TREATMENT TO ISSUES AND POLITICAL LEADERS IN SPANISH PUBLIC NEWSCAST (2014-2021)

TRATO DEL TELEDIARIO PÚBLICO ESPAÑOL A TEMAS Y LÍDERES POLÍTICOS (2014-2021)

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ABSTRACT

Considering the absence or delay and incompleteness in the registration of what is shown in public TV, it is offered a unique study, because of its reach (from 2014 to 2021) and new method, about news program from the first channel of the National Spanish Television. It is used Civio's Foundation tool: Verba, whose transparency-seeking is presented in the introduction, besides treating media influence in political parties and agenda. There are two groups of elements that are assessed: 30 names of political leaders and 30 terms with political incidence (the 15 most common issues to citizens, according to the last CIS analysis issued and 15 others linked). This model is centered in pronounced terms, lacking other audiovisual elements from the news program. Results show a favorable treatment to PSOE, PP, and Ciudadanos and unfavorable to political parties on the left, nationalist parties, and Vox. From the selected words, it is found that some terms, such as "consensus" and especially "controversy", are highly used whilst social issues receive less importance than the

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expressed by citizens, and terms related to the political or economic system are barely mentioned. There is no proportionality nor in the relevance granted to the issues appearing on the CIS nor to the political parties according to its electoral results. Future research could use the method, polishing it to not count irrelevant mentions.

KEYWORDS: Television news, television, information, news, political parties, political communication, public utilities

RESUMEN

Ante la ausencia o retraso e incompletitud de registros de lo emitido en TV pública, se ofrece un estudio único, por su alcance (desde 2014 a 2021) y su novedoso método, sobre el Telediario de La 1 de Televisión Española. Se usa la herramienta Verba de la Fundación Civio, cuyo afán por la transparencia es presentado en la introducción, además de tratar la influencia de los medios en partidos políticos y agenda. El objetivo principal es evaluar dos tipos de elementos: 30 nombres de líderes políticos y 30 expresiones con incidencia política (los 15 principales problemas citados por la ciudadanía en el último CIS y otros 15 vinculados). El modelo se centra en las palabras pronunciadas y faltarían otros elementos audiovisuales del Telediario. Los resultados muestran un trato favorable a PSOE, PP y Ciudadanos y desfavorable a los partidos de izquierdas, los soberanistas y Vox. En cuanto a las palabras seleccionadas, se abusa de algunas, como "consenso" y sobre todo "polémica", mientras lo social recibe menor atención que la expresada por la ciudadanía y lo relacionado con el sistema político o económico aparece aún menos. No existe proporcionalidad ni en la relevancia concedida a los problemas del CIS ni a los partidos de acuerdo con sus votos. Futuras investigaciones podrían aplicar la metodología afinándola para no contabilizar menciones no pertinentes.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Telediario, televisión, información, noticias, partido político, comunicación política, servicio público

TRATAMENTO DO TELEDIARIO PÚBLICO ESPANHOL SOBRE QUESTÕES POLÍTICAS E LÍDERES (2014-2021)

RESUMO

Dada a ausência ou atraso e incompletude dos registros do que foi veiculado na TV pública, oferece-se um estudo inédito, por sua abrangência (de 2014 a 2021) e seu método inovador, no Telediario de La 1 de Televisión Española. É utilizada a ferramenta Verba da Fundação Civio, cujo desejo de transparência é apresentado na introdução, além de tratar da influência da mídia nos partidos políticos e na agenda. O objetivo principal é avaliar dois tipos de elementos: 30 nomes de líderes políticos e 30 expressões com impacto político (os 15 principais problemas citados pelo público

no último CIS e outros 15 relacionados). O modelo se concentra nas palavras faladas e outros elementos audiovisuais do noticiário estariam faltando. Os resultados mostram um tratamento favorável ao PSOE, PP e Ciudadanos e desfavorável aos partidos de esquerda, soberanistas e Vox. Quanto às palavras selecionadas, algumas são abusadas, como "consenso" e sobretudo "polêmica", enquanto o aspecto social recebe menos atenção do que o expresso pelos cidadãos e o que está relacionado ao sistema político ou econômico aparece ainda menos. Não há proporcionalidade nem na relevância atribuída aos problemas do CIS nem aos partidos segundo os seus votos. Pesquisas futuras podem aplicar a metodologia ajustando-a de modo a não contar menções irrelevantes.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Noticiário, televisão, informação, notícias, partido político, comunicação política, serviço público

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1. INTRODUCTION

Spain lacking an Audiovisual Council at the state level, as there is in the rest of the countries of the European Union (Audiovisual Council of Andalusia, 2013) and several autonomous communities, and taking into account the limitations and delay of the report on pluralism in TVE of the National Commission of Markets and Competition (the one corresponding to 2018 was published in 2021), it has been understood that it is necessary to research the treatment that the public service gives to political leaders and issues.

The topics discussed, as well as the way to do it, constitute a central element of any media, political party, or social actor. To the point that the *agenda-setting* theory is one of the most relevant in the last half-century and it has multiple derivatives and possible routes.

The parties confront each other in a scenario marked by the constructed public agenda. And there, the media have a special role, with television still, by far, the one that gathers the largest audience and whose influence is the most decisive.

Regarding the duration of the impact of the media on public opinion, MacKuen (1981) set a period of between 1 and 9 months, depending on the subject; This author placed, in increasing order in terms of durability, the following topics: energy (1 month), civil rights (4 months), Vietnam, inflation, environment, and crimes (6 to 9 months).

