Coalition for Economic Gender Equality”, the message that Sweden is an innovative state is already infused in the title (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2020). The word “lead” indicates to the reader that Sweden acts in a forward-thinking way. It points to the state’s pioneering aspirations. The use of “Sweden” instead of a particular group of people, such as the Ministry for Foreign Affairs or a certain department within it, is a type of impersonalization and collectivization. “Sweden” in the title implies that all individuals in Sweden as one collective voice striving towards the same goals. While it is highly unlikely that every single person in Sweden stands for this message, it adds gravitas to the statement made in the title. Later on, it is stated in the text that
“Sweden had submitted a letter of intent to UN Women to lead the global Generation Equality Action Coalition for Economic Gender Equality in 2020-2025”. The action described, submitting this type of a letter, once again points to Sweden’s intent to assume a leading position. The article quotes one of the Swedish Ministers stating that “[i]t goes without saying that Sweden will continue to be a strong voice for gender equality in the world”. The phrase “it goes without saying” suggests to the reader that Sweden has always been a “strong voice for gender equality”, and thus can be considered an obvious pioneer in the field. Overall, this article strives at imprinting on the reader the image of Sweden as a leading actor on the global scene, that surpasses other countries in terms of advocating for this issue and should thus be looked upon as a leader.

Value: Open

The value of being open can be interpreted differently depending on the context. In article nr. 2 – “Sweden second in ranking of European foreign policy” – the importance of “mediation and the ambition to create coalitions and build consensus” is clearly stated in the text (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2015). This applies to openness, because it can be understood in terms of being accessible, inclusive and transparent – all important aspects of mediation and creating new partnerships. Without transparency and openness, partnerships will not be stable and profitable in the long term.

In article nr. 5 – EUREKA Innovation Week 2016 - the importance of being straightforward and sincere is made evident by the statement: “The goal is to achieve a more appropriate organizational structure that promotes greater efficiency and transparency” (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2016). This indicates that across different spheres, Sweden aims to promote its core values as the only correct way of advancing the society forward. The structure of organizations improves with increased transparency and efficiency. By incorporating this type of statements in the articles on the swemfa.se website, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is broadcasting the message of openness and sharing knowledge and information with the public.

Article nr. 7 – “Democracy ‘fika’ in Tokyo” is another example of how the value of openness is transmitted in the texts (Pohl, 2020). By incorporating the culture-specific word “fika” already in the title, the article invites the readers to experience a part of the Swedish culture. “Fika” is a type of a break, during which people eat sweet snacks like pastries,
accompanied by some sort of a beverage. Inviting Japanese participants for a discussion focused on democracy over a “fika” sends a message that open discussion is a part of Swedes’ everyday activities as much as a “fika” is. The article is not only targeting Japanese audiences, but rather foreign audiences around the world and its message is to encourage people to discuss democracy and democratic values in order to advance the development of democracies across the world. Taking into consideration the setup of the main page of swemfa.se, where “Drive for Democracy” is the top category on the page, accompanied by the “Free the Speech” video, it is safe to state that Sweden is advocating for democracy and free formation of opinions. Even a small event such as a “fika” with Japanese students stands for a bigger message – that every person should feel free to share their opinions. The sentence “[h]opefully the democracy fika can encourage continued debate and engagement among the Japanese population” indicates that important conversations emerge from small and informal settings, before they turn into something bigger and result in real-life change.

The same reasoning can be applied to article nr. 6, “Afghan women trained in mediation skills” (Sahar & Nordlund, 2016). As mentioned above, and shown in Appendix A, feminist foreign policy is an important part of Sweden’s international work, and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs works continuously towards fulfilling the objectives of said policy. One of the objectives of the Swedish feminist foreign policy is to “[p]romote women’s and girls’ participation in preventing and resolving conflicts, and post-conflict peacebuilding” (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2019, p. 7). This article, categorized on the website into the “Feminist Foreign Policy” theme, describes the actions that Sweden has taken in Afghanistan in order to include more women in peacebuilding activities, by holding an education on dialogue and mediation skills. The importance of “women’s inclusion in society” is mentioned time and time again in the article as the building block for any society that aims at building “sustainable and inclusive peace”. These phrases from the article point to an open and inclusive society, where no voices should be excluded. By providing Afghan women with the necessary skills to participate in discussions on peace and security, Sweden is using its own culture and feminist policy as the example to be followed.

Article nr. 9, “Progress in the Margins – 11th WTO Conference”, also incorporates this value in its text (Blockert, 2017). The article belongs to the category ‘Free, Fair and Sustainable Trade’ and focuses on different aspects of the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference. The picture connected to this article is representing a plant growing through cracks in asphalt, and next to
this graphic there is a picture of the author of the text, standing with his arms crossed. The plant is very symbolic and could symbolize growth and progression despite adversities and difficulties throughout the process. The pose of the author – arms crossed – signify a defensive stance or being prepared to stand one’s ground. The picture in itself prepares the reader for an article, where opinions might be shared or even challenged. This is indeed shown in the text, for example via statements such as “In general, hopes are not high”, “Didn’t work then, won’t work now” and “Others, like me, tend to look for silver linings” – these quotes are all representative of the author taking a stance in the text and providing his own opinions for the readers. These statements are not representative of the views of the entire Swedish government, because the text is attributed to a particular Ambassador. They show, however, that Sweden is a state where individual opinions are appreciated, heard and shared, because every voice matters.

Value: Caring

The picture accompanying article nr. 2, which is titled “Sweden second in ranking of European foreign policy”, is representing a statue of a gun with a tied-up barrel (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2015). This is highly symbolic. Without understanding the ideological meaning of the statue and why it was created, it is difficult to understand why this particular picture was chosen for this article. The statue is called “Non-violence” and was created by a Swedish designer, although is now places outside of the UN headquarters in New York City. In this case, the visual semiotic choice accompanying the article transmits a message on its own, as well as it strengthens the message of the text that is accompanied by it.

Article nr. 3, “Climate Change Poses a Threat to Our Oceans”, sends a strong message relating to the value of being caring (Lövin, 2017). This article relates to climate change and the actions that need to be undertaken in order to stop the harmful processes to the ecosystem. A statement relating to this is: “we must cooperate in a spirit of solidarity if we are to succeed in preserving and protecting the water that we have”. Countries all around the world need to get involved in the process of taking care of the oceans. The aim of this call to action is “preserving and protecting” the oceans – these words relate to taking care of something. “Spirit of solidarity” invokes the responsibilities that the rest of the world should have towards taking care of the climate. Climate change is an international issue and does not merely affect selected places in the world. Via this text, Sweden is sending out a message that climate is an important issue that requires attention, and care. The image created in the text presents Sweden as a
nurturing state, for which environmental issues are placed highly on the priority list. Both Agenda 2030 and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals are mentioned in relation to the text and to exemplify Sweden’s involvement in climate work. For decades, Sweden has been a strong supporter of environmental and climate protection internationally and has been pushing for stronger regulations in this field (Karns & Mingst, 2010). Article nr. 3 is representative of a message that Sweden has continuously been sending out to the world over the course of years, that taking care of the climate is an essential issue to Sweden.

Article nr. 8 – “The horrific is set against the hopeful” also incorporates the value of being caring in the message of the text (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2020). The article opens with an emotional and personal recount of what the author of the text witnessed in Mosul, after its liberation. Overall, the article provides the reader with a disastrous picture of Mosul and offers an explanation for why Sweden’s assistance via different UN organizations is necessary. The author of the text writes: “We leave the water treatment facility, happy to see the UNDP emphasise that it is being repaired thanks to Swedish development assistance”, indicating that the economic help provided by Sweden is used to profit the affected citizens and locals, and that it would not have been possible without this Sweden’s aid.

Article nr. 4, “I’m running business like a Swede and it’s a winning thing” conveys the message that Sweden is caring, because it exemplifies in what way Sweden is caring towards its residents (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2015). Although the video was not created by the Swedish government, re-posting it on the swemfa.se website shows the importance of unions in Sweden and the working conditions that all employees should be provided with. This is supported in the text by stating that the “spirit of consensus in the Swedish labour market dates back to 1938 and has meant a great deal for how working conditions have developed in Sweden” – showing that improving working conditions is a long-term process, but in the end, it benefits the society. In the text, the working conditions typical for Sweden, such as work insurance or parental leave for both parents, are referred to as “perks” indicating that these might be different from otherwise generally known “employee benefits”. Using the word “perks” implies that perks are different, if not more than simply employee benefits.

