
**Changing Diplomacy Demands New Type of Diplomats**

**Judit Trunkos**

**University of South Carolina**

Judit Trunkos is a PhD Student at the University of South Carolina focusing on International Relations, Globalization and Diplomacy. This brief work is a summary of a larger, more quantitative paper, which proposes to examine the changes in modern diplomacy and to create the first database for measuring the changes caused by globalization.
Changing Diplomacy Demands New Type of Diplomats

Globalization and economic interdependence alters diplomacy and therefore changes the skill-set needed for diplomats. While in the past, diplomats negotiated with the political ideology and military alliance of their government in mind, today economic and business benefits and transparency towards the public are behind negotiations. Whereas in traditional diplomacy before globalization, the most important features of a diplomat were his or her family and social status, combined with military experience, today it is specialized education in business and public relations. In this new globalized political-economic environment, the only way to conduct successful diplomacy is to adjust to the new game.

Changing Diplomacy

Since the end of the Cold War the role of ideology in diplomacy has decreased (Leguey-Feilleux, 2009). However, just as Leguey-Feilleux observed the diminishing nature of ideology in diplomacy, he makes the same mistake as the other scholars listed below. They make an observation from a strictly political or a strictly economic perspective, and do not examine globalization’s effects on diplomacy. As we will see, scholars tend to focus on the economic nature of modern diplomacy just as Baldwin, Collier, Leguey-Feilleux and Gilpin do, or focus on the political/diplomatic nature just as Eban, Baylis, Putnam, Nye and Kissinger do. Therefore, based on my research I found two schools of thought about the changing nature of modern diplomacy: a political perspective and an economic perspective, neither of which covers the area I intent to examine.

The phenomenon of globalization is fairly new, thus the long-term effects of it cannot be examines; however, the short-term effects should have been studied much more, and not just on a qualitative, comparative basis, but also on a qualitative-analytical basis. The listed scholars only examine the changes diplomacy narrowly, even though globalization affects much more than just the surface. A comprehensive qualitative study should be done on how globalization affects diplomacy.

Economic Perspective-Globalization of Diplomacy/Non-State Actor

Economic interdependence pushes countries to work together (Leguey-Feilleux, 2009). With economic summits such as the G-8 Summit, among other important issues, the leading economic powers make sure that the global world continues to run and support their living standards as they meet annually; economic summits thus became the new form of diplomacy. The interlocking economic systems of the individual nations force cooperation on all participants and dictate that the foreign representative considers economic goals as priorities while representing the interest of the nation.
The increasing numbers of Multinational Organizations (MNO) after World War II raised a new issue with diplomacy. The diplomatic representation of non-state actors increased. As we saw it in an earlier section, the European Union (EU) enjoys the privilege of attending economic summits such as the G-8 Summit. As the number of MNOs increase, their role in global diplomacy enhances. In a globalized world, MNOs play a more important economic role than states do. Non-state actors therefore continue to change the nature of new diplomacy (Baylis, 2001). While intergovernmental agencies continue to prefer bilateral negotiations, MNOs and non-state actors, begin to use multinational meetings.

The economic power of MNOs supersedes individual states. Their resources and wealth are greater than the member states of the UN (Gilpin, 1987). In addition to the economic superior power of individual states, MNOs can also be geographically much larger that any state or empire that has ever existed. Naturally, a political entity should be represented diplomatically. Just as oligopolitstic competition began to dominate global market economy, larger summits began to appear as a combination of diplomatic and business meetings. As business and political representation melts together, major meetings between MNOs and state actors increasingly focus on economic interest and trade negotiations.

With the increasing economic power of MNOs by the late 20th Century industrialized countries’ governments began to utilize these international economic giants to achieve their own goals. Governments realized that they can use MNOs to protect their own economy and to help to maintain their own share of global economy (Gilpin, 1987). Gilpin further fails to expand on how CEOs of corporations are given the diplomatic role of not only negotiating their own company’s interest but also encouraged to keep in mind the home countries’ economic interest. As the government starts sending businessmen as diplomats to summits, they begin to transform diplomatic meetings into business negotiations. As a result, traditional diplomatic tools such as bilateral meetings and diplomatic etiquette disappear and businessmen turn into diplomats.

