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Politainment and political personalisation. From television to YouTube?

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Abstract

Introduction. The forms of North-American political communication have been transferred to the Western democracies, where concepts like politainment or personalisation have been widely confirmed on the TV media. However, the digital environment is still unexplored ground. **Methodology.** Using content analysis, we examine whether both phenomena, predominating in the Spanish politics broadcasted on TV, have extrapolated to YouTube. **Results.** A considerable use of the personalisation resource is confirmed, without exceeding the attention towards political parties, and a scarce presence of the approach towards politainment. **Discussion.** Discrepancies in the results of previous works about this object of study, suggest the convenience of reflecting upon these phenomena in the digital medium. **Conclusions.** The extrapolation of these two resources of political communication to YouTube was not produced, or at least, not with the intensity with which these are used in television.

Keywords

Political communication; spectacularisation; personalization; YouTube; digital media.

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1. Introduction

This article reflects upon two concepts, personalisation and spectacularisation, applied to the field of political communication. Two phenomena that introduced progressively in Western media, especially in television, with origin in the communication and marketing practices exerted in North-American politics. Gradually, the media in the parliamentary systems seem to have adopted the communicational models of the presidential systems.

These aspects have been widely studied in the field of television, as the most favourable medium to embrace these kinds of tendencies due to its codes and languages. However, today politics faces the new digital mediatic scenario that is increasingly gaining relevance in the management of communication. In the environment of cyberpolitics, YouTube emerges as the social network that resembles more to television, since its activity is based on the dissemination of audiovisual content. This research aims, by means of the content analysis of eighty videos about the four Spanish political parties with the highest representation in the parliament, to validate whether the tendency towards Americanisation through phenomena like personalisation or politainment, already observed in the Spanish mediatic context (Berrocal, 2003; Berrocal, Redondo, Martín-Jiménez and Campos, 2014; Dader, 1990; Rodríguez-Virgili, Jandura and Rebolledo, 2014b) have been extrapolated to the online videos platform. Likewise, in those cases where personalisation is identified, the aim is to observe whether the attention on the political leaders is focused on their personal traits or towards their professional facet instead.

Currently the research lines that study political communication on social networks, are specially prolific in terms of Facebook (Ballesteros and Diez, 2018; Fenol and Cano, 2017; Muñiz, Dader, Téllez and Salazar, 2016; Rodríguez-Fidalgo, Ruiz, Paíno and Jiménez, 2017; Tuñez and Sixto, 2011) and Twitter (Alonso, Marcos and Casero, 2016; Catalina, López-de-Ayala and Fernández-Fernández, 2015; Graham, Broersma, Hazelhoff and Van't-Haar, 2013; Jivkova, Requeijo and Padilla, 2017; López-Meri, 2016; Miquel, Alonso and Marco, 2017; Polo and Cárdenas, 2014). Nevertheless, the analysis of political communication on YouTube is still incipient, despite being the most popular network in our country, together with Twitter and Facebook, mentioned earlier.

On the other hand, the main object of study in the assessment of the binomial political communication-social networks, is the use of these new communication tools by the political sphere or the levels of interaction between the political class and citizens. Specific aspects proposed in this research (politainment and political personalisation) still lack of a background where they are analysed and delimited in a scientific manner. Likewise, in these studies, the analysis of political communication during electoral periods is the majority, therefore this research aims to fertilise the less explored ground of the use of communicational resources, like personalisation and politainment during the so-called permanent campaign, hence contributing to the progress in understanding these phenomena from the perspective of digital political communication.

Both at theoretical as well as a methodological level, this article is based on previous studies with broad academic dissemination. The study conducted by Vázquez-Sande (2016) is a reference in terms of the analysis of Spanish political personalisation on YouTube. The author studies the context of Galician municipal elections of 2011, and among his conclusions we underline the trend, still embryonic in the online videos platform, to use the personal contents in the form of story as a resource. Regarding the line of study that delves into the phenomenon of infoentertainment on YouTube, it was initiated in the national context by Berrocal, Campos and Redondo (2012; 2012b). In both studies, the authors analyse the type of dissemination and consumption of videos on YouTube about five political leaders, thus concluding in both cases, a predominance of infoentertainment and personalisation. The study of Berrocal, Campos and Redondo (2014) analyses the typology of prosumers in the politainment phenomenon through the case study of the presence of Ana Botella before the International Olympic Committee in 2013. Another contribution that fertilises the line of study about infoentertainment, is that of Berrocal, Gil and Campos (2016) where there is an analysis of the participation of the Spanish politics on the elections to the European Parliament of 2014. In this case, the trend evidenced by the previous studies seems to decelerate, given that the conclusions of this research point out to a greater number of videos focusing on political formations under a perspective of serious and argumentative information about the ideology of every political party. Berrocal, Martín-Jiménez and Gil (2017) have results similar to the latter, regarding the electoral campaign for the general elections of 2016 in Spain. However, in this proposal, the electoral period is compared to the political communication that is produced and consumed on YouTube during the permanent campaign where, once again, politainment and personalisation predominate.

These studies represent one of the analytical focuses that contribute to alleviate the deficit of studies on political communication that consider the social network YouTube as context. Even though our research shows some disparity of results compared to the ones obtained in these last studies mentioned, it is a proposal that aims to contribute to the incipient line of study that analyses politainment and political personalisation on YouTube, thus offering empirical results that, together with those of future studies, help to delimit the nature of these phenomena in the online videos platform.

2. Personalisation and infoentertainment of politics broadcasted on TV

The conventional mediatic system, configured by press, radio and television as main communication vehicles, served for decades as a mediation instrument between the political sphere and the citizens, becoming a core piece in the formation of the public opinion in the Western democratic systems.

Apart that the political content conveyed is informational or propaganda-like, namely, regardless of the bias imposed by the mediatic sphere, its influence on the production and distribution stages of the discourse coming from the political arena seems reliable (Mazzoleni, 2010). Edelman (1991), mentioned early the role of the media as conditioning agents in the public perception of the political reality, a reality permanently constructed and transformed by the symbols and meanings that this same media provides.