Value: Authentic

In article nr. 1 authenticity is implied through the statement: “The facts are clear, the evidence is there” (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2015). This is in relation to why the profession
of midwives is crucial, and why the project initiated by Sweden should be considered as important. Words such as “facts” and “evidence” signify that something is definite and firm; it is backed by data that is not conjecture. It is almost as strong as stating that something is proven, which can and should only relate to indisputable information. The statement is supported by other pieces of information in the text with specific figures, e.g., “In 2013 alone, 289 000 women died worldwide from childbirth complications”, as well as “Nearly 3 million newborns die in the first month of life and 2.6 million newborns are stillborn each year”. Providing exact numbers increases the validity of the text. It contributes to the cause being considered more serious and important, because of the presentation of big scale numbers. This strong statement with specific data is weakened by the use of aggregation in other sections of the text, e.g., “the vast majority of these women and children” and “in too many countries”. While the exact statistical data strengthens the validity and authenticity of the text, using aggregation and the general terms relating to quantities act in the opposite direction.

In the same article, it is stated: “Because we are convinced that it is the smart thing to do. That is why we want as many people as possible to take part in this conversation” (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2015). This statement calls all interested parties to get involved and discuss this cause. This statement is both official and unofficial in how it is formulated and what is being said. “We” in this format represents the Swedish authorities. It adds to the seriousness of the matter, because the message comes from the Swedish government. The use of the pronoun “we” instead of writing the text in third person, using phrases such as “the Swedish Government” or “the Embassy”, is an indication of a certain degree of intimacy. First-person narrative results in the authors of the text sounding informal, but also genuine about what is being conveyed.

Article nr. 3 – “Climate Change Poses a Threat to Our Oceans” – aims at being seen as authentic and honest, however it is important to take the ideological and political beliefs into consideration when analyzing the genuineness of any text (Lövin, 2017). The political and ideological stances are not so much hidden in this article, as they are straightforwardly, yet strategically placed in it. The article is attributed to Isabella Lövin, the Minister for International Development Cooperation at the time, as well as a member of the Green Party in Sweden. The photo attached to the article is also of Isabella Lövin. Because she is a member of the Green Party, if this is a fact that the readers are aware of, it can actually profit the trustworthiness of the text. As the article is signed with Isabella Lövin’s name instead of having
the usual “Ministry for Foreign Affairs” signature, it aims at utilizing her position to strengthen the proclamations in the text.

The author’s ideological and political stance is in line with what is written in the text, and there is a certain level of informal language which can be attributed to the author’s personal convictions, e.g., “they light our way through the darkness that is currently shrouding the world” when discussing the importance of Agenda 2030 and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. This type of poetic statements is rather rarely seen in a governmental text. This text was originally published via the UN’s flagship magazine, The UN Chronicle just a few days before the shorter version of it was published on the Swedish Foreign Policy Stories website (Lövin, 2017). The original article is much longer, contains references to other research as well as examples of different climate-related issues. Because of the length of the original article, it can be deduced that only certain parts of it were selected in order to get the core message across to the audiences visiting swemfa.se, and at the same time encourage the readers to read the full article via the UN Chronicle. As mentioned above, Sweden has been supporting stronger regulations concerning climate issues for many decades, e.g., when in 1960s the state took the initiative of proposing the first international conference on the biosphere, and in 1970s it held the UN Conference on the Human Environment, resulting in environmental matters being put on the UN agenda (Karns & Mingst, 2010, p. 504). Article nr. 3 indicates that Sweden is still, up to this day, strongly involved in environmental work, which points to Sweden’s authenticity.

Article nr. 11 – “The Old Man and the Prize” is written in a much different way from the other analyzed articles, although it is almost as informal as article nr. 4, “I’m running business like a Swede and it’s a winning thing” (Samuelsson, 2020; Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2015). What differentiates it the most from other texts is the fact that it is written as if it were a short story, a novella. It points to the value of authenticity in a way, that the informal nature of the texts awakes the feelings of reliability, truthfulness, and genuine passion and interest in the matter. The first-person narrative in the text points to overall informality of this report – e.g., “we at the Embassy” and “the idea was perfect for us”. The focus of the text shifts from the event of donating the Hemingway sculpture to the museum in Cuba, to general facts about Ernest Hemingway and him winning the Nobel prize. There is also a shift from the first-person narrative to third-person passive voice. There is a humorous undertone throughout the text, such as the joke about it raining during the ceremony, the planning process of how the sculpture was to be transported and the recollection of
Hemingway’s celebrations, when he was informed about winning the 1954 Nobel Prize in Literature. The vocabulary used is relatable, and the sentences are easy to follow, as shown in the following quote: “A little ray of sunshine appeared between the clouds and shone through the leafy treetops of the park and onto Hemingway’s head” (Samuelsson, 2020). “A little ray of sunshine” is an idiom carrying the meaning that something positive happens during a time of hardship, although here it is used literally - the sun was shining after the rain had passed. The addition of “onto Hemingway’s head” is humoristic, as it was not actually Ernest Hemingway’s head, but the bronze statue depicting Hemingway’s head. There are some instances of impersonalization and collectivization in the text, e.g., “we at the Embassy”, “Envoy Carl-Herbert Borgenstierna and the Consul in Havana, Per Gunnar Wilhelm Aurell”, however the participants are also both personalized and individualized, e.g. “Envoy Borgenstierna’s wife Anita”, “The Cuban actor Emilio del Valle”, “Ernest woke his wife Mary” (Samuelsson, 2020). All of the above contribute to the conversational tone in the text.

Other themes in the articles
There are other aspects and themes present in the articles, which do not necessarily point directly to any of the core values, however which can clearly be noticed during the analysis, and which contribute to how the messages of these articles are being received.

The language in the articles is not specifically advanced, thus making it approachable and aimed at multiple audiences at once. Articles such as nr. 4 - “I’m running business like a Swede and it’s a winning thing” – or nr. 11 – “The Old Man and the Prize” – are written in a rather informal way, encouraging the readers to see a different side of the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2015; Samuelsson, 2020). Article nr. 11 is written as if it were a story, imitating the general style of writing of Ernest Hemingway, whose achievements are the topic of the article. Even the title of this article is a reference to Hemingway’s short novel “The Old Man and the Sea” and the novel is mentioned a few times in the text. This type of informality points to approachability and a willingness to connect with the audience, so it can be linked to the core values “open” and “authentic”, but it also adds a level of humor to the conversation. This could be indicative of Sweden being able to adapt to less formal situations, in a way that does not diminish the state’s legitimacy on the international scene. Especially in article nr. 11 where the Swedish diplomat Carl-Herbert Borgenstierna is described as having been heavily affected by celebrations and excessive drinking of alcohol together with Ernest Hemingway, the addition of this personalization of a Swedish diplomat
humanizes him as it shows emotions (Samuelsson, 2020). It indicates that government officials can act in ways that are relatable to people across the world.

