

Public Diplomacy Research in Japanese Language: A Systematic Review of Patterns and Trends in Academic Literature from 2001 to 2022

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Abstract

This study examines public diplomacy research in the Japanese language through a systematic review of academic literature. It reviews 149 Japanese academic articles to elucidate the trends, characteristics, and themes in the field. The research methodology primarily utilises descriptive statistics to analyse the article publication counts, author demographics and research productivity, the types of scholarly journals in which the articles are published, and the keywords in article titles including four different translations of public diplomacy. Content analysis of the titles of the identified articles is conducted, and the papers are categorised using Cull's taxonomy of public diplomacy (Cull, 2019). A supplementary survey is conducted on two journals, which contributed to building a theoretical framework of the related concepts in public diplomacy in the Japanese language. Key findings include a paradox in Japan's public diplomacy research. A growth in the number of publications and the breadth of the themes studied are revealed, but a lack of established journals and low productivity among the authors are observed at the same time. The study highlights the position of 'cultural diplomacy' in the public diplomacy research in the Japanese language and discusses the challenges of translation and definition, suggesting the need for further investigation. It argues that the discourse around public diplomacy in Japan has been influenced by previous studies in English, especially those from the U.S., suggesting the ambiguity of the original English term 'public diplomacy' and the U.S. dominance in the scholarship as a challenge to the advancement in Japanese literature. The meta-analysis of previous studies in a non-English literature diversifies the research perspectives and contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of public diplomacy as a whole.

Keywords: public diplomacy, systematic review, Japanese, cultural diplomacy, translation

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Introduction

Japan's public diplomacy

In today's interconnected and globalised world, it is meaningful to shed light on the regions that have not received sufficient attention. In the context of public diplomacy studies, this holds especially true, as public diplomacy is fundamentally an attempt to build and develop external relations, naturally extending its impact beyond the domestic sphere. It is now a global practice involving countries with diverse backgrounds, political systems, and languages. Consequently, regions such as East Asia and the Indo-Pacific have garnered increased attention in recent years as the discipline continues to evolve (Spry, 2019). As discussed in the succeeding sections, public diplomacy research in Japan emerged in the early 2000s, offering a better understanding of its practice. However, the characteristics of previous studies in Japanese is unclear. Public diplomacy in Japan has evolved within the framework of the country's geopolitical positioning, economic strength, and rich cultural assets, while being influenced mainly by the practices of its American and European counterparts. This distinct profile can offer a unique perspective to the Japanese discourse on public diplomacy.

Japan has pursued a position as a peaceful nation and has placed emphasis on mutual understanding through cultural initiatives since the end of World War II. It is a more recent phenomenon that Japan started to institutionalise its public diplomacy operations. The organisation and strategisation of public diplomacy took place during an economic downturn following the collapse of the so-called bubble economy in the early 1990s. Its development aligns more closely with Western models in that regard, unlike countries in East Asia and Southeast Asia where public diplomacy has been embraced as part of their economic growth strategies. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) created the Public Diplomacy Department in 2004 by integrating external public relations and international cultural exchange units. Its establishment materialised Japan's comprehensive approach to a U.S.-type of public diplomacy, strategically encompassing both external public relations and cultural relations (Kaneko and Kitano, 2014). It is reasonable to assume that the groundwork for these developments was laid out by the diplomats stationed in the U.S. around the year 2000. They likely proactively engaged with and absorbed the latest research trends on soft power and public diplomacy on-site, later incorporating these insights into the Japanese framework upon their return. Consequently, Mikami argues that the interpretation adopted by MOFA since the early development of public diplomacy is perceived as being informed not by the discourse in Japan but by that in the U.S. (Mikami, 2007).

Public diplomacy, introduced to Japan as an imported concept, has since become embedded in the government's policies. It is exemplified by the Council on the Promotion of Cultural Diplomacy, launched in 2004 under the Koizumi administration, that emphasised Japan's pop culture as a driving force of cultural promotion in general (Ogawa, 2020). The Great East Japan Earthquake, Tsunami and Fukushima Nuclear Accident in 2011 significantly affected

Japan's international reputation, necessitating government efforts to counter the "Japan Passing" phenomenon. The Prime Minister's Office and MOFA took measures through the media, cultural exchange opportunities, and international broadcasting, in collaboration with institutions such as the Japan Foundation¹⁾ and Japan's public broadcaster, NHK World News (Ogawa, 2020). Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's emphasis on strategic external communication during his second administration from 2012 to 2020 is also noteworthy. These efforts were aimed at promoting understanding of Japan's stance amid increasing tensions with its Asian neighbors. As observed, significant developments in contemporary public diplomacy in Japan have taken place over the past two decades.

Systematic review

A systematic review is 'a means of evaluating and interpreting all available research relevant to a particular research question, topic area, or phenomenon of interest' (Kitchenham, 2004: iv). The individual studies in question are referred to as primary research. Systematic reviews constitute secondary research, which hold significance in that they systematically integrate or categorise primary studies (Roth-Cohen & Avidar, 2022). This methodology is characterised not only by its inclusion of all available research but also by its 'clear and structured questions, systematic search strategies, criteria for selecting studies and coding procedure' (Roth-Cohen & Avidar, 2022:2).

Correspondingly, a systematic review enables a more comprehensive and scientific analysis than that achieved with general literature reviews (Kitchenham, 2004; Roth-Cohen & Avidar, 2022). It was originally used in the medical field, but it spread to other disciplines in the mid-1990s and has been applied to public relations studies, a discipline adjacent to public diplomacy, since the 2010s (Volk, 2016).

Systematic reviews have also been deployed to public diplomacy research, with focus placed on studies published in English. For example, Sevin et al. systematically evaluated 2,124 peer-reviewed English papers published since 1965 up to 2017, spanning 52 years (Sevin et al., 2019). The study revealed pioneering and prominent trends in research that had emerged in English-speaking regions since the inception of the concept of public diplomacy. It supports the notion that academic interest in public diplomacy has increased since the turn of the century. The authors confirmed the interdisciplinarity of public diplomacy research and indicated a regional focus on the U.S. and China. As a comprehensive review of the literature published in English, Sevin et al.'s work serves as an important benchmark for evaluating non-English research in the field (Sevin et al., 2019).

1) The Japan Foundation is the institution for international cultural exchange programmes, established as a special legal entity in 1972 under the auspices of the MOFA.

Purpose of this study

This study used Sevin et al.'s research as a standard in illuminating five research questions (RQs), with a focus on Japanese studies that have not been systematically reviewed. The questions are as follows:

RQ1: How has the number of public diplomacy-related academic articles in Japanese evolved over time?

Sevin et al. revealed that the production of English papers on public diplomacy grew significantly after 2001 with over 100 articles published annually since 2008 while only 75 papers were published between 1965 and 2000 (Sevin et al., 2019). Building on this previous research, this study examined the trend in Japan.

RQ2: Who authors public diplomacy papers in Japanese?

This RQ sought to determine the attributes of the scholars and their productivity in publishing public diplomacy studies. This approach was intended to lay out the depth and diversity of Japanese scholarship in the academic discipline of interest.

RQ3: What are the characteristics of the Japanese scholarly journals that publish papers on public diplomacy?

Investigating which journals publish public diplomacy-themed articles clarifies how the field is approached in Japan and depicts the extent of scholarship on the concept, the practice and the domain in the country. English articles are mostly published in journals of international relations, and they are featured in journals on journalism and mass communication (including public relations), as well as regional studies. This coverage demonstrates the academic and regional breadth of public diplomacy research (Sevin et al., 2019).

RQ4: What themes are addressed in Japanese papers within this field?

Sevin et al. analysed the terminologies used in the titles and abstracts of the identified papers and indicated that certain terms, country names or combinations thereof are frequently employed (Sevin et al., 2019). We compared these with the terminologies used in the Japanese literature.

RQ5: How are different Japanese translations of 'public diplomacy' used?

Four Japanese translation terms for public diplomacy are used in this study. It aimed at elucidating not only the differences but also the interrelationships among the translated terms used in the literature.

