



Agenda and media pluralism in Al Rojo Vivo and Las Mañanas de Cuatro

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Abstract:

Even with the rise of digital and hybrid communication, television continues to be the main source of information in Spain. A sample of 50 broadcasts was taken (25 from "Al Rojo Vivo" and 25 from "Las Mañanas de Cuatro") to register who participates in them, under what conditions and what issues are discussed. A high degree of equivalence in terms of agenda setting and an extremely low inclusion of women is observed. The Catalan independence process monopolised attention. The methodology includes quantification of the counter-arguments received by the participants, showing a clear disadvantage for Catalan sovereignist and leftist standpoints (despite being the two channels most identified with the left in the survey used as a reference).

Keywords:

Agenda setting, journalism, pluralism, television, political talk shows.

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Resumen:

Aun con el auge del entorno digital e híbrido, la televisión continúa siendo el principal medio de información en España. Se toma una muestra de 50 programas (25 de "Al Rojo Vivo" y 25 de "Las Mañanas de Cuatro") para registrar quién participa en ellos, en qué condiciones lo hacen y sobre qué temas se discute. Se aprecia un alto grado de equivalencia en la agenda establecida y una bajísima inclusión de mujeres. El Proceso catalán monopolizó la atención. La metodología incluye la cuantificación de los contraargumentos recibidos por los contertulios, mostrando una clara desventaja de las posiciones soberanistas e izquierdistas (a pesar de tratarse de las dos cadenas identificadas más a la izquierda en la encuesta usada como referencia).

Palabras clave:

Agenda setting, periodismo, pluralismo, televisión, tertulias políticas.

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1. Introduction to the issues dealt with and hypothesis

Despite the advent and consolidation of a hybrid media ecosystem in which the digital world is expanding both quantitatively and in terms of influence, television continues to be the mass media par excellence, and is that which records the highest audience ratings. Also regarding political communication, current affairs and election periods. Political talk shows, in particular, not only enjoy great followings, but have been experiencing a boom in recent years and register record viewers in the weeks that were studied (from 17th October to 22nd November, 2017). Thus, the high audience ratings of these political talk shows and the frequent appearance of political leaders in them, contribute great value to the importance of daily political debates. The academy picked up on this phenomenon in earlier years (for example, linking its development towards hybridization with reality show and celebrity/gossip news formats -Palao Errando and Garcia Catalán, 2011-). Pastor Francisco (2015) compared two political programmes broadcast on a Saturday night: *Un Tiempo Nuevo* (Cuatro) and *La Sexta Noche* (La Sexta). Although the former introduced a greater number of topics considered as *soft* (such as society or culture), important similarities were found insofar as “TV Programming blocks with doses of info-entertainment, based on current affairs and focused on dialogic genres, with the professional profile of the participants based on the figure of the journalist whose arguments are predominantly tend towards disqualifications and personal accusations” (2015: 27).

The purpose of this research is to gather information about the conditions in which two important political television talk shows in Spain are developed: the selection of topics and the media pluralism which unfolds in them. Just as introduced, and although coexisting with many other media (and some of them in permanent growth), television continues to be in the XXI century the main instrument for political information, as is shown repeatedly by the indicators, projects for example like that of Vaccari (2013) for global context and the post-electoral studies of the Sociological Research Centre for the Spanish arena.

One reason of interest in choosing *La Sexta* and *Cuatro* for the purpose of this article is that they are the two channels which are the most left-wing among mainstream television (both in general perception and in the GIPEyOP/Mediaflows survey on Media and Communicators, with 5414 valid responses and work in the field up to 04/01/2017¹), which may provide significant indications of the wide range of speech displayed in the current Spanish media system. Respondents placed *La Sexta* at 2.9 and *Cuatro* at 4.1, with 0 being the left and 10 the right. The host of *Al Rojo Vivo*, Antonio Garcia Ferreras, appeared in the survey and was placed with a 2.8 average in this variable. In addition to *Al Rojo Vivo* (*La Sexta*), the other talk show programme analysed is *Las Mañanas de Cuatro* (which, although also obtaining ratings well above those of its channel, was cancelled about 7 months later).

That the two programmes analysed correspond to the two major media groups gives added significance to the contributions, thus giving us a better idea of the wide spectrum of opinions existing at the end of 2017 on Spanish television. In the distinction between external and internal pluralism, this situation corresponds to the first type, while the focus of the article is, in any case, internal media pluralism developed in both reference programmes and their *agenda*

1 https://www.uv.es/pavia/Informe_Encuesta_Medios.pdf

setting. After analysing 3,134 news items on six Spanish news channels, Humanes et al (2013) a hybrid model in Spanish television was observed, in which scales of internal and external pluralism coexist depending on the channel and business strategy of the communication group. TVE1 news programmes reflected the highest levels of internal pluralism, with Antena 3, Telecinco and Cuatro as commercial model references and La Sexta and Intereconomía as exponents of the niche audience model according to their ideological orientation.

In addition to other key faculties such as *framing* or *priming*, *agenda setting* is probably the defining capacity of any communication media in their relationships with other powers and with reality itself. A theoretical approach of great importance from the 70s (McCombs and Shaw, 1972; McLeod et al., 3 1974), equipped with potential explanatory and intuitive understanding, worthy to be widely used in various researches. With time, deeper debates have been generated to be used in power disputes and other ideological causes after the agenda setting (Gandy, 1982; Carragee & Roefs, 2004). The context in which this project has been developed is that of one of the least dynamic European societies in 2000 (Morales & Mota, 2006), with a media system increasingly more concentrated in only two media groups. The high political parallelism between media and political parties (Campos Domínguez, López García & Valera Ordaz, 2013: 37) has been maintained in general in the coordinates proposed by Hallin and Mancini (2008). Significantly, only a slight autonomy of the media is discerned with regards to biased *frames* subsequent to the elections (Valera Ordaz, 2015).

