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## Personalisation of politics, storytelling and conveyed values

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### Abstract

**This descriptive–interpretative synchronous research analyses the discourse of the Galician candidates for the municipal elections from 400 *YouTube* videos with the aim of establishing a taxonomy of the values conveyed by these politicians. Therefore, the construction of the candidates' image within a context defined by two basic points (the personalisation of politics and storytelling as a narrative technique that contributes to 'fictionalize" (Maarek, 2014) the life of politicians) is hereby discussed. Particular emphasis is placed on the elements they include in their discourses. Thus, after conducting both a literature review and a content analysis, the results show the most stressed values in the personal stories of these candidates are associated with qualities such as humility, routine, intellectual/professional background, generosity and closeness. Hence, a discursive strategy seeking to translate and project personal qualities into political action in a surreptitious and hidden way has been detected. This strategy aims to reconcile the traditional goal of pursuing a symbolic construction of authority and the ever more pressing need of using new framings of the candidates. Thus, they are portrayed as a fellow man to which people can relate.**

### Keywords

**Storytelling, personalisation, electoral narrative, electoral communication, framing**

### 1. Introduction and State of the Art

One of the main challenges for political communication comes from the multiplication of the informational, communicative and relational stimuli to which voters are exposed. This situation derives from the convergence of screens and platforms, the common practice of multitasking and the "infoxication" contexts threatens our already-diminished attention skills due to the significant disaffection on the part of Spanish people towards politics, politicians and political parties. Actually, experts, such as Sampedro (2014), state that "the electoral value of a candidate does no longer lie that much (although it does) in popularity polls, but in their ability to be listened, funded or supported by the networks" (Sampedro, 2014: 175).

This situation has resulted in an additional effort on the part of the candidates and their communication teams, since they are aware the

first requirement to generate potential voters is to attract the interest of the audience. Therefore, new thematic lines reconciling the personalization of politics and storytelling as a communication technique have emerged. According to Maarek (2014), "politicians are increasingly advised to "fictionalise" their lives and talk about them, so they can enhance their affinity to voters through their personal values and journeys instead of their political beliefs" (Maarek, 2014: 18).

Thus, one of the theoretical keystones in our research is the personalisation of politics, which is grounded by some theorists such as McAllister (2007), who state that it is "one of the main features (and maybe the main feature) of the democratic policy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century" (McAllister, 2007: 585). This concept involves a dual phenomenon of individualization and privatization (Van Aelst, Sheafer & Stanyer, 2012: 205), since not only the focus shifts from political parties to their candidates but also, within them, the attention is focused on their most personal, private and intimate aspects. Therefore, the parties' representatives end up becoming "cognitive shortcuts" (Laguna, 2011: 46). This is influenced by the increasingly intelligibility of voters concerning human categories as opposed to the party-political ones (Del Rey, 1996).

Porath, Suzuki and Ramdohr (2014) also refer to this duality, although they highlight the fact that within the focus on the attributes of the candidate it is important to distinguish between "their political attributes (individual competence) and their private life (privatization)" (Porath, Suzuki & Ramdohr, 2014: 98). Apart from this, we must also take into account the three perspectives proposed by Rodríguez, Jandura & Rebolledo (2014) to study personalisation: the political system, the media and voters' behaviour.

Therefore, since the beginning of this century, when Martín (2002) identified the factors fostering the downward trend of the partisan loyalty or the decreasing importance of political parties (Martín, 2002: 49-51), there have been a lot of studies on the levels of personalisation (institutional, behavioural and media) (Rahat & Sheafer, 2007: 66-68) or the seven ways in which this personalisation can be manifested: focus on leaders, institutional personalisation, giving parties a face, individual political competence, privatisation, personal narrative and behavioural personalisation (Van Santen, 2012:41).

Some authors also addressed the causes of this trend on complementary points. Giglioli (2005) based it on the adaptation of politics to the needs of media and the imposition of the audio-visual language; Varela and López (2014) placed it in the dynamics of operation of the parties themselves; Cheresky (2003) highlighted the greater ease with which politicians' personal leaderships create representative bonds with people; and Berrocal (2003) linked it to voters' interest of knowing details and anecdotes about the political leaders.

In line with this argument, this change of focus on the contents has resulted in substantial modifications in the format, so narratives are now a privileged tool for spreading these kinds of elements. According to Fara (2015), the sense of these narrative formulas lies both in the need for differentiation and the positioning of the candidates. The fact that "clear ideological differences have ceased to exist since the 90s" (Fara, 2015: 14), as well as the degree of knowledge of people concerning political marketing techniques, which lessens the impact of traditional actions and requires new alternatives.

