Title: Communication strategies of governance and quality of democracy: Argentina, Chile and Uruguay 1990-2010 –

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Abstract

Government communication strategy: good democratic government and political representation

In the present article there will get the processes of management of the communication of government in Latin America (realizing review of countries of the south: Argentina, Chile, Uruguay) and his influence in the types (and levels) of political representation. How is legitimacy constructed from the management of communications of government in Latin America? Does this management of the communications of government of what way affect in the democratic governance of the system?

The aim is to describe the strategies of communication of government on the basis of the behavior of other two variables: political representation and democratic governance. There exist two paradigms of communication of government, one that it emphasizes in the unidirectional communication and other one who conceives to the communication of government as strategic and in network. Each of these strategies associates to a type of political representation and to a level of governance of the political system.

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Introduction

In Latin America, citizens increasingly more supportive of democracy as a system of government, but distrust it to solve their problems (Latinobarometro, 2008). In our region, most countries have low levels of political representation, ie, citizenship is not represented in decisions being implemented by their governments (Luna and Zechmeister, 2005). When measuring the degree of confidence in political institutions, political parties are poorly evaluated, and are often behind other actors, as the Church and the Armed Forces (LAPOP, 2008). Latin America has strong momentum for further away from the authoritarian past, while a brake on the time to consolidate a democratic system of quality. What explains this phenomenon? It is the communication of government, stupid!

The communication making process of government is the field of communications of this: a variable that determines the design process of public policy (MPP onwards). The relationship between government and citizens is constructed in this space of symbolic interaction, and it can generate many questions: how to build and manage a relevant environment that is favorable to a strategy of government? How to improve the image of a government that is accountable for their management to various stakeholders, all very different from each other and with different interests? How to generate greater accountability and programmatic representation spaces, through integrated management of government communications? Many questions are summarized in one: how to empower government communications as a tool for governance?
Communication and governance

Democratic governance can be defined as "the ability to process and apply without violating institutional policy decisions under the law and in a context of democratic legitimacy" (Altman, 2001).

Policy decisions must be communicated in a context of democracy. The communication strategy aims to build a network of thematic partnership between the views of a specific audience about the issuer, that is functional to the latter. "The communication policy is intended to mobilize the citizenry to win the 'battle for the meaning' of what is and should be the 'good order'" (Rincon, 2004). Through the strategies we choose the path that will take the government to communicate with the public, that is, through what means and specific channels will be implemented the rendering process, the stage of political communication which refers us Wolton.

The strategy involves decisions as "a government there are many things that can be highlighted. In fact a government management covers a wide area of action [...] but can not communicate everything there is to know to choose which projects or actions, or the image of these-are promoted" (Izurieta, 2001). The strategy becomes, then, a "comprehensive plan that makes sense in everything he does and does not do the government and everything communicates, or fails to communicate" (Duran, 2001).

The succession of government communications in the public creates an image of the government. We define the image as a means "of chains or networks of associations that are built over a period of time and as a result of stimuli that accumulate slowly. This leads to the formation of a mosaic of impressions that make up the image" (Caprioti, 2004).
Paradigms of government communications

We distinguish two paradigms of government communication: one-way communication of government and government strategic communication network. Each of these government strategies are indicative of two ways to understand the governance and representation of a political system. In the government-way communication, the emphasis is on the channels and messages, and not necessarily on the impact these have on the recipients. The government refers only to provide information to citizens without preview the impact it will have on their image.

In contrast, the government strategic communication network, the effort focuses on understanding the perception of citizens about government, based on this, channels and messages are designed to build an image. Includes not only the vertical flows of information, but also the management of internal communication of the State, in the context of the reform (transversal management, joined up government). In turn, place special emphasis on upward vertical communication, ie how the public is able to communicate with the government.

