WAR/ PEACE JOURNALISM APPROACH IN VIETNAMESE ONLINE MEDIA COVERAGE OF SOUTH CHINA SEA DISPUTE

An analysis of Mediated Vietnamese Public Diplomacy Messages

MA thesis
Global Journalism
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ABSTRACT

This research aims at examining the Vietnamese online media’s framing of conflict, thereby highlighting the outstanding characteristics of peace journalism and war journalism frames available in the media of an Asian peripheral country when it covers conflicts with other core, more powerful nations.

The study is inspired from an overarching hypothesis of a possible junction between peace journalism and public diplomacy as relevant theories have it that they are basically identical in one sense: both representing a form of message which carries the note of peace-rebuilding, solution-orientated and mutual understanding in the war context. That message is delivered through media to reach out the foreign publics, not only to gain benefits for national interests but also to point out a solution for peace and offer an opportunity to conflict-resolution talks.

The events chosen for study are media analysis following two attacks in late May and early June, 2011 against two Vietnamese oil exploration vessels in the South China Sea in which China was the accused.

Basing on the theories of peace journalism, public diplomacy and world system theory, the research hypothesized that Vietnamese online media’s framing of China throughout seven months May 1st to November 30th, 2011 is inclined towards peace journalism.

Two research techniques were employed: Quantitative Content Analysis to find out the dominant frame of the Vietnamese online media when covering the two clashes between Vietnamese and Chinese ships; and Qualitative Critical Discourse Analysis to further examine what messages the media aspire to send to foreign publics and how these messages are crafted.

Findings from the content analysis rejects the main hypothesis, showing that the Vietnamese online media still opted for the war journalism frame even though theoretical and empirical evidence confirms Vietnam’s soft, assuaging and non-provocative approach in its public diplomacy with China.

CDA results however highlighted the characteristics of the Vietnamese online media’s war frame: very tactful and implicit. The negative China presentation and positive self-presentation of Vietnam cannot be clearly seen through the use of victimizing, dehumanizing
and emotionalizing language, but through implications and presuppositions hidden in the sentences. The implied messages that the Vietnamese online media want to send out the foreign publics portray China as a perverse bully neighbor and a two-faced partner, defying international law and breaking regional peace. Meanwhile, Vietnam is portrayed as a tolerant victim of China – its own friend and as a noble, forgiving friend of China. These messages are presented in the media by a very flexible, diplomatic and reconciliatory language so as to create an enemy scene with China.

The study confirms the value and applicability of the theories selected and findings from previous studies. It also inspires future studies on expanding public diplomacy and peace journalism theories to make it more applicable to media of similar state structure or those in Asia.
1. INTRODUCTION

1.0. Introduction

The history of the world contains a barrage of wars and conflict spread across the globe. When reading the news, we see that evidence of continued conflicts and wars still going on whether it is economic, religious, or political driven. However, news readers at times come across different versions of reporting about the same event that come from a wide array of news sources nowadays. The question why are there different versions of a reality compels us to once again consider the ever-existing manipulative power of governments and corporations towards media.

It is theoretically and empirically-proved that the media, no matter in what type of state structures they operate, are more or less susceptible to the ruling elites’ manipulation for their interests. Media operating under a non-democratic state structure experience even tighter grip of the government and the controlling party and negotiation of ethics are most of the time needed for their existence. In non-democratic societies, the media are tamed into a mouthpiece for the ruling elites.

In the war context, media are exploited even more drastically by the government to correct the national image, persuade world opinions and gain their support more than the other warring side is demanded more than ever. It is supported in previous literature that a country’s foreign policy and media’s representation of war/ conflict are intertwined in a sense that media reflect a nation’s diplomacy and foreign policy plays a part in shaping the media coverage.

Vietnam and China are two neighbors that have a long history of wars, with the latter’s domination of the former for nearly 1,000 years in different times. Efforts have been continuously exerted to maintain the friendly, cooperative environment between the two antagonist “friends”, but clashes happen at times still due to overlapping claims of sovereignty in the sea. And literature back it up that to keep this relations going smoothly, Vietnam as a weaker side cannot help but keeping a friendly, non-provoking fashion in dealing with China in all matters.

This study therefore aims to examine the influence of Vietnam’s foreign policy or more specifically public diplomacy on its media coverage of the two latest conflicts with China.
Between late May and the first half of June 2011, Chinese vessels interfered and harassed Vietnamese exploration ships on two separate occasions. The first took place on 26 May when a Chinese Maritime Surveillance ship was filmed cutting the cable of Vietnam’s Binh Minh ship that was conducting surveys on the sea area claimed by Vietnam (Reuters, 2011; Vietnam News Agency, 2011a). A similar case happened on Jun 9 when a Chinese fishing boat, supported by two Chinese fishery administration vessels, hit the survey cables of Viking II – a ship hired by the Vietnam Oil and Gas Group, when it was conducting seismic surveys in Vietnam’s exclusive economic zone and continental shelf (Thayer, 2011b; Vietnam News Agency, 2011b).

The two clashes were regarded as part of the general South China Sea dispute that involves China, Taiwan and four other countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The dispute dates back to the early 1940s when China released the map that claims sovereignty over most of the disputed sea and since then have gone through many phases without being fully resolved (Burgess, 2003).

The thesis is aimed at finding the dominant frame in the Vietnamese online media when covering the two clashes and the analysis is based on Galtung’s (1986, 2002) peace journalism model. It also considers the hypothesized convergence of peace journalism and public diplomacy in a sense that they might be identical as peace-re-building, reconciliatory messages aimed at the other side of wars/conflicts. Therefore, a critical discourse analysis is done on a selected sample to find out mediated public diplomacy messages in the Vietnamese online media.

1.1. Statement of scientific problems and research questions

Previous studies show that media coverage of war/conflict has been quite thoroughly examined in academia, yet mostly from the Western point of view. Most of the war events that fell into academic research are related to the Western powers, namely the US and the UK such as the 2003 war in Iraq, the war in Afghanistan, the Gulf War, the Israel-Palestine conflict etc.

Very few studies were conducted on local wars in Asia where the warring sides do not have the same international-level power of influence as the US and the UK, but can offer a whole new, different approach in terms of foreign policy, media policy, war strategies as well as conflict resolution mechanisms to the academia.
Lee (2010) confirms that there is a dearth of research on Asian vernacular media. The lack of media research on media framing of conflicts in vernacular news in Vietnam and the fact that China remains a big neighbor to which Vietnam has to pay lots of respect gave rise to the main research question: *how Vietnamese media framed the two afore-mentioned clashes and China as the biggest claimant country in the South China Sea dispute.*

The study uses content analysis to find the answers for the four questions below:

1) What is the dominant frame used in the coverage China’s assertive actions, which are part of the South China Sea conflict in Vietnam’s online media in relation to Galtung’s (1986, 2002) Peace Journalism model?

2) What are the salient indicators of war journalism and peace journalism manifested in the coverage of the conflict?

3) What are the differences, if any, in dominant frames used by English-language online media and Vietnamese-language online media?

4) Is there a relationship between war and peace journalism framing and stories specific to three newspapers Vietnamplus, Vietnamnet and VnExpress? [The two Vietnamnet newspapers, though operated in different languages of English and Vietnamese, are under control of the same ministry while the other two newspapers are directly controlled by the government (Vietnamplus) and by a corporation (VnExpress)].

5) Is there any difference between the framing of stories before and after the two attacks in all four surveyed newspaper altogether and in each individual newspaper?

Since quantitative analysis can only answer *what* questions and previous studies (Kempf & Reimann, 2002; Mandelzis, 2007) have it that the way information delivered by the media might result in completely different message from the content of the information itself. Therefore, the study uses CDA to find answers to the question:

1) What are mediated public diplomacy messages formulated and dispersed by the Vietnamese online media about China and Vietnam as the two opponents in the clashes?

2) How are the mediated public diplomacy messages delivered?
Given the void of scientific research in the area and the significance of the South China Sea dispute to the regional security and freedom of navigation in the East Sea as well as the research-proved pattern of deference public diplomacy in Vietnam’s strategy towards China, the above research questions should be given due attention.

1.2. Background

The first part of the background section provides an overview understanding South China Sea dispute, including its nature and the power asymmetry among the opponents. The second part of this section is devoted to elaborate on Vietnam’s foreign policy to China, which is hypothetically deemed as one of the main factors forming the Vietnamese online media’s framing of the clashes and China.

The background information is also considered important to explain several hypotheses that laid the foundation for the research questions.

1.2.a. The South China Sea dispute:

Overview:

The South China Sea “occupies a 648,000-square-mile portion of the Pacific Ocean stretching roughly from the Strait of Malacca in the southwest to the Strait of Taiwan in the northeast…The region encompasses hundreds of small islands and reefs, the majority located in the Paracel and Spratly island groups.” (Burgess, 2003: p.7)

The South China Sea disputes among six claimants are concerned with jurisdiction over territory and maritime zone. According to Emmers (2010) and Odgaard (2003), the South China Sea disputes are marked by overlapping claims over the two groups of islands among various offshore features. China, Taiwan and Vietnam contest over the Paracel Islands and six claimants namely China, Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei have claims over the Spratly Islands and/or surrounding waters.

Even though the islands “have little worth in themselves”, they “may serve as the legal base points needed for states to gain exclusive jurisdictional rights over the waters, as well as the resources found there.” (Emmers, 2010: p.118-119). Aside from claims to islands, claims to maritime space “concern right of access to underwater fishing resources and oil and gas drilling rights (Burgess, 2003: p.8). “It is the world’s second busiest international sea-lane,
and well over half of the world’s petroleum-bearing traffic passes through its waters” (Ibid: p.7).

The nature of the South China disputes:

Disputing parties in the South China Sea present two types of claims: “historical claims of discovery and occupation, and claims that rest on the extension of sovereign jurisdiction under interpretations of the provisions of the United Nations Law of the Sea Convention (UNCLOS)” (Emmers, 2010: p.120).

According to Tonnesson (2003), both China and Vietnam claim full sovereignty over both the Paracel islands and the Spratly islands. The dispute over the Paracels is purely bilateral between Vietnam and China, whereas the Spratlys dispute involves China, Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei.

Among six countries involved in territorial claims and contests, China claims the largest part. Its interrupted U-shaped line (or nine-dotted line) map released in 1947 covers all of the Spratly and Paracel islands and most of the South China Sea (Emmers, 2010 and Burgess, 2003). China uses historical and archaeological grounds for its claims, referring to naval expeditions by the Han Dynasty in AD 110 and the Ming Dynasty in the 15th century (Burgess, 2003). Vietnam has since 1975 claimed the Paracel and Spratly islands on historical and archaeological claims as well as portions of the South China Sea (Emmers, 2010 and Burgess, 2003). In 1977, Vietnam also established an EEZ (exclusive economic zone) of 200 nautical miles as prescribed in the UNCLOS (Emmers, 2010).

Power asymmetry and ASEAN dispute-settlement strategy:

China now has the upper hand in the disputes since “it undoubtedly has the largest military force” (Emmers, 2010: p.121) compared to other Southeast Asian “weaker parties” (Ibid: p.127). Its growing assertiveness “has drawn attention to the potential eruption of violent conflict” (Odgaard, 2003: p.11). Historically, China has used military means to consolidate its position in the disputed areas. The most serious was a naval battle against South Vietnam that led to Chinese invasion of the Paracels from Vietnam in 1974 before the fall of the US-supported Saigon administration. A naval confrontation between China and Vietnam in March 1988 ended up with Chinese seizure of the Spratlys and the killing of 72 Vietnamese sailors (Burgess, 2003). The most recent incident involved Chinese occupation of Mischief
Reef in 1995, which is located in the Kalayaan claimed by the Philippines (Emmers, 2010; Odgaard, 2003 and Burgess, 2003).

These military skirmishes have augmented Vietnam and the Philippines’ fears of becoming “a prime target of Chinese ambitions to secure dominance” (Odgaard, 2003: p.16) and turn these two countries into “the suspicious activists” (Ibid: p.19) in the formal Sino-ASEAN negotiations on a code of conduct for the South China Sea.

Envisioning “their relative military weakness” (Ibid: p.124), the Southeast Asian claimants depend on this informal code to include China in diplomatic consultations so as to avoid direct confrontation with it (Emmers, 2010: p.127). Vietnam is not an exception, given its reverence to China due to historical factors and its military weakness compared to China.

1.2.b. Vietnam foreign policy towards China

As Storey (2008) observed, among ten members of the ASEAN, Vietnam’s relationship with China is “the most complicated, multifarious, tense, and conflict-prone” and “laden with historical baggage.”

Two millennia of Chinese over lordship—first as a formal part of the Chinese empire from the first century BC to 938 AD, then as a tributary state until 1885—combined with an intense relationship over the past 60 years characterized by extremes of amity and enmity, have shaped Vietnam’s China psyche to be almost schizophrenic (Storey, 2008).

For Vietnam, there is a coexistence of “respect, even admiration, for Chinese culture, system of governance and economic reform” and “deep resentment, bordering on hatred, of Chinese condescension, bullying, and perceived attempts to control its political destiny.” (Ibid) The domination periods, according to Guan (1998: p.1122) are “a reminder of Vietnam’s weakness and vulnerability vis-à-vis its huge neighbor.”

Sino-Vietnamese hostilities already resulted in two naval battles – in 1974 in the Paracels and in 1988 in the Spratlys. China won both battles, resulting in its occupation of the Paracels and its entry into the scramble for occupation of the Spratlys (Odgaard, 2003: p.16). After over a decade of hostility following the 1979 border conflict due to Vietnam’s occupation of China’s ally – Cambodia, Vietnam and China resumed normal relations in 1991 (Guan, 1998 and Storey, 2008). Since then, bilateral relations have been broadened and improved politically and economically around the official mantra of “long-term stability, orientation
toward the future, good neighborliness and friendship, and all round cooperation” in the spirit of “good neighbors, good friends, good comrades, and good partners.” (Storey, 2008).

Despite the seemingly friendly relationship, Vietnam and China still have overlapping sovereignty claims in the South China Sea (Storey, 2008).

Guan’s (1998) speculated that with a “fairly antiquated naval and air assets” compared to China’s strongest naval and air forces in the region (p.1141), Vietnam is unlikely to object to China. Vuving (2006: p.809) highlighted two characteristics of the Vietnamese traditional way of dealing with China: “military resistance” and “diplomatic deference”. Deference means that Vietnam – the weaker party dares not to pursue its interests in a way that goes against the stronger party’s wish, but rather in a manner that corresponds to its superior status.

While most of Asia’s countries such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand have developed sort of bilateral security alliance with the US to provide a counter-balance to China, Vietnam choose not to do the same for fear of provoking resentment of China (Tonnensson, 2009: p.8). Instead of depending on a counterbalance power that might enrage China, Vietnam is likely to keep a cautious, full-of-alert eye on what China does while “safeguarding as much as possible of its national independence through regional and global diplomacy” (Ibid: p.25)

The asymmetric relationships between Vietnam and China are not only mentioned in foreign policy research. They are also reflected through the way Vietnam’s media address China and sovereign disputes relating to its “huge neighbor.” (Guan, 1998: p.1122)

1.2.c. Vietnam’s media and its coverage on China-related issues

Vietnam is one of the five remaining Communist regimes in the world where the media system is still totally under state control and access to information for the public is strictly controlled (De Beer, 2009; Neumann, n.d.; Kalathil & Boas, 2003; Neher, 2002). Although the press has gained more freedom and got better in challenging state corruptions, suppressions against political dissent happen at times (Yin, 2008).

Despite a boom in the number and types of newspapers and magazines owing to economic reforms adopted in Vietnam since 1986 and introduction of internet in 1997, the majority of
the media outlets in Vietnam are still state-owned (Ibid). Private media are only allowed if the publication is a joint undertaking between the owner(s) and the relevant state agency (Yin, 2008).

Vietnam features an “authoritarian political system” (Kalathil & Boas, 2003: p. 73) in which the single Communist Party still “retains significant power and makes all major policy decisions” of the government (Ibid: p.83). Besides exerting strong control over the telecommunication sector, the party also “keeps a firm grip on print and electronic media, exercising oversight through the Ministry of Culture and Information” (Ibid: p.84).

Reporting on China–Vietnam relations remains a taboo for the media (Thayer, 2010). China has so far not only “swayed over Vietnamese politics through party-to-party linkages and through various mechanisms such as reciprocal seminar series focusing on ideological questions,” (Ibid: p.1) but it can even request retraction of stories already published in the Vietnamese press, i.e. China ordered Vietnam to withhold the announcement of its release of 23 Vietnamese fishermen until after the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus Eight had concluded (Thayer, 2010).

State control of the media in Vietnam is bolstered by security legislation, which Kalathil & Boas (2003: p.84) perceive as being “designed to promote self-censorship”. As a result, the domestic media rarely publish articles critical of the government or its policies. The press are encouraged to “champion the fight against corruption and other social evils” but “questioning Party rule remains expressly prohibited” (Yin, 2008: p.30).

Vietnam’s relations with China and their disputes are among hot taboo for the domestic press in Vietnam. Cases happened at times that “cyber-dissidents” or bloggers were detained due to spreading rumors about Hanoi conceding too much land to Beijing in their land border demarcation agreement (Storey, 2008).

“The Vietnamese state routinely exercises censorship over media reporting that could harm relations with China.” (Thayer, 2010: p.6) The government has to loosen up repression against the press after series of students’ patriotic demonstrations against Chinese violating actions in the commonly-claimed South China Sea in 2007. It is because the demonstrations later spread the domestic anti-China backlash to “a wider circle of the political elite who not only criticized Chinese actions but also began to question their government’s handling of relations with China” in 2009 (Ibid).
Feeling that the regime’s appeal to nationalism “as one of the basis of its legitimacy” was being threatened over its handling of “Chinese derogation of Vietnamese sovereignty and national security” (Thayer, 2010: p.7), it responded by changing media strategy. The government gave a green light to the media to publish stories that show “a bit of patriotism and nationalism” (Thayer, 2011).

Media started an upheaval of reporting on sea conflict, but “negative commentary is censored” (Thayer, 2011). All that are allowed is reporting on the plight of Vietnamese fishermen that were captured by China when fishing offshore in the overlapping sea area, featuring Vietnam’s historical claims to the South China Sea and the views of foreign analysts sympathetic to Vietnam (Thayer, 2010, 2011) This press policy, however, did not stay consistent very long. In 2009, two Vietnamese newspapers that published retrospect accounts of the students’ anti-China protests in 2007 were temporarily shut down (Thayer, 2010).

According to Thayer (2011), Vietnam and China even agreed in a joint press release to “steer public opinion” and to restrict material detrimental to their bilateral relations.

Thayer’s (2010, 2011) overview of Vietnam’s media coverage on China and relating conflicts between them are plausible enough as personal observations, given state control’s over media and its cautious diplomatic deference to China. It might not be a surprise that no media researches on vernacular media have been found regarding Vietnam’s media handling China-related conflict. This is supported by Lee (2010: p.364) who states that vernacular press is an understudied locus of research that has largely been ignored.”

Therefore, my research is expected to fill out the void in media research in vernacular news in Vietnam. The Western-developed theories of peace journalism and public diplomacy as well as previous scholarly findings about political influence on media will be used in this study to examine how media in a communist regime cover a conflict over sovereignty with China, given the power asymmetry to the advantage of China and its respectful diplomacy for the technically-speaking rival.
1.3. Scope of the thesis

The thesis is aimed at finding the dominant frame in the Vietnamese online media in reporting the two clashes between Vietnamese and Chinese boats in relation to Galtung’s (1986, 2002) peace journalism model and their public diplomacy messages. The study is aimed at testing the relationship between public diplomacy and peace journalism theories. More specifically, its goal is to test an assumption, which stems from various similarities between public diplomacy and peace journalism in the angle of out-messages to foreign audience, that a nation’s public diplomacy might result in peace journalism framing of its media.

Literature review shows that combining these two theories in studying war reporting is very new for academia. The study, therefore, has a certain degree of uniqueness. It is very much related to the concept of global journalism because it deals with global theories: Peace Journalism Theory; Propaganda theory as an overarching theory that covers public diplomacy and government’s agenda-setting through media; and World System Theory that explains the logic of the relations among countries around the world. Results of study are not limited to the case of Vietnam and China only, but they will inspire similar studies on media presentation of conflict in other countries that have similar foreign policy, political agenda and relationships as Vietnam’s and China’s.

1.4. Outline of the thesis

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. The Introduction lays out the scientific problems that inspire this study and offers background information about the South China Sea conflict and Vietnam’s foreign and media policies towards China. Chapter 2 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework aims at elaborating the previous research on war reporting and identifying relevant theories that lay the theoretical framework for the study, including Peace Journalism, Public Diplomacy and the World System Theory that explains the relationship between core, periphery and semi-periphery nations. Third chapter Methods and Material includes two big subsections explaining two methods used: content analysis and CDA, including definitions, sampling techniques, code-book for content analysis and phases of CDA analysis.
Chapter 4 *Results and Analysis* provides and interprets the findings obtained by the two research techniques described in chapter 3. It is divided into two main sections, explaining results of content analysis and CDA processes separately.

Chapter 5 *Conclusion* wraps up the study by answering research questions and connecting the results with the theoretical frameworks as well as findings from previous research in the area. This chapter is followed by the *Bibliography* and the *Appendices* chapters.
2. LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0. Introduction

This chapter is intended to review the previous research relevant to media framing of conflict and public diplomacy. The chapter also includes presentation of three theoretical frameworks regarding peace journalism, public diplomacy and relationships among core, periphery and semi-periphery nations.

2.1. Review of Literature

Media coverage of wars and conflicts is not a new subject of study for media scholars. The research area, together with the history of different wars in the world, internationally and locally alike, has developed through different phases in which different focuses are highlighted.

This chapter is therefore designed to provide an overall picture of war/conflict reporting in the global context and in Vietnam.

2.1.1. Overview

Despite many idealistically postulated characteristics such as being independent, objective and committed to reporting the truth, etc., the media turn out to be a tool to serve the interests of a small group of elite people. Herman & Chomsky (1998) present a propaganda model which argues that media function as propaganda tools in capitalist democracies and work under a self-censorship due to political and economical influences. The model sets out five news “filters” that censor media stories, including dominant media corporations and the government. Shinar and Kempf (2007) later generalized the manipulation of media by various actors:

Since the early days of the newspaper, governments, elites, and other sectors interested in protecting and promoting their interests by any means, began to censor, pressure, and manipulate the press (and later other media) (; p.9)

Governments and military leaders exert even more control and manipulation of the media when it comes to “disseminating propaganda justifying war aims, sustaining the morale of the home and fighting fronts and demonizing the enemy” during much of the 20th century
(Welch, 2005: p.x). Therefore, there have been bunches of studies on media coverage of every war since the early 20th century.

One of the main focuses of media studies relating to the World War I and II was governments’ use of media of all types (TV, newspapers, radio or movies) to impose constraints on the flow of information and promote propaganda for their own ends (Welch, 2005: p.x).

After the two world wars, the world got into a new phase of the Cold War from the early 1960s onwards, “in which visual propaganda achieved even great immediacy and intimacy” and a great part of scholar works on the world’s media during this time focused on the struggle between the USA and the USSR for ideological supremacy (Welch, 2005). This ideological struggle gave rise to the emergence of a new form of propaganda which is termed “public diplomacy.” Public diplomacy “refers to global communication efforts to inform, influence, and engage global publics in support of national interests.” (McPhail, 2010: p.87)

After the 1991 Gulf War, there was a changing nature of international crises, from inter-state to intra-state, including a series of conflicts in Bosnia, Serbia, Rwanda, Kosovo and East Timor. All of these conflicts “saw ‘Perception Management and Psychological Operations (PSYOPS)’ deployed in support of military operations” (Welch, 2005: p.xv). The terrorist attack on the twin towers in New York on September 11, 2001 further pushed national governments to escalate activities in the so-called PSYOPS, which gave rise to a modern term “information warfare” that “refers to propaganda and persuasion campaigns, including deception” by military forces and governments (Balnaves, Donald & Shoesmith, B., 2009: p. 127-128).

Media researchers have since then been focusing more on governments’ use of media, traditional and new alike, “both to disorient the opponent, and to win domestic and international opinion over to their cause” (Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2000: p. 241) including Nohrstedt (2009), Ottosen (2008), etc. Lots of studies have been done on “what the Pentagon’s term ‘Perception Management’” in modern warfare that entails winning the hearts and minds (Welch, 2005: p.xv). Among various studies on this type of new war propaganda include those of Kempf & Reimann (2002, p: 210-213) on the way media in Western countries deployed “two-sided messages and double-bind communication” to create a deceptive appearance of their contribution to the de-escalation of the Gulf War; of Zelizer

It can be said that media studies on war reporting focus on a wide range of issues and take the political influence on media coverage from governments of war players as a core theory. As a new form of propaganda, public diplomacy has been increasingly used in media research on war reporting (Nye, 2008; Gilboa, 2000, 2002; Entman, 2008) thanks to its tie to national security and foreign policy.

### 2.1.2. Researches on war reporting

Galtung’s (1986, 2002) theory of peace journalism (PJ) offers a theoretical platform for media researchers of war reporting. The theory clearly differentiates PJ from war journalism (WJ) by comparing PJ and WJ as two contrasting frames in war/conflict reporting. They compete in four broad practice and linguistic orientations. From observing features of the current media’s war reporting, Galtung (2002) perceives WJ as being “violence-orientated, propaganda-orientated, elite-orientated and victory-orientated”. Meanwhile, PJ – identified as focusing on conflict transformation – is based on peace/conflict, truth, people, and solutions (Ibid).


The majority of the researches on war media within this scope of study use quantitative method and the coding of variables for their content analysis depends largely on Galtung’s (1986, 2002) classification of PJ/WJ and the later 17-point plan for practical peace journalism expanded by Lynch and McGoldrick (2005). Mostly print or online news stories are collected for analysis and the majority of which are English-written.

The dominant questions for the relating researches deal with what is the dominant frames – PJ or WJ – that media in a certain country use in reporting a conflict, be it regional/local as in Lee & Maslog (2004) or international war that “is distant only in geography but perhaps much closer in heart and mind” (Lee & Maslog, 2005: p.1). And what are the most salient indicators of the dominant frame? (Ibid)
Lee & Maslog’s (2004) research on the media framing of regional conflicts of 10 English newspapers in five Asian countries (India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Indonesia and Sri Lanka) established that “…peace journalism is an ideal whose time has not come. “ (:p.19) With countries “embroiled in a decades-old territorial battle” over land such as Pakistan and India, “media continue to adopt a knee-jerk, unreflecting kind of coverage of conflicts, with little consideration for long-term, peaceful solutions” and “it is very likely that the media reflected their governments’ stands” (Ibid).

