

The electoral debates of 2015 and 2016 in Spain. Context of perception and credibility for young people

Los debates electorales de 2015 y 2016 en España. Contexto de percepción y credibilidad para los jóvenes

Alfredo Arceo Vacas. Complutense University of Madrid. Spain.

aarceo@ucm.es



Sergio Álvarez Sánchez. Complutense University of Madrid. Spain.

sergioalvarezsanchez@ucm.es



Olga Serrano Villalobos. Rey Juan Carlos University. Spain.

olga.serrano@urjc.es



This article is the product of the research project “The televised electoral debates during the campaigns of 20-D of 2015 and 26-J of 2016: comparative study of the messages and the image projected by the candidates”, reference PR41/17-20954, financed by the public body Complutense University with the support of the private entity Santander, within the aid program for the financing of research projects PR41 / 17.

Dates:

- Start of research: December 15th, 2017.

- End of research: December 15th, 2018.

Acknowledgment

Carlos Correa Paz

Partner and director of CeCubo Group, Spain, for providing Twitter data using the CeCubo Metrics tool – carlos.correa@cecubogroup.com

How to cite this article / Standard reference

Arceo Vacas, A.; Álvarez Sánchez, S. & Serrano Villalobos, O. (2020). The electoral debates of 2015 and 2016 in Spain. Context of perception and credibility for young people. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, (76), 17-37. <https://www.doi.org/10.4185/RLCS-2020-1435>

ABSTRACT

Introduction: This article describes the influence of the context of perception of the electoral debates broadcasted on 2015 December 14th and 2016 June 13th, in the credibility attributed to the candidates, and the reached degree of understanding. **Method:** Polls of that time were reviewed; a descriptive analysis of the press news was conducted; two focus groups on credibility judgments with young actuants were organized; and content analyses of the candidates' messages on Twitter were performed. **Results:** The press favored a context of negative emotions; the candidates used Twitter to show their social efficacy, but failed to convince young people. **Discussion:** Campaign teams should worry for the lack of perception of the credibility subfactor most worked by candidates.

Conclusions: The candidates would have looked more credible had they worked on other credibility subfactors, instead of focusing only on social efficacy; and by acting more spontaneously (something on which Rajoy succeeded).

KEYWORDS: political communication; elections; electoral debates; credibility; social media; press.

RESUMEN

Introducción: Se describe la influencia del contexto de percepción de los debates electorales del 14 de diciembre de 2015 y el 13 de junio de 2016, en la credibilidad atribuida a los candidatos, y el grado de entendimiento alcanzado. **Metodología:** Se revisaron encuestas de la época; se practicó un análisis descriptivo de noticias en prensa; se celebraron dos grupos de discusión con jóvenes, sobre los juicios de credibilidad; y se realizaron análisis de contenido a los mensajes en Twitter de los candidatos. **Resultados:** La prensa propició un contexto de emociones negativas; los candidatos destinaron Twitter a demostrar eficacia social, pero fracasaron entre el público joven. **Discusión:** Que no se percibiera el subfactor de credibilidad más trabajado, debería preocupar a los equipos de campaña. **Conclusiones:** Los candidatos habrían ganado credibilidad trabajando otros subfactores, en vez de centrarse sólo en la eficacia social; y mostrándose más naturales (algo que logró Rajoy).

PALABRAS CLAVE: comunicación política; elecciones; debates electorales; credibilidad; redes sociales; prensa.

CONTENTS

1. Introduction. 1.1. Purpose and relevance of the research. 1.2. Public relations in political communication. 1.3. Framing of electoral messages. 1.4. The study of perceived credibility. 2. Objectives. 3. Methodology. 3.1. Methodological approach. 3.2. Review of electoral and opinion polls. 3.3. Holding of focus groups. 3.4. Descriptive study of the press news. 3.5. Content analysis of Twitter accounts. 4. Results. 4.1. Relevant information of the polls. 4.2. Treatment of the campaigns in the press. 4.3. Summary of the focus groups. 4.4. Analysis of the profiles of the candidates on Twitter. 5. Discussion. 6. Conclusions. 7. References. 7.1. Related papers.

Translation by **Paula González** (Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, Venezuela).

1. Introduction

The purpose of this research is to describe the perception contexts of two electoral debates that marked a turning point in Spanish political communication. The face to face encounter between Mariano Rajoy (acting president at the time and candidate of the *Partido Popular* for the presidency of the Government) and Pedro Sanchez (candidate of the *Partido Socialista*), issued on December 14th, 2015; and the four-way debate between Mariano Rajoy, Pedro Sanchez, Pablo Iglesias (candidate of *Podemos*), and Albert Rivera (candidate of *Ciudadanos*), held on June 13th, 2016.

The socio-political context in which the effects of the media on the audience occur is a factor that must be taken into account to assess its consequences because, without going any further, differences have been found between the impact of the affective dimension of the news during a campaign period and outside of it (Aaldering, Van der Meer, and Van der Brug, 2018, p. 87). In each specific context, to achieve electoral success, a candidate needs to convince voters of his capabilities. In recent times, this need has given place to a progressive personalization of politics in its leaders, either through a greater weight on them compared with the media attention to their parties; or through a greater attention to the personal life of politicians, versus their public life (Van Aelst, Sheafer, and Stanyer, 2011, p. 214). In turn, personalization impacts on the dynamics of mediated

communication in campaigns: only when society is mired in one of these periods, it has been confirmed how positive images for the perception of the leadership of candidates have a greater effect in the intention of public vote than the negative ones (Aaldering *et al.*, 2018, p. 86).

However, there is a format in which candidates enjoy a lower degree of mediation to present their political proposals to voters: the electoral debate (López-García, Llorca-Abad, Valera-Ordaz, and Peris-Blanes, 2018, pp. 790-791). For its part, the public, thanks to this particularity, uses televised electoral debates to detect inconsistencies between the messages of the candidates in these formats, and their statements on other occasions (Coleman and Moss, 2016, p. 13).

The effects of electoral debates as well as those of the different media contents are deployed in an environment in which digital communication has an increasingly prominent role. However, the first signs point towards an underutilization of its platforms. The study by Chaves-Montero and Gadea (2017, p. 13) found that parties and candidates tend to give more relevance to Twitter than to Facebook; and that both miss their chances to increase their perceived credibility through interaction. In the 2015 campaign, 87.6% of the Facebook posts analyzed by Ballesteros (2017, p. 8) lacked a mobilizing desire, with 35.4% dedicated to the narration of experiences; besides, the dynamization of debates and responses barely reached 1% of what was published. Only Pablo Iglesias generated debates on Facebook beyond self-promotion (Chaves-Montero and Gadea, 2017, p. 17). Albert Rivera and *Izquierda Unida* were also exceptions because of their mobilizing efforts, being the account of *PP* the one that least called to action (Ballesteros, 2017, p. 9). Even so, almost all the calls for mobilization on Facebook were reduced to the attendance to rallies (Ballesteros, 2017, p. 14). In fact, regarding the use of social networks, both the candidates and the parties use Twitter primarily as a tool for content distribution, instead of as a space to manage a debate with the public, in parallel with the one being televised (Lozano Aguilar and García Orosa, 2017, pp. 237-238).