Another example of the language in the text showing emotion is seen in article nr. 8 – “The horrific is set against the hopeful” (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2020). As mentioned above, this article opens with a personal and emotional recount of what a particular group of diplomats witnessed in Mosul. The text is attributed to Ambassador Lars Ronnås, indicating that the summary is written from his point of view. One of the first statements in the text is that “[f]actual impressions are mixed with the emotional”, indicating early on to the reader, that the destruction witnessed by the author affected him personally (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2020). By being demonstrative of own feelings, the author influences the formality of the text, in a way that it becomes less formal, and more conversational. This results in the message being conveyed in an engaging and memorable way. The readers are more likely to remember a text with personal and emotional remarks, rather than a report filled with numbers and containing no modifiers. One example of an emotional sentence in this article is: “The enormous destruction, city blocks in ruins, a hospital turned into a skeleton of twisted reinforcement bar and lumps of concrete, people going about their everyday lives…”. The use the superlative adjective “enormous” to describe the level of destruction in the city is indicative of it affecting the author and magnifies the impact of the word “destruction”. Describing the destroyed hospital as “a skeleton of twisted reinforcement bar and lumps of coal” aims at grabbing the readers’ emotions by presenting a desolate and apocalyptic, yet very specific image. Other than the hospital, another building detailed by the author is “the main university library, a building blackened by soot, with storeys without walls and floors pocked with craters from rocket-propelled grenades”. By specifying that the destroyed buildings were a hospital and a library – the former being an institution that provides assistance and treatment to the sick and injured, and the latter being an institution enabling people access, often for free, to huge amounts of knowledge – the author purposefully avoids generalizations and provides concrete examples, in order to evoke emotional responses from the readers. All of the examples above indirectly point out why Sweden’s assistance in Mosul, in cooperation with different UN organs, is needed from the author’s point of view. Factoring in emotions and personal views in the article need not lessen its validity and reliability. On the contrary, the personal approach encourages the readers to become involved by appealing to their emotional responses.
Multilateral organizations are discussed in seven out of twelve articles. Organizations belonging to the UN System are mentioned in five out of twelve texts. This includes both articles, which on the swemfa.se website are categorized under the “Climate and environment” theme. One of the assumptions, on which Sweden’s public diplomacy strategy is based, is that different actors need to work together in order to advance development (Council for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad, June 2017). Ergo, global governance is an important aspect of Sweden’s role in the world. Incorporating other actors in articles from and about Sweden’s international presence supports this postulate. Sweden’s aims and aspirations are to be a leader not only in the field of digitalization, but also when it comes to multilateral cooperation, international peace and security and climate (Utrikesdepartementet, u.d.). Intergovernmental organizations, such as the UN or the WTO, provide Sweden with platforms to advance these aims. The UN’s agenda involves all of the abovementioned issues, and more, into its work (Karns & Mingst, 2010). It can thus be considered an ideal platform for Sweden to promote its values and to conduct international work towards development.

Another theme present in the texts is the way in which the “us vs. them” technique is utilized. In some of the texts, participants that are Swedish representatives or representatives from Sweden’s partner organizations are mentioned by name and function. For example, in article nr. 12, the participants are described using personalization and functionalization – such as “Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde and Minister for Gender Equality, with responsibility for anti-discrimination and anti-segregation, Åsa Lindhagen” (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2020). There is a certain degree of detail provided about these participants. Most importantly, they are identified by their names. Other participants in this article are also described in a similar way – “Tea Trumbic from the World Bank and Joanna Lilja from Act Church of Sweden”. Another article exemplifying this is article nr. 2, where participants are described in a similar manner – e.g., “Mikaela Kumlin Granit, Head of the EU Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs” and “Mark Leonard, Director of the European Council on Foreign Relations” (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2015). However, there is a shift in how participants are presented in articles, which focus on particular geographical areas, e.g., article nr. 6, where the participants are referred to as “women activists from all provinces in Afghanistan” and “representatives from Provincial Peace Councils (PPCs) and the Department of Women’s Affairs (DoWA), but also teachers and journalists” (Sahar & Nordlund, 2016). There is a quote provided in the text, which is attributed to Afghanistan’s First Lady Rula.
Ghani, as well as two other quotes attributed to “one participant” and “another participant from Farah province” respectively.

A similar situation is seen in article nr. 8, where the narrator is identified as Swedish Ambassador Lars Ronnås, and other participants are introduced as “7–10 year-old girls”, “[t]he head of the house, an older woman” and “the head of the neighbourhood”. The only exception is the leader of a water treatment facility, which is visited by the Swedish delegation, who is mentioned by name (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2020). Even though the characterization of the participants might still evoke an emotional response from the readers, it does create a division between the different participants. This is an exemplification of the “us vs. them” practice, in a way that highlights which of the participants are relevant to Sweden’s image and also takes the focus away from other cultures and participants. Ronnås is not indicated as the author of the text, although he is the narrator. In the example of article nr. 6, the focus is not on the women participating in the education, but rather on Sweden enabling them to pursue this opportunity (Sahar & Nordlund, 2016). In line with constructivist approach, reality is socially constructed through interactions between different actors (Onuf, 2013). By consistently and strategically applying the “us vs. them” technique, a distinct image of Sweden emerges in contrast to other states and international actors. It contributes to presenting Sweden in a favorable light, in order to advance the conveyance of Sweden’s four core values – open, innovative, authentic and caring.

Finally, the question arises as to why these particular events were chosen to be published on the Swedish Foreign Policy Stories website. The website does not seem to be updated on a daily, weekly, or even monthly basis, indicating that the events included on it are carefully selected from all of the projects and events, in which Sweden is involved internationally. Even though the articles are placed into themes on the website, they are not necessarily similar, except for the overall topics. The two analyzed articles from the theme “Feminist foreign policy” differ in geographic scope – article nr. 6 focuses on an event held in Afghanistan, whereas article nr. 12 tackles an issue of an announcement made by Swedish officials on the international scene (Sahar & Nordlund, 2016; Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2020). The focus of the former is of local nature, whereas the focus of the latter is global. The former is also attributed to two individual authors, whereas the latter is authored by The Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. This is an example of individualization vs.
collectivization (Machin & Mayr, 2012). This might be indicative of a correlation between the fact of naming the authors and the scope of the article.

The two articles posted under the theme “Free, fair and sustainable trade” vary in terms of the tone, with article nr. 4 humorously presenting a music video on Swedish work environment, and article nr. 9 discussing challenges related to a global conference (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2015; Blockert, 2017). In the theme “Creative Sweden” article nr. 5 provides information about an international event held in Stockholm with hundreds of participants attending in order to find innovative ways of advancing global development, while article nr. 11 reports on the donation of a statue of Ernest Hemingway to his museum in Cuba, as well as Hemingway’s Nobel Prize win (Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2016; Samuelsson, 2020). The size, importance or international impact of the events or issues discussed in the texts differ to a large extent. Nonetheless, these are instances that were selected to be posted on this website, for the purpose of being seen by international viewers and, especially, the target audience. From this particular sample of articles, it can be deduced that the texts are showcasing a wide spectrum of Sweden’s interests, actions and projects. The events and issues presented in the articles might be the best representation of Sweden’s core values, as well as other aspects of the Swedish public diplomacy strategy. The discourse in the articles emphasizes the image of Sweden as a nation based upon innovation, openness, care and authenticity. No trends pertaining to the timeline of the publication of articles were identified.

7 Final Discussion and Conclusion
The aim of this study is to contribute to the field of public diplomacy studies of Sweden by examining the way in which the Swedish public diplomacy strategy is applied in the digital sphere, as well as to identify the way in which Sweden’s core values are communicated. This is done by studying the discourse in the articles published on the website “Swedish Foreign Policy Stories”. The research questions are:

- What aspects comprise Sweden’s public diplomacy strategy?
- How is the website “Swedish Foreign Policy Stories” (swemfa.se) reflective of this strategy?
In what way are Sweden’s core values communicated through the website “Swedish Foreign Policy Stories” (swemfa.se) in order to promote the desired image of Sweden abroad?

This issue is examined having identified that the current research in the field of Sweden’s public diplomacy revolves around outcomes and effects of the strategy. There is a lack of relevant research that analyzes the way in which the messages are communicated, and what tools are used to convey the intended image of Sweden.

Sweden’s public diplomacy strategy consists of five building blocks: the vision, the core values, the profile areas, the target group and the visual identity. The strategy is governed by the Council for the Promotion of Sweden Abroad, which consists of different governmental organizations. The way in which the four core values are supposed to be implemented in Sweden’s public strategy is difficult to deduce from the official documents explaining the building blocks of this strategy. The core values, although supposedly guiding the work, are explained briefly and vaguely.

The Critical Discourse Analysis of the articles on the Swedish Foreign Policy Stories website (swemfa.se) indicates that the core values of Sweden are indeed incorporated in its contents. Twelve articles were analyzed. This sample is large enough to draw conclusions about the implementation of Sweden’s core values in texts pertaining to Sweden’s public diplomacy, but it is not enough to generalize the results. Many of the articles are indicative of more than one core value, e.g., article nr. 11 (Samuelsson, 2020). As core values are not to be understood literally, the method of CDA is useful in a way that rather than particular words, the focus lies on the context of the articles. The articles relate to both global and local issues that Sweden is engaged in. There is a clear division between “us” and “them”. The overall focus of the articles is the actions and views that Sweden stands for, rather than aspects concerning other cultures. This can be understood as a technique to characterize Sweden vis-à-vis its international counterparts. Whatever emotions and responses are evoked in the readers, they are related to the image of Sweden.

