Pluralism and political parallelism in Spanish television news programmes

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Abstracts
[ES] Introducción. El artículo se articula en dos objetivos generales. En primer lugar se intenta verificar si la información televisiva de las cadenas generalistas se rige por el dominio del pluralismo externo como característica distintiva del sistema de medios pluralista-polarizado, tal como han expuesto Hallin y Mancini. El segundo propósito se centra más específicamente en abordar la relación entre pluralismo y paralelismo político. Metodología. Se ha realizado un análisis de contenido a una muestra de 3.134 noticias de los noticiarios prime time de seis cadenas de televisión de cobertura estatal: *TVE1*, *Antena 3*, *Telecinco*, *La Sexta*, *Cuatro* e *Intereconomía*. Resultados. Los resultados demuestran respecto al pluralismo que el modelo televisivo español es un modelo híbrido en el que coexisten diferentes gradaciones de pluralismo interno y externo en función del perfil de la cadena y de la estrategia de negocio del grupo de comunicación. Los informativos de la televisión pública reflejan los mayores niveles de pluralismo interno.

[EN] Introduction: This article has two main objectives. Firstly, it attempts to determine whether the news content of the mainstream Spanish television channels is governed by external pluralism which is a distinguishing feature of the polarised-pluralist media system, as exposed by Hallin and Mancini. The second objective is to address the relation that exists between pluralism and political parallelism. Methods: The study is based on the content analysis of a sample of 3,134 news items broadcast by the prime time news programmes of six national television networks: *TVE1*, *Antena 3*, *Telecinco*, *La Sexta*, *Cuatro* and *Intereconomía*. Results: The Spanish model of television is hybrid and combines different degrees of internal and external pluralism depending on the network's profile and the media group's business strategy. The news programmes produced by the public television channels exhibit the highest levels of internal pluralism.

Keywords
[ES] pluralismo; paralelismo político; noticias; televisión digital terrestre; España.

[EN] pluralism; political parallelism; news; digital terrestrial television; Spain.

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1. Introduction

The relation between pluralism of information and political parallelism has already been widely studied. The main thesis that supports this relation says that high levels of political parallelism occur in media systems dominated by external pluralism and an interpretive journalistic style (Hallin and Mancini, 2004; Josephi, 2005; Strömbäck and Dimitrova, 2006). Countries that conform to the polarised pluralistic model, like Spain, exhibit this feature. With regards to our object of study, television news, Hallin and Mancini (2004: 270) claim that television is a "common ground" dominated by internal pluralism and objectivity. Traditionally, it has been argued that the need to reach large audiences leads television channels to achieve internal pluralism and a more objective view of reality. However, the success reached in the last years by Fox, an American conservative TV network, has led several authors to consider that in a fragmented audiovisual media context the search for niche audiences instead of mass audiences benefits the trend towards external pluralism, which results in a higher level of political parallelism and polarisation. Even Mancini has recently said that "The old logic by which few companies compete for the broadest audience possible (the so-called golden era of broadcasting) is over" (Mancini, 2013: 46)

Based on these premises, the purpose of this article is to analyse the relation between information pluralism and political parallelism in Spanish digital terrestrial television. First of all, we will try to determine whether the news content of the mainstream television channels is governed by external or internal pluralism. Secondly, we will specifically focus on the relation between pluralism and political parallelism proposed by Hallin and Mancini (2004). This study about the news patterns of Spain's digital terrestrial television is based on the content analysis of the daily news programmes of the national mainstream TV networks.

1.1. External and internal pluralism

Pluralism guarantees that citizens have free access to information that represents all points of view and, consequently, allows them to develop an independent opinion. For this purpose, there are two types of pluralism which, a priori, guarantee the freedom of information: internal and external pluralism. External pluralism refers to the diversity of media organisations and the contents that express the different points of view of a society. This means that pluralism emerges from the variety of companies (public or private), media (printed, broadcast, digital, etc.) and contents that express different editorial lines. On the other hand, internal pluralism occurs within each media organisation, and refers to the diversity of points of view that are included in the news content of each media organisation and reflect the search for neutrality, content balance, and cultural diversity.

The relation between internal and external pluralism raises a debate of interest to academics and politicians, who have reached different conclusions. Some promote external pluralism as the best guarantor of the quality of the democratic system, while others propose the exact opposite. However, most academic and politicians agree that public television channels must guarantee internal pluralism, i.e. the pluralism of content, in order to fulfil their public service function. At the same time, commercial channels seem to guarantee external pluralism because of the diversity of ownership (Czepek and Klinger, 2010).

A conceptual contribution to the definition of both types of pluralism was made by the Council of Europe (1994) in its fourth European Ministerial Conference on mass communication policy in a democratic society: "Pluralism can be internal, across a wide range of values, opinions, news stories and interests that find a vehicle of expression in the bosom of a particular media sector, or external through some of these bodies, each of them expressing a particular point of view".