In sum, the problem the current research intends to solve refers to the determination of the impact of contexts on the perception of the electoral debates by the voters. The debates cannot be studied isolating them from the reality described for digital communication, nor from the specificities that the candidates and parties themselves generate with their communication during the campaigns. To understand the dynamics and the effects of the two selected electoral debates, it is unavoidable to outline their perception contexts. By incorporating this dimension, a usual lack in the analysis is put to an end. In this sense, the work of Aaldering *et al.* (2018) provides clues that demonstrate the importance of perception contexts, and it has been a fundamental study to gauge that the current research must follow the evolution of these contexts throughout each campaign

Analyzing this series of issues (and, in particular, how the communicative efforts of the candidates impacted in the perception contexts of the electoral debates of December 2015 and June 2016), is a particularly relevant work due to the unprecedented situation in Spanish political history, without previous references. Two new parties were emerging that challenged *PP* and *PSOE* for the first time (*Podemos* on the left and *Ciudadanos* as a liberal option), experiencing a political blockade between the two elections mentioned, for lack of agreement. Consequently, the careful and specific study of the electoral debates of both campaigns and their contexts is pertinent.

1.1. Public relations in political communication

Public relations are present in the political sphere, as they are in the public and private ones. They are essential for an electoral candidate to reach an understanding with their audiences, through knowledge of the issues that concern them and the expectations they host. The concept of public relations in the political scope is defined as:

The management process by which an organization or individual, for political purposes and through goal-oriented communication and action, seeks to influence, as well as establish, build, and maintain beneficial relationships and reputations with its key audiences to help it sustain its mission and achieve its goals. (Strömback and Kiouisis, 2011, p. 8)

At the same time, political communication “borders with many territories where politology, sociology, anthropology, the sciences of communication and public opinion, psychology, rhetoric, and publicity coexist” (Mazzoleni, 2010, p. 17). If both ideas are addressed, the field of political communication would encompass any exchange of messages about decisions that collectively affect a community; on the contrary, for the public relations in the political sphere, the construction and care of the relationship must be given, as well as the mutual benefit between the politician and its public. When using dimensions with which to measure the strategies of political public relations that are deployed, Seltzer and Zhang (2011, pp. 27-28) extract four variables from the discipline literature: Mutual control (that is, the level of agreement about who is entitled to exercise power), trust, satisfaction, and dedication or commitment.

Consequently, to analyze whether this bidirectionality occurs in a public relations campaign in any field, Broom (1977) took the co-orientation model of McLeod and Chaffe (1973) as the basis for conceptualizing a series of double-flow relationship variables (that is, bidirectional): communication (dialogue dimension), understanding (shared knowledge), agreement (shared attitudes), and congruence (or complementary behavior). Along with these variables, in the co-orientation model, precision refers to the coincidence between what a party thinks its interlocutor has in its head, and what the latter actually thinks (Walden, Bortree, and Di Stasso, 2015, p. 527). Precision becomes especially important in political communication because it implies orientations towards the object (in the case of this research, an electoral candidate) of both parts of the relationship (Eveland and Hutchens, 2013, p. 424).

These dimensions imply that the judgments of the public on the person or organization with which they are relating are constantly evolving, due to the effects of the possible understanding and agreement that is achieved each time. For this reason, the co-orientation model, in the adaptation that Broom (1977) carries out for the field of public relations, invites, on the one hand, to establish objectives oriented to find the evolution of the contexts and strategies throughout the periods analyzed; on the other, to incorporate a goal of description of the public's judgments on each candidate to verify the results obtained from the possible application of this model. However, its follow-up is hypothetical at this stage since, although organizations state that they prefer a two-way communication model, in practice there is not always agreement on the quality of the relationship, generating uncertainty (Walden *et al.*, 2015, p. 532).

As it could not be any other way, nowadays this dialogue, understanding, and active agreement with the public can be encouraged especially through social media. This public, pioneer in the adoption of social networks, develops its political learning in new news sources, such as Facebook, whose dynamics of diffusion and impact on the political knowledge of young people are already achieving considerable independence from those of traditional media (Edgerly, Thorson, and Wells, 2018, pp. 1055-1056). At the same time, in the so-called “celebrity politics”, emotions and feelings become a source of affinity, identification, and evaluation of politicians (Loaden, Broman, and Xenos, 2016, p. 404). This phenomenon interacts with a new reality, in which the young public harbors a new way of understanding politics, more focused on concrete problems as they arise, than in their systematization and explanation through the sense that ideology traditionally provided (Manning, 2013). Some

conclusions invite to formulate an objective expressly oriented to investigate the processes by which the young public makes attributions about the electoral candidates:

It is clear from our findings [...] that it is likely that the effectiveness of the use of social networks in mobilizing support depends on the receptivity of politicians and political celebrities to the expectations and demands of action of young citizens who connect in the net. Most of the existing literature focuses on the study of politicians and celebrities when they use the media, rather than on young citizens as social agents active in shaping political communication and the practices of political representatives. (Loaden *et al.*, 2016, p. 414)

In the current work, we have tried to analyze how the variables of the co-orientation model interacted with the public's perception frameworks before the general elections held in 2015 and 2016 in Spain; how these frameworks contextualized the electoral debates held during those campaigns, impacting on the perceived credibility of each candidate; and what dimensions did the latter work to be perceived as credible.

1.2. Framing of electoral messages

The basic structures of understanding with which we make sense of events are referred to as frames; a structure that also allows us to understand what is relevant in each situation or topic, providing them with meaning (Mueller, 2018, p. 25). Thanks to the frames, individuals perceive, identify, and label the interaction situations of their day to day. This proposal has great reception in the studies on communication because the frames help to understand how the audience accepts those interpretations suggested by the media about public events or how they influence.

Along these lines, Robert Entman tried to synthesize the path of the framing theory in communication, defining the process of framing as: "selecting some aspects of perceived reality and making them more prominent in a communicative text, so that they promote particular definitions of the problems, causal interpretations, moral evaluations, and/or recommendations for the treatment of the described matter" (Entman, 1993, p. 52). The citizen lives in a communicative environment where meanings are elaborated, opinions are constructed, and political choices are expressed, notes Mazzoleni (2010, p. 232), who adds that it does so through three sources of communication that are at the same time sources of influence: the media, social interaction, and political subjects. Concerning the first one, the media carry out a selective framing with which they can turn the news with a political charge into positive, negative, critical or supportive (Watanabe, 2017, p. 225).

