Title of the Research Project: Ideational Change through Collective Learning: Public Deliberation and the Decentering and Recentering of Structures of Meaning

Acronym: LearningDemoi

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DELIVABLE D.2.

PRIMARY DATA IN THE LEARNINGDEMOI PROJECT: SAMPLE OF DOCUMENTS AND CODING PROCEDURE

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Overview of the LearningDemoi Project and Deliverable D.2.

The LearningDemoi project pursues several objectives, one of which is to contribute to the understanding of processes of ideational change. In particular, this research pays attention to the processes of decentring and recentring of socially shared structures of meaning, or discourses, as they occur in the public sphere. This is essentially an empirical question. It is addressed by means of three case studies, namely:

1. Public debates on universal conscription in Spain between 1987 and 1996;
2. Public debates about the abolition of military service in Germany between 1987 and 2010 (for the period before 1990, West Germany is referred to by the term 'Germany');
3. Debates sparked by political discontent in Spain between 2008 and the present day, focusing especially on those arguments set off by the so-called indignados or 15M movement after May 2011 and subsequent actors closely linked to this movement (in particular, Podemos).

To analyse these three cases, the LearningDemoi project resorts to the examination of secondary data and secondary academic literature, as well as the production and analysis of primary data. The latter is the result of the coding of a sample of documents intended to be representative of the discourses and narratives that circulated in the Spanish and German public spheres and shaped the abovementioned debates. The coding of this textual material sought to identify the main ideas advanced by these discourses and narratives, their evolution and interrelationships, and the relations established between actors based on the acceptance or rejection of these ideas.

Three research techniques are triangulated in this project, yielding a mixed-method research design. These research methods are:

1. Descriptive statistics;
2. Network analysis;
3. Process tracing or historical reconstruction.

Descriptive statistics and network analysis are used to explore the data produced by the coding of the sample of documents. The recurrent deployment of some arguments, or the introduction of new ideas and elimination of old ones over time, as well as the structural properties of the networks of ideas and networks of actors are some of the issues explored through these two methods. Taken together, they might help uncover relevant elements which are sometimes less visible to less formalised qualitative approaches. Systematic historical reconstruction, for its part, shall help to bring together all the elements mentioned above—i.e. primary and secondary data, results already available in the specialised literature, and so on—into a coherent narrative.

Deliverable D.2. describes the sample of documents analysed and the coding procedure. It also presents the codes deployed to code the
different documents. More precisely, in the next section a brief description of the textual material is given. I also explain how relevant passages and topics were identified in each case. I then turn to the Discourse Network Analyzer, the software used for the coding of texts. Its basic features are introduced, and I also provide some brief notes on other methodological and technical alternatives considered by this research but finally discarded. In the subsequent section, I describe the coding procedure in some detail. The next three sections present the codes used for each case study. Finally, an annex has been introduced where an initial coding grammar—developed ad hoc for this project, although finally discarded—is described.

Sample of Documents

In order to analyse the processes of ideational change related to each of the cases studied, a sample of documents was coded. This is a qualitative sample intended to be representative of the main discourses and narratives that shaped these public debates. Strictly speaking, the sample did not aim at statistical representativeness. Instead, the project opted for a qualitative sampling strategy. Based on case-specific knowledge, a number of key documents were selected, which were expected to reflect the most salient discourses and narratives shaping the three debates studied by this research. Table 1 provides an overview of the documents selected:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Conscription in Spain</th>
<th>Conscription in Germany</th>
<th>Political Discontent in Spain</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Main political actors** | Political parties with parliamentary representation. | Political parties with parliamentary representation. | Political parties with parliamentary representation. Since January 2014, also

1 A sampling strategy seeking statistical representativeness not only would have exceeded the resources of this research project, but in all probability would also have been an inefficient way of approaching the study of these public debates. Such a sampling strategy should have taken into account national and regional newspapers; TV channels and television programmes; influential radio stations and radio programmes; online communication, encompassing, in turn, communication occurring in blogs, social networks (notably, Twitter and Facebook) and popular websites (including those of newspapers where users are allowed to post comments); books and magazines contributing to the flow of ideas and communication on a given topic; and the myriad of everyday face-to-face conversations that can also shape public debates. Furthermore, if one considers the periods covered by the cases analysed in this research, which stretch over several years, it becomes obvious that statistical representativeness is not a feasible sampling criterion for any research project such as this one.
Podemos, as well as Ciudadanos since February 2015.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main social actors</td>
<td>Movimiento de Objetión de Conciencia, MOC (Movement for Conscientious Objection).</td>
<td>No social actor identified as relevant by the specialised literature.</td>
<td>15M movement (since May 2011).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents</td>
<td>First Ideological Declaration (1979, MOC); Second Ideological Declaration (1986, MOC); Manifesto of the Insumisos (1989, MOC); What is Insumisión (1991, COA-MOC Zaragoza); Open</td>
<td></td>
<td>Manifestos: Real Democracy Now! We Are Not Merchandise in the Hands of Politicians and Bankers (2011); Democracy Is Kept Hostage: On #25S We Are Going to Rescue It! (2012); Manifesto for the 25A (2013);</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² In 2008 and 2012 no such debates were held.
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<th>Source: own elaboration.</th>
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According to the specialised literature, political parties with parliamentary representation and the anti-militarist social movement, with a special emphasis on the Movement for Conscientious Objection, were the major political and social actors involved in public debates over military service in Spain (see Deliverable D.1. of this project). The sample of documents sought, then, to reflect the discourses of these actors and their evolution concerning universal conscription.

To this end, transcripts of plenary debates of the Congress of Deputies where the topic of military service was dealt with were retrieved, as well as the preambles of the most relevant pieces of legislation on this matter passed between 1987 and 1996. Plenary debates of the Congress of Deputies usually attract considerable public attention—enough attention at least to expect political actors to have uttered in this setting the same discourses and narratives as those they would have articulated in other public contexts. Furthermore, focusing on parliamentary debates, rather than ad hoc policy documents or statements of principles, enhances the comparability of political actors’ discourses, as it permits to control for contextual variation. The possibility of coding electoral manifestos was also explored, but electoral programmes turned out to be poor sources of information regarding political actors’ stances on conscription. The sample of parliamentary debates was supplemented with the preambles of some significant pieces of legislation, where information on the arguments and ideas that informed the regulation of conscription could be found.