Focused on television, its irruption substantially modified the relationship between representative and represented, targeting the attention, focusing since its beginnings, on the personal aspects of rulers. This medium "has changed the way politics is led and the way it is perceived; today it is managed in terms of personality" (Hart, 1999: 2). The television field soon swayed towards *frame*, which favours the personalisation of politics, preferably addressing, not the activity of organizations but rather that of the leaders and most prominent spokespersons. The first surveys conducted to the public opinion already evidenced the prevalence of the image of the candidate, reflecting how many people would

vote a specific politician, even disagreeing with his discourse, only because he might seem nice at a personal level (Meyrowitz, 1985). Like different authors state (Berrocal, 2003; Dader, 2009), television was the main transforming agent in the evolution of political communication when positioning the personalism of the leader or maximum ruler in its epicentre, subjecting organisations to a great submission and relegating the interest of the programmatic policies. “An hyperpersonalisation that collides and repels the principles attributed to the deliberative and participatory political action” (Dader, 1990: 352). The democratic systems have succumbed to the temptation of personalisation, that puts the exhibition of some leader addressing the emotional above the political communication based on the rational discussion of the arguments of the party (Berrocal, 2003).

Different authors (Pasquino, 1990; Rospir, 2003; Vázquez-Sande, 2016) abound on the trend to overlap the political candidate to his organisation and the prevalence of his speech to the stance and proposals of the formation they are affiliated to. A phenomenon that Maarek (2008: 95) considers a consequence of what he calls "tabloidism" of politics. Calise (2000: 32) mentions it under the syntagm “*candidate centred*”, clearly referring to the centrality that television exerts on the candidate at the expense of political formations. Thus, "the candidate has become the pivot on which the contemporary politics turns" (García-Jiménez, 2009: 27).

"The projects disappear for the benefit of leaders, who appear as the only participants in the singular fight (...) It hardly matters what he knows nor even what he says, what matters is showing 'a good performance' before the cameras" (Muñoz-Alonso, 1999: 37-38).

The power of image in the audiovisual medium seems proven, which ends up by emphasizing, not only the political figure in particular, but it even determines his potential based on his aspect. "In the end, almost unavoidably, the image, especially the physical image, is much more important than any other quality or feature of the candidate" (Pasquino, 1990: 207). Vázquez-Sande (2016), refers to the mediatic use of personal traits of the candidate as the current discursive axis in the political strategy.

In the current dynamic that governs the television, the telegenic conditions of a candidate, his dialogic skills aligned with the paces and timing of the medium and his physical image, generate a profile of mediatic-political leader that turns the traditional capacities of a ruler into obsolete: the arguing, the logical thinking or persuasion (Gil-Ramírez, 2018). Therefore, the phenomenon of personalisation is understood in this research as a mediatic practice "characterised by focusing the attention on politicians, as well as by a greater emphasis on their personal traits" (Rodríguez-Virgili et al., 2014: 61) and to which the political actors are forced to adapt if they aim to gain visibility through said media (Strömback, 2008). Likewise, the concept of personalisation we assume in this proposal, is related to some of the forms proposed by Van Santen (2012): the frame centred on leaders (mediatic frame of politicians instead of political parties), the individual political competition (mediatic frame of particular traits and abilities of politicians), privatisation (mediatic frame of the private life of politicians), the personal narrative (mediatic frame of emotions and personal experiences of politicians) and the personalisation of behaviour (mediatic frame of the individual political behaviour and the reduction of attention towards the activity of the party).

Besides the personalistic approach (*frame*), another of the aspects that, in parallel, transformed political communication, was the need to adjust the message of rulers to the timing, pace and productive routines of the television industry. This adjustment, generally causes a loss of reflection, information and political debate, prioritising in the small screen, the brief statements as a sort of spectacular headlines. Obviously, in this process the political message is fragmented, enormously simplified, until

reducing to brilliant phrases or some slogans (Franklin, 1994). Thus, "the themes that can be tailored and alluded with simplicity and drama, will get a greater coverage than the complex and ungrateful ones" (McNair, 1995: 65). The television times delimit the space of reflection, explanation or deliberation, producing an ephemeral, superficial effect, of trivialisation and spectacularisation of information.

Colombo (1997: 22), assimilates the political communication broadcasted on television as "a Disneyland of the news, where the pace, vivacity, sense of suspense, striking turn of events, dramatic accent, shock and indignation and continuous switching of figures belong more and more to the show world." Muñoz-Alonso (1999: 36) shifts the simile to the ground of sports when talking about politics broadcasted on television as "a sports model that conceives information as a show, where always somebody wins and somebody loses and where scoring goals is what matters."

In this scenario, "increasingly more often, politicians are advised to 'fictionalise' their lives" (Maarek, 2014: 18). Politics is forced to perform on stage (Gosselin, 1998), to represent the events and their narration, if it wants to keep competing with the opposing political parties and reach citizens-audience that is ever more influenced by the pseudo reality presented through the small screen. The relevance of media seems to overlap the logic of the democratic discourse, thus imposing "a political process of markedly theatrical nature (...) a 'reality show' with artificial sets, prefabricated characters, provoked situations, fictional discussions" (Vallés, 2010:19).

The phenomenon we have been describing so far has received different names: infoentertainment (Berrocal *et al.*, 2012; 2012b; del-Rey-Morató, 1998; Ferré, 2013), politainment (Berrocal *et al.*, 2014; 2017), emotivisation of politics (Sartori, 2012), info satire (Vázquez-Sande, 2017). Labelled under one term or the other, what seems proven in the current political communication broadcasted on television, is that the implementation of entertainment, together with the vigour of personalisation, have contributed to impose a mediatic system where spectacle prevails, addressing the emotional-affective *frame* demanded by the audience figures and the interests of advertising sponsors, against the rationale-argumentative frame that should govern in the ideal of deliberative democracies (Gil-Ramírez, 2018).

3. From television to YouTube?

Positioning the origin of the extensive use of infoentertainment and political personalisation in Spain in the arrival of private channels to the television programmes grid (Vázquez-Sande, 2017), this kind of phenomena have been consolidating in the medium for years, until reaching its actual establishment. However, in the last decades, the new channels of digital communication represent a different field that brings along new codes and languages. Then, it is possible to extrapolate this kind of techniques to the political context of social networks?