But not only the media resort to framing. The political candidates themselves can build and refine the frames with which they frame their messages, in an effort to ensure that political debates occur in the terms proposed by the candidate (Harris, 2010, p. 42). Most importantly, Druckman (2001, p. 1061) states that the credibility of the source of a message is decisive when the recipients assume the frame it intends to establish.

1.3. The study of perceived credibility

At this point, the credibility of the source comes into play as a determining factor in the image of candidates and political parties. From the perspective of Daniel Kahneman (2012, p. 35) there are

two ways of thinking that mediate our behavior: System 1, which operates quickly and automatically, with little or no effort and no sense of voluntary control; System 2, which focuses attention on the endeavored mental activities that demand it, including complex calculations. System 2 operations are often associated with the subjective experience of acting, choosing, and concentrating. Both systems act as communicating vessels, where System 2 has some capacity to change the way System 1 works by programming the normally automatic functions of attention and memory (2012, pp. 37-38).

Robert Cialdini refers to a reflection by Daniel Kahneman that “nothing in life is as important as you think it is while you are thinking about it” (Cialdini, 2017, p. 33). This specialist continues:

The implications of Kahneman's assertion apply very well to the practice of pre-suasion because a communicator who gets an audience to focus on a key element of a message pre-loads it with importance. This form of pre-suasion explains what many see as the main role (labeled as agenda-setting) that the media use to influence public opinion. The central principle of the agenda-setting theory is that the media rarely produce changes directly; it is much more likely that it persuades indirectly, by giving selected topics and facts a better coverage than other issues and facts. (Cialdini, 2017, pp. 33-34)

The persuasion processes that influence the two systems of thought are of great value from the point of view of effectiveness. According to the Yale School, the recipient makes judgments about the credibility of the source based on the expert knowledge it attributes and how reliable it seems (Hovland, Janis, and Kelley, 1953). Precisely, credibility has been described as "a crucial asset for political leaders and is key to understanding failure and success in the competitive political market" (Van Zuydam and Hendriks, 2018, p. 258).

José Luis Arceo (1993) made a review of the aforementioned studies on the image of the source in political communication, defining three factors: credibility, attractiveness, and power. Thus, it also divides credibility into three subfactors: competence or expert knowledge, ethical reliability, and social efficacy (Arceo, 1993, p. 18). Since these secondary dimensions are in line with those described in the previous literature about credibility (Hovland and Weiss, 1951; Hovland *et al.*, 1953), and in light of the comments of Van Zuydam and Hendriks (2018), the objective of monitoring the credibility strategies of each candidate in the elections being studied will be considered. These strategies are intended to impact the perception context, given that they try to achieve some attributions by the audience, before and after the debates. On the other hand, Kim, Kioussis, and Molleda (2015) verified how the efforts to provide messages with affective attributes impacted on the credibility, trust, and authenticity attributed to the source.

However, this does not mean that the other two factors should be disregarded. The attractiveness of the candidate is based on its notoriety and, mainly, on the similarity that a member of the public perceives with its own sociodemographic characteristics or lifestyle. Todorov, Mandisodza, Goren, and Hall (2005, p. 1623) claim that election results can be predicted based on the inferences that the facial aspect of the candidates evokes in the voters. This role of physical appearance becomes more important when elections are personalized in candidates, "and when the costs of acquiring information about the candidates are high" (Lawson, Lenz, Baker, and Myers, 2010, p. 562).

Regarding the power factor (Arceo, 1993, p. 18), it includes the decision-making capacity of the candidate, his status, socio-political and economic support, and interest in the public's opinion.

2. Objectives

The research is based on the general hypothesis that credibility subfactors, as described by José Luis Arceo (1993), are the determining variable in the generation of the contexts of perception of electoral debates. This hypothesis is also based on the Yale School's assertion that the basic component of the credibility of the source is precisely the acceptance of the spokesperson by the public (Hovland and Weiss, 1951). To guide towards its validation or refutation, and in line with the purpose and problem defined, a series of derived objectives have been established. Throughout this introduction, we have presented the key contributions that have led to the formulation of the following objectives:

1. Observe the evolution of the aforementioned contexts: What reading did the media and citizens do.
2. Identify any variation in the strategies of the candidates to gain credibility.
3. Detect the parameters by which the young public attributes credibility to the candidates.
4. Synthesize the judgments made by the public on each of the four main candidates for the general elections of 2015 and 2016.

3. Methodology

To carry out this research, a mixed methodology has been used, which entails the combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques that can be deployed simultaneously, in chronological order, or sequential order (Ongwuebuzie and Combs, 2011). In the case of the study at hand, the qualitative techniques of discussion groups and a descriptive analysis of texts have been combined with the quantitative technique of content analysis. Its application has been carried out following the sequential order in which they are presented in the next lines.

Through the discussion group technique, the speeches of its participants are collected through the interactions and negotiation processes between them, with the ultimate intention of obtaining a general framework of information on representative opinions, attitudes, symbolic systems, etc. (Ballestín and Fàbregues, 2018, pp. 155-158). Regarding the content analysis, it is the method aimed at "systematic, objective, and quantitative analysis of the characteristics of the message" (Neuendorf, 2017, p. 1). This systematization that it provides places content analysis as the indicated technique to extract objective data on the performance of candidates in social networks.

3.1. Review of electoral and opinion polls

As an initial step, the polls published by the two main demographic institutions in Spain were analyzed: The Center for Sociological Research (*CIS* for its Spanish acronym), as the public body dedicated to the study of Spanish society; and the company *Metroscopia* (entity that, during the analyzed period, worked with the newspaper *El País*).

In both cases, the studies published in the two months before each election date were collected, to obtain relevant information on: the intention to vote; the country's main problems for respondents, and assessments of the four candidates. The data collected contributes to shedding more light to interpret the information obtained from the set of techniques of this mixed methodology.

3.2. Holding of focus groups

To understand how the credibility factor operates in the perceptions of the Spanish population under 30 years of age, two discussion groups were organized with participants between 19 and 29 years of age. With the choice of this technique, it was not attempted to find out the credibility attributions that this population would make in the face of the debates studied, but that, with exploratory intent, the results have been used to better understand the process of forming impressions on the credibility of the candidates.

A strategic sampling was carried out to form two focus groups, dividing the participants into a first group with the youngest and with participants from different regions; and a second group formed exclusively by people from Madrid from 22 to 29 years of age. Through this design, it was possible to triangulate which were the states of opinion that were repeated in both sessions and that, therefore, young people with well-differentiated characteristics had in common.