The study of Lee & Maslog (2004) confirms the “surprising” presence of peace journalism as a dominant frame in Sri Lanka even though the country’s government faced two decades of upheavals and violence with the LTTE. However, it attributes the existence of PJ to the shift in Sri Lankan government’s policy towards the LTTE after the 2001 cease fire instead of the full awareness of journalists and editors of the need for peace journalism.

The most salient indicators of the peace journalism frame that were found do not take the story beyond reporting facts and do not exemplify “a strong contributory, pro-active role by journalists to seek and offer creative solutions and to pave a way for peace and conflict resolution” (Lee & Maslog, 2004: p.21)

… a closer examination of the pattern of war journalism and peace journalism indicators reveal that the peace journalism framing is highly dependent on what can be considered to be criteria of a less interventionist nature, for example, an avoidance of good-bad labels, a non-partisan approach, a multi-party orientation, and an avoidance of demonizing language. (Ibid)

Similarly, Lee & Maslog’s (2005: p.17) study insists that “PJ is practiced” but leaves it open an interpretation of PJ existence as a result of “just a cautious attitude in reporting a controversial military engagement initiated by a superpower in a distant land than any genuine desire...to promote peace and find solutions to the situation in Iraq.”

Lee & Maslog (2005) finds that newspapers in 5 Asian countries relied on WJ framing in covering their respective regional conflicts, but used PJ framing to cover the distant war in Iraq. This finding reaffirms Lee & Maslog’s (2004: p.19) statement that “a country’s media is not likely to remain neutral in reporting a conflict in which its government is involved.” It is also supported in literature that a country’s media are less likely to remain neutral in reporting a conflict in which its government is involved (Bennett, 2003; Carruthers, 2000; Combs, 1993; Hiebert, 2003; Mandelzis, 2007).
When it comes to examining how a country’s media cover a certain war/ conflict when it is not directly involved as a war side, researchers are very much concerned about the influence of a country’s dominant public opinion, geopolitics and foreign policy on the adoption of certain frames and tone in the media (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005; Dimitrova & Ahern, 2007).

Dimitrova and Strömbäck’s (2005) study on the framing of the 2003 Iraq war in Dagens Nyheter and The New York Times - the two “agenda-setters” newspapers of Sweden and the US (: p.408) confirms the association between the media coverage of the war with the country’s foreign policy.

_Dagens Nyheter_ was found to have a more negative tone of coverage than _The New York Times_, which was consistent with the then-Swedish foreign policy that was strongly against the war. Similarly, _The New York Times’_ more positive tone was found to be in harmony with the pro-war sentiments in the political elites and public opinion in the US since the US President was commander in chief in that war (Dimitrova and Strömbäck, 2005: p.411).

The association between the national political environment and the media framing of war was also confirmed in Dimitrova & Ahern’s (2007) study. The research was about how 4 online news sites from the Western world and the Arab world (The New York Times and The Guardian from the US and UK and Al Ahram and Al Jazeera from Egypt and Qatar) covered the 2003 Iraq war in terms of tone, frames and sources.

The study finds that the Arab and Coalition media created two completely different “tale of war” (: p.165): “one of destruction and violence” in the Arab media and “one of military conflict leading to rebuilding for the people in Iraq.” (Ibid) The divergent frames between the Arab news sites and the US and the UK news sites were generally consistent with the national political environment which was marked by the schism in public opinion regarding the war.

There is another group of studies on media presentation of war and conflict that use critical discourse analysis (CDA) as the only research technique or the supplementary one with quantitative analysis. There focuses are beyond the mere question of the media framing of conflict falls into PJ, WJ or neutral category. They touch more on researching the active, intended formulation of media discourse in reporting about conflicts and their socio-political implications.
Kempf & Reimann’s (2002) use quantitative analysis on over 4,000 news items that covered from the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait until after the end of the Gulf to find out what information was given by the media in Germany, Finland and Norway as alternative ways of settling the Gulf War. They also use qualitative content analysis to unveil how this was done.

The study confirms the presence of “quite a lot of de-escalation-oriented elements” (Kempf & Reimann, 2002: p. 210) in the Gulf War media coverage, yet “these de-escalation-oriented elements of conflict coverage are relativized, if not warded off completely” (Ibid). Despite the prevalent conflict resolution alternatives, the surveyed media were found to implicitly deliver war escalation messages by “the more complex and refined patterns of two-sided messages and double-bind communication” (Kempf & Reimann, 2002: p.212).

The results of the study therefore show “a gross orientation towards conflict escalation” (Kempf & Reimann, 2002: p. 225)

Although the media put high emphasis on reporting about alternatives to violence, there was extremely little critical journalism that gave peace a chance. The facts were all there, but the media placed them within a framework of binary and military logic and thereby undermined possible de-escalatory effects of promising alternatives to war (Ibid).

Presence of alternatives to conflict in media was proven through this finding as not enough to ensure the de-escalation of the conflict. Talking about peace does not necessarily mean promoting peace. Sometimes, the way peace is presented in the media may create a war-initiating instead of peace-initiating message.

Mandelzis’ (2007) study on the news discourse of the two mainstream newspapers in Israel pinpoints the negative side of media’s extensive use of the term ‘peace’ during the 14 months from the initiation to the conclusion of the peace agreement with Palestine (or Oslo Treaty). The study finds that:

Every topic in the news was linked to the notion of peace. However, in contrast to ‘solution-oriented conflict reporting’, the news discourse gradually developed confusing and conflicting messages which soon deteriorated into ‘escalation-oriented conflict reporting’ (Mandelzis, 2007: p. 104)

Mandelzis (2007: p.104) lays out three-stage process of deterioration in Israeli news discourse, which began with a “deceptive discourse of harmony”, then changed into a “misleading and limited peace discourse” and finally sharply deteriorated into “a war discourse.”
Addressing war reporting from an angle of how a peace message is formulated, Mandelzis (2007) concluded that:

… the media reproduced the dominant policy of the political elite... The dramatic political change that occurred in relations between Israelis and Palestinians was followed by extensive use of the term ‘peace’ in news discourse and accompanied by semantic confusion about terms relating to ‘war’ in post-Oslo media news discourse. (Mandelzis, 2007: p.109)

Since media’s presentation of conflict is proved to be very much in connection with the foreign policy of the government and the public opinion (Dimitrova & Strömbäck, 2005; Dimitrova & Ahern, 2007; Mandelzis, 2007), it is fairly plausible for media researchers to examine the intertwining relationship between media coverage of war of a country and its public diplomacy.

The term public diplomacy has been around since the mid 19th century but it re-emerged in 1965 when the US adopted public diplomacy as “a benign alternative to terms like propaganda and psychological warfare” in order to disassociate its own information practices from “the loaded term propaganda with all its negative associations from World War II (McPhail, 2010: p.89) in an ideological war with the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

There is no single common definition of public diplomacy but rather every nation has its own definition that works best for their own national goals. It is conceived as “efforts by the government of one nation to influence public or elite opinion in a second nation for the purpose of turning the foreign policy of the target nation to advantage.” (Manheim, 1994: p. 4)

In Gilboa (2002)’s view, public diplomacy refers to the world leaders’ extensive use of global communication “as a significant instrument to advance negotiation and to mobilize support for agreements” (Ibid: p. 741). Sheafer & Shenhav (2009: p. 277) identify “the basic praxis of public diplomacy lies in producing messages by states to audiences all over the world.”

McPhail (2010: p.88) offers a practical definition that explains both the nature of public diplomacy and the target to which it aims at:

In the short-term, public diplomacy is about getting one’s message out to foreign publics in a timely and understood fashion; at its core, the best public diplomacy is about relationship building to build mutual understanding between the parties engaged in a communication exchange (Ibid).
The afore-mentioned definitions points out the close relationship between public diplomacy and peace journalism: they carry the messages of peace and trust building between engaged parties which need to reach out to publics, particularly the world public, and the obvious way to do that is through the media. They should, therefore, be combined in a research on war/conflict reporting.

Their correlation paves the way for a hypothesis of my thesis that war reporting in a country’s media might be influenced, among other “media and institutional constraints” (Lee, 2010: p. 361), by the public diplomacy defined by its dominant political elites.

Public diplomacy has “a strong tie to national security and foreign policy outcomes” (McPhail, 2010: p.84) and a close relationship with peace journalism as a type of media framing with the optimal purpose of reaching out to the global audience with a peace-and-understanding-building message. However, there are few media studies that test the assumption that public diplomacy of a nation might influence its media’s presentation of a conflict and turn it into peace orientation. Personal experience working in the media system of Vietnam results in my hypothesis that such an influence exists.

In conclusion, most of the previous research on media coverage of war/conflict was exclusively performed in the West or done in the English-language news stories and therefore had little relevance to research on media coverage of Vietnam-China sovereignty clashes. Given Vietnam’s reverence foreign policy towards China (stated in Chapter 1), the study use Western-developed theories of peace journalism, public diplomacy and world system as well as previous scholarly findings about political influence on media to examine how the Vietnamese online media framed its two clashes over sovereignty with China.

2.2. Theoretical framework

The theoretical approach for this research is mainly based on theories of peace journalism as part of the war reporting theory and public diplomacy as part of the propaganda theory. The World System Theory is used to explain the asymmetric relations between China and Vietnam in which Vietnam as a periphery country compared to China as a core country and justify certain presuppositions such as Vietnam tends not to provoke China.
The first theoretical approach uses Galtung’s (2002) polarization of war coverage into two competing frames: peace journalism and war journalism as a foundation. The second approach uses Gilboa’s (2002) theory of public diplomacy that offers a clear distinction between public diplomacy and media diplomacy.

### 2.2.1. Peace Journalism

Johan Galtung employed the concept of peace journalism since the 1970s to develop two opposing modes of war reporting, namely Peace/Conflict Journalism vs. War/Violence Journalism (Galtung, 1986, 2002).

The Norwegian scholar argues that the majority of mainstream media generally follow the ‘low road’ in reporting conflict by describing it as a violent collision between two rivals within enclosed space and time, choosing to conceal peace initiatives, and taking zero-sum perspective usually used in sports reporting (Ibid). This is what he identifies as war journalism. Galtung (1986, 2002) advocates an alternative road or the ‘high road’ of peace journalism that focuses on conflict transformation.

Galtung (2002) states that the role of peace journalism is to go beyond the mere shallow reflections of the violence in the war zone, reveal the root causes of conflicts, and thereby showing opportunities for peace without violence. Contrary to the zero-sum game model of war journalism, peace journalism is metaphorically envisioned as health reporting in which reporters must see beyond the battle of a human body against the disease, so as to inform causes, cures and preventive measures (Galtung, 2002: p.259).

Lynch & McGoldrick (2005) develops a short definition of peace journalism as:

> Peace journalism is when editors and reporters make choices, about what to report and how to report it, which creates opportunities for society at large to consider and to value non-violent developmental responses to conflict. (p.5)

Basing on Galtung’s (1986, 2002) model, Lee (2010) offers a definition for PJ as:

> In a nutshell, peace journalism is an advocacy, interpretative approach to highlight peace initiatives, tone down ethnic and religious differences, prevent further conflict, focus on the structure of society, and promote conflict resolution, reconstruction and reconciliation. (Lee, 2010: p.362)
Since its inception, peace journalism has been welcomed in the peace research field. Proponents of the theory maintain that peace journalism is the right approach to gradually help the masses realize there are other solutions to conflict rather than violence (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005; Ottosen, 2010) or “a system of global media ethics” (Tehranian, 2002: p.58). Shinar (2007: p.2) defines peace journalism as —a normative mode of responsible and conscientious media coverage of conflict that aims at contributing to peacemaking, peacekeeping, and changing the attitudes of media owners, advertisers, professionals, and audiences towards war and peace.

However, peace journalism has its opposition as well. Critics argue against the theory for its assault on the professional norm of objectivity (Loyn, 2007) and disregard of structural constraints that shape the work of journalists (Hanitzsch, 2007).

Peace journalism is prone to criticism from the basic definition of what it is. Hanitzsch (2007: p.2) argues that there is no single and universal concept of peace journalism. “The idea of peace journalism is rather driven by a heterogeneous movement which does not always define itself in a clear-cut manner” (Ibid).

It might be fair to argue that Lynch and McGoldrick’s (2005) definition is vague and broad in the sense that it cannot describe what journalism is in terms of structure, style, discourse, etc. It indicates that peace journalism is a choice that can be subjectively taken by reporters and editors as an advocacy form of communication for peace. It therefore leaves the room for critics like Loyn (2007) to argue that this type of journalism is inclined to take peace as an excuse for biased reporting and it goes against professional norms of journalism, including objectivity, balance, truthfulness, neutrality and detachment.

Loyn (2007) also claims that the opposite of peace journalism is not war journalism, but good journalism since it imposes expectations onto journalists to search out for peace proposals and by doing so compels them to take on subjectivity. The aim of good journalism, according to Loyn (2007: p.5) is to represent reality accurately by respecting objectivity and seeking truthfulness.
I find this argument weak and not persuasive enough since Loyn (2007) himself acknowledges that “there cannot be a single truth” (:p.3) and “the ideal of pure objectivity – a view from nowhere – is chimerical” (: p.4). Loyn even cited Daniel Hallin's finding that objectivity distorted what was happening during the Vietnam war and the main reason is —official accounts were not challenged (2007: p.7).

In defense of peace journalism, Peleg (2007) disagrees that objectivity is the most important issue in war reporting. He maintains that it is not essential to discuss the objectivity position when reporting what you see when the main point of the story is often what you don’t see.

Peace journalism is not merely good journalism; it is different journalism and a departure from the traditional way of covering news stories, particularly conflict and violence, not only in nuances and emphases but in substance. Peace journalism is not to report what is seen but to report what can be seen, not simply to reflect reality but to explore reality and unearth what is not ostensibly reflective; to wisely utilize structural and organizational imperatives and to be subdued by them; to regard and cultivate readers’ interest but not be manipulated by them. This is the profound shift in the nature of journalism that the new philosophy offers. (: p.7)

This definition is very much relevant to the core foundation of peace journalism – the framing theory. From the conceptual basis, Galtung’s (2002) peace journalism model is supported by framing theory. There are different definitions of framing, but in general, news framing refer to the process of organizing a story, selecting and highlighting certain aspects of an incident to reveal reality in a pre-destined way and thus promote a particular interpretation (Entman, 2008). Earlier, Entman (1993) puts it like this:

To frame is to elect some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definitions, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation. (Entman, 1993: p.51-52)

Tankard et al. (1991) described a media frame as “the central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration” (: p.3).

According to Entman (1991), frames package key ideas, stock phrases, and stereotypical images to bolster a particular interpretation. Through repetition, placement and reinforcement, the texts and images provide a dominant interpretation more readily perceivable, acceptable, and memorable than other interpretations.
McCombs, Shaw and Weaver (1997) argued that framing is an extension of agenda setting – the process performed through two levels. In the first level, object salience is transmitted in the media. In second level, framing, or indicator salience, illustrates the way the media guide us how to think about something.

It is fair, therefore, to say that peace journalism theory, which bases on media framing, has a connection with agenda setting.

In summary, Galtung’s (2002) peace journalism model identifies other options for the readers to the conflict other than violence by taking four broad practice and linguistic orientations: a solution-orientated, people-orientated and truth-orientated approach. This means that peace journalism is expected to highlight possible suggestions for peace that the parties to the conflict might want to hide, to focus on the victims and give voice to the voiceless, and to reveal propaganda and untruths on all sides. Moreover, it must also take peace-orientated approach by exploring causes of the conflict in an open space and time, finding hidden motives or goals of involving parties and showing invisible effects of violence.

In contrast, war journalism is identified by four opposing approaches namely war-orientated, propaganda-orientated, elite-orientated and victory-orientated. A table of peace journalism model details is attached in Appendix 7.1.

Galtung’s (1986, 2002) model of peace journalism was later expanded by Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) into a 17-point plan that lays out practical guidelines to have a more balanced reporting of conflicts. The model and the 17-point practical guideline offer a platform for the study to code news stories in the content analysis part.

Peace journalism offers a solid theoretical foundation for this research because it was consistently built both in theoretical framework (Galtung, 1986, 2002) and practice guidance (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). Both lead to the bottom line of reporting conflicts: among various faces of reality that can be reported, select those that encourage non-violent responses to the conflict, unveil realities that are covered up or past unnoticed, thereby show the possible solutions to the conflict.
2.2.2. Public diplomacy

Public diplomacy existence dates a long time before it was coined as a term by the US in the 1960s to replace ‘propaganda’ as a communication technique ridden with negative connotations (Pamment, 2011; McPhail, 2010). Each country might have their own definition of public diplomacy that best serves their national interests. And even though public diplomacy is very much connected to the e US as a concept in communication research, in a general sense, it refers to the messages a nation, no matter where it is located, wants to use to create a positive image among public opinion in foreign lands.

Public diplomacy’s etymology has an American heritage, though its communicative attributes predate its twentieth-century origins wherever nations with ambition or at war cared about what others outside their national border thought about them. (McPhail, 2010: p.85)

Despite being around since at least the mid-19th century, public diplomacy is a new field of practice and scholarship (Gilboa, 2008). It lacks theoretical frameworks and most of the recent studies, as observed by Entman (2008: p.87), “appear to analyze successes, shortcomings, and failures of public diplomacy in practice…” rather than focus on formulating a standard framework for it.

Moreover, the existing studies mostly deal with public diplomacy as a tool of American foreign policy during the cold war and US experiences in the “ideological battle for the hearts and minds” with the USSR (Gilboa, 2008). During the cold war, both the US and USSR used international broadcasting to persuade the target public masses and win their support for their respective rival ideologies (Ibid). However, a new phase in the development of public diplomacy began after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the US and together with the revolutions in mass communication and international relations, the concept has also been revised and expanded.

Earlier, public diplomacy was defined as the tool of only government to have “direct communication with foreign peoples, with the aim of affecting their thinking and, ultimately, that of their governments” (Malone, 1985: p.199). Later definitions broaden actors of the communication process to include non-state actors such as non-governmental organizations and clarify content of these messages. Frederick (1993: p.229) adds that public diplomacy also refer to “activities, directed abroad in the fields of information, education, and culture, whose objective is to influence a foreign government, by influencing its citizens.”
However, within this study, public diplomacy is studied from the flow of information angle in which a nation state uses to promote information relating to foreign affairs issues and serve its national interests in general.

Although there is no single standard definition of what public diplomacy is but it has been taken among media scholars as “a euphemism for ‘propaganda’ or ‘international public relations’” (Gilboa, 2000: p.290) and exists in different forms.

Public diplomacy takes shape in various ways. It may be an effort by a government to bring an honest view of the world to people in countries where their own governments obstruct access to information. Or it may consist of nothing more than self-serving, manipulative messages of questionable truthfulness. (Seib, 2009: p.772).

Manheim (1994: p.4) perceives it as “efforts by the government of one nation to influence public or elite opinion in a second nation for the purpose of turning the foreign policy of the target nation to advantage.”

Gilboa’s (2002) study of global communication and foreign policy, which was based on the six-fold taxonomy of diplomacy communication, is one among few theory-inclined researches. In his view, public diplomacy refers to the world leaders’ extensive use of global communication “as a significant instrument to advance negotiation and to mobilize support for agreements” (2002: p. 741). This practice is termed “media diplomacy”, which is known as “uses of media by leaders to express interest in negotiation, to build confidence, and to mobilize public support for agreements” (Ibid).

Earlier in his study, Gilboa (2000) stresses the need to distinguish between public diplomacy and media diplomacy because basing on “phases in conflict and policy goals”, they are “two different efforts to influence press accounts: public diplomacy, when the sides are involved in a confrontation and their goal is propaganda; and media diplomacy, when they seek, sometimes jointly, rapprochement and wish to end the conflict through negotiations.” (Ibid: 294) In Gilboa’s (2000) view, public diplomacy is the initial step that precedes media diplomacy in communications between/among states in conflict when there have not been willingness from either side for negotiations.

Media diplomacy comes only when involved parties are ready to use “the mass media to communicate with state and non-state actors, to build confidence and advance negotiations, as well as to mobilize public support for agreements.” (Gilboa, 2000: p.295)
Gilboa (2000) maintains:

… whereas public diplomacy primarily entails one-sided propaganda designed to foster an image abroad, media diplomacy primarily entails a serious appeal, sometimes made jointly by two rival sides, for conflict resolution directed at both domestic and foreign constituencies. (p.303)

The opposition of public diplomacy against media diplomacy in terms of whether the willingness for peace negotiation is one-sided or both-sided lacks empirical evidence. It even plays down the advocacy role of media to highlight initiatives for peace and thus accelerate peace building and reconciliation process. It is supported in literature (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005; Ottosen, 2008) that peace journalism stories were realistically practiced and created momentum for conflict resolution in reality, even when willingness to stop violence, rebuild peace and reconciliation is not from both sides of a conflict.

If public diplomacy is understood only as a message to help promote a country’s foreign policy and image among foreign publics, it leaves a void for media research about war reporting in a of a certain type of message used to promote a country’s foreign policy among its own domestic readers. This is particularly the case for nations that directly involved as a conflicting side.

Sheafer & Shenhav (2009) underlines the challenge for a government in times of conflicts to appropriately formulate similar messages both to foreign audience and domestic readers. The dilemma is that they are supposed to enforce a sense of solidarity by addressing national sentiments when they engage in conflict, yet they have to ensure these national sentiments do not harm public diplomacy interests (Ibid).

How to shape a message that both “manifests its national sentiments” and “comply with the government’s interest” without resonating negatively and repelling foreign publics, including those of the involved countries in the war (Sheafer & Shenhav, 2009: p. 277), is a question very much related to the study.

This question gave rise to another hypothesis that there might be differences, even within a country’s media, between the English-language and vernacular-language sections, when covering a conflict that its government is directly involved.
McPhail (2010: p.87) offers a more general conception of public diplomacy as “a global process oriented toward diplomacy to publics.” And in this process, “open communication, interaction, and reaching out to publics through news and opinion management are expected.”

This definition does not inclusively restrict the target audience of public diplomacy messages to only foreign publics, and highlights two important constituents of public diplomacy: it can use news (media) as a tool to reach out to publics and manage their opinions. It might be understood as a process to familiarize a nation’s foreign policy among publics, foreign and domestic alike, in order to gain their support.

Using media to convey foreign policy messages to publics is the very first layer of public diplomacy.

McPhail (2010) suggests three main layers of engagement in public diplomacy, including monologic (one-way) communication through international news services, particularly TV and radio; dialogic (two-way) communication through social and cultural exchanges; and collaborative (group venture/joint projects). The study also focuses on examining the media framing and public diplomacy messages formulated and propagated in that first layer in the Vietnamese online media.

In order to formulate hypotheses regarding how the surveyed media framed and what public diplomacy messages created to persuade both foreign and domestic publics, the study uses the World System theory developed by Emmanuel Wallerstein

2.2.3. World System Theory

World system theory (WST), proposed by Immanuel Wallerstein, examines the structure of the world from the economic relations point of view.

World system theory states that global economic expansion takes place from a relatively small group of core-zone nation-states out to two other zones of nation-states, these being in the semi-peripheral and peripheral zones. (McPhail, 2010: p.24)

The three groups of nation-states have varying degrees of interaction in terms of economic, cultural, political, media, technical, labor, etc., with the advantage tilting to the core nations group. The core provides technology, software, capital, knowledge, goods and services to the other groupings of nations. WST is an adaptation of dependency theory in examining the “periphery” through core-periphery relations (Martinez-Vela, 2001: p.3)
Among the most important structures of the current world system is a power hierarchy between \textit{core} and \textit{periphery}, in which powerful and wealthy “core” societies dominate and exploit weak and poor peripheral societies. (Martinez-Vela, 2001: p.3)

It is assumed that the zones exhibit unequal and uneven economic relations, with the core nations being the dominant and controlling economic entity… The semi-periphery and periphery nations are in a subordinate position when interacting with core nations (McPhail, 2010: p.25)

Although WST is more of a theory about “world economy” integrated through markets than a political center, it is useful for research in other areas, including mass media (McPhail, 2010) and politics and foreign policies (Golgeier & McFaul, 1992; Hinnebusch & Ehteshami, 2002; Goodwin, 2001).

The theory presents the socio-political influence that the core imposes on the periphery and semi-periphery groups. It is reflected through several concepts, including \textit{imperialism} or “the domination of weak peripheral regions by strong core states” and \textit{hegemony} or “the existence of one core state temporarily outstripping the rest” (Martinez-Vela, 2001: p.4).

According to McPhail (2010), the core nations are generally considered to include the US, the European Union (of which the most recent ten entrants are considered to be semi-peripheral). Asides from ten EU members mentioned above, the semi-peripheral group includes China, the Philippines, India, Russia and several others from Latin America and the Middle East. The peripheral nations are the least developed countries, normally referred to as developing countries.

Based on WST, the historical and political relations between China and Vietnam (mentioned in Chapter 1) can be regarded as core-periphery relations.

As a core nation, China has the dominant power that enables them to dictate economic and political relations with Vietnam – the peripheral country in a self-interest fashion.

Vietnam has both respects for China, both culturally, economically and politically but it also has deep resentment of Chinese condescension, bullying, and perceived attempts to control its political destiny (Storey, 2008). However, theoretically, Vietnam as a peripheral nation is likely to keep harmonious relations with the core nation – China.

Technological, political, and economic factors have not changed traditional state relationships in the periphery. The desire of many of the poorer states to move closer to the core in order to reap the economic benefits may induce cooperation rather than conflict (Golgeier & McFaul, 1992: p. 491)
China has so far not only “swayed over Vietnamese politics through party-to-party linkages and through various mechanisms such as reciprocal seminar series focusing on ideological questions,” (Thayer, 2010: p.1)

A good evidence of Vietnam’s subordination to China is when it had to follow the latter’s request to withdraw media stories already published by the Vietnamese media or withhold publication to the benefits of China (Thayer, 2010).

WST sheds light on the nature of Vietnam-China relations as well as power imbalance to the advantage of China. It lays out a platform for the study’s hypotheses that the Vietnamese media do not directly oppose China and media coverage of the two clashes between Chinese and Vietnamese boats is shaped in a certain format to reduce threats of conflict.

WST confirms VN’s public diplomacy, then WST combine with public diplomacy theory confirm the hypothesis that surveyed media are peace-orientated.

WST then reaffirm a presumption that the surveyed media is likely to adopt a peace-orientated approach when covering the two clashes and China in general six months after the peak time of conflicts passed by. The theories of peace journalism, public diplomacy and world system combine together to form a solid foundation to confirm theory-based presuppositions regarding the thesis study.