To analyze the long-term effects of *agenda-setting*, the research by Watt *et al.* (1993) can be consulted, which, despite being several decades old, refers to television and provides a longitudinal study with infrequent duration: more than 4 years. The formula used to measure the prominence of each story rewarded the long ones, those close to the beginning of the program, and those that included video.

Regarding the mentions of politicians or parties, Silver (2015) or Stray (2016) have registered robust correlations between the media attention given to a politician and the average estimate of the vote in the polls, especially concerning primaries in the U.S.A.

Specifically, with examples such as that of Trump and other similar politicians in other countries, a question that gained greater prominence was that of "what affects more to determine electoral support: the amount of media attention or the positive or negative presentation in that coverage?".

The amount of media attention received is the fundamental element, according to authors such as Silver, ahead of the positive assessment: "The interesting thing, as we've pointed out before, is that a candidate can potentially gain in the polls in the short term by increasing his media coverage, even if he potentially hurts his favorability rating. Trump seems to realize this" (Silver, 2015).

The Civio Foundation is the creator of the tool used in this research and is the promoter of projects to improve citizen access to politics. It is a Spanish non-profit organization with more than 1,000 members that, as presented on its website, since the end of 2011 "monitors the public powers, informs all citizens, and presses to achieve real and effective transparency in institutions".

Its objective is "to achieve free access to the information they generate, to know how decisions are made, to have public policies based on evidence, to hold the public sector accountable, and to facilitate citizen action and participation. And the levers we use to achieve these changes are journalism and innovation".

A team of 9 people whose mission is to end the opacity in public affairs. One of its initiatives is Verba, a record of all the words spoken on the newscasts programs of *La 1* of *Televisión Española* at noon (3:00 p.m.) and night (9:00 p.m.) since 2014 (there are two exceptions: one in June 2018 and another on May 10th, 2019, because the subtitles are not published).

Verba is based on an open-source web app resulting from a grant from the Google Digital News Initiative. Its search engine allows you to find all the occurrences of any word or phrase and see them in their context.

Although relatively young, Civio already has numerous appearances in scientific articles. Thus, Casero-Ripollés and López-Meri (2015) presented 4 case studies and Civio was one of them (the others, the British mySociety, the American Sunlight Foundation, and the Chilean *Ciudadano inteligente*). Among the milestones of Civio, they pointed to leading the 2014 Ranking of Journalistic Innovation, prepared by the Communication Research Group (CRG) of the Universidad Miguel Hernández (MHU) of Elche (2015: 111).

In an FDP directed by Casero-Ripollés himself, Carsí (2016) focuses on Civio and Poletika.org to analyze their websites, activity on social media, documents and

manifestos, and impact on digital media. Civio stands out in transparency in the dissemination of information on its website but not in online interactivity (2016: 17).

At that time, Civio had 9,500 followers on Twitter and 6,800 "likes" on Facebook (2016: 18-19). As of August 23rd, 2021, the figures were 46,100 and 10,400, respectively. *Cadena SER, La Vanguardia*, and *El Mundo* are 3 media outlets that disseminated the work of the foundation in its early days (2016: 20).

Its commitment to transparency was already highlighted by Alonso González and García Orta (2016) -or later by Cortés del Álamo *et al.*, 2018-. Also in 2016, it was one of the 16 media and entities selected by Ferreras Rodríguez for practicing data journalism.

We can also cite the inclusion of a report by Civio in the analysis by Sánchez Calero and Mancinas-Chávez (2017) or the studies by Capoano (2018) and Valero-Pastor and Carvajal (2019), which in both cases interview Civio Foundation to analyze its work and innovation processes.

The first case includes three other Spanish journalistic organizations (Vocento, El Confidencial, and WeblogsSL) and in the second another Brazilian organization (Agência Pública). Capoano (2018: 88) highlights the interdisciplinarity of Civio researchers and the combination of formats in their narrative (infographics, apps, long reports...).

For their part, Valero-Pastor and Carvajal research the transfer of knowledge and, in the case of Civio, its representative Miguel Ángel Gavilanes points out that the most fruitful way is the informal conversation (2019: 1167), although he also admits that the less institutionalization of certain processes causes loss of information (2019: 1166).

With a similar approach to that presented in this research, Matarín (2020) encodes the 257 mentions that were made of the words "immigration" or "immigrants" in TVE news in the first 8 months of the coronavirus pandemic:

"By frequency of appearance, Donald Trump, president of the United States (USA) stands out, being the most cited (17.5%), followed by Santiago Abascal" (Matarín, 2020, p. 297). References to Vox account for 12.7% of those made to political actors or institutions.

It also points out the low appearance of the rest of the parties, except for positions appointed by the PSOE. Several times there is talk of whether or not there are agreements between the Government partners, but the details are not emphasized. In this way, it is observed that the news does not link the issues that affect immigration with the discourse of the parties ideologically located to the left.

Except for what happens in the case of Vox, the allusions do not focus on the parties or the organic positions of their members, thus transferring the ideological message of each of them, but are made by referring to the representation of

institutional positions, as happens, for example, with mentions to the Government of Spain (7.90%); the Government of the Canary Islands (4.80%); the UN Rapporteur (4.80%); Government Delegation (3.20%) among others.

It is relevant to note that the references to the President of the Government of Spain are only 1.60%. Comparatively, a much lower percentage than the US president.

The privileged treatment received by Vox and the contrast with the mistreatment of leftist formations is also corroborated by other research works, such as that of Estevez *et al*. (2020), which shows how in the general elections of November 2019 in Spain, among the mentions of political parties at the state level, Vox received much more attention in 13 main *online* newspapers than it was then entitled to by the number of votes or seats (24).