In the analysis, attention is paid to the moderator, especially when a counter-argument is put to a fellow debater or collaborator in a live situation. These interventions were registered. The approach chosen considers the moderator as an actor “becoming the channel’s icon itself, which both in moderating and in explaining his/her point of view, defines the subject, but also his/her tone of voice, the dramatic profile and the setting from which the subject is approached . The participants follow these guidelines [...]” (León Gross and Gómez Calderon, 2011: 68). Such an approach contrasts for example with that taken by Santamaría Guinot (2017: 132): “As the role of the host of the programme is to direct the talk show towards the topics they wish to debate in public, we will not analyse the interventions of Xavier Coral nor Helena García Melero”.

In addition to that concerning the data regarding the choice of the agenda and list of participants with their respective frequency of attendance or intervention via interview, the proposed methodology focuses on the words of the presenter and specifically the degree of questioning posed by the position of the fellow debaters or the interviewee. To grasp the full conditions in which these communicative exchanges operate, it is necessary to add a methodology like that of Sánchez Castillo (2018) on “audio-visual courtesy”. This includes analysis from a predominantly visual point of view (the use of resources such as a split screen, subtitles showing the respondent’s opinion or frames of this person while listening to the questions, among other variables) but combined with the intensity level from 0 to 10, of the different questions asked (the variable closest to that which is used in this study).

As is apparent from studies like that of Carniel Bugs and Sabés Turmo (2014) or Botella (2006), Spain lacks an audio-visual regulatory body; something which, besides being exceptional in the EU², hinders compliance with democratic values.

2 Cotarelo, R. and Gil J. (2017), note 149.

This is in the line of what Miguel de Bustos (2004: 15) commented: “[...] today more than ever it is essential to establish regulatory pluralism policies, because it is fundamental to ensure that the design of new networks and their capabilities are not created exclusively for commercial purposes, which could lead to an exclusion of the less advantaged groups”.

There are regional bodies which are entrusted with certain functions (Catalonia, Andalusia and the first steps in other communities), but the gap in the state context causes projects such as the one presented here, to be essential in order to know the relevant data on political programmes in the most popular communication media. From the European arena, the European Commission has not required televisions to comply with the minimum standards of democratic quality not as a means of information nor as to its structure, as “the only clear reference to democratic -informative significance of the media activities is relegated to the press sector”-Rodríguez Pardo (2005: 125), analysing the control of the Commission on media concentrations- and “this position, however, is not transferred to the television sector whose informative work is undoubtedly minor, but of much greater influence.

Therefore not having a robust regulatory support, it is more useful to use the ethical standpoint. So, to guide us roughly on what should be found in the programmes analysed, this is McChesney’s proposal (2013, 110-111): accurate information on persons in positions of power or aspire to be; feasible methods for identifying falsehoods, or at least prevent those who lie, circumvent responsibilities and lead nations to serious situations, such as wars, crises and internal discord; if there is a bias in the extent or tone that is dedicated to a matter, it would be in favour of those with less economic and political power; a wide range of informed opinions on the most important issues (not only what is currently the news, but also the challenges on the horizon), which will not be confined to that which concerns the powerful.

The last point enunciated by McChesney is very relevant in that it contains the two subjects under study in this paper: *agenda setting* and pluralism of opinions about such issues. These issues can and should be analysed in the light of numerous verifications, among which we will take the following 3:

- A) Over half of the 10 problems most mentioned in the CIS interviews of October and November 2017 will be present in the analysed programmes of *Al Rojo Vivo* (hypothesis A1) and the programmes of *Las Mañanas de Cuatro* (hypothesis A2) in a proportion representing at least one third of the percentage of people who reported this subject as being one of the most important.
- B) The time dedicated to the 10 topics most dealt with in *Al Rojo Vivo* will show a Pearson correlation above 0.75 regarding the time dedicated to these same topics in *Las Mañanas de Cuatro*.
- C) The number of men and women participants respects the principle of balanced gender presence established by the Equality Act and the LOREG (Organic Law of General Electoral Procedure, Article 44 bis) fixed at a minimum of 40% for each sex with regards to the electoral lists.

Agenda setting is a successful theory in that it is based on powerful intuitions. The complexity begins when defining and specifying the changing and fleeting causal relationships between the media agenda and the public agenda. Not only how the first one determines the second but how they interrelate and at what rate. Frequency is certainly a key variable and therefore is granted a central role, not without referring to at least more sceptical standpoints, as for example that of Wolf (2000: 188): “conceptualizing only the frequency variant as a degree of perception of the relevance of the topics seems

simply inadequate. The idea that a high frequency defines a strong relevance is linked to an oversimplified, pre-semiotic communication model: [...] in order to deal with the information contained in the text, the recipient must combine the input information with the one stored in his/her memory”.

After comparing the data from the CIS studies and the programmes analysed, as well as the respective dates of both, Wolf’s affirmations may be qualified in one way or another and obtain more information on the relationship between the media agenda and the public agenda. Nevertheless, it should be recalled, and with Rubio Ferreres (2009: 14) that “the theory of *agenda setting* does not properly study the effects of the media in the short term, but the effects in long-term consequences. In other words, according to the theory of agenda setting the effects do not lead directly to the explicit and immediate determination of mass behaviour, but rather to influence the way in which the public organizes its own image of the world. The effects of *agenda setting* are therefore cognitive effects, since they influence in the knowledge systems the audience assumes and structures in a stable manner. Therefore, it is not about one-off effects, but cumulative and temporarily deposited ones”. Therefore, more than drawing conclusions on the impact of one agenda over another, we can observe where both the media and the public originate from, in the same time frame. This is how Andreu Abela (2008) among others, understood it, analysing the incidence of the headlines over 7 years in El País and El Mundo from the answers given in the CIS about the major issues.

Regarding the participation of women, the most current studies which contain a variable thereof (Consell de l’ Audiovisual de Catalunya, 2019) are taken as the reference. In its report on pluralism during the electoral campaign in the general elections (12th to 24th April, 2019), the CAC verified in La 1, 86.7% of male intervention time on information about the election campaign and 13.3% of female intervention time (2019: 101), data virtually identical to that of Telecinco -86.9% versus 13.1% (2019: 117) -, Antena 3- 86.2% - of intervention time for men and 13.8% for women (2019: 133) and La Sexta - 86.3% for men and 13.7% for women (2019: 152) -. In response to the information related to the elections, the intervention time of the candidates was 32.7% in La 1, 31.3% in Telecinco, 21.4% in Antenna 3 and 24.6% in La Sexta, noting differences between the channels, but all being a far cry from equality.

