Political and private life in the 2012 Basque parliamentary election. Study of the format "A day with the candidate"

Francisco Javier Ruiz San Miguel [CV] [iD] [G] Full Professor. University of Málaga (Spain) / sanmiguel@uma.es

Fermín Galindo Arranz [CV] [iD]   Full Professor. University of Santiago de Compostela (Spain) / fermin.galindo@usc.es

Sonia Ruiz Blanco [CV] [iD] [G] Associate Professor. University of Málaga (Spain) / sblanco@uma.es

Abstract
Introduction: Politics play a leading role in today's society and this protagonism is not only based on the political discourse of candidates and parties but also on the exposure of the most personal aspects of politicians. That is why in recent times politicians try to show and share more about their professional and most private spheres. **Methods:** This study is based on the in-depth content analysis of four feature articles about the candidates participating in the 2012 Basque parliamentary election. **Research results:** Despite the efforts of the media to offer a balanced and neutral framing of the candidates in the four feature articles, there are substantial differences in terms of genres and photojournalistic styles, as well as the linguistic treatment of images. **Discussion:** The objective is not to determine how the candidate is perceived, but to establish how the candidate is shown, based on the analysis and measurement of several variables. **Conclusions:** There is a clear discrepancy between the textual narrative and the images that accompany the feature articles, which creates a cognitive dissonance in readers.
Keywords
Transparency; private life; political marketing; body language; nonverbal language; iconic analysis.

Contents
1. Introduction and state of the art review. 2. Methods. 3. Results. 4. Discussion. 5. Conclusions. 6. Notes. 7. References.

Translation by **CA Martínez-Arcos**
(PhD in Communication from the University of London, UK)

1. Introduction and state of the art review

The persistent crisis, which started eight years ago, in mid-September 2008, along with the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers that anticipated the financial crisis, is not only a classic economic crisis of capitalist cycle, it is affecting the whole superstructure of the mode of production, particularly the narratives that underpin the collective consciousness on which social relations are based. The most direct result has been the general total loss of credibility, especially in the public space. This has been accompanied by the disruptive emergence of the digital media, which have subverted, in good measure, the *status quo* of most of the ideological devices of the government, especially those in charge of shaping the public opinion (school, media and culture), as well as the devices that articulate the systems of representation (systems of political parties and unions), all of which are framed mainly within the scope of the private domain (Althusser & Barco, 1997, pp. 115-116).

Faced with this new state of things, explanations are sought to rearticulate these aspects, which involves, as Richard Sennett (1978, p. 321) has pointed out, the mythification of the ills of the current society as a product of the impersonality, alienation and coldness which have generated an ideology of the privacy **[1]**. This, in turn, promotes the idea that social relations, regardless of their type, are more real, authentic and credible when they are framed within an aspiration of proximity and kindness with others. Accordingly, some promote the idea that this proximity and kindness constitute moral goods in themselves as they contribute to the development of the individual personality and transform political categories into psychological categories.

From this perspective, it is interesting to unravel the discursive strategies that are being employed to mitigate voters' lack of trust and affection towards their potential political representatives, who in recent years, with increasing frequency and intensity, rely on formats and genres that revolved around the revelation of their private and even intimate affairs. So "the taste for spontaneity has inverted the most rigid liturgies of the State. The emotional excludes the ceremonious" (Debray, 1995, p. 19).

The narrative of the format *24 horas con el candidate* ("24 hours with the candidate") is increasingly gaining popularity both in television and in feature articles with strong iconic elements, and is becoming a classic element of election campaigns, particularly in the configuration and promotion of the image of candidates.

In October 2012, on the occasion of the Basque parliamentary elections, the *Vocento* media group challenged the candidates to the presidency of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country (*lehendakari*) to let a group of journalists and photojournalist to document a full day of their campaign. The challenge was accepted by the candidates. who were certainly motivated by the impact that *Vocento*'s newspapers have in the Basque Country: *El Correo* in Bizkaia and Alava, and *El Diario Vasco* in Gipuzkoa, whose added readership, almost 700,000 according to AIMC (EGM, April 2012-March 2013), is higher than that of any another medium, including television.

Based on the size of *Vocento*'s newspaper readership, particularly on the weekends during an election campaign, we can argue that the series of feature articles under study, despite excluding its digital version (due to their limited availability -only to subscribers-), has a huge social input.

This research study focuses on the construction of the political characters based on their representation through the photographs and iconography included in the feature articles.

The study includes the analysis of the four feature articles written about: Iñigo Urkullu, EAJ/PNV (Sunday, 7/10) (Ibáñez, 2012a); Antonio Basagoiti, PP (Friday, 12/10) (Ibáñez, 2012b); Laura Mintegui, EH Bildu (Saturday, 13/10) (Benito, 2012a); and Patxi López, PSE/PSOE (Sunday, 14/10) (Benito, 2012b).

All feature articles followed a similar structure, which included a large photograph in the central space on the front-page of both newspapers and a double truck, with the upper half reserved for images, all of them in technicolour. Undoubtedly, these illustrations, with a remarkable personal and advertising style, also aimed to substantially encourage the purchase of the newspaper.

It is not necessary to resort to an excessively detailed evaluation or a thorough eye tracking (Gómez Díaz, 1992, p. 66) to discover the privileged location and layout that each one of the feature articles enjoyed in the days of peak audience, which was further increased by the interest aroused by the election campaign.

2. Methods

This analysis seeks to draw conclusions on the use of the aforementioned format in the current practices of the political communication, focused on the analysis of the photographic material, from a socio-semiotic perspective, whose partial model has been previously used in the study of large photographic series (Gómez Cortecero, 2015), which is not our case as we are dealing with a limited and complex series of feature articles.