Meanwhile, Unidas Podemos, with 42 seats, was reduced to between 6% and 12% each day of the campaign and with less presence on the decisive days, those before the elections. Conversely, the percentage of Vox appearances grows on the most influential days, hovering around 25% of the total on the last day of the campaign (when it reaches its maximum) and on the third to last.

It also uses the tool Verba of Civio for the analysis of the journalistic coverage Vicente (2020), which Verba uses to verify and question the practically null relevance granted to some topics, in this case of scientific dissemination and, in particular, those related to the periodic table.

Another critical demonstration of the public newscasts agenda comes from Arévalo-Salinas *et al*. (2021), specifically for their fourth section, checking how many mentions there were in La1 newscasts of words related to immigration.

2. OBJECTIVES

Research is carried out on the treatment of political leaders and issues in the La1 Newscast as an evaluation of the degree of pluralism and journalism practiced in a statewide television network, with the TV still being the main information medium in terms of audiences. With greater justification for three reasons: first, because it is a public service; second, due to its relevance, by constituting the official summary of the day's news and by broadcasting La1 the most-watched newscasts programs on RTVE; and third, because since La2Noticias is suspended (March 12th, 2020), La1 broadcasts the only public and state-wide television news programs, beyond thematic channels.

The structure of the article is displayed in a presentation of the topics in the theoretical framework, including the tool used (the Verba search engine) and the creative foundation (Civio); a methodological explanation of what themes and leaders have been selected and how, as well as the two parts of the analysis; the presentation of results and conclusions. The two hypotheses to verify are:

    A. Political leaders receive a number of mentions proportional to their electoral results

    B. The topics will receive a number of mentions proportional to the relevance that citizens give them in the CIS surveys and the importance they have for the current political and economic system

3. METHODOLOGY

60 elements are analyzed: 30 corresponding to themes and 30 about political leaders. In the first group, the 15 problems most cited by those interviewed in the CIS in the latest available study are taken, that include the questions about what are the main problems in the country (July 2021) and another 15 related words or expressions, one for each one of those top 15 themes.

Regarding the political figures, two spokespersons from each party with at least 2 seats are taken, they are joined by a representative from the Navarra Suma confluence and another from the BNG (the party with the most votes among those with one seat), and finally 4 former leaders.

The data is extracted from the Verba tool on August 28th, 2021. The procedure with each of the 60 topics and names studied is made up of three parts: one quantitative and the other qualitative. The content analysis of point 2 is justified by the fact that "this procedure not only requires a descriptive analysis but is complemented by an interpretive analysis" (Bernete, 2013: 236).

1) First, the number of mentions that each item receives on public newscasts at noon and night is shown from 2014 to August 28th, 2021.

2) The second component consists of a reflection on the treatment given to each issue and politician. Variables such as the relevance given to the news in which that issue or politician is mentioned and its positive, neutral, or negative approach are especially considered. Both are variables followed in Matarín's (2020) research and before in others, such as Teso (2014). For each object of study, an analysis of at least the last 20 mentions received is carried out.

The Verba tool from the Civio platform is used for the whole process. The two limitations to be reviewed are: on the one hand, the difficulty in cleaning the search for uses of the word that are different from the main one; on the other, complex statistical analysis is not carried out, preferring the proposed model.

The 30 selected political representatives scrupulously respect gender equality (15 women and 15 men). For non-state parties, a second spokesperson is taken from another territorial scope. They are as follows:

- Pedro Sánchez and Nadia Calviño for the PSOE
- Pablo Casado and Díaz Ayuso for the PP
- Santiago Abascal and Macarena Olona for Vox
- Alberto Garzón and Isa Serra for Unidas Podemos
- Yolanda Díaz and Ada Colau for the confluences associated with UP

- Gabriel Rufián and Carme Forcadell for ERC
- Inés Arrimadas and Ignacio Aguado for Ciudadanos
- Carles Puigdemont and Laura Borràs for Junts
- Aitor Esteban and Izaskun Bilbao for PNV
- Mertxe Aizpurúa and Arnaldo Otegi for EH Bildu
- Íñigo Errejón and Joan Baldoví for Más País y Compromís
- Mireia Vehí and Dolors Sabater for CUP
- Sergio Sayas for Navarra Suma and Ana Pontón for BNG
- Finally, Felipe González, Mariano Rajoy, Pablo Iglesias, and Rosa Díez are selected as former leaders

The 30 topics chosen are (in parentheses, the corresponding problem cited in the CIS of July 2021, question 16, in order of mention):

- Crisis and capitalism ("The economic crisis, problems of an economic nature")
- Unemployment and labor reform ("Unemployment")
- Coronavirus and tax reform ("The dangers to health: COVID-19. The coronavirus. Lack of sufficient resources to face the pandemic")
- Political class and regeneration ("The bad behavior of politicians")
- Regime and Transition to Democracy ("Political problems in general")
- Health and primary care ("Health")
- Consense and controversy ("Lack of agreements, unity, and capacity for collaboration. Political situation and instability")
- Social investment and evictions ("Problems of a social nature")
- Class consciousness and political culture ("Little citizen awareness (lack of civility, sense of civic spirit)")
- Program and opposition ("The Government and specific parties or politicians")
- Compliance with the coalition agreement and pact ("What political parties do")

- Precariousness and strike ("Problems related to the quality of employment")

- Illegal referendum and sovereignty ("The independence of Catalonia")

- Educational system and science ("Education")

- Corruption and fraud ("Corruption and fraud")

One of the cited works that use the same search engine is that of Vicente (2020), in principle quite specific (on the periodic table), and that does not expand the variables beyond knowing the number of mentions to the subject in the newscast. It does offer a list of possible related news that did not appear (2020: 123), which constitutes a suggestive avenue for future developments of similar research.