Consequently, the first discussion group held was composed of young university students or recent graduates, residents of the Community of Madrid at the time of its realization. Four 22-year-old women (three of them from Asturias, Cordoba, and Murcia), a 19-year-old woman, and a 22-year-old man (from Extremadura) participated in this first dynamic. The strategic sampling for the second dynamic was carried out among young graduates residing within the metropolitan area of Madrid. Thus, it was attended by four women from 22 to 29 years of age, a 27-year-old man, and another of 29.

Both groups started with the projection of a fragment of the electoral debate of June 13th, 2016. In the sequence, the journalist asked the four candidates what they would do to avoid a second electoral repetition. Once the fragment was finished, the person that carried out the dynamic encouraged the participants to share their perceptions, applying a script based on the exposed credibility subfactors.

3.3. Descriptive study of the press news

For both elections, the features with which the written press reflected the respective perception contexts were analyzed. To this end, we went to the newspaper archive to analyze the cover news about each campaign of three Spanish press headers (*El País*, *El Mundo*, and *ABC*) during two periods: From December 6th to December 28th, 2015, and from June 13th to July 6th, 2016. The total of informative pieces analyzed can be found in table 1.

Table 1. *Informative cover pieces: Total number of analysis units.*

	<i>El País</i>	<i>El Mundo</i>	<i>ABC</i>
The period from December 6 th to December 28 th , 2015	186	207	132
The period from June 13 th to July 6 th , 2016	157	169	76

Source: self-made.

The inclusion in the sample of units dated in days after the elections allows taking into consideration the possible persistence of a context of perception of the political situation that transcended the respective campaigns.

A descriptive analysis of the sample was used (Berrocal, Redondo, Martín, and Campos, 2014), with which to collect its main features of interest for the purpose and objectives of the research. During this analysis, the possible presence of eight components that would indicate a clear tendency towards misinformation was recorded, thus affecting the credibility of the source or the message:

1. Aggressiveness: when a candidate or party attacked other political actors or defended itself from external attacks.
2. Fear: when the candidate or party speaks about an external threat; or, at least, when talking about how to protect people from it.
3. Joy: the main characters of the news appear smiling, reference is made to the act of smiling, or a positive judgment is manifested.
4. Anger: when the candidate, the party or the media itself makes a protest of any kind in the news.
5. Lies: references of a candidate or party to false claims of rivals; the appearance of false statements in the candidate's speech or in the coverage given by the newspaper in the news.
6. Sadness/ disappointment: references to unwanted events that have already taken place. The comments favorable to the idea of change were also codified as disappointment since they illustrate the dissatisfaction of the candidate, the party or the media itself with the situation being discussed.
7. Populism: comments from the candidate or the media that reinforce the idea of the audience of belonging to a community; examples of specific citizens to whom the candidate resorted.

3.4. Content analysis of Twitter accounts

To gather how the candidates worked credibility attributions through social networks, Twitter has been chosen before the reality indicated by Chaves-Montero and Gadea (2017, p. 13), according to which the parties and candidates opt for granting greater relevance to this platform compared to other alternatives. Tweets and retweets released from the four candidates' profiles in two periods have been analyzed: From December 1st to December 20th, 2015, and from May 30th to June 19th, 2016 (table 2). These dates include the two weeks prior and the week after each debate, to compare results between the periods before and those that follow.

Table 2. *Corpus of each candidate's tweets: Total number of analysis units.*

	Mariano Rajoy	Pedro Sánchez	Pablo Iglesias	Albert Rivera
The period from December 1 st to December 20 th , 2015	880	722	257	528
The period from May 30 th to June 19 th , 2016	774	754	195	774

Source: self-made.

Two platforms were used to retrieve the tweets and dispose of them as analysis units: The Cecubo Metrics system and TweetDeck. The first one is capable of providing an overturn of all the messages of the profiles that interest the researcher, during the period of time that he indicates. In case it is of interest for your purpose, the results of the Cecubo Metrics search not only collect the tweets of the account in question but all of those in which it was mentioned. Only in the specific case of Albert Rivera's messages between December 6th and December 9th, 2015, was the absence of results in Cecubo Metrics covered by the TweetDeck platform, a Twitter management tool compatible with the language of queries that operates in this social network.

A codebook was developed with the following definitions for image factors:

1. Expert knowledge: it was codified when the candidate demonstrated mastery over a subject or attacked the lack of knowledge of an adversary. Examples: presentation of contrasting data; denial of data from a third party; assessments of management capabilities.
2. Ethical reliability: the candidate's allusions to its own honesty, or questioning that of its rivals. Examples: an allusion to its own commitments or of those of its adversaries; mentions of one's own or others' corruption; reports of behaviors or intentions, and to ask for trust.
3. Social efficacy: development of arguments, proposals formulation, carrying out actions or inviting the public to carry them out.
4. Attractiveness: the presence of the candidate or its companions in a video or photograph; samples of its lifestyle or personal life; images of the capacity in public events; thanks, from the candidate to third parties, and showing interest in their opinions.
5. Power: in this case, the presence of a series of terms was enough to codify the category: "Government", use of the verb "can" concerning party or candidate actions, administration of awards or punishments, the appearance of international leaders...

Each of the categories was coded in each tweet based on which elements denoted it: if it was observed in the image, in the text, in its first sentence, in all of them... With these criteria, the following scale from 0 to 4 was made:

1. Absence of the category in the tweet.
2. Category present in secondary sentences of the text of the tweet, in the entry of the link to a website, or testimonial presence in the image or video that was included.
3. Presence of the category due to mentions of third-party profiles, as well as in hashtags introduced in the middle or at the end of the message. The category may also appear in the content to which the link included in the tweet is connected; occupying up to 30% of the embedded video; or, finally, without taking up more than one-fifth of the image uploaded by the candidate.
4. The category opens the tweet in its first sentence, but without starring in any possible image, video, link or embedded element. The opposite case is also coded with this intensity: That the item stars in the image, video, link or embedded element, but does not appear in the initial sentence of the message.
5. The category is registered in all of the tweet's components. This maximum score is also recorded if the category is observed in the opening sentence, without the tweet containing any additional multimedia element.

4. Results

Between the end of 2015 and June 2016, the surveys gathered how the perception context worsened significantly in three key aspects: the economic situation, the concern about corruption, and the assessment of political leaders. Throughout that time, the components of fear and aggressiveness are constant in the analyzed newspapers, as well as a series of patterns in the messages that each candidate released through Twitter. The comments expressed in the discussion groups by young voters add to this scenario very critical positions with political leaders and their parties; and especially with traditional formations. However, these latter opinions did not always translate to the credibility assessments of each candidate.

4.1. Relevant information of the polls

According to the *CIS* series, in October 2015 the three main problems for Spaniards were, in this order: Unemployment, corruption, and the economic situation. However, corruption was the problem

that citizens foresaw as most electorally decisive. In November, this concern reached its highest point, with 40.1% of mentions when respondents were asked about their concerns. This evolution coincided with an approach of intention to vote of the new parties, *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos* (which was placed in the second position), to *PP* and *PSOE*.