2.3. Summary

In conclusion, most of the previous research on media coverage of war/ conflict was mostly conducted in the West, from the Western viewpoint and on English-language news samples, even when they are produced in Asian media. Only a few researchers, but again, from the Western hemisphere, study about war reporting in vernacular media. Furthermore, if studied, the coverage of local wars/ conflicts is often put into a comparative research with coverage of global wars instead of being examined as they are in their own right. Therefore previous studies on this area had little relevance to research on media coverage of Vietnam-China sovereignty dispute issues.

In addition, most of the studies on war reporting take peace journalism theory of Galtung (1986, 2002) as a core theoretical approach to mainly confirm the presence or absence of peace journalism as a dominant frame in the surveyed media.
The study, therefore, combines three theories concerning Peace Journalism, Public Diplomacy and WSL to not only find out the dominant media framing and public diplomacy messages in the Vietnamese media, but also to test the hypothesized connection and/or convergence of public diplomacy and peace journalism as mediated messages aimed at transforming conflict.
3. METHOD & MATERIAL

3.0. Introduction

As previously discussed, quantitative analysis can only answer what questions and the way information is delivered by the media might result in completely different message from the content of the information itself. Such cases require another research technique – the CDA to support findings of the content analysis part (Kempf & Reimann, 2002; Mandelzis, 2007).

This thesis therefore uses a combined method of both Quantitative and Qualitative approach to be able to answer the research questions posed in the study.

Content analysis, which has received wide applause for its objectivity or inter-subjectivity (Neuendorf, 2002: p.11), will be employed to answer the first group of descriptive questions, i.e. to find the dominant frame used in English and Vietnamese media coverage of China before, during and after the cable-cutting incident, the most salient indicators of war journalism or peace journalism found in the surveyed media, etc.

CDA analysis is applied on 22 news stories covering exactly the two incidents of alleged Chinese attacks on Vietnamese exploration ships and encroachment into Vietnam’s sea territory in order to examine what mediated public diplomacy messages crafted by the Vietnamese online media and how these messages were delivered. The events happened on the 2nd phase spanning from May 26th, 2011 to June 13th, 2011. The analysis is expected to examine how China and its alleged sovereignty violation acts were portrayed in the Vietnamese online media during the tense time between the two incidents of Chinese boats’ cutting undersea cables of Vietnamese ships. The way online media in Vietnam delivered the incidents shows what mediated beliefs about China and Vietnam were propagated to foreign audiences by the Vietnamese online media. In the following section I will provide a detailed description of methods employed for the thesis and explain the reasons why I chose these methods and give account on the sample to explain why this technique is best for answering my research questions.

3.1. Quantitative analysis

Content analysis is defined as “the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics.” (Neuendorf, 2002: p. 1). The technique has been widely adopted in many
areas of inquiry, especially in media and communication, with examples ranging from the analysis of word usage in news to the media portrayals of certain issues, such as wars or conflicts (Lee & Maslog, 2004, 2005; Dimitrova & Ahern, 2007; Sheafer & Dvir-Gvirsman, 2010; Siraj, 2008).

Earlier, Kerlinger (1986) also defines content analysis as a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective, and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables.

Among many other definitions of content analysis, Neuendorf’s (2002) and Kerlinger’s (1986) clearly point out the quantification capacity of the method to provide “the accurate representation of a body of messages” and thereby helps researchers to summarize results and report them succinctly (Wimmer & Dominick, 2000: p. 135-136). Even though the objectivity of this method remains a question among critics who maintain that media texts are open to different interpretations that might deal with readers’ subjectivity (Deacon et al, 2007: p. 131). However, the systematic character in both sampling and evaluation processes ensures that at least with content analysis, each news item has an equal chance of being included in the analysis and a set of guidelines used for evaluation throughout the study will help ensure the validity of the findings.

The first phase of the study is based on a content analysis of 207 news stories from two vernacular online newspapers and 133 news items from two English-language online newspapers during the period between May 1st and November 30th, 2011. The study seeks to examine what is the dominant frame used by the online media to cover the two clashes and China as the accused for sovereignty encroachment and damage against Vietnam’s exploration ships.

The research questions:

1) What is the dominant frame used in the coverage China’s assertive actions, which are part of the South China Sea conflict in Vietnam’s online media in relation to Galtung’s (1986, 2002) Peace Journalism model?

2) What are the salient indicators of war journalism and peace journalism manifested in the coverage of the conflict?
3) What are the differences, if any, in dominant frames used by English-language online media and vernacular online media?

4) Is there a relationship between war and peace journalism framing and stories specific to three newspapers Vietnamplus, Vietnamnet and VnExpress? [The two Vietnamnet newspapers, though operated in different languages of English and Vietnamese, are under control of the same ministry while the other two newspapers are directly controlled by the government (Vietnamplus) and by a corporation (VnExpress)].

5) Is there any difference between the framing of stories before and after the two attacks in all four surveyed newspaper altogether and in each individual newspaper?

Given Vietnam’s reverence foreign policy towards China, its media being state-guided and controlled, the study puts forward the following hypotheses:

**The hypotheses:**

H1: The dominant frame in the surveyed media throughout three phases of analysis is Peace Journalism.

H2: The four electronic newspapers differ but not significantly in their framing of news stories.

H3: Peace journalism is found to be strongest as the dominant frame in directly state-controlled Vietnamplus newspaper, followed by ministerial English Vietnamnet newspaper. Meanwhile, vernacular language Vietnamnet and VnExpress newspapers are more inclined towards war journalism frame.

H4: Vernacular news stories are more inclined towards war journalism frame than peace journalism frame.

H5: Since being directly controlled by the government, Vietnamplus is the most likely to adopt peace journalism frame, followed by Vietnamnet and Vietnamplus respectively.

H6: The number of articles framed as war journalism stories increases in the 2nd phase and falls dramatically in the 3rd phase of the analysis. By contrast, the number of peace journalism stories rose sharply in the 3rd phase.
3.1.1. Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis is only news stories belonging to hard news category, or up-to-the-minute news about events related to the two clashes and the follow-up events after the incidents. Interviews, editorials, commentaries and all other forms of opinions found on the surveyed sites are excluded due to their expected slanted viewpoints because these types of journalistic writings openly allow different degrees of writers’ subjectivity only. One might argue that in non-democratic regimes, news can be ideologically shaped, yet at least in terms of content, news focus on reporting events, not reflecting writers’ point of view.

Two vernacular news sites namely http://vnexpress.net and http://vietnamnet.vn are selected based on their rankings as the 3rd and 12th most popular online newspapers visited in Vietnam by Alexa (2011). The two English-written sites chosen for the sample are: http://www.vietnamplus.vn and http://english.vietnamnet.vn.

The surveyed online newspapers are selected on the basis of both their popularity (the case of two Vietnamese-language news websites) and their hierarchy in media management and control, which often draws researchers’ speculations about different levels of news censorship and political manipulation imposed on each site.

Vietnam has so far 53 officially licensed online newspapers by August 2011. Most of them are independent newspapers, with no printed version and a few are online versions of printed parent newspapers (Eek & Ellström, 2007). Technically, there are four official levels of state management in the ownership of these online news sites:

1) directly under the Communist Party (such as the Vietnam News Agency website – www.vietnamplus.vn or the Communist Party of Vietnam online newspapers http://dangcongsan.vn/cpv/index_e.html) or the National Assembly (www.daibieunhandan.vn)
2) under a ministry (such as http://vietnamnet.vn and http://english.vietnamnet.vn being controlled by the Ministry of Information and Technology or http://baocongthuong.com.vn/ - the mouthpiece of the Ministry of Trade and Industry)
3) under a provincial party committee – the highest political organization at the provincial level (such as http://sggp.org.vn owned by Ho Chi Minh City’s Communist Party Committee)

The first, second ranks and the fourth to 11th positions belong to websites not classified as online newspapers.
4) under a socio-economic union or organization\(^1\) (such as www.baodatviet.vn under the Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations)

The www.vnexpress.net is technically under the management of the Ministry of Science and Technology. However, it actually “has a unique ownership allowing them to work as free and limitless as possible in a country like Vietnam” (Eek & Ellström, 2007: p:i) Introduced in 2001, VnExpress – the pioneering online newspaper\(^2\) – has become the leading electronic newspaper in Vietnam and the third most visited webpage (Alexa, 2011). Eek & Ellström (2007) praise VnExpress for its objectiveness and point out the ownership of VnExpress as “a significant uniqueness” (:p.28).

VnExpress is owned by a stock company, FPT Telecommunications, which is the largest telecommunication company in Vietnam. The [press] law requires that all media must be owned by the government and have a license granted by the same. An ownership like this is very exclusive in Vietnam. Therefore, VnExpress is only owned by the government on the paper, but not in reality (Eek & Ellström, 2007: p.28-29)

Eek & Ellström (2007) also cite an interviewee who works as an editor with VnExpress as saying: “We have no limits or no directions from the government and can work as free as is possible in a country like Vietnam.” (p:29) The ownership, Eek & Ellström (2007: p.29) maintain indirectly make it possible for VnExpress to present the news in a different way.

Altogether, quantitative analysis is performed on news stories taken from three electronic newspapers that represent three ascending levels of state management: direct state and party control (Vietnamplus), ministerial (VietnamNet Vietnamese and English versions) and corporate levels (VnExpress).

### 3.1.2. Sampling approach

The news items studied are chosen through the non-random sampling approach which is “simply available to the researcher by virtue of its accessibility.” (Bryman, 2008: p.183)

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\(^1\) The government in Vietnam does not permit independent political or social organizations and the existing organizations still proceed along orthodox communist lines (Kalathil & Boas, 2003: p.84)

\(^2\) The first electronic newspapers available before the initiation of VnExpress in 1997 were online complements of printed newspapers. VnExpress was the first Internet publication with no printed parent version (according to Eek & Ellström (2007)
The sample chosen for content analysis is based on purposive sampling technique (Bryman, 2008). The content analysis sample includes all the news stories covering China and the South China Sea conflict altogether. The search for related news stories written in English is initiated with key words such as East Sea (another name for South China Sea used by media in Vietnam), China, cable, sovereignty, violate, etc. News items in Vietnamese are also collected by searching Vietnamese words bearing similar meanings as the aforementioned keywords, i.e. biển Đông, Trung Quốc, cắt cáp, chủ quyền, xâm phạm, etc. The sampling will cover a period of 7 months from May 1st to November 30th, 2011. The content analysis process will take into account changing nuances, if there are any, in the media portrayals of China – a party to the sea conflict – in correspondence with three different phases in time:

1) nearly a month before the first China’s alleged action of cable-sabotage against Vietnamese oil exploration ship on May 26th, 2011;
2) the middle period from the China’s first alleged attack on May 26 until June 13 when Vietnam conducted two live-firing exercises in the waters 40 kilometres off central Vietnam’s coast. This period also spans over the second cable-cutting action by China against Vietnamese-hired Viking oil exploration ship.
3) the subsequent period of six months ending November 30th

Despite the fact that convenience sampling strategy is “impossible to generalize the findings” (Bryman, 2008: p.183), it is practically plausible for this study given time and cost constraints as well as limited accessibility to the print archives of surveyed newspapers. In addition, it helps gather enough material to form a general mosaic picture of how China is portrayed before, during and after the upsurge of its ASEAN neighbors’ complaints against its intrusion into their sea territories and harassments against their ships.

3.1.3. Variables

The coding scheme for content analysis is built based on Galtung’s polarization of war/peace journalism as two competing frames in terms of approach and language (cited in Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005: p.6) and Lynch and McGoldrick’s 17 point-plan for practicing peace journalism (2005). Two groups of eight indicators each are formulated as follow to represent war journalism and peace journalism frames and make it more suitable to the conflicts under study:
### Table 3.1. List of War Journalism and Peace Journalism Frame Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>War/ Violence Journalism</th>
<th>Peace/ Conflict Journalism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Focus on visible effects and violent details:</strong> focusing on the description of</td>
<td>1. <strong>Focus on invisible effects of violence:</strong> revealing long-term impacts from the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>violence in the two clashes between Chinese boats and Vietnamese oil survey vessels for</td>
<td>violence and clashes (<em>regional peace being destabilized, friendship and cooperation</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>example: chasing after ships, cutting cables, intentionally rammed against Vietnamese</td>
<td>between nations being damaged, <em>free navigation</em> being blocked, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ship, robbing equipment and food, injuries of the crew members, damaged equipment, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Here and now:</strong> focusing on explaining <em>who did what</em>, who <em>threw the first stone</em></td>
<td>2. <strong>Causes and consequences:</strong> explaining the conflict formation (<em>when it started,</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or started the clashes with little or no explanation of the general South China Sea</td>
<td><em>why, what parties involved, their goals, their positions in dispute resettlement, etc.)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disputes that involve more parties than just China and Vietnam and date back way</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>before these two recent clashes between Vietnamese and Chinese boats happened. In</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>short, little or no explanation is given to the general, prolonged conflict regarding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the South China Sea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>One-party orientation:</strong> only giving voice to the Vietnamese side without</td>
<td>3. <strong>Multi-party orientation:</strong> giving voices to all parties to the conflict, at least to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presenting the positions of the Chinese side.</td>
<td>Vietnam and China as the two warring parties in these clashes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>See “them” as a problem and/or threat:</strong> blaming the Chinese boats, the Chinese</td>
<td>4. <strong>See conflict as a problem:</strong> criticizing the clashes, qualifying violence as a bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sides for starting the clashes.</td>
<td>way to solve sovereign disputes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Partisan:</strong> showing more support to “our” side (the Vietnamese side) by exposing</td>
<td>5. <strong>Non-partisan:</strong> not providing more support to one side than the other; being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“their” (Chinese) wrongdoings and scheme while not mentioning or marginalizing “our”</td>
<td>balanced by providing relatively the same amount of factual statements, for and against</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-benefit plans. Partisanship can be seen in evaluative statements that show</td>
<td>alike, concerning Vietnam and China; not including subjective evaluative comments of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>journalists’ subjective opinions (such as <em>these are intentional and systematic acts</em></td>
<td>journalist, exposing the sovereignty claims of both Vietnam and China as warring parties in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by China) or even through the factual statements in favor of the Vietnamese side (<em>the</em></td>
<td>the South China Sea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>world media commented that the drilling on June 13 is Vietnam’s response to China’s</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>intrusion and its distortion of the truth</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
in the East Sea). A story will be coded as partisan if it contains more negative evaluative comments against China or deliver more factual statements that are unfavorable to China but favorable to Vietnam.

6. **Elite-orientated**: quoting only statements of government or military leaders or giving more space (more paragraphs) in the news story to their positions than to the voices of ordinary people (such as *fishermen who were harassed by Chinese ships*, *crew members of the attacked vessels*, *students* and/or *intellectuals* concerning about South China Sea issues, etc.)

6. **People-orientated**: giving more space in the story to the voices of ordinary people directly affected by the conflict and/or independent researchers as well as students, intellectuals, etc. more than to governmental or military heads.

7. **Agreement and/or negotiation orientated**: focusing on the presentation of China’s and/or Vietnam’s willingness to discuss about the South China Sea issues, of the friendship and cooperation between Vietnam and China, of suggestions for solutions to the disputes in order to maintain peace in the reason and ensure absence of violence

7. **Differences-orientated**: focusing more on the blames Vietnam and China pointed at one another and/or different positions on their claims

8. **Use one or all of the following types of language:**
   a. demonizing (derogative labels such as *extremist*, *fanatic*, *traitor*, *bully*, *aggressor*, *villain*, etc.; demonizing adjectives like *cruel*, *vicious*, *brutal*, *blatant*, *aggressive*, etc.)
   b. victimizing (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs that are used intentionally to exaggerate and sell pains or damage inflicted on “our” or the Vietnamese side such as *victims*, *defenseless*, *pathetic*, *desperate* etc)
   c. emotive ((nouns, adjectives and verbs that are subjectively used to describe what happened in an exaggerated manner in order to intrigue strong feelings of viewers such as sympathy, pity for the Vietnamese side and/or fear, hate, anger against the Chinese side such as: “mắng Philippines” or “scolded the Philippines”; “nói đời” or “senselessly infuriated”, “lên tiếng tuyên bố” or “loudly proclaimed”; “ngang nhiên xâm phạm” or “blatantly violated”; “China treated the Philippines like a doormat”, etc.)

8. **Avoid using all of the following types of language:**
   a. demonizing
   b. victimizing
   c. emotive
Each story was initially coded for peace and war journalism indicators as explained further in the Code Book Appendix. It was later categorized according to the dominant frame of war journalism, peace journalism or neutral based on the number of indicators respective to each frame. A frame is dominant when at least five of their eight indicators are present in a story. If a story has the equal amount of war journalism and peace journalism indicators, it is coded as a neutral story.

In some cases, two opposite indicators of war journalism and peace journalism frame might appear simultaneously in a story. The dominant indicator, then, is the one that appears in more paragraphs than the other opposing indicator.

In regards to the 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} indicators of both war journalism and peace journalism, they can only be counted as appearing in a story if their corresponding contents are discussed in at least one whole paragraph instead of being mentioned in a marginalized fashion (such as in an independent clause of a sentence).

3.2. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

CDA “is the single most authoritative line of research regarding the study of media discourse” (Carvalho, 2008: p.162) and its analytical value lies in its ability to search for “aspects or dimensions of reality that are obscured by an apparently natural and transparent use of language.” (Ibid)

Media researchers were very much encouraged by Ottosen (2010) to combine peace journalism model and CDA because “by using CDA as a supplement, we could offer a more comprehensive analysis of case studies, including the systematic suppression of certain crucial aspects as well as the voices of ordinary people in the public discourse on war and peace issues.” (: p.263)

Earlier, Nohrstedt & Ottosen (2008) maintain that CDA “suggests a more comprehensive analysis” that reveals “the systematic silencing of certain crucial aspects”, thereby finding out the complex discursive constructions and structures that contribute to conflict escalations and wars (:p.11). This study, therefore, uses CDA technique to explore what beliefs about China and its actions concerning the sea conflict with Vietnam were shaped by Vietnamese online media and propagated to foreign audiences.
3.2.1. Sources and sampling criteria

The sample chosen for the CDA is based on the critical-case sampling technique, which Lindlof defines as “a person, event, activity, setting, or (less often) time period that displays the credible, dramatic properties of a ‘test case’” (Deacon, et al, 2007: p.55). It is quite familiar in studies of media presentation and relations between journalists and the state during military conflict (Ibid). The advantage is that critical-case samples can demonstrate a claim so strikingly that it will have implications for other, less unusual, cases (Deacon, et al, 2007).

The core events that chosen for CDA analysis are the two attack incidents in which China was accused of trespassing the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf of Vietnam, cutting cables of Vietnam’s Binh Minh 02 ship on May 26 and of Vietnam’s Viking II ship again on June 9.

The two events drew great public attention, prompting relevant agencies in Vietnam – lawyers’ association, Vietnam Fatherland Front, the oil and gas national corporation that owns and hires the attacked ships, etc. to speak up their opposition against China’s violations. Vietnamese online media covered extensively with lots of news and commentaries about the two clashes. However, since these are considered “hot” and taboo issue (Thayer, 2010), it took the online media around 2 days to publish the news. Therefore, stories collected for CDA analysis are those published between May 26 – when the first attack occurred and June 13 – the date when Vietnam had military drillings presumably as a counteraction against China’s violations.

The CDA were performed on stories taken from two English-written newspapers (Vietnamnet and Vietnamplus). Why only English-written sources were chosen?

The aim the of CDA part is to find out what beliefs about China and its actions were formulated and how they were propagated to the foreign audience or what public diplomacy messages the Vietnamese online media aspired to send out to the world.

Since vernacular-language online media were perceived as a government’s propagating tool to “manufacture consent” among domestic audience, English-language media were chosen because they serve the role of informing foreign audience about Vietnam.
The stories selected were those either reported about the events themselves or those describing all the follow-up activities or moves from each party after the two incidents. Keywords being used to search for the news are the same keywords used in content analysis sampling. The two websites together with their stories chosen for CDA are presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2. Titles and dates of stories used for CDA

| Vietnam English | | Vietnamplus English |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1 | Vietnam condemns Chinese intrusion | 1 | Vietnam accuses China of violating marine sovereignty |
| 2 | Vietnam demands China to pay compensation | 2 | Chinese marine surveillance ships violate VN’s sovereignty |
| 3 | China slanders VN of creating new incidents | 3 | Vietnam demands China stop sovereignty violations |
| 4 | Filipino Senator: China bully Southeast Asian countries | 4 | US opposes use of force in the East Sea |
| 5 | Chinese sites hacked over Vietnam sea sovereignty | 5 | Defence Minister meets Chinese counterpart in Singapore |
| 6 | Vietnamese-Chinese Defence Ministers talk about East Sea | 6 | Vietnam lawyers urge China to respect international sea laws |
| 7 | Lawyers protest Chinese violation | 7 | Vietnam Fatherland Front debates East Sea issues |
| 8 | Vietnam oil and gas body opposes Chinese acts | 8 | Vietnam oil and gas body opposes Chinese acts |
| 9 | Chinese boats intrude VN’s waters, cut cables again | 9 | China told to stop harassing Vietnam’s ships |
| 10 | Vietnam to hold maneuvers in East Sea | 10 | Vietnam lawyers oppose China’s sovereignty violation |
| 11 | Lawyers oppose sovereignty breach | 11 | Peace committee concerned over Chinese ships’ violations |
3.2.2. CDA phases

As suggested by Richardson (2007), the CDA process was performed in two different levels, moving from the small-scale (micro-textual) analysis of words, through sentences and onto macro-textual analysis of how propositions were combined throughout the whole stories. Special attention was paid to the second level of analysis which focused on examining the rhetoric and narrative reflective of Vietnamese media operators’ political ideology of contending issues with China.

The CDA process was organized in the following stages:

Stage 1 analyzes the propositions manifested explicitly and implicitly through:

- **Lexical analysis:** since words convey the imprint of society and of value judgments in particular, all types of words, particularly verbs, modal verbs, adverbs and adjectives were analyzed to see what connotative meanings they carry (such as transitive verbs such as *cease, stop, not repeat* deliver a presumption that *a certain action is going on*; new word *materialize* in this study is used euphemistically to explain China’s scheme to turn undisputed sea into disputed sea so that they can claim that area). Then words and phrases used to name and refer to people and actions were analyzed. Attention was given as well to the predicational strategies, which is the way of linguistically assigning qualities to persons, events, actions and social phenomena (Richardson, 2007).

- **Semantic moves:** was defined by Bell & Garrett (1998: p.39) as a strategy to manage opinions and impressions by suggesting positive self-presentation in one clause while showing negative other-presentation in the other clause within the same sentence. For example: … *while China calls for solving relevant disputes through peaceful measures; its own action is making the situation in the East Sea more complicated*...

Stage 2 examines the political ideology concerning China and its actions expressed implicitly through:

- **Sentence construction: syntax and transitivity**

The structure of a sentence and particularly transitivity tell us very much about the relationships between actors and the roles they play in the even/ incident described in the story (Richardson, 2007). Therefore, transitivity analysis shows how actions are represented,
how agents of those actions are portrayed and to whom they are done, thereby showing the choices that are probably made on purpose of reporters and editors.

- **Rhetorical tropes:**

Richardson (2007) maintains that journalists are unable to provide reports of events that are entirely objective without consciously or unconsciously employing rhetorical strategies to persuade readers to adopt similar viewpoints. Van Dijk (1996: p. 24) earlier stated that journalism represents “opinion statements … embedded in argumentation that makes them more or less defensible, reasonable, justifiable or legitimate as conclusions.” The success of these arguments depends on the use of rhetorical tropes or deviations from the ordinary and principal significance of a word (Ibid).

- **Narrative form:**

Richardson (2007: p. 71) defines narrative form as “the sequence in which events are presented to us” and news narratives are important because they reflect what we consider important or trivial, good or evil. The narrative form of news stories therefore carries with it a certain political and socio-cultural ideology that is worth being analyzed.

### 3.3. Limitations of the study

The limitations of this study are related to restrictions in the technical and theoretical approaches.

#### 3.3.1. Technical limitations

The content analysis part is conducted on news that are collected from electronic newspapers and covered events happening almost a year before the study. The collecting work of samples is initiated by using search tool in each websites of the sources. It cannot assure that all related news articles were found and analyzed due to technical limitations of each sites.

During the sampling process, some news stories were found to be withdrawn from the sites and only their titles, which were mostly quite aggressive in tone, remain seen on the sites. However, this only has a little effect on the Generalization of the study because decisions to withdraw certain items during the peak time of the two clashes make the whole sample
representative of the government’s public and media policy towards contending issues involving China.

### 3.3.2. Theoretical approach limitations

The lack of research on war reporting, using public diplomacy as one of the core theory, in Asia in general and Vietnam in particular, is a challenge to this study. All three theories employed to deal with the research questions concerning an Asian country’s media purely reflective the Western perspectives.

Western-developed peace journalism theory, for example, defines two opposite media framings of conflict basing on the story approach and language. However, English and Vietnamese are two different languages with their particular characteristics. Using a Western theory based on the analysis of English language might result in slightly imprecise results if a detailed codebook were not in place.

This study, therefore, include also CDA analysis to reinforce results of the content analysis part. It contributes to introducing new features of war journalism and peace journalism indicators characterized for the Asian region or Vietnam more specifically.

### 3.3.3. Methodological limitations

Without the constraints of time and travel costs, the thesis study would have included interviewing as the last research technique. The subjects for interviewing might be reporters and editors of those surveyed newspapers and government officials working on the construction of Vietnam’s public diplomacy and particularly Vietnam’s foreign policy towards China. Their answers would further confirm the results from the content analysis and CDA process.

### 3.4. Generalization, validity and reliability

#### 3.4.1. Generalization

The Generalization of the findings is “the extent to which they may be applied to other cases, usually to a larger set that is the defined population from which a study’s sample has been drawn” (Neuendorf, 2002: p.12).
The quantitative method uses a sample of stories that span a period of seven months (1st May – 30th November). The sample is quite large and extensive in terms of time to ensure the Generalization of the content analysis. Some might argue that the sampling approach is purposive, non-random and four sources selected are not large enough to be representative of the whole 53 official electronic newspapers in Vietnam. However, the sample was collected from the two most popular Vietnamese online newspapers and the two most representative sources for the government’s public diplomacy messages – the two English newspapers of Vietnamnet and Vietnamplus. Moreover, the sample also cover stories posted one month before and six months after the two clashes. This ensures a proper level of Generalization for the quantitative analysis.