It is in this context that new personal narratives turn progressively into an increasing trend. They are also influenced by the audio-visual logics pinpointed by Sartori (2012), particularly that of emotivization (Sartori, 2012: 119), since this type of contents suits this factor perfectly.

In this sense, it is convenient to mention the taxonomy recently proposed by D'Adamo and García Beaudoux (2016) on the psychological functions of stories in the modality of government: the property of gathering and involving citizens so that they feel they are part of the public-political management; the ability to work as the so-called "social anxiolytics," since they provide certainty and, finally, in line with Laguna (2011) who considers candidates

as cognitive shortcuts, the heuristic cognitive power that characterises them (D'Adamo & García Beaudoux, 2016: 7-8).

Furthermore, if we combine the approach of Heath and Heath (2007) with that of Nuñez (2007), eight prototypical storylines for the political narrative can be distinguished: the challenge, the bonding, the visionary story, the educational story, the values in action, the storyline of change, the storyline of the emancipator and the claiming storyline. Apart from this, all the stories have four phases: embryonic, consolidation, decline, collapse and disarticulation (D'Adamo & García Beaudoux, 2014)

Among the resources to build the stories, Nuñez (2007) highlights the following: myths, rites, archetypes and metaphors. We will not delve into these elements due to a matter of space. One of the most interesting issues within this context of disaffection is the property of these discourses to deviously foster actions, taking advantage of the emotional halo by which they are surrounded.

Not surprisingly, one of the main objectives of stories is to appeal to the receptor's emotions by following previous research in neuropolitics. This discipline is focused on studying the behaviour of human beings as "citizens, voters or receptors exposed to the stimuli of political communication" (Rubio & Sapag, 2012: 96). In this field, mirror neurons are key, since they are the main mechanism to activate empathy. This has also proved to be instrumental in the field of political communication (Iacoboni, 2009).

There are other advantages to stories besides their competitiveness, among others the great mnemonic power they provide (Bruner, 2003), their alignment with the narrative of human beings (Soulier, 2006) or their cohesive power and their power to modify opinions (Arroyo, 2012).

This research will largely be focused on personal stories that the analysed candidates presented on *Youtube*. The approach of this research is explained in the next section. Therefore, on the basis of Sadowsky & Roche, who state that personal stories make "the leader more accessible, more believable and more trustworthy" (2013: 130). This happens due to the *humanization* of the leader, because these type of narratives "are connected to the limbic brain – where emotions reside- which can inspire passion, and not only understanding" (Sadowsky & Roche, 2013: 38). Therefore, this work will study the construction of discourse on *Youtube* about the candidates, who according to Guber, would work as "conductors" (2011: 51) of "emotional transport" (2011: 50).

That said, it should be recognized that both issues (personalization of politics and use of personal stories) are not exempt from critics. Thus, there are theorists such as Salmon (2007) who state that incorporating these stories creates a new stage in political communication (post-politics): "by addressing individuals as an "audience," avoiding the opponent, eluding parties, they have substituted the public debate for attracting emotions and desires. By doing so, they have started a new era in the democracy, that we can described as post-political" (Salmon, 2007: 222).

Vallés shares a similar approach, since he holds that democratic politics have been "abducted" by a communicative logic of crucial importance. Among its main features the author highlights "preference for the symbol-story character, instead of collective actors" (2010: 15).

Moreover, this type of formulas help to impose the strategic and game approach, which surpasses that of thematic coverage. This increases the mistrust and cynicism towards politicians and politics (Berganza, 2008: 123). Conversely, other authors such as Innerarity (2015), contrast this overexposure of private life to the inherent sense of politics:

The more our attention is focused on banal details of private life the less capacity we develop to assess the nuances of public life. Politicians' private life works as a great distraction in deeply depoliticised societies [...] The visibility of a leader's private life creates

a show thanks to which those inherent political issues that should be part of the public agenda remain hidden (Innerarity, 2015: 280).

In fact, previous research by this author was also focused on knowing the active experts and professionals' insights into the risk personal stories pose to the trivialization of politics (Vázquez-Sande, 2016b). Furthermore, he also studied the limits and objections of using personal stories in the field of political communication (Vázquez-Sande, 2016a), which included the thesis that these discourses work as a technique and tool instead of a strategy and an aim itself.