Regarding the article by Matarín (2020), it focuses attention on the mentions of only two terms, discarding others because they contain references to topics not relevant for the research (2020: 293), a problem also faced in this article and with the difficult exhaustive arrangement, since this time the included results are 29,203 for political leaders and approximately double for the selected topics.

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Likewise, by focusing on a single topic (immigration, like the previous one) and a few very specific days (June 17th-23rd, 2018), the methodology used by Arévalo-Salinas *et al*. (2021) is more prone to detailed analysis. One that, besides the mentions of certain words using the Verba search engine, includes aspects such as the duration of the news, its sources, and decisions in the selection of topics (2021: 17).

4. DISCUSSION

The quantitative results are presented in Table 1 and Table 2. PSOE, PP, and Ciudadanos receive great attention, while left-wing parties, sovereignists, and Vox are undervalued. There are big differences between Pedro Sánchez (1,675 mentions since 2020) and Pablo Casado (736) and between him and Santiago Abascal (161).

One part is explained by the greater references of others to the President of the Government, but in both cases, the difference between the first party and the second and between the second and the third is much greater than what actually exists in the number of votes or seats.

Table 1: Number of mentions to politicians in La1 Newscasts

Politician	Mentions since 2014 (since 2020)	Politician	Mentions since 2014 (since 2020)
Pedro Sánchez	10.347 (1.675)	Nadia Calviño	155 (103)
Pablo Casado	2.080 (736)	Díaz Ayuso	539 (413)
Santiago Abascal	354 (161)	Macarena Olona	5 (2)
Alberto Garzón	346 (38)	Isa Serra	14 (9)
Yolanda Díaz	118 (110)	Ada Colau	614 (35)
Gabriel Rufián	130 (36)	Carme Forcadell	267 (31)
Inés Arrimadas	527 (218)	Ignacio Aguado	91 (48)
Carles Puigdemont	1.928 (93)	Laura Borràs	27 (19)
Aitor Esteban	68 (10)	Izaskun Bilbao	5 (0)
Mertxe Aizpurúa	1 (1)	Arnaldo Otegi	193 (25)
Íñigo Errejón	287 (10)	Joan Baldoví	26 (3)
Mireia Vehí	1 (1)	Dolors Sabater	11 (6)
Sergio Sayas	1 (1)	Ana Pontón	19 (9)
Felipe González	527 (63)	Mariano Rajoy	6.474 (143)
Pablo Iglesias	3.917 (773)	Rosa Díez	131 (3)

Source: Verba/Civio.

Inés Arrimadas, leader of a party with 10 seats, multiplies by 6 since 2020 the mentions of the ERC spokesperson, which has more seats and also multiplies by 6 the mentions of the leader of IU and Minister of Consumption. Arrimadas even doubles the mentions to the Minister of Labor (who was also already vice president for part of the analyzed period). The name "Arrimadas" has a total of 858 mentions since 2014, while the EH Bildu's spokesperson, Mertxe Aizpurúa (who also held relevant territorial positions before reaching Congress) is only mentioned once (and to receive harsh criticism).

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The privileged treatment of Ciudadanos is also seen in the case of Ignacio Aguado (whose formation became extra-parliamentary in Madrid in 2021): he had 48 mentions since 2020, while other regional vice presidents did not receive any. Díaz Ayuso, president of the third autonomous community by population, multiplies by 12 the mentions of Ada Colau, mayor of the second city in Spain.

In the mentions of Pedro Sánchez, there are quite a few that consists of criticism from the opposition. Of the last 20, 7 are criticisms from the opposition, 2 are requests from his government partners, and 1 is about applause and boos received. Except when giving the estimate of the vote of the CIS, the mentions of Pablo Casado are exercising his opposition work, positively or neutrally, even when it is a case of corruption: "The president of the Partido Popular, Pablo Casado, disassociates himself from Villarejo and recalls that the party has already adopted disciplinary measures with Fernández Díaz".

In the case of Nadia Calviño, she receives few allusions to being vice president, they are usually positive and the frequency with which she appears confronted with her coalition partners stands out. Díaz Ayuso, for example, quadrupled Calviño's appearances, in line with Madrid's leading role in these newscasts: 68,094 total mentions, compared to 8,827 in Andalusia (and considering two nuances: that Andalusia has more population than Madrid and that in the search for the latter, the allusions to the city and the autonomous community are included).

On the other hand, the scant attention given to an important Vox spokesperson, Macarena Olona, is surprising, as is the case with its leader, Santiago Abascal. 3 of the 5 mentions to Olona are about her expulsion from the Permanent Council of Congress "after she tried to force a debate on Catalonia that was not on the agenda". With Abascal, there are numerous references to riots in places where he holds rallies.

Among the 20 last mentions of Alberto Garzón, 8 are from the PP asking for his dismissal, in another 4 the verbs "accuse" and "insist" are used, in 1 the electoral aspirations of his candidacy are presented in negative, in another it is presented as contradictory that he greets the king, and in the most recent one, he is criticized for a campaign to reduce the consumption of meat, as recommended by the WHO, the EU, and a multitude of scientific and international organizations.