The Generalization of the CDA is not guaranteed because of the limited size of the CDA sample. However, the CDA is itself reliable and valid enough given my personal experience as a journalist in Vietnam who understand the media system and have been exposed on a daily basis to editing any sensitive events pertaining to China (such as sovereign dispute, poisonous food, cooperation projects that can do harm to Vietnam’s pollution and local people’s livelihoods, etc.)

3.4.2. Reliability

Reliability is a concept referring to the objectivity of a content analysis. It is referred to by Neuendorf (2002) as “the extent to which a measuring procedure yields the same results on repeated trials” (: p.112).

Reliability is present when repeated measurement of the same material results in similar decisions or conclusions. Intercoder reliability refers to levels of agreement among independent coders who code the same content using the same coding instrument. (Wimmer & Dominick, 1994: p. 178)

The study uses Galtung’s (1986, 2002) peace journalism model to formulate a coding scheme. It was not only built on the constituent indicators of the two opposing frames: peace journalism vs. war journalism according to Galtung’s (1986, 2002) theory but it was also adjusted to fit in with the content of news stories covering the examined events.

Wimmer & Dominick (1994) and Neuendorf (2002) both suggested using inter-coder reliability to detect poorly-defined categories and thus enhance reliability. I conducted a pilot study in which I randomly selected a subsample (10% of the whole surveyed stories). Since
this study was individual work, it was impossible to have another coder. Therefore, subsample stories were coded twice at different times and the two groups of coding decisions were regarded as being done by two different coders.

The reliability of the coding process was decided based on Hostil’s (1969) formula {Reliability = \( \frac{2M}{N_1+N_2} \)} in which \( M \) = the number of coding decisions at two different times that are similar; \( N_1, N_2 \) are the total number of coding decisions done in both times} which gave a result of 0.76 (> the minimum of 0.70 to ensure reliability). This result helps confirm the clarity of coding instructions and category definitions, thereby the content analysis’s reliability as well.

3.4.3. Validity

“Validity is the extent to which a meaning procedure represents the intended, and only the intended, concept” (Neuendorf, 2002: p. 112). It refers to the question whether indicators that are intended to measure a concept really measure that concept or not.

The validity of the study is established first and foremost by its reliability as Wimmer & Dominick (1994: p.59) maintains: “Reliability is necessary to establish validity” even though it is not a sufficient condition.

The study’s validity is examined through two broad measures: external and internal validity.

The external validity refers to the ability to apply with confidence the findings of the study to other people and other situations (Wimmer & Dominick, 1994) or the generalization of the study. Therefore, the study’s external validity is ensured.

The internal validity of the study is represented through its face validity and construct validity.

The study’s face validity is achieved because the study’s measuring instrument is built upon Galtung’s (1986, 2002) theory of peace journalism and its constituent peace journalism vs. war journalism polarization framework. Its construct validity, which refers to the existence of relationships between the property being measured and other variables under study, is ensured on theoretical basis. The associations between variables in the study are established thanks to theoretical reasons to expect such relationships (for example the world system theory that describes the nature of core-periphery relationships among nation states combines
with public diplomacy theory to suggest a possible correlation between language and media framing.

The validity in qualitative analysis, though unable to be fully guaranteed, is still ensured by my exposure to strict editing practices and long editing process when it comes to sensitive events involving Vietnam and China. The CDA process is designed based on practical experience of working for five years as a reporter-cum-copy news writer at the foreign news service of the Vietnam News Agency (the governing agency of Vietnamplus newspaper in the study), not by subjective interpretations from the news texts./.
4. RESULTS & ANALYSIS

4.0. Results and findings

This chapter is divided into three parts. The first discusses findings from quantitative content analysis of 340 news items in four online newspapers in Vietnam, which spanned seven months from May-November, 2011. The second part discusses findings from qualitative critical discourse analysis of 22 articles covering exactly the two attacks and follow-up events. The third part reexamines the findings of both techniques in relation to the aim of the study, in specific to its research questions and aim.

4.1. Content analysis

A quantitative analysis is made to a total of 340 stories, of which 207 items are in Vietnamese and 133 others in English, extracted from 1st May till 30th November, 2011. The purposes are to examine what is the dominant frame adopted in Vietnam’s electronic newspapers when covering China’s two alleged aggressive actions against two Vietnamese oil exploration vessels and China in general five months after the incidents; and the differences among the sources in selection of dominant frames.

All of the 340 news stories selected for analysis are lumped together as domestically-produced stories even though some of them take information from stories produced by foreign wire services such as Associated Press, Reuters, Times, etc. The reasons for this decision relate to the fact that the primary-sourced news are translated, then re-written and reformulated instead of being kept as they are originally. Though sourced from foreign operators, they are all edited to keep in line with the Vietnamese government’s will.

4.1.1. The dominant frame in electronic newspapers

The first finding of the study is the dominant position of war journalism framing in the surveyed electronic media. Out of the 340 news items, 166 stories (48.82%) were framed as war journalism, compared to 114 stories (33.53%) framed as peace journalism, and 60 stories (17.65%) defined as being neutral.
Surveyed newspapers differ in their adoption of war/peace/neutral framing of the stories since chi-square value $X^2 (6, N=340) = 28.73, p < 0.005$; Cramer’s $V = 0.29$. The following table discusses the patterns of framing for each surveyed newspapers.

### Table 4.1. Distribution of War Journalism and Peace Journalism Frames Across Surveyed Websites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Levels of control</th>
<th>War Journalism</th>
<th>Peace Journalism</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>n (100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamnet (Vietnamese)</td>
<td>Ministerial</td>
<td>40 (37.38%)</td>
<td>43 (40.19%)</td>
<td>24 (22.43%)</td>
<td>107 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vnexpress (Vietnamese)</td>
<td>Corporate</td>
<td>38 (38%)</td>
<td>41 (41%)</td>
<td>21 (21%)</td>
<td>100 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamnet (English)</td>
<td>Ministerial</td>
<td>61 (70.93%)</td>
<td>16 (18.6%)</td>
<td>9 (10.47%)</td>
<td>86 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamplus (English)</td>
<td>Direct state</td>
<td>27 (57.45%)</td>
<td>14 (29.79%)</td>
<td>6 (12.77%)</td>
<td>47 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>48.82%</td>
<td>33.53%</td>
<td>17.65%</td>
<td>340 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The strongest war journalism framing was from Vietnamnet’s English news website (70.93%), followed by the official website of Vietnam’s single news agency – Vietnamplus (57.45%).

Excluding the neutral frames, the difference between war/peace journalism stories was significant between these two English-language online newspapers, $X^2 (1, N = 118) = 9.336, p < 0.005$. 

Figure 4.1. Proportion of three frames observed in surveyed e-newspapers
The findings answer two research questions as to what is the difference, if any, in dominant frames used by English-language online media and Vietnamese-language online media. The Vietnamnet’s Vietnamese news website and VnExpress have roughly the same proportions of war journalism framing of 37.38% and 38% respectively. In other words, the two Vietnamese-language newspapers do not differ significantly in their war journalism and peace journalism framing. Excluding the neutral frames, the difference was reflected through a Chi-square value $X^2 (1, N = 162) = 0.05$.

In conclusion, English stories produced by the ministerial level electronic newspaper Vietnamnet had the highest proportion of war journalism frames, followed by English stories extracted from the directly state-controlled English online newspaper Vietnamplus. The two Vietnamese-language newspapers unexpectedly had a quite similar pattern of roughly equal distribution between war and peace journalism stories.

These results answer the first research question regarding the dominant frame used in Vietnamese online media when reporting on the clashes and China and confirm the differences among surveyed newspapers in their distribution of frames.

### 4.1.2. Salient indicators of War Journalism and Peace Journalism Frames

Based on a frequency count of 1,014, the three most salient indicators of war journalism frame were *elite-orientated* (25%), *two-party orientation* (19.1%) and *partisan* (15.4%).

The stories within this research tended to focus on the elites, quoting and citing mainly political leaders and/or military officials as the main sources while ignoring ordinary people at grassroots level, who in this case were crew members who were directly exposed to China’s acts of aggressiveness.

The *two-party orientation* confined the South China Sea conflict to the two specific clashes between China’s ships and Vietnam’s ships, describing the overall dispute that involves many sides as a contention between only two rivals without clear explanation of the involved parties. And this orientation also reflect journalists’ bias in favor of the Vietnamese side by giving voice to only ‘our’ side instead of all sides related.

By being *partisan*, stories’ writers and editors showed their bias for one side in the conflict, specifically for Vietnam in this case. This indicator is quite complicated and reflected through
many ways, from overt criticism to subtle nuances, from complete disregard of quotes from ‘their’ side to unequal distribution of quotes (or using more quotes that are in favor of ‘our’ side than those for ‘their’ side), etc. This is more elaborated in the code book and the CDA part.

Meanwhile, the three most salient indicators of peace journalism, based on a frequency count of 700, were Avoid using victimizing, demonizing and emotive language (46.3%), agreement and/or negotiation orientated (24.4%) and multi-party orientation (9.6%).

By avoiding victimizing, demonizing and emotive language, the journalists avoided verbally dichotomizing the contesting parties into the good and the bad. Instead, they used more precise titles and descriptions of them. They also avoided playing on the emotional effects to sell ‘tears and pains’ or stir readers’ reactions by emotive language. The peace journalism stories were found to focus largely on agreement and negotiations between the two sides: ASEAN claimant countries and China – their common powerful contestant. By multi-party orientation, journalists also cited sources from China and those not directly involved in these two specific clashes but those taking part in the general South China Sea dispute such as officials from the Philippines, the ASEAN and the US.

It is worth noting that war journalism indicators have a total frequency 30% higher than peace journalism indicators. Notably, indicators constituting the peace journalism frame that have lowest frequencies include Focus on invisible effects of violence (0.7%), causes and consequences (2.9%) and See conflict as a problem (3.4%).

In war journalism group of indicators, Use victimizing/demonizing/emotive language indicator accounts only for 1.5%, which is convergent with the dominance of Use victimizing/demonizing/emotive language (46.3%) among other peace indicators.

The findings answers the second research question regarding the most frequently used indicators of war journalism and peace journalism frames observed in the Vietnamese media. Through these two groups of the most salient indicators, one can have a slight vision of the media coverage: war orientated by heavy dependence on the official, government source, bias against the China and in favor of Vietnam; while peace orientated by avoidance of demonizing language and presentation of willingness and opportunities for negotiations for conflict resolution.
### Table 4.2. Indicators of War Journalism and Peace Journalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WAR JOURNALISM APPROACH</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on visible effects</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Here and now</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-party orientation</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See &quot;them&quot; or China as a problem and/or threat</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partisan</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite-orientated</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference-orientated</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WAR JOURNALISM LANGUAGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use victimising/ demonizing/ emotive language</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>1014</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PEACE JOURNALISM APPROACH</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on invisible effects of violence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causes and consequences</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-party orientation</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See conflict as a problem</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-partisan</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People-orientated</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreement and/or negotiation orientated</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PEACE JOURNALISM LANGUAGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid using victimising, demonizing and emotive language</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>46.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>700</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The quantitative analysis shows there are some most commonly used terms that appear in both peace journalism and war journalism stories but in different context and collocation, thereby producing different meanings.

For example, the word “sovereignty” is combined with “sovereignty disputes” that both Vietnam and China “share” and they need to conduct peaceful talks to find solutions acceptable for both sides in peace journalism stories. It is also used widely in war journalism stories as part of Vietnamese accusation against China for violating its sovereignty.
“The 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Declaration on Conduct of the Parties in the East Sea” are found in almost every article surveyed. In war journalism stories, it is used as legal documents to qualify China as a violator. In peace journalism stories, it is however used as a foundation base for future negotiations.

Sentences regarding long-term friendship and cooperation between China and Vietnam appeared in both war/peace journalism stories quite frequently, such as: Vietnam calls on China, “for the strategic height and long-term relationship between Vietnam and China, to immediately stop and not repeat any violating actions…” (Appendix 7.4.1.11)

4.1.3. Relationship of war/peace journalism and story language

In terms of language, the war journalism frame makes up the largest proportion in the total surveyed English-written stories (66.2%), followed by 22.5% of peace journalism frame stories.

On the contrary, Vietnamese-written online newspapers in the survey were found to be more inclined towards peace journalism framing (40.6%), even though they also tilted towards war journalism framing (37.7%). Neutrally-framed stories were found to appear more frequent in vernacular pieces of news (21.7%) compared to those in English news (11.3%).

Although war journalism frame was strongest in English samples, there was a significant higher proportion of war journalism frame observed in English samples (66.2%) than those found in vernacular language samples (37.7%).

Excluding the neutral frame, the difference in war/peace journalism frame stories was still significant between the two language-based categories of online newspapers. Chi-square value $X^2(2, N=340) = 21.6; \text{ Degree of freedom (df)} = 2; p < 0.005$. This shows the likelihood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>War journalism</th>
<th>Peace journalism</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>78 (37.7%)</td>
<td>84 (40.6%)</td>
<td>45 (21.7%)</td>
<td>207 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>88 (66.2%)</td>
<td>30 (22.5%)</td>
<td>15 (11.3%)</td>
<td>133 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of relationship existing between the two variables language and frames. Cramer’s V value $\phi_c = 0.248$ shows the correlation between the two variables is moderate.

Overall, stories written in English were found to have a significantly higher proportion of war journalism frames than those written in Vietnamese.

### 4.1.4. Relationship of war/peace journalism and levels of state control

When the level of state management is taken into consideration, the war journalism frame was the strongest (70.93%) in the coverage of the incidents and China in the South China Sea disputes by the Vietnamnet’s English version page – a ministerial level electronic newspaper. English-written stories produced by the state-level newspaper Vietnamplus were found to have the second strong war journalism frame (57.45%). However, despite being at the ministerial level of control, the Vietnamese version of Vietnamnet shows roughly equivalent proportions of war journalism and peace journalism frames (37.8% and 40.19% respectively) and a similar pattern of frame distributions as VnExpress.

In order to find if there is a certain relationship between levels of state control and frames, data gathered from Vietnamese and English samples sourced from Vietnamnet were taken together into one category (Table 4.4.).
Table 4.4. Frame frequencies based on level of state control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed frequencies (fo)</th>
<th>Expected frequencies (fe)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministerial</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct state</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[X^2 (4, N = 340) = 6.042, p > 0.1\]

No correlation between levels of state control and frames was established because the relationship was insignificant, given the Chi-square value 6.042, df = 4.

The finding answers the research question as to whether there is a relationship between war and peace journalism framing and stories specific to three newspapers Vietnamplus, Vietnamnet and VnExpress.

4.1.5. **Difference between the framing of stories before and after the two attacks**

4.1.5.a. **The overall pattern:**

In order to examine the developing patterns of war journalism, peace journalism and neutral frames over the three different periods of time, the altogether data were broken down as in the Table 4.5. as follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEWSPAPERS</th>
<th>1-25 May</th>
<th>26 May – 13 June</th>
<th>14 June – 30 Nov</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WJ</td>
<td>PJ</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>WJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamnet Vietnamese</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VnExpress Vietnamese</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese English</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamplus English</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>70.6%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>77.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n1 = 17</td>
<td>n2 = 89</td>
<td>n3 = 234</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5. Numbers of war/peace/neutral stories of four newspapers in three phases

54
From the table, it can be seen that there are big gaps in the numbers of news stories sourced from the surveyed websites over the three periods. The first period from 1st to 25th May, only 17 news articles were found. The number of stories taken in the 2nd period (of almost the same length) was over five times more than the first period, which is explainable since this period was the peak period of two China’s alleged attacks against Vietnamese ships. The third time slot was the longest, ranging over 5 months, and also had the largest number of news stories.

Combined together, the data of four surveyed newspapers shows that war journalism was the dominant frame in the first two periods of time and experienced a mild increase from 70.6% in the first time slot to 77.5% during the second period. Peace journalism was seen to have the same pattern of slight increase, from 11.8% to 15.7%. On the contrary, the neutral frame shrunk from 17.6% to 6.7%, and then later rose back to 21.8% in the third period.

War journalism frame, however, was reduced by half, falling dramatically from 77.5% to 36.3% in the third time slot. Peace journalism rose by nearly three times, from 15.7% to 41.9% during this period.

In short, war journalism frame took the dominant position in all surveyed online newspapers in the first two periods of time but plunged deeply during the rest five months under survey, giving the way to peace journalism. There was a steady upward trend in stories that adopt peace journalism frame even though it only emerged later in the third time slot (from June 14th to November 30th) as the most prominent frame. The trend of neutral frame is opposite to
that of war journalism: it slid down by slightly more than 10% in the second phase and rose up again by nearly 20% in the third phase.

The findings answer the 4th research question regarding if the four surveyed newspapers differ in their framing decisions before and after the two attacks.

The following part is dedicated to analyzing the separate trends of the three frames observed in each surveyed newspaper.

4.1.5. b. Separate trends of each newspaper

Vietnamnet (Vietnamese-language; ministerial-level of state control)

There was a significant difference in the framing of stories between the 2nd and the 3rd phases of the survey with the Chi-square value $X^2 (2, N = 95) = 30.94, p < 0.001$, Cramer’s $V = 0.57$ showing the strong correlation. During the 2nd phase between May 26th to June 13th, war journalism stories accounted for an overwhelming proportion of 77.7% of the total 27 news stories examined compared to less than 15% peace journalism stories and 7.5% neutral stories. War journalism then collapsed dramatically to 17.5% of the 68 stories found during the 3rd phase. The numbers of stories framed as peace journalism and neutral rose almost four times to 54.5% and 279% respectively in this period.

VnExpress (Vietnamese-language, corporate-level of state control)

The newspaper also had a downward trend in the use of war journalism as the most dominant frame, dropping significantly from 72.7% in the 2nd phase to 17.6% in the 3rd phase. Similar to Vietnamnet’s vernacular newspapers, there were gradual upward trends in the numbers of peace journalism and neutral stories found on VnExpress, to 47.4% and 24.4% respectively. VnExpress also saw a significant difference in the framing of stories between the two phases with Chi-square value $X^2 (2, N = 100) = 14.44, p < 0.005$, Cramer’s $V = 0.35$ proving that the association between the two variables is quite strong.

Vietnamplus (English, direct state control level)

Similar to the afore-mentioned newspapers, the online news website of Vietnam News Agency Vietnamplus also saw a steep downward trend in the number of stories framed as war journalism, from 83.3% in the 2nd phase to 32% in the 3rd phase. The numbers of peace journalism and neutral stories, on the contrary, rose steadily to 48% and 20% respectively.
from 11% and 5.6%. The observed difference in framing between the two phases was proved significant by Chi-square value $X^2 (2, N = 43) = 11.09, p < 0.005$, Cramer’s $V = 0.507$ showing that the association is very strong.

**Vietnamnet (English, ministerial level of state control)**

Unlike the other three newspapers, the English version newspapers of Vietnamnet did not see any significant change in the distribution of war/peace and neutral stories from the 2\textsuperscript{nd} to the 3\textsuperscript{rd} phase, $X^2 (2, N = 85) = 0.56, p < 0.1$. War journalism stories went down slightly to 68.3% from 77.2% whereas peace journalism stories went up a little from 18.2% to 19%. Neutral stories went up by almost three times to 12.7%.

**Figure 4.5. Developing patterns of frames across surveyed newspapers over 2 time slots**
4.1.5.c. Distribution of frames between two Vietnamnet newspapers

During the 2\textsuperscript{nd} phase when two sabotage attacks allegedly staged by China occurred, the two newspapers produced roughly similar numbers of war journalism stories, hovering around 77\% of the total sums of 27 and 22 stories examined. The differences in peace journalism and neutral stories are not that significant and the Chi-square value $X^2 (2, N = 49) = 0.25$.

In the 3\textsuperscript{rd} phase, however, the two newspapers have quite significant difference in the distribution of frames, $X^2 (2, N = 131) = 35.83$, $p < 0.001$. Of 68 items found in Vietnamnet vernacular website in the 3\textsuperscript{rd} phase, only 17.6\% were war journalism compared to 54.5\% peace journalism and almost 28\% neutral stories. Meanwhile, war journalism stories remained dominant in Vietnamnet English website, accounting for 68.3\% of the total 63 stories found. Peace journalism stories went up very little from 18.2\% to 19\%.

In conclusion, there was a significant change in the distribution of frames across the two periods of time which was marked by the colossal drop of war journalism stories and the steep rises of peace journalism and neutral stories. Similar trends were observed in three newspapers: Vietnamnet vernacular newspaper, VnExpress and Vietnamplus. Vietnamnet English newspaper, however, experienced very slight fluctuations in the numbers of war/peace/neutral stories. Whereas war journalism gave in to peace journalism as the most dominant frame in the 3\textsuperscript{rd} phase in all three other newspapers, the frame remained dominant with the landslide proportion of 68.2\% in Vietnamnet English newspaper. It is noticeable that peace journalism, even when emerging as the most prominent frame in the 3\textsuperscript{rd} phase, could not win the position by a landslide as big as war journalism frame did. Altogether, peace journalism stories only account for 41.9\% of the whole 340 stories examined. Separately, peace journalism frame emerged most dominantly in Vietnamnet Vietnamese news-site, but only covered slight more than half of the surveyed stories or 54.5\%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspapers</th>
<th>26th May - 13th June</th>
<th>14th June - 30th November</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WJ  PJ  N</td>
<td>WJ  PJ  N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamnet (Vietnamese)</td>
<td>21  4  2</td>
<td>12  37  19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamnet (English)</td>
<td>17  4  1</td>
<td>43  12  8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6. Numbers of war/peace/neutral stories
4.1.6. Summary and discussion of the findings

The following section is devoted to discussing the findings of the quantitative analysis of 340 news items found from four electronic newspapers.

Finding 1:

The dominant frame in the four surveyed newspapers during the whole three time slots, spanning from 1st May to 30th November was war journalism, followed by peace journalism and neutral frames. This finding rejects the first hypothesis that the online media is more likely to incline towards peace journalism frame.

This result might be attributed to the new wave of anti-China rising in Vietnam after the two sovereignty violation cases in which China was the accused. It is also consistent with the dominant anti-China public opinion, which has been built up after a long history of conflict between the two countries and particularly after the latest two clashes.

Finding 2:

The four newspapers differs considerably in their framing of news stories even though there is a hypothesis that their distributions of frames vary but not so widely because they are all controlled by the government. This shows a quite positive sign that though objectivity and content of news stories are yet to be confirmed, at least there is no such thing as a “uniform” media system that produces all identical stories according to the government guideline.

Finding 3:

The indicators that were most widely shared by war journalism stories in the surveyed newspapers share include: elite-orientated, two-party orientation and partisan.

The elite orientation in the surveyed media reflects the nature of the state-owned media system in Vietnam. The dominance of two-party orientation and partisan indicators is comprehensible since the surveyed incidents were two clashes directly involving Vietnam and China and the media – as a mouthpiece of the government – naturally take side in its coverage.
Meanwhile, the three mostly-shared features of peace journalism included avoid using victimizing, demonizing and emotive language, agreement and/or negotiation orientated and multi-party orientation. The dominance of these three indicators shows the media’s avoidance to throw verbal provocative messages at China. Instead, they took a conciliatory approach by highlighting negotiations and give voice to the Chinese side.

**Finding 4:**

News stories written in English were found to be more inclined towards war journalism frame than those written in Vietnamese.

War journalism frame was found to be strongest in the two English-language newspapers within this study, which is contrary to the hypothesis that English news items will not be slanted in favor of the Vietnamese side because that will repel foreign publics (specifically China’s) and thus dampening Vietnam’s public diplomacy interests. The two vernacular newspapers, hypothetically expected to be more war-journalism orientated, turned out to have roughly equal distributions between war journalism and peace journalism stories.

It is observed during the coding process that quite many stories written in English were made shorter than their Vietnamese versions (in the case of Vietnamnet) and stories covering the same event. The majority of the shortening includes opposition voices from China or opinions of researchers or ordinary people; causes of the South China Sea conflict; etc. This can be partly proved by the extremely low frequencies of indicators People-oriented, Focus on invisible effects of violence shown in Table 4.2. These indicators, considered as important to achieve objectivity for a story, are unfortunately quite relativized and marginalized compared to statements of government leaders.

**Finding 5:**

When grouping samples of the two Vietnamnet newspapers into one single unit and check the significance of the differences in frame distributions of three newspapers, the study finds no association between levels of state control and the framing. This is opposite to a hypothesis that the closer a newspaper is to the government in the state management ranking, the more it is slanted towards peace journalism framing.

**Finding 6:**
Combined together, there was a colossal slump in war journalism stories in all four surveyed newspapers in the 3rd phase of time (or during five months after the two clashes) compared to the 2nd phase (the peak time when the two clashes occurred), when war journalism frame was overwhelmingly dominant (77.5%). In the 3rd phase, peace journalism emerged as the most dominant frame in all four newspapers, even though not with a landslide proportion.

The moving trends of war journalism and peace journalism frames are consistent with the heat and opposition in the public opinion in Vietnam: during the 2nd phase, the two clashes enraged people in Vietnam. During the 3rd phase, public anger at China subsided gradually and Vietnam engaged in various meetings, bilaterally and regionally with China to discuss sea dispute issues. That might be a reason for the rise of peace journalism in this period.

Separately, the change in the proportion of war journalism frame between the 2nd and the 3rd phase was most significant in Vietnamese-language Vietnamnet newspaper (with a drop of 60%) and least significant in English-language Vietnamnet newspaper (with a fall of only 8.9%).

Compared dually, the two Vietnamnet newspapers did not show significant difference in frame distributions in the 2nd phase, but differed largely in the 3rd phase when war journalism still remained the most dominant position with a landslide proportion in Vietnamnet English-language newspaper; whereas its vernacular version opted for peace journalism as the major frame.

The content analysis shows the dominant frame used in Vietnamese online media for their coverage about the two clashes is war journalism. This result raises the questions of how the war frame is formulated and crafted and in what fashion so as to not provoke China as the main theory-based hypothesis of this study suggests. It also inspires a question of what public diplomacy messages are formed in the surveyed media. CDA is applied to answer these questions.

4.2. CDA: Public diplomacy messages of China and its actions

CDA were performed on 23 English articles taken from two electronic newspapers: Vietnamnet and Vietnamplus. The analysis was aimed at examining what beliefs about China– the main protagonist in the South China Sea conflict and its alleged cable-cutting
actions against Vietnamese ships within undisputed areas that are claimed by Vietnam – were formulated and propagated to the foreign audience. In other words, what perceptions of China and its actions Vietnamese online media want to spread to the world audience. It also sought to answer a question about what self-image Vietnam wants to propagate to the outside world.