In the December survey, when the concern about corruption fell again slightly (remaining at 38.8%), the two traditional parties distanced themselves again. This correspondence is especially given to *Ciudadanos*, since *Unidos Podemos* saw their intention to vote increase from May to June 2016 (when the concerns remained the same), although the concern for corruption decreased (from 47.8% to 44.9%, but always higher figures than at the end of 2015). Regarding the economic situation, the increase in negative perceptions in the pre-election *CIS* of June 2016 compared to December 2015, coincides with that of the preference of those surveyed for *Unidos Podemos* over *Ciudadanos*.

Between December 2015 and June 2016, the assessment of the four leaders fell. In both *CIS* surveys, Rivera is the best-rated candidate, with 4.98 and 4.17, respectively. All retained the position with a decrease in the average grade. The *Metroscopia* survey of November 1st, 2015 also pointed to Rivera as the favorite by the Spaniards, but Rajoy, Sánchez, and Iglesias followed in this order. For the *Metroscopia* survey of June 7th, 2016, the situation had varied significantly: Sánchez was the favorite, followed by Rajoy, Rivera, and Iglesias.

Regarding the forecasts of the respondents for the elections, according to the *CIS* pre-election study of October-November 2015, 52.4% thought that *PP* would win on December 20th. The victory of the popular seemed even clearer for June 26th, according to the pre-election study of May 2016: 67.4% of respondents predicted it.

4.2. Treatment of the campaigns in the press

Taking as reference the record of the eight disinformation components described in the methodology, it can be affirmed that the three selected newspapers reproduced frames with the potential to undermine the credibility of the candidates or their messages. This dynamic was especially pronounced in the cases of *El País* and *El Mundo*. Together between the two campaigns, the latter newspaper is also the leader in the presence of the populist component, while *ABC* is the newspaper that least captures it.

In the case of *El País*, the anger and fear components were detected with striking frequency during the December campaign, with hardly any transmission of the joy component, in the terms in which it was defined for the application of this technique (table 3). However, *El País* is the newspaper in which a lower level of aggressiveness has been collected, compared to the other two headers. For the June 2016 elections, the components of lies and aggressiveness were the most recorded, leaving slightly behind the categories of fear and anger.

Table 3. Number of times that the misinformative categories were recorded in news from the newspaper *El País*.

	December 2015 campaign	June 2016 campaign	Total
Aggressiveness	(17.74%) 33 (4°)	(22.29%) 35 (2°)	(19.83%) 68 (3°)
Fear	(22.58%) 42 (2°)	(17.83%) 28 (3°)	(20.41%) 70 (2°)
Joy	(1.61%) 3	(3.82%) 6	(2.62%) 9
Anger	(23.66%) 44 (1°)	(14.01%) 22 (4°)	(19.24%) 66 (4°)
Lies	(20.97%) 39 (3°)	(29.94%) 47 (1°)	(25.07%) 86 (1°)

Sadness / disappointment	(5.38%) 10	(3.82%) 6	(4.67%) 16
Populism	(8.06%) 15	(8.28%) 13	(8.16%) 28
Total	186 articles	157 articles	343 articles

Source: self-made.

The results for *El Mundo* show the predominance of negative emotional components in electoral information again. In this case, aggressiveness is the predominant component, although the presence of the fear category was attenuated between December 2015 and June 2016 (table 4).

Table 4. Number of times that the misinformative categories were recorded in news from the newspaper *El Mundo*.

	December 2015 campaign	June 2016 campaign	Total
Aggressiveness	(25.12%) 52 (1°)	(23.08%) 39 (1°)	(24.20%) 91 (1°)
Fear	(23.19%) 48 (2°)	(15.38%) 26 (4°)	(19.68%) 74 (3°)
Joy	(3.86%) 8	(11.24%) 19	(7.18%) 27
Anger	(14.98%) 31 (4°)	(17.16%) 29 (3°)	(15.96%) 60 (4°)
Lies	(19.32%) 40 (3°)	(20.71%) 35 (2°)	(19.95%) 75 (2°)
Sadness / disappointment	(2.42%) 5	(5.33%) 9	(3.72%) 14
Populism	(11.11) 23	(7.10%) 12	(9.31%) 35
Total	207 articles	169 articles	376 articles

Source: self-made.

Regarding the *ABC* newspaper, the sample consisted mainly of news from December 2015. The covers of *ABC* covered both campaigns with a notable predominance of the aggressiveness and fear components (table 5).

Table 5. Number of times that the misinformative categories were recorded in news from the newspaper *ABC*.

	December 2015 campaign	June 2016 campaign	Total
Aggressiveness	(29.54%) 39 (1°)	(32.89%) 25 (1°)	(30.77%) 64 (1°)
Fear	(21.21%) 28 (2°)	(17.11%) 13 (2°)	(19.71%) 41 (2°)
Joy	(6.82%) 9	(3.95%) 3	(5.77%) 12
Anger	(13.64%) 18 (4°)	(14.47%) 11 (4°)	(13.94%) 29 (4°)
Lies	(14.39%) 19 (3°)	(15.79%) 12 (3°)	(14.90%) 31 (3°)
Sadness/ disappointment	(6.82%) 9	(2.63%) 2	(5.29%) 11
Populism	(7.58%) 10	(13.16%) 10	(9.62%) 20
Total	132 articles	76 articles	208 articles

Source: self-made.

4.3. Summary of the focus groups

In retrospect, the young acting members recalled how the arrival of two new parties significantly raised their interest in the debates (especially, on June 14th, 2016, the first with the four presidential

candidates). The wear and tear of the credibility of *PP* and *PSOE* was widespread in both groups, but the lack of perceived social efficacy was common for all candidates: the participants considered that political leaders looked first and foremost for their own interests. The reliability of the statements of the acting members on these issues, as well as the credibility attributions to the political leaders, is reinforced by the fact that they were collected immediately following the projection of the initial fragment of the June 2016 debate

As for the findings on how each candidate was perceived, Mariano Rajoy reveals himself as a natural and sincere person for the majority; but also, as a politician lacking charisma and leadership. Rajoy would lead the recognition of expert knowledge and competence, thanks to the government experience already accumulated. When the corruption problems of the *PP* arose in a group, participants who attributed the lack of ethical reliability mainly to the party, and not so much to the candidate, intervened.

The cases of Pedro Sánchez and Albert Rivera are similar in that both share an important weak point in the eyes of young participants: an excess of artificiality that leads them to lose attractiveness and appear haughty or arrogant. Although there was no consensus in recognizing him as a credible candidate, Rivera's performance in the projected fragment was the least commented, with low remembrance levels. He is perceived as a well-trained leader, but inexperienced in public management.