Apart from this, this work provides a complementary approach to other contributions by recent national scientific literature regarding storytelling. Some of this work has focused on the applications of this technique in companies such as Antena 3 (Mayor, 2014) or Levis (Merino, 2014) and in the tertiary sector (Pablo, 2017). Other studies delve into other topics, such as the relationship between the public sphere and transmediality (Rodríguez & Peñarín, 2014), storytelling as a technique to foster social change (García & Simancas, 2015) and its role in contexts of crisis communication from the public sphere (Rodríguez, Marauri & Cantalapiedra, 2013) or the role of communers towards political communication (Cárcar, 2016). Still, it should be noted that storytelling is not among the most common research lines in the field of political communication in Spain (Cárcar, 2016).

Finally, on an international level we find proposals that take the opposite approach - the creation of media stories in order to present public events- (Arquembourg, 2015) and others that show the relationship between the use of storytelling and Mélenchon's election result in France (Arquembourg, 2015) or that of Mockus in Colombia (Richard, 2011). These last two works are case studies, just as that which studies the use of this technique by Berlusconi and Obama in the tragedy of urban waste in Naples and the impact of the economic crisis on the middle class, respectively (Giansante, 2009). Other examples are that of Obama within the framework of the Operation Geronimo to capture Bin Laden (López-Hermida-Russo & Vargas-Monardes, 2013), that of the Venezuelan protests in 2014 (Semova & Pernía, 2016) or the general trend in the Spanish-American continent.

## 2. Methods

A sample of 398 videos from the 23 Galician candidates who were head of a list in the municipal elections in 2011 and gained representation in their corporations has been analysed. For each candidate, we have selected the 20 *Youtube* documents with the highest number of views -except for those which did not reach this number of documents.<sup>1</sup> From the initial sample, we have created a second one with those recordings that include, either exclusively or predominantly, personal stories from the candidates.

Therefore, with the twofold objective of, on the one hand, establishing a taxonomy of the conveyed personal values and, on the other hand, verifying whether the willingness of transferring this personal and symbolic field of action to the political sphere, we have resorted to the literature review and the content analysis.

Accordingly, we have developed a data sheet in which we have compiled the conveyed values, encoded in non-mutually exclusive categories, as well as the resources used to do so. Moreover, we have studied whether the transference of this type of discourse to the electoral field has been performed explicitly, such as requesting for votes in the video itself.

Therefore, the research questions are as follows: What are the highlighted personal values in the strategy of the candidates on *Youtube*? Is there an evident desire to transfer this personal and symbolical value to the political sphere, or, conversely, is it an association that the voters need to carry out "autonomously"?

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<sup>1</sup> The entire list of politicians and extracts can be consulted in Appendix I.

Finally, the following hypothesis has been stated: "The transference of the personal values of the candidates to the political sphere presented in their stories seeks to be achieved through the voter's subconscious, instead of an explicit link between the videos of both poles (political and personal)."

### 3. Results

In order to classify the obtained results we have opted for establishing several categories depending on the detected objectives linked to the references to determined personal values

- Humility: family background and social status.
- Routine: presentation of the politician with traces of common activity.
- Academic and professional background showing the candidate is particularly trained in the position of mayor for which he/she is eligible.
- Generosity: the candidate who gives up part of their personal components and their time for the benefit of their devotion to public service.
- Closeness: physical and psychological proximity to their voters.
- Others: other qualities and values.

In a first approach, it has been highlighted which of these closed categories are the most frequent based on the number of times they are stressed in the different videos, both on an explicit and an implicit level and taking into account that in the same video can appear one or several personal values<sup>2</sup>.

**Table 1.** Presence of values in the videos

Value	Explicit presence	Implicit presence	Total presence
HUMILITY	4	0	4
ROUTINE	8	5	13
BACKGROUND	6	0	6
GENEROSITY	6	4	10
CLOSENESS	6	4	10

Source: Prepared by the author

This shows that one of the main objectives of the videos is transmitting the value of routine, not only if we attend to its explicit content but also if we consider the implicit one. This is the most highlighted quality among the analysed documents.

Once these figures have been shown, we will focus on each of the categories in order to show how these qualities have been depicted on discourse in the videos.

#### 3.1. The value of humility

Concerning humility and giving value to family and social background, only two politicians have focused on this topic. However, they have taken two different approaches: on the one hand, emigration (the candidate of the PP in A Coruña) and, on the other hand, highlighting the fact of coming from a large family with limited resources (the candidate of the PP in Lugo).

