Digital Diplomacy: Hololive Indonesia and Virtual Youtuber (Vtuber) as Indonesia's New Public Diplomacy

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ABSTRACT: Globalization has influenced the international political system, including the diplomacy scene. The advent of the internet has resulted in new public diplomacy that emphasizes network and soft power. Virtual YouTubers have emerged as a global phenomenon, becoming new Japanese soft power. This research aim to explain the Virtual Youtuber's potential as new power in the realm of new public diplomacy, emphasizes on the development of long-term relationship and two-way communication differs from traditional public diplomacy, focused on propaganda and one-way communication. Through qualitative descriptive analysis method and content analysis technique, this research focus on the role of VTubers, specifically Hololive Indonesia, as a new power in Indonesian new public diplomacy characterized by three key features: (1) a branding-oriented approach; (2) the utilization of new media and the establishment of long-term relationships; and (3) the involvement of foreign viewers as actors, fostering non-hierarchical relationships among these actors. The study's findings show that Virtual Youtuber could be the actor in the realm of new public diplomacy. As in the case of Hololive Indonesia through the promtoion of Indonesia branding as a multicultural and diverse nation. The utilization of YouTube as a new media platform, combined with features like live chat, super chat, and subscription, allows VTubers to establish long-term relationships with their viewers. Furthermore, these features allow Hololive Indonesia's viewers act as actor to actively contribute in the content produced by VTubers, establishing non-hierarchical relationships between them.

Keywords: Popular Culture, New Public Diplomacy, Hololive, Soft Power, Virtual Youtuber.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization in the present era provides prospects for unprecedented communication. According to (Scholte, 2005), globalization is the intensified interdependence between governmental and non-governmental entities in the global sphere. In addition to globalization, the post-Cold War era

witnessed the rise of new non-state actors, which have radically altered the concept of diplomacy. Diplomacy refers to the institutionalized communication of information among officially recognized representatives of different actors, which is then used to create, control, and distribute public interests (Bjola & Holmes, 2015). Moreover, the notion of public diplomacy has achieved extensive acknowledgment in the realm of international affairs. Currently, actors involved in public diplomacy include not just state actors as well as a range of non-state actors such as multinational corporations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international governmental organizations (IGOs),non-state paramilitary organizations, and other non-state actors. Contemporary trends in public diplomacy extend beyond engaging with people in general on a broad spectrum, but rather involve targeting specific individuals and significant groups within larger communities, resulting in the emergence of novel concepts and strategies in public diplomacy. A new public diplomacy that requires specialized knowledge and approaches different from those commonly utilized in diplomacy.

The new public diplomacy is distinguished by several differences from traditional public diplomacy. These differences involve active engagement of various non-state actors, the shift in communication mechanisms to real-time communication through internet, adoption of network communication models, and dissolution of information boundaries between domestic and non-domestic sources. Highlighting the significance of collaboration and dialogue, involvement of modern technology, and a greater presence of recent actors comprising from NGOs and other non-state actors (Nariswari, 2021). (Cull, 2009) also believed that new public diplomacy employs a people-to-people model, emphasizing the establishment of reciprocal relationships between sender and receiver, meanwhile traditional public diplomacy emphasizes one-directional communication from actors to the public (actor-to-people).

Nevertheless, the premise of national interest remains a key consideration to be taken into account when engaging in any diplomatic effort. (Morgenthau, 2010) explains that a nation's diplomatic strategy must be grounded in its national interests. This idea remain valid for every sovereign nation, Indonesia is not an exception. As an independent nation, Indonesia places its national interests as the first priority when engaging in diplomaticactivities and formulating foreign policies. Since gaining independence, Indonesia has consistently adhered to the principle of a free and proactive foreign policy, which serves as the foundation of its diplomatic approach. (Matthew, 2020) defines the term "free" as Indonesia's stance of not associating with any specific nation or individual in the international stage. Instead, Indonesia adopts a pragmatic approach that is centered on its national interests. Meanwhile, the term "active" highlights Indonesia's position and role as active participant in the building and sustaining of global peace.