Methodology

Search Terms

The set of words used to search for articles is an important factor in determining the direction of the research. The problem is that there is no fixed Japanese translation for the English term ‘public diplomacy’. Multiple translations are applied to the term, and just picking up a few papers can give an idea of the confusing situation. For instance, Horinuki laid out many translations describing that “ ‘public diplomacy’ is known in Japan as 公報外交 ‘gazette diplomacy’, 広報外交 ‘public relations diplomacy’, 広報文化外交 ‘public relations and cultural diplomacy’, 大衆外交 ‘mass diplomacy’ and 公論外交 ‘public opinion diplomacy’ ” (Horinuki, 2019 : 144) . Nagura applies 文化外交, a term meaning cultural diplomacy, to the translation of public diplomacy. Putting the direct translation of public diplomacy パブリック・ディプロマシー (*pabulikku-dipulomashi*) in brackets, she describes that “ ‘cultural diplomacy’ (‘public diplomacy’) was first used in public by the former U.S. diplomat Edmund Gallion in 1965 ” (Nagura, 2015:108). In view of this situation, we determined that ‘public diplomacy’ in Japanese is not limited to パブリック・ディプロマシー (*pabulikku-dipulomashi*), the direct translation, but multiple translated terms need to be investigated.

Drawing from the results of preliminary investigations, four search terms were eventually chosen to identify relevant articles (Figure 1). The first is パブリック・ディプロマシー (*pabulikku-dipulomashi*), the above-mentioned direct translation of public diplomacy²). It is written in *Katakana* characters, one of the three scripts in the Japanese writing system that is used for foreign-language words. The term appeared in the *Diplomatic Blue Book* —the annual report on the state of foreign affairs published MOFA since 1957 — for the first time in 2004 (Lee, 2015)³). The second term is 広報文化外交 (*koho bunka gaiko*, a combined word of *koho* meaning public relations, *bunka* meaning culture and *gaiko* meaning diplomacy), which was assumingly coined by MOFA as a translation of ‘public diplomacy’ applying Kanji, the Chinese characters adapted to Japanese. MOFA’s official website states that パブリック・ディプロマシー (*pabulikku-dipulomashi*) “refers to diplomatic activities that differ from traditional government-to-government diplomacy that directly appeal to the people and public opinion of foreign countries through publicity and cultural exchange. It is often translated into Japanese as 広報文化外交 (*koho bunka gaiko*)” (MOFA, 2023). The division within the ministry known in English as the Public Diplomacy Strategy Division is called 広報文化外交戦略課 in Japanese, in which 広報文化外交 (*koho bunka gaiko*) is appended to the English term ‘public diplomacy’. It is worth emphasising that the word *bunka* meaning ‘culture’ is included in the translation of public diplomacy used by MOFA.

2) This term パブリック・ディプロマシー can be spelled out without the middle point between パブリック (*pabulikku* = ‘public’) and ディプロマシー (*dipulomashi* = ‘diplomacy’). The notation with the middle point, which is more frequently used, is employed in this paper to represent both notations.

3) The original title of the report was *Recent Developments in Our Diplomacy*, which was renamed the *Diplomatic Blue Book* in 1987.

	Search Terms	Description in English
1	パブリック・ディプロマシー (<i>pabulikku-dipulomashi</i> or <i>paburikku dipulomashi</i>)	- Direct translation of public diplomacy
2	広報文化外交 (<i>koho bunka gaiko</i>)	- Three-word connection of <i>koho</i> meaning public relations, <i>bunka</i> meaning culture and <i>gaiko</i> meaning diplomacy. -The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) uses the term as the translation of public diplomacy.
3	広報外交 (<i>koho gaiko</i>)	-Two-word connection of <i>koho</i> meaning public relations and <i>gaiko</i> meaning diplomacy.
4	文化外交 (<i>bunka gaiko</i>)	-Two-word connection of <i>bunka</i> meaning culture and <i>gaiko</i> meaning diplomacy.

Figure 1. Description of the Search Terms

Two other terms that serve as translations of ‘public diplomacy’ were used in the search — 広報外交 (*koho gaiko*, the combination of *koho* meaning public relations and *gaiko* meaning diplomacy) and 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*, the combination of *bunka* meaning culture and *gaiko* meaning diplomacy, or ‘cultural diplomacy’). More 広報外交 (*koho gaiko*) were hit than 広報文化外交 (*koho bunka gaiko*) in our preliminary surveys, suggesting that the former is a more established translation than that used by MOFA (広報文化外交, *koho bunka gaiko*). This popularity may be partly attributed to Joseph Nye’s globally discussed book *Soft Power*, wherein public diplomacy is translated as 広報外交 (*koho gaiko*, the combination of *koho* meaning public relations and *gaiko* meaning diplomacy), contributing to the generalisation of the term (Nye, 2004).

文化外交 (*bunka gaiko* meaning cultural diplomacy) was adopted as the fourth search term in the present study. The reason is that the papers of several researchers believed to be conducting research mainly on cultural diplomacy did not appear in the search results using those three aforementioned search terms. Cull, a prominent public diplomacy scholar, explains that public diplomacy consists of five elements: listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy and international broadcasting, with reference to public diplomacy practice in the U.S. (Cull, 2019). Cull’s taxonomy is widely referenced, and cultural diplomacy is commonly understood in English literature as a sub-concept of public diplomacy. However, we ventured to include ‘cultural diplomacy’ in the search terms with the aim of clarifying what the relationship between ‘public diplomacy’ and ‘cultural diplomacy’ is in Japanese literature.

Sample Selection Procedures

Academic articles were identified using CiNii Research, the academic search platform operated by Japan's National Institute of Informatics. This online platform provides extensive bibliographic information on literature published in Japan, though not exclusively in the Japanese language. Given that Japanese is seldom used outside of Japan for research and everyday communication, and is the predominant language within the country, this online database is considered a suitable tool for identifying literature specifically written in Japanese. The criteria for sample selection are as follows: (1) At least one of the four search terms is used in the title, keyword section or abstract of the research; (2) the articles are academic, appearing in journals published by either academic societies or universities (bulletins); (3) the main texts are written in Japanese; and (4) the articles are published between January 2001 and December 2022.

On CiNii Research, an 'OR search' was conducted using four search terms under the conditions: Data type 'articles', period (publication year) '2001 – 2022' and language type 'ja' for Japanese. We focused exclusively on academic journals and university bulletins for our investigation, excluding papers published by non-academic journals and books. Including peer-reviewed academic journals is essential to our study as they are considered the most prestigious academic publications in Japan and in the Western world. This study also incorporates university bulletins to comprehensively understand public diplomacy research in the Japanese language. While many university bulletins are not strictly peer-reviewed, their widespread use, often contributed to by affiliated faculty and doctoral students, serves as important sources of scholarly communication in Japan.

By restricting the search to the Japanese language, we were able to identify articles whose main texts are written in Japanese. Some of the identified articles have titles or abstracts written in English instead of Japanese, but we included them in the sample list as long as their main texts are written in Japanese.

Data collection and cleaning procedures

An initial extraction yielded data for a total of 260 scholarly articles. However, this collection included articles published in journals not classified as academic journals. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, a list was compiled of publications that did not conform to the classification of journals published either by academic societies or universities. Consequently, 48 journals and 97 papers published by them were excluded from the final list. Bibliographical information for total of 146 papers were identified after removing duplicates of data. Three articles were added to the study that were initially not extracted by CiNii Research but were identified through Google Scholar during the preliminary survey.⁴⁾ As a result, the final count

4) Among the missing three articles in CiNii Research, two articles contained the English term 'public diplomacy' in the title, keyword section, or abstract, despite the main texts being written in Japanese. These articles were not included in CiNii

of articles subject to investigation in this study amounted to 149. We collected all articles of which 49 were not available in a digital format. The selection process was carried out by three trained coders, and it has been confirmed that there was no discrepancy in the outcomes derived by each individual.