As regards the Movement for Conscientious Objection, the sample of documents included those texts where the official stances adopted by this movement regarding military service, and the army more generally, were presented. These texts reflect the discourse of the said movement between 1979, approximately, and the year 2000, around which conscription was actually abolished (although the decision to put an end to military service was taken earlier, in 1996). The said documents were taken from a book published by the Movement for Conscientious Objection itself, where it traces its own history through, among other things, a collection of texts taken to be representative of the movement’s initiatives and stances from its inception to the turn of the century (MOC, 2002).

As regards the German case, the specialised literature mostly concentrates on German political parties with parliamentary
representation—thus no major social actor was identified as playing a significant role in the process leading to the end of military service in this country (see Deliverable D.1. of this project). The sample of documents for this case rests on a remark by Hellmann et al. (2007: 658), according to whom budget law debates in the Bundestag amount to de facto ‘general debates’, where political actors confront their viewpoints on different topics. Thus, budget law debates between 1987 and 2010 were gathered. The sample of texts also included specific policy documents—in particular, reports, guidelines and white papers published by commissions appointed by the German Government or published by the defence ministers. At the time of their publication, these documents constituted remarkable inputs in the German public debate on military service or they contributed to fixing and clarifying the position of the government regarding this issue (see Deliverable D.1.).

Concerning the third case study, which concentrates on public debates triggered by political discontent in Spain, a number of actors were identified as relevant: political parties with parliamentary representation, the so-called 15M movement, and more recently Podemos, closely associated with this movement, and Ciudadanos, a relatively new and emerging party.

To reconstruct and analyse the discourses of the political parties with parliamentary representation, transcripts of the 2009-2015 Debates over the State of the Nation were gathered.\(^3\) These are plenary debates in the Congress of Deputies, which function as general debates and thus receive considerable public attention. Again, focusing on this kind of debates enhances comparability (at least among political actors seating in the parliament), and they can be expected to reflect the public discourses of political parties, i.e. those discourses that they would also have uttered in any other public setting.

Given the features of the 15M movement—in particular its rejection of spokespersons and representatives—the sample of documents did not aim to reflect the discourses of specific actors within this movement, but was articulated around major protest events. These are events associated with this movement that were identified as relevant milestones in the recent wave of mobilisations in Spain. Hence, the sample of texts included the manifestos calling for these protest events. One of these manifestoes is the one that gave rise to Podemos, which is considered in this research as a continuation of the 15M movement—at least of the 15M movement’s discourse. This interpretation of Podemos is consistent with their self-presentation, with public perception, and with data on the demographic characteristics of Podemos’ electorate (see Deliverable D.1., as well as Fernández-Albertos, 2015 and Adell

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\(^3\) The sections ‘Propuestas de Resolución’ were not taken into account in the coding, for they usually fail to attract as much public attention as the debates proper.
Argilés & Olayo Yestera, 2014). The manifesto March for Change, also by Podemos and published a year later, was also included in the sample.

Around February 2015, a relatively new political party, namely Ciudadanos, started to achieve growing popularity. Among other things, its electoral support soared from 3.1 per cent in January 2015 to 13.8 in April that year, according to estimates by the Spanish Centre for Sociological Research (CIS). Its Statement of Principles (Ideario) was also included in the sample of texts.

**Relevant Topics**

Thus far, I have used expressions such as “debates about military service” or “debates sparked by political discontent,” which are clearly too vague for research purposes. The coding of the documents concentrated, more precisely, on the following themes:

**Case 1 – public debates on universal conscription in Spain between 1987 and 1996.** The analysis of the textual material focused on those passages where political and social actors adduced their reasons for supporting or opposing military service in their country, however institutionalised. In this context, the term ‘reasons’ should be understood broadly—it can refer to arguments, as well as narratives used by actors to justify their respective positions or undermine those of their adversaries. Debates on technicalities—whether to extend or shorten military service, whether or not to exempt some people from doing it, and so on—were not considered. Similarly, adjacent debates—how to regulate conscientious objection or how to deal with insumisos, for instance—were ignored. However, technicalities and adjacent topics were taken into account if they were used to make a case for or against military service.

**Case 2 – public debates on the abolition of military service in Germany between 1987 and 2010.** The same qualifications made for case 1 apply to case 2. The analysis of the textual material concentrated on those passages where political and social actors adduced their reasons for supporting or opposing military service in their country, however institutionalised. And again, the term ‘reasons’ is to be interpreted broadly as referring to both arguments and narratives used to justify or challenge a specific position. Debates on technicalities, as well as adjacent debates, were not considered unless they were used to argue for or against conscription.

**Case 3 – public debates sparked by political discontent in Spain between 2008 and the present day.** The analysis of the textual data concentrated on those passages dedicated to (a) political discontent,
political distrust, protest events and their meaning; (b) problems, challenges and strengths of Spain’s democracy, (c) general remarks regarding social cohesion, inequality, Spain’s welfare state, and citizens’ rights and liberties; (d) general remarks concerning the causes, current state and possible evolution of the economic crisis / economic situation.

Topic (a) focused on statements about the meaning, causes and consequences of political discontent, political distrust and protest events, as well as about the actions taken—or that should have been taken, according to speakers—to deal with these issues.

Topic (b) was construed in the light of topic (a), which means that those (negative) features of Spain’s democracy that were presented as sources of political discontent or distrust were considered, as well as those (positive) features of Spain’s democracy that were mentioned in defence of Spain’s democracy and as a reaction against discontent and distrust. The issues included were, among others: the ‘privileges’ of political elites, Spain’s electoral system, corruption and public authorities’ less than forthright behaviour, the perils of direct democracy, the limits of political action in a globalised context, the benefits of political representation and the honesty of politicians. Topics related to the territorial organisation of Spain (in particular, Catalonia’s secessionism and issues related to Catalonia’s Statute of Autonomy) were not taken into account, for it was assumed that they were related to factors other than those responsible for the rise of political discontent and political distrust throughout Spain after 2008. However, remarks on the territorial organisation of this country were coded if they appeared in relation to the causes of the economic crisis (as in UPyD’s discourse). Finally, passages dealing with the alleged shortcoming of Spain’s democracy in specific territories were also ignored.