Indonesia's free and active policy allows it to engage in diplomacy to pursue its national interests without identifying itself with any particular bloc, as mandated by the 1945 Constitution of Indonesia (Indrawati & Nugroho, 2019). In addition, public diplomacy issues involve not only matters related to foreign policy but also present substantial national issues. Indonesia experiences issues with public diplomacy, particularly throughout the fourth industrial revolution. In his article "Tantangan Diplomasi Publik Kian Beragam, UNNES Siap Berperan" (Tantangan Diplomasi Publik Kian Beragam, 2021), Teuku Faizasyah argues that Indonesian public diplomacy is confronted with various obstacles, such as a shortage of skilled personnel, the inability to replicate

face-to-face interactions, and the need to prioritize target audiences that can be adequately reached throughout the internet. Another obstacle is the necessity to strengthen public diplomacy efforts with the goal to further develop foreign understanding " of Indonesia.

That is vital to prioritize the participation of Indonesian society and non-state actors in the fields of soft power diplomacy (Kementerian Pendidikan, 2023). Soft power has undeniably played a crucial part in contemporary popular diplomacy. (Ayhan, 2018) contends that developing nations might employ new public diplomacy as a pivotal component of their soft power in foreign affairs. Soft Power is the capacity of a global actor to exert influence over other nations without resorting to force or coercion (Nye, 2019a). Instead, it depends on its appeal to acquire comprehension and empathy from other nations, frequently originating from a country's culture and values.

Culture has a crucial role in exerting soft power, comprising both high-culture, such as arts and literature, and popular culture, which emphasizes mass entertainment production (Nye, 2019a). Popular culture, or mass culture, is created via the influence of media and societal actions. Media plays a significant role in spreading knowledge and culture to a large audience for financial gain (Strinati, 2017). Virtual YouTubers, or Vtubers, are one of the new popular cultures that have gone global. Vtuber, according to (Minoru, 2018) is tbe production utilizes motion capture technology to produce 2D/3D characters and share content on social media platforms via live broadcasts or videos. Vtuber is defined by Gigguk as cited by (Suan, 2021) as anime characters that are portrayed and streamed on YouTube. Referring to the plethora of Vtubers—especially those who do live broadcasts—who perform or improvise in accordance with the anime characters they represent (Suan, 2021). As per these criteria, Virtual YouTubers, also known as Vtubers, are individuals are individuals whose produce live broadcasts applying anime-styled characters and adopt the characteristics of these characters as their virtual personas (Gallennius, 2022b). The rise to fame of Vtubers could be traced back to the 2016 debut of the first Vtuber, Kizuna Ai. The Japanese viewers has welcomed Kizuna Ai warmly ever since her debut (Puspitaningrum & Prasetio, 2019; Reyes, 2017). As of the moment, Kizuna AI has amassed more than three million YouTube subscribers.

The United States, China, Peru, the Philippines, Indonesia, and other countries have additionally recognized its popularity, in addition to Japan (Cintas, 2017; Gallennius, 2022a; Puspitaningrum & Prasetio, 2019; Roll, 2018). Over the past few years, the Virtual YouTuber (VTuber) phenomenon has spread among consumers of anime, video games, and popular culture worldwide. In 2021 alone, there were over 16,000 active VTubers, and it's expected that this would increase daily (Davidson, 2021). As of November 2022, there were 20,000 active VTubers globally, including in Japan, according to the results of (User Local, 2022) poll. In Indonesia, VTubers earned popularity and recognition during the Covid-19 pandemic. The number of VTubers in Indonesia has increased significantly in just two years, both in terms of the VTubers themselves and their fan base (Liman, 2023). In 2017, Motoaki 'YAGOO' Tanigo established Hololive, a VTuber startup under Cover Corp. Yagoo, who founded his business adopting idol ideas from AKB48 and Hatsune Miku, is recognized as the "Father of VTubers" (Amos, 2022). With the debut of Tokino Sora, the first VTuber, Hololive started their production in September 2017. Followed by expansions to China and Indonesia, Hololive began operating internationally in 2019 and 2020. After Cover Corp decided to branch out, Hololive Indonesia emerged to achieve the company's

objective to penetrate the Indonesian and Asian markets (Fitzpatrick, 2011a; Liman, 2023). In fact, Indonesian society accepts Japanese popular culture exceptionally well. This can be seen through a glance at how popular Japanese popular cultures like manga, anime, cosplay, itasha, and J-Pop are in Indonesia (Islamiyah et al., 2020).