2. Method

Two representative programmes of the political talk show genre in current Spanish television were chosen. The two share the same time slot (usually from 11:20 to 14.15, except on special days, when they start earlier) and register viewers well above the average for their respective channels: La Sexta for Al Rojo Vivo and Cuatro for Las Mañanas de Cuatro. In fact, it was usual to see Las Mañanas de Cuatro as the programme with the highest ratings in its channel³, whereas Al Rojo Vivo has been in this position regularly and even beat its record audiences in the period studied. This includes 25 programmes

3 Taking two days analysed at random - one every month- on 23 rd October , 2017, we note that both Al Rojo Vivo (16.1%) as well as Las Mañanas de Cuatro (11.2%) were leaders in screen share for their respective chains, obtaining more than double that were registered that day in La Sexta (7.7%) and Cuatro (5.3%). On 9th November 2017, the *share* data in Al Rojo Vivo was 15.6% (compared to 8.9% in general for its channel that day) and in Las Mañanas de Cuatro 9.7% (compared to 5,9% in general for its channel). Sources: http://vertele.eldiario.es/audiencias-canales/analisis-espana/audiencias-lunes23octubre-ot-2017-estreno-la1-tve-lqsa-telecinco_0_1951604821.html
http://vertele.eldiario.es/audiencias-canales/analisis-espana/vivo-terreno-papel-remonta-vuelo_0_1956704314.html

broadcast from 17th October 2017, excluding special programmes in the afternoon or evening. The only exception is the programme *Las Mañanas de Cuatro* of 17th November, that by not being offered on the website of Cuatro was substituted by the programme of 22nd November (the first programme available and after the last one analysed).

In paragraph 3, “Results”, data on the number of appearances in the programmes and the number of live interventions are presented, as well as those derived from a methodology to assess the treatment given specifically to the fellow debaters and interviewees who intervene. According to this methodology, “a counter-argument” involves any intervention by the moderator implying a challenge to the central argument of the collaborator or interviewee. For this article, political interviews are excluded, although some political guests are counted as fellow debaters.

From this unit of measurement, other arguments, admonishments or criticisms of the moderator, which have minor importance, will be weighted accordingly. Thus, a “partial refutation” is counted as half a unit and a subtle refutation as one-third of a unit. The range that is assigned to questions or comments which are especially sceptical or critical are counted from 0.5 to 1.00 point. Cross-examination or insinuations can be counted but not necessarily considered refutations. Of course, the outline of this simple weighted proposal is orientative and the inclusion of any sentence of one kind or another may be debated, but the total number of counter-arguments is large enough to be significant, beyond the limitations of any coding system.

Therefore, all the collaborators who appeared on the panel as fellow debaters were registered. In the interviews, political party representatives were excluded.

When it concerns a fellow debater present on the panel, the counter-arguments that are counted are those carried out by the host of the programme. If it concerns an interviewee (not present and therefore with video connection) occasional counter-arguments made by the fellow debaters to the interviewee (being still connected or not) are added.

Admonishments for interrupting other fellow debaters are not counted. Sometimes, in *Las Mañanas de Cuatro*, the host uses the expression “well” to denote some disagreement and the will to interrupt a collaborator’s intervention. In these cases, it has been counted as a subtle counter-argument, except if much later in the programme the host repeats such an intervention to cut off the same collaborator, in which case the second “well” is counted as a partial counter-argument and the third as a complete counter-argument.

The main limitations of the study have to do with the absence of additional researchers who could have developed parallel encodings (at least relative to a sample of the total programmes analysed), checking whether relevant differences were present in a reliability test and thus refining this novel methodology.

3. Results

In both talk shows it was observed that the participants who attended the shows more frequently receive very few counter-arguments. In *Al Rojo Vivo*, there are a very small number of counter-arguments for fellow-debaters and *Atresmedia* interviewees: despite being the group which enjoys greater presence, there are 10 groups which receive more refutations than them.

Among the media which receive more refutations, we should explain the case of La Razón, whose elevated number comes almost exclusively from a particular programme in which the moderator and a journalist from this media argued repeatedly about one very specific point. Something similar happens with the Promecal Group, since all refutations received dealt with one single issue: whether the song which accompanied a report on Informe Semanal about Carles Puigdemont was the soundtrack of The Exorcist or not. This level of detail in the controversy is significant in hindering the real debate concerning deep and important matters.

If we observe the data from the Catalan press, we find an overwhelming division between the treatment received by the non-sovereignist media and that received by the sovereignist media. Thus, Nació digital suffers 20 counter-arguments, the highest number of all the interventions despite being the sixteenth in terms of presence on the programme. If we group El Periódico and La Vanguardia together, on the one hand, and TV3, Nació digital and ElNacional.cat, on the other, we find that the former had enjoyed 13 appearances as fellow debaters and 93 interventions as interviewees, receiving 1.33 in the counter-argument index, while the latter (media closer to Catalan sovereignist positions) enjoyed 11 appearances and 32 interventions, as well as 32 counter-arguments. Therefore, despite intervening less frequently, the most sovereignist media suffered 24 refutations for each refutation that the guests of El Periódico and La Vanguardia suffered.

TABLE I: Media Pluralism in Al Rojo Vivo (17 th October – 17 th November, 2017)

Communication Media or source	Total appearances as fellow debaters	Interventions as interviewees	Total counter-arguments received
La Sexta/ Atresmedia	17	18	4,67
(Politicians)	10	*	5
(Reporters without any specific affiliation)	9	6	3.5
La Vanguardia	8	44	0.33
(University Professors)	8	24	16,17
ElNacional.cat	7	0	5.5
Alternativas Económicas	6	23	7.17
El Mundo	6	10	1,83
Infolibre	6	0	2.83
La Razón	6	0	16,17
(Judges, lawyers)	5	83	7
El Periódico de Catalunya	5	49	1
Eldiario.es	5	41	0.5
ElPlural	5	13	1.5
Politikon	5	4	0.33
Nació digital	4	18	20.5

Vozpópuli	4	0	5.5
Revista Tiempo	4	0	1.33
La Cafetera	4	0	3.5
Crónica Global	3	13	0
Societat Civil Catalana	3	6	0
Grupo Promecal	3	0	4
OK Diario	2	27	3.83
Libertad Digital	2	0	0.5
The New York Times	2	0	0
Onda Cero	2	4	1,67
(Police, District Attorneys)	1	25	0
(Economists)	1	22	0.5
Agencia EFE	1	3	0
International Consortium of Investigative Journalists	1	0	0
(Associations)	0	25	6.5
La SER	0	21	0
TV3	0	14	6
El Confidencial	0	6	0
Interviú	0	6	0
(Demonstrators)	0	6	0
El Independiente	0	3	0
Total	145	514	128.33

Source: Prepared by the authors based on the results of this research.