The analysis is based on four fundamental areas: identification data, discursive strategies, linguistic enunciation and paralinguistic enunciation. These areas are quantified, subdivided and classified, in turn, in 45 items that are subsequently used to interpret the image conveyed by the feature articles about their protagonists. Thus, the first codes that support the construction of the image of the candidate are properly visual and photographic, as those that articulate the representation of space (format, amplitude of the picture, type of shot, camera angle, visual angle and depth of field), the lighting codes (degree of contrast and sharpness and chromaticism) and the temporal codes (instantaneity or traces of the representation of the time-movement). In addition, the analysis also takes into account the content of the image, i.e., the coding of the leading and secondary actors of the images, and the coding of the space where the action takes place. The analysis pays special attention to the kinaesthetic and proxemic aspects that make up the representation of the non-verbal language of the candidate who, as pointed out by Birdwhistell and Albert Meharabian (Peace, 1988, p. 12), transmit between 55% and 65% of the message, compared with just 35% and 38% of the verbal component, including the paralinguistic elements, but only 7% if we exclusively refer to words. This is of increasing significance because, as Debray has pointed out, the "non-verbal elements of the message have an increasing importance" (1995, p. 19) in political communication. This is interesting in this study because, while "non-verbal communication cannot be studied in isolation from the whole process of communication" (Knapp, 1982, p. 26), the comparison of the non-verbal language of candidates and the written language of the narrative built by journalists requires a double

assessment about the authenticity of the representation as a whole, given that non-verbal behaviour can contradict the verbal content (Knapp, 1982, p. 27).

3. Results

In the analysis of the images we must be aware that we face a triangulation of intentions-wishes of the three instances that make up the ensemble of this particular communicative phenomenon:

-Politicians (and their corresponding communication cabinets) who lend their life to be represented in images, with the intention of contributing to the creation, consolidation and maintenance of a public image that benefits the candidate in terms of votes. We must not forget that "the principle of politics is representation (...) and the political body is always a body of representation and a body in representation" (Soulages, 2012, p. 4). As Barthes has pointed out, this is the first of three possible intentions or practices of which photography can be the object (to do, to undergo, to look) (1982, p. 38). In this case, the person photographed is "the referent, a kind of little simulacrum, any eidolon emitted by object […], the *spectrum* of the photograph because this word retains, through its root, a relation to 'spectacle'" and "the return of the dead" (Barthes, 1982, pp. 38-39). For this subject of the contract of enunciation (Greimas & Courtés, 1990, p. 90), implicit in the final form and embodiment of the photographic report, the coveted role is symbolic, with a hardly concealed attempt to get the published images to become an allegory of the abstract values cherished by the electorate.

-The *operator*, the one that takes the photograph (Barthes, 1982, p. 38), the medium of communication, in its role of collective enunciator, who has negotiated the creation of the feature articles and performs the photographic editing (Ruiz San Miguel, 2002, p. 25), together with the work of the photojournalist as individual and privileged enunciator that certifies the experience in the here-now of the represented events, based on Barthes's idea of the noeme of photography: "the photographer's 'second sight' does not consists in 'seeing' but in being there" (1982, p. 96) and in collecting "what could never be repeated existentially" (1982, p. 31) for its mechanical repetition, which guarantees the real connection between the photographed subject and the photographing subject, the survival of both in the same space and the same time, the certification that "someone has seen the referent […] "in flesh and blood, or again in person" (1982, p. 140) . All of this as a meta-narrative based on which the mediator tries to project a discourse that is understood as a faithful portrait of the character [2] of the candidate through the mosaic of images that summarise the course of a *normal* day in his/her everyday activities. With the strategic search for the role of *public notary of the reality* through the construction of an ideal enunciatary, as a photojournalistic witness or observer, which is actually one of the professional stereotypes [3] and, therefore, an ideological position that aims to win credibility among the public, as a tool for the maintenance or increase of readers and advertisers (Tunstall, 1980, p. 88). As we can see, the use of photography by the *operator*, the enunciator, seeks to establish an indexical relation between the referent, the candidate, and his photographs, relying on its "particularity and the necessary relation" to a particular spatio-temporal context which are the defining properties of the index (Abril, 2007, p. 33).

-The *spectator* (Barthes, 1982, p. 38), the reader of the images, who seek to decipher the keys of the reality of the candidate through the interpretation of the keys of his photographs, and look for the

iconic image as a sign that maintains a relation of similarity with its real referent, although, as Abril points out, "all relations of similarity present some degree of conventionality" (2007, p. 32).

Therefore, in this complex process of production of meaning there is an immanent interpretation of the images as signs of the three Peircean categories (the symbol, the index and the icon), depending on the relation that aims to be established between the *representamen* and the object (in this case the subject-candidate) according to the intentionality, the interest and point of view of each one of the three agents involved in it (politician-strategic experimenter, medio-enunciator-mediator and reader-enunciatary).

However, faced with the confluence of the aforementioned three intentions, the routines of production and the techno-communicative conditions (Ruiz San Miguel, 2002) associated with the production of the feature articles present serious difficulties for the settlement of one of the bases of the contract of enunciation that is established between the parties, which assumes that what has been created is a significant collection of whatever "moments" or "cuts", in the words of Deleuze, against a collection of "poses" or "privileged moments" (1983, p. 17) during the ordinary day in which the photojournalist remains next to the candidate, to collect the images.

Especially notable among the aspects used by the medium to transmit a denotation of balance and neutrality are the aspects directly related with the paralinguistic enunciation, such as the location in the newspaper, the page layout, and the anchoring through captions and the signature of the authors, who in this case are only two photographers of the medium as one of them is the author of three of the four works.

We can see how careful has been the repetition of the structure of a large photograph on the front-page, with the rest of the photographs distributed in the central double truck of the specific supplement. There is also uniformity in the scarce editing of the images, limited to the use of two-page long photos, as an informative and layout resource.

With regards to the narrative model, while the genres employed are unified (photographic report and feature article), we can discern substantially the differences in the photojournalistic genres and styles employed for each of the candidates, as it will be shown later.

The differences in the treatment of each of the candidates is best perceived in the linguistic treatment of the photographs, both in the analysis of the items corresponding to their spatial or light coding as well as in the aspects related to the coding of the protagonists of the images (candidates and companions, the character of the action of the content), their gestures reflected in the kinesthetic codes (facial expressions, smile, visual contact, sight, body posture, expression of extremities), of their proxemic behaviour and the scenographic frame where they are presented (type and amplitude of the space).

A day with the candidate of the PNV. The most intimate Urkullu

The most remarkable aspect is the sharp incongruence between the proposed texts and the manifest meaning of the images, especially in the connotations inferred from the codes of the photographic representation.