It seems true that, considering the high and progressive penetration of the digital communicational environment, the adaptation to the uses and discursive features of the Internet media, is a requisite for political communication today. "Internet in general and social networks in particular have opened a scope of new possibilities to institutions in terms of relations with publics" (Almansa and Castillo, 2014: 24). The technical possibilities offered by this sort of communication, need to rethink and reformulate online strategies. In the new world agora (Cotarelo, 2012), political communication "has opened its unassailable perimeter of action to the traditional demand of bidirectionality issued by citizens to prompt leaders to create accounts with their image, name and surnames in the main social networks" (Quevedo, Portalés and Berrocal, 2016: 87). In the new mediatic system configured around Internet and technological tools (*smartphones* and *tablets*) that facilitate the access and participation

in the public discourse, it is already difficult to conceive political communication strategies that do not include the use of social networks, especially in electoral periods. Like Sampedro (2014: 175) recalls, "the electoral value of a candidate does not reside much (also it still does) in popularity surveys, but instead in his ability to be listened, funded or supported on networks." Political leaders are aware about the increasing influence of *social media* and increasingly act as contents prescribers. "These practices can contribute to viralise their messages and consolidate their personal brand in the digital environment. Likewise, it could reinforce the presence *offline* and the recruitment of followers and votes" (López-Meri, 2016: 116). The question that is formulated is: does the political sphere adopt in the Internet space, the techniques imposed by the television codes that have demonstrated to have permeated in the audience, or instead use new methods of strategical communication?

Among the most popular social networks in Spain, YouTube is undoubtedly the one showing greatest similarities with television. It is with good reason that "from the start, it was considered a personal way of doing television, because in English the television is informally called 'the tube'" (Siri, 2008: 5).

Television has evolved and today the consumption of general-interest channels is often done on demand in Internet, through the website of the channel or the screen of the *Smart TV*. To this mode of access to mediatic contents, there add many technological devices (computers, *tablets*, *smartphones*) that, moreover, eliminate the spatial restriction. Thus, from the television we have the possibility to access YouTube contents and in this platform, we come across massive amounts of contents coming from television channels. The hybridisation of both platforms is produced, although the dissimilarity is delimited clearly. "Unlike what might be expected from a traditional television channel that, in general, has a specific editorial line that is followed, YouTube is potentially an arena of conflict and renegotiation between different forms of power" (Siri, 2008: 2). In the online videos platform, the three stakeholders that participate in the political communication-media, citizens and political class- have the same chances of intervening content.

According to the information provided by the platform, YouTube currently has more than a billion users (equivalent to a third of all Internet users), and every day these users view a billion hours of video. "If more than fifteen years ago, the communicologists took note of the 'CNN effect', that conveyed a live broadcast of everything, everywhere, and from anywhere around the world, today the myth of total communication is *broadcast yourself* from YouTube" (Siri, 2008: 2-3).

These data justify the selection of this social network for this study and invite to open a reflection upon whether some of the elements of the mediatisation exerted by television in the political field, such as infoentertainment and personalisation, have been extrapolated to this social communication channel.

4. Methodology.

4.1 Methodological strategy

This research is a quantitative-qualitative content analysis (Igartua, 2006; López-Aranguren, 2016) that proposes the study of 80 videos. These correspond to the 20 videos considered "most relevant" for the four main political formations of the Spanish parliament, namely, *Partido Popular*, *PSOE*, *Ciudadanos* and *Podemos*.

The content analysis has been one of the most widely spread research tools in Social Sciences. In the field of political communication before the arrival of Internet, this methodological instrument has usually imposed in the study of the "politics-media" binomial. This consideration is still valid for the

new media that emerge in the framework of Web 2.0, considering the abundant number of empirical studies using it. Regarding cyberpolitics, experimental studies have proliferated (mostly quantitative) that examine the production, distribution and consumption of information on social networks [1] by means of contents analysis. In the case of this research, the specific selection of YouTube and not another kind of social network was determined by the fact that this platform still shows a more incipient scientific approach in relation to the study object.

4.2 Population and sample

The sample is collected on 28 May 2018, between 3:00pm and 7:00pm. In this research of exploratory nature, the aim is not to study a specific temporal period, but instead the analysis of a random space during the permanent campaign, understanding that, currently and considering the turbulent political landscape of the past years, political parties dedicate, in the moment of transit between one election to another, practically the same efforts to generate loyalty of sympathisers and obtain new followers (voters) than in situations of electoral campaign.

No screen out filters were used, except for the default filter established by YouTube, the filter of "Relevance."

This criterion considers the adequacy of video meta data to the items that orientate search. The factors that influence in the positioning of the video are the number of views, the interaction registered by the video ("likes" and comments), the time the user invests on watching content, how long ago was the video uploaded, the number of visits compared to the videos hosted by the channel and the number of subscribers. (Sánchez-Olmo and Hidalgo, 2016: 121)

By using this filter, we considered the multiple parameters involved and avoid the simplification we will submit the sample to, if we had exclusively applied some of the particular factors. With this criterion we understand that the sample is offered a greater stability, considering the objectives pursued.

The following screened results are obtained: 84,800 entries for *Partido Popular*, 578,000 for *PSOE*; 1,160,000 for *Ciudadanos* and 3,910,000 for *Podemos*. In the case of *Ciudadanos* and *Podemos*, since these are two words that encompass many other meanings different than the strictly political, there were obtained some results that did not belong to the parties object of study. Regarding *Ciudadanos*, one video among the 20 selected with greatest relevance was discarded for this reason, including in the sample the immediately following one, that dealt with the orange political party. Likewise, the same happened in the sample collection of *Podemos*, solving the issue proceeding the same way.

During the research and the review of the different coders, three contents were discarded due to the following reasons: the user has eliminated the video [2], the video is no longer available because the YouTube account associated to it has been cancelled [3], unable to load the video [4]. Thus, finally, 77 videos were included in the sample.

4.3 Instruments for collecting information

The design of the analysis template applied to this research considers different variables and categories which inclusion is justified by their involvement with the object of study, confirmed in prior studies. For information collection and coding, the following analysis template was used:

a) Identification data

Identification data gather aspects that allow to classify and delimit the sample, such as the account from which the video is published, the upload date or the number of reproductions registered.

b) Analysis of audiovisual content

The study of the audiovisual content allows answering to questions like who is the protagonist in the videos, whether political parties or particular leaders and, in this second case, whether there predominate or not the personal and anecdotal aspects of political stakeholders over information about their professional facet. In terms of the *framing* of content, there can also be clarified whether audiovisuals comply with the criteria of "serious" political information or the parameters of infoentertainment instead.

c) Analysis of the text of headlines and analysis of the introductory image.