Interestingly, although the participants detected in Pablo Iglesias a clear prior preparation to present himself as a credible politician, this fact did not play against credibility perceptions, unlike in the cases of Rivera and Sánchez. The participants tended to recognize a great capacity for oral expression in him, but little expert knowledge to govern.

Although most of the contributors denied the debate influenced their intention to vote, the participants showed great diversity in this regard. In the second dynamic, some recognized what utility they observed in this format: discarding candidates instead of deciding on one, by being able to observe them in a less controlled environment than other campaign actions.

4.4. Analysis of the profiles of the candidates on Twitter

Thanks to the precise definition of the items and their intensity degrees in the codebook, a series of unique findings have been made that we proceed to highlight.

On Twitter, the social efficiency subfactor was the most recurrent for the four candidates, with a drastic advantage over the rest of the variables. All of them allocated most of their tweets to spread programmatic proposals, or to show dynamism through their own activities (or through attacks on an adversary and responses to those of the latter). All of them were actions contemplated in the codebook to consign the category "Social Efficacy".

However, from this common pattern, we must highlight some specificities for each candidate. Mariano Rajoy openly employed his Twitter profile to strengthen himself as a leader with expert knowledge. Besides, this category of the codebook obtained higher average records in those tweets regarding an electoral debate. Note these findings in the results of the period prior to the debate of June 4th, 2016 (table 6).

Table 6. Classification by the intensity degree (from 0 to 4) of the “Expert Knowledge/ Competence” category, in tweets with the presence of the “Debates” category (the period from May 30th to June 13th, 2016).

	Expert knowledge/ competence	Ethical reliability	Dynamism/ social efficacy
1. Mariano Rajoy	1.68	0.36	3.34
2. Pedro Sánchez	0.93	0	3.07
3. Pablo Iglesias	0	0	3.14
4. Albert Rivera	0.23	1	3.05

Source: self-made.

An equally unique trend is that of the attractiveness factor in Pablo Iglesias' tweets. This is undoubtedly the candidate who uses it most in social networks, regardless that social effectiveness remains the analysis category with the highest average score. In particular, the “Attractiveness” category records are significantly higher than those of any other candidate after the June 14th, 2016 debate (table 7).

Table 7. Classification by the intensity degree (from 0 to 4) of the “Attractiveness” category (the period from June 14th to June 20th, 2016).

	Attractiveness	Expert knowledge/ competence	Ethical reliability	Dynamism/ social efficacy	Number of analyzed messages
1. Mariano Rajoy	3.19	0.31	0.25	2.33	50
2. Pedro Sánchez	2.38	0.12	0.77	2.88	345
3. Pablo Iglesias	2.28	0.55	0.11	3.06	367
4. Albert Rivera	2.23	0.34	0.55	3.13	300

Source: self-made.

Finally, it is worth reviewing each candidate's appeal to the ethical reliability subfactor. Mariano Rajoy's records in this category are almost testimonial: between 0.1 and 0.2 points out of 4 for any of the analyzed periods. It was Pablo Iglesias and Pedro Sánchez who led their use during the campaign for the December 20th, 2015 elections. For his part, Albert Rivera relieved them in the June 2016 campaign, becoming the candidate that alluded most to his own or others' honesty and sincerity.

As was the case with Rajoy's expert knowledge, Sánchez refers even more to issues of ethical reliability in those tweets related to the debates. Along these lines, the ethical reliability category is close to that of social efficacy, in those messages published after the debate with Rajoy (table 8).

Table 8. Classification by the intensity degree (from 0 to 4) of the “Ethical Reliability” category, in tweets with the presence of the “Debates” category (the period from December 15th to December 20th, 2015).

	Expert knowledge/ competence	Ethical reliability	Dynamism/ social efficacy
1. Mariano Rajoy	2.23	0	3
2. Pedro Sánchez	0	0.6	3.6
3. Pablo Iglesias	0	1	4
4. Albert Rivera	0	0.32	3.5

Source: self-made.

5. Discussion

In his analysis of the 2015 campaign, López-García (2016, p. 163) concluded that the candidates used the Twitter social network primarily to unite their followers and supporters and to promote the candidate's appearances in media and rallies. It is precisely this type of content that triggered the registration of the “Social efficacy” category, according to its definition in the codebook. To generate the proper perception context, candidates must have correctly worked the perceived credibility, before the electoral debates. The decompensation between the social efficacy subfactor and the rest of the analyzed variables shows that this was not the case in the 2015 and 2016 campaigns, evidencing their generalized failure to provide the necessary credibility factor. Also, for any campaign team, the discrepancy between efforts to become socially effective, and their lack of recognition for young voters, should be the most worrying phenomenon of those that have been found.

The first objective of the research was to describe the evolution of the perception context in which the electoral debates of 2015 and 2016 took place. In both cases, the media only contributed with negative components that could promote misinformation: The large headers reinforced a series of feelings capable of acting as disinformation elements. There was a general aggressiveness in the texts published during both campaigns, although it is worth noting the decrease in elements that could generate fear in readers in the face of political uncertainty. In general, the role of the press in the construction of the perception framework did not help a double-flow relationship model either. The press helped create a climate of tension and distrust in both campaigns, undermining the probabilities of attributing credibility to candidates.

This review of the front pages of the press is in the same line as the conclusion of García Marín (2015, pp. 155-156), according to which the Spanish media did not reliably reflect the electoral debates. In the case of television, the networks tended to point out the conflicting moments of the debates; the press opted for a language reminiscent of competitiveness instead. This last comment puts on the same path as the high records of the aggressiveness component.

Regarding the evolution of the perception context, it is worth noting how, in the focus groups, young people tended to express the weariness a second election campaign in just six months caused in them. Surveys revealed that unemployment, corruption, and the bad economic situation were the problems that most worried the Spaniards during the months prior to both election dates. However, no candidate was credible enough to face them, since none approved when respondents were asked to grade them. Although the voters counted on the victory of the *Partido Popular*, there is a correlation between the concern for corruption and the vote for new parties, especially for *Ciudadanos*. Similarly, the perception of the worsening of the economic situation seemed to benefit *Podemos*.

Regarding the second objective, no candidate substantially modified its credibility strategy given what happened in each electoral debate, with the notable exception of Pedro Sánchez in December 2015: his turn towards the subfactor of ethical reliability (in high correlation with the appearance of the *PP* in his tweets) occurred immediately after his debate with Rajoy. In the future, it will be worth investigating the specific weight of ethical reliability in the credibility factor as a whole. For this, the most recent electoral campaigns may be taken as a reference.

In general, the young public was interested in the debates taken as a reference in this research. However, all influence on their voting decision was reduced by the discarding of candidates who were not credible. But the most striking result is the rejection of those candidates who seemed to exercise greater control over their verbal or nonverbal communication to make a good impression.