Topics (c) and (d) focused on the general interpretative orientations of public speakers regarding the causes, current state and possible development of the following issues: social cohesion, inequality, Spain’s welfare state, citizens’ rights and liberties, and the economic crisis. In other words, topics (c) and (d) concentrated on the way actors framed the abovementioned matters. These frames included statements about abstract and diffuse aspects, as well as about specific actors, events, and actions that figured prominently in narratives about the said topics. However, debates about technicalities, specific economic and social policies, the particular consequences of some political decisions, etc., were ignored, unless they were used to frame any of the abovementioned issues. From an analytical perspective, speaking of general remarks, interpretative orientations and frames, on the one hand, and technicalities and specific issues, on the other, might seem too vague and unsatisfactory. In practice, however, passages dealing with general interpretive orientations and those with specific matters could most of the time be easily distinguished from one another.
The content of cases 1–3 was specified according to several criteria. First, the theoretical framework of this research partly determined what to take into account and where to put the emphasis. Particularly concerning case 3, the decision not to concentrate solely on specific policy stances and the arguments for or against them (or even to ignore them if they were too specific) was grounded in theoretical considerations. Instead, theoretical reasons led to broaden the scope and consider the narratives used to make sense of the topics (a)–(d) above (Eder, 2009).

Issues of feasibility and reliability were also taken into account. In this regard, a relatively straightforward definitions of the relevant topics were intended to enhance the reliability of the coding of the documents and thus of the data produced. At the same time, I tried to restrict the scope of this research, in order to keep the analysis within what is feasible given the amount of resources available. This is why certain topics were excluded from the analysis—e.g. issues regarding conscientious objection, the punishment of insumisos, shortcomings of Spain’s democracy in specific territories, etc. However, there is a downside to this. Excluding passages dealing with technicalities and specific policy measures means that relatively relevant topics, such as public pension schemes, evictions, and the privatisation of health services, fell outside the scope of the coding, for they were mostly discussed in the Spanish Congress of Deputies in connection with specific policy measures.

Finally, the definition of the relevant topics also relied on a previous reading of the textual material. This is particularly important regarding case 3. The set of questions considered in this case, which includes communication on corruption, inequality, the economic crisis, etc., stemmed from a previous reading of the documents gathered for the sample of texts. They suggested that these issues were frequently interrelated in communication triggered by, or about, recent protest events, political discontent and political distrust in Spain.

**Identification of Relevant Passages**

The textual material was coded in several rounds. The first one simply consisted in identifying those passages dealing with any of the topics mentioned above. Short texts—i.e. manifestoes and laws’ preambles—were read in full, and those passages dealing with any of the topics listed above were imported into the coding software, i.e. the Discourse Network Analyzer (henceforth, DNA).

In the case of transcripts of parliamentary debates dealing with conscription, a keyword search was first conducted. For the German case, the expressions \textit{Wehrdienst}* and \textit{Wehrpflicht}* were used; and for the Spanish one, \textit{servicio militar} and \textit{conscript*}. Those paragraphs where
these expressions were found were read in full, as well as the previous and subsequent paragraphs. If they contained information about any of the topics specified in the previous section, these passages were imported into the DNA.

The transcripts of the parliamentary debates related to the third case study were first skimmed, and all those paragraphs dealing with any of the topics associated with political discontent, as listed above, were selected and imported into the DNA. Since this implied going through over 600 pages of parliamentary debate, the software MaxQDA 11 was used to assist in the selection of the relevant passages.

The *Discourse Network Analyzer* and Other Methodological and Technical Alternatives Considered

The decisions about what to code in the textual material and how to do it, including the selection of the appropriate software (if any), were obviously interlinked. A number of different alternatives were considered to take this decision (Carley, 1993; Franzosi, 2010; Grimmer & Stewart, 2013; Koopmans and Statham, 1999; Lozares Colina et al., 2003; Mohr, 1994 and 1998; Mohr & Bogdanov, 2013; Popping, 2000 and 2003; Roberts & Poppin, 1993; Saldaña, 2013). Currently fashionable and promising approaches to automatic content analysis, such as topic modelling (Grimmer & Stewart, 2013; Mohr & Bogdanov, 2013), were eventually rejected for a number of reasons, the most important of which is that it remained unclear whether any of these methods would yield results relevant for this research that outweighed the high entry level costs of these methods. In this regard, Franzosi’s (2010: 75) warning, inspired by Bernard Bailyn, about the dangers of “mind-absorbing, soul entrapping . . . technical problem-solving” was taken seriously. Another alternative, this time explored in greater detail, was the extension, as well as simplification, of Franzosi’s (2010) “story grammar.” The latter was originally developed to code events and narrative clauses, so it needed to be extended to also code descriptive and normative statements, in order to make it useful for this research. At the same time, so as to produce data that could be easily analysed with standard network analysis techniques and standard network analysis software, Franzosi’s grammar needed to be simplified, removing from the coding grammar information considered of secondary importance. These two tasks were accomplished, yielding a coding grammar that, somewhat ironically, was very similar to Carley’s (1993: 98) “simple semantic method” and unlike Franzosi’s story grammar. Figure 5, in annex 1, illustrates the application of this coding grammar to the 2011 manifesto *Real Democracy Now!* The greatest asset of this coding grammar is that it can map semantic relations between pairs of concepts, as well as their metaphoric valence. Eventually, however, this
alternative was discarded due to it being too time-consuming. Annex I provides more information about this coding grammar.

Finally, the decision was taken to use the DNA (version 1.31; available at: www.philipleifeld.com/discourse-network-analyzer; see also Leifeld & Haunss, 2011; Leifeld, 2013; Fisher, Waggle & Leifeld, 2013). The DNA is a software developed by Philip Leifeld for qualitative content analysis, specialised in the extraction of network data. It allows to code information about actors, their statements, and whether they support or reject said statements. Essentially, codes are manually applied to the text data, although the DNA incorporates various tools to support this manual coding and prevent some errors and inconsistencies from happening. These codes are then converted into an affiliation or two-mode network, linking actors with statements. Figure 1 provides an illustration of such a two-mode network. On the basis of this two-mode network, further networks can be derived to explore different aspects of the data.

**Figure 1: Illustration of a Two-Mode Network**

In this figure, black vertices represent actors, and grey ones statements. Lines can only connect black with grey vertices, not black with black vertices or grey with grey vertices.

Source: own elaboration.