4.2.1. China – a perverse bully neighbor

One of the notable features of attributing the wrongdoing to the Chinese side that was observed in the CDA articles is the use of intransitive, ”change of state” verbs (Richardson, 2007: p. 63). After writing about China’s cable-cutting actions (what happened), where it took place, journalists wrote: “The [diplomatic] note demanded that China immediately cease and prevent the re-occurrence of activities that violate Vietnam’s sovereign right…] (Appendix 7.4.1.1.) or “Vietnam demands that the Chinese side immediately stop and not to repeat actions that violate Vietnam’s sovereignty…” (Appendix 7.4.1.2) or “Vietnam strongly opposed China’s acts on June 9 in harassing a ship conducting seismic surveys in Vietnam’s territorial waters in the East Sea and asked the Chinese side to stop repeating violations”.

These verbs carry a hidden, presupposed meaning that China and more specifically Chinese ships had violated Vietnam’s sovereignty by trespassing its waters and cutting the cables of Vietnamese survey ships. These verbs play a role in the negative presentation of China as a violator with a violating action still going on or likely to repeat. A similar presupposition that helped enhance the negative characterization of China as a regional peace-breaker was embedded in a “calling” from the Vietnamese side: “…the VBF [Vietnam Bar Federation] asked the Chinese side not to make the East Sea situation more complicated by threatening to use forces or using forces…” (Appendix 7.4.2.10). This sentence is composed of a hidden presumption that China was destabilizing the East Sea situation by threatening to use forces.

Negative China-representation was also reflected through the lexicalization of China’s actions. They were described as “systematic acts” (Appendix 7.4.2.9), “serious and repeated violations” (Appendix 7.4.2.11), “extremely perverse action” (Appendix 7.4.2.2) and even “invasive actions”. The connoted meanings embedded in these adjectives enhanced the negative characterization of China as a scheming actor that intentionally committed violations not only once but many times with an attempt of “intentionally misleading public opinion” (Appendix 7.4.2.3).
While all the analyzed articles have a tendency to comment and evaluate the nature of the action committed by the Chinese boat, foreign-sourced article in Appendix 7.4.1.4 directly pointed the finger at China and generalized and qualified it as bullying and aggressive. “China will always try to bully the Philippines and other countries in the Southeast Asian region…” and “China is aggressively pursuing large-scale maritime projects aimed at cementing its claim on the Spratlys” (Appendix 7.4.1.4). The word “bully”, which represents a more explicit and indiscreet dehumanization of the other side, was not popularly used in the CDA stories but only appear in a few number of articles taken from foreign sources. In this case, the article was taken from the Filipino newspapers of Philstar and Inquirer.

The tactful negative China-presentation was also implemented at the sentence level by a strategy defined by Bell & Garrett (1998: p.39) as semantic moves. Using this strategy, a reporter might deliver two different and even opposite propositions within a sentence such as:

In response to journalists’ questions about Chinese leaders’ repeated proclamations that “China advocates peaceful solutions to disputes” and that “it is powerful but not hegemonic,” Nga said “We hope that China will fulfill its role as a power and strictly follow what Chinese leaders have declared.” (Appendix 7.4.1.2)

The first clause of this sentence lays out a seemingly positive idea of China when reminding the audience of China’s repeated vow to support peaceful solutions to conflicts and not to use its power control over other nations. However, the second clause carries an embedded negative implication that China so far fails to “fulfill its role as a power” and not yet follows what it declared or might have followed but not strictly enough. It also hints that China’s actions have so far gone against its proclamations to advocate peaceful solutions and not use hegemonic power over other countries. That is why the Vietnamese Foreign Spokesperson (Nga) had to express a hope (or indeed produce a calling) that China will do as it had promised.

Another semantic move that was observed in the CDA articles was the combination of the leading clause before a direct quotation. The content of the quote must be kept intact, but the writer’s subjective opinion might be hidden in the introductory clause before the quote such as:
“Regarding the acts of Chinese marine surveillance vessels which on May 26 cut exploration cables of the Binh Minh 02 ship of the Vietnam National Oil and Gas Group when the ship was conducting seismic surveys on the continental shelf of Vietnam, the US spokesperson said: …” (Appendix 7.4.2.4)

This article was taken from an American newspaper and the main quotations in it must have been kept intact due to legal and ethical reasons. In the above-mentioned case, the write could have used a simple introductory phrase such as the US spokesperson stated that or suggested that. However, the journalist used an introductory clause which consisted of a long sentence stating a reality through the Vietnamese government’s lenses, resulting in a desired ambiguity that the US might have shared the same view with the Vietnamese leaders that the Chinese boat did cut the cables of a Vietnam’s ship within the country’s sea territory. This accusation made by the Vietnamese authorities gained a greater legitimacy when being located as a reality to which the US voiced their official stance. The introductory clause conveys an embedded presupposition that the US – as a third party to this clash between China and Vietnam – agreed that the Chinese boat was to blame.

In terms of sentence construction, the observed dominant structure was the active construction in which verbs were mostly used in active form in order to highlight China – the actor/agent of the violation acts. Passivised verbs were rarely used and if they were used, the active agents were always presented following preposition by.

Numerous examples can be found, from detailed description of the clashes concerning boats from two sides such as: “a Chinese fishing boat... deliberately hit the survey cables of Viking II...” (Appendix 7.4.2.10); “three Chinese marine surveillance vessels hindered the normal operations... and threatened the Binh Minh 02 ship...” (Appendix 7.4.2.2.); etc. to general accusations including: “China is intentionally misleading the public opinion...” (Appendix 7.4.2.3); “China’s actions seriously violated Vietnam’s sovereignty right...” (Appendix 7.4.2.1); “China’s attempt to materialize this claim is in fact increasing tension in the region” (Appendix 7.4.1.2), “the Chinese ships violated the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Sea...” (Appendix 7.4.1.9).

The transitivity choice bears important and uncomfortable political implications for China because it does not attempt to remove the agents of violation acts, but instead highlights the active agents and the affected subjects as well.
If passive voice was used elsewhere in the articles, the agent or main actor of the actions were always mentioned exactly as they were such as: “this is the second incident caused by Chinese ships…”; “these are intentional and systematic acts by China to materialize its claim in the East Sea” (Appendix 7.4.1.10); “a Chinese fishing boat supported by two Chinese fishery administration vessels deliberately hit the survey cables” (Appendix 7.4.1.11).

By using the passive voice but not deleting the agent, the reporter avoided all senses of ambiguity and gained high degree of precision in reporting, which is highly needed in this complex situation. The reality would have been changed if the reporter wrote the attack boat was only “a Chinese fishing boat” without adding it was escorted by China’s official fishery administration boats. This indicates that the cable-cutting action was not done coincidentally by an individual fishing boat out of private dispute but it was given the green light from a Chinese authoritative agency.

In terms of rhetorical tropes, the CDA articles were found to repeatedly use the verb “materialize” in describing the nature of China’s actions regarding the South China Sea disputes. This is a neologism which was defined as “a recently created (or coined) word, or an existing word or phrase that has been assigned a new meaning” (Richardson, 2007: p.69).

Neologism is one of the five rhetorical tropes characterized by Richardson (2007: p.64-65) as an art of choosing words and use them to both denote and connote something apart from their ordinary meaning. And in this case, it carries a negative connotation, implying China’s attempt to seize the largest share of the South China Sea. The word was used many times in the CDA articles.

The surveyed media describe the actions of Chinese fishing boats intruding into Vietnam’s waters and cutting cables of Vietnam’s oil exploration ships twice:

“These are intentional and systematic acts by China to materialize its claim in the East Sea” (Appendix 7.4.1.11); “China’s systematic action is aimed at turning the undisputed area into an area under dispute in order to materialize China’s nine-dotted line claim in the East Sea” (Appendix 7.4.1.9). The Vietnamese online media accused that “China’s attempt to materialize this claim is in fact increasing tension in the region” (Appendices 7.4.2.3 and 7.4.1.2) and “caused East Sea disputes to become more strained” (Appendix 7.4.1.9). Ambiguities stemming from the word materialize were later eased off when the
neologism was explained as to “…carry out its ambition to make China’s nine-dash line claim a reality” (Appendix 7.4.2.9).

The neologism materialize carries with it a negative connotation⁴, giving a general characterization of China’s actions as bad and undesirable, especially when it was combined with the guilt of destabilizing the East Sea and increasing tension in the region. This new word and guilt allocation strategy contribute to the negative presentation of China.

4.2.2. China – an international law violator and regional peace-breaker

Instead of using emotional, derogatory language to dehumanize the other, the Vietnamese online media used the UN Charter, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as a legal foundation and the Declaration of the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (DOC) as a non-binding foundation to expose China’s actions.

China’s position as one of the six permanent standing members of the UN obliges it to conform to the UN convention. China also signed the DOC with the ASEAN in 2002, which means that it has vowed to “undertake to resolve their territorial and jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means, without resorting to the threat or use of force, through friendly consultations and negotiations by sovereign states directly concerned, in accordance with universally recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea”¹

Therefore, the surveyed media depended on these two international and regional documents to qualify China’s actions as invasive, violating not only Vietnam’s sovereignty as stipulated in the UNCLOS but also going against the UN. These arguments were massively found in the CDA stories for example:

“China’s actions seriously violated the United Nations Charter (Article 2 of Clause 3 and Article 2 of Clause 4 and the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea signed in 1982)” (Appendix 7.4.1.7);

This legal foundation was used as an evidence for China’s violations against Vietnam’s sovereignty. Guilt was also allocated to China for destabilizing the region. Combined together, the legal evidence and guilt allocation strategy produced a negative characterization of China:
“Based on the UN charter, the 1982 UNCLOS, the DoC between governments of ASEAN countries and China, China’s above-mentioned acts seriously violated Vietnam’s rights to sovereignty and jurisdiction over its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone, making the East Sea situation to continue to be tense” (Appendix 7.4.1.11)

In another article, the local journalist used the semantic move strategy to intentionally increase the seriousness of China’s actions, highlighting that it not only violated the sovereign right of a single country, but also challenged the UN, the single largest legitimate international institution1 “…while China’s action violated Vietnam’s sovereign right to its continental shelf, it also went against the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea…China’s action had violated the spirit of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea, signed between ASEAN and China in 2002…” (Appendix 7.4.1.1)

It is noticeable that the writer mistakenly used the while-clause, which is normally used in the contrastive sense, to compare two similar acts: by nature, China’s action violated both Vietnam’s sovereign right and the UN Convention. However, this “Viet-Eng-lish” expression carries an implicit opinion that it is wrong for China to violate Vietnam’s sovereignty, but it is even worse for China to defy the UN. This is based on the general evaluative belief that defying the UN “would normally be a negative act” and should be criticized (Bell and Garrett, 1998: p.51). This not only provides further evidence for China’s violations but it also ties in with the implicitly-expressed characterization of China as a perverse bully neighbor.

The anti-China arguments that use the UN Charter, UNCLOS and the DOC as legal basis evidence were also repeated in other CDA articles (Appendices 7.4.2.5; 7.4.2.6; 7.4.2.7; 7.4.2.8; 7.4.2.9; 7.4.2.10; etc.). However, those legal documents were also mentioned in a more persuasive messages sent to China when the heat over the two clashes subsided and/or the two countries were having bilateral dialogues or attending regional meetings. This change in tone of the media when reporting the same reality is discussed in the sub-chapter 4.2.4. where Vietnam’s political positions and mediated public diplomacy messages are discussed.

4.2.3. China and its two-faced, scheming manner

Without having to use concrete, derogatory, dehumanizing words, the surveyed media still deliver a negative characterization of China as devious and deceitful by showing the conflicts
between *what* China has promised and *their actions* in reality. The contradiction and inconsistency between what China says and does was best illustrated by the semantic move strategy, in which the *while* clause that states China’s vows was formulated with positives words yet the *main* clause carries a negative opinion about its action in reality:

“*while China calls for solving relevant disputes through peaceful measures; its own action is making the situation in the East Sea more complicated*” (Appendices 7.4.1.2; 7.4.1.3; 7.4.2.3;) This sentence is composed of two clauses: the *while* clause expresses a proposition of China’s position over dealing with disputes through peaceful measures, which provides a quite positive China-presentation. Yet, the *main* clause, which carries the *main* proposition of the whole sentence, provides a critical, accusatory comment about China’s action. The negative characterization of China as two-faced and shifty was enhanced by this contrasts: opposing their negative actions with their own positive promises.

Negative innuendos against China were also embedded in the seemingly naive reporting such as someone agreed that China needed to abide by the international law as well as its own commitments: “*They [participants at the Vietnam Fatherland Front Central Committee meeting] agreed that China needed to strictly abide by the 1982 UN Convention… and the DOC as well as recent commitments that China had made*” (Appendix7.4.2.7)

Even though this statement does not deliver an explicit accusatory message, it does give a hint that China has *not yet* abided or might have abided but *not strictly* (violations still happened at times) to the international law and to its own commitments.

The similar semantic move strategy was found in other CDA articles, such as:

“*…the [China’s] action also went against commitments China made in the Declaration on the DOC signed between ASEAN and China in 2002 as well as the common perception of the high-ranking leaders of Vietnam and China*” (Appendices 7.4.2.6; 7.4.2.8; 7.4.2.3)

It is rather presuppositional to mention the commitments of China and the common perception of the two countries’ leaders without clarifying what they really are. But in general sense, a message that China had not done or had broken what it promised was delivered implicitly through this sentence structure.
In other articles, the common perception was explained still in an accusatory tone: China’s action] … goes against the common perception of senior leaders of the two countries “on maintaining peace and stability in the East Sea…” (Appendix 7.4.2.9); “…on preventing further complication of the situation in the East Sea” (Appendix 7.4.1.1)

Another semantic move strategy observed from the CDA articles was:

“In response to journalists’ questions about Chinese leaders’ repeated proclamations that ‘China advocates peaceful solutions to disputes’ and that ‘It is powerful but not hegemonic,’ Nga said ‘We hope that China will fulfill its role as a power and strictly follow what Chinese leaders have declared.’” (Appendices 7.4.1.2; 7.4.2.3; )

Negative opinions about China were hidden in the main clause. Given the earlier accusation that a Chinese boat trespassed Vietnamese waters and damaged the survey cable of a Vietnamese vessel, the Vietnamese spokesperson’s wish for China to honor their promises present a mild implication of China’s duplicity and deceit. They repeatedly claim that they support peaceful solutions and not to act as a hegemonic power, but China so far has failed to keep their promises. If it had not been true, a wish for China to keep their words would have not been told.

4.2.4. Vietnam – a tolerant victim and loyal friend of China

In the CDA samples, Vietnam was presented as a victim party whose sovereign right was violated by China. However, the surveyed media did not portray Vietnam with victimizing language, even at the high time when two clashes happened. Instead, the image of Vietnam was positively formulated using factual statements regarding its commitments to the international law, its respect to peaceful solutions to disputes and its willingness to protect regional peace. All of these self-positive statements were intentionally placed in comparison with China’s violations and disrespect to international laws and commitments it had made.

Self-positive presentation of Vietnam was done by opposing Vietnam’s self-declared commitments to international laws and regional documents with China’s acts of violations against them. The following statements that positively presented Vietnam to the world was preceded or followed by direct accusation of China that they “intentionally misleading the
public opinion” and broke their “repeated proclamations” regarding peaceful measures to solve conflicts:

“Vietnam always adheres to the common perception of the countries’ high-ranking leaders on addressing all disputes through peaceful measures…” (Appendices 7.4.2.3; 7.4.1.2)

After using international laws and regional documents to show that China’s action was wrong, Vietnam made a resolute call for China to “immediately stop and prevent reoccurrence” of the violation acts. Negative presentation of China was shown in the survey media in a tactful, implicit manner by the rhetorical tropes of metonymy, euphemism, semantic move strategies and lexical choice (as presented in the previous results of the CDA analysis).

Hyperbole, which is an “excessive exaggeration made for rhetorical effect” (Richardson, 2007: p. 65), might have been used, for example to discredit China as a growing threat to regional security. Yet, it was avoided. The only evaluative comment that might come close to describing China as a threat is the one that suggests its action “is making the situation in the East Sea more complicated” (Appendices 7.4.1.2; 7.4.1.3 and 7.4.2.3).

When it comes to narration, the majority of the CDA samples show a repeated sequence of events and statements: Vietnam condemns the actions of Chinese vessels for trespassing its waters or China’s acts of violation was presented → legal evidence to back up the accusation was presented (the UN Charter, UNCLOS and the DOC) → Vietnam’s opposition against China was reiterated and request for China to stop the acts → Vietnam and/or its relevant agencies expressed a wish to promote friendship and cooperation with China (Appendices 7.4.2.10; 7.4.2.8; 7.4.2.6; 7.4.1.8; 7.4.1.7, etc.).

The message that Vietnam wants to maintain and promote friendship with China as well as to cooperate with China to promote peace and stability in the region was reiterated in most of the CDA articles, except for those reporting on the clashes when they just occurred (Appendices 7.4.1.1; 7.4.1.2; 7.4.2.1; 7.4.2.2; 7.4.2.3).

As the accuser, Vietnam would not have needed to offer such a pacifying and assuaging message to China. However, it is this message that maintains the balance of the overall macro-structural organization of propositions in CDA samples, so that the topicalization of the stories did not appear too hostile, antagonistic or confrontational. It might result in
different interpretations of Vietnam – either both a tolerant victim and a noble friend of China that truly wants to make peace or a weaker party which tries to balance their messages out between opposition and reverence for China.

When the heat of the first clash receded and a chance for bilateral talks between Vietnam and China came, the surveyed media also toned down their opposition and slanted towards conciliatory and cooperative tendency.

Reporting on a meeting between the Vietnamese Defence Minister and his Chinese counterpart on June 4, after the first cable-cutting incident, the story in Appendix 7.4.1.6 was written in a friendly and diplomatic. It started by citing Chinese Defense Minister as saying that “China is willing to discuss the East Sea conflict at multilateral forums.” In response to China’s positive move, the article continued with the confirmation by the Vietnamese Defence Minister that Vietnam and its people “attach importance to the friendship and multifaceted cooperation with China.” (Appendix 7.4.1.6)

Then, the acts of violation committed by Chinese vessels that were criticized earlier in the surveyed media were turned into “regrettable incidents happen out of expectation of the both sides” (Appendix 7.4.1.6) or “unexpected incidents” (Appendix 7.4.2.5) as the Vietnamese Defense Minister said. These ambiguous nouns manifest a clear removal of Vietnam’s earlier accusations and blames against China. They show Vietnam’s shift in its political stance on this matter: the cable-cutting incident was no longer considered “intentional”. It was turned into an unexpected accident for both sides now.

By twisting the nature of the event, the polarization between in-group and out-group, between Vietnam and China was also removed. The former accuser– Vietnam and the accused – China are now in the same boat with a common task: solving their common problem which is “sovereignty dispute in the East Sea” (Appendix 7.4.1.6). Imperative syntactical structure using the commanding word “demand” was replaced by a soft tone of suggestion:

“The Vietnamese Defence Minister proposed that lower-ranking agencies of the two countries strictly adhere to the commitments of their leaders, stressing that the two sides need to keep calm and settle the issue peacefully through dialogues based on international laws...” (Appendix 7.4.2.5)

“Thank asked that the two countries’ armies keep calm and restrain themselves to prevent conflicts and set an example in implementing the two countries’ leaders’
commitments of becoming good comrades, good neighbors, good friends, good friends and good partners” (Appendix 7.4.2.5).

It is worth noticing that a suggestion offered was aimed at both Vietnam and China. It can be considered as unification as an opposite to polarization of the in-groups and out-groups. Instead of saying you have to respect the commitments, you need to keep calm and prevent conflicts, etc.; the surveyed media tactfully treated all these as the common tasks of ours – Vietnam and China.

The initiative of Vietnam, as a former accuser, to unify itself with the accused – China in taking the shared responsibility in order to avoid the occurrence of violent clashes committed by China appears to be the best way of reconciliation, which keeps face for both sides.

4.2.5. Vietnam – firm position but flexible language

The hard-line, non-negotiable position of the Vietnamese government on the two Chinese attacks was reflected at the first level of lexical choice. Strong adverbs were used frequently in the juxtaposition with intransitive verbs to express Vietnam’s opposition, such as:

Vietnam “strongly protested China for intentionally distorting the truth” (Appendix 7.4.1.10); “strongly opposed” (Appendix 7.4.1.8); “resolutely opposes” and “staunchly opposed” (Appendices 7.4.1.1; 7.4.1.2; 7.4.1.3)

Vietnam maintains its stance that the area where the clashes occurred is “neither a disputed area nor an area ‘managed by China’” (Appendices 7.4.1.2; 7.4.1.3; 7.4.2.3; …). This claim was preceded by a sequence of supporting law documents (the UNCLOS and DOC) that stipulate ways to determine each country’s exclusive economic zone and continental shelf and oblige concerned parties to adopt peaceful measures when dealing with sea disputes. The Vietnamese online media mostly based on the UN Convention and the DOC to criticize the violation acts of China. Vietnam’s assertion that the attacked ship was operating within Vietnam’s sovereign sea when its cable was cut by a Chinese boat was followed by a direct accusatory comment: “China is intentionally misleading the public opinion into thinking it is a disputed area.” (Appendices 7.4.2.3; 7.4.1.2; 7.4.1.3).
Another lexical choice that shows Vietnam’s resolute opposition in the South China Sea was that the way media name the sea. While the sea area in dispute is called the South China Sea in general, Vietnam calls it the East Sea.

No derogatory terms or dehumanizing language were used but the above evaluative sentence sent a clear note of the lying, scheming and deceitful nature of China. The negative characterization of China was further enhanced by a seemingly factual statement which in fact contains negative evaluation:

“China’s systematic action is aimed at turning the undisputed area into an area under dispute in order to materialize China’s nine-dotted line claim in the East Sea. This is unacceptable,” (Appendix 7.4.1.9); “China’s nine-dotted line or U-shaped line in the East Sea is completely groundless and runs counter to the 1982 UNCLOS of which China is a member” (Appendix 7.4.2.3). Vietnam maintained its resolute stance that its boat was intentionally damaged by a Chinese boat when legitimately operating within Vietnam’s waters.

The firm position of the Vietnamese government was also reflected through the repetition of imperative sentences used in the online media: “Vietnam demands the Chinese side to immediately stop all actions violating Vietnam’s sovereignty and jurisdiction and compensate for losses…” (Appendix 7.4.1.9); “Vietnam demands that the Chinese side immediately stop and not to repeat actions that violate…” (Appendix 7.4.1.2); Vietnam “demanded that China immediately cease and prevent the reoccurrence” (Appendices 7.4.1.1); “The federation demanded the Chinese side … to immediately stop and not to repeat any violating actions…” (Appendix 7.4.1.11). The structure with demand as the transitive verb manifests an act of calling for something with authority1 which is made in an urgent or peremptory2 manner.

On the one hand, the surveyed media used adverbs to strengthen the opposition meaning of transitive verbs and different strategies of semantic move to persuade that in these clashes, Vietnam was a victim by China’s violations. They transmitted the protest and firm opposition of Vietnam against China’s actions, thereby unavoidably delivering negative evaluations against China. On the other hand, the rhetorical tropes they used in delivering accusatory messages show Vietnam’s caution and tactfulness.
First of all, metonyms were widely used in the CDA samples, mostly through the forms of association between the actor/ violator and the tool used to conduct acts of violation. In other words, “the user of an object replaced by the object” (Richardson, 2007: 0.68) and in this case, China – the main actor of the violation is replaced by either Chinese marine vessels or its violating action, for example:

The Vietnamese Foreign Ministry “has staunchly opposed the recent action of Chinese marine surveillance vessels”; “had handed over a diplomatic note … in protest against China’s action”; “China’s action violated Vietnam’s sovereign right…” (Appendix 7.4.1.1; 7.4.1.2; 7.4.2.1); “China’s actions seriously violated the UN Charter…” (Appendix 7.4.1.7). Even though metonymy in this case cannot enable the writer to “conjure away responsible, involved or affected actors (whether victims or perpetrators)” (Richardson, 2007: p. 68), it still enables the Vietnamese media to circumvent pointing direct accusatory finger at China or Chinese government even though their involvement in these clashes were clear because the Chinese attack boat were escorted by Chinese marine surveillance vessels. Accusations were implicitly hinted at China and the Chinese government but explicitly speaking, they specifically directed at the action of Chinese vessels which conspired with the Chinese fishing boat to cut the cables, for example: “the Chinese ships violated the 1982 UNCLOS” (Appendix 7.4.1.9); “”

Metonymy, in this case, also helps the surveyed media provide a more detailed, factual narration of who did what to the audience. Instead of accusing that China violated the Vietnamese sovereignty and international laws, the surveyed media massively attributed the guilt and accusation to “the acts” or “China’s actions” such as: “…expressing concerns over recent violations by Chinese ships” (Appendix 7.4.1.11); or “its claim” as in “The claim has violated the exclusive economic zones and continental shelves of a number of countries in the region, including Vietnam…” (Appendix 7.4.2.3). Clearly, the media tried to sway audience’ attention to Vietnam’s opposition against the acts by Chinese vessels in this context of the clashes and its claim, but not against China or Chinese government in general. The evil-doer was still presented not by direct naming but by using euphemistical metonymy.

CDA analysis also found a popularly-used metonymical noun phrase –“the Chinese side” which both manifests the clear polarization between our side and the other side (China) and indicates a certain degree of ambiguity in naming the real bad-doer. This phrase was used in
various situations, including: “Vietnam demands that the Chinese side immediately stop…” (Appendices 7.4.1.2; 7.4.1.9; 7.4.2.3); “the association asked the Chinese side to strictly abide by UNCLOS…” and “the Chinese side should seriously implement commitments prescribed in the DOC…” (Appendix 7.4.1.8); “the federation has enough legal bases to announce that the acts of the Chinese side seriously violated…” (Appendix 7.4.1.11); “Vietnam resolutely opposes the Chinese side’s action that damaged and hindered Vietnam’s normal exploration…” (Appendix 7.4.2.3)

Another evaluative statement that polarizes China and the rest of the world with common knowledge and conscience was picked up in the comment: “There is no common perception that says China has the right to impede Vietnam’s activities in the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf of Vietnam” (Appendices 7.4.1.2; 7.4.2.3). Put in a euphemistically way, this statement is still embedded with an implication that China has gone against the common perception of the lawful world when harassing Vietnamese ships within Vietnam’s territorial waters.