In Spain, the Audiovisual Communication Law establishes, in article 4, that "all people have the right to receive audiovisual communication through a variety of public, commercial and community-oriented media that reflect the ideological, political and cultural pluralism of society". However, in article 10, this law states that "audiovisual communication service providers have the right to set their editorial line through the selection of contents and schedules". Thus, private broadcasters contribute to pluralism with the mere existence, which reinforces external pluralism, while public (regional and national) television channels must develop internal pluralism (Preamble and article 40).

The analogue to digital switchover opened new expectations of plurality in the television sector. Political leaders and digital technology experts predicted new possibilities for the public service, increased internal and external pluralism and greater cultural diversity. However, this has not happened. The implementation of the EU guidelines and policies on digital television in most of the member states has reinforced the logic of the market (Bustamante, 2008). In Spain, the regulation of digital terrestrial television (DTT), which was established by the Socialist Government of José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, expanded the number of programmes and favoured the entry of new television groups, some of which were close to the Socialist project, like Mediapro. These changes resulted in the weakening of the public sector and the strengthening of the Mediaset and Planeta groups which reinforced their dominance through *Telecinco* and *Antena 3* (Bustamante and Corredor, 2012; Zallo, 2010). The promised abundance of channels should have strengthened external pluralism, but instead the development of the sector has favoured the concentration of large media groups. In this context, it is particularly interesting to examine whether the news production is governed by internal or external pluralism, which is the first objective of this article (H1).

1.2. Pluralism and political parallelism

Pluralism, both external and internal, serves to characterise the media systems in relation to the political systems. For Hallin and Mancini (2004), pluralism is one of the indicators of the two dimensions of political parallelism, which refers to the way in which the media content reflect the different political tendencies and the degree and nature of the relations that the media establish with political parties and social organisations. External pluralism is characteristic of the media systems with strong political parallelism, while internal pluralism is exhibited by media systems that do not have strong connections with the political parties.

In its origins, the term parallelism, proposed by Seymour-Ure (1974), made reference to the relation between political parties and the press, and took into consideration the ownership of newspapers, the editorial point of view and the affiliation of readers. Subsequently, the term political parallelism covered a broader set of relations between political parties and the media in general (Blumler and

Gurevitch, 1995). Hallin and Mancini (2004) defined the concept of political parallelism in line with the broader vision of Blumler and Gurevitch (1995) and proposed the following areas to analyse it: the media content, the organisational relations between the media and the political parties, the political affiliations of journalists and the partisanship of the audiences.

The relation between pluralism and political parallelism in the Spanish media fits, in general terms, the polarised pluralist model described by Hallin and Mancini (2004): external pluralism, interpretive journalism, governmental control over the management of public audiovisual media, and state intervention in the regulation of the audiovisual media through the licensing system.

In Spain, studies on print journalism have revealed a system with a strong political parallelism and a resulting predominance of external pluralism. Strömbäck and Luengo (2008) point out that one of the most important differences between the election news coverage in Sweden and Spain is precisely that in Spain the focus is placed on the political actors and fundamentally the political parties. Van Dalen (2012) carried compared political journalists from Denmark, Great Britain, Germany and Spain and found out that the Spanish journalists considered that they did not to assume the role of adversaries but adopted a partisan position. Mazolleni affirms that this adversarial model is unlikely to be found in media systems where there is certain misunderstanding between the political and media spheres (2010: 94).

On the other hand, it is widely agreed that the ideological alignments have contributed to a highly politicised political journalism and to an increasing polarisation (Casero, 2012; González and Novo, 2012; Martínez Nicolás and Humanes, 2012; Van Dalen, De Vreese and Albaeck, 2012). The reasons for this situation seem to be two: the tensions between the media companies and the political parties produced by the successive license concessions granted to the audiovisual sector from the 1990s, and the subsidies given to the press in its different variants (advertising, grants). Secondly, the consolidation of interpretive journalism, reflected through the radio and television talk shows, in which journalists act as representatives of the ideological positions that coincide with those of the political parties. Large newspapers tend to act as political actors on major issues of political confrontation: by supporting or opposing the proposals of the political parties or the government, or through investigative journalism, by publishing cases of corruption and political scandals in general.

In Spain the audiovisual sector was liberalised in the 1990s, although with a licensing system which has perfectly reflected the parallelism that was already known in the press. The relations between the media companies and the political parties and the regulatory institutions have entered into conflict when the government's decisions have affected the broadcasting licenses and the economic interests of the media groups. Moreover, the government has promoted the consolidation of related media groups (González, Rodríguez, Castromil, 2010). On the other hand, in the management of public television, the exploitation attempts of the government have been a constant in political life. In general, the management of RTVE has been guided by the political interests and projects of the respective governments.