Half of the 14 mentions to Isa Serra (Podemos) refer to her legal case for trying to stop the eviction of a disabled person in 2014. After becoming a spokesperson for her formation, she only appears 5 times, and 3 of them are about her accusation. The last 6 mentions of Yolanda Díaz are framed in differences between her or her coalition and her partner, the PSOE.

With Ada Colau there are not a few messages related to violence in the streets. In others, verbal forms such as "boycott" or "has charged against..." are used, besides relating her to a possible case of corruption with the Platform for People Affected by Mortgage.

For Gabriel Rufián, ERC spokesman in Congress, the mentions are low for being the sixth state group in the number of seats and normally decisive to achieve a majority. Practically all the references to Carme Forcadell are about her prison situation. Among the most recent allusions to Inés Arrimadas, they frequently refer to the party and its internal crisis after several terrible results.

The treatment of Ignacio Aguado, from Ciudadanos, is privileged in terms of the number of appearances for a regional spokesperson and also in the approach received. He is even interviewed live on the Newscast and is announced in its headlines (October 1st, 2020, 9:00 p.m.).

With Carles Puigdemont, on the other hand, the expression "fled" is used on 4 consecutive occasions. "Escaped" too. The mentions are usually on judicial issues and/or with a negative approach (he supposes the "main obstacle", "obstacles", "will block the way"...).

Something similar is seen with his partner Laura Borràs: "she warns", "she has taken advantage of her meeting with the king to reproach him", "she has called unfair", "chemical castration", "barrier of constitutional alliances", "she says now", "she has not attended the parade today". 7 of the last 23 allusions to Borràs are about a legal case opened against her, accusing her of embezzlement and tax fraud for the award of contracts.

The references to Aitor Esteban are neutral or positive, except perhaps one in which it is said that he denies the farewell to Espinosa de los Monteros (Vox). All the mentions to his fellow MEP Izaskun Bilbao were in 2014, none in 2019 (when she also presented herself and won a seat). Besides the contempt for Bildu's spokesperson (who only appears once and is harshly criticized), the public newscast dedicates 10 of its last 20 mentions to Arnaldo Otegi to talk about legal cases against him.

For his part, Íñigo Errejón has a relevant number of appearances but not since 2020 but rather before, especially in September 2019 (launch of Más País) and the end of 2016 and the beginning of 2017 (internal processes in Podemos). Joan Baldoví (Compromís), Ana Pontón (BNG), and Dolors Sabater (CUP) are left-wing territorial leaders who receive a similar number of mentions, Baldoví some more and less the CUP spokesperson.

Of the 11 results that the latter receives, 2 are criticisms of another politician, 3 are in the context of the riots in Catalonia in February 2021, and the others are quick presentations. The only mention of her colleague Mireia Vehí was when greeting another deputy. The same happens with the list head of Navarra Suma, Sergio Sayas, whose only appearance is when he is hugged by Pablo Casado.

As for Ana Pontón (BNG), the last 4 allusions to her name (and the only ones since the Galician elections) referred to the proceedings opened by the Prosecutor's Office of the National Court for possible insults to the king when the king emeritus left Spain to the United Arab Emirates.

Ending with the analyzed ex-politicians, Felipe González is named fundamentally in three types of news: when he gives his opinion on current affairs, when some historical event is recounted, and when his management is flattered or criticized, especially in response to the request for the formation of an investigation commission when a report was published on his involvement in GAL terrorism.

In the case of Mariano Rajoy, his mentions are higher, being the president immediately before the current one. All the last 20 references to Rajoy are about investigations into corruption cases, except for a couple of criticisms of his management.

Regarding Pablo Iglesias, almost all his recent mentions allude to his abandonment of politics, his succession being the subject with the most appearances. In his time as vice president, the abuse of negative words is observed, such as "shock", "controversy", "anger", "demanded", "accuses", "riots", "attacking", "barrage of criticism", " wave of criticism "...

Furthermore, the opposition's censorships are constant, including phrases in which the journalist assumes that Iglesias encourages riots: "The PP calls for the removal of Pablo Iglesias for encouraging the riots," repeated. This contrasts with the general criterion of including words that make it clear that it is the opinion of the issuer.

Finally, the few allusions to Rosa Díez are especially about her support for the PP and her call to protest against the Government's policy on Catalonia.

Table 2: *Number of mentions in La1 Newscasts to the topics most cited in the CIS (Topic A) and related words (Topic B)*

Topic A	Mentions since 2014 (since 2020)	Topic B	Mentions since 2014 (since 2020)
Crisis	10.358 (3.404)	Capitalism	66 (10)
Unemployment	4.095 (843)	Labour reform	673 (119)
Coronavirus	7.789 (7.778)	Tax reform	434 (56)
Political class	253 (37)	Regeneration	517 (13)
Regime	2.614 (302)	Transition to democracy	33 (4)
Health	6.602 (4.326)	Primary care	538 (375)
Consensus	1.429 (338)	Controversy	4.248 (910)
Social investment	29 (11)	Evictions	259 (87)
Class consciousness	0 (0)	Political culture	67 (9)
Electoral program	293 (8)	Opposition	7.316 (1.264)
Compliance with	10 (1)	Coalition pact	72 (15)

the agreement			
Precariousness	447 (108)	Strike	3.256 (240)
Illegal referendum	524 (51)	Sovereignty	814 (73)
Educational system	147 (25)	Science	1.305 (332)
Corruption	4.335 (343)	Fraud	2.621 (410)

Source: Verba/Civio.