Data analysis process

The systematic review was based primarily on descriptive statistics. Additionally, a more detailed content analysis was conducted. From the bibliographic data of each article, we identified the year of publication, the authors, the journal in which it was published, and the terms used in the title, abstract and keyword section. A total of 122 authors wrote at least one of the extracted articles on public diplomacy. An analysis was conducted on these authors from multiple perspectives, including their roles as sole authors or co-authors of the scholarly articles under consideration. This analysis confirmed the count of manuscripts authored independently and collaboratively. Based on the number of articles per author and whether they were single- authored or co-authored, the research productivity index (RPI) was then calculated to determine each author's output and impact with respect to scholarship on public diplomacy. The RPI is the sum of 'the number of articles published by each author and the cumulative article credit for each author' (Roth-Cohen & Avidar, 2022:7). The maximum cumulative article credit that an author can receive for one paper is 1 point. 1 point is awarded to a single author, 0.5 points each is given to two co-authors and 0.33 points each is given to three co-authors. For instance, an author with 10 solo-authored articles receives a cumulative article credit of 10 points, leading to an RPI of 20 points. Conversely, an author who co-authors 10 papers with another author obtains a cumulative article credit of 0.5 for each paper, resulting in an RPI of 15 points.

We explored authorial attributes, specifically the stages of the authors' careers at the time of publication. Identifying career stages helps determine the periods in their professions at which the authors became interested in public diplomacy. We also examined the membership of academic societies among authors at the time of the survey. Pinpointing the authors' areas of specialisation through their society memberships helps to determine which disciplines are most actively involved in studying public diplomacy in Japan. For both career stage and academic society affiliation, Researchmap⁵⁾ was used as the primary data source, along with the authors' institutional and personal websites. Gender known from the author's name was investigated, and their locations and ethnic backgrounds were considered.

In terms of the journals that published the selected articles, all identified journals were categorised as either academic society publications or university bulletins. They were also

Research's results as the English term was not part of the search criteria. The reason for the third article not being extracted by CiNii Research is unclear, but it was later found in the database.

5) Researchmap is a major online database of researchers working in Japan operated by the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST). Japanese researchers are encouraged to register themselves to publish and update their achievements regularly.

classified by theme based on the National Diet Library Classification Table (NDLC). The NDLC is a classification standard for bibliographic materials held by the National Diet Library, which has a comprehensive collection of domestic publications in Japan. The use of the NDLC enabled the categorisation of the journals under a unified index.

In systematic reviews, the title, abstract and keywords of the articles under review are often the subject of analysis. However, there are many examples of articles in Japanese in social sciences and humanities that do not include abstracts and/or keywords. Indeed, out of 149 articles, only 27 (18.1 %) have a title, abstract and keywords. Titles are the only element among the three that was available for all identified articles. Therefore, limiting the analysis to titles, we analysed the volume and co-occurrence of the words present in the titles using KH Coder, a Japanese text-mining software programme developed for research purposes.

Furthermore, to elucidate the relationships between the four selected search terms as translations of public diplomacy, the articles were categorised according to the five components of public diplomacy as identified by Cull based on close reading.

Descriptive Findings

Yearly growth of paper publication (RQ.1)



Figure 2. Number of Articles by Year of Publication (N=149)

The review of publication year of all 149 articles indicated that an average of 6.8 articles have been published annually since 2002 (Figure 2). According to the survey, only eight articles were published before 2000 with only the target publication year changed from the

original search criteria of this study. These findings confirm that public diplomacy has become an explicitly pursued subject in Japan in this century, as it has been in the English-speaking world. The reason behind the difference in trends between years remains unclear due to the relatively small overall number of publications. However, it is worth noting that five out of the 16 articles published in 2013, which had the highest number of publications, were special feature articles on U.S.-Japan public diplomacy in *Intelligence*, the peer-reviewed research journal of the Institute of 20th Century Media at Waseda University.

Authorship, research productivity and authorial attributes (RQ.2)

The surveyed 149 articles were authored by a total 122 authors. Out of these authors, 101 (82.8%) published only one article (Figure 3). On the other hand, eight authors, representing 6.6% of the total, published three or more papers.

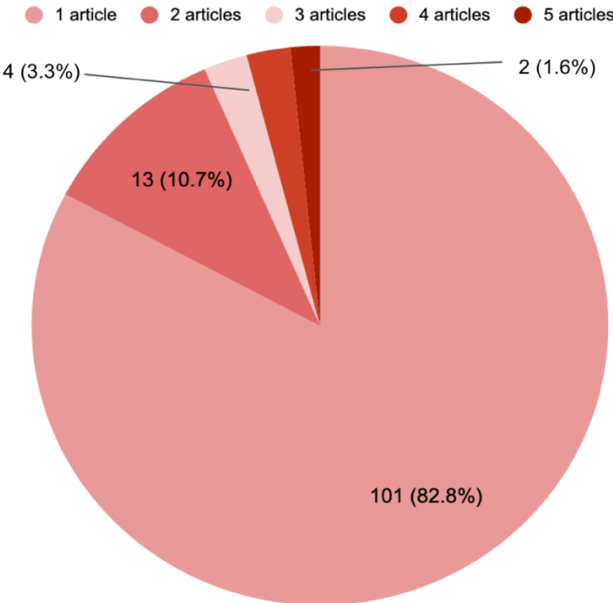


Figure 3. Authors by the Number of Published Articles in Public Diplomacy Studies (N=122)

141 of the 149 articles (95%) were single authored, six articles were co-authored by two scholars and the remaining two articles were co-authored by three authors. Despite the high degree of single authorship, the small number of articles published by each author resulted in the low degree of RPI. Both authors, Toshiki Kumagai and Xuebin Zhang, attained the highest RPI score of 10 points by each publishing five solo-authored papers. Specifically, all five papers by Toshiki Kumagai were published in the bulletins of Kyoto University of Foreign Studies from 2003 to 2014, while four out of five papers by Xuebin Zhang were published in the bulletins of Doshisha University from 2012 to 2017 (e.g. Kumagai, 2014; Zhang 2017). The lowest RPI was 1.33 points, earned by each of the six authors who published one paper that was co-authored with two other researchers (Figure 4). The mean

RPI was 2.5, and the median was 2.

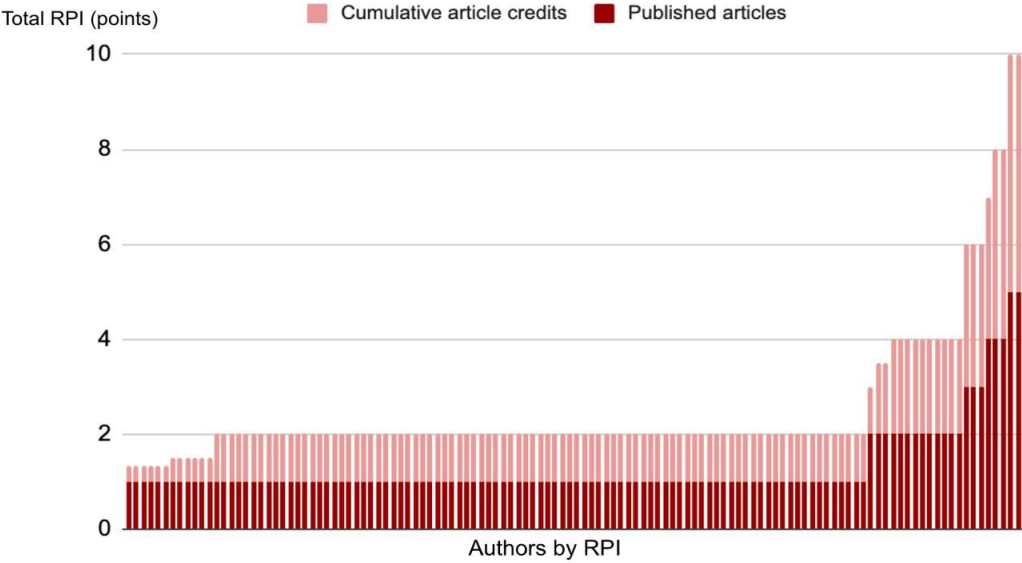


Figure 4. Authors by Research Productivity Index (N-122)

The total number of individual authors was 122, but the gross headcount of authors was 159 as some authors have authored more than one paper. Out of a total of 159 individuals, information regarding the backgrounds of 150 persons (accounting for 94.3 %) was able to be obtained from sources such as Researchmap. We estimated the positions held by these authors at the time of publication of their articles by cross- checking the publication year of articles with the corresponding author’s biography.