The examination of TV audiences according to their vote preferences in the general elections of 2011 and their TV channel preferences to follow the political and electoral news shows that there is a clear relation between the preferred channel and the voted party (see table 1). We could affirm that there is a process of selective exposure, which is not as strong as in the case of press, but is definitively significant (Humanes, 2013). As in the North American context, in Spain there has been a battle to obtain more loyal niche audiences defined by their political ideology (Farias and Roses, 2009: 21). For instance, *El País* newspaper published in its TV criticism section: "Fighting for the same audience, and with the same weapons. *Intereconomía* and *13 TV* are engaged in a fierce battle to

conquer the most conservative and Catholic viewers ('proud to be righties' says one slogan)" (*Guerra abierta en la 'TDT party'*, 20-3-2013). The paper also wrote: "*La Sexta* broke the audience records with [the TV shows] *Salvados* and *El intermedio*. This was affirmed by *Planeta*, the owner of *Antena 3*, when protecting the identity of this refuge between progressive and indignant in a DTT full of chat shows frayed with cat's names" (*Culebrón*, 17-2, 2013).

Table 1. Parallelism between voted party and TV channel chosen to obtain elections news (%)

	Total	Votes in the 2011 General Elections					
		PP	PSOE	IU/ICV	UPyD	CiU	Other
TVE1	39.4	37.4	51.6	41.7	43.2	11.3	32.7
Antena 3	18.4	25.5	11.0	11.5	23.3	8.6	10.0
Cuatro	2.5	1.7	3.4	6.4	3.6	1.1	3.1
Tele 5	11.9	10.7	13.5	6.8	8.7	4.1	8.5
La Sexta	3.1	1.3	4.3	9.3	3.9	0.6	3.9
Intereconomía	2.4	5.8	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.0	1.1
X^2(p= .000)	4692.873						
Cramér's V	.313						

Source: *Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas*, *Estudio 2920*.

Abbreviations:

PP: *Partido Popular* (Popular Party)

PSOE: *Partido Español Obrero Socialista* (Spanish Socialist Workers' Party)

IU/ICV: *Izquierda Unida/Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds* (United Left/Initiative per Catalonia-Green Party)

UPyD: *Union Progreso y Democracia* (Progress and Democracy Union)

CiU: Convergència i Unió (Convergence and Union)

As pointed out by Hallin and Mancini (2004), one of the indicators of parallelism is the degree in which the media content reflects the different political orientations, which can be achieved through a system of internal or external pluralism. A system based on internal pluralism is that in which a media organisation does not show a defined political orientation but a diversity of points of view, and in which the professional role assumed by journalistic is more directed towards neutral information than towards interpretive journalism. In contrast, a system of external pluralism predominates in media systems with a strong political parallelism, like the Spanish case (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 30). Along the same line, Kaid & Strömbäck (2006: 425-426) claim that "objective and impartial information is important in media systems that are governed by internal pluralism but not so much in media systems governed by external pluralism".

The second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth hypotheses of this study address the presence of these indicators of pluralism and parallelism in TV news programmes. As we have pointed out in a previous article (Humanes and Montero, 2013: 168-169), the content analyses aimed at measuring internal and external pluralism in our country have not measured these indicators, which makes this study more interesting as it can complement the previous works carried out by academics (Laporte and Sádaba, 2005) and the audiovisual councils of Catalonia and Andalusia.

2. Objectives and hypotheses

This article has two broad objectives. The first one is to determine whether the news content of the Spanish mainstream television channels is governed by external pluralism as a distinguishing feature of the polarised-pluralist media system, as previously explained. The second objective is to address the relation between pluralism and political parallelism in the way proposed by Hallin and Mancini (2004).

In relation to the first objective we formulated hypotheses related to the internal/external dichotomy of pluralism in systems of polarised pluralism:

H1: External pluralism will dominate over internal pluralism in the Spanish media's agenda setting.

H2: A unique point of view will predominate in the news, which is a distinctive feature of the systems characterised by external pluralism.

H3: Interpretive journalism, which is a distinctive feature of the systems characterised by external pluralism, will predominate in the Spanish media.

There are three hypotheses related to the internal/external dichotomy of pluralism as an indicator of the level of political parallelism:

H4: The political agenda setting is characterised by external pluralism, so that each TV network will give more importance to certain subjects and will make other issues less visible according to its ideological orientation.

H5: A unique point of view will predominate in the political news.

H6: Interpretive journalism will predominate in political news, along with positive or negative assessments depending on the political orientation of each network towards the subjects closest to its editorial line, as proposed by the thesis of political parallelism.

3. Methods

Table 2. Basic characteristics of the sample

Network	Distribution of units (%)	Length (average n° of seconds)	Genre (%)				
			News	Reportage	Interview	Colas*	Opinion
TVE1	19.5	76.5"	40.5	14.3	1.1	44.1 kHz	0
Telecinco	13.4	71.6"	46.5	19.7	0	33.9	0
Antena 3	14.9	74.8"	33.8	23.5	0.6	42.1	0
Cuatro	20.5	64.4"	31.2	25.9	0.2	42.7	0
La Sexta	14.9	73.7"	33	20.6	0.4	45.9	0
Intereconomía	16.3	86.8"	65.6	10.9	9.8	8.8	4.9
N	3134		1298	601	63	1147	25

Source: Authors' own creation. *Presentation assisted with video.