The first candidate tries to transform something that, according to his opponents, is a problem for him ("it is true that some say I wasn't born here") into an opportunity. He uses this to highlight his immigrant status, which he attributes to his parents who "emigrated to

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<sup>2</sup> As an indication, it should be noted that only in 4 out of the 21 videos portray a single value, being the coexistence of several qualities the most frequent pattern.

Brazil to look for the opportunities we didn't have here." In spite of this fact, Negreira asserts that in 1963 "we came back to our origin" to speak about his comeback to the Galician city. Moreover, he also highlights how brave his parents were as well as the uncertainty their departure was for them, since he refers to them by stating that "they left everything behind in the 50s without knowing where to go."

Regarding the candidate of PP in Lugo, firstly we must highlight the fact that one of his videos is almost totally devoted to discussing his humble origins. For this purpose, he mainly uses a combination of two testimonies: that of his brother and, particularly, that of his schoolteacher. The latter insists on the privation his family endured both explicitly ("he came from a very, very humble family, very humble, very humble," as implicitly, mainly addressing the topic of the large family: "I called his dad and they both came, he had eight children," and she insists in this idea, "he had eight [children] and he was the seventh, there was a younger girl." In this sense, she explains how this condition could have affected the future of the politician, since at first his father was opposed to him studying due to the economic difficulties of the family ("I proposed that he studied but his father's face went strange... He was livid. How could his son go study?")

Meanwhile, his brother highlights how the additional difficulties due to their family's monetary conditions affected the candidate: "he had to make an effort, because there were a lot of us at home and there weren't many possibilities to confront all the expenses and stuff." This fact forced him to juggle studies and work "and, well, he worked and probably got some help from home and by working and so he got ahead. He passed and finished his degree".

Finally, the sentence pronounced by his teacher at the end of the video is also relevant. She states that "it has nothing to do, his life has nothing to do with that of any other person I know from politics. He came from a totally different background. He came from a background with many difficulties." It would appear that the aim here is to distance the candidate of the PP from the traditional thought to restrict political activity to these people in financial stability conditions.<sup>3</sup>

### 3.2. The value of routine

The value of routine and normality is highlighted in discourse by resorting to several language resources:

- Using adjectives that portray this value: "he is a very normal person" (candidate of the PP in Vigo).
- Using adverbs strategically so that they help with the routinisation of the public representative: "each and everyone of us has a love in their lives, and so do I" or "mayors fall in love too, some of us over heels" (both of them candidates of the PSOE in Lugo).
- Using comparisons of equality strategically, introduced by the adverb "como" ("as" in English), in order to promote the equalization to many other people: "a childhood like that of any other child", or "just like many Galicians, just like many from A Coruña and the region" or "just like many, I've worked in Santiago" (candidate of the PP in A Coruña).
- Recreating anecdotes so the audience can identify with the politician, such as that of the candidate of the PSOE in Lugo, when he talked about his refusal to buy a dog for

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<sup>3</sup> Similarly, in other video of the abovementioned candidate (that of the PP in A Coruña), the intention is also to distance politicians from the image of being a financially established person and coming from wealth. However, he does not refer to his own story, but to that of one of his political mentors: "A real example of a good person, politician, austerity, dear Gerardo; I remember when I started to work in the Xunta, in that flat, far away from the opulence in which numerous politicians live nowadays."

his daughter (both parents and children who have experienced a similar situation can relate). Another example could be that of the candidate of the PP in Vigo, whose daughter explains that “just with that she’s happy” when the politician “gets out to give a snack” to her granddaughter and go for a stroll with her.

- Verbalizing behaviours or attitudes showing politics as non-infallible people not always possessing the absolute truth: “I’m sure that I won’t always be right, I’m sure that a lot of the things I’ll do or day, won’t be shared by everyone” (candidate of the PP in Ferrol), or exposing a non-perfect childhood by addressing how naughty the candidate was as a child (candidate of the PP in Lugo).
- Presenting politicians in situations that everybody could have lived in their lives, such as the uncertainty of correspondence in love (candidate of PSOE in Lugo) or the fact of setting challenges and goals to meet on a personal level (candidate of PP in Lugo).