Highlight the very little attention given to the topics "capitalism", being the current economic system and in full crisis, "compliance with the agreement", "coalition pact", "educational system", "evictions", "political culture", "regeneration ", "transition to democracy"...

And the null appearance of the expression "class consciousness". "Health" soars during the pandemic but did not have as much coverage in the previous 6 years. The word "controversial", for example, had more than 1,000 more mentions than the word "health" between 2014 and 2019.

The term "crisis" is associated in newscasts with a wide range of topics, although in the last analyzed weeks its constant use stands out to refer to the situation in Afghanistan. Before that, the allusion to the coronavirus crisis was the most frequent.

In 2 years (between August 2019 and August 2021), there are only 5 comments critical of capitalism (or 6, at the most), none are in the headlines and, in fact, none appear in the first 16 minutes of the newscast, being the most common after half an hour.

In addition, several of the mentions are in foreign countries and others in the field of poetry, and even a text that speaks of "savage capitalism that we have imposed on ourselves" is labeled as "ideological", even though that self-imposition has never been such. The economic system has never been expressly asked.

It is noteworthy that in the last 3 months (June-August 2021) when historical unemployment drops were recorded, only 34 sentences contained the word "unemployment" (and in this case, as in many others, some results that are not about the subject must be discounted).

Moreover, none of those 34 opened the newscast as the main news, despite the historical data and even though, for many years, Spaniards have placed this as their main concern. If we compare with the same months of 2019, we find more than triple the results (116).

The case of the expression "labor reform" is also illustrative, since repealing it was one of the main promises of Pedro Sánchez and, nevertheless, since he was invested for the first time, the mentions in the newscasts are limited and there are even whole months in which it does not appear.

Regarding "tax reform", the last 5 results refer to the proposal of the Bank of Spain, many of the results refer to Colombia and not to Spain, and only 1 of the 20 mentions (the least recent) details something which taxes would change, something basic.

For "coronavirus", the most interesting thing is to see the evolution of its appearances since it burst in March 2020 (although previously there were already mentions):
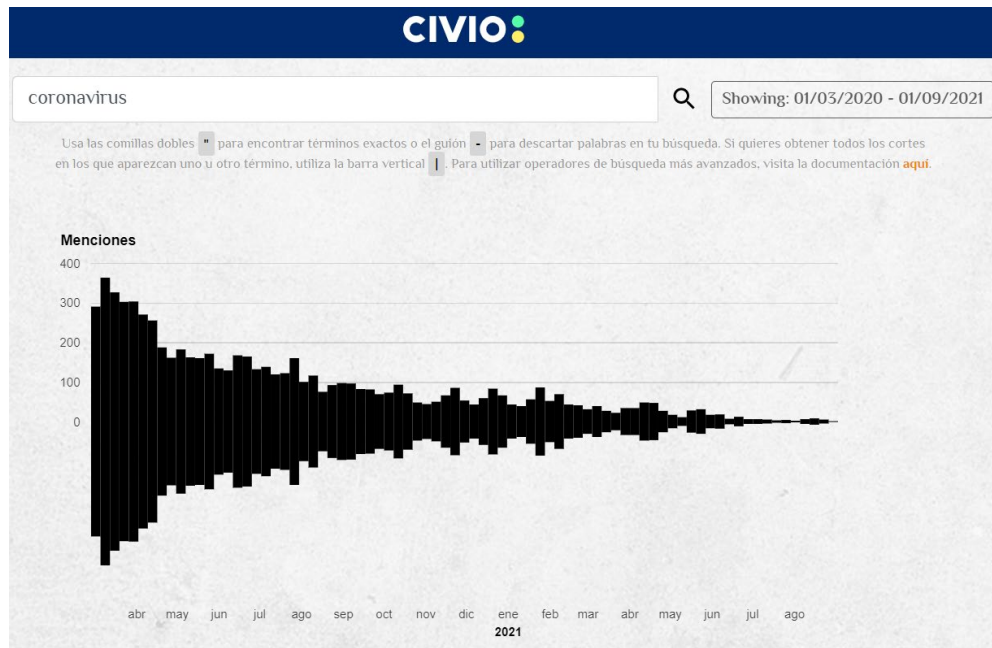
Figure 1. *Evolution of mentions of "coronavirus" in La1 Newscasts*
Source: Verba/Civio.

It is a continuous linear decrease, standing out the few mentions in the last months and the enormous difference with the first ones. With the expression "political class" we find 7 recent mentions that referred to other countries. With the word "Regime" something similar but more pronounced occurs: 14 of 20 references are to foreign regimes, 2 are in another sense, and 4 are words of the PP to criticize the Government and an alleged "regime change".

Therefore, only 20% refers to the Spanish political regime and 0% are critical of it. With "regeneration", there are only 5 references in the last year and a half that refer to political regeneration. Since 2017, only 4 mentions appear regarding Spain when writing "transition to democracy" and all 4 are positive about the Transition and its protagonists.

Besides the coronavirus pandemic, mentions of health only stand out in autumn 2014, due to the Ebola crisis. Regarding Primary Care, it is given very little relevance, except at the end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019, with protests in several autonomous communities due to lack of resources, and the newscast focused especially on criticizing the situation in Catalonia.

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The insistence on using the words "consensus" and "controversy" are symptomatic of the ideological approach. The first, "consensus", as it was defining the story of the Transition and since then as a political ideal to maintain the status quo on fundamental issues.

And the second, "controversy", to reduce the debate to superficial and emotional issues, to convey an image that all political options are equal, and as a distraction from important issues. That the mentions of "controversy" even tripled the numerous mentions of "consensus" shows the determination of the newscast to transfer this controversial approach to politics.