New Public Diplomacy

According to (Melissen, 2005), public diplomacy is the effort to positively influence people and institutions outside of one's own nation in order to alter their opinions of that nation. On the other side, according to (Nariswari, 2021), new public diplomacy serves as an instrument for both state and non-state actors to comprehend cultural norms, attitudes, and behaviors in order to establish and maintain relationships through public diplomacy initiatives. The term of new public diplomacy places significant emphasis on communication networks and the involvement of foreign publics in its operations. Traditional public diplomacy is under uncertainty due to the introduction of new technology and the rise of non-state actors in international politics triggered by globalization (Fitzpatrick, 2011b). As stated by (Fitzpatrick, 2011b), this has led to the emergence of a new global order in which non-state actors now dominate international relations and nation-states have less influence in traditional political and governmental spheres. (Melissen, 2005) argues that new public diplomacy is more collaborative and meaningful since it involves interacting with foreign publics rather than just providing them with knowledge or understanding. As the table below explains, this leads to a key distinction between new public diplomacy and old public diplomacy.

Table 1. Traditional Public Diplomacy and New Public Diplomacy

Aspects and Characteristics	Traditional Public Diplomacy	New Public Diplomacy
Actors	State	State Non-State
Technology	Shortwave Radio Print Newspapers Landline Telephone	Internet Mobile Phones
Media	Clear boundaries between domestic and international news sphere	Blurring of boundaries between domestic and international news sphere

Source of approach	Advocacy and Propaganda	Corporate Branding and Network Theory
Terminology	International Image Prestige	Soft Power and Nation Branding
Structure of role	Top Down, actors to foreign publics	Horizontal, facilitated by actors
Nature of role	Targeted message	Relationship building
Overall aim	Management of international environment	Management of international environment

Source: Hartig, 2014.

New public diplomacy aims to establish long-lasting relationships by developing deeper relationships with foreign publics. As defined by (Melissen, 2005), it involves engagement with civil society on a global scale as well as creating connections that promote cooperation between non-governmental organizations at both national and international levels. This expands the scope of new public diplomacy beyond simply delivering a message, conducting campaigns, or performing direct government interactions with foreign publics in order to achieve success in foreign policy. In reverse, traditional public diplomacy focuses on influencing the viewpoints of foreign publics in order to influence the foreign policies followed by the political leaders of those nations (Racharjo & Affandi, 2019). As opposed to being merely observers as in traditional public diplomacy, foreign publics targeted by new public diplomacy take part in the diplomatic process and act as active actors (Racharjo & Affandi, 2019).

As stated by (Gurgu & Cociuban, 2016), the key distinctions between traditional public diplomacy and new public diplomacy are the broadened participation of non-state actors, the shift in real-time information delivery mechanisms via the internet, and the transformation of public diplomacy's propaganda concepts into new public diplomacy's communication networks. One of the primary drivers driving the rise of new public diplomacy is the advent of the internet itself. (Hocking, 2005) stated that there are two paradigms in public diplomacy: the networked approach and the conventional hierarchical method. The networked method prioritizes non-hierarchical cooperation and multidirectional information flow, whereas the traditional hierarchical approach concentrates on government-to-government connections and top-down vertical communication.

This network-based approaches facilitate the interdependent, non-hierarchical establishment of interactions amongst online actors who have common interests. (Fitzpatrick, 2011a) further identifies ten additional traits of modern public diplomacy, which include: (1) A more collaborative approach in international relations; (2) Establishing mutual understanding between foreign publics and international actors; (3) Creating and sustaining relationships between foreign publics and international actors; (4) Facilitating relationship networks between organizations and societies in the public and foreign sectors; (5) Involves both domestic and foreign publics in its activities; (6) Engages both publics in its policies; (7) Dialogue and reciprocal relationships as basic principles; (8) Highlight on two-way communication; (9) Prioritizes people-to-people interactions over mass messaging interactions; and (10) Focus on proactive and long-term relationship building.