To confirm whether there are used terms related to the political formations or to the particular leaders in the headlines, will allow us to keep delving into the levels of personalisation produced in the political communication disseminated and consumed on YouTube. Likewise, the analysis of protagonists in the introductory images will be useful to study the political personalisation in this social network from the visual *framing* (Chihu-Amparán, 2010). In these cover images, there is an analysis of the presence of stylemes that distinguish the politainment or not.

The relevance of the research lies in the analysis of the audiovisual content of videos considered "most relevant" in YouTube for the labels suggested, using the study of headlines and introductory images in a complementary manner, in an attempt to corroborate the hypothesis that texts and photographs that hook consumption on this online platform, will reinforce the data obtained in the study of audiovisual content.

Table 1: Content analysis template

Identification data	
Publication channel/ Publication date/ No. of reproductions	
Analysis of Audiovisual Content	
Variables	Categories
"Protagonists of content"	
Authors own creation based on Berrocal et al. (2012; 2012b; 2016; 2017), Porath, Suzuki and Ramdohr (2014) and Quevedo et al. (2016)	0. There is no protagonist figure
	1. Political party
	2. Political leader
	2.1 In his personal/ private facet
	2.2 In his professional facet/ political attributes
	3. Particular citizens
	4. Media representatives
	5. Association or social collectives representatives
	6. Other figures
"Content Framing"	
	1. Informative

Authors own creation	2.	Infoentertainment
Analysis of the Text of Headlines		
Variables	Categories	
"Leading terms of the text"		
Authors own creation	1.	Acronyms of the political party
	2.	Name of the political leader
"Headline-content consistency"		
Authors own creation based on Quevedo <i>et al.</i> (2016)		
Analysis of the Introductory image		
Variables	Categories	
"Protagonists of the image"		
Authors own creation based on Quevedo <i>et al.</i> (2016)	0.	There is no protagonist figure
	1.	Political party
	2.	Political leader
	3.	Particular citizens
	4.	Media representatives
	5.	Association or social collectives representatives
	6.	Other figures
"Image Framing"		
Authors own creation	1.	Informative
	2.	Infoentertainment
"Image-content consistency"		
Authors own creation based on Quevedo <i>et al.</i> (2016)		

Source: authors own creation

The three dimensions of the fieldwork analyse the components of videos broadcasted by YouTube, assuming that their combined study will allow to obtain data of interest for the progress of the study line focused on political communication in social networks.

The use of the variable "Protagonists of content" for analysis, is grounded on different studies, which theoretical or methodological tenets serve as the basis for building the categorisation suggested. Thus, the studies of Berrocal *et al.* (2012; 2012b; 2016; 2017) gather the differentiation between the protagonism of the political leader or candidate (in those cases where the electoral periods are analysed) and the protagonism of the political party. Likewise, the authors suggest the differentiation between the attention centred on the political action or on the personal action of individual politicians, on whom there is the focus of information. These two options are evident in the study of Porath *et al.* (2014) through the dichotomy between the political attributes (individual competency) of the leader and his private life (privatisation). On the other hand, the review of the research conducted by Quevedo *et al.* (2016) encouraged the incorporation of categories related to particular citizens and media in this variable, like those useful to examine the level of consistency between the different perspectives from which the politainment and the personalisation are analysed on this paper.

Quevedo *et al.* (2016) base on the assumption that the visual has a significant transcendence in the traditional mediatic representation of politics. Their main objective was to corroborate the extrapolation of said consideration to the context of social networks, specifically Twitter in the case

of this research. The authors confirm a prevalence of personalisation techniques in the communication carried out on the *microblogging* platform during the campaign before the municipal elections of 2015 in Spain. Considering the closeness to our object of study, we deemed appropriate to transfer the analysis of protagonism in the Twitter photographs suggested by the authors, to our own analysis template though the study of the protagonism in the introductory images of YouTube videos.

Lastly, to classify the different visual elements (audiovisual content and cover images) within the category of infoentertainment or not, many of the stylemes of this genre proposed by Berrocal et al (2014b) were considered. Although referred to the field of television, some of them (thematic preferences, selection and treatment of informative sources, technical features or narrative style) are also identifiable on contents offered by YouTube.

4.4. Procedure

The purpose of this research is to examine and compare about twenty videos of each of the four Spanish political parties with greater representation in the parliament from a triple dimension: content, headlines and introductory images.

The social platform YouTube differentiates from other rather popular social networks in Spain like Facebook or Twitter in the sense that, to undergo analysis, there are no applications available that facilitate the contrast of quantitative data. For these last platforms however, Internet offers different tools (see for instance: *Trendsmat*, *Blitzmetric*, *Twtrland*, *Wisemetrics*, *TweetReach*) that facilitate the task of the researcher by offering metrics of a wide scope of numeric data. Like Deltell (2012: 9) confirms in his study about the political communication strategies implemented by Equo on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube during the campaign prior elections of 2011 in Spain, the videos platform is "from all the tools analysed, the most complex to evaluate."

This way, in this study the data base was tailored manually, establishing lists containing the links, available at any time, to the contents of videos analysed on YouTube, as well as the tables that gathered the texts of the headlines in relation to the most relevant videos for each one of the 4 political parties suggested, along with the screenshots containing the introductory image of every content.

Finally, the analysis template made based on the independent and dependent variables, with the possibility of multiple or dichotomous response, was used by two coders (authors of this research) with a percentage of coincidence of 89%.

5. Results

The findings obtained are presented in this section in a structured manner, considering two blocks: personalisation and politainment.