The study aims to achieve its objectives and to test its hypotheses with the content analysis of a sample of 3,134 news items broadcast by the prime-time news programmes of six mainstream national television networks: *TVE1*, *Antena 3*, *Telecinco*, *La Sexta*, *Cuatro* and *Intereconomía*. For

the analysis, we examine the news broadcast during three weeks randomly selected within the first quarter of 2012 (23-29 January, 13-19 February, and 5-11 March). The sports and the weather sections were not taken into account for the study. Table 2 presents the basic characteristics of the sample of news.

The analysis performed in this study is based on a total of 25 variables divided in seven blocks, but this article is only based in the analysis of the following variables:

a) Indicators related to the relevance of the news within the programme. The objective is to measure the importance granted to some issues in comparison to others, through three variables: length of the news report, inclusion (or not) and position in summaries, and order of appearance within the news programme. This part of the analysis is based on a purpose-built three-level index of importance (null, medium and high) based on the previous variables.

b) Theme selection. Refers to the most important and second most important events of the news programme. These events were classified in thematic blocks (see table 4). The analysis of this variable also included establishing whether the news item was part of a thematic block about the same issue.

c) The level of pluralism has been addressed through a variable that measures the presence/absence of different perspectives on the same news item.

d) Indicators related to the journalistic style. It refers to the position of the journalist in relation to the action or the actor of the news story. This analysis has been divided in three categories: descriptive (narration of what happens), interpretive (analysis and assessment of the situation) and critical (which includes the opinion of the journalist) types of journalism (McNair, 2000; Strömbäck and Dimitrova, 2006). The news items with interpretive and critical styles have been coded according to their assessment (positive, negative or neutral) of the main issue (see table 8).

The second level of analysis considered the indicators of the TV networks in order to be able to contextualise the results of the content analysis of the news:

- Political orientation of the network. This variable has been measured with the ideological position, the memory of vote and proximity to a political party of the audience of each network, based on the data provided by the 2011 post-election study of the study 2920 carried out by the *Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas* ("Centre for Sociological Studies") on the use of newspapers, radio stations and television channels among Spanish people. Table 3 shows the results.

- Communication group to which it belongs. This indicator is interesting because the date on which the data were collected from *Telecinco* and *Cuatro* they were already part of the same media group and *Antena 3* and *La Sexta* were in the merging process.

- Ownership: public/private. This variable serves to determine whether the news programmes of the private TV stations have greater tendency towards the commercialisation of news content and how this might affect pluralism.

4. Results

The results of the content analysis are organised according to the two general objectives of the study.

4.1. External and internal pluralism of information

The first level of analysis of the internal and external information pluralism should be based in the networks' news programmes' agenda setting (H1).

Table 3. Characteristics of the sample of TV channels

TV channel	Total audience / news programmes*		Media Group	Ideological position of the audience (Humanes, 2013)		
				Ideology	Vote	Proximity
TVE	12.8%	17.2%	Public	Centre-left	PSOE	PSOE
Antena 3	12.4%	12.4%	*Planeta*	Centre-right	PP	PP
La Sexta	4.9%	6%		Left	PSOE	IU
Telecinco	13.9%	12.9%	Mediaset	Centre-left	PSOE	PSOE
Cuatro	6.4%	6.4%		Centre-left	IU	IU, UPyD, AMAIUR
Interecon.	1.6%	2.2%	*Vocento*	Right	PP	PP

*Barlovento Comunicación, March 2012.

The central hypothesis of the agenda setting says that there is a correlation between the issues highlighted by the media and the subjects regarded by citizens as the most important or worrying (in the case of the personal and/or public agenda). Following this argument, the plurality of the issues selected by every television channel will be necessary for the public to make a pluralistic perception of reality.

Table 4 shows the thematic distribution of each TV network. In the presentation of results the 87 main events identified in the sample have been grouped into 14 thematic blocks. In all networks the political news constituted the greatest percentage of the news content, followed by economic news. There was also an important presence of issues related to the most commercial and/or sensational genres, such crime (10%) and disasters (10.7%).

To corroborate the first hypothesis about the predominance of external over internal pluralism in the agenda setting, we carried out bivariate analysis and adjusted residuals analysis (adjusted residuals over ±1.96 indicate that there are more or less cases than we would expect under the null hypothesis, with a confidence level of 95%). This allowed us to determine whether there is over-representation (or underrepresentation) of certain issues at two levels: across the news programmes of the different networks (external pluralism) and within each network -internal pluralism-.