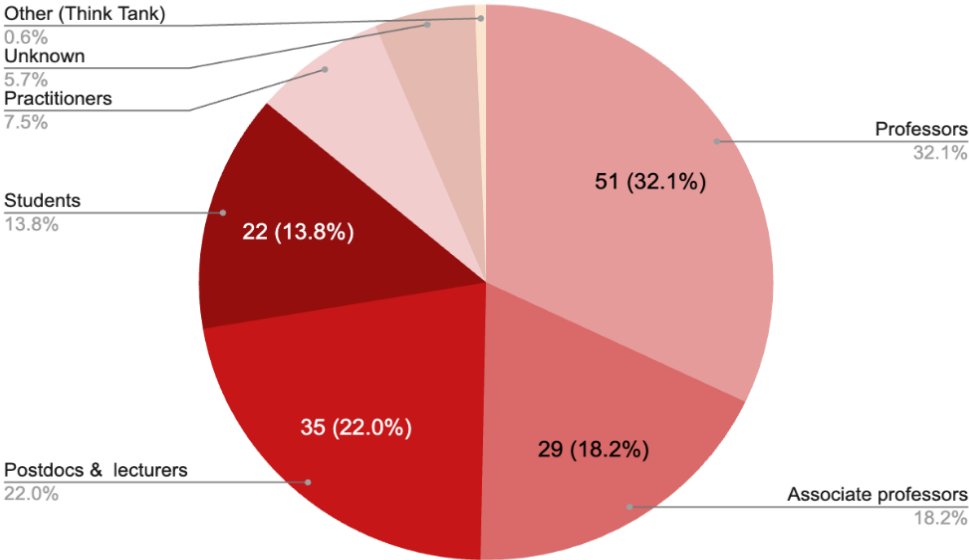


Figure 5. Authors’ Career Status at the Year of Publication (N=159)

The result shows a diverse distribution of posts held by the authors at the time of article publication, with 35 junior scholar positions including postdocs and lecturers (22.0 %), 29 associate professors (18.2 %) and 22 students (13.8 %) (Figure 5). The most common position was that of a professor (including emeritus professors), held by 51 authors (32.1 %). Of the sample, 12 authors were practitioners (8.2 %), in fact. They were affiliated with various institutions, ranging from MOFA, the Japan Foundation to foreign diplomatic organisations located in Japan. For example, while serving as Deputy Director-General at MOFA, Keiji Ide authored an article titled “On ‘Cultural Diplomacy’: Historical Perspective, Meaning, and Challenges for Us” in 2009, which was published in a peer-reviewed journal by Japan Association for Cultural Economics. Apart from the above-mentioned active practitioners, some authors had direct or indirect practical experience of public diplomacy, serving, for example, as former diplomats or former journalists in international reporting.

Most of the authors, 101 individuals, indeed, had written only one paper, suggesting a low correlation between career progression and increased or sustained interest in the field. Of the 21 authors who wrote more than two papers, eight were promoted or advanced in position by their second or third publication (e.g. from lecturer to associate professor or from student to postdoctoral researcher). One author transitioned from being a practitioner to being a professor between his first and second publications.

We identified 57 out of 122 authors (46.7%) who disclosed their affiliation with academic societies on Researchmap or their personal and/or institutional websites. This analysis revealed that this select group of authors were associated with a total of 210 different societies, covering a wide range of disciplines including history to area studies to arts, informatics, and economics⁶). Due to the limited sample the analysis was incomprehensive, but the academic society with the largest number of member-authors was the Japan Association of International Relations (18 authors), followed by the Japan Association for Media, Journalism and Communication Studies (eight authors) and the Japan Association for Asian Studies (six authors) and the English Literary Society of Japan (five authors). The list also includes more than 27 international associations, incorporating societies active in countries like the United States and South Korea, as well as international bodies such as the International Studies Association (ISA), to which three authors belong. Although the Japan Association of International Relations stands out as a prominent society, the involvement of members from a multitude of other societies indicates the diverse academic backgrounds of scholars in public diplomacy. The fact that 42 out of 210 societies (20.0%) include the term ‘history’ (including ‘history of ...’) in their titles is also a notable characteristic of the societies to which the authors belong.

6) Among the academic societies listed, 119 organisations are registered in the *Gakkai Meika* (Directory of Academic Societies) by the Science Council of Japan (SCJ), the representative body of the Japanese scientific community across all disciplines. This online directory includes more than 2,100 academic research organisations and federations of academic research organisations that have offered to cooperate with the activities of the SCJ and have been granted the status of ‘Science Council of Japan Cooperating Academic Research Organisations’ (SCJ, 2024).

Out of a total of 122 authors, 70 were classified as male and 44 as female based on the characteristics of their names. Gender determination was not possible for the remaining 8 names, partly because they were in a foreign language. Consequently, among those whose gender could be estimated, 36.1% were female authors. The percentage of female researchers in Japan has shown a gradual increase, rising from 13% in 2007 to 18.2% in 2022 (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2022). This percentage remains the lowest among OECD member countries (Cabinet Office, 2022). A research study on researchers affiliated with universities, excluding those working in private and/or government sectors but including PhD students, indicates that 28.2% of them are female (Nagase, 2020). Nagase further analyses the representation of female researchers at universities by discipline, revealing that in commerce and economics, philosophy, law, politics, and history, the female ratio ranges from around 18% to 25% (Nagase, 2020). In this context, the percentage of female researchers publishing papers in public diplomacy is relatively high.

The Japanese language is primarily used in Japan, suggesting that scholars conducting research in Japanese are generally based in Japan. While they are likely to be predominantly Japanese, they are not limited to this nationality. Authors with diverse ethnic backgrounds have contributed to publications in Japanese academic journals, adding value to research conducted in the Japanese language. Some authors have non-Japanese names but their names are written in *Kanji*, indicating their ethnic roots in the regions that share Chinese characters, such as South Korea or China. Additionally, there are three authors whose names appear in *Katakana* which are characters used for foreign-language words. A small number of the articles, including those authored by these three scholars, are Japanese translations of non-Japanese language content.

Types of journals (RQ.3)

Publishing bodies	Number of journals	Number of articles
Academic societies	36 (33.3%)	47 (31.5%)
Universities	72 (66.7%)	102 (68.5%)
	108	149

Figure 6. Categorisation of Journals and Articles

A total of 108 journals published 149 articles in Japanese, all of which were published by institutions in Japan. Specifically, 36 academic society publications (33.3% of the total journals) published 47 articles (31.5% of the total articles) while university bulletins publish the remaining articles (Figure 6). The smaller volume of academic journals and articles published by them indicates the general trend in Japan, where university bulletins serve as a common platform for research.

Following the thematic classification of the relevant journals by the NDLC, 27 (one-quarter of the total) were general scholarly journals, constituting the largest group (Figure 7). The next most common types of publications were categorised under "History and Geography" (24 journals). This, combined with the observation that many academic societies to which the authors belong focus on history, suggests that a historical approach is prevalent in public diplomacy studies in Japanese. The number of articles published by the "Politics, Law, Administration" journals (16 journals), the third category, is 29, slightly higher than that published by "History and Geography" journals.