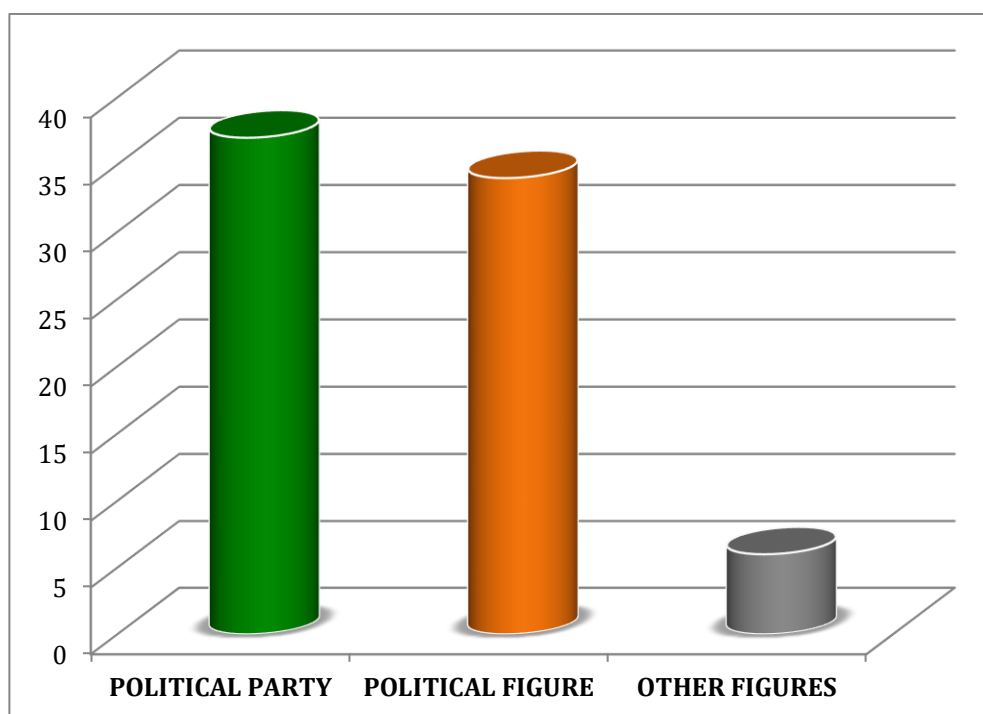
5.1. The phenomenon of political personalisation on YouTube.

Like we mentioned earlier, at a methodological level, the phenomenon of personalisation is observed in this research from three perspectives: the analysis of audiovisual content of videos, the analysis of headlines and the analysis of introductory images.

5.1.1. Personalisation through audiovisual contents

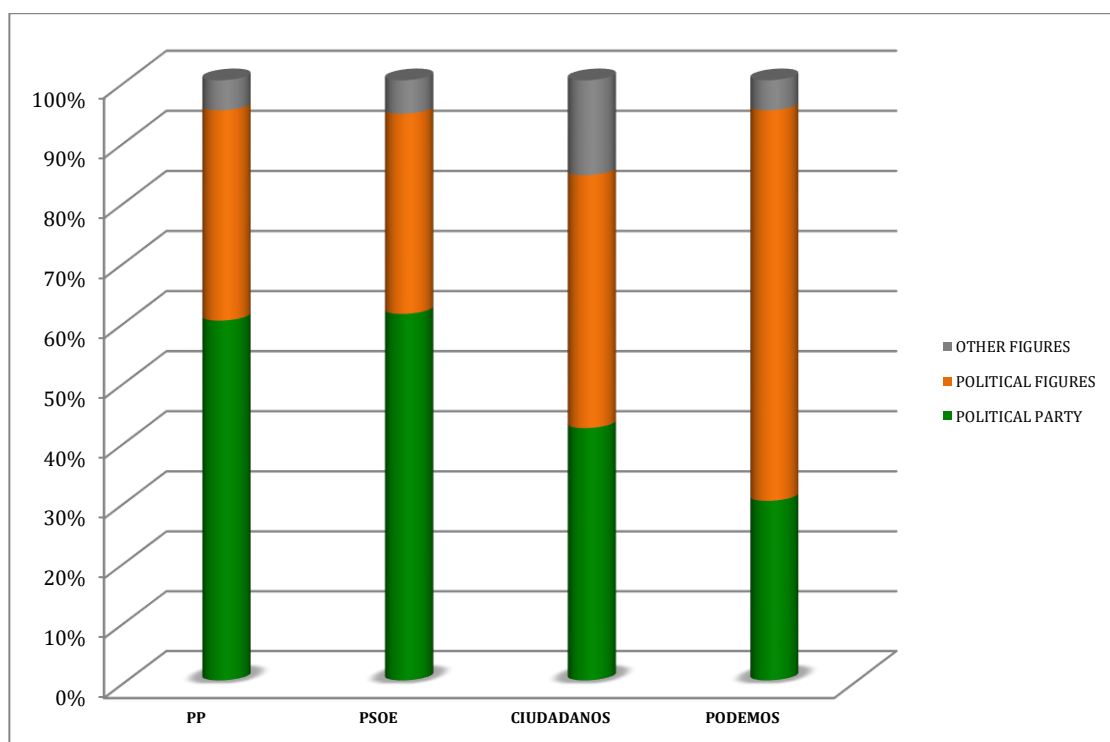
The contents in which the political party is the protagonist of information are slightly the majority (48%) compared to those that focus on a specific political leader in particular (44%). Only in 1 video, the leading figure is a journalist and likewise, only once the relevance of the audiovisual lies on a particular citizen. In no case the representatives from associations or social collectives are the focus of the political communication analysed. In 8% of videos other figures (please read Leticia Ortiz or Mario Vargas Llosa, among others) are the focus of attention.

Graphic 1. Protagonists



Considering a comparative analysis between the four formations object of study, the results of the most relevant videos on YouTube labelled "*Partido Popular*" and "*PSOE*" almost match. In both cases, the protagonism of the political party (60% and 61% respectively) is very superior to that of particular politicians (35% and 33% respectively). A very different situation is obtained in relation to the labels of the emerging parties, like "*Ciudadanos*" and "*Podemos*". The videos about the orange formation focus information in an identical percentage (42%) on the political figure in particular or towards the organization. In the contents talking about *Podemos*, is where personalisation becomes more evident. From the audiovisual pieces, 65% focus the attention on one of the members of the purple formation individually, compared to a 30% where the attention is focused on the political structure instead.

Graphic 2. Personalisation by political party



Focusing on those cases where, in general, the attention is drawn towards particular politicians (44%), only 21% present a *frame* towards personal attributes of political leaders, compared to 79% which frame is targeted to the professional facet of the figure. This 21% corresponds in its totality to videos labelled as "Podemos" and it is related to one of the themes that focuses the political attention on the period in which the research is conducted: the purchase of a chalet by Pablo Iglesias and Irene Montero.