The strategic communication approach suggests that the communication of government should play a role that responds to changes required by the environment. The speed that the information society imposes on us accelerate the dispute over the image. The government, its president and his ministers are concepts which must be filled with meaning. Of course, the meaning and the association of ideas that the public make of them will be influenced by messages that are transmitted from the government. The power is in the communication channels of government, but to determine image in people. As a result, management must tackle the final goal, the result.
The focus of "dissemination and press" public relations or government insisted on a one-way communication, and actually forgot the meaning of a concept comes in a battle involving different actors: government, opposition, civil society, external agents, operators, unions, etc.. The approach of "strategic communication" aims to monitor constantly how to produce meanings that dispute, and thereafter deploy tactics. But to understand this exchange, we must be clear: what we want them to think about the government and its members? In short, what is the target image that is sought to achieve?

For this, the first step is to define a set of attributes with which to associate the image of the government, and what issues in particular. If the image is determined by the public, you need to know (research stage) and then understand how it serves a dual challenge: first, that these priority issues for the government entering the imagination of their audiences, and second, that the association of ideas to make the matter is favorable to the government. The analysis should be constant communication and understanding the different audiences, so that they have prepared alternatives, according to various scenarios.

The communication of government should take an adaptive strategy, assuming that "the changes are created by the environment, but the organization attempts to create linkages to evolve in unison. We seek a balanced relationship. It is not entirely reactive strategy but emphasizes the environment, not in the organization "(Bazaga, 1997). Should be heard constantly the environment of the organization, and in this case to analyze which is the map of public government, and each of them to see what your profile, characteristics, interests and needs from the government.
The former public relations strategy or one-way communication is not conducive to improving the areas of political representation, to the extent that favors only communication actions of the government, and not manifestations of what the public expects. Even, the focus is the lack of direct interaction between ruler and ruled. Not made up the "issues" of the government, the public loses the clue to breaking election promises links between the two that were generated during the campaign.

On the other hand, one-way communication of government does not favor schemes of governance, to the extent that does not make up deep issues, and to different audiences around the environment of a government. In short improvised, and not act according to the imaging strategy that the government has been raised.

In another sense, the network governance approach strives to make up the themes of interest to different types of people, which creates space for the communication of such matters. The focus is on accountability and the creation of opportunities for vertical and horizontal accountability. Are given the tools to facilitate the exercise of political representation, and thus, monitoring by the public of the actions of the ruler. As networked, interested to hear and know what happens in each of those nodes, in order to adapt the system around their interests.

The government knows you are not alone, for it meant to be handled by the ties that communicate with each of their audiences. Meet the interests, characteristics and needs of each of them and considered when designing a message and choose a channel of communication. This paradigm promotes good governance, to the extent that there is control by the government of what is
happening with their decisions, the political system as a whole, and thus worry about measuring the impact of their interventions.

**How to operationalize the variable communication strategy?**

By operationalizing the variable media strategies pose different dimensions. The dimensions raised by Noguera (2001) are:

- **Communication reactive:** the government reacts to the events that take place, planned or unexpectedly, and must communicate.
- **Proactive communication:** communication is an initiative that is used strategically to advance the government's agenda.
- **Communication may be called 'equity:** through it seeks seat in the mind of the electorate, the achievements of the government's.
- **The election campaign for a government comes to an election and goes to another.**
- **The actions of the public listening:** indeed, the most important communication of all, and paradoxically given less attention when it comes to communication.

Along with this, you must analyze what are the communication channels and what have directionality (vertical, horizontal, ascending or descending) when interacting with citizens and government. When we talk about issues of governance, we must know that "the issues facing the government are generally complex or dense to be explained to the public or transmitted by the media" (Izurieta, 2001). Therefore, it must develop a strategy to communicate, whether listening to what raises the public, for electoral purposes, accounting, reactive or proactive.
On the other hand, the construction of messages is needed to see what the best way to communicate the particular issue is of interest from the government. "The first thing to know is the audience, if the object is to construct an effective message" (Izurieta, 2001).