The headline on the front-page that claims to offer "the most intimate Urkullu" contrast remarkably with the proxemic behaviour. Only one of the nine images shows the nationalist candidate in an intimate attitude, when he kisses goodbye his wife on the doorstep of their house, although the position of their arms show excessive rigidity and distance for an intimate distance in English-speaking countries (Hall & Blanco, 1997, pp. 144-146). The scenography of the actions is neither positive as the candidate is presented in intimate spaces in three occasions, but with attitudes and proximity with family members that do not favour such connotation.

As for the colour temperature and chromaticism, there is a predominance of neutral and cold combinations, which contribute to distancing the candidate and reducing dimension and dynamism. In addition, there is general statism of the actions portrayed, which are dynamic on just two occasions. This idea is reinforced by the formats used, all of them vertical or square, descriptive and static, except for three landscape images that present completely rigid actions.

Another item involved in the dynamism and the capacity for social interaction of the protagonist is the photojournalistic genre, and in this case the individualised portrait would be ideal and recurrent in this type of feature article, but also the less attractive and less meaningful. In the case of Urkullu, only four human landscapes differ from the pure portrait, two with his family and two with his fellow party members, who only appear as companions, eluding the representation of any social contact out of a *safe* and *controlled* environment.

The gestures in general neither differ from the general tone. There is no facial expression of happiness, only neutral expressions, or sadness or disdain, without the least hint of a smile, neither from him or his companions, either family members or fellow party members, with whom he does not make direct eye contact at any time, only two sidelong glances.

Particularly important here is the treatment of directions of the gaze (Descamps, 1990, p. 88) which, with the exception of a frontal gaze, all of them are descending, associated, according to the quadrant of the field of view they occupy, from left-past to frontal-present, to a certain anguish and blocking in the past; to a certain shyness, alienation and contempt, but also pessimism, introversion and certain depressive sentiment with respect to the lived moment (Ermiane, 1959; Lurçat, 1979; Descamps, 1990).

Only one photograph shows a frontal look on one occasion, and it denotes a direct, open, extrovert mood, but it corresponds to a portrait in a decontextualised medium short shot, over a flat background without any other actor with whom interact.

If we have to define the image that the photographic report draws of the nationalist leader, we can say that he is a distant, isolated, unpleasant, sad, hardly dynamic, reserved, introverted, pessimistic and perhaps nostalgic character **[4]**.

A day with the candidate of the PP. Basagoiti, family and campaign

In the case of the candidate to Lehendakari of the Popular Party, the graphic treatment is differed from the rest. The most obvious reason is that this is the only photographic report that was not made by Ignacio Pérez, but instead by photojournalist Igor Aizpuru.

There are some notable aspects in the codes employed, especially in the treatment of light and colour temperature in the front-page image, which is warm, with an unequivocal connotation of proximity of the candidate, reinforced by the portrayed scene, in which he comforts his daughter, who is sick in bed. In the rest of the candidates, colour has been balanced, featuring neutral shades that do not support obvious connotations, neither positive or negative.

However, in the inner photographs do not maintain this trend, although the work invested in the quality of the light is noticeable and is reminiscent of Vittorio Storaro in Bernardo Bertolucci's *The Conformist*, which plays with warm colours for indoor, intimate and private spaces, while blues are reserved for exteriors.

Other aspects of the encoding of the space where Basagoiti is presented also stand out. He is the candidate represented the most in images shot in landscape mode (more than 75% of the times), which build a more narrative story, which enhances his dynamism, with expressive shots (medium or medium long shots), focusing the attention on him, playing with a reduced depth of field, which gives him great presence, intimacy **[5]** and protagonism in the spaces in which he is shown, well contextualised by the wide visual angle employed (he has almost twice as many images with this visual angle than the nearest competitor), all this aiming to contribute to the construction of more social and relational spaces, which hide the scarce interaction of the candidate with people who are not family or party members. Only one image shows him with a fisherwoman, picking up his purchase, and doing so in a forced position of social distance (Hall & Blanco, 1997, p. 149), without any personal contact.

The headline of the front-page, "Basagoiti, family and campaign" bets on building the image of an eminently home and family man, with four photographs with his family and four in his home, and one of him buying in the market.

However, aside from the visual codes that concern the photographer and the editor who selects and combines them (paralinguistic utterances), the reading is contradictory in the kinesthetic and proxemic aspects that depend more on the portrayed behaviour of the candidate. There is a remarkable transcendence of the non-verbal communication in the transmission of emotions and feelings, as showed by Mehrabian (1981, pp. 75-80), who calculated that 55% of a message is transmitted by body language (posture, facial expression, look, gestures), 38% by the paralinguistic elements (intonation, rhythm, pauses, emphasis) and only 7% by the verbal language.

Although Basagoiti appears repeatedly in his house, with members of his family, only one of ten images shows an expression of joy, offering a simple low smile **[6]**, to Oyarzabal, his fellow party member with whom he jokes, but at a distance framed more in the social than the personal field (Hall & Blanco, 1997, p. 149). This reading becomes transcendent if we consider that the lack of gestures and expressions is associated with someone without emotions, without feelings (Miguel Aguado & Nevares Heredia, 1995, p. 147). And Basagoiti does not show any emotional, sincere and direct facial expression to any of the three members of his family with whom he appears. More discordant with the proposed eminently family person is the image which shows him accompanying his daughter to the bus stop, in which he sees the girl playing with the electronic tablet with an unequivocal expression of contempt: there is a tense and a little high commissure of the lip, which is a clear expression of disdain (Ekman & Serra, 2012, p. 230).

Another fundamental aspect is the gaze, since most of the interpersonal information is visual and establishing visual contact with others is fundamental, since the feedback provided in conversations depends on of the information acquired through that sense (Patterson, Suárez, & Patterson, 2011, p. 46). And this aspect reinforces the data pointing to a noticeable lack of empathy. There are only two direct visual contacts, with his sick daughter and in the market, picking up the grocery bag, in an operating contact with no communicative interaction. Moreover, the analysis of the type of gaze indicates that the more recurrent one is that "of power", which added to the rest of the items of this category, can transmit certain level of immodesty.