**The Coding Procedure**

Through the DNA, information was coded about:

- The *date* when a statement was made or (as in the case of manifestoes, laws, and policy documents) published.
- The *document* where a statement appeared.
- The person making the statement and the organisation to which this person belonged. In this project, however, I only concentrated on organisations, thus the information about the ‘person’ is identical to that about the organisation.
- The statement made.
- Whether the person agreed or not with the said statement.

The list of codes used for each of the case studies can be found at the end of this document.

From the different aspects coded, the most challenging one was the definition of the ‘statements’. Coding at a very low level of abstraction, almost verbatim, would have missed the interaction between speakers. Rarely do speakers use exactly the same words to express an idea, thus the final output of the DNA would have been, if coded at a low level of abstraction, a long list of statements made only once. Furthermore, at a low level of abstraction coding would have been too context-sensitive and thus prone to reflect minor changes caused by the specificities of the situation, which is at odds with the goals of this research, which seeks to map processes of ideational change rather than changes in the rhetorical repertoire of public speakers. At the other end of the spectrum, it is obvious that coding at a very high level of abstraction would have missed a lot of content and nuances. At the extreme, one would have used statements such as ‘in favour of military service’ or ‘against conscription’, which, again, would have failed to retain most of the information contained in the textual data and would have misrepresented the interactions between speakers due to this oversimplification of the original textual material. To be sure, this is not a new problem, but still a pervasive one, which implied that the question what the most appropriate formulation of an idea is, i.e. what code to elaborate to grasp an idea, was always open and had to be repeatedly addressed. In this regard, the coding procedure should be understood as an aid to the qualitative analysis of the data, as it allowed to observe patterns that otherwise might have been difficult to detect. Yet ultimately this is a qualitative study that relies upon the interpretation of a set of statements and texts, with the coding itself being part of this interpretative exercise. In any case, the documents analysed are publicly available and allow for replication.

Codes were formulated inductively and in an iterative process, so that several passes on the data were needed in order to create and consolidate new codes as new data was added—thus following the coding process advocated for by Koopmans and Statham (1999).

Now, consider the following statement used to codify communication on political discontent in Spain.

The (mostly economic) measures taken by Zapatero’s government are beginning to work (have worked / worked). (Negation: They are not
It illustrates several things:

First, as a general rule, the chronological criterion was used to decide how a code should be formulated. This means that the code reflects the way an idea was initially formulated—in this case, that ‘the measures taken by Zapatero’s government are beginning to work’, rather than ‘Zapatero’s measures are inefficient’ or ‘Zapatero’s measures don’t work’, for example (although the latter appears more often in the textual material).

Secondly, in order to keep the number of codes manageable, the initial code was frequently extended to incorporate tenses other than the original one—that is, ‘the measures taken by Zapatero’s government are beginning to work’ (as initially formulated), ‘are working’ (as claimed later), ‘have worked’ (as asserted even later), and so on.

Thirdly, codes sometimes incorporated several qualifications, usually in parentheses, such as ‘the (mostly economic) measures taken by Zapatero’s...’. This means that the same code was sometimes applied to slightly different ideas or concepts—in this case, to Zapatero’s economic measures, as well as to non-economic measures also used to fight the economic crisis. A code referred to different ideas when they were regarded as relatively minor. Again, this was to keep the number of codes relatively low and manageable. This same logic applies to codes that express different intensities in the way an idea is formulated—for example, the ideas ‘Social mobilisation can stop the degeneration of democracy’ and ‘Only social mobilisation can stop the degeneration of democracy’ were coded together. Sometimes—as in the code ‘Political elites / ruling elites are destroying people’s lives / impoverishing Spanish citizens’—a code referred to several ideas not because the differences between these concepts were deemed minor, but because during the coding it was often unclear whether speakers were referring to one concept (e.g. ‘political elites’, the destruction of people’s lives) or another one (e.g. ‘ruling elites’, the impoverishment of Spanish citizens) or both of them.

Fourthly, frequently in the coding, the negation of a statement does not only refer to the logical rejection of this statement, along the lines ‘A’ vs ‘non-A’. The rejection of the statement ‘the measures taken by Zapatero’s government are beginning to work’ is that they are not beginning to work. Sometimes, however, speakers rejected a statement and added a new idea—for instance, that Zapatero’s measures are not only not working, but making the situation even worse. Statements that were recurrently used to negate another statement, although strictly speaking they went beyond its mere negation, were not coded as new statements but as negations—e.g. ‘Zapatero’s measures are aggravating the situation’ was coded as the negation of ‘Zapatero’s measures are
working’. Again, this was intended to keep the number of codes low and manageable. In any case, I tried to be relatively prudent in my coding decisions—only if actors explicitly denied or supported a particular idea, or it became very clear from the context that they were referring to this idea (e.g. by the use of pronouns), did I code that they were affirming or denying a statement. This means that if statement A (e.g. redistribution is necessary) implies the logical rejection of statement B (e.g. one should not interfere with the market), but an actor expressed statement A without also clearly referring to statement B, I only coded statement A (and obliterated the information that thereby she was implicitly denying statement B).

Besides, statements such as ‘The PSOE claims that they are fighting the crisis effectively’ (uttered, for example, by the PP) were ignored. Only if the PSOE actually claimed this was the case, did I code that the PSOE supported the claim ‘The PSOE is fighting the crisis effectively’. What some speakers said that other speakers were supposed to say was not taken into account.

Finally, it should be noted that in the DNA output used for the subsequent analysis of the data, duplicate statements were ignored. Thus, there was no need to code anew statements already coded in a given text, for this new code was simply ignored in the output file. To be sure, this implied a loss of information, but it also avoided a source of error. It was frequently far easier to determine whether or not a certain idea was put forward by a speaker than to decide whether this idea was mentioned one, two, twenty, or three and a half times in a text. Furthermore, the number of times an idea is repeated is not always a good indicator of its salience. Given this limitation, it was decided that the benefits of knowing the number of times a statement was made did not compensate for the costs of counting the number of statements and the danger of thereby introducing a new source of error.

Figures 2 – 4 provide examples of the application of the coding.

**Figure 2: Actors and Statements about Topics (a) and (b)**
*of Case 3 in 2015*
Figure 3: Actors and Statements about Topics (c) and (d) of Case 3 in 2009

Source: own elaboration.