[In the last column all counter-arguments have been put together as a single number. Thus, a complete counter-argument counts as 1 point, a partial one is counted as 0.5 and a subtle correction as 0,33].

* For the purposes of this study we have only counted the appearances of politicians as fellow debaters and not their interventions as interviewees.

As happens in *Las Mañanas de Cuatro*, the ideological positioning of *Las Mañanas de Cuatro* regarding the situation in Catalonia determines the media approach of the programme. This is the clearest interpretation of the results in terms of the counter-arguments received by the various collaborators. So, the guests of RAC1 are, sovereignist associations and professors unfavourable to the actions of the State who, by far, receive a higher number of refutations. In some cases, the presenter's opposition is so obvious that he/she is forced to launch express messages of supposed reconciliation or politeness, as "you were invited because we want to hear what you have to say" (Joan Queralt, 10/11/17 or Ramón Cotarelo, 3/11/17). During interviews of sovereignists or leftists, there are allusions that the collaborator is a troublemaker

or something similar (as if he has offended the fellow debaters or that “things are getting heated”), which seeks to discredit the positions of the interviewee. This happens with Pere Mas or J.C. Monedero.

Despite placing much emphasis on the economic aspects of the situation in Catalonia, there are hardly any economists in the two programmes. Besides, these analysts display little pluralism, as they are almost all from the PSOE arena: Miguel Sebastián was minister in the government of Rodríguez Zapatero, Gonzalo Bernardos defines himself as “a social democrat” and José Carlos Díez was appointed as coordinator of the economic area for the thirty-ninth PSOE congress.

TABLE II: Media Pluralism in Las Mañanas de Cuatro (17th October – 17 th November, 2017)

Communication Media	Total appearances as fellow debaters	Interventions as interviewees	Total counter-arguments received
(Reporters without any specific affiliation and linked to PRISA)	11	3	0.5
(Court Journalists without any specific affiliation)	0	9	0
Público.es	10	0	1.33
(Conservative Reporters without any specific affiliation)	9	0	7
ABC	9	0	2,33
Diari Ara	7	5	6.67
El Mon	7	0	3.5
RAC1	6	10	28,33
13TV	6	0	1,17
La Razón	6	0	0
Huffington Post	6	0	1
República.com	5	0	0
El Confidencial	5	11	0
Diario 16	5	0	1.5
El Independiente	4	0	1.33
ATTAC	4	0	0
El Economista	4	0	0
OKDiario	3	0	3.83
La Ser	3	0	0
Infolibre	3	0	0
La Marea	3	0	0.5

Agencia Catalana de Noticias	2	0	0,83
La Vanguardia	2	26	7
L' Eco de Sitges	1	0	0
Economía Digital	1	0	0
Hydra Media	1	0	0
Carne Cruda	1	6	3
Racó Catalá	1	0	4,33
Libertad Digital	1	0	0
(Lawyers, judges)	1	76	2
(Political Scientists, sociologists)	1	25	0.33
(Teachers, University professors)	0	85	22.17
(Civil associations)	0	32	13.83
(Police, GC, Mossos)	0	28	0
(Economists)	0	35	6.5
El Español	0	8	0
El Mundo	0	12	0
Mediaset	0	14	0.5
(Playwrights)	0	5	4.5
TV3	0	4	0
Total	138	388	124

Source: Prepared by the authors based on the results of this research.

It is worth noting that both in Al Rojo Vivo as well as in Las Mañanas de Cuatro the cases of spokespersons from associations and university professors, because, although a priori it may seem because of their social roles they would not receive many refutations from the moderator who invited them to the programme, however, the data reflects that they received refutations and counter-arguments above that of the average. This is even more striking when one observes that people linked to the so-called State sewers, such as Eduardo Inda, Esteban Urreiztieta and Dani Montero⁴, did not receive any counter-arguments.

4 "Inda, Urreiztieta, Alfonso Rojo y Daniel Montero a sueldo de la presunta organización criminal de Villarejo". Patricia López, Público.es, 27-03-2019. https://www.publico.es/politica/audio-prueba-villarejo-e-inda-le-dieron-pequeno-nicolas-grabacion-cni.html?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=web

In terms of gender equality, regarding access to the microphones for these 2 programmes, the figures are overwhelming: in that only 18.18% of the participants in *Al Rojo Vivo* was a female. In *Las Mañanas de Cuatro* this percentage increases but it is still a far cry from equality (26.32%). To this we must add that the usual presenters of both programmes are male. In the *La Sexta* debate this is aggravated by the fact that a few days before, the third political force in the country (through the commission of the Observatory for Communication media of the State Sectorial Circle for Podemos Feminism) had denounced the lack of women in debate programmes and had placed special emphasis on the case of *Al Rojo Vivo*⁵.

TABLE III: Gender equality in *Al Rojo Vivo* and *Las Mañanas de Cuatro*

Media equality (excluding political party interviews)	<i>Al Rojo Vivo</i> (25 programmes from 17th October, 2017)	<i>Las Mañanas de Cuatro</i> (25 programmes from 17th October 2017)
Male participants	72 (81.82%)	56 (73.68%)
Female participants	16 (18.18%)	20 (26.32%)
Female participants live	19.07%	14.21%
Appearance of women in panel discussions	23.45%	35.51%
Counter-arguments received by women	20.26%	8.47%

Source: Prepared by the authors based on the results of this research.

* It must be added that in the two programmes, in the male interventions, the usual moderator is also male.