4.2.6. Summary and discussion of the findings

Like other war reporting articles, 22 CDA articles also presented a symmetrical picture of two sides: Vietnam as the accuser and China as the accused. The negative China presentation and positive self-presentation of Vietnam was not clearly seen through the use of victimizing, dehumanizing and emotionalizing language, but through implications and presuppositions hidden in the sentences. The implied negative opinions about China were found as follow:

- China is a perverse bully neighbor
- China is an international law violator and regional peace breaker
- China has a two-faced, devious manner in handling relations with other claimant countries
- Vietnam mildly presented itself as a tolerant victim and a noble friend of China, who swallowed its pride and bitterness of having its sovereignty violated and ships damaged by China to offer China a pacifying message of making peace.
- Vietnam remains tough and non-negotiable on sovereignty issues but adopts flexible, diplomatic and reconciliatory language not to make enemy scene with China
These are the findings for the research question: What are the mediated public diplomacy messages formulated and dispersed by the Vietnamese online media about China and Vietnam as the two opponents in the clashes?

The afore-mentioned negative presentation of China was observed through the lexical choice, the semantic move strategies, the rhetorical tropes of euphemism, metonymy and neologism, and the narrative of the CDA stories.

Victimizing and dehumanizing language was not used to describe the accused. Negative opinions were formulated and pointed at China’s actions and actions of Chinese vessels. That is why the surveyed articles used transitive verbs that connote the continuity of China’s violation acts and give presuppositions that China’s violations occurred and reoccurred several times, for example “cease”, “stop”, “not to repeat”. Adjectives with negative denotations and connotations were used mostly to modify the nouns describing the actions of Chinese attack boats, not China as a state or a government, such as: “systematic acts”, “serious and repeated actions”, “extremely perverse actions”, “invasive actions”, etc. Explicit evil-naming verb “bully” was only found one time in the foreign-wired story.

The findings explain the 2nd CDA question regarding how the surveyed media deliver these mediated public diplomacy messages.

Instead of using emotional, derogatory language to dehumanize the other, the Vietnamese online media used international documents such as the UN Charter, the UNCLOS as a legal foundation and the DOC as a non-binding foundation to expose China’s actions. By reiterating that China’s actions (not China because China might respect other aspects of the cited legal documents) violated international laws and regional agreement, the surveyed media maintains a certain level of precision and accuracy and avoids direct provocation against the Chinese government at the same time. However, the negative opinions of China who defied international laws were still transmitted.

The semantic move strategy which allows clauses within a sentence to express different, even opposite propositions was widely adopted in the CDA samples. The strategy facilitates the opposition of what China promises and what they do in reality, thereby contributing to the negative presentation of China as two-faced, deceitful partner in the South China Sea conflict because they broke their promises not to use violent measures.
Vietnam portrayed itself as a law-biding country by opposing its commitments to international laws and regional documents with China’s acts of violations against these laws. Negative presentation of China was shown in the survey media in a tactful, implicit manner by the rhetorical tropes of metonymy (the media replaced China with China’s actions or China’s boats when it comes to direct accusations), semantic move strategies and lexical choice. Hyperbole might have been used, for example to discredit China as a growing threat to regional security, yet it was not. Instead, China was portrayed as a trouble-maker, threatening peace in the region, which was implicitly expressed through the only evaluative comment that its action “is making the situation in the East Sea more complicated.”

Vietnam online media also tried to balance their protest messages against China so that they would not sound too harsh and hostile. That was why the pacifying message that Vietnam always respects and wants to maintain friendship with China repeatedly appeared on the CDA samples. Also, Vietnam – as an accuser made an initiative to unify itself with the accused when suggesting that they will together with China keep calm and cooperate for the peaceful solution of the South China Sea disputes.

Altogether, Vietnam maintains it firm position that China’s actions violated Vietnam’s sovereignty and Vietnam has the right to demand China to stop their violations. However, the media used flexible, reconciliatory language to assuage and persuade China to cooperate and not use violence in solving sea disputes.

In short, the Vietnamese online media tactfully crafted messages to persuade foreign publics that China violated Vietnamese sovereign rights, which are justified by the UNCLOS, attacked Vietnamese boats; that Vietnam will resolutely keeps its stand, not giving her sovereign; and that Vietnam is tolerant and forgiving enough to pacify and persuade China to sit down for negotiation to resolve the conflict.

### 4.3. Conclusion

The Vietnamese online media examined within this study adopted war journalism as the main frame during the seven months, from May 1st to November 30th, 2011, to cover the sea sovereign dispute issue relating to China. The two most prominent events were the two attacks against Vietnamese oil exploration vessels, in which China was the accused.
The content analysis also shows that English news stories are more inclined towards war journalism than peace journalism frame but finds no association between the levels of state management of the newspapers and their framing distributions.

The content analysis also points out the steady upward movement trend of peace journalism across three time slots of the study, and the fluctuations of war journalism: gradually increasing in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} phase before dropping dramatically in the 3\textsuperscript{rd} phase.

The CDA conducted intensively on a small sample of only 22 articles, specifically covering the two clashes. It shows the media’s negative presentation of China as a sovereign violator, international law violator and peace breaker with a two-faced, scheming manner, whereas Vietnam was portrayed as a tolerant victim and a noble friend, always willing to maintain peace and friendship with China. Notably, these messages were implicitly crafted and delivered in a subtle manner so that the stories do not sound too blunt and provocative but rather assuaging and reconciliatory./.
5. CONCLUSION

The study is inspired from an overarching hypothesis of a possible convergence between peace journalism and public diplomacy as relevant theories have it that they are basically identical in one sense: both representing a form of message which carries the note of peace-rebuilding, solution-orientated and mutual understanding in the war/conflict context. That message is delivered through media to reach out the foreign publics, not only to gain benefits for national interests but also to point out a solution for peace and offer an opportunity to conflict-resolution talks.

The study examines Vietnamese online media’s framing of sea dispute between Vietnam and China, with the spotlight on the two attacks allegedly attributed to latter. Therefore, it also uses the world system theory to further consolidate the hypothesis by justifying Vietnam’s subordination to China in a periphery-core relationship. This also suggests Vietnam’s media possible tendency towards peace journalism framing.

Two research techniques were employed: content analysis to find out the dominant frame of the Vietnamese online media when covering the two clashes between Vietnamese and Chinese ships; and CDA to further examine what messages the media aspire to send to foreign publics and how these messages are crafted.

Findings from the two analyses, rejects the main hypothesis, showing that the Vietnamese online media still opted for the war journalism frame even though theoretical and empirical evidence confirms Vietnam’s soft, assuaging and non-provocative approach in its public diplomacy with China. However, they also confirm the value and applicability of the theories selected and findings from previous studies. The following part is devoted to discussion of the study results in relations with theories and previous research.

5.1. Further discussion of findings

The findings can be summarized in a sequence corresponding to the research questions as follow:

- The dominant frame in the four surveyed newspapers during the whole three time slots is war journalism, followed by peace journalism and neutral frames. Though rising in the 3rd phase (five months after the two clashes) as the dominant frame, peace journalism frame
could not have a landslide proportion of more than 50% as war journalism did (over 70%) in the 1st and 2nd phase.

This result resonates a finding in previous studies that media is not likely to stand neutral, especially when the country where it operates is involved as a warring-side.

- The three most salient indicators representative to war journalism frame include: *elite-orientated, two-party orientation and partisan*. Meanwhile, the three mostly-shared features of peace journalism included *avoid using victimizing, demonizing and emotive language, agreement and/or negotiation orientated and multi-party orientation*.

The first part of this finding is consistent with previous research’s confirmation that the media are used as a tool to reproduce and propagate the dominant policy of the political elite; and that it is not likely that media of a country in conflict remain objective and neutral in their reportage.

The second part of this finding shows a similarity with previous media studies which state that peace journalism found is actually of “a less interventionist nature” and does not go beyond fact-reporting because of its reliance on such indicators as avoidance of demonizing language, multi-party orientation. However, content analysis on 340 stories in Vietnamese online media showed a dominant focus on *agreement and/or negotiation orientation*. This is one of the important features of public diplomacy to “advance negotiation” (Gilboa, 2002) and to “build mutual understanding” (McPhail, 2010).

- News stories written in English were found to be more inclined towards war journalism frame than those written in Vietnamese. This finding is consistent with the result in previous studies that English language stories are more likely to be framed as war journalism than peace journalism. It is also consistent with the Vietnamese government’s wish to contain the domestic anger and nationalism to an acceptable level that is not detrimental to its diplomatic relations with China as mentioned in Thayer (2010).

- Combined together, stories from all four online newspapers show that the number of stories framed as war journalism gradually increase from the 1st to the 2nd phase and significantly drop in the 3rd phase. It is supported by previous studies which maintain the shift in media framing towards peace or war might result from the political change due to a new positive or negative development concerning two warring sides in the conflict.
Peace journalism frame, on the contrary, has a steady upward movement throughout 3 divided time slots. Even during the peak time of conflict between the two clashes, the surveyed media still see a slight increase in the number of peace journalism stories. This finding partly contributes to confirm the convergence of media coverage and Vietnam’s foreign policy towards China. It is also in consistent with the world system theory and previous studies that suggests Vietnam’s relative subordination as a periphery country to China as a core country.

- When examined separately, all four newspapers show steady increases in the number of stories framed as peace journalism and decreases of war journalism stories from the 2nd to 3rd phases.

Notably, two newspapers that differ most significantly in their distribution of war/peace journalism frames are the two Vietnamnet newspapers. Their differences can be summarized as follow:

Vietnamese Vietnamnet newspaper experiences large fluctuations in the distributions of war/peace journalism frames: a biggest rise of peace journalism frame and sharpest plunge of war journalism frame from the 2nd to the 3rd phase compared to other three newspapers. By contrast, English Vietnamnet newspaper sees the smallest rise in peace journalism and the most marginal decrease in war journalism stories compared to other newspapers.

- CDA analysis finds the negative China presentation and positive self-presentation of Vietnam was done in a tactful, implicit fashion. It cannot be clearly seen through the use of victimizing, dehumanizing and emotionalizing language, but through implications and presuppositions hidden in the sentences. The implied messages crafted by the surveyed media include:
  - China is a perverse bully neighbor
  - China is an international law violator and regional peace breaker
  - China has a two-faced, devious manner in handling relations with other claimant countries
  - Vietnam mildly presented itself as a tolerant victim and a noble friend of China, who swallowed its pride and bitterness of having its sovereignty violated and ships damaged by China to offer China a pacifying message of making peace.
- Vietnam remains tough and non-negotiable on sovereignty issues but adopts flexible, diplomatic and reconciliatory language not to make enemy scene with China.

Results from the CDA analysis is very much consistent with public diplomacy theory in a sense that media are used as a communicative channel for governments to reach out to foreign publics and persuade them to accept their foreign policy as well as their positive images. Besides, they are used to form the picture a government in conflict wants the world and the public in the other side to perceive and counter every wrong impressions possibly created by the other side.

The findings also reaffirm the Vietnamese online media’s orientation towards portraying the government’s public diplomacy or foreign policy towards China. As a periphery nation, Vietnam still shows a certain level of subordination to the core country China in the ways its media avoid direct, explicit negative descriptions of China.

However, the findings reject a hypothesis of a convergence of public diplomacy and peace journalism. Vietnam’s reverence foreign policy towards China and the corresponding respectful, reconciliatory fashion of its public diplomacy towards China do not necessarily result in the dominance of peace journalism stories in its online media.

All the above findings partly answer Sheafer & Shenhav’s (2009) question about how a nation’s media shape messages to both manifest national sentiments while still complying with its government’s interests and not repelling foreign publics. The answer is avoidance of war-provocative, demonizing language in portraying the other side while using hints and implications to report actions of the other side which are deemed unfair and detrimental to our side’s interests.

5.2. Contribution of the study to media theory in Vietnam context

Using peace journalism, public diplomacy and world system theories as a core theoretical framework, the study contributes to the initiation of a new media theory that is not only unique to Vietnam, but also applicable to other countries that have similar state structures, media system and subordinate position as a periphery nation in dealing with other countries from the core group of nations.
The formulation of the new theory, possibly regarding mediated peace journalism model in peripheral nations in Asia, will take into consideration culture, language and public diplomacy. The theory is expected to be developed further to touch on other issues including the conditions for new peace journalism, the media presentation of new peace journalism, ethics issues related, etc.

5.3. Relations of the study to global journalism concept

Results of the study proved that there is not enough evidence to establish the convergence of peace journalism and public diplomacy or in other words, the existence of public diplomacy does not necessarily result in media’s tendency towards peace journalism frame. However, the study shows that they do have relations in a sense that a nation’s public diplomacy (at least in the case of Vietnam) leads to the dominance of peace journalism indicators in its media presentation of a conflict it involves.

These results are deemed applicable to other countries in the world whose state structures and media systems bear some similarities with Vietnam’s.

These results also inspire the formulation of a new media theory about peace journalism adopted in Asian peripheral nations which takes into consideration characteristics of their public diplomacy, culture and politics into consideration.

The study, in conclusion, is very much related to the concept of global journalism from its aim to its results. It deals with global theories of peace Journalism, public diplomacy and world system. It also touches on the empirical findings about agenda-setting and propagandistic nature of media, which are then applicable to media in all state structures and at almost all times around. Results of study are not limited to the case of Vietnam and China only, but they serve as a platform for a new theory as mentioned in the afore-mentioned section.
5.4. Suggestion for further studies

The two research techniques help find all answers to the study’s research questions, confirms the validity of the world system theory and public diplomacy theory as well as their applicability in media research in the war reporting area in Asia.

The finding that public diplomacy might not be influential enough to induce media’s inclination towards peace journalism framing might serve as a departure point for a study on applying characteristics of public diplomacy (such as persuasive, building trust and mutual understanding, pacifying to engage the other side into negotiation, etc.) in revising the indicators of peace journalism. It is agreed that peace journalism is not about reporting what is seen but what can be seen. Yet, the final decision to make war or peace lies not in the hand of the public but more likely in the hand of the ruling elites.

Another possible ground for future studies is about how to enforce the persuasiveness of a nation’s public diplomacy through the media channel. The study can employ Galtung’s (1986, 2002) peace journalism vs. war journalism model as well as Lynch & McGoldrick’s (2005) 17-point plan to answer what the media should do to best present one country’s diplomacy to foreign publics. In addition, the study might have to consider including interviewing technique to get the opinions of public diplomacy actors/designers as well as the publics to see how effective those measures, developed from peace journalism theory can be.

In short, the study lays a platform for future studies on the reciprocal influences between public diplomacy and peace journalism. These future studies are expected to further improve the two theories in the context of media research.
6. BIBLIOGRAPHY


BIBLIOGRAPHY


- Veray, L. 2010. 1914–1918, the first media war of the twentieth century: The example of French newsreels. Film History, 22, pp. 408-425.


7. APPENDICES

7.1. Appendix 1: Galtung’s (2002) model of peace journalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PEACE/CONFLICT JOURNALISM</th>
<th>WAR/VIOLENCE JOURNALISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Peace/conflict-orientated</strong></td>
<td><strong>1. War/violence-orientated</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• explore conflict <em>formation</em>, <em>x</em> parties, <em>y</em> goals, <em>z</em> issues, general ‘win,win’ orientation</td>
<td>• focus on conflict arena, 2 parties, 1 goal (win), war general zero-sum orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• open space, open time, causes and outcomes anywhere, also in history/culture</td>
<td>• closed space, closed time, causes and exists in arena, who threw the first stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• making conflicts transparent</td>
<td>• making wars opaque/ secret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• giving voice to all parties; empathy and understanding</td>
<td>• ‘us-them’ journalism, propaganda, voice, for us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• see conflict/ war as a problem, focus on conflict creativity</td>
<td>• see ‘them’ as the problem, focus on who prevails in war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• humanization of all sides; more so the worse the weapon</td>
<td>• dehumanization of ‘them’, more so the worse the weapon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• proactive: preventive before any violence/ war occurs</td>
<td>• reactive: waiting for violence before reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• focus on invisible effects of violence (trauma and glory, damage to structure/culture)</td>
<td>• focus only on visible effects of violence (killed, wounded and material damage)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Truth-orientated</strong></td>
<td><strong>2. Propaganda-orientated</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• expose untruths on all sides</td>
<td>• expose ‘their’ untruths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• uncover all cover-ups</td>
<td>• help ‘our’ cover-ups/ lies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. People-orientated</strong></td>
<td><strong>3. Elite-orientated</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• focus on suffering all over; on women, the aged, children, giving voice to the voiceless</td>
<td>• focus on our suffering; on able-bodied elite males, being their mouth-piece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• give name to all evil-doers</td>
<td>• give name of their evil-doers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• focus on people peacemakers</td>
<td>• focus on elite peace-makers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Solution-orientated</strong></td>
<td><strong>4. Victory-orientated</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• peace = non-violence + creativity</td>
<td>• peace = victory + ceasefire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• highlight peace initiatives, also to prevent more war</td>
<td>• conceal peace initiative, before victory is at hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• focus on structure, culture, the peaceful society</td>
<td>• focus on treaty, institution, the controlled society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• aftermath: resolution, reconstruction, reconciliation</td>
<td>• leaving for another war, return if the old war flares up again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 7.2. Appendix 2: Public, Media and Media-Broker Diplomacy: A Comparative Framework
Gilboa (2000: p.303)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Public Diplomacy</th>
<th>Media Diplomacy</th>
<th>Media-broker Diplomacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
<td>Negotiations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiators</td>
<td>Officials</td>
<td>Officials</td>
<td>Journalists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time frame</td>
<td>Long range</td>
<td>Short range</td>
<td>Immediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>General/ fundamental</td>
<td>Specific</td>
<td>Very specific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method</td>
<td>Promote favorable image</td>
<td>Appeal for conflict resolution</td>
<td>Mediation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sides</td>
<td>One sided</td>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>All sides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Foreign societies</td>
<td>Domestic/ foreign societies</td>
<td>Officials/ public opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Multiple channels</td>
<td>Mass media</td>
<td>Mass media</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 7.3. Appendix 3: Indicators of War Journalism and Peace Journalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WAR JOURNALISM APPROACH</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on visible effects</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Here and now</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-party orientation</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See &quot;them&quot; or China as a problem and/or threat</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partisan</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite-orientated</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference-orientated</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WAR JOURNALISM LANGUAGE</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use victimising/ demonizing/ emotive language</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**                                                                                   | 1014      | 100.0%         |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PEACE JOURNALISM APPROACH</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on invisible effects of violence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causes and consequences</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-party orientation</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See conflict as a problem</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-partisan</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People-orientated</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreement and/or negotiation orientated</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PEACE JOURNALISM LANGUAGE</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avoid using victimising, demonizing and emotive language</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>46.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**                                                                                   | 700       | 100.0%         |
7.4. Articles used in the CDA

7.4.1. Articles from Vietnamnet

7.4.1.1. VN condemns Chinese intrusion 28/05/2011

_VietNamNet Bridge - The Vietnamese Foreign Ministry has staunchly opposed the recent action of Chinese marine surveillance vessels in cutting the exploration cables of a PetroVietnam ship that was conducting seismic surveys at Lot 148 within Viet Nam's continental shelf._

A ministry official confirmed that, while the PetroVietnam ship, Binh Minh 02, was conducting seismic surveys at the lot which falls within the country's 200 nautical mile continental shelf on Thursday, Chinese vessels cut its exploration cables at a location 120 nautical miles from the Dai Lanh cape in the central province of Phu Yen.

The official added that a representative from the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry had handed over a diplomatic note to representatives from the Chinese embassy in Ha Noi in protest against China's action. The note demanded that China immediately cease and prevent the recurrence of activities that violate Viet Nam's sovereign right to its exclusive economic zone and continental shelf. The note also demanded compensation for damage caused.

The diplomatic note stated that, while China's action violated Viet Nam's sovereign right to its continental shelf, it also went against the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The note said that China's action had violated the spirit of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (DOC), signed between ASEAN and China in 2002, and the common perception of the two countries' high-ranking leaders on preventing further complication of the situation in the East Sea.

Viet Nam National Oil and Gas Group (PetroVietnam) Deputy General Director Do Van Hau provided the information on the violation during an interview with the media in Ha Noi yesterday.

According to Hau, in implementing the group's oil and gas exploration and exploitation programme for 2011, the PetroVietnam Technical Service Corporation (PTSC), an affiliate of PetroVietnam, dispatched the seismic survey ship Binh Minh 02 to conduct seismic surveys at Lots 125, 126, 148 and 149, which lie within the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf of Viet Nam.

The Binh Minh 02 had conducted two previous surveys in those areas, the first in 2010 and the second on March 17, 2011, he said, adding that surveys had been conducted smoothly and that the Binh Minh 02 had performed its tasks competently.

At 5:05am on May 26, the Binh Minh 02 picked up a strange vessel moving towards the survey area on its radar. Five minutes later, it detected the approach of another two ships. The three ships were subsequently identified as Chinese marine surveillance vessels that had moved into the survey area without warning.
At 5:58am, the Chinese ships crossed through the survey area, only 120 nautical miles from the Dai Lanh cape in the central province of Phu Yen, an area well inside Vietnamese territorial waters, cutting the Binh Minh 02’s exploration cables.

Hau added that the three Chinese vessels had hindered the operations of the Binh Minh 02 and threatened it by saying that the Binh Minh 02 was violating Chinese sovereignty.

The Binh Minh 02 determinedly rejected the Chinese threats, responding that it was operating inside Vietnamese territorial waters.

The Chinese vessels kept up impeding the Binh Minh 02 until leaving the survey area at 9:00am on May 26.

The Binh Minh 02 had to cease operations on Thursday in order to gather damaged equipment for repair. Under instructions from PetroVietnam and PTSC, the Binh Minh 02 repaired its equipment on the spot and resumed its operations by 6:00am yesterday.

The PetroVietnam leader affirmed that the Chinese vessels had penetrated deep into Viet Nam's territorial waters in order to sabotage and hinder PetroVietnam's exploration activities, calling it an extremely perverse action that violated Viet Nam's sovereign rights.

He said that PetroVietnam had reported the incident and had asked the Vietnamese Government to take the strongest possible measures in demanding that the Chinese immediately cease their invasive actions that have blocked PetroVietnam's operations while assisting the group in carrying out its exploration and exploitation activities.

PetroVietnam affirmed that it would continue to conduct seismic survey activities in the area that they confirm belongs to Viet Nam. The group will work in close co-operation with relevant agencies to ensure the effective and safe operations of the Binh Minh 02 which, in operation since 2008, has carried out a multitude of surveys on Viet Nam's continental shelf.

Source: VNS

7.4.1.2. Vietnam demands China to pay compensation 29/05/2011


VietNamNet Bridge – The Vietnamese Foreign Ministry has staunchly opposed the recent action of Chinese marine surveillance vessels, in cutting the exploration cables of a PetroVietnam ship which was conducting seismic surveys at Lot 148 within Vietnam’s continental shelf.

The China marine surveillance ship coded 84 enters Vietnam territorial waters on May 26, 2011.

In an answer to Vietnam News Agency reporters’ question on the issue on May 27, the ministry official confirmed that while the Binh Minh 02 ship of the Vietnam National Oil and Gas Group (PetroVietnam) was conducting a seismic survey at Lot 148, within the country’s 200 nautical mile continental shelf on May 26, 2011, Chinese boats 12, 17 and 84 cut the Binh Minh 02 ship’s exploration cables at a location 12 degrees 48’25” north latitude and 111
The official said the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry’s representative handed over a diplomatic note to representatives of the Chinese embassy in Hanoi to protest against China’s above action, demanding the country immediately cease and prevent the re-occurrence of its activities violating the sovereignty of Vietnam’s exclusive economic zone and continental shelf, and provide compensation to Vietnam.

The diplomatic note stated that China’s actions seriously violated Vietnam’s sovereignty right to its continental shelf and the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and went against the spirit and content of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (DOC) signed between ASEAN and China in 2002, and the common awareness of the two countries’ senior leaders of preventing further complications over the situation in the East Sea.

Vietnam demands that the Chinese side immediately stop and not to repeat actions that violate Vietnam’s sovereignty and jurisdiction rights over its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone, as well as pay damages for the Vietnamese side.

The statement was made by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson, Nguyen Phuong Nga at a press conference in Hanoi on May 29.

“Vietnam resolutely opposes the Chinese side’s action that damaged and hindered Vietnam’s normal exploration and survey activities on its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone, causing great damages for PetroVietnam,” she stressed.

This action seriously violated Vietnam’s sovereignty and jurisdiction rights over its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone, breaking the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and going against the spirit and words in the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (DOC) signed between ASEAN and China in 2002, as well as the common perception of the high-ranking leaders of Vietnam and China, she added.

Nga also rejected the Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson’s remarks on May 28, that the Vietnamese side’s oil and gas exploration activities in the waters managed by China damaged the country’s interests and management right in “South China Sea”, going against the two countries’ common perception on the “South China Sea” issue and that the action taken by the Chinese governing body is merely a marine supervision and law execution in the China-managed waters.

She explained that the area where Vietnam conducted explorations is entirely within the 200-nautical mile exclusive economic zone and continental shelf of Vietnam as stipulated by the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. This is neither a disputed area nor an area “managed by China”. China is intentionally misleading the public opinion into thinking it is a disputed area.

Nga at the same time stressed that Vietnam always adheres to the common perception of the countries’ high-ranking leaders on addressing all disputes through peaceful measures and avoiding actions that further sophisticate the situation. “There is no common perception that says China has the right to impede Vietnam’s activities in the exclusive economic zone and
continental shelf of Vietnam,” she said, adding that it is China’s action that goes against the common perception of the two countries’ high-ranking leaders.”

The spokesperson also pointed out that while China calls for solving relevant disputes through peaceful measures; its own action is making the situation in the East Sea more complicated.

Asked about China’s nine-dashed line claim in the East Sea, and a series of recent disputes with Vietnam and the Philippines, Deputy Chairman of Vietnam’s National Border Committee, Nguyen Duy Chien said: “China’s nine-dotted line or “U-shaped line” in the East Sea is completely groundless and runs counter to the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, of which China is a member. The claim has violated the exclusive economic zones and continental shelves of a number of countries in the region, including Vietnam, and prompted protests from these countries. China’s attempt to materialize this claim is in fact increasing tension in the region.”

In response to journalists’ questions about Chinese leaders’ repeated proclamations that “China advocates peaceful solutions to disputes” and that “It is powerful but not hegemonic”, Nga said “We hope that China will fulfill its role as a power and strictly follow what Chinese leaders have declared.”

Do Van Hau, Deputy General Director of PetroVietnam, briefed reporters of the incident when PetroVietnam-owned Binh Minh 02 ship was blocked and threatened, as well as had its cables cut by three Chinese marine surveillance vessels while conducting explorations at 12 degrees 48’25” north latitude and 111 degrees 26’48” east longitude, some 116 nautical miles off Dai Lanh cape in the central coastal province of Phu Yen.