In the event of the existence of external pluralism, the analyses should show differences between networks with respect to the distribution of topics, i.e. if all the networks give the same importance to the same topics then the residuals will be close to 0.

The statistically significant residuals in table 4 confirm that *Intereconomía* has an overrepresentation of political, economic and employment news in comparison to the rest of the networks. Among private television networks, *Telecinco* largely conforms to the most commercial news model, which is centred in disasters, crime, society and social problems with an orientation towards human interest. The news programmes produced by *Cuatro*, also owned by Mediaset Spain, are similar to those of *Telecinco*, since both have greater overrepresentation of the most commercial news, accompanied by the under-representation of political news.

Finally, the news programmes of the public network have greater presence of news about science, culture, and conflicts and wars, although this case is explained by the greater inclusion of international news. The differences in the networks' agenda are also statistically significant when the 87 news events are considered separately (X^2: 1248.391 gl:425 p≤ .000).

Table 4. Thematic distribution across the sample of TV networks (% and adjusted residuals)

	Telediario 2	Informativos Telecinco	Antena 3 Noticias	Noticias Cuatro	La Sexta Noticias	Telediario Intereconom.	Total %
Government, politics	28%	17.6%	26.9%	20.6%	22.5%	44.5%	26.8%
	.8	-4.7	.1	-4.0	-2.2	9.9	
Crime	5.6%	14.2%	10.9%	15.1%	14.4%	.4%	10%
	-4.1	3.2	.7	4.9	3.4	-7.9	
Disasters, accidents	6.4%	15.6%	12.2%	18.7%	7.7%	2.7%	10.7%
	-3.8	3.6	1.2	7.4	-2.2	-6.4	
Employment, trade unions	7.5%	6.2%	6.4%	3.9%	5.6%	10.4%	3.6%
	1.0	-.4	-.2	-3.1	-1.0	3.7	
Business, economy	13.4%	12.4%	9.0%	8.9%	12.7%	21.7%	12.9%
	.4	-.4	-2.8	-3.4	-.2	6.5	
Armed conflicts war, terrorism	5.1%	3.7%	2.6%	3.4%	3.6%	3.1%	3.6%
	2.1	.0	-1.3	-.3	.0	-.7	
Social problems	2.6%	4.1%	1.3%	2.5%	3.4%	1.0%	2.5%
	.3	2.4	-1.8	.1	1.5	-2.4	
Health	3.0%	3.9%	1.1%	1.7%	2.6%	.8%	2.1%
	1.5	2.7	-1.7	-.8	.7	-2.3	
Education	1.5%	1.1%	1.1%	.6%	.6%	1.6%	1.1%
	1.0	.1	.0	-1.3	-1.0	1.1	
Culture	10.3%	4.8%	10.0%	4.5%	5.6%	4.7%	6.7%
	4.0	-1.7	3.1	-2.5	-1.0	-2.0	
Science	2.1%	.9%	1.1%	1.6%	.2%	1.4%	1.3%
	2.1	-.7	-.4	.7	-2.2	.2	
Environment	.7%	2.5%	.6%	2.5%	1.7%	.6%	1.4%
	-1.8	2.0	-1.6	2.5	.6	-1.8	
Society	3.6%	10.3%	3.8%	5.8%	5.8%	1.0%	4.9%
	-1.7	5.6	-1.2	1.1	1.0	-4.5	
Other	10.2%	2.7%	13.0%	10.1%	13.5%	6.3%	9.4%
	.7	-5.1	2.9	.7	3.3	-2.7	
N	610	437	468	641	466	512	3.134

X^2: 521.474 gl:65 p≤ .000

The results also confirmed the second hypothesis about the preference for a unique point of view in news production over the inclusion of a plurality of views about a same event, for the whole sample. Only 37.2% of the news items offered more than one perspective. More interesting, however, is the residual analysis presented in table 5, which shows the existence of differences across networks. Only in TVE half of the news items present different perspectives. *Antenna 3*, *Cuatro* and *La Sexta* are above the average percentage of the total sample. But the networks that fit the hypothesis the most are *Telecinco* and *Intereconomía*.

To reject the idea that different perspectives about a same event were offered in different news items (i.e. in two news items) we associated the variable "presence of different points of view" with the variable "inclusion in a thematic block", i.e. inclusion in a block of several news pieces about a same event. The results reveal that the news stories that present more than one point of view are those that are grouped with others news stories into a thematic block, and that those that have only a single perspective are not part of any block. And this applies to the whole sample (p≤ .002) and to each network separately, with the exception of *Cuatro* (p≤ .063). This result reinforces the second hypothesis.