TABLE IV: Agenda in *Al Rojo Vivo* and *Las Mañanas de Cuatro* (17 th October – 17 th November, 2017)

Topic	Minutes in <i>Al Rojo Vivo</i> (% of total programme)	Minutes in <i>Las Mañanas de Cuatro</i> (% of total programme)	Mentioned as one of the 3 major problems in the CIS *
Catalonia	153'30" + 154'55" + 250 + 167'38" + 280'18" + 214'14" + 169'15" + 135'10" + 286'1" + 402'21" + 225'29" + 226'56" + 162'28" + 305'22" + 217'26" + 163'27" + 143'21" + 134'57" + 301'22" + 209'18" + 147'44" + 138'53" + 127'48" + 109'22" + 132'57" 4944'48" (92.5%)	248'17" 135'51" + 131 + + + 149'56 148'11" + 136'19" + 148'56" + 149'59" + 257'31" + 151' + 150'34" + 150'27" + 147'19" + 149'28" + 138'40" + 89'30" + 232'45" + 135'45" + 124'12" + 95'09" + 88'14" + 59'22" + 129'21" + 93'40" + 73'54" 3494'10" (87.08%)	29% general 8.8% personal [October] 24.6% general 7% personal [November]

5 <https://www.publico.es/politica/denuncia-ausencia-mujeres-tertulias-television.html>

Paradise Papers	55'16" + 15'18" 0'50" 19'18" +++ 2'55" 8'38" 1'51" +++ 5'48" 109'54" (2.06%)	-	0.2% general 0.2% personal ["Fiscal fraud" October] 0.4% general 0.2% personal [November]
Lezo Case	9 + 1 + 2.46 + 9.06 + + 24'36 20'09 12'38 + 25'40 + 104'55" (1.96%)	8'22" 19'19" +++ 3'50" 7'26" 35'14" +++ 5'11" 15'10"	28.3% general 10.2% personal ["Corruption and fraud" October] 31,5% 11.2% [November]
Gürtel Case	2'36" + 5'35" + 7'15" 1'31" 5'52" +++ 11'09" 33'58" (0.63%)	13'22" + 35" 14" + + 5'35" + 13'58" + 2'30"	28.3% general 10.2% personal ["Corruption and fraud" October] 31,5% 11.2% [November]
Another corruption	1'45" + 6'14" (Rus) 8'59" (0.17%)	6'06" (Commissions in the Valencian Parliament) + 7'08" (Grau, PP Valencia) + 1'53" (inspection of Puyol, Cifuentes and other cases where the party under investigation denounced an investigator) 15'07" (0.38%)	28.3% general 10.2% personal [October] 31,5% 11.2% [November]
PP Caja B	5'35" + 2'24" 7'59" (0.15%)	24" + 19'09" + 4'42" + 50'48" + 51'14" [Includes Lezo audios, Caja B and internal PP affairs] 126'17" (3.15%)	
Bárcenas hard drives, PP on trial	3'42" + 2'21" 6'03" (0.11%)	[In " Caja B"]	
Kichi-Teofila Martínez altercation	4'23" (0.082%)		

Pensions (IMF)	15'45" (0.29%)		3.1% general 7.2% personal [October] 3.2% 8% [November]
Fires	7'30" + 0'25" 7'55" (0.15%)	17' + 13'28" 30'28" (0.76%)	
Channel Promotions	3'26" + 1'02" + 3'40" + 7 15'08" (0.28%)	3'48" (0.09%)	
Villarejo arrested	4'15" (0.079%)	9"	
The Receiver of Revenue intervenes in the Madrid Town Hall	10'02" (0.19%)	6'30" + 11'46" 18'16" (0.46%)	
Spanish national football team T-shirts	6'25" (0.12%)	6'24" + 59" 7'23" (0.18%)	
Podemos Financing	13'55" (0.26%)	15'32" (0.39%)	
Rajoy seeks to stand again for presidency	6'58" + 1'57" 8'55" (0.17%)		
Púnica Case	1'01" + 4'33" + 15'04" 20'38" (0.39%)	10'37" 3'51" + + + 3'35" 26'46" 44'49" (1.12%)	28.3% general 10.2% personal ["Corruption and fraud" October] 31,5% 11.2% [November]
P. Sánchez plane incident	1'14" (0.023%)		
NTMEP [Humour]	4'24" (0.082%)		
Mongolia Report [Humour]	6'17" (0.12%)		
Regional financing	6'03" (0.11%)		
Retweeting as a criminal offence	2'27" (0.046%)		
NY accident	0'37" (0.011%)		
Extremadura revindication about train connections	0'31" (0.01%)		
Military plane crash		1'30" (0.04%)	
Aznar Iraq		4'29" (0.11%)	

Poverty		25"	
Bank bailout		21	
Health and education cuts		18"	8.3% + 5.3% + 0.8% general ["Health", October] 9.9% + 6.9% + 1.3% personal ["Education", October] 9.2% + 7.5% + 1.5% general[November] 10.4% + 7.4% + 2.1% personal [November]
The most expensive light bills		14"	0.0% 0.1% [October] 0.1% general 0.3% personal [November]
Rato / Bankia		16"	
PP policy Tripling the rate of alcohol		11"	
Protests in Murcia about the wall		10"	
PSOE participation in PP corruption		40"	
20th November, fascist acts		4'36" + 16'13" + 4'35" 25'24" (0.63%)	
Police hatred chat		33'19" + 58'35" 91'54" (2.29%)	
TOTAL	5345'50" (100%)	4012'37" (100%)	

Source: Prepared by the authors based on the results of this research.

* CIS Data 3191, with fieldwork from 2nd to 11th October, 2017, and from CIS 3195, with fieldwork from 1st to 15th October, 2017. "General" refers to the mention of the issue as one of the three main problems in Spain, whereas "Personal" includes mention as one of the three problems that most affect the interviewee personally. Data from the questions 7a and 8a are taken respectively. Unlike the first and second columns, the third should not total 100%, as it is multi-choice and not all are included.