Hau emphasized that the sea water where PetroVietnam’s ship was operating is deep inside Vietnam’s continental shelf.

PetroVietnam has conducted seismic surveys in the area for numerous times and Binh Minh ship 02 operation within the sea waters under Vietnam’s sovereignty is quite normal, said the PetroVietnam senior official.

Hau said the Chinese ships’ cutting Vietnamese ship’s cables is a deliberate and well-prepared action.

“It is impossible to cut cables at a depth of 30m under the water without special equipment,” the oil and gas exploration expert explained.

“The incident has caused considerable losses and obstructed operations of PetroVietnam. The Binh Minh 02 ship and logistics ships had to stop working in order to repair the damaged facilities,” Hau said, adding that the Binh Minh 02 ship has so far resumed normal operation after the repair. 

Source: TTXVN

7.4.1.3. China slanders Vietnam of “creating new incidents” 01/06/2011


In a regular news briefing on May 31, Jiang Yu said that Vietnam needs to “refrain from creating new incidents” in the East Sea.

The statement was made after Vietnam staunchly opposed the recent actions of Chinese marine surveillance vessels, in cutting the exploration cables of the Vietnam Oil and Gas Group’s ship— Binh Minh 02, which was conducting seismic surveys at Lot 148, within Vietnam’s continental shelf.

China's Foreign Ministry continued to defend the actions of the Chinese boats. According to Reuters, in the regular press briefing on May 31, Jiang Yu still confirmed: “The enforcement activities that China's maritime ships undertook with the illegally operated Vietnamese ships are completely justified.”

She even said: "We urge the Vietnamese side to immediately stop their activities from infringing on our sovereignty and refrain from creating new incidents".

On May 27, the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ officials confirmed that while the Binh Minh 02 ship was conducting a seismic survey at Lot 148, within the country’s 200 nautical mile continental shelf on May 26, 2011, Chinese boats 12, 17 and 84 cut the Binh Minh 02 ship’s exploration cables at a location 12 degrees 48’25” north latitude and 111 degrees 26’48” east longitude, 120 nautical miles from the Dai Lanh cape, in the central province of Phu Yen, Vietnam.

Do Van Hau, deputy general director of PetroVietnam, the state-owned company that manages Binh Minh 02, said that in implementing the group's oil and gas exploration and exploitation program for 2011, the PetroVietnam Technical Service Corporation (PTSC), an affiliate of PetroVietnam, dispatched the seismic survey ship Binh Minh 02, to conduct seismic surveys at Lots 125, 126, 148 and 149, which lie within the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf of Vietnam.

Binh Minh 02 had conducted two previous surveys in those areas, the first in 2010 and the second on March 17, 2011.

The surveys had been conducted smoothly and that the Binh Minh 02 had performed its tasks competently. At 5:05am on May 26, the Binh Minh 02 picked up a strange vessel moving towards the survey area on its radar. Five minutes later, it detected the approach of another two ships. The three ships were subsequently identified as Chinese marine surveillance vessels that had moved into the survey area without warning. At 5:58am, the Chinese ships crossed through the survey area, only 120 nautical miles from the Dai Lanh cape in the central province of Phu Yen, an area well inside Vietnamese territorial waters, cutting the Binh Minh 02’s exploration cables.

The three Chinese vessels hindered the operations of the Binh Minh 02, and threatened it by saying that the Binh Minh 02 was violating Chinese sovereignty. The Binh Minh 02 determinedly rejected the Chinese threats, responding that it was operating inside Vietnamese territorial waters. The Chinese vessels kept up impeding the Binh Minh 02 until leaving the survey area at 9:00am on May 26. The Binh Minh 02 had to cease operations on May 26, in order to gather damaged equipment for repair. Under instructions from PetroVietnam and
PTSC, the Binh Minh 02 repaired its equipment on the spot and resumed its operations by 6:00am of May 27.

Hau emphasized that the sea water where PetroVietnam’s ship was operating is deep inside Vietnam’s continental shelf. PetroVietnam has conducted seismic surveys in the area numerous times, and Binh Minh ship 02 was operating within the sea waters under Vietnam’s sovereignty is quite normal, said the PetroVietnam senior official. Hau said the Chinese ships’ cutting Vietnamese ship’s cables is a deliberate and well-prepared action.

“The area where the incident occurred lies entirely inside Vietnam’s continental shelf. This is the first time Chinese surveillance ships entered Vietnam’s continental shelf, regardless of warnings”, Hau said.

**China is intentionally misleading public opinion**

At a press conference on May 29, the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry’s spokeswoman, Nguyen Phuong Nga confirmed: “ This action seriously violated Vietnam’s sovereignty and jurisdiction rights over its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone, breaking the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and going against the spirit and words in the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (DOC), signed between ASEAN and China in 2002, as well as the common perception of the high-ranking leaders of Vietnam and China”.

Nga also rejected the Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson’s remarks on May 28, that the Vietnamese side’s oil and gas exploration activities in the waters managed by China damaged the country’s interests and management right in “South China Sea”, going against the two countries’ common perception on the “South China Sea” issue, and that the action taken by the Chinese governing body is merely a marine supervision and law execution in the China-managed waters.

She explained that the area where Vietnam conducted explorations is entirely within the 200-nautical mile exclusive economic zone and continental shelf of Vietnam as stipulated by the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

In its articles about the Binh Minh 02 ship case, Reuters wrote that this incident happened about 120 km (80 miles) off the south-central coast of Vietnam and some 600 km (370 miles) south of China’s Hainan island.

According to the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry’s spokerson, Nguyen Phuong Nga, this is neither a disputed area nor an area “managed by China”. China is intentionally misleading the public opinion into thinking it is a disputed area, she said.

The spokesperson also pointed out that while China calls for solving relevant disputes through peaceful measures; its own action is making the situation in the East Sea more complicated. *Thai An*

**7.4.1.4. Filipino Senator: China bully Southeast Asian countries 02/06/2011**

VietNamNet Bridge – China will always try to bully the Philippines and other countries in the Southeast Asian region in a bid to control massive oil resources in the disputed Spratly Islands in the South China Sea, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said on the Philstar recently. While the Philippines obviously does not have enough defense capability against a superpower such as China, Santiago advised the government to be circumspect and be extra wise in dealing with its big neighbor.

Santiago also warned the Philippines might end up as a “satellite country” of China.

Despite this, Santiago said the US as well as the rich countries in western Europe would not allow China to have leverage in terms of oil and natural gas development in the Spratlys.

“America and the countries in western Europe will not allow it because there will be imbalance in the distribution of power in the world once China is able to take over oil and mineral resources underneath the South China Sea,” she said.

On May 24 2011, the Philstar cited News5 as saying that China has set up military garrisons and outposts on six reefs that are part of the Kalayaan Island Group, part of the Truong Sa (Spratly) Islands.

According to the Philstar, apart from the military garrisons and outposts, China is aggressively pursuing large-scale maritime projects aimed at cementing its claim on the Spratlys. These projects include construction of port facilities, airports, navigation buoys, lighthouses, ocean observatories and maritime meteorology networks.

At the recent meeting with Chinese Defence Minister Liang Guanglie (during Liang’s visit to the Philippines), Filipino President Benigno Aquino III warned Liang that alleged intrusions and encounters in disputed islands in the South China Sea area could lead to a dangerous arms race in the region.

Speaking to the media on May 24, one day after the meeting with Chinese Defence Minister Liang Guanglie, President Aquino said: “I said, ‘If there are incidents such as these, doesn’t it promote an arms race happening within the region? When there’s an arms race, doesn’t the potential for conflict also increase? Who benefits from such a development? I told them, ‘We may not have the capabilities now but that might force us to increase our capabilities also’”.

Mr. Aquino reiterated the Philippines’ position that countries in the region should focus on regional prosperity to ease the tensions caused by the rival claims of the Philippines, China and several other Southeast Asian countries over the Spratlys group. *Thai An (Source: Philstar and Inquirer)*

**7.4.1.5. Chinese sites hacked over Vietnam sea sovereignty** 04/06/201


*VietNamNet Bridge* - Hackers have attacked many Chinese websites and left the phrase "Spratly and Paracel islands belong to Vietnam” on them after Chinese ships violated Vietnamese territory and harassed Vietnamese vessels in the last few weeks.

The hacking took place on June 1 and 2, the Vietnamese edition of Vietnam News Agency reported.
On May 26, three Chinese surveillance ships trespassed into Vietnamese waters and cut exploration cables belonging to Vietnam’s state-owned Binh Minh 02 ship while it was conducting oil exploration at 12 degrees 48’25” north latitude and 111 degrees 26’48” east longitude, some 116 nautical miles off Dai Lanh cape in the central coastal province of Phu Yen.

Then on June 1, three Chinese military vessels used guns to threaten the crew of PY 92305TS fishing boat of central Phu Yen province while they are fishing in the waters of Vietnam’s Truong Sa archipelago.

Such hostile acts have stirred up outrage among the online community in Vietnam and the region. Source: Tuoi Tre

7.4.1.6. Vietnamese – Chinese Defense Ministers talk about East Sea 06/06/2011


VietNamNet Bridge – China is willing to discuss the East Sea conflict at multilateral forums and protests unilateral activities, Chinese Defense Minister Liang Guanglie said. On the sideline of the Shangri-La Dialogu, the two Defense Ministers had a bilateral meeting.

At the meeting, Vietnamese Defense Minister Phung Quang Thanh, mentioned the Binh Minh 02 incident on May 26.

General Thanh confirmed that the Vietnamese Party, State, Army and people attach importance to the friendship and multifaceted cooperation with China. He said that the good relations between the two sides still have a problem: sovereignty dispute in the East Sea.

“Sometimes regrettable incidents happen out of expectation of the both sides,” General Thanh said.

He told his Chinese counterpart the incident on May 26, when three Chinese patrol ships snipped the cable of Vietnam’s oil exploration ship named Binh Minh 02, in Vietnam’s exclusive economic zone.

“The incident has stirred up the public opinion and made leaders of the Party and the State of Vietnam worried. At this conference, some officials and the media also asked me about this incident,” General Thanh said.

He asked the inferior agencies of the both countries to seriously obey commitments made by the leaders of Vietnam and China.

“The two sides need to calmly solve the issue by peaceful methods, through negotiation based the international laws, particularly the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS 1982) and the Declaration on Conduct of the Parties in the East Sea (DOC), which was signed between ASEAN and China,” he emphasized.
In his speech at the Shangri-La Dialogu, General Thanh mentioned the Binh Minh 02 incident.

“If I don’t mention it, the world still knows it clearly, because the captain of Binh Minh 02 is a Russian and its crew includes sailors of different nationalities,” General Thanh said.

Minister Liang Guanglie said that the East Sea dispute is a matter in Vietnam-China relations and China’s point of view in this issue is solving it through negotiation.

China is willing to discuss this issue at multilateral forums and protests unilateral activities. China commits to maintain peace and stability in the East Sea and fully implement the DOC, he said.

The Chinese Defense Minister also said that the two sides must observe the international laws, including the UNCLOS 1982.

According to him, the armies of the two countries need to cooperate more closely and China doesn’t expect a similar incident happens in the future.

He confirmed that the Chinese People’s Liberation Army wasn’t involved in the recent incident. Trung Phuong

7.4.1.7. Lawyers protest Chinese violation 06/06/2011


VietNamNet Bridge – The Viet Nam Lawyers' Association yesterday spoke out against Chinese vessels cutting the seismic survey cables of a Vietnamese ship operating in Viet Nam's exclusive economic zone on May 26.

The three Chinese marine surveillance vessels cut the cables of the seismic survey ship Binh Minh 02 while it was operating deep within the sea zone over which Viet Nam holds exclusive rights regarding exploration and use of marine resources.

China's actions seriously violated the United Nations Charter (Article 2 of Clause 3 and Article 2 of Clause 4) and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea signed in 1982, according to the association.

"It has also violated Viet Nam's sovereign jurisdiction over its exclusive economic zone and continental shelf," it added.

Cutting the survey ship's cables went against the Declaration of Conduct of parties in the East Sea that China signed in 2002 as well as Viet Nam-Chinese relations.

The association called on China to comply with the UN framework of which China is part, relevant international laws and its commitment to the Declaration of Conduct.

China was also called upon to desist from acting similarly in future as well as to provide compensation for the losses that the Viet Nam Oil and Gas Group, the owner of the Binh Minh 02 ship, had suffered.
The association hoped to boost the friendship and co-operation between Viet Nam and China in maintaining and keeping to international laws with respect to sovereignty while upholding and promoting peace throughout the region and the world.

**Peaceful gatherings**

A small number of people spontaneously gathered in front of the Chinese Embassy in Ha Noi and its Consulate in HCM City yesterday morning, June 5, to demonstrate their discontent at foreign violations of Viet Nam's sovereignty.

The gatherings were in opposition to Chinese marine surveillance vessels cutting the cables of the Vietnamese seismic survey ship, Binh Minh 02, on May 26 while it operated within Viet Nam's exclusive economic zone.

Participants said that the Chinese vessels had violated Vietnamese sovereign jurisdiction over its exclusive economic zone and continental shelf, the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Declaration of Conduct signed between China and ASEAN countries.

The peaceful gatherings soon dissolved after persuasive efforts by Government officials. *Viet Nam News*

### 7.4.1.8. Vietnam oil and gas body opposes Chinese acts 08/06/2011


*VietNamNet Bridge* - The Vietnam Oil and Gas Association (VOGA) has strongly opposed the acts of the Chinese marine surveillance vessels, which recently cut the survey cables of a Vietnamese ship operating on the continental shelf of Vietnam.

VOGA raised its opposition in its recent statement on the case which happened on May 26 when three Chinese marine surveillance vessels cut the survey cables attached to the Binh Minh 02, a survey ship of the Vietnam National Oil and Gas Group (PetroVietnam), when it was conducting seismic surveys well within Vietnam’s exclusive economic zone and continental shelf.

“This action seriously violated the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS 1982) as well as Vietnam’s sovereignty and jurisdiction rights over its exclusive economic zone and continental shelf, and caused economic damages for PetroVietnam,” the association stated.

The action also went against commitments China made in the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (DOC) signed between ASEAN and China in 2002, as well as the common perception of the high-ranking leaders of Vietnam and China, it added.

VOGA stressed that Vietnamese oil and gas enterprises’ implementation of seismic surveys in the country’s exclusive economic zone was a normal activity that has occurred since the 1980s and was totally in line with UNCLOS 1982.
Therefore, the association asked the Chinese side to strictly abide by UNCLOS 1982 – of which China is a member – as well as relevant international laws.

“The Chinese side should seriously implement commitments prescribed in the DOC and not to repeat similar acts in the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf of Vietnam, as well as pay for damages to PetroVietnam caused by the three marine surveillance vessels,” said VOGA.

The association said it always sought to boost the traditional friendship and cooperation between the two countries’ people, and oil and gas workers, and respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries for the interest of peace, security and cooperation in the region.

7.4.1.9. Chinese boats intrude Vietnam’s waters, cut cables again 09/06/2011

VietnamNet Bridge – In the morning of June 9, a Chinese fishing boat accompanied by two fishery administration vessels cut cables of a Vietnamese oil exploration ship which was making a seismic survey within Vietnam’s continental shelf.

The ship, named Viking II, owned by the Vietnam Oil and Gas Group (PetroVietnam) had its cables cut at 6am (Hanoi time), June 9 at 6o47'5"N, 109o17'5"E, which lies totally within Vietnam’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and continental shelf, said the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry’s spokeswoman Nguyen Phuong Nga at a press conference in Hanoi the same day.

Nga said that the three Chinese ships cruised over the Viking II’s prow and sped up when the Vietnamese ship was conducting seismic surveys. Though the Vietnamese ship fired warning signals, the Chinese ship numbered 6226 intentionally entered Vietnamese exploration area. Viking II’s cables then became tangled in the specialized cable-cutting equipment belonging to the Chinese 6226 ship. This hindered Viking II’s operations.

After that, two Chinese fishery administration vessels numbered 311 and 303 arrived on the scene, together with some other ships, and rescued the 6226 vessel. The Vietnamese Foreign Ministry’s spokesperson stated that such actions are deliberate and obviously violated Vietnam’s sovereignty and caused serious economic damage.

She said that the Chinese ships violated the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the acts went against common conceptions of leaders of both countries in maintaining peace and stability on the East Sea.

Notably, this incident came just days after three Chinese patrol vessels entered Vietnam’s EEZ and continental shelf and cut the cables of PetroVietnam’s Binh Minh 02 ship on May 26.

The actions caused East Sea disputes to become more strained, Nga stressed.
“China’s systematic action is aimed at turning the undisputed area into an area under dispute in order to materialize China’s nine-dotted line claim in the East Sea. This is unacceptable,” she stated.

Vietnam demands the Chinese side to immediately stop all actions violating Vietnam’s sovereignty and jurisdiction and compensate for losses, the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry’s spokesperson stressed.

Also, on the afternoon of June 9, the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry’s representatives met with Chinese counterparts to protest against the violation.

“China’s nine-dotted line” or “U-shaped line” in the East Sea is completely groundless and runs counter to the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea of which China is a member. The claim has violated the exclusive economic zones and continental shelves of a number of countries in the region, including Vietnam, and prompted protests from these countries. China’s attempt to materialize this claim is in fact increasing tension in the region,” Nga said.

Vietnam also asked China to compensate for loses that Chinese ships caused to PetroVietnam.

Nga said that Vietnamese agencies and forces will closely combine to ensure normal economic activities within Vietnam’s waters.

At the press conference, the Foreign Ministry’s spokeswoman also confirmed that websites of some agencies under the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry were hacked.

7.4.1.10. Vietnam to hold maneuvers in East Sea 11/06/2011

VietNamNet Bridge – The Foreign Ministry’s spokeswoman, Nguyen Phuong Nga has confirmed that Vietnam’s naval forces will hold military exercises in the central province of Quang Nam on June 13.

On June 10, answering reporters’ questions about the news that Vietnam’s navy will organize drilling with live ammunition in the sea of Hon Ong in Quang Nam province on June 13, Nga said that this is "a routine annual training activity of the Vietnam navy in the area where the Vietnam navy regularly conducts training (activities) that are programmed and planned annually for units of the Vietnam People's Military."

The drilling on June 13 will take place for six hours, from 6-12 pm, near Hon Ong island, around 40 km from the coast of Quang Nam province. Boats have been informed to be far from the sea off central Vietnam during the drilling.

The spokeswoman also strongly protested China for intentionally distorting the truth, as it said that Vietnam “seriously violated China’s sovereignty” and “threatening national security and the lives of Chinese fishermen”.

The fact is--a Chinese fishing boat intruded deep into Vietnam’s waters and cut cables of Vietnam’s Viking II oil exploration ship, ignoring warnings by loudspeakers, flare, hooters from Vietnamese ships.
This is the second incident caused by Chinese ships, after the first on May 26, when the cables of Vietnam’s Binh Minh 02 ship were cut by three Chinese patrol ships.

These are intentional and systematic acts by China to materialize its claim in the East Sea.

The world media commented that the drilling on June 13 is Vietnam’s response to China’s intrusion and its distortion of the truth in the East Sea.

However, the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry stated that these are normal annual maneuvers of the navy.

Asked about a possible role for the United States or others in resolving the disputes, Nga said in separate remarks late on June 10: "Maintaining maritime peace, stability, security and safety in the Eastern Sea is in the common interests of all nations within and outside the region."

"Every effort by the international community toward maintaining peace and stability in the East Sea is welcomed," she said. VTCnews

7.4.1.11. Lawyers oppose sovereignty breach 13/06/2011


VietNamNet Bridge – The Viet Nam Bar Federation yesterday, June 12, issued a statement to oppose China’s violations of Viet Nam’s sovereignty and jurisdiction rights over its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone.

In its statement, the federation asked the Chinese side not to make the East Sea situation more complicated by threatening to use force or using force, and to conduct itself in line with its role as a member of the United Nations, especially a member of the UN Security Council, and in its capacity as a nation with an important role in Asia-Pacific and the world.

According to the Viet Nam Foreign Ministry’s spokesperson and concerned agencies, on May 26 three Chinese marine surveillance vessels cut survey cables of the Binh Minh 02, a survey ship of the Viet Nam National Oil and Gas Group, at 12 degrees 48’25” north latitude and 111 degrees 26’48” east longitude, some 116 nautical miles off Dai Lanh Cape in the central coastal province of Phu Yen and about 340 nautical miles off China's Hainan island coast.

On late May 31, three Chinese naval vessels fired to threaten four fishing boats of Vietnamese fishermen while they were fishing at 8 degrees 56’ north latitude and 112 degrees 45’ east longitude on the continental shelf of Viet Nam.

On June 9, a Chinese fishing boat supported by two Chinese fishery administration vessels deliberately hit the survey cables of Viking II, a ship hired by the Viet Nam National Oil and Gas Group to conduct seismic surveys, at 6 degrees 47’5” north latitude and 109 degrees 17’5” east longitude on Viet Nam's continental shelf.
Based on the UN Charter, the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties on the East Sea between governments of ASEAN countries and China, China's above-mentioned acts seriously violated Viet Nam's rights to sovereignty and jurisdiction over its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone, making the East Sea situation to continue to be tense.

The federation has enough legal basis to announce that the acts of the Chinese side seriously violated fundamental principles of international laws: not threatening to use force or using force in international relations to challenge the territorial integrity or political independence of any nation.

The acts also seriously violated the sovereignty and jurisdiction rights of Viet Nam to its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone according to Article 55, Article 56 and Article 57, Article 76, Article 77 and Article 301 in the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and went against Clause 1 and Clause 4 in the Declaration of the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea between ASEAN member countries and China.

The federation demanded the Chinese side, for the strategic height and long-term relationship between Viet Nam and China, to immediately stop and not repeat any violating actions within Viet Nam's continental shelf and exclusive economic zone in the East Sea and to take responsibility for paying damages caused to the Viet Nam National Oil and Gas Group and the Vietnamese fishermen.

The federation always treasures and wants the friendship as well as the traditional cooperation between the two peoples and bar organisations to be further promoted in the spirit of respecting independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of each other, jointly dealing with differences between the two countries by peaceful means, preventing and opposing actions that harm peaceful and friendly relations between the two countries.

It requested the national bar organisations of ASEAN countries, the Law Association for Asia and the Pacific and the China Bar Association to jointly bear responsibility for protecting justice, international law, respecting independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries, maintaining peace and international security and jointly building a democratic, fair and civilised world.

The federation will do its utmost to contribute to the legal fight of the Vietnamese State and people to protect sovereignty and territorial integrity in general and seas and islands in particular in every forum by international legal institutions.

**Peace Committee**

The Viet Nam Peace Committee yesterday sent a letter to the Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament expressing concerns over recent violations by Chinese ships of the water under Viet Nam's sovereignty rights.

The committee said that on May 26 and June 9 Chinese marine surveillance, fishery administration and fishing vessels had taken actions that seriously violated Viet Nam's sovereignty and jurisdiction rights over its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone.
The Viet Nam Peace Committee and the Vietnamese people were concerned over those serious and repeated violations by Chinese ships, the committee said, adding that these acts caused adverse impacts on the long-standing friendship between the two peoples and on public worries in the region and the world, as well as on peace and stability in the region.

The committee expressed the wish that the Chinese side not let similar actions recur. *VietNamNet/Viet Nam News*
7.4.2.1. VN accuses China of violating marine sovereignty

27/05/2011 | 21:25:01

The Vietnamese Foreign Ministry has staunchly opposed the recent action of Chinese marine surveillance vessels in cutting the exploration cables of a PetroVietnam ship which was conducting seismic surveys at Lot 148 within Vietnam’s continental shelf.

In an answer to Vietnam News Agency reporters’ question on the issue on May 27, the ministry official confirmed that while the Binh Minh 02 ship of the Vietnam National Oil and Gas Group (PetroVietnam) was conducting a seismic survey at Lot 148 within the country’s 200 nautical mile continental shelf on May 26, 2011, Chinese boats 12, 17 and 84 cut the Binh Minh 02 ship’s exploration cables at a location 12 degrees 48’25” north latitude and 111 degrees 26’48” east longitude, 120 nautical miles from the Dai Lanh cape in the central province of Phu Yen.

The official said the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry’s representative handed over a diplomatic note to representatives of the Chinese embassy in Hanoi to protest against China’s above action, demanding the country immediately cease and prevent the re-occurrence of its activities violating the sovereignty of Vietnam’s exclusive economic zone and continental shelf, and provide compensation for Vietnam.

The diplomatic note stated that China’s actions seriously violated Vietnam’s sovereignty right to its continental shelf and the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and went against the spirit and content of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (DOC) signed between ASEAN and China in 2002, and the common awareness of the two countries’ senior leaders of preventing further complications over the situation in the East Sea./.

7.4.2.2 Chinese marine surveillance ships violate VN’s sovereignty

27/05/2011 | 18:51:00.

Chinese marine surveillance vessels on May 26 violated the waters under Vietnam’s sovereignty right, causing economic damage and hindering the operations of the Vietnam National Oil and Gas Group (PetroVietnam).

This information was given by PetroVietnam Deputy General Director Do Van Hau while granting an interview to the press in Hanoi on May 27.

According to Hau, in implementing the group’s oil and gas exploration and exploitation programme in 2011, the PetroVietnam Technical Service Corporation (PTSC), an affiliate of PetroVietnam, dispatched the seismic survey ship Binh Minh 02 to conduct seismic surveys at Lots 125, 126, 148 and 149, which lie totally within the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf of Vietnam.
The Binh Minh 02 ship conducted two surveys on these areas, the first one in 2010 and the second one starting on March 17, 2011, he said, adding that the surveys have been implemented smoothly and the Binh Minh 02 ship has performed its tasks competently.

However, at 5:05am on May 26, the Binh Minh 02 ship’s radar detected a strange vessel moving quickly towards the survey area and five minutes later it also saw two other ships approaching. The three ships were then identified as marine surveillance vessels of China which were moving into the survey area without warning.

At 5:58am, the Chinese marine surveillance ships ran through the survey area, only 120 nautical miles from the Dai Lanh cape in the central province of Phu Yen, an area totally belonging to the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf under Vietnam's sovereignty right and jurisdiction, and cut the Binh Minh 02 ship’s exploration cables.

Hau added that the three Chinese marine surveillance vessels hindered the normal operations of the Binh Minh 02 seismic ship and then threatened the Binh Minh 02 ship, saying that the Vietnamese ship violated China’s sovereignty.

The Binh Minh 02 ship determinedly rejected the Chinese marine surveillance vessels’ arguments and affirmed that it was operating legally in the waters under Vietnam's sovereignty.