Apart from these modalities and examples, there are other cases in which the value of routine lies on the transmitted contents. This is the case of the interview with the candidate of the PSOE in Vigo who, when asked by the host, tells how his day starts: “I have a bath, I have a bath in the morning, I lie on the bed, I take it easy; I can be at least 10 minutes in the bathroom. Yes, yes, I take it easy. Eh... I have a coffee with milk while I read the newspaper (...)”. He also explains that he wakes up listening to the radio, just like a lot of people in the audience, as well as what newspapers he reads and how he does it. Therefore, in this case, the value of routine does not come from a particular sentence but from the actions altogether.

Something similar happens with the representative of the PP in Vigo, who intends to transmit this quality of routine from a double point of view: he associates his free time to having a drink or partying, as a wide part of his electorate does; while he also shows himself as a person who devotes a lot of time to work and, thus, needs to disengage or “disconnect a little bit: even if I haven’t gone out for several months, I’ve been working 14 hours a day... It’s also ok to go out with your group, with the team who has been working a lot and to have a drink together.” This same politician, in another video stresses this routine by insisting in this same argument: “I have been working many hours for many years and it’s not difficult for me [...] I dedicate very little time to [sports] these days, very little time, I have very little time for sports now unfortunately.”

Moreover, this routine can be interpreted from presenting the politician in common scenarios for anyone (i.e., their homes: “but she’s the same at home, at home, with her friends, actually she keeps her long-life friends,” according to the daughter of the candidate of the PP in Vigo). Another option is to desacralise the political activity and present the public representative as an open-minded person: “Friends who are left-wing, right-wing and everything, she’s a woman of the world” (same speaker).

Finally, it should be highlighted that on other occasions the transmission of this value derives from the presence of hobbies that can be shared by a great part of the electorate, such as sports, music, cuisine, etc. This is a formula several candidates resort to. All these activities connect with the habits of the electorate, to whom they tend to present summoned up with a certain normalization.

### 3.3. The value of background

Apart from humility and routine, there is another quality related to the academic and professional experience, which candidates use to suggest their suitability to assume the position of mayor. They achieve this by resorting to their personal background or politics as discourse axis.

Therefore, the candidate of the PP in A Coruña presents his professional background in different sectors as one of the most important features to conquer the necessary votes to be mayor. Thus, one of his videos finishes with him talking about his "extensive professional experience" while he highlights that with his candidacy he is facing "the biggest challenge for a person from A Coruña".

Conversely, the candidate for the PSOE in Lugo does not resort to his professional background but to his political one. He claims to be the same person who competed in the primary elections of his party as the previous step to be designed candidate for the elections in the following year. According to him "I'm still the same man (...) imagine what it is to look forward to being the mayor of this city, to look forward to continuing working for the city and adding almost 8 years of experience to that".

Therefore, there are two clearly different ways of claiming background as a value that deserves the trust of voters, since on the one hand, the candidates use their professional background and, on the other hand, they resort strictly to political background. These are two similar strategies to show the past of the candidates to endorse their future.

### **3.4. Generosity**

If we associate generosity with values related to effort and dedication we can distinguish two large blocks: on the one hand, personal generosity in those cases in which politicians show their personal sacrifice to, fulfilling the command of the party, renounce to work positions related to their personal background or their personal conditions to benefit the city for which they work; and, on the other hand, social generosity, in those candidates who present themselves as public servants boasting their ability to help the others and to get socially involved with them.

In the first group of personal generosity we find the candidates of the PSOE in Ferrol and of the PP in A Coruña. Both cases share many similarities, since both of them recognize the intervention of the president or the secretary-general of their parties to convince them to renounce their previous conditions:

- "And the truth is that I was having such a good time until Emilio Pérez Touriño [secretary-general of the PSdeG] said: 'Vicente, we have to try to win the mayoralty of Ferrol'. And I was really enjoying my time in Santiago with the Ports, and Emilio Pérez Touriño knew it, but then, the political organization decided that we had to try to win the elections and here I came" (candidate of PSOE in Ferrol).
- "It wouldn't be understood that I had a commitment with the city if I didn't stay in the city, if I didn't continue with my work in the city and if I didn't favour A Coruña over any personal ambition" (candidate of PP in A Coruña).

It is striking how the latter verbalises his commitment with the city, giving preference to it over any other personal interest and any other personal challenge when he favours "A Coruña over any personal ambition". Thus, this candidate uses this value to present himself as a generous person who sacrifices his fair personal goals and makes them conditional to his condition of candidate and potential mayor.