And with regards to the direction of the gaze, which can be understood from a more introspective perspective, as this is not usually employed as visual contact with partners, it is descending in eight of the ten images, which is sign of decay and depression, as pointed out by numerous research carried out by psychiatrists, psychologists and pedagogues (Lurçat, 1979; Ermiane, 1959; Ermiane & Guilhot, 1961; Guilhot, 1962).

And according to the classification of Descamps (1990, p. 89) **[7]**, we can see the noticeable decay that the candidate of the PP connotes in the images, which especially point to his present and future, with six descending gazes in the central shot, concerning the present and one to the right, reserved for the future.

The previous findings have a substantial transcendence since, as showed in the study of Argyle, Alkema and Gilmour (1971), the lack of consistency between the verbal language (for example in the ideological discourse or in this case the one exposed by the author of the text of the report) and the non-verbal language, especially the body language that is shown in the ten photographs of the candidate's day (especially as a subject who has to expose himself to the scrutiny of voters and seduce them in order to get elected in the polls), generates distrust and promotes the idea of a speech that has been prefabricated to improve his image, which is reinforced by the lack of spontaneity transmitted in the images, even in those photographs that present on-going dynamic actions.

The photographic report of Basagoiti distils a series of connotations and denotations that lead to interpret his representation as an excessively seriously character, even sad or withdrawn, hardly communicative and spontaneous, with low empathy and not as traditional as he presents himself with his pose of home and family man.

A day with the candidate of EH Bildu. Mintegi, up close

The feature article about Laura Mintegui is the most peculiar for several reasons. She is the only woman who has been interviewed and her feature article includes the lowest number of photographs about her day: only eight.

In addition, the feature article deprives us of one of scenographic frameworks that justifies the chosen format the most, the access to her personal and intimate space: her home. This results in the delimitation of her image, since her profile can only be built and justified based on her work, both her usual performance and during the election campaign. Details are anything but random, showing a clear ideological stand, which separates the candidate's personal and intimate characteristics from her ability to perform her functions as politician.

The singling out continues in the same scenographic code, since the candidate is presented in environments that are much more open to interaction with anonymous subjects that are less institutional, safe and predictable than those who accompany the rest of the candidates.

One of the values that candidates try the most to transmit is honesty, in a more open, spontaneous and unequivocal way. The feature on Mintegui contains induced meanings, in that sense, in several encodings and in a recurring basis. The most notorious and transcendent one is the smile shown in five of the eight photographs, not only based on its persistence, but also due to its unequivocally sincere character, in three Duchenne smiles, using the term coined by Ekman (2012, p. 256) in honour to the great French neurologist who explained the physiological impossibility to fake this type of smile.

This type of smile, which is recognisable by any human being **[8]**, together with the spontaneous interactions with anonymous people, in open and uncontrolled scenarios, transmit an image of social easiness, security and honesty, which enhances the image of the candidate.

The smile, just like laughter, is a socialised and socialising emotion (Descamps, 1990, p. 159) that is of enormous interest to the subjects under analysis because of the work they do and the position they wish to achieve.

The coding of the social actors that accompany Mintegui also maintains that coherence. There are no representatives of the circles of power, only anonymous people (in half of the cases), campaign collaborators and journalists. Here is important to highlight the presence of the candidate next to an immigrant, who constitutes the only appearance of any representative of the so-called marginal category **[9]** in the whole set of pictures of the four candidates. Moreover, the candidate appears in codes of very close proximity, in three occasions at a personal distance and in one at a more intimate distance, even including physical contact. This entails strong connotations of empathy with ordinary heterogeneous people, which will undoubtedly reflect very well on her potential electorate.

The image Laura Mintegui presents is that of an open, cheerful, communicative and empathic candidate, but with authority and control over the management of her spaces and privacy, and centred almost exclusively in her working facet, with a marked professional character.

A day with the candidate of the PSE. López, from sun to sun

It can be argued that the overall tone of the feature on Patxi López is purely institutional. The only image that breaks with this tone is one that shows him interacting with individuals from outside his family and party circles, an eminently social and formal handshake, during which he shows a Duchenne smile, which involves a sincere and spontaneous expression, next to opponents of the EH Bildu that are also campaigning. The ideological opposition between both political formations, and the implications of the recent past, generates a noticeable connotation of democratic character on the part of the candidate and of effort to normalise social and political life.

In the realm of the family, López is presented up close, but with certain degree of passivity, which could connote a relative detachment given that the person who gesturally shows an effort to come together in the pictures they share is his wife, Begoña Gil, who in this way takes a more active role in the representation of their relationship.

In the social sphere, the candidate is shown to be much more dynamic, cordial and friendly, as reflected in his "let them do their thing" attitude towards the technical staff of Telecinco, who are preparing him for an interview, and in his interaction with the militants of a rival party. The candidate is also shown with certain cheerful attitude, as denoted by his rejection to formalities and ceremonies in the last image of the feature, when he friendly and warmly embraces Victor García Hidalgo, while walking by the street.

He and Mintegui are the two candidates who better represent their great professional capacity and open social attitude. Both qualities are very appealing for candidates to the lendakaritza.

4. Discussion

"A day with the candidate" is a format that aims to delve in the personality of a public actor, to document his/her daily activity in order to separate the person from the character. It is of a format of convenience in which the medium and the writer play their cards to set the tone and the agenda.

The conclusions presented here on the reading of the photojournalistic representations of the four candidates are based on the detailed analysis of 45 codes that articulate the production of meaning in the exposed photographic reports. However, we should not assume that these meanings are out of the reach of voters who have also read the feature articles. As noted by Hager and Ekman (1983), the information conveyed by facial expressions reflect the emotions of our interlocutors, and they can be recognised by anyone, even without specific training.

It is important to remember that the focus of the analysis is not the nature of the candidates' personality, but the visual discourse that is built around them, to represent them. The objective is not to determine how the candidate is perceived, but to establish how the candidate is represented and what specific profile is formulated for each one of them.