5.1.2. Personalisation through headlines.

In the headlines of the 77 videos analysed, there is reference in 81 times to terms that allude to political parties, compared to 44 cases in which the particular name of some political representative is used. Considering the 4 labels proposed for the analysis (*Partido Popular*, *PSOE*, *Ciudadanos* and *Podemos*), in all cases the weight of the text lies on the political formation which name is used to search the most relevant videos on YouTube, sometimes even doubling or tripling the references to the names of political leaders.

Analysing the headlines of videos in a personalised manner in each one of the labels proposed, in the case of *Partido Popular* the focus of attention is put on the political organizations in 74% of occasions, compared to 26% where the text includes the name of some public representative. Likewise, the proportion is 67% compared to 33% in the videos about *PSOE* and 66% versus 34% in the case of *Ciudadanos*. The headlines of the contents about the purple formation are the ones gathering a greater number of references to particular political leaders (45%), reaching a situation of quasi-balance with the mentions to political parties (55%).

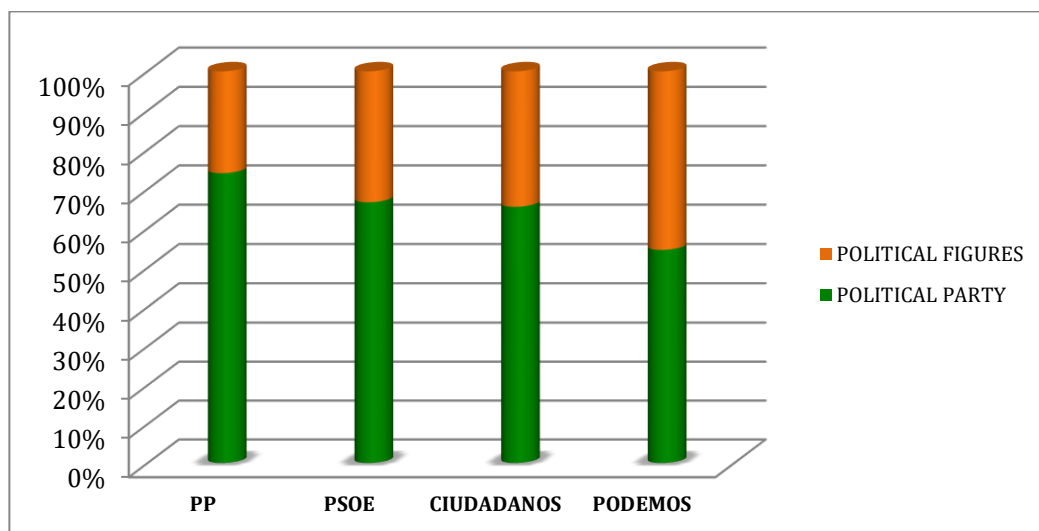
Figure 1. Protagonism of the acronyms of the political party



Source: authors own creation using the Wordart application

Among the 4 political formations evaluated there is none standing out in the number of mentions, obtaining all of them numbers that do not show a significant difference: *Partido Popular*- 22, *PSOE*- 20, *Ciudadanos*- 19, *Podemos*- 18. Other political parties mentioned in one occasion through the headlines include: *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* (ERC) and *Candidatura de Unión Popular* (CUP).

Graphic 3. Protagonism of political parties in headlines



Regarding the use of the name of political leaders in the headline statements, the terms used most often are Pablo Iglesias 10 times, followed by Rajoy in 7, Arrimadas in 4 and Pedro Sánchez and Carrizosa in 3.

Headline-content consistency

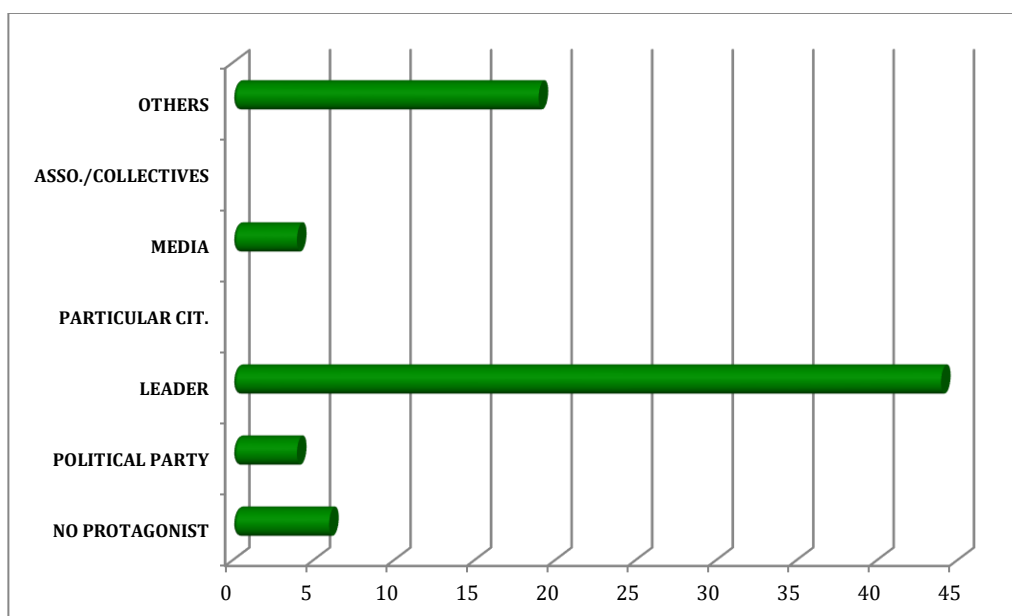
We propose the comparison of results obtained in the analysis of the audiovisual contents and those obtained in the study of headlines to determine whether there is a consistency between them. As observed in graphics 2 and 3, in both cases, in global terms, the relevance of information lies on the political parties, even though their protagonism is more evident in the texts that serve as video headings. The trend towards personalisation evidenced, to a lower extent, in the videos about *Ciudadanos* and to a greater extent in the videos about *Podemos*, is minimised in the analysis of headlines introducing the contents of both formations. Therefore, the results of these sections seem discordant, although they point in the same direction.

5.1.3. Personalisation through introductory images

Considering the field of audiovisual, the trend towards personalisation is prominent in the introductory images of the videos about political communication consumed and disseminated on YouTube.

More than half of the cover images (57%) present, in the foreground, a particular political leader, compared to an insignificant attention put on political formations (5%). The resource of using other figures is also noteworthy (for instance Marta Sánchez, Leticia Ortiz or El Selu- a troupe member), hoarding 25% of introductory images of contents or the lack of presence of particular citizens and associations/ social collectives in this category.