On the contrary, young participants tended to value Mariano Rajoy's naturalness positively. A study of the 2008 US presidential primary elections already indicated that the perception of manipulation or deception by the candidate, correlated negatively with perceptions of competence, goodwill, and trust (Teven, 2008, p. 392). That is to say, the communication of positive qualities is what makes the difference, and not the candidate's attempts to feign those he does not possess. In future research, it will be ascertained whether these patterns are reproduced in audiences of other age segments.

The fourth and final objective of the research was to obtain a summary of the public's judgments about each candidate. Mariano Rajoy's naturalness before the camera manages to inspire trust and honesty among the young public. Overall, the credibility attributed to Albert Rivera tended to be low, although there are mixed opinions found among the public. Both Rivera and Pedro Sánchez suffered a lack of credibility because of the artificiality they transmitted. Interestingly, although it is recognized that Pablo Iglesias also arrives at the debates with great preparation work, he was credible for a good part of the young public in the analyzed period. To a large extent, young people recognize sincerity and ethical reliability in him. At present, it would be possible to inquire about the evolution of credibility attributed to each of these leaders, from the elections analyzed in this article until today. The academy and the profession could learn a lot from their respective successes and failures in their political public relations efforts.

6. Conclusions

The current research began to analyze the context of perception of some singular electoral debates to be held in a new political board, by incorporating two new parties with the potential to mobilize the vote; and, in the case of June 2016, after a blockade situation never before lived in Spain for the formation of government. All this in the boom of social networks as a channel for political communication. From the exposed results it is concluded that the candidates would have taken more advantage of a complete approach to their different subfactors, instead of turning unsuccessfully on social efficacy. For the candidates, it was not effective to base all their efforts on social efficacy and work it through an excess of artificiality. Consequently, the perception framework of both debates was not conducive to ensuring that the public attributed credibility to their performance in them.

Social networks served as a platform to cover candidates' efforts as socially effective. Interestingly, young people mainly report how political leaders lacked this subfactor. This would imply very poor degrees of mutual understanding and agreement between candidates and voters. Similarly, work the misgivings towards those who most controlled their projected credibility. On the other hand, the results reflect how Mariano Rajoy successfully generated through Twitter a positive perception framework about his expert knowledge.

Finally, if they were closer, the candidates could have softened the climate of negative feelings that the main newspapers reflected during the campaigns. Consequently, candidates should avoid stiffness to appear more natural before voters.

7. References

- Aaldering, L.; Van der Meer, T. & Van der Brug, W. (2018). Mediated leader effects: The impact of newspapers' portrayal of party leadership on electoral support. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 23(1), 70-94. <https://www.doi.org/10.1177/1940161217740696>
- Arceo Vacas, J. L. (Dir.) (1993). *Campañas electorales y publicidad política en España (1976-1991)*. Barcelona: ESRP-PPU.

- Ballesteros Herencia, C. A. (2017, julio). Movilización en las campañas electorales a través de las redes sociales. Las elecciones generales españolas de 2015. Ponencia presentada en la 15ª conferencia de la *International Association for Media and Communication Research*, Cartagena de Indias, Colombia. <http://uvadoc.uva.es/handle/10324/26049>
- Berrocal, S.; Redondo, M.; Martín, V. y E. Campos (2014). La presencia del infoentretenimiento en los canales generalistas de la TDT española. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, (69), 85-103. <https://www.doi.org/10.4185/RLCS-2014-1002>
- Broom, G. M. (1977). Coorientational measurement of public relations. *Public Relations Review*, 3(4), 110-119. [https://www.doi.org/10.1016/S0363-8111\(77\)80010-6](https://www.doi.org/10.1016/S0363-8111(77)80010-6)
- Cialdini, R. (2017). *Pre-Suasion. A revolutionary way to influence and persuade*. Simon & Schuster.
- Chaves-Montero, A. y Gadea, W. F. (2017). Uso, efectividad y alcance de la comunicación política en las redes sociales. En: A. Chaves-Montero (Ed.), *Comunicación política y redes sociales* (pp. 13-32). Egregius.
- Coleman, S. & Moss, G. (2016). Rethinking election debates: What citizens are entitled to expect. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 21(1), 3-24. <https://www.doi.org/10.1177/1940161215609732>
- Druckman. J. N. (2001). On the limits of framing effects: who can frame? *The Journal of Politics*, 63(4), 1041-1066. <https://www.doi.org/10.1111/0022-3816.00100>
- Edgerly, S. L.; Thorson, K. & Wells, C. (2018). Young citizens, social media, and the dynamics of political learning in the U.S. presidential primary election. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 62(8), 1042-1060. <https://www.doi.org/10.1177/0002764218764236>
- Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51-58. <https://www.doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1993.tb01304.x>
- Eveland, Jr., W. P. & Hutchens, M. J. (2013). The role of conversation in developing accurate political perceptions: A multilevel social network approach. *Human Communication Research*, 39(4), 422-444. <https://www.doi.org/10.1111/hcre.12011>
- Harris, D. B. (2010). Partisan framing in legislative debates. En: B. F. Schaffner y P. J. Sellers (Eds.): *Winning with words: The origins and impact of political framing*. Routledge.
- Kahneman, D. (2012). *Pensar rápido, pensar despacio*. Penguin Random House.
- Kim, J. Y.; Kioussis, S. & Molleda, J. C. (2015). Use of affect in blog communication: Trust, credibility, and authenticity. *Public Relations Review*, 41(4), 504-507. <https://www.doi.org/10.1111/hcre.12011>
- Lawson, J.; Chappell, H.; Lenz, G. S.; Baker, A. & Myers, M. (2010). Looking like a winner: Candidate appearance and electoral success in new democracies. *World Politics*, 62(4), 561-593. <https://www.doi.org/10.1017/S0043887110000195>