Table 5. Several perspectives for the whole sample (% and adjusted residuals)

Telediario 2 (TVE1)	Informativos Telecinco	Antena 3 Noticias	Noticias Cuatro	La Sexta Noticias	Telediario de Intereconom.	Total
50.7%	16.5%	44.9%	43.2%	46.6%	16.0%	37.2%
7.6	-9.7	3.7	3.5	4.5	-10.9	
309	72	210	277	217	82	1167

X^2: 265.076 gl: 5 p≤ .000

The third hypothesis has been only partially confirmed for the total sample since almost half of the units of analysis are descriptive and the other half are interpretative and critical (table 6). Of all the networks, the public network is the only one that clearly conforms to descriptive journalism, while *Intereconomía* and *La Sexta* are the complete opposite. *Informativos Telecinco* has equal shares of descriptive and interpretive news, and *Antena 3* and *Cuatro* concentrate the highest residuals in purely interpretative journalistic style.

Table 6. Journalistic style across networks (% and adjusted residuals)

	Telediario 2 (TVE1)	Informativos Telecinco	Antena 3 Noticias	Noticias Cuatro	La Sexta Noticias	Telediario Intereconom.	Total
Descriptive	60.3%	55.4%	42.5%	42.9%	35.8%	57.6%	49.3 %
	6.0	2.7	-3.2	-3.6	-6.3	4.1	
Interpretive	30.7%	42.6%	45.9%	46.8%	42.3%	14.1%	36.9 %
	-3.5	2.6	4.4	5.8	2.6	-11.7	
Critical	9.0%	2.1%	11.5%	10.3%	21.9%	28.3%	13.8 %

X^2: 327.498 gl: 10 p≤.000

The variable "journalistic style" was associated with the variable "presence of several points of view" in order to achieve a more truthful explanation. Critical news items (+4.5) tend to include more different points of view than descriptive news (- 4.9) (X^2: 223.073 gl: 2 p≤ .000). The relevance of this relation for political events will be addressed again later.

4.2. Pluralism of information and political parallelism

The relation between pluralism and parallelism is more clearly reflected in the political news. The fourth hypothesis predicted that the selection and importance of the political affairs would follow the model of external pluralism, i.e. networks would give priority to certain topics and would make others less visible according to their ideological orientation. The results presented below only correspond to the events classified in the political block and those that were related to the economy or trade union and thus had an undeniable political component. In total the study considered the 18 events with the highest frequency.

Table 7 presents, for each event, the negative and positive adjusted residuals that are statistically significant in each news programme. This analysis allows us to identify the topics that are over-represented (or under-represented) based on the number of news items dealing with them. In this way, if all the networks had allocated a similar number of news, the residuals would be less than ±1.96 and we would be talking of internal pluralism. The results of the content analysis allow us to reject this idea in 15 themes. Once again, *Intereconomía* is the network with the greatest differences in its informative priorities: the national public deficit; news about ETA and the peace process; the unions' protests over the labour reform; the amendment of the abortion law; the anniversary of the 11-M; the congress of the Popular Party; the elections to the Executive Secretary of the PSOE; the

ERE gate and other cases of corruption in the Junta de Andalucía; and the involvement of the former Minister José Blanco in the *Campeón Case* are the most over-represented topics. In contrast, TVE and *Antena 3* only show positive residuals for one topic: the deficit of the autonomous communities and the labour reform, respectively. *Informativos Telecinco* also gives more visibility to the news about unemployment. *La Sexta* stands out for giving the largest coverage to the *Nóos case* (also known as the *Babel Operation*), in which Iñaki Urdangarín is involved. Finally, none of the issues gets positive significant residuals in *Cuatro*.

Table 7. Major political events by network (% and adjusted residuals)