This study indicates that the core values are communicated via different mediums on the Swedish Foreign Policy Stories website, and not exclusively via the textual aspects of the articles. Visual semiotic choices as well as the structure of the website contribute to the implementation of the core values on the website. The choices of which topics, events and
aspects of Sweden’s work are selected to be shared on this website also contribute to the way in which the core values are being communicated.

The study shows that Sweden’s core values are implemented in the texts. They are not overtly stated and identified as such, however their essence is implemented in the texts. This study is conducted deductively, where the researcher is aware of what aspects are being investigated. Whether the core values are communicated effectively or not cannot thus be determined. This is a question for potential future qualitative research on the topic, e.g., gathering a group of participants to read the articles, followed by a questionnaire on what feelings the articles evoked in them in relation to the image of Sweden.

Another recommendation concerning future research is investigating whether Brand Sweden is performing more or less effectively when compared to other nation brands in the world in the field of public diplomacy. In order to gain more clarity on the topic of how the strategy is planned and carried out, as well as in what way all five building blocks are incorporated, professionals from the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs could be approached and interviewed. A study analyzing which channels for Sweden’s public diplomacy are most effective mediums for sharing the image of Sweden abroad, and what types of audiences are reached. Instead of focusing on the core values, a study could also be conducted focusing on one or more of the ten specific focus areas.
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ARTICLES FROM THE SWEDISH FOREIGN POLICY STORIES WEBSITE:


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Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2015. *Government Offices of Sweden*. [Online] Available at: https://www.regeringen.se/rattsliga-dokument/proposition/2003/05/200203122/?TSPD_101_R0=088d4528d9ab2000cb0068c6d4 07dc93682497225114feacde7142ef5bfa97a8e87f681d8aa6989a08acafa3bb1430004389245d 42a7e60b818fd01a2646272680cc1a6e59c9459697f61deab61008c5241bb9 [Accessed 23rd May 2021].


Bild borttagen i digital version av upphovsrättsliga skäl.
APPENDIX B: Screenshot of the Swedish Foreign Policy Stories website (swemfa.se)

Bild borttagen i digital version av upphovsrättsliga skäl.
APPENDIX C: Analysis of the articles on swemfa.se - CDA

Table 1. midwives4all
Table 2. Sweden second in ranking of European foreign policy
Table 3. Climate Change Poses a Threat to Our Oceans
Table 4. “I’m running business like a Swede and it’s a winning thing”
Table 5. Eureka Innovation Week 2016 – “A great exchange of experiences”
Table 6. Afghan women trained in mediation skills
Table 7. Democracy ‘fika’ in Tokyo
Table 8. The horrific is set against the hopeful
Table 9. Progress in the Margins – 11th WTO Conference
Table 10. Vindelälven-Juhtatdahka and Voxnadalen become new biosphere reserves
Table 11. The Old Man and the Prize
Table 12. Sweden seeks to lead Action Coalition for Economic Gender Equality
Table 1. midwives4all

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Title of the article (1)</strong></th>
<th>midwives4all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme on the website</strong></td>
<td>DRIVE FOR DEMOCRACY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aim/purpose of the article</strong></td>
<td>To inform of the new global campaign launched by Sweden. The data provided further strengthens the message and is a call to action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammatical moods</strong></td>
<td>Declarative – information about the profession and its importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(the main “sentence types”): declarative, imperative or interrogative</td>
<td>Imperative – to work for creating the profession of midwives in countries which do not have it, in order to save lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date published</strong></td>
<td>23-02-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ANALYSIS/OWN CONCLUSIONS</strong></td>
<td>The fact that the title and the name of the project are not capitalized is a conscious choice. Perhaps it is to signify development, or make it seem more approachable – e.g. by using “4” instead of “for”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Swedish MFA is included in the logo – credit goes where credit is due – it’s a tactic to ensure that the initiative is linked with Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual semiotic choices</strong></td>
<td>The article is accompanied by a picture/logo at the top representing the initiative, as well as the logo of the MFA in the bottom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lexical choices</strong></td>
<td><strong>INNOVATIVE</strong>: “as early as 1751 the Collegium Medicum reported to the Swedish Parliament”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“we will draw on our networks to innovate, share knowledge and make an impact”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“We will use a co-creative and innovative communication approach.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“yet in too many countries this profession still doesn’t exist”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>OPEN</strong>: “in broad cooperation with a range of different stakeholders”,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“we will [...] share knowledge”, “co-creative”, “an ecosystem for conversation”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CARING</strong>: the topic of the article, the overall message that Sweden values life and healthcare, “our welfare state, where maternal and child health services were provided free of charge”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>AUTHENTIC</strong>: “The facts are clear, the evidence is there.”, “Because we are convinced that it is the smart thing to do. That is why we want as many people as possible to take part in this conversation.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comparing data from 1751 to today’s data on women and newborns who died at childbirth is a bit of an overreach. It is done in order to argue for why midwives are important, but if one wanted to criticize and pick this statement apart, it could be done by analyzing medical methods, cleanliness and sterility of hospitals, whether this concerns home births or births at medical institutions etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The profession is important – in terms of being innovative it indicates that the profession is innovative, and creating these jobs is also innovative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Many phrases relating to cooperation, places Sweden as a state that wants to cooperate with other actors. This relates to the strategy: target group audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspect</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonalization/</td>
<td>“Midwives” and “children” are discussed in general terms. Then, there is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personalization</td>
<td>“women” and “newborns”. “Maternal mortality rate” “maternal and child health”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Institutions: the MFA, Collegium Medicum, Swedish parliament, midwifery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>as profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualization/</td>
<td>Collectivization – no individuals in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collectivization</td>
<td>the text, only representatives of bigger groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nomination/</td>
<td>Functionalization = the participants are playing a specific role, defined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functionalization</td>
<td>by what they do and what their roles are, not who they are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Us vs. Them</td>
<td>The speaker in the text is “we” as in we, the Swedish MFA. The first sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>is passive, but the rest of the text is stated in terms of “we”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggregation</td>
<td>Both specific numbers as well as aggregation are used. “In 2013 alone,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>289 000 women died worldwide from childbirth complications. Nearly 3 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>newborns die in the first month of life and 2.6 million newborns are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>stillborn each year.” “The vast majority of these women and children...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“yet in too many countries...” “...900 per 100 000 live births...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presuppositions</td>
<td>Knowing who the counterparts mentioned in the text is a presupposition,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>though a valid one considering where the article was posted. Knowing what a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>midwife is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title of the article (2)</td>
<td>Sweden second in ranking of European foreign policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme on the website</td>
<td>PEACE &amp; SECURITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim/purpose of the</td>
<td>To inform of Sweden’s results in an international ranking and to reinforce the image of Sweden as a peaceful and cooperative actor on the global stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>article</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical moods (the</td>
<td>Declarative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>main “sentence types”):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>declarative, imperative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or interrogative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date published</td>
<td>19-02-2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ANALYSIS/OWN CONCLUSIONS**

The context of this statue is that it’s called “Non-violence”, and it was created by a Swedish sculptor called Carl Fredrik Reuterswärd. The statue is placed outside the UN headquarters in New York City. It bares the meaning of non-violence and peaceful conflict resolution and is internationally recognized. The statue has been re-created and exists now in many forms in different places in the world.

**Visual semiotic choices**

Picture accompanying the article at the top of the website. It represents a statue of a gun with a tied-up barrel. There are two links attached at the bottom of the article – one of the links is currently disabled (links to a non-existent page).

There isn’t much focus on Sweden in particular in the text, but what isn’t there is also a type of clue to what message is to be sent.

Sweden is a part of the EU community, and it stands for the actions and messages sent out by the EU.

A comparison is drawn between Sweden and Germany, the latter being placed top in the index on Foreign Policy – meaning that Sweden is actively acting to contribute to Foreign Policy.

This comes with certain connotations. It is important for Sweden to be viewed as an active member, contributing to the work. Sweden wants to be seen as a pioneer or forerunner in this.

**Lexical choices**

“mediation and the ambition to create coalitions and build consensus” – in relation to both Germany and Sweden (OPEN AND AUTHENTIC)

“great testimony to Sweden’s long-term efforts” = overlexicalization; the words great and long-term are here to indicate a deliberate and vibrant action, where there might in reality not be much of such.