Figure 4: Conflict Network, Case 3, Topics (a) – (d), 2012-2015

Source: own elaboration.
Source: Own elaboration. Conflict networks are one-mode networks that result from collapsing the original two-mode networks. Vertices represent actors. A line has been drawn between two actors whenever they disagreed on a given statement. Line width reflects number of disagreements.

**List of Codes: Abolition of Military Service in Germany**

Not yet publicly available.

**List of Codes: Abolition of Conscription in Spain**

Not yet publicly available.

**List of Codes: Political Discontent in Spain**

Not yet publicly available.
Annex I: Initial Coding Grammar

This annex contains some excerpts describing the initial coding grammar elaborated for the LearningDemoi project. This coding grammar was eventually discarded given how time-consuming it is and the goals and resources of the LearningDemoi project. Another alternative—more precisely, the use of the DNA—was deemed more appropriate and feasible. Since other scholars might find this initial coding grammar, or maybe an idea or two therein, useful for their own research, I have decided to include this annex in Deliverable D.2.

The coding grammar was initially intended to constitute an extension, as well as simplification, of Franzosi’s (2010) “story grammar.” Since the latter was developed to code events, I sought to extend it to code not only events or narrative clauses, but also descriptive and normative statements. At the same time, in order to produce data that can be easily analysed with standard network analysis techniques and standard network analysis software, Franzosi’s grammar was simplified and information considered of secondary importance removed from the coding grammar. The end result is a coding grammar that is very similar to Carley’s (1993: 98) “simple semantic method” and unlike Franzosi’s story grammar.

Prior to the development of any coding grammar and list of codes, a set of coding decisions must be made (Carley, 1993). It is outside the scope of this annex to discuss them in detail, thus I will simply enumerate the different alternatives available and indicate the ones chosen for this coding grammar, together with a brief explanation.

Table 2: Coding Choices

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<th>Possible Alternatives</th>
<th>Chosen Option</th>
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<tr>
<td>Development of the list of codes – predefined vs interactive</td>
<td>Interactive. Some codes are predefined (i.e. they derive from categories of the coding grammar – e.g. “positive relation”, “negative relation” – or from knowledge acquired from the secondary literature – e.g. “Podemos”, “15M”, etc.), but most codes are created during the coding process. Essentially, this is because this is an exploratory research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of generalization – concepts coded exactly as they occur in a text vs recoded in some altered form</td>
<td>Recoded in altered form. Concepts are coded at a low level of abstraction, but not verbatim. The advantage of this is that it favours comparability across texts. Besides, this decision is consistent with the goal of coding concepts, rather than counting words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of implication for concepts – explicit concepts vs implicit concepts</td>
<td>Implicit concepts. The coding seeks to reconstruct the basic conceptual framework conveyed by a text as interpreted by most competent readers. This means, for example, that pronouns and circumlocutions are coded according to the implicit meaning to which they refer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of relations vs frequency of relations</td>
<td>Frequency of relations. All relevant statements in a text are coded, even if they repeat the same idea. Thus, not only the existence of a specific semantic relation between a given pair of concepts is coded, but also the frequency with which a relation is cited. It is also true, however, that some network analysis techniques cannot take into account the frequency of relations, only their existence (i.e. values “1”, “0”) – so this information is often lost during the analysis of the coded data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information preserved about relations – strength, sign, direction, meaning</td>
<td>A coded relation between a specific pair of concepts denotes: (1) that a semantic relation exists between two concepts; (2) the metaphoric valence of the said semantic relation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of implication for relations – explicit vs implicit relations</td>
<td>Only explicit relations between pairs of concepts are coded. Explicit relations are those expressed by linguistic signs and grammatical conventions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The coding unit is the statement, which consists in the expression of an opinion by a political or social actor regarding any of the topics predefined by a research project. Three types of statements are distinguished: narrative statements, descriptive statements and claim statements:

statement → narrative statement | descriptive statement | claim statements

Types of Statements:

1. **Narrative statements** are action or process statements. They refer to what an actor (a person or group of people) or an entity (an institution, a situation to which agency is attributed, etc.) did in the past, is doing in the present or will do in the future, as well as to the actual or likely outcome of this doing, i.e. its consequences. “Sentences whose predicates are activities or parts of the social process” are narrative statements (Abbott, 2001: 130; see also Franzosi, 2010: 11-33).
2. **Descriptive statements** are statements that simply describe (pretending to do so in a non-evaluative way) or that describe and evaluate actual states of affairs. They describe how the speaker perceives that things, people, group of people, etc., are; how they feel; what they have or to whom or what they belong. Unlike narrative statements, descriptive statements refer to **static** elements of a situation, of an actor, etc., rather than to actions.

3. **Claim statements**: express what *ought to* or *ought not to* be done. Claim statements range from general exhortations to abstract principles to more context-specific appeals to adopt certain policy decisions. They might be directed at specific social actors or not.

The coding grammar varies depending on the type of statement. Narrative statements are composed of three elements: the acting subject, the action that he/ she/ it does, and the object affected by the said action. Although I speak of ‘subject’ and ‘object’, I only do so following a grammatical convention. In principle, institutions, objects, complex phenomena, and so on, can also act as subjects (as in ‘the economic crisis is impoverishing the Spanish people’). Similarly, people can also be objects, as in the aforementioned example.

It should also be noted that ‘subject’ and ‘object’ do not necessarily refer to the grammatical subjects and objects of a sentence—this might be the case or not, for it is the *meaning* of a statement that is coded, not its grammatical structure. Thus, it is a relevant unit of meaning what is coded, that is, a **concept**. According to Carley (1993: 81), "a concept is a single idea, or ideational kernel, regardless of whether it is represented by a single word or a phrase. Examples of concepts are ‘friends’, ‘textual analysis’, and ‘likes to play golf’.”

An ad hoc list of codes should be developed to code acting subjects and affected objects. The action, however, is coded in terms of ‘positive’ or ‘negative relation’. I will come to this later.

```
narrative statement → acting subject action affected object
    acting subject → Code
    action → positive relation | negative relation
    affected object → Code
```

Descriptive statements are composed of three elements: subject, relation and attribute. Again, although I speak of ‘subject’ and ‘attribute’, I do so borrowing from the grammatical terminology. Objects, abstract phenomena, events, and so on, can also act as subjects. ‘Attribute’ in turn, refers to what is said about a subject. They can actually refer to attributes (e.g. ‘we are hard-working’), but also to
other concepts that are said of a subject, like in ‘we have nothing to talk with them’. As stated above, concepts, not grammatical elements, are coded.