- Loader, B.; Vromen, A. & Xenos, M. (2014). The networked young citizen: Social media, political participation and civic engagement. *Information Communication and Society*, 17(2), 143-150. <https://www.doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2013.871571>
- López-García, G.; Llorca-Abad, G.; Valera-Ordaz, L. y Peris-Blanes, À. (2018). Los debates electorales, ¿el último reducto frente la mediatización? Un estudio de caso de las elecciones generales españolas de 2015. *Palabra Clave*, 21(3), 772-797. <https://www.doi.org/10.5294/pacla.2018.21.3.6>
- Manning, N. (2013). The relational self and the political engagements of young adults. *Journal of Sociology*, 50(4), 486-500. <https://www.doi.org/10.1177/1440783312467094>
- Mazzoleni, G. (2010). *La comunicación política*. Alianza Editorial.
- McLeod, J. M. & Chafee, S. H. (1973). Interpersonal approaches to communication research. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 16(4), 469-500. <https://www.doi.org/10.1177/000276427301600402>
- Mueller, F. (2018). Taking Goffman seriously: Developing strategy-as-practice. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, (53), 16-30. <https://www.doi.org/10.1016/j.cpa.2017.03.009>
- Ongwuebuie, A. J. & Combs, J. P. (2011). Data analysis in mixed research: A primer. *International Journal of Education*, 3(1), 1-25. <https://www.doi.org/10.5296/ije.v3i1.618>
- Strömback, J. & Kioussis, S. (2011). Political public relations: Defining and mapping an emergent field. En: J. Strömback & S. Kioussis (Eds.): *Political Public Relations. Principles and Applications* (pp. 1-32). Routledge. <https://www.doi.org/10.4324/9780203864173>
- Todorov, A.; Mandisodza, A. N.; Goren, A. & Hall, C. C. (2005). Inferences of competence from faces predict election outcomes. *Science*, 308(5728), 1623-1626. <https://www.doi.org/10.1126/science.1110589>
- Van Aelst, P.; Sheafer, T. & Stanyer, J. (2011). The personalization of mediated political communication: A review of concepts, operationalizations and key findings. *Journalism*, 13(2), 203-220. <https://www.doi.org/10.1177/1464884911427802>
- Van Zuydam, S. & Hendricks, S. F. (2018). Credibility enacted: Understanding the meaning of credible political leadership in the Dutch parliamentary election campaign of 2010. *Journal of Political Marketing*, 17(3), 258-281. <https://www.doi.org/10.1080/15377857.2015.1039747>
- Walden, J. A.; Bortree, D. & DiStaso, M. (2015). Reconsidering the public relations professional–blogger relationship: A coorientation study. *Public Relations Review*, 41(4), 526-532. <https://www.doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2015.06.002>
- Watanabe, K. (2017). Measuring news bias: Russia's official news agency ITAR-TASS' coverage of the Ukraine crisis. *European Journal of Communication*, 32(3), 224-241. <https://www.doi.org/10.1177/0267323117695735>

7.1. Related papers

- Andstead, N. (2016). A different beast? Televised election debates in parliamentary democracies. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 21(4), 508–526.
<https://www.doi.org/10.1177/1940161216649953>
- Fontenla Pedreira, J.; Conde Vázquez, E. y Máiz Bar, C. (2019). Uso de Twitter durante los debates electorales televisados en los comicios andaluces de 2018. *Ámbitos. Revista Internacional de Comunicación*, 46(2019), 213-240. <https://www.doi.org/10.12795/Ambitos.2019.i46.12>
- García Marín, J. (2015). La cobertura mediática de los debates electorales en España. *Revista Española de Ciencia Política*, (38), 135-161.
<https://www.doi.org/10.1080/00028533.2001.11821554>
- Housholder, E. E. & LaMarre, H. L. (2014). Facebook politics: Toward a process model for achieving political source credibility through social media. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*, 11(4), 368-382. <https://www.doi.org/10.1080/19331681.2014.951753>
- Mazaira-Castro, A.; Rúas-Araújo, J. y Puentes-Rivera, I. (2019). Fact-checking en los debates electorales televisados de las elecciones generales de 2015 y 2016. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, (74), 748-766. <https://www.doi.org/10.4185/RLCS-2019-1355>
- Pressgrove, G. & Kim, C. (2018). Stewardship, credibility and political communications: A content analysis of the 2016 election. *Public Relations Review*, 44(2), 247-255.
<https://www.doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2018.01.003>

AUTHORS:

Alfredo Arceo Vacas

Department of Communication Theories and Analysis, Faculty of Information Sciences, Complutense University of Madrid (UCM). Associate Professor of the Complutense University. Degree in Journalism and Doctor of Information Sciences from the same university. He has directed research on political, institutional and business communication. He also coordinated the work *El portavoz en la comunicación de las organizaciones. Fundamentos teórico-prácticos*, edited by the Publications Service of the University of Alicante. Among his articles, “The Identity of University Social Responsibility on the Websites of the Universities of the Autonomous Region of Madrid (Spain) and the State of Puebla (Mexico), As a Tool of Grassroots Public Diplomacy,” in the journal *American Behavioral Scientist* stands out. He was director of the Master in Organizations Communication and, at present, of the Master in Corporate and Advertising Communication.

aarceo@ucm.es

H-index: 6

Orcid ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5981-4397>

Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.es/citations?user=gBodfbUAAA&hl=es>

Scopus: <https://www.scopus.com/authid/detail.uri?authorId=6603281180>

Academia.edu: <https://independent.academia.edu/ArceoAlfredo>

Sergio Álvarez Sánchez

Department of Communication Theories and Analysis, Faculty of Information Sciences, Complutense University of Madrid (UCM). Postdoctoral Researcher in the Department of

Communication Theories and Analysis of the Complutense University. Between 2017 and 2019, he was a predoctoral researcher in training (call CT27 / 16-CT28 / 16 of the Santander-UCM contracts). Master in Organizations Communication and Doctor in Audiovisual Communication, Advertising, and Public Relations from the Complutense University of Madrid. He has conducted several pieces of research based on the theory of framing, including his doctoral thesis: “The Communication Strategies of Political Actors in the Face of Social Conflict: Analysis of their Reference Framework for the Labor Reform of 2012”. He has just published the article “Use of a mobile app to evaluate the quality of higher education. Neuromarketing study” (of which Alfredo Arceo is also the author) in *Prisma Social*.

sergioalvarezsanchez@ucm.es

Orcid ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7494-8991>

Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=muJbJXkAAAAAJ&hl=en>

ResearchGate: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Sergio_Alvarez34

Academia.edu: <https://independent.academia.edu/SERGIOALVAREZSANCHEZ>

Olga Serrano Villalobos

Department of Communication Sciences and Sociology, Faculty of Communication Sciences, Rey Juan Carlos University (URJC). Associate professor of the Rey Juan Carlos University and the Complutense University, and researcher of the Chair of Communication and Health of the Department of Communication Theories and Analysis of the UCM. Degree in Advertising and Public Relations and Ph.D. in Information Sciences from the latter institution. In the Chair of Communication and Health, she has investigated prevention through image and addictions to new technologies, taking into consideration different psychosocial factors. One of the main results of this work is the article “Techno-addiction to sex in the youth population: Proposal for the design of an early detection scale”, published in the *Revista Comunicación y Salud* in 2017.

olga.serrano@urjc.es

H-index: 1

Orcid ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8562-6680>

Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.es/citations?user=Ibag1qAAAAAJ&hl=es>

ResearchGate: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Olga_Serrano2

Scopus: <https://www.scopus.com/authid/detail.uri?authorId=57200720869>

Academia.edu: <https://independent.academia.edu/OLGASERRANOVILLALOBOS>