NDLC Themes	NDLC Code	No. of Journals Categorised Under Each Theme	No. of Articles Published by the Journals in Each Category
General scholarly journals	ZV	28	37
History, Geography	ZG	24	26
Politics, Law, Administration	ZA	16	29
The Arts (including Language, Literature)	ZK	13	16
Bibliographies, Libraries, General yearbooks	ZU	9	16
Economics	ZD	5	6
Social affairs, Labour	ZE	4	6
Science and technology	ZM	2	3
Philosophy, Religion	ZH	2	2
Education	ZF	1	1
Not categorised (online-only journals)		4	7
Total		108	149

Figure 7. Classification of Journals by NDLC Themes (N=108)

Terms usage in the titles and themes addressed (RQ.4)

The scope of the investigation into the occurrence of terms was limited to the titles of the 149 articles due to the characteristics of Japanese literature, where the abstract and/or keywords are often missing. Of all the terms used in the titles, the most frequently occurring (49 times) was 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*, the combination of *bunka* meaning culture and *gaiko* meaning diplomacy, or 'cultural diplomacy') followed by パブリック・ディプロマシー (*pabulikku-dipulomashi*, the direct translation of public diplomacy, 48 times) (Figure 8).

	Search Terms	Description in English	Frequency
1	パブリック・ディプロマシー or パブリックディプロマシー (<i>paburikku-dipulomashi</i> or <i>paburikku dipulomashi</i>)	- Direct translation of public diplomacy	48
2	広報文化外交 (<i>koho bunka gaiko</i>)	- Three-word connection of <i>koho</i> meaning public relations, <i>bunka</i> meaning culture and <i>gaiko</i> meaning diplomacy. -The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) uses the term as the translation of public diplomacy.	4
3	広報外交 (<i>koho gaiko</i>)	-Two-word connection of <i>koho</i> meaning public relations and <i>gaiko</i> meaning diplomacy.	22
4	文化外交 (<i>bunka gaiko</i>)	-Two-word connection of <i>bunka</i> meaning culture and <i>gaiko</i> meaning diplomacy.	49

Figure 8. Appearance of the Search Terms in the Article Titles

These words are two of the four translations of public diplomacy used in the search. 広報外交 (*koho gaiko* meaning public relations and diplomacy) and 広報文化外交 (*koho bunka gaiko*, a combined word of ‘public relations’, ‘culture’ and ‘diplomacy’) appeared 22 times and 4 times, respectively (Figure 8). A clear tendency was found in the usage pattern of the four translations of public diplomacy in the titles: The term 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*, ‘cultural diplomacy’) dominates around one third of the titles of the articles. It appeared frequently in Japanese literature to an extent that is comparable to the direct translation of the English term パブリック・ディプロマシー (*paburikku-dipulomashi*, ‘public diplomacy’) in terms of the volume used in the titles. The analysis shows that ‘cultural diplomacy’ is one of the central axes of Japanese research in the field of public diplomacy studies.

Terms	Pronunciation, Meaning in English	Frequency
日本, 日(地名), 訪日, 来日 etc...	<i>nihon</i> (Japan), <i>nichi</i> (Japan), <i>Honichi</i> (visiting Japan), <i>Rainichi</i> (coming to Japan), etc...	64
アメリカ, 米国, 米 (地名), アメリカン etc...	<i>amerika</i> (USA), <i>beikoku</i> (USA), <i>bei</i> (USA), <i>amerikan</i> (American) etc...	51
中国, 中 (地名), China etc...	<i>chugoku</i> (China), <i>chu</i> (China), China etc...	21
日米	<i>nichibei</i> (US-Japan)	10
アジア, 東南アジア, 東アジア	<i>ajia</i> (Asia), <i>tonan-ajia</i> (South-East Asia), <i>higashi ajia</i> (East Asia)	9
ドイツ, 独 (地名)	<i>doitsu</i> (Germany), <i>doku</i> (Germany)	7
ソ連, ソ(地名), 露 (地名),	<i>soren</i> (Soviet), <i>so</i> (Soviet), <i>ro</i> (Russia)	7
韓国, 韓 (地名)	<i>kankoku</i> (South Korea), <i>kan</i> (South Korea),	5
フランス, 仏	<i>furance</i> (France), <i>futsu</i> (France)	5
ヨーロッパ, 欧州, 欧 (地名), 東欧, 北欧	<i>yoroppa</i> (Europe), <i>oushu</i> (Europe), <i>ou</i> (Europe), <i>touou</i> (Eastern Europe), <i>hokuou</i> (Northern Europe)	5
イギリス, 英	<i>igirisu</i> (UK), <i>ei</i> (UK)	3

Figure 9. Most Frequently Appeared Countries/Regions in the Article Titles

Regarding geographic regions, the terms ‘U.S.’ and ‘China’ appeared the most-frequently, indicating a high level of interest in these regions as research subjects. This is in line with the research trends in literature in English (Sevin et al., 2019; Figure 9). The United States has been a key research subject in Japanese-language literature regarding public diplomacy practices and theories since the early 2000s. The studies include analyses of public diplomacy as a U.S. foreign policy strategy, as well as U.S. policies toward Japan during the post-World War II occupation and in the Cold War periods (e.g., Kitayama, 2003; Yoshimoto, 2014; Tsuchiya, 2020). Interestingly, among the 149 articles surveyed in this study, the earliest article published was authored by a staff member at the American Center Reference Service (ACRS), which is part of the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo (Hashimoto, 2002). This article, featured in the journal *The Science and Technology of Information* introduces the ACRS’ mission “to promote mutual understanding between Japan and the U.S. by providing information services to the Japanese public.” It also highlights the facility’s early adoption of the internet and e-mail services.

In the Japanese publications, interest in Asia began to expand around the end of the 2000s. China has been a focal point of attention as a public diplomacy actor and as a target of Japan’s and/or the U.S.’s activities. The same is true for neighboring South Korea. Comparative studies between Japan and China, as well as between Japan and South Korea, can also be observed (e.g., Liu, 2020; Hisada, 2013). Taiwan as a research subject is only explicitly mentioned in the title of one paper (Nagura, 2015). Europe has also been a subject of study. In the postwar period, Japan focused on building relations with other countries primarily through cultural exchange. The Japan Foundation has modeled its activities after those of the British Council and the Goethe Institute. Against this backdrop, the activities of European countries have been a topic of academic research. (e.g. Okeda, 2009).

Co-occurrence of the terms in the titles (RQ.5)

To investigate the differences in the characteristics of the four search terms, we analysed the co-occurrence of terms in the titles using KH Coder. It showed that パブリック・ディプロマシー (*pabulikku-dipulomashi*, public diplomacy) co-occurs with the terms 日本 (*nihon*, ‘Japan’) 米国 (*beikoku*, ‘the U.S.’) while 広報外交 (*koho gaiko*, meaning public relations and diplomacy) co-occurs with 日米関係 (*nichibei kankei*, meaning U.S.-Japan relations) and 情報 (*joho*, information). 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*, meaning cultural diplomacy), the most frequently used translation in the titles co-occurred with the words 文化, 交流 and 事業 (*bunka, kohryu and jigyou*, meaning culture, exchange and project, respectively) unlike the other search terms (Figure 10). The co-occurrence of the words used in the titles suggests that 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*, meaning cultural diplomacy) has different properties from the other three translations.