The expression "social investment" as public money invested in social issues has not appeared since 2015 (when it is used to summarize an intervention by Pablo Casado and another by Pedro Sánchez) and only on 2 occasions in 2020 there are very close phrases: "social public investment" on 27/10/2020 (3:00 pm, 10 minutes) concerning the 2021 General Budgets and "investment in social" on 23/07/2020 (9:00 pm, 21 minutes) on a more specific topic. On other occasions, the synonym "social spending" is used, more frequently and with a connotation somewhat different from "social investment".

Except for announcing the extension of the suspension of evictions of vulnerable people (although they continued to occur), the word "evictions" does not appear for more than 3 months, as of May 25, which is alluded to explain that "the anti-system" (referring to the CUP) pressure ERC to comply with Housing.

"Political culture", for its part, only appears 11 times in almost 8 years (several general, several related to Podemos, 2 to the PSOE or PSC, and 1 to Venezuela), since the rest registered are phrases in which the words appear close "Culture" and "politics".

Looking for "Electoral Program" we find that the public newscast refuses to explain what the ruling parties' program is, that they promised. Since 2020 (that is, in 1 year and 8 months), the few references to the electoral program are to foreign countries (USA, Italy, and Ireland).

There is also one in the framework of a trial against the Parliamentary Board (for processing parliamentary initiatives, including some contemplated in the electoral program) and another is about a common "controversial" program from 20 years ago, commented on in the obituary about Paco Frutos (IU candidate in 2000). Besides, there is only one generic appeal and another in a work of fiction.

These data are corroborated by those of "compliance with the agreement": in 2020 there is a mention regarding an EU-United Kingdom agreement, in 2019 a couple of them before agreements, and a police demonstration demanding the Government for what was agreed.

We must go back to 2018 to find an allusion to the analysis of compliance with an agreement ("Ciudadanos celebrates this Friday in Malaga a national executive

committee to which its regional leader, Juan Marín, will report on the level of compliance with the legislative agreement with the PSOE", 05/09/2018); the content says that "Ciudadanos accuse Susana Díaz of not complying with points of that agreement such as the change of the electoral law or the elimination of the surveys".

In the same line, the "coalition pact" has little development in the TVE Newscasts. In the registered 8 months of 2021, there are only 2 UP quotes about what is stipulated in the coalition pact at one point (stopping abusive increases in housing rent) and a sentence stating that "After weeks of public discrepancies in the coalition government, today we heard President Sánchez say that he is satisfied with the pact with Unidas Podemos"(23/02/2021, 9:00 p.m., 8th minute).

For its part, the word "opposition" is used frequently and mostly to refer to the opposition in the Congress of Deputies, which is the active part of the news, except when it is Pedro Sánchez or someone from the PSOE who questions the groups of the opposition.

Regarding the appearance of the word "precariousness", it may be relevant to point out that in the 1620 days of Rajoy's mandate whose newscasts are registered, precariousness was mentioned 0.13 times a day, while, since Yolanda Díaz is Minister of Labor, the frequency increases 33.4%.

Although the pandemic covers almost the entire time of the coalition government and this increased precariousness, the number of permanent contracts in August 2020 was higher than in August 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015, the first years of the labor reform of the And the figure in August 2021 is also higher than that of 2016 and 2017.

The distribution of the word "strike" is different because, since 2020, the weeks with the highest peaks in mentions remain at 12 or 13, while in 2019 that level is frequently exceeded and 70 mentions are reached in 2 different weeks. In 2018, 3 weeks beat that record. In previous years, there are not such high data but they are higher than those of 2020.

The insistence on using the expression "illegal referendum" (524 times) contrasts with "agreed referendum" (19 times). In "sovereignty", one speaks of other countries or Gibraltar, Sahara, Ceuta, or Melilla, except for an allusion by UP to the fact that the head of state is not subject to popular sovereignty.

In 8 months of 2021, the "educational system" only appears 4 times: 2 on other countries and 2 criticisms of the PP to the Government. In 2020, there are many allusions to the effects of the pandemic and the new education law: they are fundamentally critics from the opposition or defenders of concerted education or positions of the PSOE or one of the PNV, being difficult to find left-wing opinions.

References to "science" are considerably more in the years 2018-2020 (638) than in 2015-2017 (389). The large drop in mentions of the word "corruption" is very striking if we consider that there is still news about it or that the Government