“the development of EU foreign policy was discussed” = the article mentions that this is why the meeting had happened; this implies that Sweden is very much involved in official policy aspects of the EU and international cooperation.

There isn’t much focus on Sweden in particular in the text, but what isn’t there is also a type of clue to what message is to be sent.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field – perhaps also in any other field it is active in.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impersonalization/Personalization</th>
<th>Both. Representatives from states are persons, but States are also referred to as institutions with values: “France […] was considered to be less inclined to seek coalitions before acting”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individualization/Collectivization</td>
<td>Both institutions and individuals are presented in the texts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Nomination/Functionalization | Both present – there are quotes from particular individuals, and they are mentioned by name and function.  
- Mikaela Kumlin Granit, Head of the EU Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs  
- Mark Leonard, Director of the European Council on Foreign Relations |
| Us vs. Them | The EU vs. Russia, with Sweden being a part of the EU. Structural oppositions in relation to Russia.  
Clear division that the actors are opposite to each other, i.e., the EU does not support Russian actions. |
| Aggregation | No aggregation; the numbers which are presented are specific, and relating clearly to the report on EU’s work. |
| Presuppositions | It is implied that Russia is the “villain” on global scene, and the texts implies condemning their actions, thus indicating to the reader that Russia is “bad” – but no specific examples or explanations are provided.  
This signifies that the text is aimed at an audience with certain degree of knowledge about international affairs. |
Table 3. Climate Change Poses a Threat to Our Oceans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the article (3)</th>
<th>Climate Change Poses a Threat to Our Oceans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme on the website</td>
<td>CLIMATE &amp; ENVIRONMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim/purpose of the article</td>
<td>To inform of the current situation concerning oceans and a demand for change, especially from other international actors. Also, information of an upcoming Ocean Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical moods (the main “sentence types”): declarative, imperative or interrogative</td>
<td>Declarative, at some points Imperative because it calls to action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date published</td>
<td>29-05-2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Visual semiotic choices**

- Photo of Isabella Lövin – the Minister for International Development Cooperation at the time the article was written.

**Lexical choices**

- Large numbers are presented in relation to the amount of water in the oceans on Earth, followed by “This can seem like an infinite amount.” – This indicates that there will be a shift in the text, and that this amount of water is not actually as much in relation to how people utilize it.

  “We cannot protect our share of the ocean with walls; instead, we must cooperate in a spirit of solidarity if we are to succeed in preserving and protecting the water that we have at our joint disposal. We must work together with our closest neighbours and cooperate at a global level, between countries.” (CARING, AUTHENTIC) – but this is also criticism that implies that this is a part of everyone’s job. A call to action not just aimed at Sweden, but the entire world. (CARING)

  “The importance of the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) cannot be stressed enough. They light our way through the darkness that is currently shrouding the world.” – oddly poetic phrase for a government-published text.

- One of the goals for which developments are unfortunately

**ANALYSIS/OWN CONCLUSIONS**

- It is not so much that the political and ideological beliefs and stances are hidden in the texts, rather than they are quite straightforward in terms of where Sweden stands – e.g. supporting Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. This article exemplifies what Sweden is doing to take action, and how Sweden contributes to achieving these goals.

  However, the statement “light our way through the darkness that is currently shrouding the world“ implies that the rest of the world is blind in relation to these goals. They are not doing enough. This is where Sweden comes in, as it takes initiative and CARES about achieving these goals through action.

  “The Conference will be the first high-level forum to focus on one single goal in the 2030 Agenda, and we are enthusiastic to see growing engagement among the countries of the world.” – INNOVATIVE by taking initiative.

Results in the final sentence:
moving in the wrong direction is SDG 14 = critique of the actions taken to protect the oceans. – The text is signed by Isabella Lövin, the Minister for International Development Cooperation at the time, as well as a member of the Green Party in Sweden. This statement advances the political goals and views of the Party. But also signifies to the readers that environment is an important cause to Sweden.

This is why the Government of Sweden, together with the Government of Fiji, took the initiative to host the Ocean Conference in New York in June 2017. = took the initiative = INNOVATIVE

“The Conference will be the first high-level forum to focus on one single goal in the 2030 Agenda” = INNOVATIVE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impersonalization/personalization</th>
<th>Impersonalization – institutions instead of particular people.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individualization/collectivization</td>
<td>“We” as Sweden and “we” as the world thus collectivization,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nomination/Functionalization</td>
<td>Not relevant for this text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Us vs. Them</td>
<td>The article highlights the importance of “we” – the world uniting in order to fight climate change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggregation</td>
<td>Not present in the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presuppositions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Table 4. “I’m running business like a Swede and it’s a winning thing”</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title of the article (4)</strong></td>
<td>“I’m running business like a Swede and it’s a winning thing”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme on the website</strong></td>
<td>FREE, FAIR &amp; SUSTAINABLE TRADE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aim/purpose of the article</strong></td>
<td>To inform of a new video which works as an advertisement for the Swedish model in a workplace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammatical moods (the main “sentence types”): declarative, imperative or interrogative</strong></td>
<td>Declarative – informative, funny, pop culture included.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date published</strong></td>
<td>17-02-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual semiotic choices</strong></td>
<td>The picture attached to the article is a still shot from the video, which is the subject of the text. There is more emphasis on the video and its contents than the text in this publication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lexical choices</strong></td>
<td>The language in the text is rather informal, with phrases such as “believe it or not” and “Next stop the Grammys?” and “heavy hip-hop beats”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Then, in between the informal statements, there are words such as “constructive cooperation”, “spirit of consensus”, “working conditions have developed in Sweden” – <strong>CARING, AUTHENTIC, INNOVATIVE</strong> – the way in which the message is transmitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overlexicalization: “woman business leader and her staff”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All four values: OPEN, CARING, AUTHENTIC, INNOVATIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impersonalization/personalization</strong></td>
<td>Overall, the language in this text is informal; the institution behind the video is referred to as such. – OPEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Turning directly to the reader with statements such as “right?” or “no?” affects how the text is received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individualization/collectivization</strong></td>
<td>“Woman business leader and her staff” – woman being a part of a group “female bosses”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feminist foreign policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender equality, especially in managerial positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ANALYSIS/OWN CONCLUSIONS</strong></td>
<td>The link does not work. The video is no longer available via youtube, but can be found on vimeo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Having watched the video, what is left out in the text on the swemfa.se website is the fact that the video is about an American company that’s being run in line with SWEDISH COMPANY STANDARDS. That message is lost in the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The message of the video is to show that when the employees are being taken good care of in terms of different perks (such as 6-week vacation, maternity and paternity leave, earmarked budget for each employee to spend on health-related activities) the business/the company benefits from it too. – which is implied in the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inviting, intimate, encourages the readers to feel involved</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nomination/ Functionalization</th>
<th>“woman business leader” - functionalization</th>
<th>In the context of the article, this is still informal. The character in the video has no name, so it is not possible to describe her in different terms.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Us vs. Them</td>
<td>Sweden = good example Other countries where companies usually do not provide the same working conditions for their employees = to be improved, and to be affected and targeted by this video.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggregation</td>
<td>Not relevant for this text.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presuppositions</td>
<td>What the collective labour agreement entails is never explained in the text; or exactly what “perks” come with it or what are the standard rights and benefits for the employees in Sweden.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5. Eureka Innovation Week 2016 – “A great exchange of experiences”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the article (5)</th>
<th>Eureka Innovation Week 2016 – “A great exchange of experiences”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme on the website</td>
<td>CREATIVE SWEDEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim/purpose of the article</td>
<td>To inform of an international event focused on innovation held in Stockholm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical moods (the main “sentence types”): declarative, imperative or interrogative</td>
<td>Declarative – informing of the event and its outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date published</td>
<td>04-05-2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ANALYSIS/OWN CONCLUSIONS**

**Visual semiotic choices**
- Picture from the event, in the centre a man and a woman sit and seem to be discussing something, a computer screen behind them in the centre
- URL LINKS do not work

**Lexical choices**
- **INNOVATION**: Already in the title, “a great exchange of experiences”; “More than 900 participants from 33 countries met up in Stockholm” = what’s implied is that Stockholm is the hub for innovation and creative thinking, the very first sentence
- “to give participants the opportunity to meet, share ideas and discuss smart cities” = encourages people to come up with new ideas; does not impose own ideas but instead wants to act as a platform for others to grow and develop and be creative; also, oddly touristy sounding
- “matchmaking” = interesting use of this word instead of e.g., intermedier, arbitrator, intermediary. Later followed by “EUREKA is all about finding new partners for transnational R&D collaboration” – partnersh in terms of business is a generally used term (also a quote)
- “The goal is to establish EUREKA as an important stakeholder in European Innovation Policy” = almost sounding business-like, using a word like stakeholder relates to business, investments and profit.
- There is a separation, a disengagement between the quotes from different spokespeople, which is obviously going to happen in any text, because it is different voices coming from different people – but the language in the text is not adjusted to the quotes (“matchmaking”).