The changes of a global world-market transform the nature of diplomacy as well. Melissen and Wiseman summarize postmodern diplomacy as a system in which both state and non-state actors can participate simultaneously. In that case, diplomats need to be prepared to negotiate with business diplomats. As a result of the increasing number and participation of business diplomats in diplomacy, Saner and Yiu concludes that there are six new diplomatic functions of modern diplomats, all related to economics in some way (Saner, 2003). Saner and Yiu finds that in addition to the traditional roles of diplomacy, the new roles are: economic, commercial, corporate, business, national NGO and transnational NGO diplomacy (Saner, 2003). The direct effects of globalization are clearly visible on diplomacy, as they change their role into a business-like function.
Saner and Yiu are two scholars who actually look at the changes caused by globalization. They examine the new roles diplomats play as a result of globalization, but they fail to further study how institutions should adjust accordingly to train prepared diplomats for the future. Saner’s and Yiu’s article titled *International Economic Diplomacy: Mutations in Post-Modern Times* is a good start to build this paper upon, however, the session on education and professional experience must be extended and researched to pinpoint the necessary skills that successful diplomats will need to acquire.

**Economic Perspective—Globalized Diplomacy**

Economic statecraft, according to Baldwin, is a powerful and diverse tool of foreign policy. It is the most effective and cheap way to influence other countries (Baldwin, 1985). Baldwin points out that efficiency of economic pressure tools might be an even better diplomatic tool than force or any soft power. Indeed, economic aid and foreign aid is just as powerful as negative economic tools such as sanctions or embargos. And in the end the lack of financial or economic support of a country might end up being a stronger influence than sending troops. The continuous interdependence of globalization is making all participants depend on each other on some level and transforms traditional diplomacy into business negotiation about trade and investment. Even though Baldwin talks about diplomacy as part of economic statecraft, he fails to further examine the growing role of diplomacy in today's globalized world.

Baylis examines the increasing role of international negotiations between governments and he calls it “Development Diplomacy.” Since the end of World War II, the emerging priority of all nations, especially poor and developing countries is to improve the economic stability of their respective nation. According to Baylis, this is how “Development Diplomacy” began to serve a much more important role in global diplomacy. “Development Diplomacy” serves third world countries economic interest as they attempt to negotiate to get closer to the international political economy (Baylis, 2001). Baylis touches upon the economic nature of modern diplomacy, but fails to further connect the issue with globalization and the need to prepare diplomats for more business-like negotiations.

After the Cold War, increasing global economy began to alter diplomacy and as a result professional boundaries between business and diplomacy become blurred (Saner, 2003). In this new system, according to Saner and Yiu, foreign service, government, business and universities need each other in order to be effective (Saner, 2003). The phenomenon of overlapping fields and professions signals a change in the traditional diplomatic roles, which leads to a necessary change in the preparation and training of future diplomats. This cross – fertilization among fields, as Saner and Yiu calls it, leads to an increasing need of a business,
Changing Diplomacy Demands New Type of Diplomats

Judit Trunkos

4

economy and trade emphasized education for diplomats. While Saner and Yiu points out the significance of these changes in diplomacy, they fail to further study the degree and significance to which these changes are occurring.

Political Perspective-Two-Level Diplomacy

As Robert Putnam explains it, diplomacy does not exist solely on the international level. It is tightly connected with the public opinion and with the constituency. A diplomat always represents the interest of the nation but at the same time cannot ignore the public opinion. The importance level and the secrecy of each negotiation is different, however, the diplomat can politically benefit or get hurt as a result of his performance abroad. Therefore, the diplomat has to keep in mind not only the foreign effects of his actions, but also the domestic consequences of the same. Because of the close connection between the two levels of diplomacy, diplomats will prioritize the domestic popularity (Putnam, 1988). In any event, the diplomat needs to be able to communicate with both domestic and foreign public efficiently.

Without great communication skills, the new diplomat cannot appeal to its constituency directly or through the media. And while it would be logical to perhaps train PR experts and send them to Embassies and meetings, the reality is that governments cannot afford to send additional experts to the already existing delegations. It is much more cost-effective to send diplomats who are also experts in PR or business. While Putnam explains the relationship between the two levels of diplomacy, he fails to further examine the public speaking and communication skills diplomats need on both levels to conduct diplomacy.

The 24-hour cycle media also enforces the communication skills of diplomats. Initiated in the U.S. with the extensive coverage of Vietnam and Watergate, exposure of diplomatic negotiations became more aggressive (Eban, 1983). The two-level diplomacy that Putnam describes became closely interconnected. The diplomat must conduct business with his negotiating partners while the media is keeping the domestic and international public informed (Eban, 1983). The diplomat cannot hide behind secrecy anymore, but he must answer the questions of the media. The capability of public speaking and public diplomacy became a crucial requirement for successful diplomats.

Globalization’s technological and communicational revolution thus provides more transparency to the public, which leads to the increasing need of communication skills for diplomats. As former Secretary of State Albright summarized the most important function of the senior member of the cabinet, she listed communication with the public as one of the most important skills (Albright, 2008). The irreversible effect of opening up secret political and economic negotiations to the public by the media constantly puts pressure on the diplomat to ensure he is
always representing the best interest of his country and he is able to convince the people of the same¹.