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continues to breach its commitment to making an anti-corruption law and a statute of the complainant. The same occurs with "fraud", except for a flare-up in November 2020.
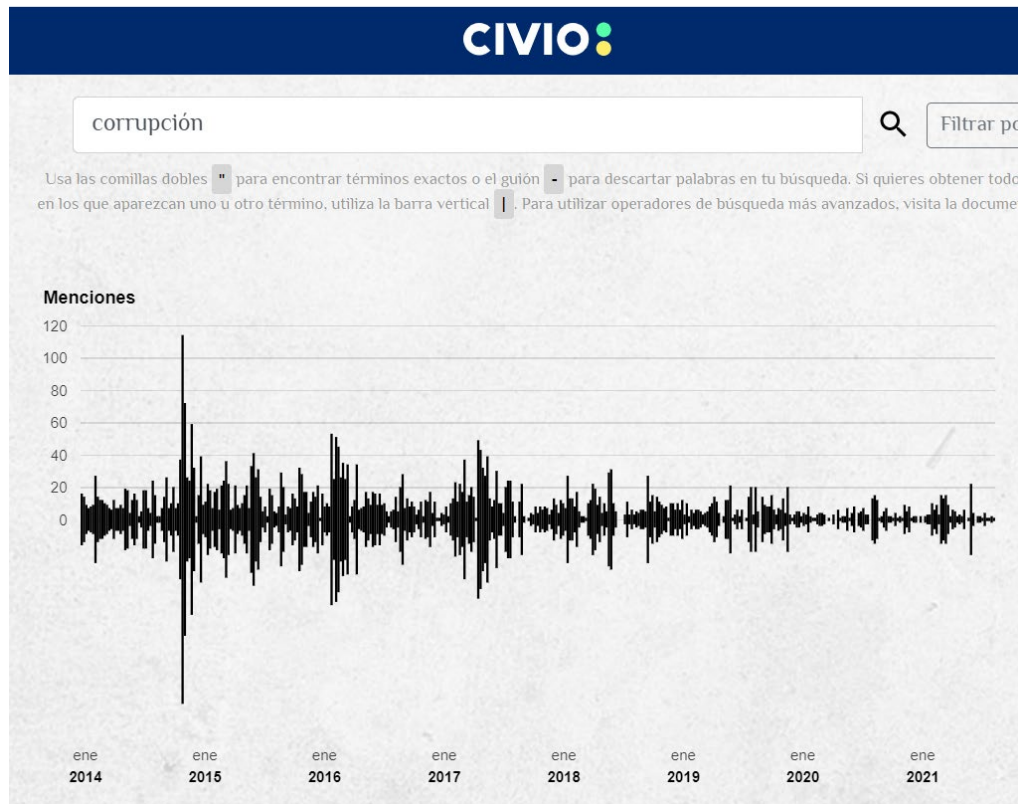
Figure 2. *Evolution of mentions of "corruption" in La1 Newscasts*
Source: Verba/Civio.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This research seeks to expand studies on public television and the differences between the media agenda and citizen concerns with a novel methodology and with quantitative and qualitative components. The Verba tool from the Civio Foundation is used, which already has extensive coverage in matters of transparency.

Regarding the treatment of political leaders in newscasts, there is a deficit of attention to leftist formations, sovereignists, and Vox, while parties such as PP and Ciudadanos are widely benefited both quantitatively and qualitatively, and the PSOE stands at the center of the political news in a much higher proportion of the votes received.

Thus, the 1,675 mentions to Pedro Sánchez since 2020 stand out and the fact that Inés Arrimadas multiplies by 6 the mentions to the IU leader and Minister of Consumption (Alberto Garzón) and also to Gabriel Rufián, whose formation surpasses Ciudadanos in seats and is most relevant in the formation of majorities.

The allusions to the leader of Ciudadanos also double those of the Minister of Labor and second vice president of the Government in part of the analyzed period, Yolanda Díaz. The territorial parties, mostly on the left, suffer both from the low number of appearances and the negative treatment. Also, Junts is harmed, while the treatment of the PNV is neutral.

The unfolded agenda reveals the conservative tendencies of the Newscast, starting with the little attention given to topics such as "evictions", "educational system", or "precariousness", which, despite being some of the most cited citizen problems in CIS surveys, receive fewer mentions than "illegal referendum".

Words with a strong and hidden ideological charge are abused, such as "consensus" and above all "controversy". Others, such as "political class" or, especially, "Regime", are used a lot to refer to other countries. Terms related to the economic system, such as "capitalism" or "class consciousness" appear very little or not at all, respectively.

Something similar happens, despite its relevance, with "labor reform", "tax reform", "social investment", and those that refer to the political system, such as the aforementioned "Regime", "regeneration", or "transition to democracy". For its part, mentions of "coronavirus" decrease at a very clear rate.

Regarding political parties, the results are consistent with what was concluded for the press in Estevez *et al*. (2020), except that in that case, Vox was benefited and not here. Also with Matarín (2020), there is this divergence.

The distribution of the mentions offers relevant indications in favor of the correlation between media attention and the received vote, in line with Silver (2015) and Stray (2016), with the positive or negative treatment of these mentions being in second place, although also important.

The hypotheses are not fulfilled: the proportionality of the electoral results is not respected in the allocation of attention in the newscasts to leaders, nor of the citizen responses about the country's problems, nor in the case that we pay attention to the importance of the issues for the political and economic system.

With these data, it is the second point cited that is closer to being fulfilled since 15 of the 30 words analyzed receive more than 100 mentions since 2020, while the third is the one that gives the most opposite results: the more systemic relevance, less coverage.

The main contribution of the study is the updated and long-range temporal and topic balance of the approach of the public newscast, especially since Spain lacks an Audiovisual Council as exists in other EU states and considering the incompleteness and great delay with which the report on TVE of the National Markets and Competition Commission is published.

There are two limitations of the study, not using advanced statistical models and that the analysis refers to words pronounced in newscasts but does not include other elements, especially the images broadcasted in a properly audiovisual medium. This can be found in studies such as that of Sánchez Castillo (2018) about interviews with political leaders in Informativos Telecinco, or that of Arévalo-Salinas et al. (2021), which inquires about the insertion of images or music in the public newscast, as well as other decisions (sources used, duration of the news...).

Future research may propose methodological complements that include these other cited items or simply seek an update of what is described here. In any case, it is possible to get more out of the Verba search engine by fine-tuning the method so that results that are not relevant because they are not related to the leaders and political issues in question are not counted. One possibility would be to polish them one by one when the number of mentions does not exceed a certain threshold and take a sample when it does.

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