Conversely, the second block of social generosity comprehends other cases:

- "Totally socially involved for her whole life" (a neighbour on the candidate of the PP in Vigo).
- "The commitment with people, that's what I've always had in me. That's what made me take a further step in both my professional and personal life, which was devoting to politics and it was because of people" (candidate of the PP in Vigo).
- "And at that moment she told me: 'forget about the book, because I'll take care of it, go and worry about other things'. And it was true, she fulfilled it; she took care of



the book and I didn't have to worry about that anymore" (an artist on the candidate of PP in Vigo).

- "This craziness for the city is what makes me work, what gives me enthusiasm, what gives me eagerness, what makes me dedicate myself to this wonderful job on a daily basis" (candidate of the PSOE in Lugo).
- "She has always been clear about her vocation to work for helping the others" (candidate of the PSOE in Lugo).

### **3.5. Proximity and physical, psychological and emotional closeness**

In order to express the value of closeness, just like it happens with the qualities we presented above, there are different possibilities and goals that can be grouped as follows:

- Use of adjectives and substantives from the semantic field of closeness: "she's a very warm person" (candidate of the PP in Vigo), "she treats people in a close manner" (candidate of the PP in Vigo), "an affiliate highlighted three qualities that a good politician should gather: dedication and work, common sense and be close to the people" (candidate of the PP in Ferrol); or negation of its antonyms: "the secretary, the people around her don't see her as a distant or different person" (candidate of the PP in Vigo).
- Semantic references to politicians' attitudes denoting physical closeness: "she sits with people, talks and learns" (candidate of the PP in Vigo) or "in my dozens of meetings in the last weeks on the street, at cafés or by telephone" (candidate of the PP in Ferrol).
- Statements oriented towards reinforcing the feeling of the politicians belonging to the same space that their audience: "I live and feel the same city as you" (candidate of the PP in A Coruña) or "I think the virus that comes when you work in the Port doesn't ever leave you, no matter where you are. I believe that we are really lucky, I insist, and I believe that the city owes gratitude to the Port" (candidate of the PSOE in Ferrol) in a speech pronounced for the centenary of the entity to professionals of these facilities in which this politician had also worked.
- Statements seeking empathy and psychological and emotional closeness by referring to situations that part of the voters could have felt, such as apologizing to the family for the little time the candidate can devote to them because of work (candidate of the PP in A Coruña talking about her daughter) or an object that evokes a late loved one and helps to remember this person (candidate of the PP in Lugo talking about a painting he did of his father).

In other cases this closeness comes expressed in other ways, such as the case of the candidate of the PSOE in Vigo when he boasts of the high number of people he assists through media: "directly opening microphones, [I assist] 40 people a week."

Furthermore, closeness can also be achieved by using the first-person plural in the verbal forms seeking support from voters to the candidate's own proposals. Contents seeking to reflect shared positions and feelings are also introduced. This is the case of the closing sentence of a video from the candidate of the PP in A Coruña. After presenting a number of memories with which his voters will probably feel identified (he uses specific references such as "the billiard rooms of Don Pío in Orzán", "the continuous sessions of the cinema 'Equitativa'" or "the sunsets in Orzan beach") he states that "this is our city, A Coruña, the city we want." This sentence is clearly related to the abovementioned one that states "I live and feel the same city than you." In this case we can see how, after seeking closeness and empathy through common experiences with anchoring and physical dimension, the emotional dimension is pursued.

### 3.6. Other values

Finally, in the section "others" there are cases such as that of those politicians who show they are grateful to their city for the position the citizens have allowed them to occupy. Therefore one of the goals here seems to be precisely recognizing their neighbours' gesture of having elected them for the position.

For example, this happens in the interview to the candidate of the PSOE in Vigo, who states that "it's an absolute happiness... I have to say it... I thank this city for giving me the privilege of being the Mayor of Vigo." Even when he is insisted by a journalist "you repeat that you still like being the major..." he reiterates "yes, no doubt, no doubt, no doubt." And, afterwards, he adds that "being able to do it [answering calls with petitions from the citizens of Vigo] is a privilege. Believe me, it's a privilege, the fact that there are hundreds of people, thousands of people calling is a privilege."