The event is taking place during Swedish Chairmanship in the organisation, the priorities listed relate to Sweden’s values: “The goal is to achieve a more appropriate organisational structure that promotes greater efficiency and transparency.” = **OPEN & AUTHENTIC**

“The goal is to deliver a general methodology and toolbox for the implementation of a new tool” = **INNOVATIVE**

Hosting an event generates revenue for Sweden and contributes to the overall image of Sweden abroad. = **INNOVATIVE**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Innovative projects</strong></td>
<td>Team Sweden – the MFA describing their “daughter” project as innovative is a strong message about what the text is trying to achieve.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impersonalization/personalization</strong></td>
<td>Impersonalization – referring to institutions, organizations rather than particular people</td>
<td>Distancing, formal, serious mood of the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individualization/collectivization</strong></td>
<td>Only in terms of profession, not culture or religion</td>
<td>Professional aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nomination/functionalization</strong></td>
<td>Functionalization – names and what these people do is in terms of career.</td>
<td>As above: professional, formal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Us vs. Them</strong></td>
<td>Focus primarily on Sweden</td>
<td>Putting Sweden in focus, but other actors mentioned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Many other countries participated in the event, but not mentioned as focus of this article</td>
<td>Other innovation/project teams mentioned by name of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aggregation</strong></td>
<td>“Many countries have sent large delegations” – what is considered large in terms of a delegation for this type of event? (coming from a quote, but still was included in the text)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presuppositions</strong></td>
<td>Knowing what EUREKA is – never explained the nature of this platform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Table 6. Afghan women trained in mediation skills</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title of the article (6)</strong></td>
<td>Afghan women trained in mediation skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme on the website</strong></td>
<td>FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aim/purpose of the article</strong></td>
<td>To inform of a new training held by Sweden for the purposes of educating Afghan women.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammatical moods (the main “sentence types”): declarative, imperative or interrogative</strong></td>
<td>Declarative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date published</strong></td>
<td>15-12-2016</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual semiotic choices</strong></td>
<td>The photo attached to the article has no caption explaining its origins, but can be assumed to represent Afghani women which attended the event.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Lexical choices** | Direct quotes from the participants and Afghanistan’s First Lady = AUTHENTIC  
“Women’s inclusion in society” = OPEN  
“sustainable and inclusive peace”  
“the Embassy of Sweden hosted the initial phase of a Dialogue and Mediation training for Afghan women”  
“to strengthen the skills and professional capacity of women peace activists to engage in conflict prevention and conflict resolution at the local, provincial and national level in Afghanistan” |
| **Overall conclusion from the article:** Sweden is open to hold educations and to support local women in Afghanistan to participate in peacebuilding processes, and to improve their dialogue and mediation skills. The article points to an open and inclusive society as the ideal one; women must be involved in discussions to create such society. |
| **Impersonalization/personalization** | Both personalization and impersonalization.  
The participants in the education (Afghani women) are not really described as anything else but participants, Afghani women and at some point their profession is mentioned. |
| **Individualization/collectivization** | “Participants include representatives from Provincial Peace Councils (PPCs) and the Department of Women’s Affairs (DoWA), but also teachers and journalists.” |
| Nomination/Functionalization | “said one participant”  
“said another participant from Farah province” | No names are provided for the participants, although there are quotes from them. There is also a quote from Afghanistan’s First Lady, Rula Ghani, and her name is included after the quote. The text is about female empowerment, so lack of any kind of characterization of the participants can be seen as demeaning and de-humanizing. |
| Us vs. Them | The text is about empowering women, and even if there is an “us vs. them” aspect to it as in us – Sweden/Swedish representatives holding the education vs. the Afghani women participating in the education. The two sides are however not antagonized against each other. | |
| Aggregation | “from all provinces in Afghanistan” – not specified how many provinces “Women from every province in Afghanistan were invited”  
“participants from an astounding 32 out of 34 provinces” – At this point it is specified how many provinces there are, but it is not specified exactly how many women participated in the event. “studies show” – what studies though? Lack of example or reference to a particular study or research | |
<p>| Presuppositions | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Title of the article (7)</strong></th>
<th>Democracy ‘fika’ in Tokyo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme on the website</strong></td>
<td>DRIVE FOR DEMOCRACY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aim/purpose of the article</strong></td>
<td>To inform of an event in Tokyo involving Japanese students focusing on democracy conversations. Also, a message that Japan needs to improve its democracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammatical moods (the main “sentence types”): declarative, imperative or interrogative</strong></td>
<td>Declarative – information about the event. Imperative – encourages the audience to take action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date published</strong></td>
<td>06-02-2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Visual semiotic choices**   | The picture attached shows a group of people, seated by two round tables, in the middle of a discussion. Some people are smiling, some are serious, all seem to be a part of the discussion. There are cups of coffee, as well as other beverages and sweet pastries on the tables. |

| **Lexical choices** | Sense of inclusion and interesting discussion. The choice of taking a “candid” picture: done so in order to evoke feelings of heart-warming and inclusive environment. Important that coffee & pastries are visible in the photo to show what a “fika” is to foreign audiences. |

1. The word “fika” in the title
2. “invited some 30 Japanese university students”
3. “to enjoy buns and coffee (Swedish ‘fika’)”
4. “The positive response from the participants is testament to a pent-up need for similar initiatives for young people in Japan. Hopefully the democracy fika can encourage continued debate and engagement among the Japanese population.”
5. “Critical and independent thinking is not something that is taught in school or encouraged in society either.”

1. culture-specific word for “coffee break” with pastry
2. “some” in front of a number acts as an intensifier, thus suggesting that the number is something to be proud of, good turnout
3. not exactly an explanation of what fika is, but using the word show its importance to the Swedish culture – why not use “coffee” or “afternoon tea” or “teatime” or “meeting” or “discussion” – no. fika incorporates the Swedish-ness into the text.
4. This is assigning features to the “democracy fika” which the event might not possibly have. This statement aims at values OPEN, INNOVATIVE and CARING, but slightly misses the mark. It is patronizing, generalizing, and very specific for feedback from 30 students.
It implies that Japan requires Sweden’s involvement as the middleman in order to advance
its democracy discussions. On the other hand, it also tries to show that conversations that start in small and informal events also have the power to make a change.

5. Previous sentence is accredited to “the students”, whereas this one is written from a general POV. Both this and the previous sentence are written in passive voice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impersonization/ personalization</th>
<th>Impersonal – institutions and organizations, e.g., the Swedish Embassy, the Embassy in Tokyo, the students, Japanese media</th>
<th>Concealing who stands for what, but also a sense of collectivity. About students: no personalization or characterization of them.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individualization/ collectivization</td>
<td>“students”</td>
<td>Using a collective word rather than provide some individual quotes from the students. Only indirect quotes/citations from the students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nomination/ Functionalization</td>
<td>Functionalization</td>
<td>Students. No explanation provided what are the fields, that the students are studying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Us vs. Them</td>
<td>We = the Swedish Embassy in Tokyo Them = Japanese students, Japanese society</td>
<td>We used to reaffirm that this is personal and very important to the Swedish government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggregation</td>
<td>“many young Japanese people feel” “together with other actors”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presuppositions</td>
<td>It is presupposed that Japan is not a fully functional democracy, and requires help from other actors in establishing a conversation around it. But also, Swedish culture is a presupposition, as well as Swedish democracy being the ideal one</td>
<td>What are the Japanese values? What is their culture centered around? The Japanese values are not discussed in the text. They might be different, but in what way?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8. The horrific is set against the hopeful

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the article (8)</th>
<th>The horrific is set against the hopeful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme on the website</td>
<td>PEACE AND SECURITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim/purpose of the article</td>
<td>To recount for when a delegation from Sweden’s Embassy in Baghdad visited Mosul and what was witnessed – both in terms of the damage to the city’s infrastructure as well as the damage to the people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical moods (the main “sentence types”): declarative, imperative or interrogative</td>
<td>Declarative: describing Sweden’s visit from the Embassy in Baghdad to Mosul, travelling with staff from UNDP and UNMAS, as well as describing facts from the occupation. Also, interrogative: “And why tell temporary visitors what there might be to say?” – the author questions why a man, who had seen much hurt and violence should trust him, knowing that he is only a temporary visitor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date published</td>
<td>18-03-2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ANALYSIS/OWN CONCLUSIONS**

**Visual semiotic choices**

Picture from what can be assumed as the expedition discussed in the article. Four men are visible in the picture, one of which is wearing a bulletproof vest with the Swedish flag on it, and another one is in military uniform and carrying a gun. There are ruins of buildings in the background, as well as red and white tape closing off the ruins from where the men are walking.