** In *Las Mañanas de Cuatro*, features such as "Lo que el Procés ha escondido", "Mientras mirábamos a Cataluña" and the like are counted in "Catalonia". They have in common the introduction of the discussion on *agenda setting* and on different topics for several minutes, but without losing sight of the element that groups them (not being Catalonia).

The agenda deployed in *Al Rojo Vivo* and *Las Mañanas de Cuatro* during the period studied almost becomes monothematic and leaves virtually no relevant room for any other topic other than the situation in Catalonia, of which 92.5% of the time was dedicated to this in *Al Rojo Vivo* and 87.1% in *Las Mañanas de Cuatro*, despite the fact that in the CIS studies, this issue did not exceed 15.6% as the main problem cited by respondents (as a general problem, the maximum in those months was 29% in October 2017). In addition, it should be considered that these talk shows are broadcast in the two channels which are the most left-wing, so that in principle they would be expected to place less relevance to a conflict of this kind compared to other media. Another methodological nuance to consider (and which results in the obsessive coverage granted to the subject) is that the special programmes on Catalonia that these programmes have broadcast at later hours than normal have not been counted.

TABLE V: Comparison of the problems cited by CIS interviewees and the agenda of *Al Rojo Vivo* and *Las Mañanas de Cuatro* (October-November 2017)

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Mentioned as a general problem in the CIS (Average October-November 2017)</i>	<i>Mentioned as a personal problem in the CIS (Average October-November 2017)</i>	<i>Time dedicated in Al Rojo Vivo (17th October- 17th November, 2017)</i>	<i>Time dedicated in Las Mañanas de Cuatro (17th October- 22nd November, 2017)</i>
Unemployment	65.65%	35,95%	0%	0%
Catalonian independence	26,8%	7,9%	92,5%	87,1%
Corruption, fraud / Tax fraud	30.2%	10,9%	5,55%	7,93%
Politicians in general, parties and politics	27.25%	10,6%	0,512%	0,39%
Problems of an economic nature	22.65%	22,95%	0,11%	0,00019%
Health	8,75%	10,15%	0%	0,000043%
Problems of a social nature	8,25%	5,9%	0,29%	0,000041%
Education	6.4%	7,15%	0%	0,000043%
Problems related to job quality	5,75%	8,1%	0%	0%
The government and specific political parties or politicians	5,15%	1,8%	0,36%	0,0046%

Sources: as in the previous tables, own compilation of the results of this investigation were used with regards to *Al Rojo Vivo* and *Las Mañanas de Cuatro*. For the data of the first two columns: Studies from CIS 3191, with fieldwork from 2nd to 11th October 2017, and 3195, with fieldwork from 1st to 15th October 2017.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The decisions of both programmes -in this case on agenda and media pluralism- are only coherent and can be explained from their political positions. These positions are in short contrary to any questioning of the current political and economic system and especially contrary to Catalanian sovereignism, given the dates of the study (October and November 2017). At the same time, privileged treatment is granted to the thesis linked to the parties which defended the application of Article 155 in Catalonia and especially those close to PSOE.

The former affects media pluralism inasmuch as they are the interventions which are most criticized by the State institutions (or those who propose methods of diverse relationships between Catalonia and Spain) those who receive the most counter-arguments.

That the most frequent fellow-debaters are the ones who receive the least refutations could be an indication contrary to that which one would expect from a sufficiently pluralistic debate, and in which the participants do so on equal terms. And above all point to the fact that the number of appearances is not related to informative interest nor diversity but depends on the ideological closeness to the moderator (who carries out the measured counter-arguments).

The data obtained shows a close monothematic approach from Al Rojo Vivo and Las Mañanas de Cuatro of everything related to the Catalanian Independence Process in the broadcasts analysed (25 of each programme).

Given the dates of the study, it is reasonable and even foreseeable that the Catalanian question be one of the topics most dealt with. However, over-representing this issue in the levels registered is a decision with a powerful political impact.

Regarding the hypothesis formulated, we note that:

A) The answer to the first hypothesis is conclusive: both with respect to Al Rojo Vivo and to Las Mañanas de Cuatro, the topics discussed do not correspond to the concerns expressed by the CIS interviewees. Of the 10 main subjects, only 1 (the independence of Catalonia) obtained at least one third of the percentage of people who reported this issue as being one of the top three most important. In fact, it gets more than three times the maximum percentage obtained in the CIS and the decision to treat this issue excessively is what prevents other matters from achieving the attention that the citizens grant it. Therefore, none of the 10 most mentioned problems in the CIS is covered in either of the two programmes studied in a minimally similar proportion to that expressed by citizens in the CIS.

B) There is a great similarity between the agenda displayed on the two programmes analysed, almost to the point of being interchangeable. Thus, the time spent on the 10 topics most dealt with in Al Rojo Vivo shows a Pearson correlation of 0.999 with respect to the time they received on the same 10 topics in Las Mañanas de Cuatro.

C) The participants in both programmes are mainly men: 81.82% in the case of Al Rojo Vivo and 73.68% in Las Mañanas de Cuatro, therefore the hypothesis related to gender equality is ruled out: the 40% figure the law requires in the electoral lists will not be reached.

Given these results, some recommendations for discussion are: the lack of women in political debate programmes (C) could be solved with a legal provision such as the so-called “zipper systems” to oblige the minimum legal requirements of equality to be fulfilled; on the other hand, both the broad ideological and topic parallelism between programmes of

different communication groups (B) as the disregard for the problems cited by the public (A) are two more examples of the very serious consequences for plurality that the existence of a duopoly which controls 4 of the 5 main Spanish channels could have, and could only be mitigated by a deep reform towards a new media model, more open, pluralistic and respectful of democratic standards. Possible concrete measures in this direction are: the establishing of the three-thirds model (one third for public broadcasters, one third private and one third for community media) as an objective towards convergence, the creation of an Audio-visual Council which registers the activity of the TV and emits at least suggestions, the limitation by law of the capitalist concentration in the media, the convocation of a process to assign new broadcasting licenses to entities without current presence, etc.

The self-references in both programmes always consist of the self-exaltation of the journalist's own alleged journalistic qualities, not including general debates about the media situation, the capitalist concentration of the media, the control of banks and large companies or the reliance on advertisers and governments. This deficiency corroborates that which Rendueles highlighted (2013: 169), that no public matter should be excluded in principle from the processes of deliberative democracy which would imply "a subversion of dominant consensus in liberal democracies about the withdrawal of political debate on the accumulation of capitalist processes, which are taken for granted".