In other cases the presence of values is clearly associated to one personal quality attributed to the specific politician, such as:

- Friendliness: "she has an overwhelming personal friendliness, her permanent smile and altogether is an appeal from the human point of view" (artist from Vigo on the candidate of PP in this city).
- Friendship: "obviously, I wish her the best, she's a friend and I wish her the best" (artist from Vigo on the candidate of PP in this city).
- Social commitment: "I think that all the people should have a social commitment that lasts forever. In other words, I won't retire from the social commitment. Since I was 17 when I was in the Jesuit school in Vigo somehow my classmates made me as responsible for the Pre-university Course" (candidate of the PSOE in Ferrol).
- Sense of national defence: "the concept of national defence, which I totally shared, has to be studied and analysed [...] We all have the concept of national defence, for me it's very untarnished and I think it's important, but I also have the other part: the development of the city of Ferrol" (candidate of the PSOE in Ferrol).

### 3.7. Requesting for vote

One of the formulas to discover whether there exists a translation or transference of the symbolic capital generated towards the candidates thanks to their personal attributes and the reinforcement of their values is knowing if they requested for vote during the video. Thus, these qualities would be directly associated according to the electoral end with which they have probably presented.

It is remarkable that in these videos with personal stories there is not any direct interjection exhorting the user to choose the candidacy of the specific politician. On the contrary, the limited number of interventions we have detected in this sense are all implicit. Therefore, we could only observe that the testimonies were directed to request the vote for one candidate in two of the recordings, both from the same politician (the candidate of the PP in Vigo). The following tables show some of the statements showing this:

**Table 2.** Examples of implicit request for vote for the candidate of the PP in Vigo

L3.- "We really think that Vigo needs Corina, but I say it as a daughter, as a citizen..."  
L2.- "A woman like that has to win in Vigo."  
L10.- "We need her to come back."  
L8.- "We want you to win."  
L14.- "She has to win."  
L15.- "We need you to win."  
L6.- "Corina, I wish you the best, I hope you triumph."  
L9.- "Corina, you have to win."  
L16.- "Grandma, you have to win."

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LO68Xnq9Wis>

In this case, we can see as the request for vote is basically based on terms of need. This is achieved by using the periphrasis of obligation "have to" in four cases and also resorting to semantic formulas that refer to this same question, such as the verb "need", used three times. In contrast to these seven petitions, based on need, there are only two other testimonies that present it as a volitional act, with verbs like wish or want. Thus, the mobilization of the vote is mainly tried to be earned by using structures that refer to imperative formulas.

**Table 3.** Examples of implicit request of vote in other video by this candidate

L3.- "I deeply hope that Corina's project of city goes ahead."  
L15.- "This is the best option for Vigo."  
L9.- "I sincerely believe that Vigo needs her."  
L11.- "And I hope that, please, soon, soon, for the sake of Vigo and all its citizens, she comes back to the mayoralty."  
L6.- "Because she will be the best for Vigo."  
L8.- "Corina Porro what I hope is that we win this elections and then we can start to see the light."  
L20.- "I'll give her a vote of confidence."  
L5.- "Together we'll see if we can manage to make our city the most beautiful in the world."  
L12.- "You'll come back with us to the place you belong, to the mayoralty of Vigo."

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYXwZ32LVmA>

As opposed to the first video, in this case the implicit request for vote is not based on terms of need but in volitional testimonies, with a predominance of the verb "hope", used by three people.

Moreover, in this sentences the support the participants in the video foster and show towards this politician is prominent. They clearly show their involution with the project and try to serve as a stimuli so that the addressees of the video do the same. Therefore, we can find statements such as "I'll give her a vote of confidence", "together we'll see if we manage" or "you'll come back with us".

#### 4. Conclusions

In this final section, the first think that should be highlighted is the verification of the hypothesis, since the transference of the intended symbolic capital from the personal qualities of the candidate is not explicitly transferred to the political sphere from a discursive approach. Actually, there are just two cases in which there exists an implicit association by alternating invitations to vote in imperative and volitional terms.

Therefore, it can be inferred that the strategy for presenting the values of politicians aspires to make the addressee the one who, autonomously and almost subconsciously,

extrapolate these traces of the private and intimate life of the candidates to the public-political sphere.

Concurrently, it has been proven that within the taxonomy of values, the most repeated one is that of "routine" (13 occurrences), followed by generosity (10) and closeness (10). Thus, it is also reasonable to state that the process of celebrification of the candidate (Oliva, Pérez-Latorre & Besalú, 2015) coexists with that of normalization and routinisation that derives from resorting to these personal values.

Furthermore, the provided examples show that the stories are rich in metaphors, myths, rites and archetypes. Although it has not been possible to systematize them in this work due to the broad range they present, this is an interesting line for further research.