The man closest to the camera is Ambassador Ronnås, who is also mentioned in the text as the author. The flag on the bulletproof vest carries much cultural symbolism (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 54). The ruins of building in the background show the extent to which the city was destroyed. It can be deduced that the buildings were bombed, or shot at, and are now abandoned. The presence of the military man with the gun indicates that the city might not be completely safe yet, and there are still dangers awaiting, which is why this situation is serious.

**Lexical choices**

1. Ambassador Lars Ronnås recounts a day when the horrific was set against the hopeful.

2. “Factual impressions are mixed with the emotional. The enormous destruction, city blocks in ruins, a hospital turned into a skeleton of twisted reinforcement bar and lumps of concrete, people going about their everyday lives…”

3. “Daesh’s extreme oppression of women is gone. But in society, an

1. Personalization of the text – it’s a recount from a particular individual. - AUTHENTIC

2. A sort of an informal sentence, where emotions are mentioned. – the effects of the occupation of Mosul as witnessed by the Swedish delegation are devastating and show, why Sweden’s help is necessary -- CARING
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impersonalization/ personalization</th>
<th>Individualization/ collectivization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambassador Lars Ronnäs recounts a day when the horrific was set against the hopeful. Impersonalization when talking about the UN organizations: UNDP and UNMAS</td>
<td>&quot;The pupils have&quot; &quot;The pupils are&quot; &quot;They train and engage locals – not least women&quot; &quot;Income for the residents&quot; &quot;The head of the house, an older woman, points to a cellar&quot; &quot;We ask the local mukhtar, the head of the neighbourhood&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The text was attributed to Ambassador Ronnäs, and in this sense personalized. The text seems to be aimed at awakening an emotional response from the audience reading it about how devastating the effects of this war are.</td>
<td>Both.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Nomination/Functionalization** | “a classroom of pupils, all of whom are 7–10 year-old girls”
“The head of the house, an older woman” | The use of the word “pupils” is a functionalization, instead of what would be considered nomination like “children”. The pupils are first described as “7-10 year-old girls” – although later on in the text they are only referred to as “pupils”

“The older woman” is a sort of nomination - describing that the head of the house is an older woman is presenting her in a certain light, different from if she had only been described as “the head of the house”.

---

| **Us vs. Them** | Sweden = us
UNDP/UNMAS = them, but cooperating with “us” | The UNDP and UNMAS are presented in a way, that they are utilizing Sweden’s resources in a way that benefits the citizens and locals in Mosul, thus creating a positive narrative for this cooperation.

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| **Aggregation** | “A major part of their efforts”
But also: “The number of objects is 47 000.”
“its 3 500 square metres” | Aggregation is present, but most data is backed by concrete numbers.

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<p>| <strong>Presuppositions</strong> | What the particular participants in the text are, and what their role and meaning in the world is – UNDP, UNMAS, Daesh, the occupation of Mosul | These are not contestable statements, but it is presupposed that the readers know about these agents. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Title of the article (9)</strong></th>
<th>Progress in the Margins – 11th WTO Conference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme on the website</strong></td>
<td>FREE, FAIR AND SUSTAINABLE TRADE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aim/purpose of the article</strong></td>
<td>To inform of the upcoming event called the Eleventh WTO Ministerial Conference. Providing both pros and cons of the event and what it leads to. Overall vague as to what Sweden’s stance is in particular issues, also what issues exactly are being discussed (except for abolishing harmful fisheries subsidies – what Sweden aims for).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammatical moods (the main “sentence types”): declarative, imperative or interrogative</strong></td>
<td>Declarative mostly, also imperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date published</strong></td>
<td>05-12-2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual semiotic choices</strong></td>
<td>The picture shows a plant growing through cracks in asphalt. It also shows a man with his arms crossed, presumably the author of the article. Very symbolic. Plant growing out of asphalt means conquering great difficulties and obstacles to reach a desired outcome/goal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Lexical choices**            | First sentence: “It’s the most wonderful time of the year again”  
2. “This is an issue that Sweden has worked on for decades and I can personally testify that it was pretty lonely work in the beginning.”  
3. “Didn’t work then, won’t work now.”  
First sentence: there is a hyperlink to a music video of the Andy Williams song “It’s The Most Wonderful Time of The Year” – the author of the text then writes that he does not mean Christmas. This is a rather unofficial opening of an article, signifying that perhaps the article is personal and written from an individual POV. – INNOVATIVE? AUTHENTIC – points to a personal record about the event.  
2. INNOVATIVE = Sweden as one of the first states in the world to be working with a particular issue, but from the sentence it can be deduced that other joined eventually, thus showing initiative and being a pioneer  
3. A personal insight, pointing to an honest opinion from the author – OPEN. Provides an OPEN opinion to the foreign audiences on a matter that might seem like a point of disagreement from other countries involved in this conference. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Impersonalization/personalization | “Some people in Geneva”  
“Others, like me”  
“There will be a presentation”  
“There will also be high level events”  
“This is an issue that Sweden has worked on” | Both – the collective approach of representing Sweden and the Swedish delegation, but also personal opinions from individual point of view. Still in professional context; views based on work experience. |
| Individualization/collectivization | “Our challenge will be to”  
“Others, like me,” | |
| Nomination/Functionalization | Functionalization. However, not very relevant for this text. | |
| Us vs. Them | Us = the author, and Sweden  
Them = participants in the MC11 event that are not a part of the Swedish representation | |
| Aggregation | “thousands of people travel around the world”  
“Some economists”  
“some of the negotiations”  
“Some people in Geneva”  
“Many events will have participation from ministers and several declarations are expected” | Vague. |
| Presuppositions | What WTO is  
What these events are like (the meaning behind a conference, especially with multilateral agents) | |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the article (10)</th>
<th>Vindelälven-Juhtatdahka and Voxnadalen become new biosphere reserves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme on the website</td>
<td>CLIMATE &amp; ENVIRONMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim/purpose of the article</td>
<td>To inform of the new biosphere reserves in Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical moods (the main “sentence types”): declarative, imperative or interrogative</td>
<td>Overall: declarative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date published</td>
<td>02-07-2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual semiotic choices</td>
<td>A photo from one of the reserves, Vindelälven, showing a source of water and a forest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Lexical choices           | “Biosphere reserves encourage sustainable development” = **INNOVATIVE, CARING**  
                           | “In biosphere reserves, new solutions are tested and a scientific basis is created to provide examples of how to reconcile the conservation of natural areas with human activities.” = **INNOVATIVE**  
                           | “areas of unique and rich Sami and Swedish cultural heritage” = **AUTHENTIC** |
| Impersonalization/ personalization | Sweden and UNESCO are the main participants in the text. There is a quote from the Minister for Environment and Climate Isabella Lövin on the subject. |
| Individualization/ collectivization | Collectivization.                                             |
| Nomination/ Functionalization | Functionalization                                             |

**ANALYSIS/OWN CONCLUSIONS**

“Sustainable” and “development” can be directly linked to the 17 Sustainable Development goals.

In terms of **INNOVATION**, the quote: “This biosphere reserve will encourage new solutions for promoting cultural diversity, sustainable fisheries and reindeer husbandry, and sustainable tourism” can be linked directly to the 17 SDGs – e.g. SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities, 13 Climate Action, 14 Life Below Water, 15 Life on Land.