Event	Telediario 2 (TVE1)	Informativos Telecinco	Antena 3 Noticias	Noticias Cuatro	La Sexta Noticias	Telediario Interecon.	Total
Labour reform	3.8%	3.0%	5.1%	1.6%	1.7%	3.7%	97
	1.1	-.2	2.8	-2.5	-1.9	.9	3.1%
Spain's public deficit	2.1%	.9%	1.9%	.8%	1.1%	3.3%	57
	.9	-1.4	.4	-2.0	-1.1	3.1	1.7%
Unemployment	1.3%	2.5%	.6%	1.6%	.9%	1.4%	43
	-.1	2.2	-1.5	.5	-1.0	.0	1.4%
Justice reform	1.1%	.7%	1.3%	.6%	.9%	1.4%	31
	.4	-.7	.7	-1.0	-.3	.9	1.0%
Nóos case	.7%	2.1%	1.1%	1.6%	3.6%	2.0%	55
	-2.3	.5	-1.2	-.4	3.4	.4	1.8%
Economic situation in Spain	3.0%	3.2%	2.8%	1.6%	1.7%	1.0%	68
	1.5	1.6	1.0	-1.2	-.7	-2.0	2.2%
ETA	1.8%	1.4%	1.3%	.9%	.6%	5.9%	62
	-.3	-1.0	-1.2	-2.1	-2.2	6.9	2.0%
Unions' protests over labour reform	1.8%	.7%	1.5%	.8%	1.5%	6.3%	65
	-.5	-2.2	-1.0	-2.6	-.9	7.2	2.1%
Change to abortion law	.5%	.7%	.4%	.6%	.4%	2.1%	25
	-.9	-.3	-1.0	-.6	-1.0	3.8	.8%
11-M anniversary	.2%	.5%	.2%	.2%	.2%	1.8%	15
	-1.3	.0	-.9	-1.3	-.9	4.6	.5%
Trial against Garzón	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%	2.1%	1.6%	43
	-.5	-.4	-.6	-.3	1.6	.4	1.4%
Congress of the PP	1.6%	1.1%	2.4%	1.7%	.6%	3.5%	58
	-.4	-1.2	.9	-.3	-2.1	3.1	1.9%
PSOE's secretary elections	1.3%	.5%	1.7%	.6%	.9%	2.3%	38
	.2	-1.6	1.1	-1.5	-.8	2.6	1.2%
ARE gate, corruption in Andalusia	2.5%	.9%	2.6%	1.1%	1.7%	4.1%	67
	.6	-1.9	.7	-2.1	-.7	3.4	2.1%
Andalusia's elections	1.8%	.9%	2.4%	1.1%	.2%	1.4%	41
	1.2	-.8	2.2	-.5	-2.3	.1	1.3%
Trial to former President F. Camps	1.5%	1.1%	1.5%	2.5%	2.1%	1.4%	54
	-.5	-1.0	-.4	1.7	.8	-.7	1.7%
José Blanco, *Campeón Case*	1.1%	.5%	.4%	.3%	.6%	1.8%	25
	1.1	-.9	-1.0	-1.5	-.4	2.7	.8%
Deficit of the Autonomous communities	2.8%	1.6%	.4%	.8%	1.1%	2.1%	47
	2.9	.2	-2.1	-1.7	-.8	1.3	1.1%

X2= 1248.391 gl= 425 p≤.000

There are also significant differences in relation to the issues with the lowest coverage in the news agenda of each programme. In the public network the Nóos case received the lowest news coverage. In *Telecinco* it was the unions' protests over the approval of the labour reform and in *Antena 3* the deficit of the autonomous communities. *Noticias Cuatro* dedicated less news items to the corruption cases of the Andalusian Government, the labour reform, the national deficit, ETA and the peace

process; and the unions' protests over the approval of the labour reform. *La Sexta* under-represented the events in which ETA was the protagonist, the congress of the PP, and the elections campaign in Andalusia.

With regards to the importance given to the events, the differences in the associations are statistically significant (p≤ .000). But in general terms there is no correspondence between the number of news items and the level of importance. *TVE1* gives a high level of importance (residuals +2.8) to the issue of the deficit of the autonomous communities –whose presence is greater than expected–, but it is the congress of the PP which receives the highest importance (+6.8). In the case of *Telecinco*, the issues with a high level of importance are the labour reform (+ 3.5), the congress of the PP (+ 6.6) and the trial against Valencia's former president Francisco Camps (+4.8). In *Antena 3*, the labour reform does receive a high level of importance (+3.5), but the issues that receive the greatest importance are the PP's congress (+8.4), like in the public network, and the unions' protests over the labour reform (+5.1). *Cuatro* presents the trial against Camps as the most important issue (+7.9), which is also the most covered issue (2.7%, see table 7). In *La Sexta Noticias* the Nóos case is the most covered, but the issues presented as the most important are the protests over the labour reform (+5.6) and the trial against Camps (+3.1). In *Intereconomía* the quantitative coverage is related with the importance given to the topics: the unions' protests over the labour reform (7.9), the amendments to the abortion law (+7.6), the 11-M anniversary (+6.7), the PP's congress (+3.2).

Table 8. Indicators of plurality and parallelism for political issues (% and adjusted residuals)

	Telediario 2 (TVE1)	Informativos Telecinco	Antena 3 Noticias	Noticias Cuatro	La Sexta Noticias	Telediario Interecon.	Total
Plurality	53.8%	35.1%	45.2%	43.9%	46.7%	18.9%	38.9%
	+4.5	-.7	+1.6	+1.3	+1.8	-7.3	
Critical journalism	4.7%	2.6%	4.8%	12.1%	19.0%	39.5%	16.9%
	+4.8	-3.5	-3.9	-1.6	.6	10.6	
Interpretive journalism	26.9%	36.4%	40.5%	43.2%	44.8%	17.1%	31.9%
	-1.6	.9	+2.2	+3.0	+3.0	-5.6	
Descriptive journalism	68.4%	61.0%	54.8%	44.7%	36.2%	43.4%	51.1%
	+5.1	+1.8	.9	´1.6	-3.3	-2.7	
Negative assessment	1.8%	44.1%	1.7%	6.8%	25.0%	50.8%	19.5%
	-6.8	+3.7	-5.3	-4.1	+1.1	+12.3	
Positive assessment	.6%	11.8%	6.0%	1.5%	3.3%	17.9%	6.9%
	-3.8	+1.1	-.4	-2.7	-1.1	+6.7	
Neutral assessment	97.7%	44.1%	92.2%	91.7%	71.7%	31.3%	73.6%
	+8.2	-4	+5	+5.2	-.3	-14.9	
High importance	9.4%	13.0%	15.9%	16.7%	5.7%	14.9%	12.9%