Finally, the pretension of building discourse based on the subliminal actions by the receptors may be attributed to the choice of the communication teams to distance these contents from a more propagandistic tone from a formal point of view.

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**Appendix I.** Videos and politicians analysed in these research

City	Candidate	Political party	Video title <sup>4</sup>	Link to the video
Vigo	ABEL CABALLERO	PSOE	Abel Caballero vs Pablo Dios - Vigo en Verano	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vf57Zc5TvDc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vf57Zc5TvDc</a>
	CORINA PORRO	PP	El "Tu Night" de Corina Porro (y II)	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFC6nLOGNiA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFC6nLOGNiA</a>
			corina porro report	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M2gDUSr-fms">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M2gDUSr-fms</a>
			Corina Porro	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LO68Xnq9WIs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LO68Xnq9WIs</a>
			Corina Porro	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8k_Xes7lNYw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8k_Xes7lNYw</a>
			Corina Porro - vídeo ifevi 15-5-2011	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYXwZ32LVmA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYXwZ32LVmA</a>
	Conozco a Corina: Pedro Solveira, artista	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FVAg10_hfc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FVAg10_hfc</a>		
SANTI DOMÍNGUEZ	BNG			
A Coruña	JAVIER LOSADA	PSOE		
	CARLOS NEGREIRA	PP	Presentación de candidatura del PP de La Coruña - Carlos Negreira	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1g0rmhnz9U">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1g0rmhnz9U</a>
			Discurso de Carlos Negreira en su investidura como alcalde 3	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWslhDnTLOU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWslhDnTLOU</a>

<sup>4</sup> For space reasons, we have only included the videos of the second sample instead of 398 that constitute the initial one.

			Presentación de candidatura del PP de La Coruña - Carlos Negreira profesional	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qx8Ob1xy_X4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qx8Ob1xy_X4</a>
			Presentación de la candidatura de Carlos Negreira	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7MLWDZOQcQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7MLWDZOQcQ</a>
	X. MANUEL CARRIL	BNG		
	CÉSAR SANTISO	IU		
<b>Ferrol</b>	VICENTE IRISARRI	PSOE	El Toro por los Cuernos 01 08 2013 Vicente Irisarri Parte 1	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tcj_4mt4TUK">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tcj_4mt4TUK</a>
			El Toro por los Cuernos 01 08 2013 Vicente Irisarri Parte 4	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YNoMW9zLN88">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YNoMW9zLN88</a>
			"Un siglo de Autoridad Portuaria" de María Sande. Intervención de D. Vicente Irisarri	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RrtIIU_eQoo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RrtIIU_eQoo</a>
	JOSÉ MANUEL REY	PP	Presentación de la candidatura al congreso del PP Ferrol (2)	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ExgFz0TEEbA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ExgFz0TEEbA</a>
	XOÁN XOSÉ PITA	BNG		
	YOLANDA DÍAZ	IU		
	JUAN FDEZ	IF		
<b>Lugo</b>	JOSÉ LÓPEZ OROZCO	PSOE	Loco por Lugo	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-uHx50WLLEI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-uHx50WLLEI</a>
			Entrevista ao Excmo. Alcalde de Lugo José López Orozco	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TaJek4iBcij">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TaJek4iBcij</a>
			Presentación de J. L. Orozco como candidato	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSBcpM8NQFk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSBcpM8NQFk</a>
			Orozco demuestra su amor por Lugo	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=izzgB1IUJYI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=izzgB1IUJYI</a>
	JAIME CASTIÑEIRA	PP	Castiñeira ábrenos as portas da súa casa	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yoim_jHPxLA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yoim_jHPxLA</a>
			Jaime Castiñeira de pequeno	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ch58jgdHlzw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ch58jgdHlzw</a>
	ANTÓN BAO	BNG		
<b>Ourense</b>	FRANCISCO RODRÍGUEZ	PSOE		
	ROSENDO FERNÁNDEZ	PP		
	ISABEL PÉREZ	BNG		



<b>Santiago de Comp.</b>	X. ANTONIO S. BUGALLO	PSOE		
	GERARDO CONDE ROA	PP		
	RUBÉN CELA	BNG		
<b>Pontevedra</b>	ANTÓN LOURO	PSOE		
	TELMO MARTÍN	PP		
	M. A. FDEZ. LORES	BNG		

*Source: Prepared by the author*