Graphic 4. Protagonism of political leaders on images



Considering the comparative analysis of the four political formations focused on this study, the search label "*Podemos*" is the one showing a greater percentage (75%) of images led by political representatives, being their leader, Pablo Iglesias either individually or together with this personal and professional partner, Irene Montero, the one hoarding the greatest attention.

Figure 1. Personalisation "Podemos"



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1aiASmqDj4&t=517s>,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4F1jKaXLv_I

Secondly, the label search "*PSOE*" shows that, in 67% of cover images the protagonism lies on some particular political leader. Even though, in this case, there is an ensemble cast between the figures focus of attention, showing Pedro Sánchez as protagonist the same number of times than Iglesias, Ábalos or Cospedal.

Close percentages are the result of the analysis of the personalisation in the heading images of videos labelled as "*Ciudadanos*" (47%) and "*Partido Popular*" (40%). Regarding the visual elements that present contents about the orange formation, the absence of his national leader, Albert Rivera, is noteworthy, thus distributing the protagonism between the different members of the party (Arrimadas, Carrizosa, Villegas, Toni Roldán or Lorena Roldán). In the case of *Partido Popular*, the leader Mariano Rajoy, hoards the protagonism a greater number of times.

Figure 2. Personalisation "Partido Popular"



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1FU33VWkao>,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xulRuWh_2M&t=1s

Graphic 5 shows the distribution of the rest of categories analysed in this variable as per the four labels proposed.

Graphic 5. Protagonists of the image by political parties

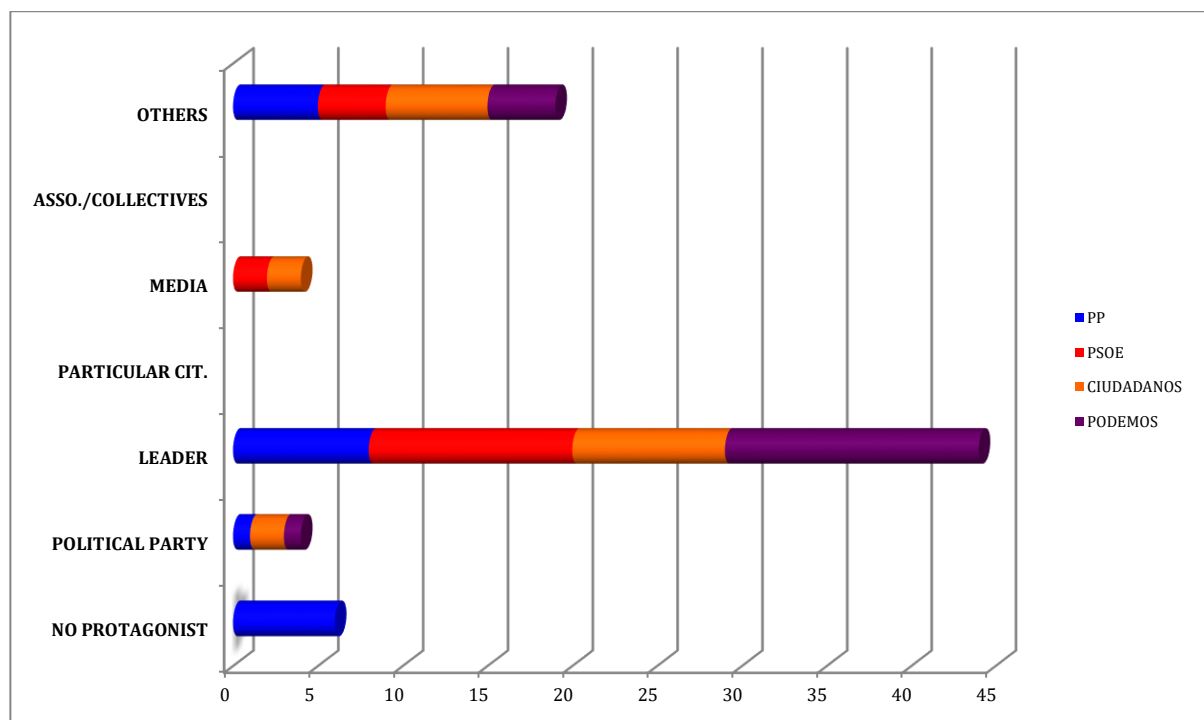


Image-content consistency

The data obtained in the analysis of the audiovisual content and the one we come across in the study of the introductory images are discordant. In the former, the attention to the political leaders is lower (44%) than that dedicated to political parties (48%), but the gap between both frames is not especially significant. However, the tendency reverses in the analysis of images heading the videos, where there is a considerable use of personalisation (57%) and where political formations go almost unnoticed (5%).

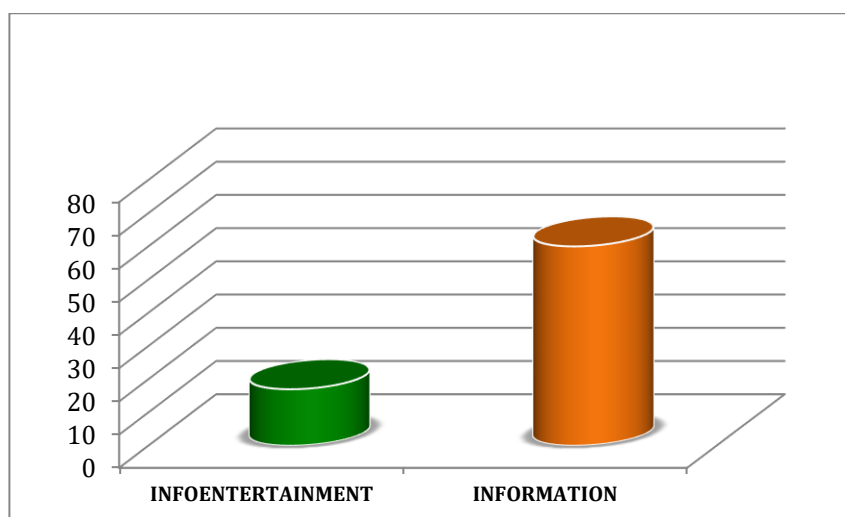
5.2. The politainment phenomenon on YouTube

The politainment phenomenon is observed from two of the proposed perspectives: the analysis of audiovisual content of videos and the analysis of introductory images.