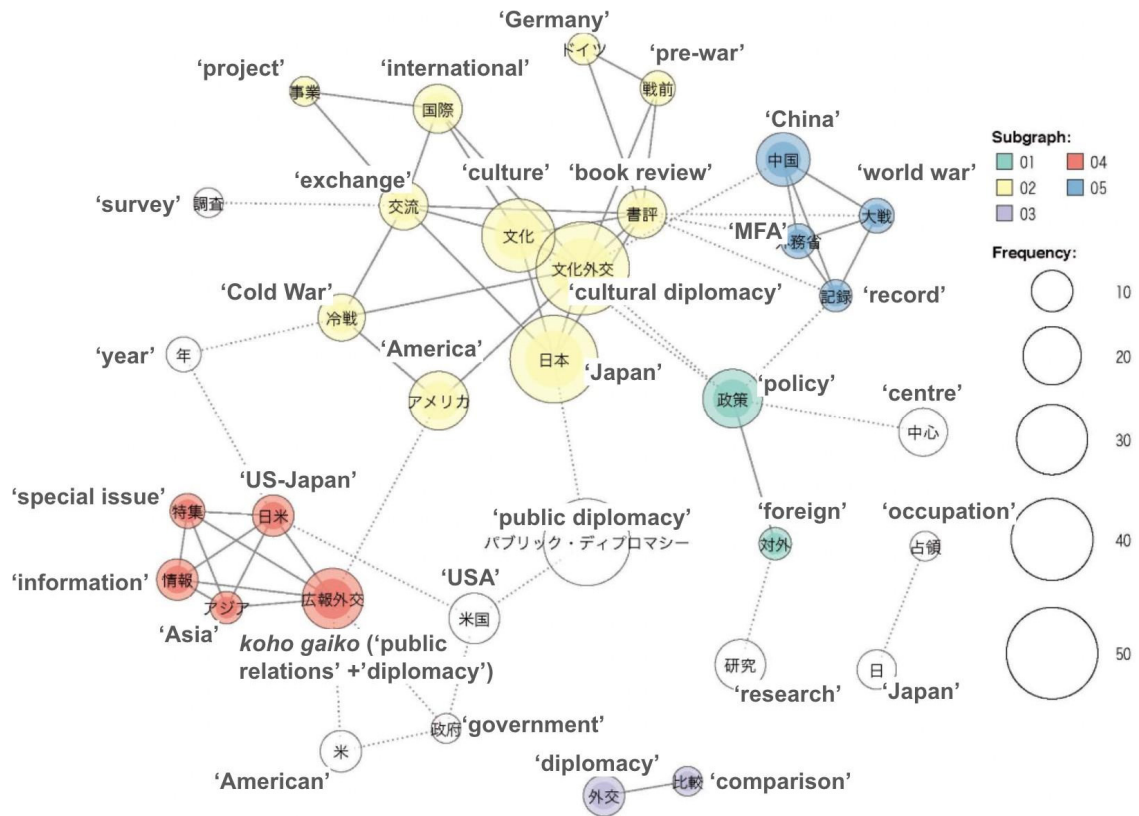


Figure 10. Co-occurrence of the Terms in the Titles

Thematic Analysis

To further explore the characteristics of the four translations of public diplomacy present in Japanese papers, the extracted papers were categorised based on the taxonomy of public diplomacy by Cull, a renowned scholar in this academic discipline. Cull's description of cultural diplomacy, one of the components of public diplomacy alongside listening, advocacy, exchange diplomacy, and international broadcasting, explicitly refers to attempts to manage the international environment by exporting one's way of life, sentiments, and art outside of one's own country (Cull, 2019). Cultural diplomacy, as a part of public diplomacy, is generally considered a component in English literature. However, our survey on word usage in article titles showed that the term 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*, meaning cultural diplomacy) was used frequently and to a similar degree as パブリック・ディプロマシー (*paburikku-dipuromashi*), the literal translation of public diplomacy. A deeper investigation into the characteristics of cultural diplomacy in Japanese-language literature was conducted.

During the classification procedure, the title of each paper was examined, along with the abstract and keywords when available, and the introduction and conclusion sections as needed. Regardless of whether the Japanese title contained the term 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*, meaning cultural diplomacy), if the research topic aligned with Cull's definition of cultural diplomacy, the paper was labeled as pertaining to cultural diplomacy. For instance, the article

that explores the cultural relations between the U.K. and the U.S.S.R. during the Cold War with a title that included 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*) was categorised as cultural diplomacy (Waldron, 2020). Another article examining the reception and dissemination of Japanese culture in France with a title that included パブリック・ディプロマシー (*pabulikku-dipulomashi*) instead of 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko* meaning cultural diplomacy) was also categorised as cultural diplomacy (Watanabe, 2011).

Consequently, among the extracted articles, 96 papers were categorised according to the five components of Cull's taxonomy. 33 papers, including those with a strong focus on theory and/or history, could not be fitted into any of the components. 15 book reviews and the remaining five papers were also excluded after it was determined that they did not have a direct relevance to the research field of public diplomacy.

		Search Terms (Translations of Public Diplomacy) in the Titles				2 search terms in 1 title	No search terms in the titles, but in abstracts / keywords only	
		①パブリック・ディプロマシー (<i>pabulikku-dipulomashi</i> , 'public diplomacy')	②広報文化外交 (<i>koho bunka gaiko</i> , 'PR+culture+diplo macy')	③広報外交 (<i>koho gaiko</i> , 'PR+ diplomacy')	④文化外交 (<i>bunka gaiko</i> , 'cultural diplomacy')			
Cull's taxonomy	Culture	8	2	0	23	0	16	49 papers
	Exchange	2	0	2	11	1 (②+③)	2	18 papers
	Listening	0	0	1	0	0	1	2 papers
	Advocacy	10	0	8	0	1 (①+③)	4 (①x3, ③x1)	23 papers
	International Broadcasting	1	0	2	0	0	1	4 papers
Others	PD in general, PD organisations, PD theories	24	0	4	3	1 (①+②)	2	33 papers
	Book reviews, non-PD themed	2	1	3	12	0	2	20 papers
		46 papers	3 papers	20 papers	49 papers	3 papers	28 papers	

Figure 11. Papers Categorised by Cull's Taxonomy and Search Terms in the Titles

Despite the analysis being conducted on a limited number of samples, the findings initially indicated that the Japanese term 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*, cultural diplomacy) has been utilised not only for what Cull identified as cultural diplomacy but also for exchange diplomacy (Figure 11). Among the 34 articles with the Japanese term in their titles (in the third column from the right in Figure 11), 23 pertained to Cull's categorisation of cultural diplomacy and 11 related to exchange diplomacy. This suggested that cultural diplomacy in the Japanese context has been interpreted as a broader concept than what was outlined in Cull's taxonomy. Furthermore, it was discovered that papers focusing on the other three aspects of Cull's classification (in the third to the fifth row in Figure 11) — listening (2 papers), advocacy (23 papers) and international broadcasting (4 papers) — did not incorporate the term 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*, meaning cultural diplomacy) in their titles. This remained consistent even when the research scope was broadened to include abstracts and keywords:

the term 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*, meaning cultural diplomacy) was not applied to these three elements. This indicated that the term cultural diplomacy in Japanese was specifically associated with what Cull defined as cultural diplomacy and exchange diplomacy.

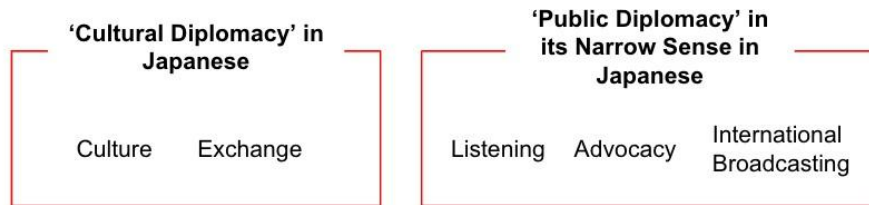


Figure 12. 'Cultural Diplomacy' and 'Public Diplomacy' in its Narrow Sense in Japanese

The sample size was limited, but the findings suggested that the term 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*, meaning cultural diplomacy) was used selectively. It was applied in contexts related to culture and exchange but not in domains like listening, advocacy, and international broadcasting, which focused on the dissemination of diplomatic information and its influence on target audiences. This implied a distinct separation between activities regarded as cultural diplomacy and those that were not. In the titles of research papers focusing on listening, advocacy, and international broadcasting, terms such as パブリック・ディプロマシー (*pabulikku-dipulomashi*) and 広報外交 (*koho gaiko*, meaning public relations and diplomacy) were utilised instead of 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*, meaning cultural diplomacy). This suggested that these terms are regarded as appropriate for areas outside of cultural diplomacy. It was inferred that in Japanese literature, these terms were specifically applied in the narrower context of public diplomacy, deliberately excluding elements of culture and exchange (Figure 12).