Figure 1. Formal dynamics of the images of each candidate
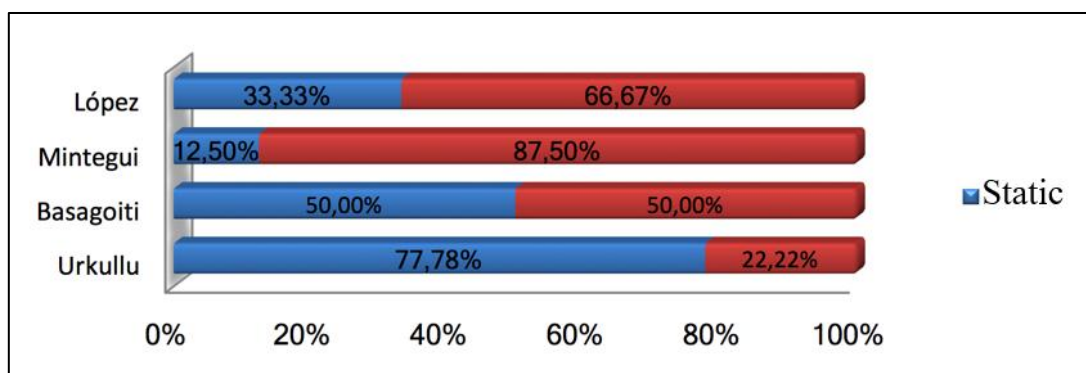
The representations of Mintegui and López are precisely the cases that best improve the image and dynamism and working ability of the candidates, as well as their natural disposition to socialisation. These are appealing features for candidates to the Presidency of the government in a community in which the individual has been traditionally validated based on his/her capacity and seriousness in the

professional realm, and with a detectable presence of the civil society, which is the result of a dense and heterogeneous social framework.

Figure 2. Social origin of the candidates' interlocutors
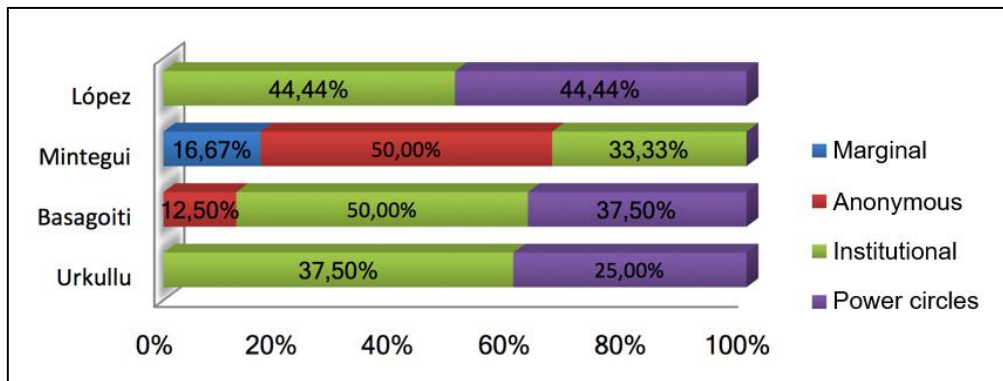
If we accept that a leader must have the capacity to give hope, inspire, motivate, integrate (2011 Anel) and clearly show his/her integrity and unequivocal capacity of service (Martínez de Miguel & Soriano, 2014), it is undeniable that in the circumstances of this election campaign, one of the worst and more pessimistic moments "of the crisis" (as *El Correo* newspaper itself reminded us in the front-page of the last feature article, on 14 October), these qualities have an even higher value to an electorate that has been punished by cuts, growing inequality and economic, social and institutional pessimism. This is why it is necessary to examine those codes that can bear both the direct denotations and diffuse connotations that support the perception of these values.

If as Fast points out, we represent our state of mind with our body language (2005, p. 15), based on the sample of images that has been analysed, the codes that best convey the ability to give hope and illusion are those that reveal the positive and pleasant feelings and emotions, which can be read as signs of hope and have ability to excite and inspire.

**Figure 3. Basic expressions of candidates**
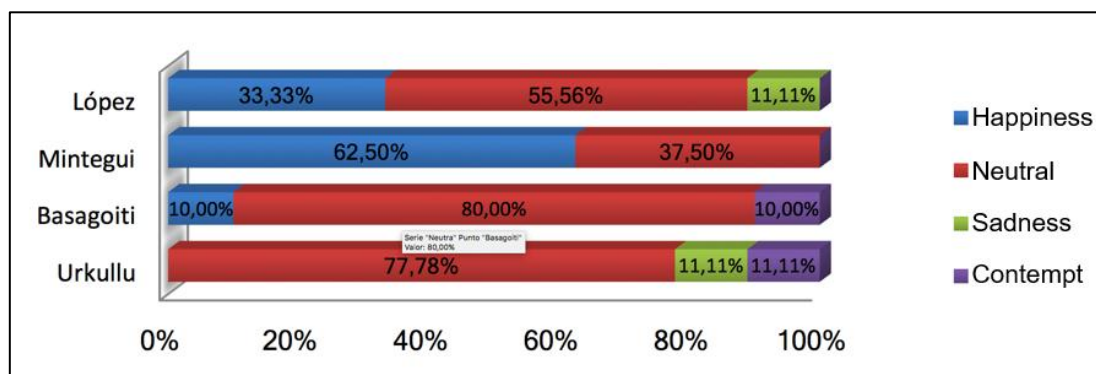
On the one hand, we must look at the basic expressions of the face of the candidate who, in order to meet the expectations about him, should focus on the joy, casting aside the rest of the seven basic emotions (Ekman & Serra, 2012).

The results are significant. Mintegui is the candidate who is shown more openly happy, in almost twice as many occasions than her immediate follower, López, who is shown happy in a third of his pictures. Basagoiti appears happy in only one picture while the nationalist, Urkullu, does not appear happy in any picture. It is remarkable that the last two candidates also appear with expression of contempt, which can transmit connotations of self-sufficiency and lack of empathy, suggesting that the people who are the object of his rejection do not have enough value for him. Another expression that is present is sadness, in both López and Urkullu.

A perfect complement to refine the explicit and implicit message transmitted by the feature articles of each candidate, is to observe the basic expression of the rest of the actors that accompany the protagonist.