According to (Nye, 2019b; Rudiawan, 2022) Japan has been recognized to possess the most soft power resources in Asia and strives to project a positive image in the eyes of the global media. Virtual YouTubers, or Hololive, do, in fact, represent a Japanese popular culture. But the existence of Hololive Indonesia offers Indonesia a great opportunity to employ VTubers in general and Hololive Indonesia particularly as a novel instrument for new public diplomacy. Therefore, research question of this study is "How Virtual Youtuber and Hololive Indonesia could be the new actor and powerhouse on conducting Indonesia's new public diplomacy.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
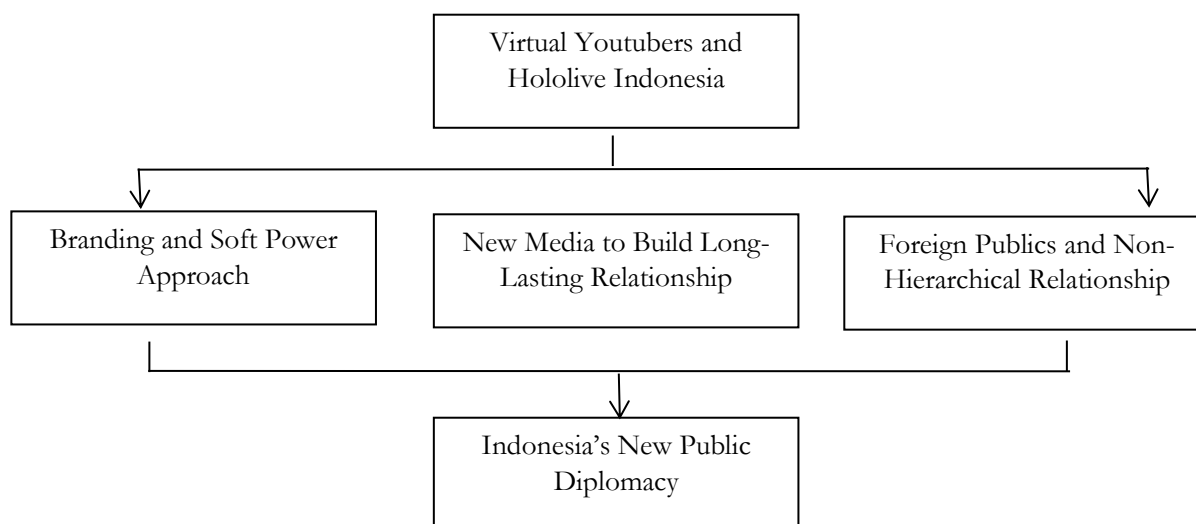
As seen from the conceptual framework above, there are three main characteristics of new public diplomacy that can be conducted by Virtual Youtubers in general or Hololive Indonesia specifically. The three characteristics include of branding approach and use of soft power, utilization of new media in order to create a long-lasting relationship between actors, and finally the participation of foreign publics as active actor to create a non-hierarchical or horizontal relationship between actors.

METHOD

According to (Creswell & Creswell, 2022) qualitative research attempts to comprehend the meanings of individuals or groups based on their experiences with social and humanitarian situations. In accordance with (Neuman, 2013), qualitative research aims to investigate social phenomena via an interpretive lens by utilizing social science ideas and concepts. This study also makes use of literature review technique in addition to descriptive analytic technique. As on this research, the primary data are collected from Hololive Indonesia Youtube contents and the respective comments on the contents. The secondary data are also used to support the finding such as journal articles, online articles, books, and various documents.

As the primary data have been collected, the primary tool to analyze the data through content analysis technique. As content analysis use to explore the youtube contents, and sort the selected comments on the contents in accordance the needs of the context according to the messages. Finally, through content analysis, the selcted contents are analyzed by the new publc diplomacy concept.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Virtual YouTubers as New Public Diplomacy Non-State Actors

VTubers usually use real-time motion capture technology to conduct their stream activities. Consequently, anyone regardless of race and economic conditions could become a vtuber, be the "pilot" of their respective anime character role. This technology enables the pilot to manipulate their virtual persona on the computer in accordance with authentic motions and expressions in the physical world, eliminating the necessity for additional equipment like a mouse and keyboard.