5.2.1. Politainment through audiovisual contents

The study of the sample shows a scarce presence of the infoentertainment genre in the audiovisual contents of the most relevant videos on YouTube about the four Spanish political parties with greater parliamentary representation.

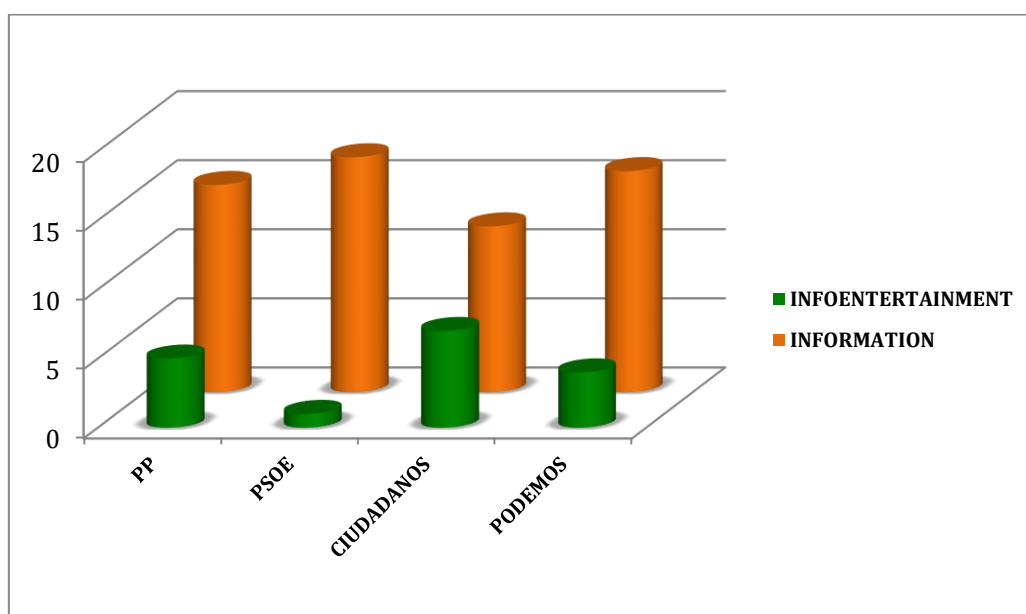
Graphic 6. Politainment



Most audiovisuals (78%) offer serious, explanatory and argumentative information about the political affairs they deal with. A minority of videos (22%) focus political information from the humour or satire criticism perspective.

In terms of the scarce use of the infoentertainment, the results between the contents examined under the name of right-wing parties (PP and *Ciudadanos*) show higher percentages (25% and 37% respectively) of videos using stylemes distinctive of this phenomenon. In the information that results from the search under the name of left-wing formations (PSOE and *Podemos*), percentages are considerably lower (6% and 20% respectively).

Graphic 7. Politainment by political parties



5.2.2. Politainment through introductory images

The results obtained in the analysis of infoentertainment through the introductory images show identical data in proportion to the results obtained in the study of audiovisual contents (Graphic 6). Only 22% of images heading videos contain some element (styleme) characteristic of politainment.

Figure 3. Politainment by introductory images



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z4sM5wseulo>,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ul56zI6h5-k&t=361s>,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJUBxEyZHo&t=423s>,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVfsuEkst1s&t=1s>

Considering the different labels proposed, politainment is a resource used in 32% of cover images of Ciudadanos, in 25% of Podemos, in 22% of those of *PSOE* and in 9% of those of Partido Popular.

Image-content consistency

Lastly, it is worth mentioning that there are few coincidences between 22% of videos where the presence of politainment in their audiovisual content is detected and the 22% of introductory images where the phenomenon is identified. Despite resulting the same percentage, only 4 videos have stylemes distinctive of infoentertainment both in terms of content as well as in the heading image, therefore we come across 13 videos where, regardless the content is introduced with elements tending to humour and criticism, it finally results in a serious and argumentative information. Likewise, an equal number of videos offer a *framing* towards politainment in their content, without the heading image conveying this trend.

6. Discussion and conclusions

The extrapolation of politainment and personalisation to YouTube, as characteristic resource of political communication broadcasted on television has not been produced, or at least, not with the intensity to which these techniques are used on television. In the political information broadcasted through the small screen, these phenomena were confirmed as two resources that collaborated with the needs of the screen share, after the irruption of private televisions, responding to the demands of an homogeneous audience. However, YouTube is a complex ground, where the consumption of political

information is only one among the many options of the user, who has access free access to contents. The volume and diversity of videos broadcasted and consumed daily in this social network is such, that the platform does not depend on the levels of consumption of political information for its survival, nor these influence in its prestige as a communication channel. This difference between both media, could be related to the lesser use of these techniques of political mediatisation on digital communication.

In the videos referred to the four political formations with greater parliamentary representation in Spain disseminated on YouTube, a considerable use of the personalisation resource is evidenced, but without exceeding the attention towards political parties except for introductory images, and a scarce presence of the politainment framing. The two factors that are determinant in the selection of some contents over others by the user, namely, the headlines and images that serve as cover for the audiovisual content, seem to complement in terms of the use of political personalisation as claim technique. While in introductory images, the focus is mainly put on political leaders in particular, in the headline texts the political formations have a greater weight. In the audiovisual contents the proportion is balanced, being the framing of parties slightly preferred.

In the videos that refer to *Partido Popular* is where there is less presence of the personalisation phenomenon, compared to videos that refer to *Podemos* where mostly particular leaders are protagonists.

This analysis constitutes an additional contribution to the studies that begin to configure a research line around politainment and political personalisation on the social network YouTube. The discrepancies observed in terms of the previous results about this object of study, formulate the convenience to keep working towards empirical evidences that contribute to trace a clear trend about political communication in the digital environment and to delimit a more complete view and comprehension of politainment and political personalisation and its evolution on Internet.

7. Notes

1. Please review the studies cited in the Introduction section.

2. Please check: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kNbb3sXMfY>

[Last retrieved on 06 September 2018].

3. Please check: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X65xGrysqMQ>

[Last retrieved on 07 September 2018].

4. Please check: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eWihwYCPd40>

[Last retrieved on 12 September 2018].

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