The fifth hypothesis predicted that a unique point of view would predominate in the coverage of the topics closest to the orientation of the network, particularly in privately-owned networks. The results are not statistically significant for *Antenna 3* and *Cuatro* and for this reason we will focus on the associations that exist in the other four networks. In *Telediario 2* (p≤ .013) it should be noted that although in political issues the use of different points of view is predominant (53% of the news), the three issues most directly related to the actions of the government (labour reform, justice reform and the protests over the labour reform) are mostly presented with a unique point of view. In *Telecinco* only 35% of the news items present diverse opinions, and in terms of events only the announcement of the amendment to the abortion law moves away from this trend (+2.4). In *La Sexta* (p≤. 008) there

is a higher proportion of news with different perspectives (46.7%; + 1.8), but this trend is not followed for the trial of Camps (-2.8) or the unions' protests over the labour reform (-2.1). In *Intereconomía* (p≤. 000) the analysis confirmed the tendency to use of a unique "point of view" in the coverage of political news (-7.3), with the exception of the news about the amendment of the abortion law (+2.7).

The last hypothesis is that the interpretive journalistic style will prevail in political news, along with positive or negative evaluations depending on the orientation of the TV network. *Intereconomía* (p≤ .000; p≤ .000) fits perfectly this model. The issues that are closest to its ideological orientation (the anniversary of the 11-M attacks; the trial against Camps, which resulted in his acquittal; and the amendment to the abortion law) mostly conform to the interpretive or critical style and are always accompanied by positive assessments. The issues that do not support its ideological positions (the Nóos case, ETA, the unions' protests, the trial against Garzón, the ERE gate in Andalusia, and the Campeón case) are also presented with an interpretive journalistic style, but in this case the evaluation of their themes and/or protagonists is negative. In *La Sexta* (p≤ .005; p≤ .000) the same model is used. The labour reform, the economic situation in Spain, the amendment of the abortion law, and the trial against Garzón are negatively assessed. In *Cuatro* (p≤ .000; p≤ .000) and *Antena 3* (p≤ .000; p≤ .000) none of the events associate the interpretive style with positive or negative evaluations. In *Telecinco* (p≤ .027; p≤ .000) the events that generate more news items with interpretive style and negative evaluations are the deficit of the autonomous communities, the unemployment and the Nóos case; while only the PP's congress received positive assessments.

As expected, in the news programmes of the public TV networks (p≤ .000; p≤ .000) the data refute the sixth hypothesis according to the regulation of these programmes. As shown in table 8, the descriptive style is predominant (68%) and when the interpretive style is used it does not generate positive or negative evaluations for any of the selected events.

5. Conclusions

The results show that, with regards to pluralism, the Spanish television model is hybrid and combines different levels of internal and external pluralism according to the profile of the network and the business strategy of the media group. The predominance of one or another type of pluralism cannot be confirmed. Possibly, one of the important factors to keep in mind is that, after the implementation of DTT, the television sector are currently developing and adapting their supply according to the demand and that the networks are trying to delimit their news programmes to optimise the audiences.

In the classification of the television networks, according to the primacy of internal or external pluralism, there is not a single dimension. The type of pluralism that characterises a TV network is defined by three important areas: the production of news based on balance and neutrality criteria; the commercialisation of information and the emphasis on entertainment; and the ideological position taken in the news to defend political and social values. The poles corresponding to these three areas are represented, respectively, by *TVE1*, *Telecinco* and *Intereconomía*. The private networks that more clearly follow the business model (*Telecinco*, *Cuatro* and *Antena 3*) are still governed by the traditional logic of the search for mass audiences in the sense proposed by Mancini (2013), while *La Sexta* and *Intereconomía* are closer to the new logic of the search for ideologically-oriented niche audiences.

There is no strong political parallelism between television and the political system, since in general terms there is no predominance of external pluralism. The selection of topics, the presence of a unique point of view in the news content and the positive or negative valuation of the information,

according to the ideological orientation of the network, do not present a positive correlation in most networks, with the exception of *Intereconomía*, and to a lesser extent, *La Sexta*. This is not an obstacle for news programmes to take one or another position in the most important political issues, through the selection of topics, their treatment and assessment.

It should be noted that, contrary to the expected presence of a strong state control in public broadcasting, which is characteristic of the polarised pluralistic system, the content analysis showed that *TVE1* is the network with the highest level of internal pluralism. The results seem to confirm that the policy and the management models of the public audiovisual media have remarkable effects on pluralism (Fernández and Fernández-Viso, 2012).

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