This mechanism enables greater interaction between people and computer system within the VTuber industry (Wang, 2022). Compared to AI technology or Vocaloid applications, of which have gained popularity in Japan, neither of them requires human intervention and are solely virtual characters. As a result, a non-comparable scenario arises when comparing human-controlled vtubers and virtual anime characters, particularly in terms of human emotions, which are often conveyed through facial expressions and body movements. Furthermore, as explained by (Wang, 2022), characters created using AI technology or Vocaloid applications are unrealistic and unable to fulfill the desired companionship and sense of belonging sought by VTuber viewers.

In addition, the uses of anime characters as their character;s visual significantly increases the attractiveness of VTubers in Japanese pop-culture fandom (Liman, 2023). In addition, (Mamat et al., 2022) reveal that society finds VTuber characters intriguing due to their ability to exceed physical limitations, thus freeing them from political agendas, nationality, gender bias, and sexual orientation. The two-way communication capacity of VTubers allows them to engage with their viewers enable them to act as individual non-state actors in conducting new public diplomacy.

Fitzpatrick (2011) argues that this idea of new public diplomacy challenges the traditional view that public diplomacy activities are limited to governments or state actors. (Hartig, 2014) highlights the

significance of non-state actors and questions the dominant role of state players in the realm of public diplomacy. The two-way communication facilitated by VTubers also reflects a new communication model within the realm of new public diplomacy. The focal point is centered around the two-way interaction through the means of conversation and active engagement, as opposed to the one-way interaction and propaganda of traditional public diplomacy (Hartig, 2014). Krause and Van Evera, as cited in (Hartig, 2014), state that dialogue implies equality among parties and finding solutions to meet the interests of both sides.

The interactions normally conducted with their viewers could be seen as an example of fulfilled interests. VTubers primarily focus on the viewership and engagement they receive, which involves things like live chat and donations. VTubers frequently participate in endeavours aimed at sharing information while establishing a safe space for digital interactions with their viewers. VTuber viewers watch VTuber content for a reason of entertainment and virtual companionship alleviate stress or quick escape from reality (Puspitaningrum & Prasetio, 2019; Ronggowarsito et al., 2023). The majority of VTubers, who are primarily from Japan, also represent Japanese culture in the content they streamed (Puspitaningrum & Prasetio, 2019). As a result, enable their viewers to acquire knowledge about Japanese culture or about Japan as a whole.

Hololive Indonesia as Indonesia New Public Diplomacy Non-State Actors

The emergence of the first generation of Hololive Indonesia in 2020 has greatly enhanced the status of Virtual YouTubers in Indonesia. This phenomenon exhibits a strong correlation with the general popularity of the Hololive in Japan. In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic, demanding reduction in outdoor activities, has had a significant effect on the growth of Indonesian interest for VTubers. Especially dedicated to those with an affection for Japanese culture and a need for entertainment alternatives. As the pandemic occurred worldwide, it also affect the foreign publics nevertheless. A study by Liman (2023), Hololive Indonesia has contributed to the growth of foreign interest in the Indonesian language through means of the content offered on the YouTube platform. At present, Hololive Indonesia is experiencing major development, with nine members and three generations debuted at total.

In April 2020, the first generation, comprising Airani Iofifteen, Ayunda Risu, and Moona Hoshinova, made their debut. The second generation, featuring Anya Melfissa, Kureiji Ollie, and Pavolia Reine, made their debut in December 2020. The third generation, featuring Kaela Kovalskia, Kobo Kanaeru, and Vestia Zeta, was introduced in March 2022. The establishment of Hololive Indonesia up until its current generation has been an intentional and targeted expansion. Yagoo asserts that the motivation behind this expansion stems from the wide recognition of anime in Indonesia, the easy-to-find cosplay culture, and, notably, the thriving and deeply established popular culture fandom in the country (Liman, 2023).

The expansion strategy has indeed proven successful, as indicated by the substantial figure of subscribers acquired by members of Hololive Indonesia. Based on data obtained from (Holotracker, 2023), Kobo Kanaeru has emerged as the member with the most subscribers, amassing a total of 2,240,000 subscribers as of December 2023. On the other hand, as of December 2023, Anya Melfissa holds the lowest number of subscribers among the members of Hololive Indonesia, with a total of 668,000 subscribers. The substantial subscriber count of

Hololive Indonesia members displays their capacity to effectively engage a broad demographic, specifically targeting international viewers residing outside of Indonesia. Based on data sourced from (Google & Trends, 2023), it has been discovered that multiple countries beyond Indonesia, including Malaysia, Taiwan, the Philippines, Japan, Canada, and the United States, conduct searches for "Hololive Indonesia." Also, non Indonesian-viewers, commonly known as "kaigai niki," can be seen through comments left in the comment section or in the live chat. This shows that while Hololive Indonesia members mainly use Indonesian as their primary language on their stream, their content is capable of reaching both domestic and international viewers.. This assertion is reinforced by the linguistic proficiencies exhibited by the members itself which typically bilingual or polyglot.