The main limitation of the study is the absence of encodings carried out by other researchers. This would have calibrated the reliability of the classification adopted and its transfer into intensity scores given to each of the moderator's interventions which represent a questioning of the guest's argument. To gain an insight as complete as possible of the conditions in which political talk shows are developed, the methodology used here can be complemented with others, such as that used by Sánchez Castillo (2018).

The transfer of the media agenda (represented in this study by *Al Rojo Vivo* and *Las Mañanas de Cuatro*) to the public agenda (represented by the spontaneous responses of citizens in the CIS surveys) is the centre of gravity of the agenda setting. Precisely because this theory is generally granted great relevance to the long term -for example, Rubio Ferreres (2009: 14)-, the potential influence of the media agenda in 2017 is lived out in later years, above all when referring to the special nature of this period and considering the special media coverage, as has been demonstrated regarding the practically monothematic agenda deployed by the reference programmes.

Therefore, the analysis which can develop the potential in terms of the transfer of the agenda of this study has two major milestones: 2019, because of the coincidence of elections of all kinds which have put to the test the impact of the 2017 agenda in the face of a crucial power-setting, and 2024, when 7 years will have passed, those who had used authors such as Andreu Abela (2008) in their studies to calibrate in proportion and more completely the relationship of agenda setting and its influence on public opinion. 2024 coincides also with the completion of the electoral cycle which started at European level in 2019.

In any case, despite the fact that one of the two talk shows analysed was cancelled, it would be advisable to repeat the research in another period not affected by the extraordinary political situation that Spain lived through during the weeks under study, adding other programmes and gathering more information about the new methodology proposed.

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Annex

Al Rojo Vivo

Collaborator	Appearances as fellow debaters	Interventions as interviewees	Counter-arguments received (complete, partial, subtle)
Lluís Orriols, teacher	7	3	6, 0, 2
Javier Sardá, journalist/La Sexta	7		2, 1, 4
Estefanía Molina, Elnacional.cat	7		4, 3, 0
Pere Rusiñol, Alternativas Económicas	6	3+5+4+2+3+3+3	4, 5, 2
Enric Juliana, La Vanguardia	6		0, 0, 1

Pablo Simón, Politikon	5	4	0, 0, 1
Ignacio Cembrero, La Sexta	5		0, 0, 1
Angélica Rubio, El Plural	5		1, 1, 0
Ferran Casas, Nació digital	4	5+4+5	17, 7, 0
Javier Aroca, anthropologist	4		3, 1, 0
Pilar Gómez, La Razón	4		13, 1, 2
Fernando Berlín, La Cafetera	4		2, 3, 0
Jesús Maraña, Infolibre	4		1, 0, 1
Gabriel Sanz, Vozpópuli	4		4, 1, 3
Nativel Preciado, Revista Tiempo	4		1, 0, 1
Carlos Quílez, Crónica Global	3	3+4+3+3	
J.A. Zarzalejos, journalist	3	3+3	
Ignacio Escolar, Eldiario.es	3	3	0, 1, 0
Manuel Cobo, PP	3		1, 0, 0
A. Pérez Henares, grupo Promecal	3		2, 4, 0
Lola García, La Vanguardia	2	5+3+5+5+9+3+4+4+3	
Enric Hernández, El Periódico de Catalunya	2	4+4+4+3+3+6+3+3	1, 0, 0
Martín Pallín, Emeritus judge	2	4+4+3+6	
Gonzalo Boye, lawyer	2	6+6	4, 1, 0
Gemma Robles, El Periódico de Catalunya	2	6+3	
Carlos Segovia, El Mundo	2	4	0, 0, 1
Rodríguez Burgos, Onda Cero	2	4	1, 0, 2
Miriam They, Societat Civil Catalana	2	3	
F. Marhuenda, La Razón	2		0, 4, 0
José Zaragoza, PSC	2		1, 0, 0
Raphael Minder, The New York Times	2		
Jorge Bustos, El Mundo	2		0, 3, 0
Manuel Rico, Infolibre	2		1, 1, 0
G.Llamazares, IU-Asturias	2		
María Claver, OKDiario	2		3, 1, 0
Pablo Montesinos, Libertad Digital	2		0, 1, 0
Neus Tomàs, Eldiario.es	1	7+3+5+2+3+5+5+5+3	
Joaquim Bosch, Juezas/ces por la Democracia/ Judges for Democracy	1	4+3+5+2+4	
Jordi Casas, La Sexta	1	4+3+3	0, 1, 0
José Carlos Díez, economist	1	5+3	

Toni Castejón, Sindicat de Mossos d'Esquadra	1	6	
Álex Ramos, Societat Civil Catalana	1	3	
Álex Cubero, Agencia EFE	1	3	
Astrid Barrio, El Periódico de Catalunya	1		
Teo Lozano, Atresmedia	1		
Joan López, teacher Abat Oliba	1		
Eva Granados, PSC	1		
Santi Vila, PdeCAT	1		
J.L. Sánchez, Eldiario.es	1		
Lucía Méndez, El Mundo	1		
J.M. Contreras, La Sexta	1		
Joaquín Castellón, La Sexta	1		
Mar Cabra, International Consortium of Investigative Journalists	1		
Joaquín Manso, El Mundo	1		
Pérez Medina, La Sexta	1		
Anna Grau, journalist	1		
Carlos Santos, journalist	1		
Fernando de Páramo, Ciudadanos	1		1, 2, 3
Eduardo Inda, OKDiario	-	3+3+2+4+5+2+5+3	0, 0, 1
M.Á. Campos, La SER	-	2+3+3+2+3+1+4+3	
González Vega, Jueces/zas por la Democracia	-	5+5+6+3+4	
Marcel Mauri, Òmnium	-	4+4+8	5, 1, 0
Jorge Verstryngge, political scientist	-	7+7	9, 1, 0
Vicent Sanchis, TV3	-	14	3, 6, 0
Marcos Paradinas, El Plural	-	5+5+3	
M. Sebastián, economist PSOE	-	4+4	
Jordi Évole, La Sexta	-	8	
Pérez Royo, professor University of Seville	-	7	1, 0, 0
Valentín Anadón, SAP-FEPOL	-	7	
Gonzalo Bernardos, economist	-	3+3	0, 1, 0
J.M. Olmo, El Confidencial	-	3+3	
Jordi Pina, lawyer	-	6	1, 1, 0
Luis Rendueles, Entreviú	-	6	
Roger Español, demonstrator	-	6	
Emilio Fernández, UPF	-	6	