Figure 4. Basic expressions of candidates' companions
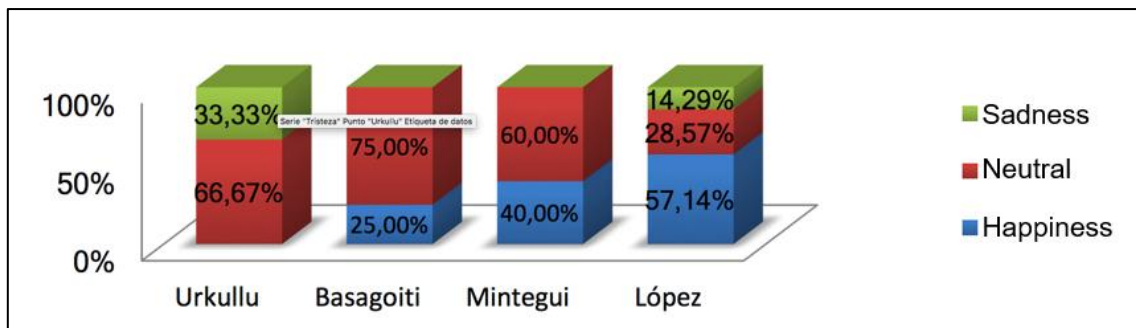
The results almost emulate the expression of the candidates. In this case López and Mintegui stand out once again for being closer in percentages, although in the reverse order. Once again there is a remarkable absence of happiness in the images of the nationalist leader who, on the contrary, appears sad in up to a third of the images.

In order to evaluate in the best way possible the candidates' capacity of transmitting sincerity and authenticity to exercise the second function of the good leader, to motivate, we will focus in the analysis of the smile, "the characteristic facial sign of the pleasant emotions" (1990, p. 252), and will properly separate spontaneous emotional reactions from the fake gestures, prepared or learned, of the candidates and their companions.

Figure 5. Presence and type of candidates' smiles
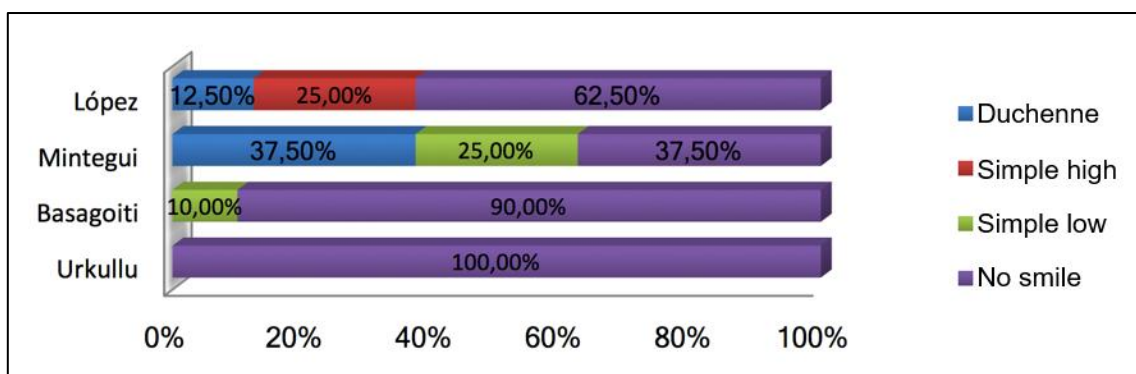
Regarding this code, only Mintegui and López are capable of transmitting some degree of sincerity and authenticity through their representations in their photographs, specifically the presence of Duchenne smile which, as mentioned, is the only type of smile that is impossible to fake.

**Figure 6. Presence and type of candidates' companions' smile**
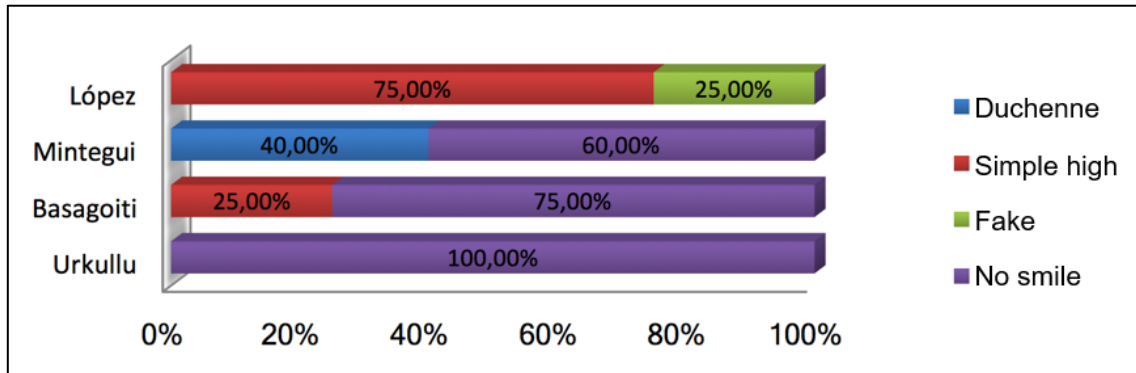
As for the reaction of the candidates' companions, the positions are reaffirmed. There is an absolute lack of smiles in the feature article on Urkullu, a shy appearance in the feature article of Basagoiti and once again López and Mintegui occupy the first places.

In this case, there are smiles in all the images in which López appears interacting with other actants, although some of them are false. Meanwhile, in the case of Mintegui, there are smiles in just 40% of the pictures but all of them are unmistakably sincere.

As Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2002) have pointed out, the leader must express his/her own values with truthfulness and sincerity, and tune in to the emotions of the people around him/her. To determine how these meanings are conveyed, we examined the degree of interaction in which each candidate engage and the type of relationship they establish with their interlocutors, through the observation and interpretation of the results of the analysis of the codes corresponding to the level and type visual contact, as well as the direction of the gaze.