The text is not about people in the sense of participants, but organizations and nature reserves.

Minister for Environment and Climate Isabella Lövin
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Us vs. Them</th>
<th>No clear division in terms of us vs. them.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aggregation</td>
<td>“one of the world’s most northerly biosphere reserves and one of the world’s largest by surface area, at 1.3 million hectares”</td>
<td>No specific numbers were provided here in the first part of the sentence, although other data is provided. (“one of” can mean top 10, top 20, top 50 – depending on how many there are) “The 341 000-hectare Voxnadalen area”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presuppositions</td>
<td>1. What UNESCO is 2. What biospheres and biosphere reserves are 3. That this is a designated honor: quote from the text “‘UNESCO’s designation of two new Swedish biosphere reserves is a recognition of years of local effort and commitment by many people to strengthen sustainable local and regional development,’ says Minister for Environment and Climate Isabella Lövin.” 4. Areas of unique and rich Sami and Swedish cultural heritage</td>
<td>3. UNESCO biosphere reserves are indeed designated by UNESCO, but first nominated by National governments, and then approved or not by UNESCO. There is no information about this process in the text. It’s not so much a presupposition as it is an omission – either to make the message clearer for the readers, or to send a representation set in false narrative: as if UNESCO had picked Swedish reserves. 4. Assumes that there is such a thing as Swedish culture, and Sami culture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Table 11. The Old Man and the Prize

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the article (11)</th>
<th>The Old Man and the Prize</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme on the website</td>
<td>CREATIVE SWEDEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim/purpose of the article</td>
<td>To inform of a new Hemingway sculpture in Cuba, donated by a Swedish entrepreneur together with the government. Also, to describe how Hemingway is connected to Sweden and why this sculpture is important to the Swedish-Cuban relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical moods (the main “sentence types”): declarative, imperative or interrogative</td>
<td>Declarative = very curious language overall, the article is written like a story. *An instance of imperative sentence for comedic purposes The text is chaotic at times. Lacks structure. Comedic, light-hearted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date published</td>
<td>09-04-2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual semiotic choices</strong></td>
<td>A picture from the ceremony of unveiling the sculpture at Hemingway's home in Cuba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Lexical choices**       | 1. “Dark rain clouds hung heavy above Finca Vigia”  
2. “An energetic caretaker assured us that not a single drop of rain would fall during the ceremony. But the artist, Johan Falkman, declared in front of the some two-hundred guests present that when so many Swedes gather in one and the same place – then yes, it WILL rain.”  
3. “Much smaller than the original at least...”  
4. “The sculpture was a work of art! Works of art can’t just be brought into the country any old how!” |
| **Impersonalization/ personalization** | 1. First sentence of the article after the tagline. Already a feeling of an informal text, reading like a story. = AUTHENTIC, OPEN  
2. An example of comedy and informality in the text.  
3. The use of ellipses in this way is to indicate pause in narrative, and it is an informal way of conveying a message. Another example from the text: “A similar one was sold in 2014 for SEK 35 million...”  
4. An example of an imperative sentence for comedic purposes. It describes the long process of transporting the statue to Cuba as well as the administrative aspects of it. |
|                           | Both, “we at the Embassy”  
one of the staff members at the Embassy”  
a telegram from Anders Österling, then Permanent Secretary of the Swedish Academy”, but later on there is this quote: “the Swedish Academy wrote”  
“Hemingway prefers to drink his vodka mixed as a Bloody Mary (his favourite drink after Mojitos and Daiquiris) and soon the magnum bottle is empty.” |
<p>|                           | There is some impersonalization in the text, but a definite majority of statements refer to individuals rather than entire institutions. The text becomes more informal and light because of these choices. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individualization/collectivization</th>
<th>“Envoy Carl-Herbert Borgenstierna and the Consul in Havana, Per Gunnar Wilhelm Aurell”</th>
<th>The participants are presented as members of collectivity, but it does not de-humanize them in this context, because they are still often mentioned by name, and the collectivization makes it easier to understand the context.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nomination/Functionalization</td>
<td>“Envoy Borgenstierna’s wife Anita” “The Cuban actor Emilio del Valle” “the Swedish jazz musician Gunhild Carling” “the artist Johan Falkman” “Ernest woke his wife Mary”</td>
<td>Both. Many participants are mentioned in the text, and when discussing the officials that were a part of the process of delivering the statue and awarding Ernest Hemingway in 1954/1955 the participants are described in terms of functionalization and nomination – the name and profession included. Ernest Hemingway’s wife Mary &amp; Borgenstierna’s wife Anita are described in terms of nomination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Us vs. Them</td>
<td>Us = Sweden, delegates from Sweden Them = Hemingway, representatives from Cuba</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggregation</td>
<td>Not present, statements supported by facts: “Some months previously, on the morning of 28 October 1954”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presuppositions</td>
<td>1. Knowing who Ernest Hemingway is 2. Knowing of the Nobel Prize 3. Acceptance of drinking culture as a norm (mentioning the alcohol, joking about the celebrations)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table 12. Sweden seeks to lead Action Coalition for Economic Gender Equality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the article (12)</th>
<th>Sweden seeks to lead Action Coalition for Economic Gender Equality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme on the website</td>
<td>FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim/purpose of the article</td>
<td>To inform of Sweden’s plans for this coalition, as well as why it is important to take action within this field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical moods (the main “sentence types”): declarative, imperative or interrogative</td>
<td>Declarative – the state of the world, events etc. Imperative – “we must stand up”, “we must scale up”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date published</td>
<td>12-03-2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Visual semiotic choices**

- Photo from the event in focus, with three female members of the Swedish government sitting on a stage in front of an audience. The officials are: Minister for Gender Equality Åsa Lindhagen, Ambassador for Gender Equality Ann Bernes, Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde.

**At first glance, the majority of people present in the photo are women.**

**Lexical choices**

1. “Sweden wants to lead”
2. “Ms Linde and Ms Lindhagen announced that Sweden had submitted a letter of intent to UN Women to lead the global Generation Equality Action Coalition for Economic Gender Equality in 2020–2025.”

1. **INNOVATIVE** = pointing to Sweden’s “pioneering” aspirations, not just in the field of digitalization, but also other fields. But also – collectivization!
2. Not so much a lexical choice, as pointing to the **INNOVATIVE** and **CARING** values. Submitting a letter = taking action, aimed at making appositive change in the world.

**Impersonalization/personalization**

- Both: representatives are mentioned by name, but in context of the organisation they come from e.g. Ambassador for Gender Equality and Feminist Foreign Policy Coordinator Ann Bernes.

- A good way of presenting officials in this type of text, it is not important to the readers to know who they are personally; it is important to know what organization they represent and what viewpoints they stand for, collectively.

**Individualization/collectivization**

- “Representatives of various women’s rights organisations and other stakeholder groups”

- “Sweden wants to lead” = collectivization of “Sweden” as one, standing for all people in Sweden.

- Both collective nouns rather than naming individuals, but also mentioning representatives from certain organizations, always in context of these organizations – it is done so to have a sense of clarity, as there are many organizations mentioned. The number of organizations points to
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Nomination/Functionalization</strong></th>
<th>Functionalization of participants, e.g., Minister for; Ambassador for, Sweden had submitted, led by UN Women, France and Mexico</th>
<th>This text is about the cause of gender equality in terms of events and policy formation, rather than as compared to article nr. 6, about individuals being lifted. The focus is shifted from local (nr. 6) to global (nr. 12) thus the language should be adjusted accordingly.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Us vs. Them</strong></td>
<td>“Sweden” together with other actors, “The World Bank”, “Act</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aggregation</strong></td>
<td>“Various women’s rights organisations and other stakeholder groups”</td>
<td>But also: “is one of six action coalitions” “also includes two major forums”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Presuppositions**           | 1. Knowing what the UN is, and its role in the world and why it is important to the cause.  
2. “The deteriorating global situation for gender equality”  
3. “It goes without saying that Sweden will continue to be a strong voice for gender equality in the world.” | 1. no links provided to the UN website, it is assumed that the readers are familiar with what it is.  
2. not explained in what way the situation is deteriorating  
3. Assumed that Sweden has always been such a voice.  
The overall tone and the contents of this article indicate that the readers are to be familiar with certain aspects of work for gender equality, e.g., resolution 1325. |