The communication channels used by the government should be tailored to the characteristics, interests and needs of their audiences. "An effective message should be: appropriate, memorable, understandable, credible and make sense or meaning."

On the other hand, when we talk about "communications plans", we must analyze whether or not the government's communication strategy. In short, it indicates the degree of professionalism of this policy, as it includes the need to work in a defined goal, then the strategy, different audiences, activities and tactics.

**Democratic Governance in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay**

One of the requirements posed to have a stable system of government is the institutionalization of the party system. The level of institutionalization of a party system indicates its stability, centrality in the political system. Based on the index institucionalización posed Payne et al (2002) we compare the performances of our respective units of analysis: Argentina, Chile and Uruguay.
Table 3: Classification of Latin American political systems according to level of party system institutionalization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Volatilidad Electoral</th>
<th>Raíces en la Sociedad</th>
<th>Grado en que los partidos y las elecciones determinan quién gobierna en el país</th>
<th>Índice Agregado</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>2.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>1.42</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Payne et al. 2002

The argument most commonly used in the study with respect to democratic governance refers to a non-institutionalized party system and democratic is prone to fall into messianism, in producing the type of outsiders Fujimori, Collor de Mello, Chavez, who, in the end After all, are in the check-and-balances of the presidential system an obstacle to the realization of their agenda (Altman, 2000).

But a too institutionalized party system, where the game pre-set the potential for political representation of the system does not encourage a better quality of democracy.

Types of representation

The authors analyze the level of correspondence between the points made by voters based on surveys of Latinobarómetro and raised by their political representatives based on the Study of Elites at the University of Salamanca (Alcantara).
Table 5

Summary Representation Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>“Conservative” Score&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Sum of average scores for each policy dimension.  
<sup>b</sup> Sum of highest scores for each policy dimension.

Source: Luna & Zechmeister (2005)

Both Chile and Uruguay account for the highest levels of congruence between citizens and the political elite for a number of matters of public interest. On this basis we review institutional regarding how institutions affect the construction of agreements ensure the political representation of the system.

On the other hand you need to ask regarding the assessment of political parties as key actors of the government. In this case both political parties in Argentina and Chile do not have broad popular support, as if he has Uruguay. To the extent that political parties have cross-functional staff to generate for the government, make government programs and liaise between the rulers and citizens, they become a contextual variable that determines the government's communication strategy and types of political representation that can be generated in the system.
Chile.

The level of adhesion of the Chilean political party system is very low compared to levels in the region (Figure 1). That contrasts with the fact that Chile is one of the less volatile electoral systems (Jones, 2006) in the region. The public seems to disagree with the political parties, yet the study of Luna & Zechmeister (2005), the Chilean political system is broadly representative.
Uruguay.

Uruguay is, after Chile, the political system with higher levels of political representation in the region (Luna and Zechmeister, 2005). This is linked to the strength of the democratic regime that is deeply rooted in the collective imagination and the centrality of parties as political actors configurators (Gonzalez, 1987). The big difference with Chile, is that besides being a highly representative, the support and confidence in political parties is of the highest in the region (Latinobarometro, 2008).

But what kind of representation is generated based on that? A high degree of membership of political parties does not mean that they generate a high level of representativeness of the electorate to come to power. Neither the type of representation is programmatic.

Unlike the Chilean case, the Uruguayan system of proportional representation, so that the allocation of seats is almost identical to that of the votes. In this case, there are no limitations for which votes are translated into spaces on the political agenda representing both majority and minority interests. Systems of proportional representation in this case have the virtue of open spaces in the Congress for the participation of different actors and thus the range of fields (Norris, 2004).

Argentina

In the case of Argentina we can argue that the institutional design affects the construction of durable political arrangements, through a network that determines a low stability in the system, with high fluctuations in the representativeness of the system. It is the institutional system itself which requires the government to go in search of meeting the demands of the electorate, who later distanced the link between citizens and their rulers (powered by variables of political culture in Argentina).