**Figure 7. Presence and type of candidates' visual contact**
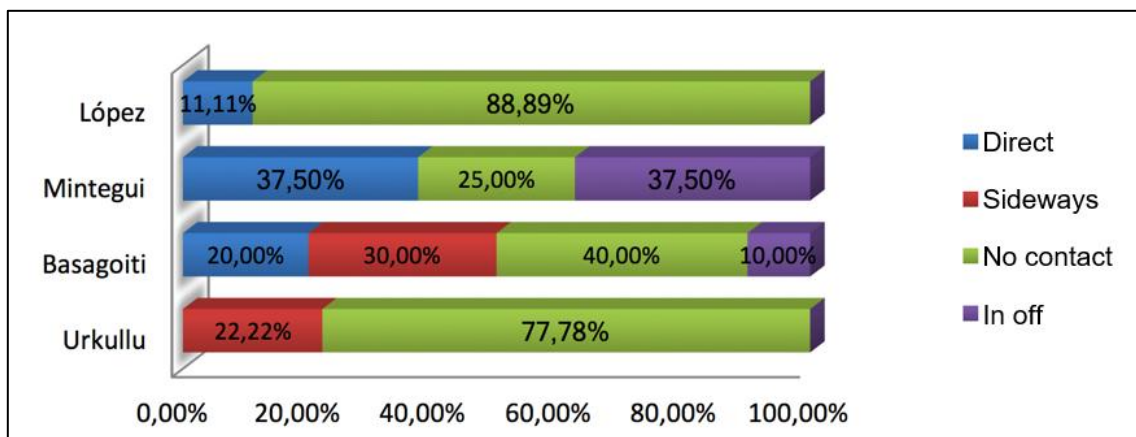
The profiles of the rest of the codes are repeated in this area. For the leader of the PNV, his lack of direct visual contact with his interlocutors is added to his primarily descending looks, towards the central quadrant (corresponding to the present) and the left quadrant (past) and the right quadrant (the projection of the future). The photograph of the candidate reflects an inability to establish direct, honest and empathic contact, and a tinge of mistrust, induced by his sidelong glances.

Basagoiti does not show much better results in terms of interaction. He makes direct eye contact in just two images, and there is a greater presence of sidelong glances, in almost one third of the total. With regards to the direction of eyes, the primary is the descending look, in 80% of the cases. Only two pictures show him looking directly towards the central upper quadrant (B1) and, in both cases, this is due to a forced position of the head (looking at a glass of soft drink and at the grocery bag he gives to the fisher woman).

The result of the representation is therefore very similar to that of the previous candidate. The only difference is the eye direction, which conveys greater pessimism about the situation taking place at the moment the pictures were taken.

Figure 8. Quadrants in which candidates set their sights
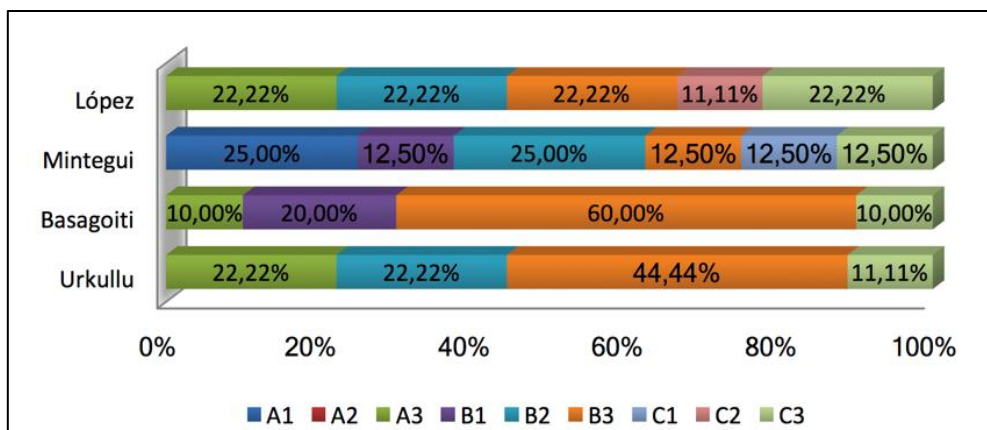
In the case of the then Lehendakari, only one photograph shows him making direct visual contact with his interlocutors, in his encounter with the militants of EH Bildu, whom he greets. This can connote a quiet, committed character, in the realm of family, friends and political party, and more alert when interacting out of his zones of comfort, as reflected by his body posture, which is shown significantly more rigid in the aforementioned photograph.

With regards to direction of the eyes, two thirds are descending, in the same proportion for the directions that symbolise the three possible time periods. This connotes a lack of positive emotions towards the situation taking place at that moment and in the near future, which is tempered only by the looks to the frontal and right frontal eye fields, which reflect the ability to face with realism the ongoing events and reflection on future plans (Descamps, 1990, pp. 87-88).

As in most of the rest of the codes related to the construction of meaning through the transmission of feelings and emotions by the photographed subject, the representative of the EH Bildu obtained much more positive results than the rest and conveys values that are more adjusted to the ideal values of a leader with projection. In fact, only two images show this candidate not making direct visual

contact (while she picks up the cutlery to eat and when she is getting ready for the rally), since 37.5% of the looks in off suggest visual contact with the interlocutor, who is out of the frame but seems to be directly interacting with the candidate. In terms of the direction of the glances, 62.5% have an optimist-idealist motivation, twice as many for the past than for the present or the future, in which pessimistic views are equally distributed (Descamps, 1990, p. 88).

To establish certain criteria on the ability of candidates to transmit the perception of their capacity of integration, we took into consideration the crossed interpretation of the data collected on the proximity and mobility between the different social groups, with the codes of the type of spaces and proxemic levels in which they are articulated.

As we have seen, the analysis of the social origin of the subjects that appear next to the candidates indicates that, except in the case of Mintegui, the candidates only interact with members of their family and their party or other political agents that are part of the institutional realm, the power elite. It is difficult, in such circumstances of representation, to manage to transmit a message of social integration. This is not the case of the candidate of the EH Bildu, who interacts with ordinary citizens in three-fourths of the photographs of her feature article, even with subjects included in the so called marginal category. She even does so in public and social spaces, in almost 90% of the cases, and with proxemic treatment of closeness, even with personal contact and within a personal space.