Following the analysis of how the Japanese term 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*, meaning cultural diplomacy) had been used in titles, the papers in the first and second rows of Figure 11 were subsequently examined. These papers were categorised as addressing what Cull defined as cultural diplomacy and exchange diplomacy. Interestingly, the translations of public diplomacy in the titles of these papers are not confined to 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*, meaning cultural diplomacy). There were instances where different translations such as パブリック・ディプロマシー (*pabulikku-dipulomashi*), 広報外交 (*koho gaiko*, meaning public relations and diplomacy) and 広報文化外交 (*koho bunka gaiko*, a combined word of *koho* meaning public relations, *bunka* meaning culture and *gaiko* meaning diplomacy) were used in the titles. In this case, contrary to previous observations, the employment of translations such as パブリック・ディプロマシー (*pabulikku-dipulomashi*) and 広報外交 (*koho gaiko*, meaning public relations and diplomacy) in Japanese encompassed 'cultural diplomacy,' including both cultural diplomacy and exchange diplomacy as defined by Cull. Thus, the term public diplomacy was applied in a broader sense in the Japanese context (Figure 13).

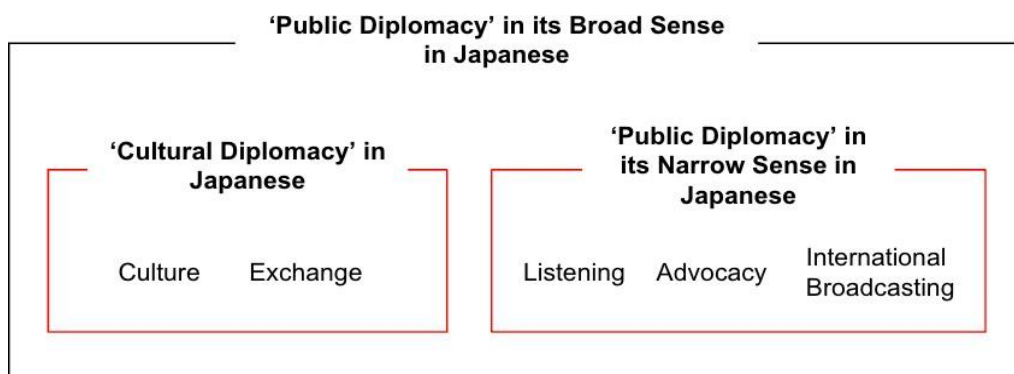


Figure 13. 'Public Diplomacy' in its Narrow Sense and its Broad Senses in Japanese

This study suggested that both the narrow and broad sense of public diplomacy were utilised in Japanese texts. However, further consideration of the cultural aspect was needed to understand the research landscape in Japanese literature, incorporating achievements from related fields. Thus, a supplementary survey focusing on two prominent domestic academic journals was conducted. The journals included *Intercultural*, published by the Japan Society for Intercultural Studies since 2003, and *Cultural Policy Research*, published by the Japan Association for Cultural Policy Research since 2008. We analysed the use of the four translations of public diplomacy — パブリック・ディプロマシー (*pabulikku-dipulomashi*, the direct translation of public diplomacy), 広報文化外交 (*koho bunka gaiko*, a combination of *koho* meaning public relations, *bunka* meaning culture, and *gaiko* meaning diplomacy), 広報外交 (*koho gaiko*, meaning public relations and diplomacy) and 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*, meaning cultural diplomacy) — in the titles, abstracts and keywords (where available), and main texts of the articles published in the two journals up to the year 2022 since their first issues.

As a result, a total of 14 articles were extracted. Of these, 7 articles used the term パブリック・ディプロマシー (*pabulikku-dipulomashi*, the direct translation of public diplomacy), 5 articles used 文化外交 (*bunka gaiko*, meaning cultural diplomacy) and the remaining 2 articles used both terms. Because these articles used the concerned search terms in the texts instead of titles, abstracts or keywords, 10 out of the 14 articles did not appear in this original list of 149 articles. Furthermore, upon expanding the scope of the investigation, 23 additional articles were identified that discuss themes related to public diplomacy, despite not utilising the four search terms. The identified titles included “The Struggle between Japan and China over the University Establishment as a ‘Cultural Strategy’: the Qingdao Business University and the Private University of Qingdao in the First Half of the 1920s” and “Heritage Diplomacy by the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA): Focusing on its Reflexive Framework” (Yamamoto, 2011; Sasaki, 2020).

From these findings, it was able to be discerned that researchers engaged in fields such as international cultural exchange and cultural policy, which corresponded to cultural diplomacy

and exchange diplomacy in Cull’s taxonomy, may have used the terms public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy in a limited manner or not at all. There was an observable tendency to avoid applying not only the narrow definition of public diplomacy but also the application of the term ‘cultural diplomacy,’ and even the broader concept of public diplomacy (Figure 14). Such an approach towards public diplomacy is likely not confined to authors of literature on cultural relations in Japanese. Public diplomacy and cultural relations inherently share overlapping areas and are closely related, but the strategic use of culture as means to achieve political objectives can lead to opposition due to the blurring of traditional distinctions (Melissen 2005:21-23).

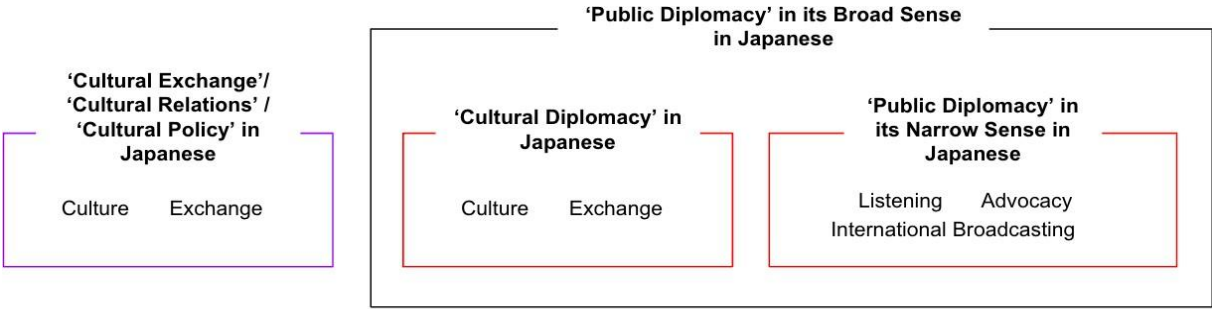


Figure 14. ‘Cultural Exchange / Relations / Policy’ as External of ‘Public Diplomacy’ in Japanese Literature

Melissen pointed out that among public diplomacy activities, cultural diplomacy was closer to New Public Diplomacy (2005:21-23). New Public Diplomacy sought the post-Cold War model of public diplomacy whose characteristics included the interactive nature of communication, the diversification of actors, and promotion of exchanges between citizens. Such views were shared by some Japanese scholars. Kawamura introduced the concept of cultural relations policy (CRP), a comprehensive set of cultural policies which defines the management of international cultural relations by states in a broader sense than general cultural diplomacy or public diplomacy (Kawamura, 2022:149). It was also worth noting that the application of New Public Diplomacy to the government’s practice of public diplomacy had been discussed in Japanese literature. For instance, foreign policy by the Democratic Party of Japan, which came to power in 2009 overthrowing the long-standing Liberal Democratic Party regime, was positioned within the trend of New Public Diplomacy. Lee argued that values of mutual assistance and coexistence among citizens of different nationalities were recognised in the political philosophy of *Fraternité* promoted by then Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama (Lee, 2015). As mentioned above, the term パブリック・ディプロマシー (*pabulikku-dipulomashi*, the direct translation of public diplomacy) had been mentioned annually in the Diplomatic Bluebooks since 2004. Lee revealed that as evidence of the Democratic Party government’s foreign policy differing from that of the long-standing LDP regime, the term did not appear in three years’ worth of Bluebooks published under the Democratic Party administration (Lee 2015).

When integrating related Japanese concepts into the framework established by English-language literature, it can be posited that Japanese cultural diplomacy, which interprets international relations through the lens of cultural activities, aligns with the category of New Public Diplomacy (Figure 15). As we have explored, it appears that these areas of research have intentionally distanced themselves, or perhaps remained concealed from conventional public diplomacy studies. Nevertheless, it is suggested that these fields hold the potential to enrich the evolution of New Public Diplomacy theory.