The existence of a plurality electoral system to achieve the government and the use of mechanisms of proportional representation in congressional districts, combine the need for the government to have its own majority to not depend on the political opposition. If you require forge alliances, they no longer belong only to the sphere of legislation, but the Argentine institutional design itself introduces the need to negotiate with other levels of government, particularly provincial governors.

The complexity of alliances and negotiation processes in Argentina have been often blurring the platforms of the parties towards achieving certain support to promote good governance. In recent years Argentina has returned to democracy, successive presidents agreed on a tragic political
chronology: Please assume the mass and the electoral majority, display a project schedule in terms of reforms associated with the base program, when to seek alliances granted certain ideological positions in favor of political pragmatism. Then end up getting back to citizens losing political legitimacy and therefore capable of generating representative from the government.

**Governance and representation from the strategies of political communication**

The communication strategy aims to build a network of thematic partnership between the views of a specific audience about the issuer that is functional to the latter. "The communication policy is intended to mobilize the citizenry to win the" battle for the meaning "of what is and should be the" good order "rests on a planned policy of the image" (Rincon 2004). The strategy then becomes a "comprehensive plan that makes sense in everything he does and does not do the government and everything communicates, or fails to communicate" (Duran, 2000).

We can define the image as a means "of chains or networks of associations that are built over a period of time and as a result of stimuli that accumulate slowly. This leads to the formation of a mosaic of impressions that make up the image" (Caprioti, 2004).

That is why after the analysis of these strategies can visualize the functionality that meet certain types of political representation and democratic governance.

How? Based on the options strategy has been argued that "traditional mechanisms to report on what the government does become less successful and are frowned upon by a sector of the growing population, if reports on paved roads, this little importance to beneficiaries who are not offended has benefited and is almost irrelevant to the general public, which tends to be more interested in what is offered in what is already done. " (Brown Cesar, 2008)

We distinguish here two communication paradigms: public relations and strategic communications of government of government network. Each of these government strategies are indicative of two ways to understand the governance and representation of a political system.

**Unidirectional communication strategy vs. government. Government strategic communication network**

The strategic communication approach suggests that the communication of government should play a role that responds to changes required by the environment. The speed that the information society imposes on us accelerate the dispute over the image. The government, the President and his ministers, are concepts which must be filled with meaning. Of course, the meaning and the
association of ideas that the public make of them will be influenced by messages that are transmitted from the government. The power is in the communication channels of government, the power to determine the image is on people, it is they who perform certain association of ideas, that lead them to support or not a government. Therefore management must tackle the final goal, the target audience, ultimately the outcome.

Clearly, any approach based on "Dissemination and Press" public relations or government insisted on a one-way communication from government to citizens, when in fact the meaning of a concept comes in a battle involving different actors: government, opposition, civil society, external agents, operators, unions, etc. .. The focus on "Strategic Communication" aims to monitor constantly how to produce meanings that dispute, and thereafter deploy tactics. But to understand this exchange, we must be clear What we want to be thought of government and its members? In short, what is the target image that is sought to achieve?

Before outlining tactical actions, we must first be clear about the purpose of government communication, and thus the beginning of government Image What is the objective? First we develop a set of attributes that you want to associate the image of the government, and what issues in particular. If the image is determined by the public, we know (research stage) and then understand how we meet a double challenge: first that these priority issues for the government entering the imagination of our audiences, and second that the association of about ideas that will be favorable to the government. The analysis must be constant communication and must understand the different audiences, so be prepared for different alternatives according to different scenarios.

Strategic communication is to adopt an adaptive strategy assuming that "changes are created by the environment, but the organization attempts to create linkages to evolve in unison. We seek a balanced relationship between the environment, through the relationship with the actors operating in it and the organization. It is not entirely reactive strategy but emphasizes the organization, not the environment "(Bazaga, 1997).