Miguel Pallarés, district attorney	-	6	
Josep Bou, Asoc. Empresaris de Catalunya/ Association of Catalan Entrepreneurs	a	5	
Cristina Almeida, lawyer	-	4	
Joan Serra, Nació digital	-	4	
Enric Blanes, ANC	-	4	1, 0, 0
Ferran Monegal, El Periódico de Catalunya	-	4	
Fidel Masreal, El Periódico de Catalunya	-	3	
Pablo R. Suanzes, El Mundo	-	3	
Xabi Barrena, El Periódico de Catalunya	-	3	
Enrique Santiago, lawyer	-	3	1, 0, 0
Carlota Guindal, La Vanguardia*	-	3	
Pablo Herraiz, El Mundo	-	3	
Antonio Salvador, El Independiente	-	3	

*Afterwards, in El Español

Las Mañanas de Cuatro

Collaborator	Appearances as fellow-debater	Interventions as interviewee	Counter-arguments received (total, partial, subtle)
Ernesto Ekaiser, journalist	10	3+3+3	
Jaime González, ABC	9		2, 0, 1
Joan Guirado, El Món	7		2, 3, 0
Alejandro Vara, journalist	6		2, 1, 0
Pere Mas, RAC1	6	4+6	23, 10, 1
Alfonso Merlos, 13TV	6		0, 1, 2
Ana Pardo de Vera, Público.es	6		0, 0, 1
Carmen Morodo, La Razón	6		
Esther Palomera, Huffington Post	6		0, 2, 0
J.M. Calleja, journalist	6		
Pepe Oneto, Republica.com	5		
Fernando Garea, El Confidencial	5		
Rodolfo Irago, journalist	5		0, 1, 0
Beatriz Talegón, Diario16	5		1, 1, 0
Daniel S. Ugart, Diari Ara	4		4, 2, 2
Cristina de la Hoz, El Independiente	4		1, 0, 1
J.M. Crespo, Público.es	4		1, 0, 0
Sol Sánchez, ATTAC	4		

Esther Esteban, El Economista/El Digital	4		
Javier Gállego Jané, journalist	3		2, 3, 3
Cristina Fallarás, La Marea	3		0, 1, 0
Israel García, OK Diario	3		3, 1, 1
Ana Terradillos, La SER	3		
Alicia Gutiérrez, Infolibre	3		
Mariona Ferrer, Diari Ara	3		1
Roger Pi de Cabanyes, Agencia Catalana de Noticias	2		0, 1, 1
J.M. Brunet, La Vanguardia	2		7
Nacho Corredor, political expert	1	2+4+3+4+3+3	0, 0, 1
Carlos Carnicero, Economía Digital	1		
Ketty Garat, Libertad Digital/esRadio	1		
Antoni Sella, L'Eco de Sitges	1		
Cándido Conde-Pumpido, lawyer	1		
Santi Terraza, Hydra Media/L'Eco de Sitges	1		
Javier Gallego, Carne Cruda	1	6	2, 2, 0
Magda Gregori, Racó Català	1		3, 2, 1
Enric Blanes, ANC	0	8+4+4	7, 1, 0
I. González Vega, Jueces/zas por la Democracia/ Judges for Democracy	0	4+6+4+6	2
Eduardo Garzón, economist	0	2	2
Agustín Vigo, Unión Federal de Policía	0	7+4	0
Marcelino Sexmero, Asoc. Jueces Francisco de Vitoria	0	4	0
Pilar García de la Granja, Mediaset	0	3+2+3+3+3	0, 1, 0
Pérez-Royo, Professor University of Seville	0	6+5	1, 2, 0
Juan Soto Ivars, El Confidencial	0	2+4+2+3	
Joaquim Bosch, Jueces/zas por la Democracia/ Judges for Democracy	0	3+3+3+4+2+6	
J.C. Monedero, teacher Complutense	0	3+5+3+3+4	6, 6, 1
J.C. Díez, economist	0	5+4+7	1, 1, 0
Agustí Alcoberro, ANC	0	3	0, 0, 1
Argelia Queralt, Teacher UB	0	4	
Xavier Arbós, Professor UB	0	5	
S. Niño Becerra, economist	0	4	0, 2, 0
Roser Mercader, TV3	0	4	

Toni Castejón, Sindicat de Mossos d'Esquadra	0	4	
Esteban Urreiztieta, El Mundo	0	4+4+4	
Marcel Mauri, Òmnium Cultural	0	5+8	5, 2, 0
Esther Vera, Diari Ara	0	5	
Quico Sallés, La Vanguardia	0	3	
Martín Pallín, Emeritus judge	0	5+4	
Luis Arroyo, sociologist	0	3+3	
Marius Carol, La Vanguardia	0	3	
Carlota Guindal, La Vanguardia	0	4+3+4+5+4	
J.M Gay de Liébana	0	3+5+5	1, 2, 0
Xavier Melero, lawyer	0	7	
Ramón Cotarelo, professor	0	7+4	5, 5, 1
Fernando J. Pérez, El País	0	3	
Antón Losada, Teacher University of Santiago	0	5+8+7+6	
María Peral, El Español	0	4	
J. Nieva Fenoll, professor UB	0	3	
Cristina Almeida, lawyer	0	5	
Joan Queralt, professor UB	0	7	2, 2, 0
Albert Boadella, playwright	0	5	4, 1, 0
J. Moreno Redondo, lawyer	0	6	
J. Francisco Silva, asociación suboficiales Guardia Civil	0	7	
Dani Montero, El Español	0	4	
Pau Molins, lawyer	0	4	
Emiliano Herrero, Policía CCOO	0	6	