**Figure 9. Type of space in where candidates are presented**
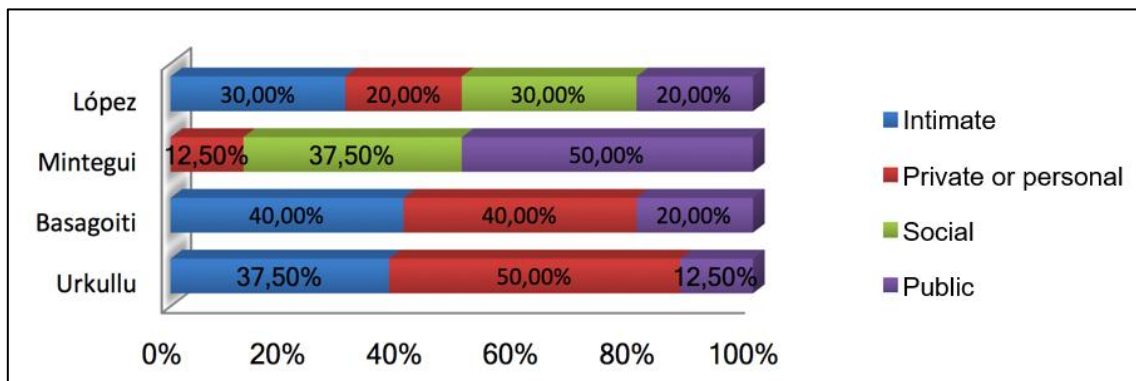
The burden of intimate and personal spaces is much greater in the case of the other three candidates, which involves difficulty to denote and connote the capacity of mobility and social integration. Again, the results are quite similar in the cases of Urkullu and Basagoiti, while López presents a completely balanced distribution of intimate and private spaces, on the one hand, and social and public spaces, on the other.

Obviously, the lack of interaction with citizens has as a consequence the impossibility of rating the degree of proximity with them, since it is non-existent in all cases, with the exception of Mintegui, as mentioned.

The representation offered of Urkullu, Basagoiti and López by the feature articles of *El Correo* newspaper reinforce the idea, recurrent in the various surveys held during those years, of the estrangement between politicians and the civil society, the separation of the political class from the problems of the common people.

Figure 10. Interaction distance between candidates and companions
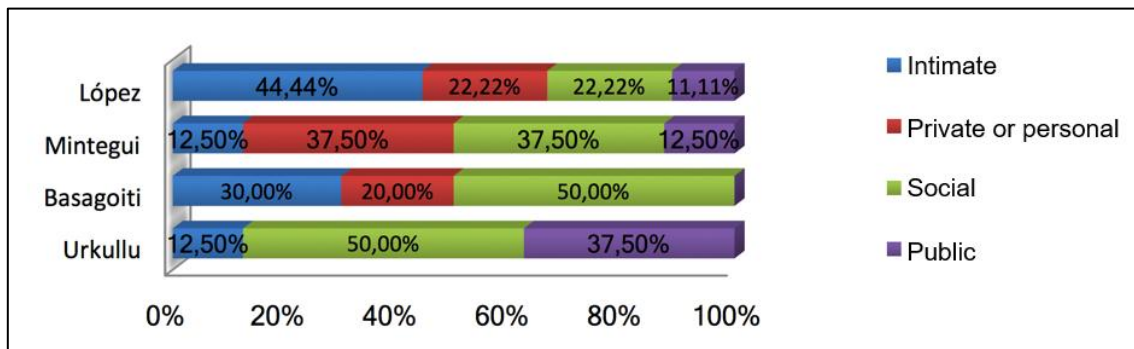
5. Conclusions

As a way of conclusion, based on the collected and exposed data, we can point out that, despite the medium's initial claim of transmitting an idea of neutrality and balance between the contenders, some of the codes employed show certain inclination towards the most conservative candidates. Thus, Basagoiti enjoys the largest number of images and, therefore, greater presence. Moreover, Basagoiti and Urkullu are more clearly associated with home and family values, while in the rest of the cases this aspect is minimised. López is presented in his house in only two occasions, with his wife, while Mintegui does not gives us access to her house, and there is only one reference to her family in one image, in which she shows a photo of her children.

The general conclusion, at the level of photojournalistic analysis, is that while there are some signs of preferential formal treatment towards Urkullu and Basagoiti, it is López and, especially, Mintegui who are better represented, with a more appealing image for the electorate, since they transmit many more of the positive features that a good leader must have, more so in the current situation of widespread crisis and change.

On the other hand, there is a clear incongruity between the textual narrative and the story told by the images, especially in the case of the conservative candidates, which undoubtedly creates a cognitive dissonance in readers, which subsequently harms the representation of the affected characters, sowing doubts in the story and even raising suspicions about the excessive manufacturing of certain profiles.

6. Notes

1. Paula Sybil argues that the preponderance of privacy over public sphere began in the 18th and 19th centuries to protect the individual and the nuclear family from the requirements and worries of the public space (2013, p. 71).

2. Understood as the combination of values, feelings and attitudes that are part of the behaviours.

3. These are two of the four categories of photojournalists proposed by Paul Almasy (1980).

4. The term character should not only be understood from the perspective that proposes that the candidate occupies an important role in society, but also as the representation of the person presented as political body, as a body of the representation, a fictitious subject invented by the authors of the story.

5. As Regis Debray (1995, p. 19) points out, the changes that are taking place in the symbolic distance between citizens and the State and its representatives are conveyed through the media's image and, particularly, the variations in some of the codes that build it (like the use of closer shots that transmit closeness and simulate intimacy, or the scenery in which the politician is presented, seeking for the ordinary, non-official and liturgical), in an attempt to charge their image with emotion through closeness and trivialisation, so that the symbolic is overshadowed by the ostentation of the *individual*.

6. Ekman (2012, pp. 252-261) identified 18 different types of smiles. For the purposes of operativity, our analysis only takes into account five types (sincere or Duchenne, superior, simple high, simple low and false) plus the possibility of absence.

7. Descamps has identified up to 25 possible directions of the gaze, but remarks that they can be reduced to nine basic types, with the same degree of operability. Three directions in the horizontal level (descending, withdrawal and depression; frontal, access to the real; and ascending, escape to the ideal) and three in the vertical level (left, past; centre, the present; and right, the future).

8. Darwin (1998) drew attention to the universality of the facial expressions of the emotions, and in the last years this has been perfectly established by conclusive experimental studies like those carried out by David Matsumoto and his team (2013).

9. This category includes hose actants of the image that are either excluded from society or can present indicators or circumstances that allow us to assume the existence of the risk for this.

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