We must listen constantly to the environment of the organization, and in this case to analyze which is the map of public government, and each of them to see what is their profile, their characteristics, interests and needs with respect to the government. If you want to install "target images" in our government must recognize how the environment is composed of the SCI, and in this case the government as a whole, since "organizations are not a closed system that feeds itself and does not need contact with other social agencies to develop their activities. "

The former public relations strategy or way communication does not help to improve the levels of political representation to the extent that only privileged communication actions of the government, and not manifestations of what the public expects. Not even favors direct interaction between ruler
and ruled. Not be tracked to the "Issues" of the government, the public loses track otroras regarding campaign promises to break the links created in electoral marketing the election period.

Furthermore way communication does not favor government schemes to the extent that governance does not make up deep issues, or to different audiences around the environment of a government. In short improvised, and not act according to the strategy of the government image has been raised.

In another sense, the network governance approach strives to make up the subjects of interest of different types of citizens, creating spaces for communication of such matters. The focus is on accountability and the creation of opportunities for vertical and horizontal accountability. Are given the tools to facilitate the exercise of political representation, and therefore the monitoring by the public of the actions of the ruler. As networked, interested to hear and know what happens in each of those nodes, in order to adapt the system around their interests.

The focus of government strategic communication network is not improvised. They act based on the objectives in terms of image that were laid at the beginning of the period and are constantly monitored. The government knows you are not alone, for it meant to be handled by the ties that communicate with each of their audiences. Meet the interests, characteristics and needs of each of them and considered when designing a message and choose a channel of communication. This paradigm promotes good governance, to the extent that there is control by the government of what is happening with their decisions, the political system as a whole, and thus worry about measuring the impact of their interventions.

Case analysis

Chile. This political system has a proven and outstanding communication strategy that considers the five levels of communication: proactive, reactive, accounting, listening campaign. From the Communications performing a Government Communication Plan, which includes channels, messages and functional Issues of government strategy. The strategy clearly is "permanent campaign" for the role given to the communication strategy. Transparency policies are the most advanced in the region, to the extent that you put the effort in which people play an active role in demanding accountability. Chile pioneered the introduction of the active principle of transparency (Rehren, 2008)

The Ministry of Communication plays a central role and articulates the government's agenda. Since its inception in 1990 and hand Eugenio Tironi became a Ministry General Government Secretariat from where centralized communication strategies allowing an overview of the Image of the
government and is exercised as spokesman to the media.

On the whole political communication from the governments of the Concertación in Chile have been able to position a positive image not only to citizens but also to the whole world. Work on the external image of Chile and the concept of nation branding are examples.

The big problem in Chile is the absence of a mobilized civil society, which makes the levels of participation and the loss of public space to the neoliberal market logic. In response, the government has not been able to engage in effective strategy to promote a more critical citizenry, active and committed to the environment (PART Corporation, 2003).

Argentina. This political system is a failed course in communication strategies. The strategy has been proactive, but based on governance highlight not including listening skills in decision-making. In fact this has generated countless crises in each image of democratic governments. We do not have a communication plan professionalized, and communication has a hierarchical role in the national government.

During the government of Carlos Menem established a communication policy that responds to the paradigm of public relations. It was conceived strategic management of the media agenda, not a government communications policy as a whole, but only focused on the image of the President.

Instead of more elaborate mechanisms for communication, the strategy was based on the works of President Menem betting provide legitimacy and popular support for the process of neoliberalization of the economy. The communication strategy that followed the privatization of public spaces (Public Enterprises, State, etc) just lacked a comprehensive vision.

Communication has not earned even a place in government. Although during the Kirchner government henceforth became a professional government communication, this has not been institutionalized (as in the case of Chile) and must wait for a change of party in government to see if there is a state policy in that matter.