Subjects and attributes are coded by selecting the code that best describes them from an ad hoc list of codes. The action is coded in terms of positive or negative relation.

descriptive statement $\rightarrow$ subject relation attribute
   subject $\rightarrow$ Code
   relation $\rightarrow$ positive relation | negative relation
   attribute $\rightarrow$ Code

Finally, claim statements are also composed of three elements: goal, relation and agent. The ‘goal’ refers to what the speaker says should be, or should not be, done or fostered. The ‘agent’, in turn, denotes the subject or entity that, according to the speaker, should, or should not, promote this goal. The same caveats expressed above apply here as well.

Goals and agents are coded by selecting, from an ad hoc list of codes, the code that best describes them. The action is coded in terms of positive relation or negative relation.

claim statement $\rightarrow$ goal relation agent
   goal $\rightarrow$ Code
   relation $\rightarrow$ positive relation | negative relation
   agent $\rightarrow$ Code

Distinguishing between these three types of statements is intended to facilitate the coding process by helping coders to reformulate longer and more complex sentences as different combinations of descriptive, narrative and claim statements, which can be coded more easily. In this sense, distinguishing between these three types of statements and their constitutive elements acts as a heuristic device that guides the coding process.

The coding grammar is intended to translate texts into network data, so that the content of these texts can be analysed using network analysis techniques. Networks consist of a set of vertices and a set of lines between pairs of vertices, as well as additional information on these vertices or lines (e.g. information on what each vertex represents or what a line means). Incidentally, the fact that lines are drawn between pairs of vertices explains the three-fold structure (i.e. code | relation | code) of narrative, descriptive and claim statements. Lines represent relations between two concepts, be it positive or negative ties. Thus, one crucial question is how to define these relations.
Some approaches to content analysis have resolved this issue by recurring to co-occurrences. In these studies, a line between two concepts simply reflects that these two concepts are close to each other in a text, irrespective of the meaning of the text (Lozares Colina et al., 2003). However, this coding grammar seeks to take meaning into account, which begs the question how to represent graphically—i.e. how to translate into network data—the indefinite kinds of relations that meaning can establish between two concepts. Let us use the expression ‘semantic relations’ to refer to the relations of meaning that exist between pairs of concepts. Since network data must necessarily simplify the plurality of semantic relations, the crucial question is whether this can be done in a way that preserves relevant information from the text without introducing noise and (systematic) error. The solution proposed here consists in distinguishing two types of relations: positive and negative ones. These two types of relations convey information on three aspects of a semantic relation:

1. First, they reflect that a given text establishes a semantic link between two concepts. In this regard, the coding categories ‘positive’ and ‘negative relations’ simply reflect that there is a semantic connection between pairs of concepts, irrespective of the precise content of these semantic relations. The information conveyed is ‘0’ (i.e. no semantic relation) and ‘1’ (i.e. a semantic relation).

2. Second, the sign of the categories ‘positive relation’ and ‘negative relation’ is intended to reflect the metaphorical dimension of semantic relations. The category ‘positive relation’ links two concepts that do not undermine each other or are not in opposition. ‘Negative relations’, in turn, link concepts that are in opposition. (More on this below.)

3. Third, the categories ‘positive relation’ and ‘negative relation’ carry meaning, which varies depending on whether they appear in narrative statements, descriptive ones or claim statements. They mean things like ‘leads to’, ‘decreases’, ‘is’, ‘is not part of’, ‘should be promoted’, etc.

Two goals are pursued by coding semantic relations in this way:

- To reconstruct the networks of concepts that appear in the texts analysed;
- To assist in the development of an ad hoc list of codes.

Information on dimensions 1 – 3 above is deployed differently depending on which of these two goals is being pursued at any given moment.

*Semantic Relations and the Reconstruction of Networks of Concepts*
In reconstructing the conceptual networks of texts, dimensions 1 and 2 are taken into account, that is, the existence or not of a semantic relation between a given pair of concepts, and the metaphoric valence of the existing semantic relations. More precisely, lines in the graphs representing conceptual networks denote the existence or not of semantic relations (dimension 1) and their metaphorical valence (dimension 2). Dimension (3), i.e. the specific meaning of a semantic relation, is largely disregarded, although it should be admitted that it plays an indirect role in the reconstruction of a conceptual network. This is because dimension (3) is taken into account when it comes to developing the list of codes, which constitute the nodes of the semantic networks. In this way, and only in this way, it exerts some influence over the reconstruction of conceptual frameworks.

Let us clarify dimension 2, i.e. the metaphoric valence of semantic relations. The contemporary philosophy of language, at least since Saussure (1916), tends to view language as a relational structure, consisting of differences of differences that are related to one another in multiple ways (Bertram et al., 2008; Morin, 2001). This is a widespread idea which, however, has been developed in divergent directions depending on the authors considered. This plurality of approaches notwithstanding, the tenet that meaning emerges from relational structures of signs has been accepted by social scientists, who have tried to adapt it variously to the analysis of social and political realities (e.g. Mohr, 1998). Let us have a look at only some of them.

Anne A. Kane (1997), for example, argues that the analysis of meaning construction has to pay attention to both the metaphoric nature of symbolic systems and the individual and collective interpretation of these symbolic systems in the face of concrete events. The first part of her argument is of particular importance here. She contends that symbols have a “metaphoric nature”, which is dependent upon the relations of symbols to other symbols within a broader symbolic structure, allowing them to establish connections “of similarity between two different things” (Kane, 1997: 256). Kane speaks of evocation, analogy, the extension of meaning, connotation, etc., in relation to this metaphoric nature of symbols. However, a fully-fledged theory of this metaphoric dimension is not provided.

Based on a number of previous studies, Jeffrey Alexander (2006) reconstructs the cognitive structure or discourse that underlies contemporary civil society. This discourse shows a binary structure, composed of “sets of homologies, which create likenesses between various terms of social description and prescription, and antipathies, which establish antagonisms between these terms and other sets of symbols” (Alexander, 2006: 56). In this way, terms such as “active”, “autonomous” and “rational” are seen as equivalent, and as opposed to terms like “passive”, “dependent”, and “irrational”, which also happen to be homologous between them. These relations of homology do not
derive from anything that can be conceived as the intrinsic properties of these terms. Rather, relations of similarity and opposition are the result of the contingent processes and events that led to a given cognitive structure.