The primary streaming platform frequently used by members of Hololive Indonesia is YouTube. Live streaming enables members of Hololive Indonesia to actively participate in interactive and exchanged conversations, facilitating real-time engagement and response with their viewera. In contrast, viewers have the opportunity to participate actively by posting comments that can be replied to by the YouTubers during the live stream. Additionally, the communication model used in new public diplomacy facilitates the widespread promotion of the Indonesian language and culture to international viewers by the members of Hololive Indonesia. According to Fitzpatrick (2011), the concept of new public diplomacy can be described as a reciprocal process, wherein public diplomacy initiatives are no longer solely directed towards target audiences.

Implementation of Indonesia's New Public Diplomacy by Hololive Indonesia

Hololive Indonesia can be defined as a non-state actor that represents the characteristics of newpublic diplomacy, as stated in the prior explanation. The use of online communication networks, notably via the YouTube platform, is shown by Hololive Indonesia membes. In addition, the participation of global viewers in live stream and their comments with languages other than Indonesian blur clear boundaries between domestic and international sphere of information. Moreover, the interactions formed between members of Hololive Indonesia and their viewers are horinzontal interaction, instead of top-down or vertical interaction. The new public diplomacy conducted by Hololive Indonesia can be observed through several key characteristics, as outlined by Hartig (2014) and Fitzpatrick (2011). These characteristics include: (1) prioritising Branding and Soft Power; (2) utilizing new media to build long-term relationships; and (3) involving foreign publics as active participants and fostering non-hierarchical relationships.

Cultures of Indonesia through Branding and Soft Power

Branding and the utilisation of soft power are important distinguishing aspects of the new public diplomacy approach, when compared to traditional public diplomacy that focuses on advocacy and propaganda. The inclusion of Indonesian culture within the contents streamed by members of Hololive Indonesia could lead to the nation-branding of Indonesia in new public diplomacy. The Hololive Indonesia account uploaded videos titled "Indonesian Folk Music Medley - hololive ID [Cover]" that showcase various aspects of Indonesian culture. The video, with over five million views, features a medley of folk songs performed by Hololive Indonesia members to celebrate Indonesia's Independence Day in August 2023.

The traditionL songs include Sik Sik Sibatumanikam from North Sumatra, Kicir Kicir from DKI Jakarta, Cublak Cublak Suweng from Central Java, Bungong Jeumpa from Aceh, and Apuse from Papua. Hololive Indonesia contributes to the nation branding of Indonesia as a culturally diverse and multicultural country through this video. This is noticeable in the caption of the video, which explains that Indonesia is not composed by just one language and one voice, but rather by a diversities that contribute to the creation of beauty and harmony. Additionally, the video's comment section shows various overseas viewers who are deeply moved by the vast cultural diversity of Indonesia. This encourages the interest of international viewers to visit Indonesia and develop a greater awareness of Indonesian culture.

> これが民謡。。？アレンジされているとはいえ、最高かよ！！インドネシアの心の背景が見えるようで、、歌詞もとても良い。旅行できるようになったらインドネシアに行ってみたい！
>
> This is folk music. Although it has been arranged, it's amazing! You can see the heartfelt background of the Indonesian people, and the lyrics are very good. I want to visit Indonesia when I can travel! (Comment by user-hn7hp2hr9k, Indonesian Folk Music Medley - hololive ID [Cover], hololive Indonesia, 2023).