The strategy is "permanent campaign", but sadly linked to episodes of corruption by the government. Transparency policies are reduced, or generate chances for the press to freely exercise their task. The relationship between media and government has been challenged over everything from period return of democracy to the recent developments in the Fernandez government unleashed in the Law Regulating Media.
Argentina's policy is not able to use communication strategically to achieve increasing areas of representation, let alone democratic governance.

**Uruguay.** Communication of government in Uruguay has two analytical periods. On the one hand since the return to democracy until 2004, and on the other side since the arrival of the Broad Front government in 2005 to the present.

From the governments of the traditional parties in the period 1985-2004 the government communications policy followed traditional standards of public relations, with emphasis on communication with the media and not on their own channels of communication of government. No communication strategies conceived by any of them, then summarized the development of media strategies and outreach. In fact the economic crisis, social and political in 2002 revealed a lack of strategic thinking of the image of the government, and the lack of transparency in information management.

In 2005 when President Vazquez took office decided to push for certain changes in corporate communication. One was the appointment of the name "Department of Institutional Communication" of the Presidency of the Republic, which used to be called SEPREDI. This was sought to leave behind the stigma that the name "Press and Publications" gave at the office, who had to relate directly to the dictatorial past. Along with this change, there was an update of the communication channels that drove the CIS, and went on to play a more proactive role in positioning media of government actions. As relevant actions highlighted: website renewal, generation of TV programs of the government, the creation of an official radio station, generating a Visual Identity Manual of Government, etc.

In recent years there has professionalized the government's communication strategy, based on a reform of Institutional Communication Service. The emphasis is on communication strategies and accounting reactive, but still not conceived as the proactive communication style. The permanent campaign is positioning the government's actions to citizens. The SCI hierarchy is at the ministerial level but as an office in the orbit of the Presidency of the Republic for which no autonomous power or hierarchy over other ministries.

It is implementing active principles of transparency in governance, supported by the Law on Access to Public Information. The reform of the communication channels are managed by the government in this regard.
The government defends press freedom and there is constant dialogue with the Press Association of Uruguay. There are still some problems of internal consistency in the management staff of government media before the media by the absence of a government spokesman. Many times items are placed on the public agenda without passing through a previous evaluation by government advisers, which suggests the different voices on the same topic in one government.

However, no progress has been about creating opportunities for citizen participation and interaction between political staff and the public. Just the presence of the Council of Ministers within the country has been a strategy of direct relationship between citizens and government. There were instances of promoting participation as the "Education Debate," but it was not designed or managed by the communication area of government.

Conclusions

The construction of an analytical framework to compare types of representative, democratic governance and levels of political communication strategies was the subject of this investigation. In describing the quality dimension of democracy in terms of communication strategies of government opens a new door for further research on the interrelationship between democracy and communication.

Clearly the governments of Argentina and of the period of analysis for Uruguay have been positioned in a unidirectional communication scheme of government. On the other hand, Chile and Uruguay since 2005 have generated actions of government strategic communication network. The influence that this has generated on the levels of democratic governance and political representation can not determine it for sure.

However, if there is an association between types and levels of political representation have been followed in Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and the communication strategy adopted. The last two combine high democratic governance with high level of political representation, unlike Argentina, which has a poor performance in both variables. In this sense, and answering our research questions, relational capital management must be functional government to improve the quality of democracy if it wants to ensure its quality.

The communication style of government may be associated with certain types of representation. In our case Chile does have high levels of party system institutionalization and significant levels of political representation, but with one big problem: poor adherence to the party system from minor parties. This indicates that the relationship is neither unambiguous nor unidirectional but complex.
and requires a causal model complexity, with intervening and contextual variables (political culture, political elites, etc).

While the scope is descriptive research tested the hypothesis of a couple of variables: the management of government communication plays a fundamental role in the quality of democracy (political representation, governance, etc). There is a relationship, but you have to delve into each of the aspects and dimensions to determine with certainty the degree of relationship between both fields. Further this research, increasing the N of cases to make our shows more comprehensive and complex and more the point of view is the way forward.

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