A similar idea has been defended by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1985). In this case, however, they are writing about social groups and political struggles, which nonetheless are conceived of as symbols inserted in a broader signifying structure. As symbols, they carry meaning, which stems from the interplay of differences and relations between them. This they call the "logic of difference." However, Laclau and Mouffe believe that there is a further level of meaning, which rests on a phenomenon that they call "overdetermination." What it means is, essentially, that a set of "objects" (social groups and political struggles) become "equivalent", that is, a certain symbolic unity is created among them. As with Alexander, this unity does not depend on the intrinsic properties of these "objects". Rather, it derives from certain signifying practices—in this case, from the exclusion of other "objects" (i.e. social groups). In other words, different elements are united on the basis of their shared opposition to a common element (i.e. another social group). This Laclau and Mouffe call the "logic of equivalence".

Kane, Alexander, and Laclau and Mouffe offer different accounts of how to conceive of meaning structures and signifying practices in the social sciences—accounts, furthermore, that are incompatible in crucial respects. However, what I want to stress with this brief review is that they all acknowledge the importance of the metaphoric dimension of symbols for social science research. The sign of the coding categories 'positive relation' and 'negative relation' are intended to reflect this metaphoric dimension of semantic relations—that is, whether or not a text presents two concepts as opposed to each other. Coding in this way does not imply accepting the entire theories of Kane, Alexander or Laclau and Mouffe, nor does it suggests that symbolic systems are divided into two opposing camps. It only means that concepts can be positively associated with each other or that they can be opposed to one another.

As stressed by the three authors reviewed here, positive relations and negative relations are largely dependent upon the specific ways in which concepts are used. In this context, this means that they are dependent upon how any given text presents the semantic relations that exist between concepts. In this regard, it is assumed that metaphoric relations rely on the everyday meaning of concepts—in other words, that the everyday meaning of concepts is used to express and create metaphoric relations. Thus, a sentence like 'financial speculation damages the common good' can be coded as: financial speculation | negative relation | common good. The everyday meaning of 'damages' hints that there is an opposition between 'financial speculation' and
‘common good’. However, the graphical representation of this sentence would leave out the meaning of the relation (i.e. damages) and would simply reflect, first, that there is a semantic relation between ‘financial speculation’ and ‘common good’, and secondly, that there is a relation of opposition between ‘financial speculation’ and ‘common good’. This leads to the next question.

**Semantic Relations and the Development of the List of Codes**

The codes ‘positive relation’ and ‘negative relation’ carry meaning, which varies depending on whether they appear in narrative statements, descriptive statements or claim statements. (This, however, does not contradict what has been said so far regarding the reconstruction of conceptual networks. This apparent contradiction should become clear in the following paragraphs.) The following table provides an overview:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positive Relation</th>
<th>Negative Relation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Narrative statements</strong></td>
<td>· leads to, causes</td>
<td>· does not lead to, does not cause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· increases, enhances, benefits, empowers, promotes</td>
<td>· hinders, decreases, hurts, damages, weakens, limits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· seeks to, aims to, wants to</td>
<td>· does not seek to, does not aim to, does not want to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· does, fulfils</td>
<td>· does not, does not fulfil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Descriptive statements</strong></td>
<td>· is</td>
<td>· is not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· is related to</td>
<td>· is opposed to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· is similar to</td>
<td>· is dissimilar to, different from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· is part of, belongs to</td>
<td>· is not part of, does not belong to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· has</td>
<td>· does not have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· feels</td>
<td>· does not feel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Claim statements</strong></td>
<td>· should be promoted</td>
<td>· should not be promoted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· should be done</td>
<td>· should not be done</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The following meanings of the categories ‘positive relation’ and ‘negative relation’ should be read as also comprising variations due to the tense and modality of a statement. That is, the expression ‘lead to’ should be read as also referring to variants such as ‘will lead to’, ‘has led to’, ‘might lead to’, ‘can lead to’, etc.*
As stated above, this meaning does not become part of the graphical representation of conceptual networks, which only reflect whether semantic relations between pairs of concepts exist and the metaphoric valence of these relations.

The attribution of meaning to the codes ‘positive’ and ‘negative relation’ should be seen as a possible solution to the following problem. Consider these two sentences:

(1) The economic crisis has led to mass unemployment
(2) The president fired James.

An intuitive representation of (1) would be:

(a) economic crisis $\rightarrow$ mass unemployment

Now, let us consider the following representations of (2):

(b) president $\rightarrow$ James
(c) president $\rightarrow$ fired $\rightarrow$ James

Option (b) is unsatisfactory, for it leaves out crucial information—intuitively, one can figure out that the president did something to James, but what exactly remains unclear. Option (c) seems more promising—it is easy to interpret from (c) that the president fired James. Now the problem is that the arrows in (a) and (c) mean different things. In (a) the arrow denotes that the economic crisis ‘has led to’ mass unemployment. In (c) the arrows suggest that there is a link between the president and the act of firing someone, and between the act of firing someone and James. Thus, in (c) the arrows simply denote semantic connections, whereas in (a) the arrow expresses a semantic connection and the meaning ‘has led to’.

If we substitute lines for arrows, it is easy to understand that the same problem applies to the representation of texts as networks. Using the same symbols to represent different things (i.e. an arrow meaning ‘has led to’ in case 1, and ‘there is a semantic connection’ in case 2) might become a source of error, especially if one is not careful enough and ends up coding similar statements in different ways.

E.g. “The economic crisis has led to mass unemployment”
“The economic crisis has been the cause of mass unemployment”

economic crisis $\rightarrow$ mass unemployment
economic crisis $\rightarrow$ cause $\rightarrow$ mass unemployment

To avoid this, two strategies are available. The first one is to code as much information as possible. That is, to “rewrite” (a) in this way:
(a_2) economic crisis $\rightarrow$ has led $\rightarrow$ mass unemployment

This strategy, however, introduces information that seems unnecessary, which runs the risk of leading to a long list of codes that is likely to be difficult to handle—hence, a list of codes that is liable to become a source of coding inconsistencies. Furthermore, it might make graphs much more complex and difficult to interpret. The second alternative is to allow arrows (or lines in the case of networks) to express different kinds of information, but trying to systematise their possible meanings in order to avoid the introduction of error. This is the strategy favoured in this research project.