The next video highlighting Indonesian culture is presented in the "Cerdas Cermat holoID-Bahasa dan Budaya Indonesia" video. The video features a quiz competition between Team Poci and Team Krishna. The questions asked in the videos are related to the Indonesian language or folklore. For example, there are questions that require Hololive Indonesia members explain the meaning of "selawe" or "swadaya". There are also questions where members need to guess Indonesian proverbs based on the image shown, as per example the proverb 'sepandai-pandainya tupai melompat, akhirnya jatuh juga' or 'hemat pangkal kaya'. Furthermore, there are also questions that necessitate both teams participate in role-playing while describing the folklore they portray, such as 'bawang putih dan bawang merah' or 'Malin Kundang'. Moreover, Pavolia Reine, the second generation member of Hololive Indonesia, streamed a unique content known as "Reine Classroom". In those streams, Reine teaches Indonesian language to her guest stars, mostly hailing from Hololive Japan or Hololive EN. To date, a total of eighteen episodes of Reine Classroom have been produced, featuring various guest stars.

> 次回も楽しみインドネシアの文化とか音楽とか料理とかもっと知りたい
>
> "I'm looking forward to the next one. I want to know more about Indonesian culture, music, and food." (Comment by user-bb1oy7wt6k, video "Cerdas Cermat holoID–Bahasa dan Budaya Indonesia", hololive Indonesia, 2023).

Based on the comments submitted by viewers of Hololive Indonesia, it is clear that their intention is to deepen their understanding of Indonesian culture, music, and culinary after watching the quiz video. This finding indicates that Hololive Indonesia has led to promoting awareness of Indonesian culture among foreign viewers, hence stimulating their curiosity to gain further knowledge about Indonesia and it's cultural heritage.

New Media and Long-Term Relationship Building

One of the main characteristics of new public diplomacy is the introduction of new media, alongside with the implementation of communication networks that facilitate real-time communication of information in the conduct of diplomatic activities. Hololive Indonesia streamed their contents in new media platforms, particularly YouTube. The content produced by Hololive Indonesia mostly consists broadcasts that occur in real-time, along with a series of short videos. Hololive Indonesia members utilise live streaming to enable direct engagement with their audience. The members conduct the live stream to create a real-time interaction with their viewers.

YouTube, as a new media platform, allows the viewers to write comments directly through both comment and live comment sections. As opposed with traditional media, such as television or radio, which only provide one way communication. Youtube features provide interactive engagement and conversation between viewers and content creators. YouTube able to become new media patform for cultural exchanges between both viewers and streamers. Racharjo & Affandi (2019) argue that YouTube functions as more than a mere platform for video content, including a platform for exchange of information and discussions. This exchange of information and discussion can be seen through the interactions of Hololive Indonesia viewers with their favorite VTubers through several features provided by YouTube. Features such as live chat, super chat, and membership allow viewers to engage in discussions and interactions with each other. These interactions and discussions create a long-term relationships between VTubers and their viewers. The membership feature also indicates the long-term relationships formed, as viewers who become members of a VTuber will receive a special badge next to their username indicating how long they have joined the membership.

Long term relationship built between the viewers and members also further demonstrated by members of Hololive Indonesia give nicknames to their viewers, such as 'moonafic' for fans of Moona Hoshinova, or 'pemaloe' for fans of Kaela Kovalskia. Essentially, any foreign audiences or viewers who like and watch the VTuber's content are now part of the fan base. The establishment of this long-term relationship between Hololive Indonesia members and their viewes can be regarded as the manifestation of new public diplomacy. As a robust and intense relationship in the process of the new public diplomacy initiated by Hololive Indonesia on their respective contents.

Foreign Public as Actors and Non-Hierarchical Relationships

Hololive Indonesia's viewers comprises people from various nations, including foreign publics and a global community involved in the new public diplomacy. Therefore, the main objective of Hololive Indonesia's new public diplomacy activities revolves towards them. According to Racharjo & Affandi (2019), the primary objective of new public diplomacy focuses on the global community, which is represented by the general public. This stands against to traditional public diplomacy, that mainly targets political elites and exploits the general public as the intended target of diplomatic activities. The communication between the members of Hololive Indonesia and the viewers establishes a non-hierarchical relationship, creating a horizontal relationship that enables long term relationships. Essentially, each viewer has the chance to to actively interact in the content delivered by Hololive Indonesia members.