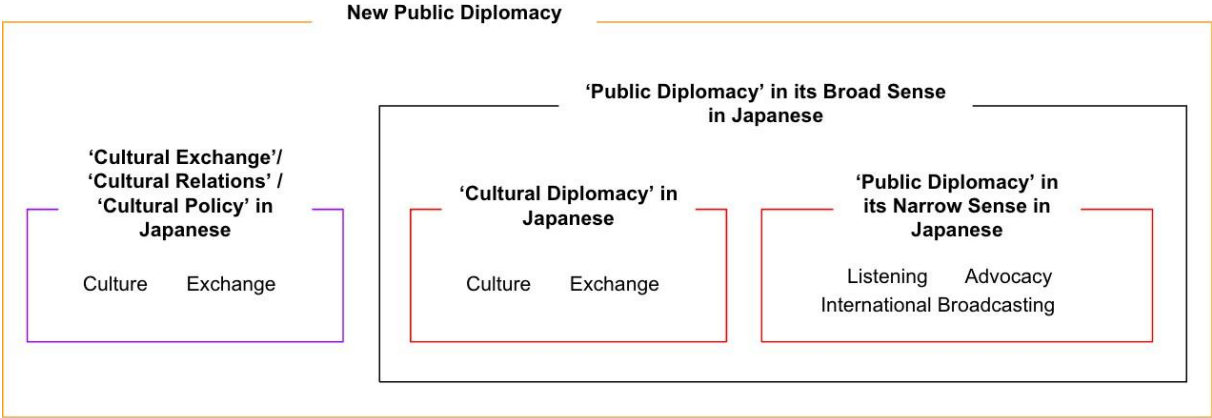


Figure 15. New Public Diplomacy in Relation to Related Studies in Japanese

Discussion

This systematic review revealed contrasting trends in the field of public diplomacy research conducted in Japanese. Papers within the field have been published in a variety of academic journals in Japanese, indicating that public diplomacy is extensively studied by academic societies and universities across different disciplines. Despite the ongoing evolution of the global landscape since 2001, which would presumably open avenues for further research, the total number of papers published in these journals amounts to only 149. The low number of articles published per journal suggests that established journals dedicated to public diplomacy research have not yet emerged in Japan. Furthermore, the career statuses and affiliations of authors at the time of publication have been varied, potentially contributing to the advancement of research in the field. However, most authors have only contributed one paper to the field of public diplomacy.

In comparison with Sevin et al.’s study, which served as a benchmark for the current work, previously published Japanese studies exhibit many similarities with those in English, despite differences in the volume of scholarship (Sevin et al., 2019). These similarities include the active pursuit of scholarship since the 2000s, the evolution into a highly interdisciplinary field, and a strong research focus on the U.S. and China (Sevin et al., 2019).

The approaches in previous studies in Japanese and English is worth mentioning, too. Our research indicated the prominence of history within the interdisciplinary research field in the Japanese studies. This can be attributed to the trajectory of diplomatic studies in Japan. Diplomatic history research investigating interstate relations from historical perspectives has thrived while studies that empirically analyse foreign policy from a political perspective have been relatively limited (Sato, 1989). There has been a growing interest in diplomacy within the international politics community in the 21st century, which was influenced by U.S.-led public diplomacy practice and soft power theory, as we observed. Seven et al.'s study also ranks "History" as the third in the top publishers of public diplomacy articles, following "Communication" and "Cultural studies. The manifestation of historical approach in English literature was identified as a key feature in the public diplomacy studies in earlier period as well (Gilboa, 2008). In short, the U.S. had a significant impact on shaping the discourse around public diplomacy in Japan. The observed similarities in research trends across the two different languages can be attributed to the dominance of the U.S. discourse, coupled with its significant influence on international relations and the growing prominence of China within the geopolitical sphere—a matter of mutual concern for Japan and its most crucial ally, the U.S..

This, in turn, may have created potential barriers to the advancement of research. One of the most critical obstacles would be definitional issues. While 'de-Westernisation' may be an overused term, explaining phenomena in your own languages would undoubtedly strengthen the concept. As discussed, Japan has developed its model of relationships with foreign publics but has not been able to define its activities, which fall under the context of U.S.-styled public diplomacy, in its own language. The problem of defining a concept is exacerbated when an already ambiguous term in the source language undergoes a translation process. It is aptly said that one noted cause for the absence of an established definition of public diplomacy is that "the issue is not so much with the Japanese language, but rather that the English word 'public' is polysemic." (Mikami, 2007). The lack of standardised Japanese translation for public diplomacy is closely tied to the absence of a clear definition in Japanese language, resulting in academic uncertainty. The analysis of Japanese literature in relation to the existing taxonomy revealed that scholars approaching public diplomacy in Japanese oversees public diplomacy from a different viewpoint. Culture has played a significant role in conceptualising public diplomacy in Japanese. This suggests a gap between the perspectives of the U.S.-oriented public diplomacy studies and that of culture-oriented studies. Therefore, incorporating research achievements that have not explicitly focused on public diplomacy could lead to the development of theories relevant to Japan's experience, benefiting both domestic scholarship and the concept of New Public Diplomacy.

Gilboa acknowledges the importance of the historical approach but expresses skepticism about its contribution to the development of research methods and theory (Gilboa, 2008). In essence, investigating contemporary issues and events help us understand the present circumstances

and anticipate future developments. The need to explore this opportunity can be derived from previous research in Japanese. For instance, none of the papers surveyed explicitly address gender in their titles. Japan ranks 125th out of 146 countries in the 2023 Gender Gap Index by the World Economic Forum, reflecting a significant gender disparity (World Economic Forum, 2023). The issue of women's status can be significant in external communications, yet it was not a prominent theme in past studies on public diplomacy. Expanding the focus, only one paper on sexual minorities in Israel was found (Hanyu, 2013). The same applies to digital. Despite the daily online communication activities by diplomatic missions, as evidenced by MOFA operating hundreds of social media accounts and over 76% of foreign embassies in Japan having Twitter (formerly) or Facebook accounts (Nishikawa, 2022), very few papers have delved into digital diplomacy.

Limitations and Recommendations

Several obstacles were encountered during our research, which could also pose challenges for future systematic reviews of Japanese papers. The lack of sufficient data was a major hurdle for a comprehensive analysis. Many papers were missing abstracts and/or keywords sections, limiting our content analysis to terms used in the titles. Furthermore, identifying citation patterns and networks would have provided a clearer understanding of the varying usage of the four translations of public diplomacy and the grouping of the authors. However, limited digital availability of the identified papers posed an issue for conducting such a detailed investigation. This study focused on academic papers, but extending the research scope to encompass books and book chapters could be a viable future option. These sources are often regarded in Japan as having academic value.

Conclusions

As the presumably first systematic review of public diplomacy research in Japanese, this paper highlighted the characteristics of the academic field conducted in Japanese language over the past two decades. Using four different translations of public diplomacy, it identified 149 Japanese academic articles published since 2002, confirmed that 108 journals published the articles, and that they were written by 122 authors. This paper revealed contrasting trends in research conducted in Japanese. On the positive side, the findings indicated potential for diverse development pathways. However, the lack of journals that frequently publish papers on public diplomacy, as well as the fact that individual researchers publish only a small number of papers in this field, indicated that this area of research in Japanese is still in its infancy.

A challenge for developing public diplomacy as an established research field in Japanese arises from the undeniable dominance of preceding English-language scholarship, which has

played a significant role in defining concepts, developing theories, and shaping the practice of public diplomacy. Due to the ambiguity of the original English term public diplomacy and the influence that English literature has had on non-English research communities, it is believed that many issues, including those that relate to translation and definition, can be shared among public diplomacy scholars worldwide. Such cross-linguistic linkages could offer new perspectives on public diplomacy studies globally. Overall, this paper represents an effort to bridge research conducted in English with domestic studies, suggesting that such practices facilitate critical examination of existing research and contribute to advancing the scholarship.

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