The meanings attributed to the codes ‘positive’ and ‘negative relations’ simply reflect those semantic connections that are common in narrative, descriptive and claim statements. Accordingly, if a sentence establishes a relation between two concepts and this relation expresses any of the meanings contained in table 3, only an arrow (i.e. a line) is used to code this relation (e.g. sentence 1 above). However, if a sentence establishes a relation between two concepts and this relation expresses a meaning that is not contained in table 3, a new code is introduced to convey the meaning of this relation (e.g. sentence 2 above). This permits to:

- Develop a more parsimonious list of codes, as the meanings of some relations that are typical of (i.e. recurrent in) narrative, descriptive and claim statements are left out. In a sense, this is analogous to ‘stop words’ in content analysis, which are normally excluded, for they would otherwise introduce much noise and little information.
- Code the meaning of those relations that are not common and thus rich in information. The meanings of those relations are coded as vertices in a network, i.e. meaning is not attributed to lines in a network, but new concepts (i.e. vertices) are introduced to convey the meaning of specific semantic relations. For example, the statements ‘politicians steal public money’ and ‘politicians waste public money’ would be coded as follows:

  Politicians $\text{ ----- steal -------- public money}$
  Politicians $\text{ ----- waste ------------- public money}$

  The lines between these concepts simply represent that there is a semantic connection between them—simple lines denote that the metaphoric valence of this connection is positive, and dotted lines express that the metaphoric valence is negative.

Limitations of the Coding Grammar
a) The coding grammar does not code the modality of a clause.

Consider these three sentences:
- We can change this situation.
- We will change this situation.
- We might be able to change this situation.

According to the coding grammar and an ad hoc list of codes partly developed for this research, these three sentences would be coded in the same way:
- We_not specified, ambiguous | positive relation | Change (political, social, economic). This is the same as:

![Diagram of We and Change](image_url)

b) The coding grammar does not code the tense of a sentence.

Similarly to point a) above, the sentences ‘we will change this situation’, ‘we have changed this situation’ and ‘we are changing this situations’ are all coded as ‘we | positive relation | change’, without taking into account the tense of the statements.

**Issues of Reliability and Validity**

The coding of texts based on this coding grammar should provide an accurate graphical representation of the underlying conceptual framework of these texts. Yet this reconstruction of the underlying conceptual framework can only be one among other equally possible and valid reconstructions. In this regard, the coding process and the development of an ad hoc codebook should be seen as akin to the translation of a text into another language—two different translations might succeed in conveying the meaning of the original text, yet they might differ considerably in their choice of words and syntactic structures.

Let us consider the following example taken from the 2011 *Real Democracy Now!* manifesto⁵:

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⁵ The original manifesto is in Spanish, but several translations, one of them into English, were also released by the association *Real Democracy Now*. The translation offered here is
The priorities of any advanced society must be equality, progress, solidarity, free access to culture, sustainability and development, welfare and the happiness of people.

There are some basic rights that should be fulfilled in these societies: the right to housing, employment, culture, health, education, political participation, free personal development, and the right to consume those goods necessary for a healthy and happy life.

The current functioning of our economic and governmental system does not attend to these priorities, and it is an obstacle to human progress.

Now the question is how to code the expression “the current functioning of our economic and governmental system does not attend to these priorities.” There are several alternatives:

a) Since the expressions “basic rights” and “priorities” are linked to the expression “advanced society” (and let us assume that there is a code in the codebook for this concept), one could simply code in the following way:

- “political system” | “negative relation” | “advanced society”
- “economic system” | “negative relation” | “advanced society”

b) The problem with option a) is that it departs somewhat from the literal meaning of the sentence, which says: “does not attend to these priorities”, instead of “does not attend to the priorities that define an advanced society” (although the latter is, I believe, implied in the original sentence). So, one can create a new code called “priorities”, which should be linked to the priorities listed in the cited passage, and code this sentence in the following way:

- “political system” | “negative relation” | “priorities”
- “political system” | “negative relation” | “basic rights”
- “economic system” | “negative relation” | “priorities”
- “economic system” | “negative relation” | “basic rights”

c) One could also refuse to introduce a new code (i.e. “priorities”) and try to stick to the almost literary meaning of the sentence. So, one could code this sentence in the following way:

- “political system” | “negative relation” | “equality”
- “political system” | “negative relation” | “progress”
- “political system” | “negative relation” | “solidarity”
- And so on and so forth. That is, one could trace dotted lines (i.e. negative relations) between the codes “political system” and “economic system”, on the one hand, and

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based on the one provided by this association, but it has been amended in substantial ways.
each and every priority and basic right listed in the passage above. This way of coding would amount to tracing 34 lines.

Let us assume that we are happy with the coding of the expression “the current functioning of our economic and governmental system” as “political system” and “economic system”, and that we are equally happy with coding “does not attend to” as “negative relation”. So, the question is how to code the expression “these priorities.” Option a), the one used in this research to code the aforementioned sentence, provides an elegant alternative, defining only two relations and introducing no new codes. On the negative side, it departs somewhat from the literal meaning of the sentence. The advantage of option b) is that it is rather literal, but at the cost of introducing a new code, i.e. “priorities”, which is not very informative and not very useful to code other parts of this text or further texts. Option c) also conveys the meaning of the sentence, but it does so by creating 34 relations, which runs the risk of giving too much weight to this sentence in the network representing the whole text (where each sentence is represented by one or a handful of relations, not by 34).

This example shows, then, that the coding of a text can provide an accurate representation of its content, but the coding process and the development of the list of codes are packed with coding decisions that are in principle equally acceptable, although, as in this case, ad hoc considerations (rather than fixed rules) can make some decisions more sensible than others. It is in this regard that I said that the coding process and the development of the codebook should be seen as akin to the translation of a text into another language—two different translations might succeed in conveying the meaning of the original text, yet they might differ considerably in their choice of words and syntactic structures.

Figure 5: Application of the initial coding grammar to the manifesto *Real Democracy Now*
Source: own elaboration.
This graphical representation contains several inconsistencies, as the manifesto was coded at an early stage of the elaboration of the coding grammar.
References