**Specialization of Diplomats—Public Diplomacy**

As I mentioned earlier, scholars study modern diplomacy by separating the political and the economic sides. The only area where I found some overlapping is the new phenomenon of specialization of diplomats. Due to the American-centric nature of globalization, diplomats around the world copy the leading power’s diplomatic methods, which is currently to select more diplomats with economic and business background. Nye published his findings about America-centric globalization and its effect on increasing American soft power. Similarly to Baylis, Nye fails to study further the emerging importance of globalization in the preparation of future diplomats. Even though Nye highlights the increasing influence of economy on soft power, he does not continue to examine this phenomenon to suggest how the future diplomats should be educated, nor does he support his theory with an empirical study (Nye, 2004).

As public diplomacy emerges from the secrecy of traditional diplomacy, diplomats become mediators and communicators of international relations between countries and the public. The new job of diplomats is to adequately inform the citizens of the host country as well as the citizens of his/her own country about the negotiated issues (Sucharipa, 2002) Sucharipa and Albright therefore recognize the emergence of this new role, do not explain how diplomats should prepare for it. Because of this ever-closing relationship between the public and diplomacy, diplomats today must be skilled to address any issues immediately in a live interview or broadcast.

Because of the increasing diversity and depth of international issues, diplomats need to be more specialized in a field (Leguey-Feilleux, 2009). As political economy becomes the driving dynamic of globalization and the 21st Century, more often experts in a certain field, who are not otherwise Foreign Service members, need to be included in national delegations (Leguey-Feilleux, 2009). The importance of great knowledge in a field begins to override the importance of etiquette and other otherwise classic diplomatic skills. In today’s summits therefore nations prefer to bring economic and financial experts to ensure the best understanding of the negotiations as they are increasingly concerned with the global market. Also, the increasing need of public appearances and communicating with the people, both domestically and internationally increases the communications skills of diplomats in the globalized area.

¹The recent event of WikiLeaks exposing secret communications between US and international diplomats is another example of globalization opening up diplomacy and requiring PR skills from diplomats.
As professional diplomats are no longer the only representatives at diplomatic negotiations, specialization of the delegate begins. Economy professors from universities, professional businessmen and financial advisors are accompanying the representatives to meetings to be able to represent the market’s side of the negotiations. The new requirements of diplomacy restrict those players who do not possess the adequate market economy and communication technology (Baylis, 2001). Baylis points out the importance of economic knowledge for diplomats, however, do not develop this idea further to suggest the best course of study and work experiences for career diplomats.

The increasing demand for PR specialists and businessman in diplomacy leads to enhanced specialization. Just like in free-market economy, the most effective way to produce more money is by specializing. The same process is affecting diplomats who are increasingly being chosen from the business world rather than from the world of intellectuals or politicians. The United States leads the process just as it plays a leading role in globalization and global market economy. Not surprisingly, the U.S. is the only country which does not require its diplomats to emerge from the Foreign Service. Instead of spending long years training the chosen representatives on a variety of social and cultural issues such as international negotiations, art, foreign cultures, music and international relations, today’s US diplomats are trained to be one thing only, globalized businessman with excellent PR skills. And maybe that is the globalized-diplomats new path.

The difficulty in examining the relations between globalization and the background of diplomats is that there are not enough studies or publications dealing with these two variables in relations to each other. There are plenty of publications dealing with diplomacy and globalization separately, but scholars today fail to make the connection to address globalized diplomacy and the consequences of such. While both Gilpin and Baylis emphasize the overwhelming size and power of MNOs, they fail to further discuss the diplomatic importance of such development. Further, despite of the fact that Baylis, Nye and Leguey-Feilleux discusses the specialization of diplomats, none of the listed authors establish that as a result of globalization, future diplomats need to develop new skills.

Globalization has been studied from many angles throughout the years, but evidently its effects on diplomacy have been ignored. The changing nature of diplomacy demands that all players be adequately prepared, however, there are only a handful of publications addressing this phenomenon. In order to conduct successful globalized diplomacy, the participants need to know the new rules and qualifications. This is an important task for foreign services around the world as well as for educational institutions focusing on diplomacy. Further research should be done on this issue to assist future diplomats and foreign services.
Judit Trunkos

Changing Diplomacy Demands New Type of Diplomats

Work Cited Page


DiploFoundation. *Economic Diplomacy.*


Judit Trunkos

Changing Diplomacy Demands New Type of Diplomats


International Organization. World Peace Foundation and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.