However, the Chinese ships continued to impede the Binh Minh 02 ship’s operations until they left the survey area at 9:00am on May 26.

The Binh Minh 02 ship had to stop its work on May 26 to gather in damaged equipment for repairing. Under the instruction of PetroVietnam and PTSC, the Binh Minh 02 repaired the equipment on the spot and resumed its operations by 6:00am on May 27.

The PetroVietnam leader affirmed that the Chinese marine surveillance vessels’ deep penetration into Vietnam’s waters to sabotage and hinder PetroVietnam’s normal exploration activities was an extremely perverse action that obviously violated Vietnam’s sovereignty right, caused economic damage and obstructed PetroVietnam’s operations.

He said that PetroVietnam had reported the incident and asked the Vietnamese Government and relevant agencies to take the possible strongest measures protesting against the Chinese side, to demand the Chinese side immediately stop actions that block PetroVietnam’s operations, and to assist the group in implementing its exploration and exploitation tasks.

PetroVietnam affirmed that seismic survey activities in this area would continue to be conducted normally because the area belongs to Vietnam’s sovereignty. The group will closely coordinate with relevant agencies to ensure the effective and safe operations of the Binh Minh 02 ship.

The Binh Minh 02 seismic ship, invested by PetroVietnam in 2008, has carried out many surveys on the continental shelf of Vietnam ’s sovereignty./.

7.4.2.3. VN demands China stop sovereignty violations
29/05/2011 | 22:01:00
Vietnam demands that the Chinese side immediately stop and not to repeat actions that violate Vietnam’s sovereignty and jurisdiction rights over its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone as well as pay damages for the Vietnamese side.

The statement was made by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Nguyen Phuong Nga at a press conference in Hanoi on May 29 regarding the case that Chinese marine surveillance vessels on May 26 cut exploration cables of the Binh Minh 02 ship of the Vietnam National Oil and Gas Group (PetroVietnam) when the ship was conducting seismic surveys on the continental shelf of Vietnam.

“Vietnam resolutely opposes the Chinese side’s action that damaged and hindered Vietnam’s normal exploration and survey activities on its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone, causing great damages for PetroVietnam,” she stressed.

This action seriously violated Vietnam’s sovereignty and jurisdiction rights over its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone, breaking the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and going against the spirit and words in the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (DOC) signed between ASEAN and China in 2002 as well as the common perception of the high-ranking leaders of Vietnam and China, she added.

Nga also rejected the Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson’s remarks on May 28 that the Vietnamese side’s oil and gas exploration activities in the waters managed by China damaged the country’s interests and management right in “South China Sea”, going against the two countries’ common perception on the “South China Sea” issue and that the action taken by the Chinese governing body is merely a marine supervision and law execution in the China-managed waters.

She explained that the area where Vietnam conducted explorations is entirely within the 200-nautical mile exclusive economic zone and continental shelf of Vietnam as stipulated by the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. This is neither a disputed area nor an area “managed by China”. China is intentionally misleading the public opinion into thinking it is a disputed area.

Nga at the same time stressed that Vietnam always adheres to the common perception of the countries’ high-ranking leaders on addressing all disputes through peaceful measures and avoiding actions that further sophisticate the situation. “There is no common perception that says China has the right to impede Vietnam’s activities in the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf of Vietnam,” she said, adding that it is China’s action that goes against the common perception of the two countries’ high-ranking leaders.”

The spokesperson also pointed out that while China calls for solving relevant disputes through peaceful measures, its own action is making the situation in the East Sea more complicated.

Asked about China’s nine-dashed line claim in the East Sea and a series of recent disputes with Vietnam and the Philippines, Deputy Chairman of Vietnam’s National Border Committee Nguyen Duy Chien said:

“China’s nine-dotted line or “U-shaped line” in the East Sea is completely groundless and runs counter to the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea of which China is a member. The claim has violated the exclusive economic zones and continental shelves of a number of
countries in the region, including Vietnam, and prompted protests from these countries. China’s attempt to materialise this claim is in fact increasing tension in the region."

In response to journalists’ questions about Chinese leaders’ repeated proclamations that “China advocates peaceful solutions to disputes” and that “It is powerful but not hegemonic”, Nga said “We hope that China will fulfil its role as a power and strictly follow what Chinese leaders have declared.”

Do Van Hau, Deputy General Director of PetroVietnam, briefed reporters of the incident when PetroVietnam-owned Binh Minh 02 ship was blocked and threatened as well as had its cables cut by three Chinese marine surveillance vessels while conducting explorations at 12 degrees 48’25” north latitude and 111 degrees 26’48” east longitude, some 116 nautical miles off Dai Lanh cape in the central coastal province of Phu Yen.

Hau emphasised that the sea water where PetroVietnam’s ship was operating is deep inside Vietnam’s continental shelf.

PetroVietnam has conducted seismic surveys in the area for numerous times and Binh Minh ship 02 operation within the sea waters under Vietnam’s sovereignty is quite normal, said the PetroVietnam senior official.

Hau said the Chinese ships’ cutting Vietnamese ship’s cables is a deliberate and well-prepared action.

“It is impossible to cut cables at a depth of 30m under the water without special equipment,” the oil and gas exploration expert explained.

“The incident has caused considerable losses and obstructed operations of PetroVietnam. The Binh Minh 02 ship and logistics ships had to stop working in order to repair the damaged facilities,” Hau said, adding that the Binh Minh 02 ship has so far resumed normal operation after the repair./.

7.4.2.4. US opposes use of force in the East Sea

03/06/2011 | 12:06:34
spokesperson/20116/18728.vnplus

A spokesperson of the US State Department reaffirmed that US opposes the use of force or threat of force in the East Sea by any party and supports the ASEAN-China Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea.

Regarding the acts of Chinese marine surveillance vessels which on May 26 cut exploration cables of the Binh Minh 02 ship of the Vietnam National Oil and Gas Group (PetroVietnam) when the ship was conducting seismic surveys on the continental shelf of Vietnam, the US spokesperson said:

“The United States supports a collaborative diplomatic process by all claimants to resolve the various territorial disputes without coercion, and we call on all claimants to conform all of their claims – both land and maritime – to international law. We oppose the use or threat of force by any claimant.”

The US State Department spokesperson reaffirmed that the US supports the ASEAN-China Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea and encourages the parties to reach a full code of conduct.
The spokesperson added that the US shares a number of national interests with the international community in the East Sea, including regional stability, freedom of navigation, respect for international law, and unimpeded commerce under lawful conditions and that it does not take sides in regional territorial disputes.

7.4.2.5. Defence Minister meets Chinese counterpart in Singapore
04/06/2011 | 21:43:02

Vietnamese Defence Minister General Phung Quang Thanh has discussed with his Chinese counterpart the incident on May 26 when Chinese marine surveillance vessels cut the cables of a Vietnamese ship when the ship was conducting seismic surveys within Vietnam’s exclusive economic zones.

At a meeting with Chinese Defence Minister Senior Lieutenant General Liang Guanglie on the sidelines of the Asian Security Summit (Shangri-la dialogue 10) in Singapore on June 3, Minister Thanh stressed that the incident raises disquiet among the public and concerns of Party and State leaders in Vietnam.

According to Thanh, the Vietnam-China relations are seeing fine developments, and the Vietnamese Party, State, army and people always attach importance to the solidarity, friendship and comprehensive cooperation with China, but there still remains the East Sea sovereignty dispute and it is regrettable that unexpected incidents still happen sometimes.

The Vietnamese Defence Minister proposed that lower-ranking agencies of the two countries strictly adhere to the commitments of their leaders, stressing that the two sides need to keep calm and settle the issue peacefully through dialogues based on international laws, especially the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS 1982) and Declaration on the Conduct of Parties on the East Sea (DOC), a document signed between ASEAN and China.

Thanh noted that the two sides should cooperate with each other and restrain themselves to the utmost in order to prevent the recurrence of similar cases, which, he said, will affect bilateral relations between the two countries and the image of China in the region.

Upon the request of the Shangri-la dialogue’s organising committee, Minister Thanh will deliver a speech on the theme of “Coping with new sea security challenges” at the plenary session, which will touch upon Binh Minh 02 ship’s case in an objective way so that the region and the world gain a correct understanding of the incident.

Minister Liang, who attended the Shangri-la dialogue for the first time, informed that he will make a speech on China’s future security cooperation which focuses on the country’s commitment to peaceful and “win-win” development at the dialogue.

Minister Thanh welcomed his Chinese counterpart’s participation in the Shangri-la Dialogue to contribute to regional peace and stability, adding that Liang’s speech will receive the attention of Vietnam and the international community.

He also thanked the Chinese Defence Minister for his attendance and positive contribution to the success of the first ADMM Plus and spoke highly of the recent Vietnam visit by Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission of the Communist Party of China, Senior Lieutenant-General Guo Boxiong, saying that the visit left good impression.
Minister Liang agreed with the Vietnamese minister’s assessment on the fine development of Vietnam-China relations, and the existed issue between the two countries concerning sovereignty dispute in the East Sea.

China’s viewpoint is to settle the East Sea dispute through diplomatic negotiations, the Chinese defence minister said. He added that China is willing to discuss the issue at multilateral forums and protests any unilateral actions.

“China is committed to maintaining peace and stability in the East Sea and fully implementing the DOC,” he said.

Minister Liang also agreed with the Vietnamese minister the two sides should obey international laws, including the UNCLOS 1982 and other documents.

”The two armies need to cooperate more closely. We do not want similar cases to happen in the future,” Liang said, stressing that the China People’s Liberation Army was not involved in the latest incident.

According to Minister Thanh, the East Sea dispute may require a long time for settlement. Therefore, the two countries’ diplomatic sectors need to conduct peaceful negotiations and the leaders of the two countries should hold dialogues and put forth solutions acceptable by both sides.

Vietnam is willing to cooperate with China for development at areas in actual dispute in accordance with the UNCLOS 1982, he said.

Thanh asked that the two countries’ armies keep calm and restrain themselves to prevent conflicts and set an example in implementing the two countries’ leaders’ commitments of becoming good comrades, good neighbours, good friends and good partners.

The same day, Defence Minister Thanh had bilateral meetings with New Zealand’s Defence Minister, Wayne Mapp, and Mongolian Defence Minister, Luvsanvandan Bold./.

7.4.2.6. VN lawyers urge China to respect int’l sea laws
05/06/2011 | 22:06:00

China needs to strictly abide by the UN Charter and the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, in which China is a member, and relevant international laws.

The Vietnam Lawyers’ Association (VLA) has made the comment while reacting to the case happened on May 26 when three Chinese marine surveillance vessels cut surveying cables of the Binh Minh 02, a surveying ship of the Vietnam National Oil and Gas Group (PetroVietnam) when it was conducting seismic surveys well within Vietnam’s continental shelf.

VLA stated that this action seriously violated the UN Charter (clause 3 of Article 2, and clause 4 of Article 2) and the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (clause 3 of Article 58, Article 76, clause 1 of Article 77, and Article 301) as well as Vietnam’s sovereignty
rights and jurisdiction rights over its exclusive economic zone and continental shelf, and caused economic damages for PetroVietnam.

The association also stated that the action also went against commitments China made in the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (DOC) signed between ASEAN and China in 2002 as well as the common perception of the high-ranking leaders of Vietnam and China.

Therefore, VLA asked the Chinese side to seriously implement commitments prescribed in the DOC and not to repeat similar acts in the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf of Vietnam as well as pay for damages caused by the three marine surveillance vessels for PetroVietnam.

The association said it always wants to boost the traditional friendship and cooperation between the two countries’ people and lawyers, and works together with the Chinese side to protect justice and international law, respect independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries as well as maintain peace and security in the region and the world at large.

7.4.2.7. VFF debates East Sea issues
07/06/2011 | 21:04:00

The Vietnam Fatherland Front Central Committee (VFFCC) on June 7 held a discussion on issues relating to East Sea happenings during the last few days.

At the event, participants exchanged views over the wrongdoings of the Chinese marine surveillance vessels in cutting the exploration cables of a PetroVietnam ship, which was conducting seismic surveys within Vietnam’s exclusive economic zone.

They agreed that China needed to strictly abide by the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (DOC) as well as recent commitments that China had made.

Delegates said the skirmishes on the East Sea cannot be resolved in a short time and required the concerned sides to patiently settle the incidents through dialogue and peaceful solutions, on the basis of mutual interests and international law.

They added that the VFF and its member organisations should fulfil their information dissemination tasks to people from all walks of life to help them obtain a sound overview on the East Sea issue and the foreign policies of the Party and Government.

Deputy Chairman of the VFFCC Nguyen Van Pha said the participants’ ideas will be carefully analysed to help authorities efficiently solve the East Sea issue.

7.4.2.8. Vietnam oil and gas body opposes Chinese acts
07/06/2011 | 21:39:08
Vietnam Oil and Gas Association (VOGA) strongly opposed the acts of Chinese marine surveillance vessels, which recently cut the survey cables of a Vietnamese ship operating on the continental shelf of Vietnam.

VOGA raised its opposition in its recent statement on the case which happened on May 26 when three Chinese marine surveillance vessels cut survey cables attached to the Binh Minh 02, a survey ship of the Vietnam National Oil and Gas Group (PetroVietnam), when it was conducting seismic surveys well within Vietnam’s exclusive economic zone and continental shelf.

“This action seriously violated the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS 1982) as well as Vietnam’s sovereignty and jurisdiction rights over its exclusive economic zone and continental shelf, and caused economic damages for PetroVietnam,” the association stated.

The action also went against commitments China made in the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (DOC) signed between ASEAN and China in 2002, as well as the common perception of the high-ranking leaders of Vietnam and China, it added.

VOGA stressed that Vietnamese oil and gasenterprises’ implementation of seismic surveys in the country’s exclusive economic zone was a normal activity that has occurred since the 1980s and was totally in line with UNCLOS 1982.

Therefore, the association asked the Chinese side to strictly abide by UNCLOS 1982 – in which China was a member – as well as relevant international laws.

“The Chinese side should seriously implement commitments prescribed in the DOC and not to repeat similar acts in the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf of Vietnam, as well as pay for damages to PetroVietnam caused by the three marine surveillance vessels,” said VOGA.

The association said it always sought to boost the traditional friendship and cooperation between the two countries’ people and oil and gas workers, and respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries for the interests of peace, security and cooperation in the region./.

7.4.2.9. China told to stop harassing Vietnam’s ships

09/06/2011 | 22:18:00

Vietnam strongly opposed China’s acts on June 9 in harassing a ship conducting seismic surveys in Vietnam’s territorial waters in the East Sea and asked the Chinese side to stop repeating violations.
Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Nguyen Phuong Nga made the protest at a regular press conference in Hanoi on June 9.

She reported to the media that at 6am on June 9, a Chinese fishing boat code-named 62226, supported by two Chinese fishery administration vessels code-named 311 and 303, deliberately hit the survey cables of Viking II, a ship hired by the Vietnam National Oil and Gas Group, when it was conducting seismic surveys at Lot 136/03 at a location 6 degrees 47’5” north latitude and 109 degrees 17’5” east longitude on Vietnam’s continental shelf.

The Chinese fishing boat 62226 trailed a cable-cutting device into the vicinity of ship Viking II and became trapped in the network of underwater cables in use by the Vietnamese vessel, despite the Vietnamese side letting off a warning flare. As a result, the ship Viking II could not operate normally.

Then, the two Chinese fishery administration vessels joined with other Chinese fishing boats to rescue fishing boat 62226.

The seismic survey area being studied by ship Viking II is well within Vietnam’s 200 nautical mile continental shelf, and completely belongs to Vietnam’s area of sovereignty, in line with the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, the spokesperson affirmed.

"The act by those fishing boats and fishery administration vessels of China was absolutely intentional, well designed and well prepared,” Nga emphasised.

She added, “It seriously violates Vietnam’s sovereignty and jurisdictional rights, runs counter to the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (DOC), and goes against the common perception of senior leaders of the two countries on maintaining peace and stability in the East Sea, while causing significant economic losses for the Vietnam National Oil and Gas Group.”

The incident took place just two weeks after a Chinese marine surveillance vessel on May 26 cut the exploration cables of ship Binh Minh 02 at Lot 148 in Vietnam’s continental shelf, bringing continuous tension to the East Sea situation, Nga said.

“China’s systematic acts were aimed at turning the region without disputes into one with disputes, and carry out its ambition to make China’s nine-dash line claim a reality, Nga said, stressing, “This is something that Vietnam cannot accept.”

“The Vietnamese side strongly opposes China’s aforementioned act and demands the Chinese side immediately cease all acts violating Vietnam’s national sovereignty and jurisdiction rights to its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone and not repeat them, and provide compensation for damages caused to the Vietnam National Oil and Gas Group,” she said.

Later the same day, a Vietnam Foreign Ministry representative met with a representative from the Chinese Embassy in Hanoi to protest the act and affirm Vietnam’s stance, Nga said.

7.2.4.10. VN lawyers oppose China’s sovereignty violation
12/06/2011 | 22:17:54
The Vietnam Bar Federation (VBF) on June 12 issued a statement to oppose China’s violations of Vietnam’s sovereignty and jurisdiction rights over its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone.

In its statement, the VBF asked the Chinese side not to make the East Sea situation more complicated by threatening to use forces or using forces, and to conduct itself in line with the role as a member of the United Nations, especially a member of the UN Security Council and in capacity of a nation with important role in Asia-Pacific and the world.

According to the Vietnam Foreign Ministry’s spokesperson and concern agencies, on May 26, three Chinese marine surveillance vessels cut surveying cables of Binh Minh 02, a surveying ship of the Vietnam National Oil and Gas Group at 12 degrees 48’25” north latitude and 111 degrees 26’48” east longitude, some 116 nautical miles off Dai Lanh cape in the central coastal province of Phu Yen and about 340 nautical miles off China’s Hainan island coast.

On late May 31, three Chinese naval vessels fired to threaten four fishing boats of Vietnamese fishermen while they were fishing at 8 degrees 56’ north latitude and 112 degrees 45’ east longitude on the continental shelf of Vietnam.

On June 9, a Chinese fishing boat supported by two Chinese fishery administration vessels deliberately hit the survey cables of Viking II, a ship hired by the Vietnam National Oil and Gas Group to conduct seismic surveys, at 6 degrees 47’5” north latitude and 109 degrees 17’5” east longitude on Vietnam’s continental shelf.

Based on the UN Charter, the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties on the East Sea between governments of ASEAN countries and China, China’s above-mentioned acts seriously violated Vietnam’s the sovereignty and jurisdiction rights to its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone, making the East Sea situation continue to be tense.

The VBF has enough legal basis to announce that the acts of the Chinese side seriously violated fundamental principles of international laws – not threatening to use forces or using forces in international relations to fight the territorial integrity or political independence of any nation.

The acts also seriously violated the sovereignty and jurisdiction rights of Vietnam to its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone according to Article 55, Article 56 and Article 57, Article 76, Article 77 and Article 301 in the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and went against clause 1 and clause 4 in the Declaration of the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea between ASEAN member countries and China.

The federation demanded the Chinese side, for the strategic height and long-term relationship between Vietnam and China, to immediately stop and not repeat any violating actions within Vietnam’s continental shelf and exclusive economic zone in the East Sea and to take responsibility for paying damages caused to the Vietnam National Oil and Gas Group and the Vietnamese fishermen.

The group always treasures and wants the friendship as well as the traditional cooperation between the two peoples and bar organisations to be further promoted in the spirit of respecting independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of each other, jointly dealing
with differences between the two countries by peaceful means, preventing and opposing actions that harm peaceful and friendly relations between the two countries.

It requested the national bar organisations of ASEAN countries, the Law Association for Asia and the Pacific (LAWASIA) and the China Bar Association to jointly bear responsibility for protecting justice, international law, respecting independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries, maintaining peace and international security, jointly building a democratic, fair and civilised world.

The federation will do its utmost to contribute to the legal fight of the Vietnamese State and people to protect sovereignty and territorial integrity in general and seas and islands in particular in every forums by international legal institutions./.

7.4.2.13. Peace Committee concerned over Chinese ships’ violations

12/06/2011 | 21:45:35
http://en.vietnamplus.vn/Home/Peace-Committee-concerned-over-Chinese-ships-violations/20116/18918.vnplus

The Vietnam Peace Committee on June 12 sent a letter to the Chinese People’s Association for Peace and Disarmament, expressing concerns over Chinese ships’ recent violations of the water under Vietnam’s sovereignty rights.

The committee said on May 26 and June 9, Chinese marine surveillance, fishery administration and fishing vessels had actions that seriously violated Vietnam’s sovereignty and jurisdiction rights over its continental shelf and exclusive economic zone.

The Vietnam Peace Committee and the Vietnamese people were concerned over those serious and repeated violations by Chinese ships, the committee said, adding these acts cause adverse impacts on the long-standing friendship between the two peoples and public worries in the region and the world, as well as do not benefit peace and stability in the region.

The committee expressed wish the Chinese side not to let similar actions recur./.
CONTENT ANALYSIS CODE BOOK

The code book is aimed at facilitating the coding of surveyed news stories taken from four different sources representative of Vietnam’s electronic media. The coding categories were based on Galtung’s (1986, 2002) classification of war journalism and peace journalism as a two opposing frames, which was broken down into two themes: approach and language.

Unit of analysis:

The unit of analysis is every news item dealing with issues of South China Sea disputes, the two clashes involving Chinese boats and Vietnamese oil survey vessels, Vietnam-China relations in the sea dispute context. The news story must have a headline, byline and from four paragraphs above.

Variables:

1. Language:
   Language of the surveyed articles is classified into two types: Vietnamese and English

2. Level of state control
   Level of state control is defined within this study as the managerial level of the governing agency that owns the newspapers. There are three ranks in this state management hierarchy:
   - Direct state control: if the governing agency behind the newspaper is under direct state management
   - Ministerial: if the governing agency behind the newspaper is under a ministry
   - Corporate: if the governing agency behind the newspaper is a corporation

3. Media frames
   3.1. War journalism frame
       War journalism frame is defined as the media’s presentation of persons and/or events in a selective way that includes at least five out of eight following indicators:
       - Focus on visible effects and violent details: focusing on the description of violence in the two clashes between Chinese boats and Vietnamese oil survey vessels (for example: chasing after ships, cutting cables, intentionally rammed against Vietnamese ship, robbing equipment and food, injuries of the crew members, damaged equipment, etc.)
       - Here and now: focusing on explaining who did what, who threw the first stone or started the clashes with little or no explanation of the general South China Sea disputes that involve more parties than just China and Vietnam and date back way before these two recent clashes between Vietnamese and Chinese boats happened. In short, little or no explanation is given to the general, prolonged conflict regarding the South China Sea.
       - One-party orientation: only giving voice to the Vietnamese side without presenting the positions of the Chinese side.
       - See “them” as a problem and/or threat: blaming the Chinese boats, the Chinese sides for starting the clashes.
       - Partisan: showing more support to “our” side (the Vietnamese side) by exposing “their” (Chinese) wrongdoings and scheme while not mentioning or marginalizing “our” self-benefit plans. Partisanship can be seen in evaluative statements that show journalists’ subjective opinions (such as these are intentional and systematic acts by China) or even through the factual statements in favor of the Vietnamese side (the world media commented that the drilling on June 13 is Vietnam’s
response to China’s intrusion and its distortion of the truth in the East Sea). A story will be coded as partisan if it contains more negative evaluative comments against China or deliver more factual statements that are unfavorable to China but favorable to Vietnam.

- **Elite-orientated**: quoting only statements of government or military leaders or giving more space in the news story to their positions than to the voices of ordinary people (such as the fishermen who were harassed by Chinese ships, the crew members of the attacked vessels who were directly exposed to the Chinese violence in the clashes, students and/or intellectuals concerning about South China Sea issues, etc.).

- **Agreement and/or negotiation orientated**: focusing on the presentation of China’s and/or Vietnam’s willingness to discuss about the South China Sea issues, of the friendship and cooperation between Vietnam and China, of suggestions for solutions to the disputes in order to maintain peace in the reason and ensure absence of violence)

- **Use one or all of the following types of language:**

  a. demonizing (derogative labels such as extremist, fanatic, traitor, bully, aggressor, villain, etc.; demonizing adjectives like cruel, vicious, brutal, blatant, aggressive, etc.

  b. victimizing (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs that are used intentionally to exaggerate and sell pains or damage inflicted on “our” or the Vietnamese side such as victims, defenseless, pathetic, desperate etc.

  c. emotive (nouns, adjectives and verbs that are subjectively used to describe what happened in an exaggerated manner in order to intrigue strong feelings of viewers such as sympathy, pity for the Vietnamese side and/or fear, hate, anger against the Chinese side such as: “mắng Philippines” or “scolded the Philippines”; “nói dọa” or “senselessly infuriated”, “lớn tiếng tuyên bố” or “loudly proclaimed”; “ngang nhiên xâm phạm” ó “blatantly violated”; “China treated the Philippines like a doormat”, etc.)

3.2. **Peace journalism frame**

Peace journalism frame is defined as the media’s presentation of persons and/or events in a selective way that includes at least five out of eight following indicators:

- **Focus on invisible effects of violence**: revealing long-term impacts speculated to result from the violence and clashes (such as regional peace being destabilized, friendship and cooperation between nations being damaged, free navigation being blocked, etc.).

- **Causes and consequences**: explaining the conflict formation, when it started, why, what parties involved, their goals, their positions in dispute resettlement, etc.)

- **Multi-party orientation**: giving voices to all parties to the conflict, at least to Vietnam and China as the two warring parties in these clashes.

- **See conflict as a problem**: criticizing the clashes, qualifying violence as a bad way to solve sovereign disputes.

- **Non-partisan**: not providing support to one side more than the other; being balanced by providing relatively the same amount of factual statements, for and against alike, concerning Vietnam and China; not including subjective evaluative comments of the journalist, exposing the sovereignty claims of both Vietnam and China as warring parties in the South China Sea.
- People-orientated: giving more space in the story to the voices of ordinary people directly affected by the conflict and/or independent researchers as well as students, intellectuals, etc. more than to governmental or military heads.
- Differences-orientated: focusing on the blames Vietnamese and Chinese side threw at one another, on the differences between what each side say they want.
- Avoid using all of the following types of language: demonizing, victimizing and emotive language (described in the above section of war journalism frame).

3.3. Neutral frame
Neutral frame is defined as the media presentation of events and/or persons that does not aim at making them more or less negative or positive than they are in reality. A story is considered having a neutral frame when it has the same amount of war journalism and peace journalism indicators.
Table: Chi-Square Probabilities

The areas given across the top are the areas to the right of the critical value. To look up an area on the left, subtract it from one, and then look it up (ie: 0.05 on the left is 0.95 on the right)

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