Moreover, viewers have the capacity to contribute as actor, by commeting and shared additional information through Youtube features such as comment section or live chat section. Particularly in content related to Indonesian culture that could cause difficulties for viewers who aren't Indonesian. As for example, it could be seen from the comment of one of Indonesian viewer explains the origin of Javanese word "Selawe" to non-Indonesian viewers.

> Sebenernya kata "Selawe" berasal dari bahasa Jawa dari dua puluh lima. Tetapi ada filosofi sendiri tentang Selawe. Dengan urutan dari 21 (selikur) 22(rolikur) 23 (telulikur) 24 (patlikur) 25(selawe) 26(nemlikur) dst. Tepat di angka 25 berubah tatanama tidak disebutkan limolikur tetapi selawe sedangkan nomer selanjut nya kembali ke tatanama 26 nemlikur 27 pitulikur dst. Begitu juga dengan 50 (sEket) tidak disebutkan limo puluh…. (Comment of nurhudda9333, video Cerdas Cermat holoID–Bahasa dan Budaya Indonesia, hololive Indonesia, 2023).

Hololive Indonesia viewers not merely function as interpreters of Indonesian culture for foreign audiences, yet they also often take on the role of translators, providing translations either in the comment section or live chat sections.

> Here's a simple translation of numbers in Javanese ngoko and krama. We use krama when we talk to our elders unless you are Javanese from East Java because it's free for all over there. 1= siji = setunggal 2= loro = kalih 3= telu = tiga 4= papat = sekawan 5= lima = gangsal 6= enem = enem 7= pitu = pitu 8= wolu = wolu 9= sanga = sanga 10= sepuluh = sedasa…. (Comment by polarbear142, video Cerdas Cermat holoID–Bahasa dan Budaya Indonesia, hololive Indonesia, 2023).

Viewers can actively participate by providing comments, suggestions, or opinions in the comment section. The viewers can actively engage by providing suggestions for future content of Hololive Indonesia or suggesting technical improvements that members of Hololive Indonesia might implement in their upcoming content.

> Nice Content TBH, Semoga Kedepannya Makin Kreatif lagi… Kalau bisa Undang Guest dari HoloJP & HoloEN, pasti lebih Ramai….. (Comment by Aman_96sotl, video Cerdas Cermat holoID–Bahasa dan Budaya Indonesia, hololive Indonesia, 2023)

The active participation of viewers in providing comments and suggestions for future content by Hololive Indonesia, as shown by the previous comments, indicates their active participation in the new public diplomacy. Hence, the viewers members are not solely function as object of public diplomacy, but also actively participate in the creation and production of Hololive Indonesia member's contents in the future.

CONCLUSION

The relentless development of globalization has ended up in major shifts in the international political scene. The area of diplomacy has recently been influenced by the emergence of numerous non-state actors, resulting in the birth of the idea of new public diplomacy in the digital age facilitated by internet networks. The concept of new public diplomacy focuses a heavy emphasis

on people to people interaction in the context of real-time network communication. It promotes a non-hierarchical, horizontal connection and fosters long-term development between actors and the global community as a whole. This study explores the potential of Virtual YouTubers (VTubers) and Hololive Indonesia on conducting new public diplomacy.

Hololive Indonesia, as a non-state actor, displays several characteristics associated with the concept of new public diplomacy. Mainly three main characteristics, which are (1) prioritising Branding and Soft Power; (2) utilizing new media to build long-term relationships; and (3) involving foreign publics as active participants and fostering non-hierarchical relationships. Through their contents, Hololive Indonesia members create Indonesia branding as a multicultural and diverse nation. Throughout their contents, several Indonesia cultures are also being promoted such as folklore and songs. Hololive Indonesia also utilize YouTube, a new media platform, facilitates real-time dialogue between actors through its various features, such as live chat, comments, and superchats. This enables long-term relationship building with viewers as the main focus of new public diplomacy. As in the new public diplomacy, foreign publics or the global community also play a role as actor. This also can be seen through the interaction of Hololive Indonesia members and viewers. The viewers actively engaged and participate through comments, mainly aid the vtubers on translation to other foreign publics, and also giving suggestion for Hololive Indonesia members on their future contents references. As a result, the viewers also actively participate on new public diplomacy done by Hololive Indonesia and generally create a non hierarchical relationship amongst them as new public diplomacy actors.

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